

REMARKS BY THE HONOURABLE JOHN ROBARTS
PRIME MINISTER OF ONTARIO
AT ONTARIO PLACE COUNTDOWN RECEPTION AND TOUR
TORONTO, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3RD, 1970

IT IS WITH A CONSIDERABLE DEGREE OF PERSONAL EXCITEMENT THAT I WELCOME YOU TO THIS SPECIAL PREVIEW TO MARK THE BEGINNING OF OUR FINAL SIX MONTH COUNTDOWN IN THE PREPARATION OF ONTARIO PLACE.

AS YOU CAN READILY SEE, WE HAVE ALREADY COME A LONG WAY IN THE CREATION OF OUR NEW PROVINCIAL SHOWCASE. AS WE MOVE INTO THE FINAL SIX MONTHS PRIOR TO COMPLETION OF THE PROJECT, IT IS A GREAT PLEASURE TO HAVE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS OUR THANKS TO THE MANY OF YOU HERE TONIGHT WHO IN SUCH GREAT MEASURE, HAVE WORKED SO HARD TO MAKE ONTARIO PLACE A REALITY. AT THIS POINT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ONTARIO PLACE WE WANTED TO GIVE THOSE WHO HAVE SHOWN SUCH AN INTEREST IN THIS PROJECT, AN OPPORTUNITY TO LET THEIR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS EXAMINE AT FIRST HAND THE FULL SCOPE AND EXCITEMENT OF THIS IMPORTANT NEW SHOWCASE FOR OUR PROVINCE AND PEOPLE.

WHEN WE FIRST BEGAN SOME YEARS AGO TO CONSIDER THE CONCEPT OF A MAJOR NEW PROVINCIAL DEVELOPMENT ADJACENT TO THE C.N.E. IT BECAME APPARENT THAT TO FULFILL ITS OBLIGATIONS THIS COMPLEX, IN WHATEVER FORM IT MIGHT ULTIMATELY DEVELOP, WOULD HAVE TO REFLECT A WIDE VARIETY OF REQUIREMENTS. WE FELT THERE WAS A NEED IN ONTARIO FOR SOMETHING AKIN TO A SPIRITUAL HOME, A TOUCHSTONE OF STABILITY, A PLACE WHERE PEOPLE COULD COME, SEE AND REFLECT UPON THE SOCIETY THAT HAS BEEN CREATED IN ONTARIO. WE FELT THERE WAS A NEED FOR A PLACE WHERE WE COULD EXAMINE OUR HISTORY, LOOK AT OUR CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC GROWTH AND CONTEMPLATE THE CHALLENGES OF THE FUTURE. IN SHORT, WE WANTED A PLACE TO RE-AFFIRM OUR IDENTITY AS ONTARIANS AND CANADIANS.

WITH ALL OF THIS IN MIND, IT WAS DETERMINED THAT A PROVINCIAL SHOWCASE SHOULD BE NOT ONLY A PLACE TO REFLECT, BUT A PLACE WHICH REFLECTS US THE WAY WE ARE. IT SHOULD BE AN EXCITING PLACE, JUST AS ONTARIO IS AN EXCITING AND DYNAMIC PROVINCE, A PLACE BRIMMING WITH ACTIVITY AND VITALITY. IT SHOULD BE COSMOPOLITAN TO MATCH THE COSMOPOLITAN PERSONALITY OF THE PEOPLE OF ONTARIO.

IN THE SUMMER OF 1968, THE GOVERNMENT OF ONTARIO MADE A COMMITMENT TO HELP COMPLEMENT THE CANADIAN NATIONAL EXHIBITION, THAT LARGEST OF ALL ANNUAL EXHIBITIONS THAT HAS PLAYED SUCH AN IMPORTANT PART IN THE LIVES OF CANADIANS FOR MORE THAN NINETY YEARS. THAT, PLUS A DETAILED STUDY OF POPULATION DISTRIBUTION AND TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS, HELPED US REACH THE DECISION TO BUILD ONTARIO PLACE HERE.

