

WORDS FOR CANADIAN CLUB
OCTOBER 20, 1997
12 NOON
ROYAL IMPERIAL ROOM

- MEL LASTMAN
MAYOR OF NORTH YORK

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

THREE WEEKS FROM TODAY, THE PEOPLE OF OUR NEW CITY OF TORONTO HAVE AN IMPORTANT DECISION TO MAKE.

WE ARE ON THE VERGE OF CREATING A NEW CITY TO REPRESENT MORE THAN 2 MILLION PEOPLE. THE PEOPLE MUST DECIDE WHO CAN BEST MAKE THE NEW CITY WORK.

IT'S A BIG JOB. IT WILL TAKE LEADERSHIP, AND COMPETENCE. IT WILL TAKE A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH.

THAT IS WHY I AM PUTTING FORWARD MY GOALS, FULLY AND CLEARLY. I AM FOCUSING ON SEVEN PRIORITY AREAS - SEVEN PILLARS THAT CAN PROVIDE A FIRM BASE ON WHICH TO BUILD OUR NEW CITY.

FIRST, WE ALL WANT TO LIVE IN A CITY IN WHICH PEOPLE WHO WANT TO WORK HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK. WE WANT TO LIVE IN A CITY IN WHICH YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE THE CHANCE TO GET A JOB AND START A CAREER.

TOO MANY INDUSTRIES HAVE LEFT - AND TOO FEW NEW ONES HAVE TAKEN THEIR PLACE.

I WANT TO TAKE A PERSONAL LEAD ROLE IN BRINGING IN NEW JOBS AND INVESTMENT. I WANT TO GO OUT AND GET HIGH-TECH INDUSTRIES TO SET UP SHOP IN TORONTO. AND I WANT TO ATTRACT INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES TO ESTABLISH THEIR NORTH AMERICAN HEAD OFFICES RIGHT HERE.

I WILL RENEW OUR PUSH TO GET THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO DESIGNATE TORONTO AS AN INTERNATIONAL BANKING CENTRE. THE WORLD RECOGNIZES TORONTO AS AN INTERNATIONAL CENTRE OF BANKING AND FINANCE - IT IS ABOUT TIME THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT DID.

WE HAVE SOME OF THE FINEST UNIVERSITIES IN THE WORLD. THEY ARE ALSO ESTABLISHING IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS. WE CAN TURN THOSE RELATIONSHIPS INTO INVESTMENTS AND JOBS. WE MUST BUILD ON OUR LINKS WITH THEM SO THAT THE IDEAS AND INVENTIONS THAT

COME OUT OF OUR SCHOOLS BECOME PRODUCTS FOR SALE IN THE GLOBAL MARKETPLACE.

NO ONE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION CAN SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF UNEMPLOYMENT ALONE. WE CAN WORK AS A TEAM. OUR CITY IS MADE UP OF PEOPLE FROM EVERY CORNER OF THE WORLD. WE HAVE LINKS WITH EVERY MARKET IN THE WORLD. WE MUST MAKE THE MOST OF OUR BIGGEST ASSET - OUR PEOPLE - AND WORK WITH SMALL BUSINESS PEOPLE TO CREATE EXPORT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE COUNTRIES THEY ARE FAMILIAR WITH. WE MUST BRING TORONTO TO THE WORLD.

AND WE MUST BRING THE WORLD TO TORONTO. TOURISM IS ONE OF OUR BIGGEST ASSETS. IT CAN BE AN EVEN BIGGER ONE. WE LIVE IN ONE OF THE GREATEST CITIES IN THE WORLD. THIS IS A CITY IN WHICH PEOPLE CAN COME TO ENJOY ALL OF THE ARTS, AND BE ENRICHED BY ALL CULTURES.

BUT WE DON'T TELL PEOPLE ENOUGH ABOUT WHAT A GREAT PLACE THIS IS TO VISIT. SOMETIMES TORONTO SEEMS LIKE ONE OF THE BEST-KEPT SECRETS IN THE WORLD. WE HAVE TO START MARKETING OURSELVES TO THE WORLD.

IF I AM FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO BE ELECTED AS YOUR MAYOR, I INTEND TO MAKE IT A TOP PERSONAL PRIORITY TO SELL TORONTO MUCH MORE AGGRESSIVELY ... AS A PLACE TO INVEST, A PLACE TO EXPAND, A PLACE TO VISIT AND A PLACE TO LIVE. OUR WELL-KEPT SECRET MUST BE CONVERTED TO SIGNIFICANT NEW INVESTMENT AND TENS OF THOUSANDS OF NEW JOBS.

