

ELIZABETH II (r. 1952- present)

In 1957 The Queen became the first monarch to open the Canadian Parliament in person. On the evening before, 13 October 1957, The Queen made a television broadcast in English and French to mark the historic occasion.



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When my husband and I were leaving Canada last time (in the teeth of a gale, as you may remember) we heard the kindly people at Portugal Cove singing "Will Ye No Come Back Again?" We could not tell them then that we had every hope and intention of returning as soon as possible. Now after six years I want you to know how happy I am to be in Canada once again, particularly at Thanksgiving.

Tomorrow afternoon I shall open the 23rd Parliament here in the nation's capital. As you may know, it will be the first time that the Canadian Parliament has been opened by the Sovereign in person and I am very much looking forward to performing this duty. At this ancient ceremony I shall preside at a formal assembly of the men and women chosen to guide the destinies of Canada. Tomorrow I shall address your representatives ... Tonight I want to talk to you more personally.

Next week I have another important and pleasant duty to perform. When I go to the United States I shall be going as the Head of the Canadian Nation to pay a State Visit to the Head of our great neighbouring country. I shall be going in other capacities as well but when you hear or read about the events in Washington, and other places, I want you to reflect that it is the Queen of Canada and her husband who are concerned in them.

I am afraid my visit to Canada this time is going to be very short, but travelling is becoming so quick and easy that I hope to be able to pay more visits in the future. In the meantime I have vivid memories of my journey across the country in 1951. All the varied scenes of that tour have been crowding back into my mind since I arrived and I have been going over the great events of those days with old friends.

I remember particularly the welcome of the children ... How you all shouted with one voice. I remember thinking that it augured well for Canada that the rising generation, whether English or French speaking, whether born here or abroad, could show so clearly that you belonged to one great Canadian family. This is a wonderful and exhilarating country worthy of your very best service when you grow up. We hope that one day we shall be able to bring our children here to see it.

Different language is no bar to unity of outlook so I want to say a few words to the French-speaking children who may be listening.

Que vous soyez de langue française ou anglaise, que vous soyez nés en ce merveilleux pays ou encore venus de pays étrangers, vous faites tous partie d'une même grande famille. Vous vivez dans un pays rempli d'aventures et de joies. Combien d'autres enfants aimeraient partager votre bonheur! Lorsque vous serez rendus à maturité, vous serez fiers de servir votre pays et vous comprendrez plus facilement tout ce qu'il a fait pour vous. Je souhaite que mes enfants puissent un jour venir ici vous visiter.

Great things have happened here in the last six years. For one thing there are more Canadians, the cities are larger, industry has expanded and the last frontier is being pushed northwards. The strength of the Canadian currency is the admiration of other nations and it reflects the increasing and sensible development of the natural resources, and your own hard work.

In 1959 I am hoping to be present when the St. Lawrence Seaway is opened and then I hope to take that chance to travel more widely across the country. All these developments and adventurous undertakings are making a contribution to Canada's prosperity, but I am also pleased to see the way Canada's stature has grown in the councils of the world.

Industry and commerce may bring wealth to a country, but the character of a nation is formed by other factors. Race, language, religion, culture and tradition all have some contribution to make and when I think of the diversity of these factors in Canada today and the achievements that have grown from their union, I feel proud and happy to be Queen of such a nation.

La brièveté de mon séjour au Canada et mes devoirs dans la capitale ne me permettent pas de m'arrêter ailleurs. Le souvenir du voyage que j'ai fait dans la Province de Québec, il y a quelques années, m'oblige à redire avec elle: "Je me souviens."

Je me souviens non seulement de la chaleur de son accueil, de la beauté de son ancien héritage, mais je me souviens aussi, d'autres choses qui sont éternelles. Car je connais votre amour pour cette terre canadienne où reposent vous aïeux. Je sais aussi votre dévouement passionné à votre foi ancestrale et à votre langue maternelle. En unissant loyalement vos efforts à ceux de vos concitoyens, vous avez aidé le Canada à jouer dans le monde un rôle qui ne cesse de grandir.

Dans ce merveilleux pays, vivent des hommes et des femmes, de races et d'origines différentes, qui fraternisent et travaillent ensemble, dans un état d'égalité. C'est là une belle leçon pour tous. Comme Reine du Canada j'en suis fière. Je vous dis "Au revoir" en vous exprimant notre gratitude pour tout ce que vous avez fait pour mon mari et pour moi. Je vous souhaite, à vous et à vos enfants, la joie, la paix.

THE QUEEN'S SPEECHES

There are periods when life seems a small dull round, a petty business with no point and then suddenly we are caught up in some great event which gives us a glimpse of the solid and durable foundations of our existence. I hope that tomorrow will be such an occasion. I hope that all of you will feel that you are taking part in a piece of Canada's history. I wish more of you could be here to witness the ceremony but at least tonight I have been able to speak to you directly in your homes.

And now it's time for me to say Goodnight. Good luck and God bless you all.