

BROCK'S BANTER: Early Morning Woke-Up Call

By Brock Weir

?Well, I'm feeling woke.?

It was not what you expect to read on social media from someone who had pulled a rare all-nighter, but it seemed appropriate. If you were one of the ones tackling the all-nighter, you do what you can to stay awake. Sometimes you self-medicate with caffeine. Sometimes that duty falls to heaps of sugary foods, snacks of all shapes and sizes, and, when all else fails, popping chocolate-covered coffee beans ? you know, if you want to pull yourself out of a half-sleep to climb the walls like a Looney Tunes cartoon.

On Saturday, I guess that particular person was taking their ?woke-ness? from wherever they could source it.

And, as we now know, this person with this singular social media proclamation was far from alone. We were all feeling just a little bit ?woke? on Saturday morning.

I'm not, of course, talking about a feeling of rising from slumber ? although that too would have been appropriate after an all-nighter or a short cat nap before rising at 4 a.m. to catch the nuptials of someone you don't even know, but in this case being ?woke? is akin to being ?aware.?

It's a term that became particularly prevalent in the public consciousness in the lead-up to (and aftermath of) the latest U.S. Presidential Election where people claimed of being woke in all directions.

Followers of Bernie Sanders, for instance, claimed they were woke to the inner workings of the American financial system. While disciples of Donald Trump, on the other hand, claimed they were ?woke? to what was ?really? going on in the world which, in most cases, meant they finally found someone who was reflective of their myopic view of the world ? or, at least, espoused principles that didn't come close to challenging their own personal worldviews.

Nevertheless, audiences estimated at the multiple billions around the world were left feeling particularly ?woke? after Saturday's Royal Wedding between Prince Harry and Meghan Markle, now Duke and Duchess of Sussex, no matter what time of the day they happened to get out of bed (or not) for the occasion.

Being ?woke? is not something one typically associates with a Royal Wedding, a ceremonial occasion that is largely by the book, with little changing from ceremony to ceremony, other than, perhaps, the key players, the venue, and, to a lesser extent, the dress. It is usually dictated by tradition, from the music selected, to the words being spoken, to the general choice of attire, but Saturday's fare offered a few interesting and unique touches, from Gospel performances, to audience participation and the sermon delivered by Bishop Michael Curry of the American Episcopal Church.

His message was a simple one, but in the context of the Royal Wedding, it turned out to be anything but.

As the speech ran a significant amount of time, the cameras panned to various people in the congregation ? royal and otherwise ? to gauge their reactions. As varied as the reactions were, I expect they were very much reflective of the viewing audience at home.

But, all were engaged, and it provided plenty to talk about.

?The late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., once said, and I quote, ?We must discover the power of love, the redemptive power of love. And, when we do that, we will make of this old world a new world, for love is the only way,? he relayed. ?There's power in love. Don't underestimate it. Don't even over-sentimentalize it. There's power, power in love.

?If you don't believe me, think about a time when you first fell in love. The whole world seemed to centre around you and your beloved. Oh, there's power in love. Not just in its romantic forms, but any form, any shape of love. There's a certain sense in which when you are loved, and you know it, when someone cares for you, and you know it, when you love and you show it ? it actually feels right. There's something right about it, and there's a reason for it. The reason has to do with the source. We were made by a power of love and our lives were meant ? and are meant ? to be lived in that love. That's why we are here.

?There's power in love to help and heal when nothing else can. There's power in love to lift up and liberate when nothing else will. There's power in love to show us the way to live. But love is not only about a young couple. Now, the power of love is demonstrated by the fact that we're all here. Two young people fell in love, and we all showed up. But it is not just for and about a young couple, who we rejoice with, it's more than that.?

Indeed it was. The Bishop went onto to illustrate the power to change the world, using the words of a spiritual created by slaves in the Antebellum Southern United States to illustrate how the power of love can have a potent power in all areas of life, from neighbourhoods, to governments, to business and commerce. That love can have the power, at the end of the day, to ensure no child would go to bed hungry ever again, that poverty could be eradicated in love, that a new kind of ?human family? can be fostered.

That is, if the power of love is harnessed and pointed in the right direction.

It was a wedding with a message, and a message that many took to heart.

For some observers, it reflected a kind of 'manifesto', real or imagined, set forth by the couple in question.

Only time will tell if that is indeed the case, but it did send billions of people around the globe out into the world feeling a bit buoyed and empowered, and that is invaluable.

No matter where you stand on the Monarchy as a principle, it is hard to argue that having something else lead the conversation on TV, radio, social media, and even around the proverbial water cooler other than the Provincial Election or American politics was a nice and welcomed change of pace.

And, if the message delivered to a global audience of billions, however unlikely the venue, can actually bear fruit, so much the better.