

The state funeral

Royal status cannot protect from death. Today we bid our last farewell to a loved and admired Queen. On her passing so the monarchy lives on, passing to her son. She has left a legacy of how to lead a life of service.

The presence of so many Kings and Queens, Presidents and Prime Ministers from around the world is testimony to the reputation for friendliness and great diplomacy which Elizabeth II enjoyed.

The long procession of so many people to bow their heads to her coffin lying in state in Westminster Hall is proof that her work did not go unmarked or unappreciated.

There is a sense of a passing of an era. She was our national link to the sacrifices and disciplines of life during the Second World War, and a reminder of the hopes she embodied for a peaceful and more prosperous life for many as post war rebuilding got underway. She spoke for us in times of joy and sorrow. Most of us have only known her as our monarch.

She led a Commonwealth that offered support and recognition for countries leaving the Empire. She readily accepted their Heads of State as her equal and made them feel welcome in the special global family of people representing nations.

May her dedication to selfless public service inspire others in public life.

May she rest in peace.