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LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I WOULD LIKE, AS MAYOR OF FORT ERIE, TO WELCOME YOU TO THESE INAUGURAL CEREMONIES AND TO THANK YOU FOR COMING. SOME OF YOU MAY FEEL THIS A STRANGE PLACE TO HOLD SUCH A CEREMONY. OUT REASONING WAS QUITE SIMPLE - HERE, WAS WHERE UNOFFICIALLY OUR MUNICIPALITY BEGAN IN 1810, BUILT BY THOSE WHO HAD CONFIDENCE IN THIS COUNTRY AND WHO FELT IT WAS WORTH DEFENDING - WITHOUT CONFIDENCE IN ITSELF, NO NATION CAN SURVIVE, NO MUNICIPALITY CAN SURVIVE, NO INDIVIDUAL CAN SURVIVE - CONFIDENCE CAN ONLY BE BUILT ON KNOWLEDGE OF THE PAST, WITHOUT WHICH THERE CAN BE NO BEGINNING. UNFORTUNATELY, I BELIEVE WE ARE LIVING IN AN AGE WHEN THE TEARING DOWN OF RELIGIOUS OR POLITICAL TRADITION IS THE FASHION OF THE DAY. THESE MERCHANTS OF DESTRUCTION COULD NEVER HAVE STUDIED HISTORY SERIOUSLY OR THEY WOULD REALIZE THE GREATEST EMPIRE THAT EVER EXISTED, - THE ROMAN EMPIRE, FELL FROM WITHIN - A VICTIM OF ITSELF. HISTORY NOT ONLY LETS US LOOK INTO THE PAST BUT REFLECTS THE FUTURE. WHY DO I FEEL SO STRONGLY IN THIS IS THIS AREA - BECAUSE I HAVE DEVOTION TO OUR COUNTRY, OUR PEOPLE, TOWN. LASTLY, THE SAME SPIRITED CO-OPERATION, LOYALTY AND ENERGY THAT CAUSED MEN TO BUILD AND DEFEND FORTS SUCH AS THIS - BECAUSE TRADITION OF PAST MIRRORED THE FUTURE THAT EXISTS HERE TO-DAY - THE SUCCESS OF OUR TOWN WILL NOT BE DETERMINED BY ITS PHYSICAL ASSETS BUT RATHER BY THE AMBITION FOR IT IN THE MINDS OF THOSE WHO WILL GUIDE ITS DESTINY.

HISTORICALLY TONIGHT, WE ARE PLACED IN AN ENVIABLE POSITION, FOR THE NEW TOWN OF FORT ERIE RECALLS THE VISION OF THE PAST WHEN WE ALL REALIZED OUR DESTINY, THAT IS, THOSE OF CRYSTAL BEACH, BERTIE, FORT ERIE AND WHAT WAS PART OF WILLOUGHBY, WERE TIED TOGETHER BY BONDS OF NECESSITY IF ~~WE~~ WERE TO SURVIVE IN THIS WORLD OF COMPETITION AND TO DEVELOP IN AN ERA WHEN <sup>IT</sup> UNITY WOULD BE THE CATALYST TO SUCCESS.

I FEEL I WOULD BE REMISS IF I DID NOT AT THIS TIME CLARIFY A SOMEWHAT CONFUSED SITUATION, A SITUATION WHICH WAS NOT OF OUR DOING.

BY BILL NO. 174, PASSED BY THE HOUSE IN TORONTO, THE REGION OF NIAGARA WAS CREATED WHEREBY THE COUNTIES OF LINCOLN AND WELLAND AS WE KNEW THEM WERE DIVIDED INTO TWELVE MUNICIPALITIES OF EQUAL IMPORTANCE AS STATED BY THE HONOURABLE DARCY MCKEOUGH, MINISTER OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS. THESE WERE EACH TO BE REPRESENTED BY ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES VARYING IN NUMBERS ACCORDING TO THE POPULATION - ONE OF WHOM WOULD AUTOMATICALLY BE THE MAYOR OF THE MUNICIPALITY CONCERNED IN WHAT IS KNOWN AS THE REGIONAL COUNCIL NUMBERING A TOTAL OF 29 MEMBERS INCLUDING THE CHAIRMAN WHO WAS APPOINTED BY THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT. THIS SYSTEM, THE REGIONAL SYSTEM, WAS DETERMINED SOLELY BY THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT THE DULY ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PEOPLE, WHO IN THEIR WISDOM FEEL IT IS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE PROVINCE AS A WHOLE. I AM OUTLINING THESE FACTS NOT AS A CRITICISM BUT RATHER TO ALERT YOU TO FACTS AS THEY ARE AND MORE PARTICULARLY, TO EMPHASIZE THE FACT THAT WHAT IS DONE IS DONE AND OUR DUTY - YOU AND I, THE COUNCIL AND THE PEOPLE, INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY, MUST WORK TOGETHER FOR ITS SUCCESS BECAUSE FAILURE CAN ONLY WORK A CATASTROPHE, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL, ON THE PEOPLE WE LOVE.