THE SECOND PILLAR MUST BE A ZERO TAX INCREASE. I BELIEVE PEOPLE WANT TO LIVE IN A CITY IN WHICH TAXES ARE REASONABLE, A CITY IN WHICH FAMILIES CAN AFFORD TO BUY A HOME, A CITY WHERE SENIOR CITIZENS CAN AFFORD TO KEEP THEIR HOMES. WE WANT TO LIVE IN A CITY THAT ATTRACTS AND KEEPS BUSINESSES RATHER THAN A CITY THAT BUSINESSES AND JOBS MUST LEAVE.

I AM REALLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE PLIGHT OF PEOPLE WHO ARE FACED WITH AN ENORMOUS PROPERTY TAX BURDEN. THE METRO TAX RATE ALONE WENT UP 64 PERCENT IN 10 YEARS. IT IS TIME TO SAY THAT ENOUGH IS ENOUGH. THAT IS WHY I AM COMMITTED TO A ZERO TAX INCREASE. I WILL RETURN TO THIS SUBJECT IN A MOMENT.

THIRD, WE WANT TO LIVE IN A CITY THAT PROVIDES HELP FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED IT. WE WANT TO LIVE IN A CITY THAT HAS AN EFFECTIVE NETWORK OF SOCIAL SERVICES. WE MUST PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN AND FOR SENIORS, FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH CLINICS, AND FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES. AND WE MUST HOLD THE PROVINCE UP TO ITS OBLIGATIONS IN THIS AREA. WE MUST MAKE IT CLEAR TO PREMIER HARRIS AND THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT THAT THEY CANNOT WALK

AWAY FROM TORONTO'S PROBLEMS. I'M PUTTING PREMIER HARRIS ON NOTICE TODAY THAT AS MAYOR, I INTEND TO FIGHT HARD TO SEE THAT THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT RECOGNIZES ITS OBLIGATIONS TO THIS CITY AND ITS PEOPLE AND THAT TORONTONIANS CAN EXPECT THEIR FAIR SHARE OF SUPPORT.

FOURTH, WE WANT A LIVABLE CITY. THAT IS WHY LOCAL SERVICES ARE SO ESSENTIAL. GARBAGE PICKUP, SNOW REMOVAL AND STREET MAINTENANCE ARE CRUCIAL TO OUR QUALITY OF LIFE. THEY HELP MAKE A CITY WORK.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT MUST RESPOND TO PEOPLE'S NEEDS. THAT IS WHY I WOULD DO AWAY WITH VOICE MAIL AT CITY HALL DURING WORKING HOURS. A REAL PERSON MUST ANSWER THE PHONE AND SAY HELLO. THAT IS WHAT SERVICE IS ABOUT -- PEOPLE TALKING TO PEOPLE.

THE FIFTH PILLAR FOR OUR CITY IS STRONG NEIGHBOURHOODS. ONE OF THE THINGS THAT MAKES OUR CITY SO SPECIAL IS THE FACT THAT OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS ARE SO UNIQUE. THAT IS WHY I BELIEVE IN AN IMPORTANT ROLE FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD ORGANIZATIONS. UNDER MY LEADERSHIP, THE NEW CITY GOVERNMENT WOULD PROVIDE LOCAL COMMUNITY COUNCILS WITH THE AUTHORITY THEY NEED TO DEAL WITH LOCAL COMMUNITY CONCERNS - FROM STOP SIGNS TO ZONING BY-LAWS. WE MUST NOT ALLOW AMALGAMATION TO WATER DOWN OR ELIMINATE OUR COMMUNITIES.

THE SIXTH PILLAR OF THE LASTMAN CAMPAIGN IS TO ENSURE THAT WE LIVE IN A CITY IN WHICH PEOPLE ARE SAFE AND FEEL SAFE. THAT IS WHY I SUPPORT OUR POLICE.

I WOULD MAKE IT A PRIORITY TO ENSURE A STRONG POLICE PRESENCE, BY MOVING POLICE OFFICERS FROM BEHIND DESKS AND GETTING THEM INTO THE COMMUNITIES.

WE MUST CONTROL YOUTH GANGS, TARGET DRUG CRIME, AND CLOSE DOWN BOOZE CANS.

THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS PETTY CRIME. WE MUST SHOW ZERO TOLERANCE FOR IT. WE HAVE TO STOP MINOR CRIME BEFORE IT TURNS INTO MAJOR CRIME

AND AS MAYOR I WOULD CALL UPON THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO REFORM THE YOUNG OFFENDERS ACT.

MY SEVENTH PILLAR IS TO MAKE SURE THAT OUR NEW CITY OF TORONTO IS A VIBRANT CITY, AND AN EXCITING PLACE TO LIVE. WE MUST MAKE IT A PRIORITY TO PROMOTE LOCAL CULTURE, AND

CELEBRATE OUR DIVERSITY. WE MUST HELP NEIGHBOURHOODS STAGE FESTIVALS AND OTHER SPECIAL EVENTS TO BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER.