THERE WAS ANOTHER FACTOR THAT ULTIMATELY INFLUENCED DETERMINATION OF THE PRECISE FINAL LOCATION. RARELY WHEN DEVELOPING A PROJECT OF THIS MAGNITUDE, ARE WE PROVIDED WITH THE CHANCE TO BEGIN VIRTUALLY WITH A CLEAN SHEET OF PAPER. IN THIS INSTANCE, WE DID. FOR THIS REASON IT SEEMED NOT ONLY WISE BUT ESSENTIAL TO SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY TO DEMONSTRATE WHAT CAN BE DONE WHEN THOUGHTFUL PLANNING AND A CONCERN FOR THE QUALITY OF LIFE ARE APPLIED TO LAKEFRONT DEVELOPMENT IN ONE OF OUR CONTINENT'S LARGEST CITIES. THIS IS WHY WATER ORIENTATION, AS YOU HAVE SEEN TODAY, IS SUCH AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE TOTAL ONTARIO PLACE COMPLEX.

SINCE THE FIRST TRUCKLOAD OF FILL ROLLED ONTO THE SITE IN MARCH OF 1969, JUST A FEW DAYS AFTER THE PROJECT WAS ANNOUNCED, A GREAT DEAL HAS HAPPENED. THAT IS ABUNDANTLY OBVIOUS. I AM SURE YOU WILL AGREE THAT TO HAVE COME THIS FAR IN JUST NINETEEN MONTHS IS, IN ITSELF, AN ENORMOUS ACHIEVEMENT.

IN LARGE MEASURE, ONTARIO PLACE HAS ALREADY LIVED UP TO ITS NAME. IT HAS AT THIS MOMENT ELEMENTS FROM OUR VAST PROVINCE INCORPORATED THROUGHOUT ITS MORE THAN NINETY ACRES. THIS DARING AND IMAGINATIVE STRUCTURE IS THE PRODUCT OF AN ONTARIO ARCHITECTURAL FIRM. THE STEEL TO BUILD THIS PAVILION WAS CREATED FROM ONTARIO'S MINERAL RESOURCES IN ONTARIO BLAST FURNACES. THE MORE THAN TWO MILLION CUBIC YARDS OF FILL WHICH MAKE UP THESE FOUR ISLANDS OF ALMOST FORTY ACRES WERE HAULED HERE FROM BOOMING CONSTRUCTION SITES AROUND METROPOLITAN TORONTO. THE MATERIALS AND PROCESSES REQUIRED TO FORM THE UNUSUAL TRIODETIC DOME OF CINESPHERE CAME FROM EASTERN ONTARIO. MANY OF THE TREES ARE FROM DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND FOREST AREAS NEAR BARRIE. AND IN CREATING MOTION PICTURES TO APPEAR AT ONTARIO PLACE, OUR FILM PEOPLE HAVE EMPLOYED THEIR CAMERAS IN COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT ONTARIO.

BUT THE PROVINCE-WIDE INVOLVEMENT IS ONLY THE BEGINNING. WHEN ONTARIO PLACE OPENS TO THE PUBLIC ON MAY 22ND OF NEXT YEAR, A LITTLE MORE THAN SIX MONTHS FROM NOW, IT WILL TRULY BE A PLACE OF INVOLVEMENT AND ENJOYMENT FOR ALL THE PEOPLE OF ONTARIO. THE MORE THAN 200 HOSTS AND HOSTESSES WHO WILL GREET YOU WILL BE YOUNG PEOPLE FROM ALL PARTS OF OUR PROVINCE. OUR RECRUITMENT OFFICERS ARE CURRENTLY CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS THROUGHOUT ONTARIO. THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES WILL BE THE KIND OF HOSTS AND HOSTESSES WHO WILL MAKE YOU PROUD OF OUR UPCOMING GENERATION. IN ADDITION TO THOSE WORKING AS HOSTS AND HOSTESSES, WE EXPECT THAT AN ADDITIONAL 800 STUDENTS WILL BE EMPLOYED IN OTHER CAPACITIES, JOINING THE APPROXIMATELY 11,000 STUDENTS EMPLOYED EVERY YEAR BY THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT IN PROJECTS FROM ONE END OF THE PROVINCE TO THE OTHER.

