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## Ottawa *Watch* 281: Queen-watching and Holy Posting

By Lloyd Mackey

*Charles Lewis retired from journalism a few years ago, for health reasons, I believe. He was very good at analysis. At present, two people who have a faith perspective write fairly regularly about faith/political issues. One is John Milloy, a former Ontario Liberal provincial politician. The other is Michael Coren, who writes for the Toronto Star.*

*Milloy is an analyst, rather than a reporter, as was Lewis. And his analysis is measured, balanced and thoughtful if leaning slightly centre left. He is himself, a serious Catholic. He does his work from Martin Luther College – what used to be Waterloo Lutheran Seminary after Waterloo Lutheran University “went public” a few decades ago and became Wilfrid Laurier University.*

*Coren, known early on as an excellent biographer of C. S. Lewis, was well-regarded in and supportive of the evangelical/reformed/charismatic/catholic community in its myriad efforts to shape the body politic. Then he took up theological studies at Trinity College, the liberal Anglican presence at University of Toronto and almost caustically critical of his former faith-based associates. His analysis tends to be combative, although, in fairness, he tries to cloak his work in Jesus-style compassion.*

*Also noteworthy is that the photo accompanying his Star columns always show him clad with his Anglican clergy collar.*

Queen Elizabeth II, among other things, Canada’ monarch, was in Ottawa this past week.

Edna and I had some opportunities to track her a bit. One of those chances came July 1, when we lined up on the sidewalk across the street from the United States Embassy to await the arrival of her landau.

I have attached the photo that I took as she passed our waiting point. In it, you can see the glass face of the embassy and the RCMP mounted honour guard riding in behind the carriage. Prince Phillip, wearing a tan hat, is beside her.

There was a bit of symbolism in choosing that site. It was just a short few feet away, that, a little over 10 years ago, I stood watching then-US president Bill Clinton dedicate the newly constructed American embassy.

The symbolism of the two occasions seemed worth mentioning, given that, a few days later, the Queen visited New York to address the United Nations. Some journalists made the point that, on that day, she was visiting a country whose citizens were not “subjects” to Her Majesty. As the queen of the British Commonwealth, she does have close to two billion such subjects. But the United States, while maintaining cordial relations with

Great Britain and the commonwealth for most of its 234-year history, has not been a part of that “tribe” since its Declaration of Independence in 1776.

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One of the results of a successful *Write! Canada* Christian writers’ conference held mid-June in Guelph, was the opportunity for attenders, including yours truly, to chat with Charles Lewis, the religion writer for the *National Post*.

Lewis heard about the conference and paid it a visit, with a view to finding writers and commenters for *Holy Post*, the newspaper’s faith-based blog.

Since then, Robert White, the editor of *ChristianWeek Ontario*, and Patricia Paddey, producer for Lorna Dueck’s *Listen Up!* have had pieces appear on *Holy Post*. I understand that an item I wrote might make the cut, as well. It deals with Iain Duncan Smith and his Centre for Social Justice, which might be one of the reasons there is now a centre-right coalition in Great Britain, with a built-in faith-based appreciation. In my piece, I make some suggestions that Stephen Harper and Michael Ignatieff might take into account, in preparation for the possibility of another minority government, after the next election.

The *National Post* can be found at [www.nationalpost.com](http://www.nationalpost.com). *Holy Post* can be found on the site under “blogs”.

Rather than either ignoring or hyperbolizing the faith-political interface, as many news gatherers are prone to do, *Holy Post* plays it straight. It is a good place for Christian believers to engage in some constructive discussion with others of a different stripe.

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