

Dear public official,

## Re: The Coronation Oath and Its Constitutional Relevance to Canadian Governance

Are you familiar with the Coronation Oath and its historical and constitutional significance in Canada?

As you know, Members of Parliament and Members of Provincial Legislatures swear an Oath of Allegiance to His Majesty the King, his heirs and successors, according to law. That Oath of Allegiance is not symbolic. It is a declaration of fidelity to the Sovereign in his Constitutional capacity. In turn, the Sovereign is bound by a solemn and historic Constitutional instrument: the Coronation Oath.

The Coronation Oath, in its present statutory form dating to 1688, requires the Sovereign to maintain *“the laws of God, the true profession of the gospel and the Protestant reformed religion established by law.”* Its roots extend back to the first English Coronation in 973 A.D. and remains virtually unchanged to this date. It remains the longest standing document in our Constitution. Both Queen Elizabeth II (1953) and King Charles III (May 6, 2023) swore this Oath publicly and solemnly.

The significance of this Oath within Canada’s Constitutional order is not merely historical, nor ceremonial. Every Constitutional document in our history recognizes that Canada is a Christian Nation<sup>1</sup> founded on the supremacy of our Christian God in our Constitutional law. The Constitution of Canada includes written statutes, unwritten Constitutional principles, and Constitutional conventions. The *Coronation Oath Act* 1688 and related succession rules (Rules of Succession)—which incorporate the religious dimensions of the Crown—have been recognized as part of Canada’s Constitutional framework (see for example, *O’Donohue v. Canada Ont. Court of Appeal* 2003). The Charter of Rights and Freedoms itself opens with the preamble: *“Whereas Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law:”*

The colon after *“rule of law”*, is significant, indicating, in the Canadian Style Manual, that the rights and freedoms that follow are subordinate to both the supremacy of God (understood in the Christian context of the Oath) and the rule of law. The Charter flows from the Coronation Oath, not the reverse.

Consequently, the King (and the Governor General acting on his behalf) is prohibited from granting Royal Assent to legislation that:

- violates or fails to maintain the laws of God as set out in the Holy Bible (King James Version);
- violates or fails to maintain the true profession of the gospel and Protestant Reformed religion;  
or
- limits or fails to preserve the rights and privileges of the bishops and clergy.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.action4canada.com/canada-is-a-christian-nation](http://www.action4canada.com/canada-is-a-christian-nation)

These are not abstract theological concerns. They relate to the hierarchy of law in Canada, the scope, limits, and duties of Parliamentary authority, and the integrity of oaths taken by public officials. Courts have consistently affirmed that Constitutional principles—including the rule of law—bind all branches of government. The King is under the law, not above it. Likewise, those who swear allegiance to the King undertake duties of fidelity to the Constitutional order embodied in that institution. Even in 1996, then English Prime Minister Sir John Major said his ministers “*would not advise Her Majesty to sign into law any provision which contradicted Her Oath*”.<sup>2</sup>

This has direct implications for areas such as immigration policy and the broader governance of Canada.

The recent open letter from Bishop Ceirion H. Dewar to King Charles III<sup>3</sup>—which went viral and garnered widespread support—stands as further testament to the enduring power of this binding Oath. Bishop Dewar reminds His Majesty that the Coronation Oath was not a ceremonial formality but “*a solemn vow before Almighty God to maintain and preserve the Protestant Reformed religion established by law,*” binding the conscience of the Sovereign. The letter highlights an issue that deserves careful Constitutional reflection, as it remains expressly supported in our Constitution.

Canadian citizens are increasingly concerned that few public officials are even aware of this Coronation Oath and its Constitutional implications, and their obligation to uphold it in the exercise of their public duties.

Given the Constitutional significance of the Crown and the oaths of allegiance taken by Canadian officials (including MPs, provincial legislators, the judiciary, public officials, law enforcement, and Armed Forces members), this topic merits thoughtful consideration.

As public officials sworn in law to serve under the King, it is reasonable and responsible to examine the Constitutional foundations of the Oath you have taken (this Oath of Allegiance can be traced back in our Constitution to 1346 A.D.).

To learn more visit: [action4canada.com/david-lindsay-the-coronation-oath-key-to-canadas-freedom/](https://action4canada.com/david-lindsay-the-coronation-oath-key-to-canadas-freedom/)

If you need further information or have any questions, please contact **Action4Canada** at [callto@action4canada.ca](mailto:callto@action4canada.ca)

Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/1996-10-15/debates/3054e292-e5d3-4654-ab96-dd743051033f/Engagements?highlight=coronation>

<sup>3</sup> <https://anglicanmainstream.org/article/open-letter-to-his-majesty-king-charles-iii/>