

ROYAL VISIT

CROWN CONCERNED ABOUT LOSING CANADA

More on the agenda than official functions

by STEPHEN THORNE
HALIFAX (CP) — There's more on the agenda for the Queen's 10-day visit to Canada than dinners, walkabouts and the Commonwealth Games.

While her message may be veiled, some experts say the ceremonial head of state will be trumpeting Canadian unity while Quebec voters contemplate their future in Confederation.

The Queen and her husband, Prince Philip, arrive today at a military base outside Dartmouth, N.S. On Sunday, they head straight for the old fortress at Louisbourg, N.S., among the last vestiges of New France.

"The Crown is very concerned at the possibility of losing Australia and Canada," says Harold Brooks-Baker, publishing director of London-based Burke's Peerage, a top authority on matters royal. "The situation in Canada is certainly very uneasy as far as Quebec is concerned."

Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating has pledged to dump the Queen as head of state by decade's end. Canada's bonds have been eroded by constitutional debate and a general ambivalence that could

Queen won't meddle in unity

by STEPHEN WARD

LONDON (CP) — The Queen goes to Canada with no intention of "meddling" in Canada's unity question or the Quebec election, a spokesman for the monarch said today.

The spokesman said the Queen's purpose is to open the Commonwealth Games in Victoria next Thursday and visit Nova Scotia and the Northwest Territories.

"The Queen will not be meddling in the country's internal politics," he said. "It would be most imprudent to be seen trying to influence the election in Quebec."

In England, the Queen's departure for Canada was overshadowed by the news that she'll tour South Africa next year — the first visit by a British monarch to the former colony since 1947.

At the same time, London's Mirror tabloid reported that Canada may axe Prince Charles from its oath of allegiance, after he was described as a

"world-class twit" by Canadians MPs.

In a front-page story, the Mirror said the "details of the extraordinary insult" comes from a report by the Commons standing committee on citizenship.

The Mirror claims that Liberal MP John Bryden said in his submission to the committee that many Canadians have reservations about taking an oath "to someone who has become a world-class twit."

Charles was also attacked by British animal lovers who claimed he had 15 diseased badgers killed on his Highgrove estate in southeast England.

The Queen's Canadian tour comes at a sensitive time, as Quebecers head towards a Sept. 12 election, with separatism a major issue. Some experts say she will be trumpeting Canadian unity in four main speeches.

Aides to Jean Chretien say the prime minister will steer clear of political comment during his time with the Queen.

of scandal is the only royalty they know.

In the first seven months of 1994, 2,561 Britons immigrated, eighth behind Hong Kong (with 18,186) and the Philippines, India, China, Vietnam, Thailand and Sri Lanka.

In Louisbourg, where the once-great cod fishery is also history, the Queen's visit is a shot in the arm.

Here, LeMoines and Marchands live side-by-side with MacLeods and MacDonalds. It's economics and development that divide them, and not along ethnic lines. These days they're rallying under Union Jacks.

Said Mayor Victor Hanham: "It seems to be pulling people together. There's a very positive air in the community right now."

A royal retrospective

by The Canadian Press

Some of the Queen's comments on Canadian unity:

■ "I am not just a fair-weather friend, and I am glad to be here at this sensitive time. I hope my presence may call to mind the many years of shared experience, and raise new hopes for the future." — 1990, after the Meech Lake constitutional accord collapsed.

■ "The unity of the Canadian people was the paramount issue in 1867, as it is today. There is no force, except the force of will, to keep Canadians together." — 1990.

■ A constitutional monarchy such as Canada's "is a system in which those who represent the community come together and remain together, rather than dwelling on differences which might further divide them." — 1990.

■ "Canada is a country that has been blessed beyond most countries in the world. It is a country worth working for." — 1990.

■ "It is agreeable to me to think that there exists in our Commonwealth a country where I can express myself officially in French." — 1964, to Quebec legislature.

■ "I want the Crown to be seen as a symbol of national sovereignty belonging to all. It is not only a link between Commonwealth nations, but between Canadian citizens of every national origin and ancestry." — 1973.

relegate anything she says or does to the realm of the irrelevant — particularly among Quebecers.