THESE ARE MY SEVEN PRIORITIES. I BELIEVE THEY CAN BE THE SEVEN PILLARS OF A CITY THAT IS A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE, WORK AND PLAY.

ACHIEVEMENT OF ALL OF THESE GOALS DEPENDS ON ECONOMIC GROWTH.

THAT IS WHY ECONOMIC GROWTH IS A PRIORITY AND FORMS THE CORNERSTONE OF THE LASTMAN CAMPAIGN. WE SIMPLY HAVE TO CREATE GROWTH AND JOBS.

DESTINATION TECHNODOME IS A GREAT EXAMPLE OF A UNIQUE PROJECT. HOPEFULLY IT WILL SOON BE CONSTRUCTED ON THE FORMER DOWNSVIEW AIR FORCE BASE. IT INCLUDES LIVE ENTERTAINMENT, SPORTS, AND GAMES, A LAKE AND A BEACH, A SKI MOUNTAIN AND WHITE WATER RAFTING ALL HOUSED UNDER ONE ROOF AND OPERATING YEAR ROUND. IT IS A PLACE FAMILIES CAN ENJOY TOGETHER.

THIS PROJECT WILL CREATE 15,000 CONSTRUCTION JOBS, AND 7,000 PERMANENT JOBS - WITHOUT DISRUPTING THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES WHILE IT IS BEING CONSTRUCTED OR AFTER IT IS COMPLETED. IT WILL YIELD \$165 MILLION A YEAR IN TAX REVENUES TO THE THREE LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT.

PROJECTS LIKE THIS WILL GENERATE THE FUNDS TO HELP PEOPLE WHO NEED IT MOST, TO PAY FOR IMPROVED POLICE PROTECTION AND TO DELIVER MUCH-NEEDED SERVICES.

OUR OBLIGATION IS TO BUILD AN ECONOMY THAT AFFORDS THE KINDS OF HUMAN SERVICES THAT MAKE FOR A CARING AND LIVABLE CITY.

BUT IT IS DIFFICULT TO DEVELOP THAT KIND OF GROWTH WHEN WE ARE HELD DOWN BY LOCAL TAX RATES THAT ARE FAR HIGHER THAN OTHER CITIES.

I AM ABSOLUTELY COMMITTED TO A ZERO TAX INCREASE. OUR MILL RATE MUST BE STABLE.

TORONTO IS IN COMPETITION WITH CITIES FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD - AND WE ARE IN COMPETITION WITH CITIES RIGHT NEXT DOOR.

DOWNTOWN TORONTO OFFICE BUILDINGS ARE THE HIGHEST-TAXED IN NORTH AMERICA. NOT FOR 1 YEAR, NOT FOR 2 YEARS, BUT FOR FIVE CONSECUTIVE YEARS.

BUSINESSES TURN TO THE 905 AREA - TO MARKHAM, VAUGHAN AND MISSISSAUGA. WE HAVE BEEN LOSING ALL KINDS OF BUSINESSES AND JOBS TO THESE CITIES.

WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO COMPETE FAIRLY, BECAUSE THE PLAYING FIELD HAS BEEN TILTED AGAINST US. THE 905 CITIES HAVE USED THAT EDGE TO LOWER THEIR COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL TAXES, RAID OUR BUSINESSES, AND TAKE AWAY JOBS.

WE MUST HAVE A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD - AND A MAYOR WHO WILL FIGHT TO ENSURE IT.

ONCE YOU INCREASE PROPERTY TAXES, THEY NEVER COME DOWN. IN 1992, METRO INCREASED PROPERTY TAXES BY 15% AND MOST WAS TO PAY FOR AN INCREASED WELFARE CASELOAD. OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS, THE CASELOAD HAS DROPPED BY MORE THAN 25 PER CENT - FROM 126,000 TO 93,000. BUT TAXES DIDN'T COME DOWN. A TAX INCREASE IS A TAX FOR LIFE.

WE SIMPLY CANNOT AFFORD A TAX INCREASE. WHEN POLITICIANS DRIVE TAXES UP, THEY DRIVE JOBS AWAY.

WE MUST SEND A CLEAR MESSAGE TO THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY THAT WE HAVE TAXES UNDER CONTROL.

THAT SUMS UP THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BARBARA HALL AND MYSELF. SHE CAN'T WAIT TO SPEND THE TAXPAYERS' MONEY. I CAN'T WAIT TO SAVE THEM MONEY.

BARBARA HALL HAS ASKED: CAN WE AFFORD A TAX FREEZE?

MY QUESTION IS: HOW CAN WE AFFORD A TAX INCREASE? HOW CAN WE AFFORD TO TAX BUSINESSES AND JOBS OUT OF TORONTO?

