



Report

**Visit of the Honourable Andrew Scheer, M.P.,
Speaker of the House of Commons,
United Kingdom**

May 16-20, 2014

The Honourable Andrew Scheer, M.P., Speaker of the House of Commons, conducted an official visit to the United Kingdom from May 16 to 20, 2014.

The Speaker has the honour to present his

Report

The Canadian delegation was comprised of the following members:

- The Honourable Andrew Scheer, M.P., Speaker of the House of Commons;
- Mrs. Jill Scheer;
- Ms. Kenzie Potter, Chief of Staff to Speaker Scheer; and
- Ms. Elizabeth Rody, Chief of Protocol of Parliament.

Context

Canada and the United Kingdom share a sovereign, and both have amongst the oldest continuous traditions of parliamentary democracy. The Canada-United Kingdom relationship is further fostered today through partnership and cooperation in international organisations and recently, both countries have placed a high priority on the security and defense relationship. Canada has a number of formal bilateral agreements with the United Kingdom, including on taxation, defence training and judicial matters. Following the visit to the United Kingdom, two important events were scheduled to happen: firstly, the eighth election to the European Parliament (May 22 - 25, 2014) and secondly, the Scottish independence referendum (September 18, 2014).

Objectives of the visit:

The main purpose of the visit was to attend to an audience with Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and present on behalf of the Canadian Parliament the Loyal Address and Proclamation on the Birth of His Royal Highness Prince George of Cambridge. This unique opportunity served to reinforce the Canadian Parliament's ongoing relationship with the Crown. As part of the program, the delegation attended the Royal Windsor Horse Show and then travelled to London for meetings with parliamentarians and officials at the Palace of Westminster.

Other objectives of the visit were to:

- Strengthen relations between the Parliament of Canada and the Palace of Westminster;
- review issues of common interests, such as the long term plans for the renovation of the parliamentary precinct and security of the parliamentary precinct;
- discuss matters relating to parliamentary governance as well as recent procedural and administrative changes at the House of Commons; and
- examine a range of issues regarding the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

Meetings

During his visit to the United Kingdom, the Speaker had an audience with Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada, and met with:

- Dr. Richard Ware, Director of Palace of Westminster Restoration and Renewal Project;
- Mr. Paul Martin, CBE, Director of Parliamentary Security;
- Officials of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority: Paul Hayes, Interim Chief Executive; Ms. Belinda Brown, Director of Assurance, Performance and Pay; and Mr. John Sills, Director of Policy and Communications;
- The Right Honourable Lindsay Hoyle, MP, Chairman of Ways and Means of the House of Commons, and Sir Robert Rogers KCB, Clerk of the House of Commons;
- Mr. Bob Twigger, Secretary to the House of Commons Commission; and
- Dr. William M. Shija, Secretary General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA).

Presentation of The Loyal Address on the birth of His Royal Highness Prince George of Cambridge to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada in the State Apartments at Windsor Castle

The Speaker of the House of Commons and the Speaker of the Senate, accompanied by the Usher of The Black Rod, attended a private audience with Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada in the State Apartments at Windsor Castle. Following the presentation of The Loyal Address to The Queen, Her Majesty invited both Speakers to tour the Royal Mews at Windsor Castle and view the Canadian horses presented to The Queen over the years. The tour was led by Mr. Terry Pendry, LVO, BEM, Royal Stud Groom to her Majesty the Queen.

Both Speakers attended a luncheon with members of the Royal Household and the Executives of the Royal Windsor Horse Show. Her Majesty invited both Speakers to sit as her honoured guests in the Royal Box during the evening performance of the Royal Windsor Horse Show.

Meeting with Dr. Richard Ware, Director of Palace of Westminster Restoration and Renewal Project

Speaker Scheer, jointly with Speaker Kinsella, met with Dr. Richard Ware, Director of the Restoration and Renewal Project of the Palace of Westminster to discuss the similar challenges that both the Palace of Westminster and Parliament are currently facing.

Dr. Ware gave a presentation on the many challenges of the project, mentioning that since both Houses and committees need to be able to meet whenever needed, there is a significant backlog of work built-up. Furthermore, the Palace, being part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site, is one of the busiest sites in England and the opportunity to do major work in the summer is negligible.

Dr. Ware then explained that a study was commissioned in 2011 that showed that there were three possible approaches: minimizing disruption by having members stay in the Palace, having members move out until work is completed or divide the work in two phases by having one of the Houses move out while work is being completed and have the second House move out only when the first House has moved back in. Members of both Houses requested an independent review of the three approaches and the results of this review should be published by the end of the year. Since an election is scheduled in the near future, Dr. Ware believes that no decision will be made until after the election.

