



PRESS RELEASE

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An innocuous Throne Speech

“A PREDICTABLE GENERAL STATEMENT WITH NO SURPRISES THAT SIDESTEPS A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT ISSUES”

- Gilles Duceppe

Ottawa, Tuesday, April 4, 2006 – “Overall, we find the economy of the Throne Speech acceptable. Prime Minister Stephen Harper has understood that he leads a minority government. He knows that this speech is a question of confidence and he did not want to include details that would be divisive. It is a speech that allows the opposition parties to support or oppose issue by issue, case by case. We will therefore be extremely vigilant. The Bloc Québécois will give them a chance, but we intend to examine the proposals very carefully from the same perspective we have always adopted, that is, we will support anything that serves the interests of Quebec,” Bloc Québécois leader **Gilles Duceppe** said today in reaction to the Throne Speech.

“What Prime Minister Harper gave us today was a Throne Speech clearly designed to avoid controversy. It is an innocuous speech without surprises that contains no further details or timeframes on the Conservative government’s intentions to implement its priorities,” he added.

The Leader of the Bloc Québécois immediately noted that the new Conservative government had said very little about the fiscal imbalance and Quebec’s role internationally. There is almost nothing new about the Harper government’s intentions. “This speech clearly leaves us wanting more,” said **Mr. Duceppe**.

The Bloc Leader also noted that the government had appropriated two of his party’s proposals, on the ratification of international treaties by the House of Commons and the question of the entry tax on Chinese immigrants. **Mr. Duceppe** noted however that a great many questions remain unanswered following the first Throne Speech from Stephen Harper’s government.

“We were disappointed to note that a number of priorities of intimate concern to Quebecers were barely mentioned or completely ignored in the new Conservative government’s Throne Speech,” responded **Mr. Duceppe**. “On issues such as culture, public housing, respecting the Kyoto Protocol and essential improvements to the employment insurance program, there is not a single word. The MPs from the Bloc will use every means available to ensure that this Parliament deals with these issues,” **Mr. Duceppe** concluded.

– 30 –

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