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TORONTO ECONOMIC SUMMIT: FRENCH PRESS REACTIONS

SUMMARY

1. EXTENSIVE PRESS COVERAGE OF THE TORONTO ECONOMIC SUMMIT, WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS PLACED ON AGRICULTURAL SUBSIDIES, DEBT AND EAST WEST RELATIONS. REAGAN'S DEPARTURE SEEN AS MARKING THE END OF AN ERA.

DETAIL

ECONOMIC SUBJECTS

2. THERE HAS BEEN EXTENSIVE COVERAGE IN THE FRENCH PRESS IN THE LEAD UP TO, DURING AND AFTER THE TORONTO ECONOMIC SUMMIT. REPORTING HAS BEEN LARGELY FACTUAL, WITH THE EMPHASIS ON AGRICULTURE AND DEBT. WITH LITTLE DISSENSION TO FOCUS ON AT THE SUMMIT, THE PRESS CONCENTRATED ON THE STRAINS ON AGRICULTURE, BOTH WITHIN THE COMMUNITY AND BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY AND NORTH AMERICA. BUT THERE IS SATISFACTION THAT THE COMMUNITY POSITION HELD AND THE OVERALL RESULT IS SEEN, FOR EXAMPLE BY LE MONDE, AS A COMPROMISE BETWEEN THE TWO CAMPS. THE COMMUNIQUE LANGUAGE ON DEBT FOR THE POOREST IS SEEN AS A STEP FORWARD AND - INEVITABLY - A REFLECTION OF MITTERRAND'S IDEAS.

3. AMONG THE MORE THOUGHTFUL PAPERS, TRIBUNE DE L'EXPANSION HIGHLIGHTS THE DEBATE ON AGRICULTURAL SUBSIDIES AND THIRD WORLD DEBT AS THE KEY ISSUES OF THE SUMMIT. ON AGRICULTURE, THE EC'S POSITION IS SEEN AS REINFORCED IN THE COMMUNIQUE TEXT BY RECOGNITION OF THE DIVERSITY OF NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND THE NEED FOR A GLOBAL APPROACH IN THE MONTREAL MTD: THE LATTER, SAYS TRIBUNE, WILL PREVENT AGRICULTURE BEING SINGLED OUT FOR SPECIAL, POTENTIALLY DAMAGING, ATTENTION. LES ECHOS UNDERLINES THE DIFFICULTY OF THE NEGOTIATIONS WHICH PRECEDED AGREEMENT ON THE SUMMIT TEXT ON AGRICULTURE, AND THE ROLE PLAYED BY DELORS IN PRESENTING THE EC'S CASE AGAINST THE US OPTION ZERO. LE FIGARO POINTS TO DIFFERENCES BETWEEN EC MEMBERS ON HOW 'ANTI-SUBSIDY' THE COMMUNIQUE LANGUAGE ON AGRICULTURE SHOULD BE, THE UK HOLDING OUT FOR SOMETHING MUCH NEARER THE US POSITION THAN THE FRENCH, AT THE OTHER EXTREME, COULD CONTEMPLATE.

4. THE DEBT OF THE POOREST WAS EXTENSIVELY TREATED IN THE RUN UP TO

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AND DURING THE SUMMIT, WITH ANALYSES OF THE POSITIONS OF THE MAIN PARTICIPANTS. THE COMUNIQUE LANGUAGE ON DEBT FOR THE POOREST IS WIDELY NOTED AND IS REGARDED AS A WELCOME, IF EXPECTED, SUCCESS FOR THE SUMMIT. INEVITABLY, IT IS SEEN AS OWING MUCH TO MITTERRAND'S PRE-SUMMIT INITIATIVE, AND HIS DESCRIPTION OF IT AS THE SUMMIT'S MOST INTERESTING ADVANCE, AND BEREGOVY'S AS 'A MESSAGE OF HOPE', ARE WIDELY QUOTED.

#### POLITICAL SUBJECTS

5. HERE TOO PRESS COVERAGE IS, FOR THE MOST, FACTUAL. LONG ARTICULES IN THE LEADING PAPERS GIVE A FULL ACCOUNT OF THE POLITICAL DECLARATIONS. EDITORIAL COMMENT CONCENTRATES ON EAST/WEST RELATIONS. A LE MONDE ARTICLE ENTITLED 'REDUCE MISTRUST' REFERS TO THE SUMMIT 'DRAWING UP AN ASSESSMENT OF THE MOST IMPORTANT IMPROVEMENT IN EAST/WEST RELATIONS EVER SEEN IN SUCH A SHORT PERIOD'. HOWEVER, LE MONDE ARGUES THAT GORBACHEV GOT A MIXED BAG OF BOUQUETS AND BRICK-BATS FROM THE SEVEN OVER DISARMAMENT, AFGHANISTAN AND EASTERN EUROPE. THE EDITORIAL ENDS WITH A REFERENCE TO CONVENTIONAL DISARMAMENT NEGOTIATIONS: IT FEARS THAT THE WEST, PARTICULARLY THE EUROPEAN MEMBERS OF THE ALLIANCE, WILL FAIL TO ADOPT A UNITED FRONT ON A SUBJECT WHICH IS 'MORE VITAL FOR THEIR SECURITY THAN EURO-MISSILES'.

6. SEVERAL PAPERS REFER TO GORBACHEV AS THE MISSING STAR OF THE SUMMIT. LIBERATION SAYS THAT HE WAS SALUTED BY THE WESTERN LEADERS AS 'REAL REFORMER WITH WHOM LINKS SHOULD BE REINFORCED'. AN EDITORIAL IN FIGARO ECHOES THIS, POINTING OUT THAT THE SEVEN'S REFERENCE TO 'GREATER FREEDOM AND OPENNES' IN THE SOVIET UNION IS A PAT ON THE BACK FOR GORBACHEV.

7. OTHER POLITICAL SUBJECTS RECEIVE SCANT TREATMENT. LIBERATION CLAIMS THAT THE SEVEN WERE DIVIDED ON SOUTH AFRICA (PARTICULARLY ON THE SHARPEVILLE SIX) AND ON CONDEMNING ISRAEL FOR ITS POLICY IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. IT ALSO CLAIMS THAT THERE WAS DISAGREEMENT ABOUT WHETHER TO MENTION THE KEY ROLE THAT SIHANOUK COULD PLAY IN A CAMBODIAN SETTLEMENT. THE SEVEN'S DECLARATION ON TERRORISM RECEIVES ALMOST NO COVERAGE.

8. MOST PAPERS NOTE THAT THIS WAS REAGAN'S LAST SUMMIT. LE MONDE IN A COMMENT COLUMN ENTITLED 'END OF AN ERA' NOTES THAT AMERICAN DOMINANCE OF THE SUMMITS MAY FADE INTO HIS DEPARTURE, AND THAT TORONTO CONFIRMED THE COMMUNITY AND JAPAN AS TWO NEW POLES OF INFLUENCE.