LET'S START WITH SOME FACTS. WHEN YOU TURN 7 GOVERNMENTS INTO 1, YOU HAVE TO BE ABLE TO SAVE A TON OF A LOT OF MONEY - OR YOU SHOULDN'T BE RUNNING FOR MAYOR.

SINCE WE ARE GOING TO HAVE ONE GOVERNMENT, WHY DO WE NEED 7 PARKS DEPARTMENTS?

WHY DO WE NEED 7 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENTS?

7 DIFFERENT PAYROLL SYSTEMS?

6 TAX COLLECTION SYSTEMS?

7 PLANNING DEPARTMENTS.

7 BUILDING DEPARTMENTS.

7 CLERKS DEPARTMENTS.

AND ALL THOSE COMMISSIONERS AND DEPUTY COMMISSIONERS.

WHY DO WE NEED 8 COMMUNICATION CENTRES TO HANDLE POLICE, FIRE AND AMBULANCE CALLS WHEN 1 OR 2 WILL DO?

WHY DO WE NEED 6 ADMINISTRATIONS FOR GARBAGE COLLECTION AND A SEPARATE ONE FOR GARBAGE DISPOSAL?

WHY DO WE NEED 7 DIFFERENT PURCHASING DEPARTMENTS? WITH A COMBINED BUYING POWER OF \$1 BILLION A YEAR, THINK OF THE SAVINGS WE CAN MAKE.

IF BARBARA HALL WANTS TO KNOW WHERE WE CAN FIND THE MONEY TO AFFORD A ZERO TAX INCREASE SHE CAN START BY LOOKING IN HER OWN CITY GOVERNMENT.

AND SHE CAN FOLLOW THAT UP BY READING HER OWN WORDS. LAST NOVEMBER, LESS THAN A YEAR AGO, ALL 6 METRO MAYORS ENDORSED A DOCUMENT THAT IDENTIFIED THE SAVINGS WE WOULD ACHIEVE BY ELIMINATING JUST ONE LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT - THE METRO LEVEL. WE ALL AGREED THAT WE COULD SAVE BETWEEN \$185 MILLION AND \$240 MILLION. BARBARA HALL AND I BOTH PUT OUR NAME TO THAT REPORT.

WE BOTH SAID THE SAVINGS WERE THERE. I STAND BY THAT REPORT AND THE CONCLUSIONS IT REACHED.

BARBARA HALL SHOULD ANSWER ONE QUESTION: IF A ZERO TAX INCREASE IS NOT POSSIBLE, HOW MUCH WOULD SHE RAISE PROPERTY TAXES? WOULD SHE RAISE PROPERTY TAXES 5 PER CENT, 10 PER CENT, 15 PER CENT? WHAT IS THE LIMIT TO WHAT THE TAXPAYERS MUST PAY? SHE SHOULD ANSWER THAT QUESTION, AND SHE SHOULD ANSWER IT BEFORE ELECTION DAY.

IT IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH FOR A CANDIDATE FOR MAYOR TO SAY SHE DOES NOT KNOW HOW MUCH SHE MIGHT HAVE TO RAISE TAXES. PEOPLE HAVE A RIGHT TO KNOW BEFORE THEY VOTE.

LEADERSHIP IS ABOUT MAKING DECISIONS - AND MAKING THEM WORK.

THAT IS THE KIND OF LEADERSHIP I WANT TO PROVIDE. I AM ABSOLUTELY COMMITTED TO ENSURING A ZERO TAX INCREASE.

THE MAYOR MUST PLAY THE LEADING ROLE TO MAKE THAT HAPPEN. ONE THING IS SURE: IF THE MAYOR ISN'T COMMITTED TO A ZERO TAX INCREASE, TAXES WILL GO UP.

ALL OF THESE PILLARS STAND TOGETHER. A ZERO TAX INCREASE CAN HELP GENERATE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND JOBS. THAT ALLOWS US TO

INCREASE ASSESSMENT AND PROTECT OUR SOCIAL PROGRAMS, AND OUR MUNICIPAL SERVICES. A STRONG ECONOMY HELPS REDUCE CRIME. A STRONG ECONOMY MEANS STRONG NEIGHBOURHOODS, AND STRONG NEIGHBOURHOODS MEAN A VIBRANT CITY.

THESE PILLARS CAN BUILD EVEN STRONGER COMMUNITIES IN EAST YORK AND ETOBICOKE, NORTH YORK AND SCARBOROUGH, TORONTO AND YORK.

WORKING TOGETHER WITH CITY COUNCIL AND WITH COMMUNITY GROUPS, WITH BUSINESS AND WITH LABOUR, WE CAN MAKE A GREAT CITY EVEN GREATER.

THESE ARE THE GOALS I STAND FOR. THESE ARE THE PILLARS WE CAN PUT IN PLACE TO CREATE A SECURE FOUNDATION FOR A NEW AND GREATER TORONTO.

THANK YOU.