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HOUSTON ECONOMIC SUMMIT: CANADIAN MEDIA REACTIONS *mb*

SUMMARY

1. CANADIAN PRESS COVERAGE OF THE HOUSTON SUMMIT CONCENTRATED ON THE DIFFERENCES OVER THE DIFFICULT ISSUES. MIXED REACTIONS TO THE COMPROMISES WHICH EMERGED. MR MULRONEY CREDITED WITH A CONSTRUCTIVE BUT NOT OUTSTANDING ROLE.

DETAIL

2. CANADIAN PRESS AND TELEVISION REPORTING OF THE SUMMIT FOCUSED ON THE DIFFERENT APPROACHES OF THE SUMMIT LEADERS TO AGRICULTURAL REFORM IN THE URUGUAY ROUND, AID TO THE SOVIET UNION AND TO CHINA, AND THE ENVIRONMENT. MOST NEWSPAPERS PORTRAYED THE OUTCOME ON THESE ISSUES AS SOMEWHAT FRAGILE COMPROMISES, ALTHOUGH THE FINANCIAL POST DESCRIBED THE SUMMIT AS GIVING A QUOTE STRONG POLITICAL KICKSTART TO THE STALLED WORLD TRADE TALKS ON AGRICULTURE UNQUOTE. THE EC POSITION ON AGRICULTURE AND US RETICENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT CAME IN FOR PARTICULAR CRITICISM. MRS THATCHER'S ROLE IN PROMOTING PROGRESS ON BOTH ISSUES RECEIVED POSITIVE RECOGNITION, AND MR MULRONEY WAS ALSO GIVEN SOME CREDIT FOR HIS ROLE. THE GLOBE AND MAIL POINTED OUT THAT MR MULRONEY'S CALL FOR THE REMOVAL OF FARM SUBSIDIES WOULD NOT MAKE HIM POPULAR WITH THE SUPPLY MANAGED CANADIAN DAIRY AND POULTRY SECTORS. OVERALL, THE OUTCOME ON THE ENVIRONMENT WAS SEEN AS DISAPPOINTING, ALTHOUGH THE PRESS WELCOMED THE US/CANADA AGREEMENT TO BEGIN EARLY NEGOTIATIONS ON A BILATERAL TREATY TO CONTROL ACID RAIN.

3. MR MULRONEY WAS ALSO CREDITED WITH THE HELPING TO ACHIEVE A COMPROMISE ON AID TO THE SOVIET UNION ALTHOUGH CBC TELEVISION NOTED THAT HE HAD MANAGED TO ALIGN HIMSELF ON BOTH SIDES OF THE ARGUMENT. MANY NEWSPAPERS GAVE PROMINENCE TO COMMENTS BY PRESIDENT BUSH PRAISING MR MULRONEY FOR HIS ROLE AT THE SUMMIT.

4. SEVERAL NEWSPAPERS NOTED THAT MR MULRONEY HAD USED THE SUMMIT TO EXPLAIN CANADA'S RECENT CONSTITUTIONAL PROBLEMS AND TO REASSURE CANADA'S G7 PARTNERS. THE OTTAWA SUN QUOTED MR MULRONEY AS SAYING THAT THE OTHER LEADERS WERE 'PERPLEXED THAT A MAGNIFICENT NATION LIKE CANADA WOULD CONSIDER ANYTHING OTHER THAN STRENGTHENING ITS

UNITY''.

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