MANY TIMES I HAVE BEEN ASKED WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO US AS A RESULT OF THIS ACTION. MAKE NO MISTAKE ABOUT IT, TAXES WILL, IN MY OPINION, RISE DRAMATICALLY AS A RESULT OF THIS CHANGE. REASONS FOR THIS WILL BECOME APPARENT IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE. HOWEVER, IN FAIRNESS, A REASONABLE FORCAST OF TAXES WITHOUT REGIONAL GOVERNMENT WOULD BE INCREASED BY A MINIMUM OF 10% DUE TO <sup>INCREASES</sup> COSTS IN COSTS OF LABOUR AND MATERIALS. IT WOULD APPEAR I AM A PREACHER OF GLOOM FROM THE FOREGOING REMARKS. I HOPE NOT BECAUSE THE FOREGOING IS WHAT I BELIEVE IS THE IMMEDIATE RESULT. IT SHOULD BE THE LONGRUN RESULT IN WHICH WE MUST BE INTERESTED. THIS IS WHERE I HONESTLY BELIEVE WE IN FORT ERIE HAVE THE MOST TO GAIN FROM SUCCESS BECAUSE WE HAVE THE MOST VACANT LAND TO DEVELOP. LAND IS THE MOST PRECIOUS COMMODITY WE HAVE - HOWEVER, UNDEVELOPED LAND IS ANOTHER MATTER. HERE, IN MY OPINION, LIES OUR PARTICULAR PROBLEM, and HERE LIES PRIMARILY OUR GREATEST NECESSITY, THE SERVICING OF WHAT WAS FORMERLY BERTIE TOWNSHIP WITH SEWER\$ AND WATER. THIS IS THE KEY TO OUR INDUSTRIAL FUTURE FOR WITHOUT INDUSTRY AND THEIR TAX PAYING AND EMPLOYING ABILITIES, WE HAVE NO FUTURE.

YOUR COUNCIL HAS WORKED EARNESTLY AND CONSCIENTIOUSLY IN YOUR BEHALF, MEETING WEEKLY AS A WHOLE AND SEVERAL TIMES A WEEK INDIVIDUALLY ON ONE COMMITTEE OR ANOTHER. FEW REALIZE THE TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF WORK INVOLVED IN THE TRANSITION. THE TOWN OF FORT ERIE HAS GONE FROM NINE SQUARE MILES TO OVER A HUNDRED SQUARE MILES. THE TRANSFER OF POLICE TO FORT ERIE, THE INTEGRATION OF THE CLERK'S DEPARTMENT, THE TREASURER'S DEPARTMENT, AND OTHERS TOO NUMEROUS TO MENTION IN A MATTER OF A FEW DAYS, RECORDS BY THE THOUSANDS TO BE REARRANGED, PAYROLLS TO BE INTEGRATED. MORE WORK HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED BY THE EMPLOYEES IN ONE WEEK THAN THE WORK THAT WOULD BE INVOLVED IN THE UNITING IN ONE DAY OF THREE OF THE LARGEST INDUSTRIES IN OUR AREA. THE COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SAFETY AND SECURITY FOR IN EXCESS OF 20,000 PEOPLE HAS BECOME THE DUTY OF YOUR COUNCIL.

IN THE ENSUING THREE YEARS, DECISIONS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE AND MAGNITUDE WILL TAKE PLACE. CERTAINLY IN A COUNTRY SUCH AS OURS NO ONE COULD EXPECT IN A SHORT SPAN OF THREE YEARS ALL THAT IS DESIRED COULD BE ACHIEVED, BUT RATHER THE FOUNDATIONS FOR THESE DESIRES CAN AND WILL BE LAID BY THIS COUNCIL MAKING POSSIBLE THEIR FUTURE COMPLETION BY OTHER COUNCILS.

I FEEL AS I BRING THIS INAUGURAL ADDRESS TO A CLOSE, I WOULD LIKE TO LEAVE THESE THOUGHTS FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION - THE TRUE WEALTH OF A NATION LIES NOT IN ITS GOLD OR SILVER BUT IN ITS LEARNING, ITS WISDOM, ITS TRADITION WITHOUT EITHER OF WHICH EXISTANCE IS POINTLESS AND USELESS.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I CLOSE AS I DID EIGHT YEARS AGO BY SAYING TO THESE MEMBERS OF COUNCIL, THIS HOPE, THAT WHEN THIS TENURE OF OFFICE IS FINISHED IT WILL BE SAID OF US WERE HONOURABLE PEOPLE, WE WERE JUST PEOPLE, WE WERE GOOD PEOPLE -----FORT ERIE IS A BETTER TOWN FOR OUR HAVING ADMINISTERED ITS AFFAIRS.