

STATEMENT



STATEMENT
TO THE LEGISLATURE
BY
THE HONOURABLE MARGARET BIRCH
PROVINCIAL SECRETARY FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
AND
CHAIRMAN, CABINET COMMITTEE ON THE BICENTENNIAL

PLEASE NOTE

Statement released for information.
Not presented to Legislature due
to early adjournment.

THURSDAY, JUNE 23, 1983



MR. SPEAKER,

I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO INFORM MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE AND ONTARIANS GENERALLY OF THE EXCITING PROGRESS THAT HAS BEEN MADE IN THE PLANNING OF ONTARIO'S BICENTENNIAL YEAR - 1984. IN SO DOING, MR. SPEAKER, I WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS MY THANKS TO MY COLLEAGUE, THE MINISTER OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS AND THE MEMBER FOR BRANT-OXFORD-NORFOLK, WHO BOTH SPOKE SO ELOQUENTLY IN THIS LEGISLATURE ABOUT THE ROOTS OF OUR PROVINCE, AND THE GREAT SENSE OF PRIDE WHICH THEY HAVE IN OUR PROVINCE WHICH THEY BELIEVE ALL ONTARIANS SHARE. THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST MAJOR SETTLEMENTS HERE PROVIDES ALL OF US WITH A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO CELEBRATE TOGETHER THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF ALL PEOPLE WHO HAVE SETTLED HERE.

THE HISTORIAN ARTHUR LOWER HAS SUGGESTED WHAT WE ARE REALLY COMMEMORATING IS THE FOUNDING OF ONTARIO -- WHAT ARE RECOGNIZABLY THE SOCIAL BEGINNINGS OF OUR SOCIETY.

WHILE 1984 IS PARTICULARLY SIGNIFICANT IN TERMS OF THE UNITED EMPIRE LOYALISTS, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT MEMBERS BE ASSURED THAT THE APPROACH WHICH WE INTEND TO FOLLOW AS A GOVERNMENT WILL EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION OF OUR NATIVE PEOPLE, OF FRANCO-ONTARIANS, SOME OF WHOM WERE HERE BEFORE THE LOYALISTS, AND OF THE MANY NATIONALITIES, RACES AND CREEDS THAT ARE NOW PART OF ONTARIO'S POPULATION.

IN A SENSE, WE ARE ALL OF IMMIGRANT STOCK OF ONE FORM OR ANOTHER, EXCEPT FOR OUR NATIVE PEOPLE. IF THERE IS ONE UNIFYING THEME THAT UNDERLINES OUR OVERALL BICENTENNIAL FRAMEWORK -- "CELEBRATING TOGETHER" -- FÊTONS ÇA ENSEMBLE -- IT IS THE HARD WORK AND COMMUNITY COMMITMENT THAT INDIVIDUAL CITIZENS HAVE MADE TO MAKE THIS A BETTER PROVINCE.

FOR THAT REASON I AM PLEASED THAT IN ABOUT 60 COMMUNITIES, BICENTENNIAL COMMITTEES ARE ALREADY AT WORK AND MANY MORE ARE NOW BEING FORMED. SERVED BY VOLUNTEERS, THEY ARE PLANNING LOCAL PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES WITH COMMUNITY GROUPS, CITIZENS, SCHOOLS, HOSPITALS AND SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS IN SUPPORT OF THE BICENTENNIAL.

MR. SPEAKER, I AM PLEASED TO REPORT THAT FULL-TIME BICENTENNIAL COORDINATORS ARE IN PLACE, OR ABOUT TO BE PLACED IN THE EIGHT AREAS INTO WHICH THE PROVINCE HAS BEEN DIVIDED. THESE COORDINATORS HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED FROM THEIR REGULAR DUTIES FROM SEVEN MINISTRIES. I MENTION THIS BECAUSE IT ILLUSTRATES THE COOPERATION AND COORDINATION THAT THIS WHOLE BICENTENNIAL EXERCISE IS REALIZING WITHIN GOVERNMENT. THE COORDINATORS WILL BE RESIDENT IN SUDBURY, THUNDER BAY, OTTAWA, PETERBOROUGH, BARRIE, HAMILTON, LONDON AND METRO TORONTO. THE PROGRAM IS BEING OPERATED FROM THE MINISTRY OF CITIZENSHIP AND CULTURE AS PART OF ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE 1984 CELEBRATIONS.

