

STATE OPENING OF PARLIAMENT:

Parliament opens on Guy Fawkes' Day - but the only threat to the ancient ceremony comes from the rain - and even that stops just in time. Princess Margaret, the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, the Princess Royal and the Duchess of Kent arrive before the Queen and Prince Philip. For Mr. Harold Macmillan, this is the first State Opening of Parliament since he became Prime Minister.

The Royal Procession comes down Whitehall, with a Sovereign's Escort of the Household Cavalry. The Queen rides in the Irish Coach; with her is Prince Philip, wearing the full dress uniform of an Admiral of the Fleet.

Guy Fawkes may have been dead for three and half centuries, but the cellars of the House have, in accordance with tradition, been formally searched before the Sovereign arrives. The Queen and her husband give a special wave to several hundred boys of Westminster School waiting at the entrance. One of the world's youngest monarchs - one of the world's oldest Parliaments - and a ceremony that never loses its appeal.