THE EXHIBITION TO BE HOUSED IN FOUR OF THESE FIVE PAVILION MODULES WILL DESCRIBE ONTARIO'S PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE.

IT IS BEING CREATED OUT OF OUR PROVINCE'S OFTEN COLORFUL AND EXCITING HISTORY BY SOME OF OUR MOST GIFTED YOUNG RESEARCHERS, WRITERS, DESIGNERS AND FILM MAKERS. AS YOU KNOW, HAVING PARTICIPATED IN TWO WORLD EXPOSITIONS AT MONTREAL AND OSAKA WITH OUTSTANDING SUCCESS, ONTARIO IS NO STRANGER TO MAJOR EXHIBITIONS. WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORLD SCALE QUALITY IN THE EXHIBITION AT ONTARIO PLACE.

ONTARIO PLACE WILL BE A FIVE-PART EXHIBITION. VISITORS WILL FIRST COME TO AN IMMENSE ELECTRONIC "WELCOME WALL" WHICH WILL PROVIDE CONSTANTLY-CHANGING INFORMATION ABOUT ACTIVITIES THROUGHOUT ONTARIO PLACE. THEN WILL FOLLOW AN AREA ENTITLED "GENESIS" WHICH, AS ITS NAME IMPLIES, WILL DEAL WITH THE VERY BEGINNING OF WHAT IS NOW ONTARIO. OUR DESIGNERS TELL ME -- AND AT THIS STAGE I MUST TAKE THEIR WORD FOR IT -- THAT THIS AREA, USING SOME OF THE MOST ADVANCED CINEMATOGRAPHY TECHNIQUES AVAILABLE SHOULD MAKE VISITORS FEEL AS IF THEY WERE PRESENT AT THE CREATION.

FOLLOWING "GENESIS" WILL BE AN EXHIBIT ENTITLED "EXPLOSIONS", IN WHICH VISITORS WILL BE COMPLETELY SURROUNDED BY IMAGES AND SOUNDS RECREATING THE EXPLOSIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH OF ONTARIO FROM THE DAYS OF PRIMITIVE AGRICULTURE AND FUR TRADING TO THE INDUSTRIAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL GIANT OF TODAY.

THE NEXT AREA IS TO BE DEVOTED TO THE CULTURE AND CHARACTER OF ONTARIO. THIS EXHIBIT, CALLED "ONTARIO STYLE", WILL LEAD VISITORS THROUGH THE HISTORY OF THIS PROVINCE AND ITS PEOPLE, FROM THE CULTURAL DIGNITY OF THE EARLY INDIAN SOCIETY, THROUGH THE EPIC STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL OF THIS VAST CONTINENT INVOLVING BRITAIN AND FRANCE, INTO OUR OWN STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL IN THE WAR OF 1812, AND THROUGH THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. AS "ONTARIO STYLE" CONCLUDES ITS STORY WITH THE EVENTS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, VISITORS WILL FIND THAT THESE SAME IDEALS, GOALS AND OPPORTUNITIES STILL DRAW PEOPLE FROM THROUGHOUT THE WORLD TO OUR PROVINCE.

THE FINAL AREA IN THE ONTARIO PLACE EXHIBITION WILL TAKE VISITORS INTO THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE.

THERE WILL BE NO END TO THE EXHIBITION AT ONTARIO PLACE. JUST AS ONTARIO'S HISTORY CONTINUES TO UNFOLD EACH YEAR, SO WILL THE ONTARIO PLACE EXHIBITION. IT WILL BE CONSTANTLY REVISED AND UPDATED.

