




Speech By
David Janetzki

MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA SOUTH

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MOTION

Death of Queen Elizabeth II and Accession of King Charles III, Address of Condolence and Congratulations

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (11.35 am): In 1947, five years before Her Majesty's accession, she uttered the immortal words, as oft quoted today—

I declare before you all that my whole life whether it be long or short shall be devoted to your service.

Never have truer words been spoken. The Queen reigned 70 years, seven months and two days—the longest in British history. The curtain has now been drawn on the second Elizabethan age. The glories of Queen Elizabeth I were romanticised by the English for centuries. The men of the Long Parliament considered themselves as reincarnated Elizabethans—even Cromwell himself. Cromwell's mother, his wife and his favourite daughter were all called Elizabeth. He constantly referred to Elizabeth of 'famous memory' and he saw himself, in power, in some sense as her rightful successor.

I have no doubt that the second Elizabethan age will be remembered with as much affection, and for as long, as the first. Queen Elizabeth II gave assent to more than 4,000 acts of parliament, appointed no less than 15 British prime ministers—the last in her final hours. Buckingham Palace stated in 2016 she had travelled over 1,661,668 kilometres to 117 nations.

In amongst all the words of her service, family, love of the outdoors, corgis and horses, very little has been said of her faith. She inherited religious responsibilities as the Defender of the Faith and Supreme Governor of the Church of England—titles vested in the reigning British monarch since Henry VIII renounced the papacy in 1534. But it ran deeper than words and history.

In the Queen's first address, she requested prayer for her upcoming coronation, and it was a multifaith request: 'I want to ask you all, whatever your religion may be, to prayer for me on that day.' The Queen's faith was personal, private and inclusive. The Queen regularly encouraged religious diversity and tolerance in the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth of Nations and across the globe. In the year of the Diamond Jubilee in 2012, the Queen noted at a multifaith reception—

Faith plays a key role in the identity of millions of people, providing not only a system of belief but also a sense of belonging. It can act as a spur for social action. Indeed, religious groups have a proud track record of helping those in the greatest need including the sick, the elderly, the lonely and the disadvantaged. They remind us of the responsibilities we have beyond ourselves. Wise words indeed for our troubled times.

The Queen was beloved by Queenslanders across the decades. Sir Joh even submitted a popular petition to London requesting the right to proclaim the monarch 'Queen of Queensland'. My understanding is that Her Majesty was never referred the petition.

The Queen and Prince Philip visited the Toowoomba region in March 1954. The run sheet of the day noted that the royal couple would 'slow down' in Oakey between 2.47 pm and 2.55 pm. In those eight minutes on Campbell Street, my father was there with his family. Incidentally, my mother's family were there too, although my mother had not yet been born. They were cheering and waving flags as the royal couple passed on their way to Toowoomba.

Perhaps the crystal clarity of my father's memory explains the enduring appeal of the monarchy. The free offering of allegiance to an hereditary authority who lives across the world is an intellectual curiosity. British political author Ian Gilmour has noted that 'modern societies still need myth and ritual' and that a monarch and his or her family are well placed to supply it.

Although his view was perhaps a little jaundiced by Queen Victoria's enthusiasm for political interference, Walter Bagehot opined that—

So as long as the human heart is strong and the human reason weak, royalty will be strong because it appeals to diffuse feeling, and republics weak because they appeal to the understanding.

Perhaps the appeal of the monarchy is simply that it is set apart from politicians with all of our striving, self-obsession and compromise. People think of kings and queens who wield their power loudly, but Her Majesty was just the opposite. She exercised her power quietly, fighting the good fight, finishing the race and keeping the faith. The Queen is dead. Long live the King.