Following Dr. Ware's presentation the discussion focussed on the long term benefits of the restoration of the Palace since it is such an iconic building.

Meeting with Mr. Paul Martin, Director of Parliamentary Security

Mr. Martin welcomed Speaker Scheer and Speaker Kinsella and, after explaining his role, indicated that although he is employed by the House of Commons, he works equally and jointly for both Speakers and is also accountable to both of them. He mentioned that this is a position that was put into place in 2012 and that prior to this, both the House of Commons and the House of Lords had their own security bodies, which proved to be problematic since Westminster needed a single voice to communicate with their partners. Dr. Ware noted that all security related decisions go through the House of Commons Commission and the House Committee of the House of Lords before it becomes policy, and that the security budget has to be approved by both Speakers.

Dr. Ware also mentioned that the Police of London has a unit dedicated to the Palace of Westminster.

Meeting with Officials of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (IPSA)

The Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (IPSA) was created in 2009 by the *Parliamentary Standards Act* and is responsible to oversee and regulate MPs' business costs and expenses. Mr. Paul Hayes, Interim Chief Executive, Ms. Belinda Brown, Director of Assurance, Performance and Pay, and Mr. John Sills, Director of Policy welcomed Speaker Scheer to their offices to discuss the mandate of this independent body. An overview of the governance model was held as well as a discussion on the issues and challenges faced by IPSA as it moves forward.

Luncheon with the Rt. Honourable Lindsay Hoyle, MP, Chairman of Ways and Means of the House of Commons, and Sir Robert Rogers KCB, Clerk of the House of Commons

Speaker Scheer met with the Chairman of Ways and Means in the House of Commons, the Rt. Honourable Lindsay Hoyle, and the outgoing Clerk of the House of Commons, Sir Robert Rogers over lunch to discuss procedural and administrative matters. The Speaker took this opportunity to congratulate Sir Robert on his successful tenure as Clerk of the House of Commons and wish him well in his future endeavours.

Meeting with Mr. Bob Twigger, Secretary to the House of Commons Commission

Speaker Scheer met with the Secretary to the House of Commons Commission, Mr. Bob Twigger, to discuss the role of the Commission and its area of responsibility namely the administration and services of the House of Commons, including the maintenance of the Palace of Westminster and security. Speaker Scheer and Mr. Twigger discussed the similarities and differences between the Canadian House of Commons' Board of Internal Economy and the UK House of Commons Commission.

Meeting with Dr. William M. Shija, Secretary General of the CPA

Dr. Shija welcomed both Speakers and thanked them for their interest in the CPA. He then briefed the Canadian delegation on the recent Executive Committee meeting, mentioning that there was good attendance and a lot of work had been done on the terms of reference. He noted that a report of the meeting should be sent by the end of July 2014 to the coordinating committee and then to the Executive Committee in Cameroon.

Speaker Kinsella enquired about the upcoming CPA Chair election, and Dr. Shija informed them that a letter would be issued in June 2014, with a deadline to respond in August 2014. The elections would be held on October 9, 2014 in Cameroon. The participants then discussed the potential candidates.

The Canadian delegation then enquired about the Internal Audit and its time line. They were informed that CPA was planning on doing a tender to find a firm that would be responsible for doing the audit. Dr. Shija mentioned that the tender process should be done by the end of June 2014. He then added that the work of the firm would be carried out during the month of July and would have a report ready by the end of August in order to share it with the Executive Committee members prior to the conference in Cameroon in October.

The participants then asked a few questions regarding the membership fees and what has been done and could be done to reduce their cost since the CPA had savings of £8 000 000. The Canadian delegation then wondered if it would be possible to divide a part of the reserve and return it to the members therefore decreasing the annual membership fee. Dr. Shija informed them that that could unfortunately not be done as most of the money would be spent on programs and assisting countries to attend conferences.

Acknowledgements

The Speaker expressed his appreciation to the staff of the High Commission of Canada in London, in particular Mrs. Gillian Licari, Head of VIP Visits Unit and Political Officer, and Ms. Dominique Lizé-Beaulieu, Visits Coordinator, for their assistance in preparation to and during the visit.

Respectfully submitted,

The Honourable Andrew Scheer, M.P.,
Speaker of the House of Commons

Travel Costs

Visit of the Honourable Andrew Scheer, M.P., Speaker of the House of Commons, United Kingdom

TRAVEL	\$ 19,453.88
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 3,686.51
PER DIEMS	\$ 2,268.48
PROTOCOL	\$ 709.28
MISCELLANEOUS	\$ 0
TOTAL	\$ 26,118.15