THE FIRST PROJECT OF THE CABINET COMMITTEE ON THE BICENTENNIAL WAS THE COMMISSIONING OF A HISTORY OF ONTARIO FROM PROFESSOR ROBERT CHOQUETTE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA. THIS PUBLICATION, TO BE GIVEN TO EVERY STUDENT IN ONTARIO, WILL BE USED AS A CURRICULUM RESOURCE THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOLS OF THIS PROVINCE IN 1983/84. MY COLLEAGUE, THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, HAS ALREADY SENT A MEMORANDUM TO THE SCHOOL BOARDS OF OUR PROVINCE URGING SPECIAL ACTIVITIES AND A FOCUS ON ONTARIO'S HISTORY DURING BICENTENNIAL YEAR. WE CONSIDER THIS PROJECT AMONG THE MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF THE BICENTENNIAL YEAR.

I AM PLEASED AS WELL THAT A BICENTENNIAL ADVISORY COMMISSION HAS BEEN APPOINTED TO PROVIDE ONGOING COUNSEL TO THE CABINET COMMITTEE AND TO INTERACT WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND MANY COMMUNITIES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PLANS AND ACTIVITIES. IN THIS RESPECT WE ARE MOST FORTUNATE AS A PROVINCE TO HAVE THE SERVICES OF A HARD-WORKING COMMISSION OF DISTINGUISHED CITIZENS HEADED BY ARTHUR GELBER, A MAN WHO HAS GIVEN VOLUNTEER SERVICE TO HIS COUNTRY FOR FOUR DECADES, AND SONJA BATA, AN OUTSTANDING BUSINESS LEADER AND PHILANTHROPIST AS VICE-CHAIRMAN. BOTH MR. GELBER AND MRS. BATA ARE IN THE GALLERY TODAY ALONG WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION.

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WITHIN GOVERNMENT, MOST MINISTRIES WILL BE UNDERTAKING PROJECTS WHICH WILL BE ANNOUNCED OVER A PERIOD OF TIME AS WE APPROACH 1984. THESE PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS WILL GREATLY ENHANCE THE CELEBRATIONS.

MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE ALREADY KNOW THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF ONTARIO HAS PROPOSED A SIX-DAY ROYAL VISIT IN THE SUMMER OF 1984 TO VARIOUS LOCATIONS IN THE PROVINCE WHERE THE ROYAL VISITORS WOULD JOIN ONTARIANS IN THEIR COMMUNITY FESTIVITIES. HAPPILY, AND COINCIDENTLY, WE WILL ALSO HAVE A VISIT BY HIS HOLINESS POPE JOHN PAUL II TO ONTARIO IN SEPTEMBER 1984.

I HAVE TODAY ASKED THAT INFORMATION KITS BE DISTRIBUTED TO MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE WHICH INCLUDE DOCUMENTS AND SOURCES WHICH WILL BE OF ASSISTANCE TO THE HONOURABLE MEMBERS. THE KITS WILL ALSO BE DISTRIBUTED THROUGH OUR AREA OFFICES TO COMMUNITY GROUPS TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO BEGIN THEIR OWN PLANNING AND JOIN WITH THE MANY VOLUNTEER GROUPS WHO HAVE ALREADY BEGUN TO DO SO.

MR. SPEAKER, I THINK IT VERY IMPORTANT THAT MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE KNOW THAT WE ARE NOT PLANNING A GOVERNMENT-CENTERED CELEBRATION AT GREAT EXPENSE. RATHER, WE ARE ENCOURAGING COMMUNITY-BASED ACTIVITIES TO BE SUPPORTED BY GOVERNMENT WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF COMMUNITY COMMITMENT TO THE BICENTENNIAL.