VISITORS WILL ALSO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ENJOY MANY EXCITING MOTION PICTURES IN "CINESPHERE", FOR ALMOST A YEAR, ONTARIO FILM MAKERS HAVE BEEN ENGAGED IN CAPTURING THE ESSENCE AND THE SPIRIT OF ALL PARTS OF OUR ENORMOUS PROVINCE. A VISITOR FROM ANY PART OF ONTARIO WILL BE SURE TO FIND SOMETHING OF HIMSELF AT ONTARIO PLACE.

"CINESPHERE", I AM TOLD, WILL BE UNLIKE ANY THEATRE ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD. IN THIS UNUSUAL DOME-SHAPED ENVIRONMENT NOW BEING INSTALLED WILL BE ONE OF THE LARGEST MOTION PICTURE SCREENS ON EARTH, A FULL 60 BY 80 FEET. A 24-TRACK STEREO SOUND SYSTEM AND PROJECTION CAPABILITIES RANGING FROM 8 MILLIMETRE THROUGH 16, 35 AND 70 MILLIMETRE TO THE GIANT ONTARIO-DEVELOPED "IMAX" PROJECTION SYSTEM WILL ASSURE THAT A VISIT TO "CINESPHERE" WILL BE QUITE AN EXPERIENCE.

ON PLEASANT SUMMER EVENINGS, THE ONTARIO PLACE "FORUM" WILL BECOME A REGULAR AND DELIGHTFUL PART OF THE SUMMER CONCERT SCENE. IN THE OUTDOOR AMPHITHEATRE, MORE THAN 6,000 PEOPLE WILL BE ABLE TO ENJOY CONCERTS OF ALL DESCRIPTIONS RANGING FROM A FIVE-WEEK SUMMER SEASON WITH THE TORONTO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, THROUGH FOLK AND ROCK MUSIC CONCERTS FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE, TO EXCITING AMATEUR EVENINGS IN WHICH OPPORTUNITIES WILL BE PROVIDED FOR TALENTED PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER ONTARIO.

THE LIST OF THINGS TO DO AND SEE AT ONTARIO PLACE IS GROWING DAILY. THERE WILL BE BOUTIQUES FOR SHOPPING AND A FULL SELECTION OF DINING FACILITIES RANGING FROM SNACKS TO FULL COURSE MEALS, ALL AT REASONABLE PRICES.

TWO SHIPS WILL BE JOINING US AT ONTARIO PLACE IN ADDITION TO THOSE THREE FINE OLD LAKE FREIGHTERS WHICH MAKE UP OUR OUTER BREAKWALL AND PROMENADE. THE "HAIDA" WILL BECOME A PART OF ONTARIO PLACE IN THE SPRING. THAT GRACEFUL BRIGANTINE "PATHFINDER", WHICH YOU MAY HAVE SEEN PERFORMING AS A SAILING SCHOOL FOR ONTARIO YOUNGSTERS, WILL MAKE ITS HOME PORT AT ONTARIO PLACE NOT FAR FROM A BOATYARD WHERE VISITORS CAN WATCH A NEW BRIGANTINE BEING CONSTRUCTED.

BY NOW YOU ARE NO DOUBT BEGINNING TO SHARE WITH ME A SENSE OF THE EXCITEMENT ABOUT THE POSSIBILITIES PRESENTED BY ONTARIO PLACE AS AN IMPRESSIVE SHOWCASE FOR OUR PROVINCE. IT IS NOW JUST A LITTLE MORE THAN SIX MONTHS UNTIL OPENING DAY. ON OPENING DAY, MAY 22ND, 1971 -- AND COINCIDENTALLY 1971 IS THE 180TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CREATION OF UPPER CANADA, THAT PART OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA THAT HAS BECOME ONTARIO -- WE LOOK FORWARD TO GREETING THE FIRST OF THE MORE THAN TWO MILLION VISITORS WE EXPECT TO WELCOME EACH YEAR.

