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PM-QUEEN-VISIT; DLBGT; 0686

DAY LEAD - BUDGET

BY PETER LOWREY

QUEBEC (CP) - THE DUTCH FOREIGN MINISTER SAID WEDNESDAY THAT QUEEN BEATRIX OF THE NETHERLANDS WAS MISUNDERSTOOD WHEN SHE PRAISED THE HISTORIC DURHAM REPORT AND THAT HE "REGRETS" THE CONFUSION WHICH PROMPTED QUEBEC POLITICIANS TO DEMAND A CLARIFICATION OF HER REMARKS.

THE 1839 REPORT BY LORD DURHAM SUGGESTED THAT FRENCH-SPEAKING QUEBECERS SHOULD BE ASSIMILATED INTO THE ENGLISH MAJORITY AND HAD LITTLE CULTURE OF THEIR OWN.

QUEEN BEATRIX PRAISED THE DURHAM REPORT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE EVOLUTION OF PARLIAMENTARY GOVERNMENT IN CANADA; WHICH THE REPORT RECOMMENDED BE ESTABLISHED; WHEN SHE ADDRESSED M.P.s, SENATORS AND INVITED GUESTS IN OTTAWA ON TUESDAY; SAID DUTCH FOREIGN MINISTER HANS VAN DEN BROEK.

BUT PARTI QUEBECOIS MEMBERS OF THE QUEBEC LEGISLATURE BOYCOTTED THE QUEEN'S VISIT BECAUSE OF THE REMARK AND ASKED FOR A "CLARIFICATION" FROM THE DUTCH GOVERNMENT.

VAN DEN BROEK; WHO IS ACCOMPANYING THE ROYAL TOUR; SAID IN AN INTERVIEW WEDNESDAY NIGHT THAT "THE WHOLE SPIRIT IN WHICH THE SPEECH HAS BEEN MADE WAS TO COMPARE THE LIKE-MINDEDNESS OF OUR TWO SYSTEMS ON HUMAN LIBERTIES AND FREEDOMS."

"JUST BECAUSE YOU MENTION THE DURHAM REPORT DOESN'T MEAN YOU ASSOCIATE YOURSELF WITH ALL THE CONTENTS OF IT;" HE SAID.

"I CAN ONLY REGRET THAT A MISUNDERSTANDING HAS COME ABOUT;" HE CONCLUDED. HE ADDED HE WAS SURPRISED BY THE REACTION TO THE COMMENTS.

QUEEN BEATRIX; WHO IS ON A NINE-DAY STATE VISIT TO CANADA WITH HER HUSBAND; PRINCE CLAUS; ARRIVED IN QUEBEC CITY FROM HALIFAX.

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