TO ASSIST MUNICIPALITIES IN THIS MAJOR ROLE, THE MINISTER OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS AND HOUSING JOINS ME TODAY IN ANNOUNCING A PROGRAM OF MODEST GRANTS IN SUPPORT OF BICENTENNIAL PROJECTS AND EVENTS. THE COMMUNITY BICENTENNIAL GRANTS WHICH WILL BE CALCULATED ON A PER CAPITA BASIS, WILL RANGE FROM \$500 TO \$10,000. SIMILAR SUPPORTIVE GRANTS PROGRAMS WILL BE AVAILABLE TO INDIAN BANDS THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF CITIZENSHIP AND CULTURE AND TO LOCAL SERVICE BOARDS THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF NORTHERN AFFAIRS. THIS GRANTS PROGRAM, OPERATED BY THREE MINISTRIES, AGAIN DEMONSTRATES THE COOPERATIVE SPIRIT OF THE BICENTENNIAL PROJECT.

I AM ALSO PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE TODAY ON BEHALF OF MY COLLEAGUE, THE MINISTER OF CITIZENSHIP AND CULTURE, THAT HIS MINISTRY HAS ESTABLISHED A SPECIAL CATEGORY WITHIN THE EXISTING WINTARIO PROGRAM TO BE KNOWN AS CELEBRATION ONTARIO.

THE AVAILABLE WINTARIO PROGRAM GRANTS IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE NEW BICENTENNIAL CATEGORY WILL CONTINUE TO ENHANCE THE IMPORTANT INITIATIVES OF INCREASING SELF-SUFFICIENCY FOR CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS WHILE ENCOURAGING EVENTS OF A SPECIAL BICENTENNIAL NATURE. THESE EVENTS MUST HAVE A SIGNIFICANT, ARTISTIC, HERITAGE, CULTURAL, OR MULTICULTURAL-SHARING THEME OR PURPOSE AND DEMONSTRATE A COORDINATED COMMUNITY APPROACH.

FUNDING WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR UP TO 50 PER CENT OF ELIGIBLE COSTS TO A MAXIMUM OF \$3,000. IN ALL CASES, THESE WILL BE MATCHING GRANTS COMPLEMENTING MUNICIPAL AND/OR PRIVATE FUNDRAISING.

MR. SPEAKER, THIS PROVINCE HAS BEEN BUILT BY THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE COME HERE. THE QUALITY OF OUR LIVES IS DUE TO EVERY SINGLE CONTRIBUTION MADE BY INDIVIDUALS HOWEVER RECENT THEIR ARRIVAL. WE HAVE A PROUD HISTORY OF TOLERANCE, COOPERATION AND UNDERSTANDING, ALL OF WHICH ARE HALLMARKS OF THE SOCIETY WHICH WE HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO CELEBRATE.

IN 1984, THE PROVINCE WILL BE HONOURING CITIZENS ACROSS ONTARIO WHO THROUGH GOOD WORKS, VOLUNTEERISM, COMMUNITY DEVOTION AND SELFLESSNESS HAVE MADE THIS PROVINCE A BETTER PLACE IN WHICH TO LIVE. I WILL SOON ANNOUNCE DETAILS OF A SPECIAL BICENTENNIAL AWARDS PROGRAM TO ACKNOWLEDGE THIS CONTRIBUTION. IN THIS RESPECT I SINCERELY HOPE THAT MEMBERS OF THIS LEGISLATURE WILL NOT HESITATE TO RESPOND TO AN INVITATION FOR NOMINATIONS. WE WILL BE LOOKING FOR THE NAMES OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE MADE THEIR COMMUNITY THEIR FIRST RESPONSIBILITY, PEOPLE WHO HAVE SERVED TO MAKE ONTARIO A BETTER PLACE. WE WILL BE HONOURING THEM AS A PROVINCE, HONOURING ONTARIANS ON BEHALF OF EACH OTHER AS WE MOVE TO A GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF OUR ROOTS AND OUR HISTORY, AND A GREATER FOCUS ON THE COMMON OPPORTUNITY WE SHARE FOR OUR FUTURE.