The royals have never recovered from Charles DeGaulle's 1967 "Vive le Quebec libre" speech, Brooks-Baker said in a phone inter-

view.

"The British family has not made it clear enough to many French Canadians that there is a reason for the monarchy," he said. "I gather that's going to be more forcefully presented in the near future."

The visit was years in the making — Elizabeth II is here primarily to open the Commonwealth Games in Victoria next Thursday, but will also visit Prince George, Nova Scotia and the Northwest Territories.

Aides to Jean Chretien say the prime minister will steer clear of political comment during his time with the Queen and there will be no effort to involve her in the unity debate.

The timing of the \$2-million visit, says the head of the Monarchist League of Canada, is purely fortuitous.

John Aimers says the trip to Louisbourg — a grand reconstruction of the fortified town commissioned by French King Louis XIV in 1713 — is "a convenient way of stressing that Canada is a bilingual country."

Probably, he said from Toronto, the once-glorious walled town is as good a place as any to do so outside Quebec itself.

"If the Crown has stood for any-

thing it has stood for unity and tolerance and goodwill and amity, which are human values and have nothing whatever to do with the Quebec election or with Meech Lake or with any other contentious political proposal."

Aimers notes anything the Queen says about Canadians' unity troubles will be subjected to "rather papal-like scrutiny" by media. But the head of the 12,000-member group acknowledges the country is gripped by what he calls a "paralytic indifference" to anything royal that could mute her words and actions.

"Were the monarchy better understood in Canada... it follows that Her Majesty's words... would have a larger impact."

To many, the royal family has been reduced to a kind of curious anachronism. And to an increasing number of Canadians, the royalty

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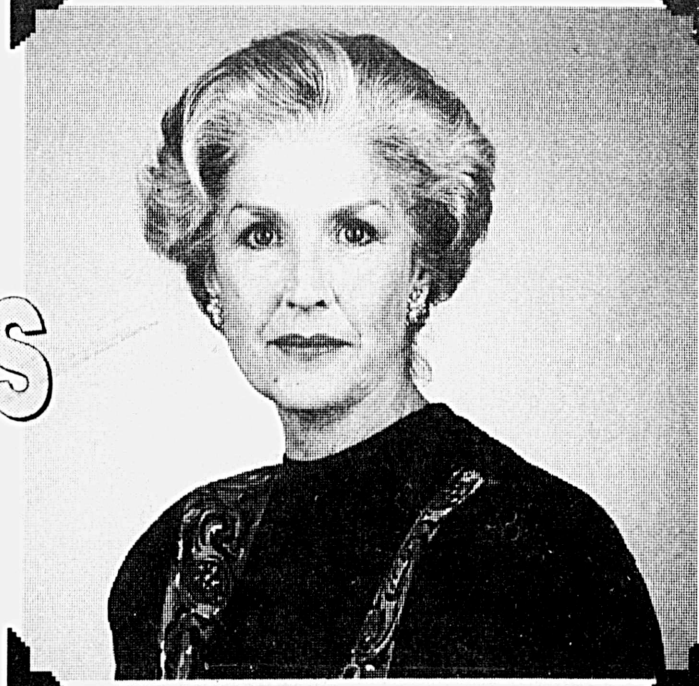
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UNBC COUNTDOWN

4 WEEKS



UNBC Chancellor Iona Campagnolo (pictured above) is starting a tour of communities in the Northwest today, en route to Prince George where she'll play a prominent role in the opening ceremonies coming up this Wednesday. The formal part of the ceremony with Her Majesty will begin at approximately 2:50pm and continue until about 4:15pm. Following a founders' recognition, a public festival will begin on campus at about 5:30, with entertainment from 20 northern BC performers, multi-cultural food booths, and campus tours.

Several thousand people are expected to attend the ceremony, and while the general public is welcome, PGTV will broadcast the formal ceremony live. Those not wishing to brave the crowds can watch the ceremony on TV and then come up to the campus for the public festival. The broadcast will include The Queen's arrival and speeches from UNBC President Geoffrey Weller, Chancellor Campagnolo, Premier Harcourt, and Her Majesty. After her address, The Queen will unveil a plaque commemorating the opening of the Prince George campus.

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