THEY WILL FIND, AS YOU WILL, A NEW FOCAL POINT FOR OUR PROVINCE. A FESTIVE, EXCITING AND INFORMATIVE PLACE; A PLACE WHICH DEMONSTRATES A NEW ATTITUDE TO OUR LAKEFRONTS; A PLACE WHICH OFFERS A TREMENDOUS VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES TO MEET THE VARIETY OF INTERESTS HELD BY PEOPLE FROM ALL ACROSS OUR PROVINCE AND BEYOND.

BECAUSE ONTARIANS ARE NOTED FOR THEIR HOSPITALITY, ONTARIO PLACE WILL EXTEND A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEIGHBOURS AND TO PEOPLE FROM THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. AND WHILE ON THE SUBJECT OF WELCOME LET ME ONCE AGAIN TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO WELCOME ALL OF YOU TO THIS SPECIAL PREVIEW AND RECEPTION . . . AND, OF COURSE, TO THE ONTARIO PLACE OPENING DAY MAY 22ND, 1971.

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950 Yonge Street, Toronto 5, Canada 365-5488

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PRESS RELEASE

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ONTARIO PLACE COUNTDOWN:

200 DAYS UNTIL OPENING

TORONTO - - It's exactly 200 days to go until the opening of Ontario Place, the new provincial showcase in Lake Ontario, south of Exhibition Park. Opening date will be May 22, 1971.

To mark the countdown occasion, Prime Minister John Robarts yesterday previewed the partially completed pavilion and the man-made island site for more than 800 guests and newsmen.

In the first speech delivered inside the Ontario Place pavilion structure, Mr. Robarts called the project "a new focal point for our province." It will be "a festive, exciting and informative place; a place which demonstrates a new attitude to our lakefronts; a place which offers a tremendous variety of activities to meet the variety of interests held by people from all across our province and beyond."

ONTARIO PLACE - - 2.

Although the 90-acre site is more mud than parkland at this stage, some signs of landscaping and tree-planting could be seen. On the new islands, the completed structures of the pavilion rising out of the water,, and Cinesphere, the triodetic Dome film theatre, gave a spectacular idea of the final shape of Ontario Place.

The project was announced on March 11, 1969 and the first truckload of landfill moved onto the site within a few days. Now, 19 months later, landfill operations are about 95 percent completed with 2,116,016 cubic yards delivered in 336,612 truckloads. This has created about 40 acres of new islands, for Ontario Place.

A comparison with Montreal's Expo 67 site which was created by a landfilling operation: Expo used from 20-25 million cubic yards to create 400 acres of new land in the St. Lawrence. Thus, Ontario Place is about one-tenth of the size of the Expo land areas. The lagoons, and other enclosed water areas bring up the Ontario Place site to more than 90 acres.

ONTARIO PLACE - - 3.

The \$18 million Ontario Place project was an "opportunity to demonstrate what can be done when thoughtful planning and a concern for the quality of life are applied to lakefront development," Mr. Robarts said. He added that the provincial government project was designed to help complement the Canadian National Exhibition.

Other announcements made at this preview tour:

Recruiters are currently visiting the 17 university campuses in the province to choose the 200 hosts and hostesses for Ontario Place in its first season. As well, about 700 other students will be needed for other jobs at the project .

Four films are currently being made in various parts of the province for showing in Cinesphere. Their subjects will include northwestern Ontario, central-north Ontario, eastern Ontario and the waterways of Ontario.

Cinesphere will be the world's most advanced film theatre with a 60-by-80 foot screen, one of the world's largest , and a complex 24-track stereo sound system.

The Ontario Place pavilion will have a five-part mixed-media exhibition in four of its five "pods" to trace the Ontario story from the time of earth's creation all the way to the challenges of the future.

ONTARIO PLACE - - 4.

The Forum, an outdoor amphitheatre, will feature concerts by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra next summer, folk music, rock, amateur talent and other cultural events.

The Ontario Place islands will have boutiques, restaurant and snack facilities, picnic areas, children's play areas and beaches.

Two ships, the World War II destroyer Haida and the brigantine Pathfinder will use Ontario Place as home port. The marina has a capacity of 300 boats.