MR. SPEAKER, NEXT YEAR PROMISES TO HAVE A GOOD MIXTURE OF POMP AND CEREMONY, AND OF SIMPLE PLEASURES SUCH AS COMPANY PICNICS, OF FAMILY REUNIONS, OF MILITARY, CHURCH AND SCHOOL EVENTS. WE HOPE THAT THE BICENTENNIAL WILL NOT ONLY DRAW MANY VISITORS TO ONTARIO BUT WILL ENCOURAGE ONTARIANS THEMSELVES TO TRAVEL WITHIN OUR BOUNDARIES SAVOURING THE SHOWS AND SPECTACLES THAT WILL TAKE PLACE.

MY COLLEAGUE, THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND RECREATION, FREQUENTLY REMINDS US THAT TOURISM IS A VITAL AND GROWING INDUSTRY IN ONTARIO. LAST YEAR, THIS PROVINCE WAS HOST TO 23-MILLION VISITORS. THE MINISTER LIKES TO POINT OUT IT'S AS THOUGH THE ENTIRE POPULATION OF CANADA DROPPED IN FOR A VISIT.

THE BICENTENNIAL PROVIDES US WITH A TREMENDOUS OPPORTUNITY FOR TOURISM PROMOTIONS THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA AND WE WILL INTEGRATE OUR ACTIVITY WITH THE "YOURS TO DISCOVER" PROMOTION WHICH HAS BEEN SO SUCCESSFUL.

NEXT YEAR WILL BE A YEAR OF GREAT EXCITEMENT. TORONTO WILL CELEBRATE ITS 150TH BIRTHDAY, INCLUDING A MAGNIFICENT MONTH-LONG FESTIVAL OF MUSIC AND ARTS; SCIENCE NORTH WILL OPEN IN SUDBURY; AND THERE WILL BE A COLOURFUL SPECTACLE AS WORLD-FAMOUS TALL SHIPS SAIL UP THE ST. LAWRENCE TO CELEBRATE THE 450TH ANNIVERSARY OF JACQUES CARTIER'S ARRIVAL IN THE NEW WORLD. THE SIX NATIONS INDIANS NEAR BRANTFORD AND CORNWALL MARK THEIR 200TH BIRTHDAYS.

IN PRESCOTT SOME 1,500 MEMBERS OF THE BRIGADE OF THE AMERICAN
REVOLUTION WILL CARRY OUT HISTORICAL MILITARY DRILLS
AND MANEUVERS DURING THEIR LOYALIST DAYS FESTIVAL. AT
THUNDER BAY, THE GREAT RENDEZ-VOUS WILL COMMEMORATE
THE FOUNDING OF THE GREAT CANADIAN FUR TRADING ENTERPRISE,
THE NORTHWEST COMPANY, IN 1784.

BICENTENNIAL SHOULD BE A CELEBRATION THAT UNITES ALL
OF US IN THIS HOUSE, ALL ONTARIANS, ALL OF THE PEOPLE WHO
HAVE HELPED MAKE THIS PROVINCE WHAT IT IS TODAY.

THE MIRACLE THAT IS OUR SOCIETY HAS NOT BEEN BROUGHT
ABOUT BY ANY GOVERNMENT OR ANY POLITICAL PARTY OR ANY
POLITICAN OR ANY GROUP OF POLITICAL PARTIES OR POLITICIANS
-- IT HAS BEEN BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE HARD WORK, COMMITMENT
AND DECENCY OF THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE BUILT THIS PROVINCE,
WHO HAVE CHOSEN THIS PROVINCE FOR THEIR HOME, WHO HAVE
COME HERE IN SEARCH OF FREEDOM AND OPPORTUNITY, WHETHER
THEY DID SO AS A RESULT OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION IN
1784, OR WHETHER THEY CAME HERE BEFORE OR SINCE -- THAT
IS THE CONTRIBUTION WE ARE HONOURING.

THANK YOU MR. SPEAKER.