

Humble Address for Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee: 26 May 2022

Prime Minister Boris Johnson presented a Humble Address to Her Majesty The Queen

I beg to move, that an Humble Address be presented to Her Majesty as on the order paper.

Madame Deputy Speaker, since the Palace of Westminster was founded more than a thousand years ago

It has seen war and peace, plague and plenty

the rise and fall of empires.

and all kinds of revolutions – scientific industrial political and ecumenical, stylistic

and almost 50 monarchs

In trying to rank the achievements of those monarchs it must be admitted that not all of them set exemplary standards of personal behaviour

and quite a few were removed violently and prematurely from office

but in our history no monarch has ever served this country so long as this one

with the first Platinum Jubilee ever

but far more importantly no monarch has ever served it so well.

When Barack Obama was asked at the end his time as President which world leader had impressed him most

he paused and his mind doubtless ran through the gallery of contemporary figures

and he said Queen Elizabeth

and I believe he was right.

And that is why next week the people of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth will be unabashed in celebrating not just the institution of the Crown but the individual who wears it.

This remarkable woman who by God and her right has led her country through good times and bad.

Who has dedicated her life to her people, to her beloved Commonwealth and to

the very idea of what a constitutional monarchy can and should be.

and who has already racked up so many superlatives, some of which the Speaker has already referred to.

In her 25,677 days as Queen, Her Majesty has undertaken more than 21,000 official engagements in well over a hundred countries.

She's granted Royal Assent to some 4,000 pieces of legislation sent to her by this House.

Hosted 112 state visits

And been served by 14 British Prime Ministers.

So far.

Across all her realms she has offered counsel and wisdom to more than 170 heads of government, including two generations of Trudeaus.

So far.

She's the holder of at least seven world records, including the most summer Olympiads opened by one person.

Although at only one such ceremony did she parachute out of a helicopter in a pink dress.

And of course there was one Olympic medal ceremony when she could claim to have bred both the rider – the Princess Royal – and the horse

a claim that will likely go unrivalled for some time to come.

And if you needed evidence of the mark she has made on our capital city, not one but two London transport lines have been named in her honour.

and it is not so much what she has done as the way she has done it

getting the best out of people

inspiring them to serve others and to serve their communities

helping to create that invisible thread of pride and allegiance that tugs on all our hearts

and makes us happy to serve or at least to do something for our country

in the way that she serves this country.

And I know that Prime ministers are not supposed to relay their conversations with The Queen

and I will not, except to say that her knowledge and understanding of politics and world affairs is profound.

and there have been times when I have been scrabbling to remember a historical date or the name of an African capital

and she has got there first

and when it comes to some subjects – anything equestrian – I am simply nowhere.

And I bet I speak for every Prime Minister who has ever had an audience with Her Majesty when I say that our conversations are always immensely comforting

because she has seen the sweep of it

she has seen the cycle from gloom to elation

and, every time, her country under her has gone forward from strength to strength.

She has seen an empire transformed into a happy Commonwealth that countries are now bidding to join.

And in the thousand-year history of this place

no monarch has seen such an increase in the longevity or the prosperity or the opportunity or the freedom of the British people

no monarch has seen such technical advances many of which British scientists played a leading part

from the dawn of the internet to the use of the world's first approved Covid vaccine.

No monarch by her efforts and dedication and achievement better deserves the attribute of greatness

and for me she is already Elizabeth the Great.

While she remains resolutely supported by the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Cambridge and other members of the Royal Family

we know these celebrations will be tinged with sadness for Her Majesty by the absence of the Duke of Edinburgh, her strength and stay.

And so I hope that in the coming days we can together further comfort her and reassure her

and show with every bonfire

with every concert and street party and aerobatic display

a love and a devotion to reciprocate the love and devotion and leadership she has shown to the whole country over seven decades.

And on behalf of the whole House

let me say, as the scholars of Westminster cried out from the Abbey's
triforium on Coronation Day 70 years ago:

"Vivat Regina Elizabetha!"

God save Queen Elizabeth.