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(ONTARIO)

The priorities of the Davis
Government.

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**the
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Your Ontario Government

has provided responsible leadership in meeting the rapidly changing social conditions in our society. Premier William Davis, his Cabinet colleagues and individual Progressive Conservative Members of the Legislature have made it their business to listen and respond to the needs of Ontarians as an integral part of the decision-making process.

This pamphlet contains descriptions of several major policy initiatives taken by your Government in recent months. At the same time it endeavours to outline the philosophy behind some of these policies and describes a few of the ongoing programs which provide the chief points of contact between you and your Government.



Agriculture

The business of producing food is vital to Ontario's economy and well-being. As a Province, we generate nearly 1/3 of Canada's agricultural output. Ontario farmers are efficient, and highly independent. However, if Ontarians are to be assured of a continuing supply of clean, wholesome food, and food products, Ontario farmers must be assured of returns which will adequately reflect costs of inputs plus reasonable profits.

The agricultural policies of the Ontario Government have been designed to encourage the development of the "family farm". In the 1974 Budget, several important tax exemptions were introduced to provide for continuity of our family farms. The basic exemptions for succession duties were increased by 50 per cent — it means, estates up to \$150,000 are free of duty. Under the innovative Land Speculation Tax, bona fide farmers are granted a special allowance from the Tax if they continue to keep their land in active production.

Ontario recognized the need for the expanded production of milk destined for the butter, cheese and powdered milk market. Under the Industrial Milk Production Incentive Program, first introduced in 1973, and renewed in 1974, farmers were encouraged to increase their milk output through a series of loans, parts of which were forgivable.

Industrial Milk
Production Incentive
Program

Community and Social Services

The Ontario Government is committed to the development of co-ordinated and rationalized systems of income security and social services in Ontario and Canada as a whole and is working toward this goal. The Ministry of Community and Social Services has recently been reorganized to give more responsibility and decision-making authority to the District Offices enabling local problems to be solved at the community level.

In the implementation of GAINS (Guaranteed Annual Income System), the Community and Social Services Ministry is responsible for the provision of benefits under Family Benefits. It is also implementing a program providing free prescription drugs to all recipients of both the Guaranteed Income Supplement and Provincial Assistance.

GAINS
(Guaranteed Annual
Income System)

Another major program involves the goal of community living for the mentally retarded. This necessitates a diversification and expansion of existing community resources and services, as well as the development of new services to facilitate this approach.

Funds are provided to municipalities and non-profit organizations for residential care of children, youth and the aged, social and recreational centres for elderly persons and for maintenance of children under the care of Children's Aid Societies. The Day Nurseries program is expanding rapidly with an additional \$11 million expenditure on day care for the 1974/75 fiscal year.

The Ministry provides funding for language training assistance to Ethnic groups and newcomers, support for community organizations, the development of community services to Native Peoples, leadership training, sports, fitness and recreation activities.

Consumer Protection

The Ontario Government has long been a leader in the field of consumer legislation. Beginning with the introduction of the Consumer Protection Act in 1967, a long series of new and innovative laws have provided the residents of Ontario with safeguards well beyond those available in most other jurisdictions.

The recently introduced Business Practices Act represents a fundamental departure from past methods of consumer protection in this Province. The Act will protect Ontario consumers from deceptive and unfair business practices by prohibiting false or misleading representations of any product or service sold to the public. Transactions which involve grossly inflated prices, inequities of contract, high-pressure sales methods or the consumer's inability to defend his own interests are prohibited by this legislation.

The Business Practices Act will provide that any agreement entered into by a consumer as a result of a representation that involves an unfair practice will be voidable by the consumer. Under the legislation, the consumer will have the right to press his own case in the courts, and failure by any company to comply with a Ministry order to cease a particular unfair practice renders the offending firm liable to fines of up to \$25,000 for each offence.

In July, 1974, The Consumer Reporting Act came into force. It deals with the reporting, exchange and gathering of both credit and personal information related to individual consumers. It provides to the consumer the right to know what is reported about them and to whom this information is passed. It also ensures that false or incorrect information can be corrected.

Under The Consumer Reporting Act, an Ontario resident who is being evaluated for credit, employment or insurance purposes can request the name and address of the agency which has supplied information regarding him. If he is subsequently refused employ-

Business Practices Act

The Consumer Reporting Act

The Ontario Building Code

Condominiums Act

ment, credit, etc. on the basis of this information, he may visit the reporting agency, examine his file and request corrections if the file contains false information. If the agency refuses to make alterations in the file, the consumer can bring the case to the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations.

The Ontario Building Code was recently introduced in the Legislature. The Code will replace the 900 different municipal building codes currently in effect throughout Ontario with one uniform standard. The Code will thus provide for safer building, efficiency of construction materials, and allow for the rapid introduction of innovative materials and methods in Ontario housing.

Also in the area of housing, the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations recently introduced major amendments to the Condominiums Act. These changes will allow condominium residents to terminate initial management contracts imposed on them by a developer, allow access by the residents to financial records related to the development management of the project, and set binding house rules.

Education

Education continues to be a principle priority of the Davis Government. It is the largest single component of the 1974/75 Ontario Budget, accounting for 29 percent of Provincial spending.

The budget of the Ministry of Education alone is almost \$1.5 billion. The major portion of this — 89 percent — is turned over directly to local school boards in grants, to assist them in operating their schools. Provincially, 60 percent of the total cost of elementary and secondary education is paid for in this way. The remainder is raised by local property taxes. Education spending ceilings, which continue in effect, have resulted in a scrutinizing of spending by school boards to achieve maximum pupil benefit.

The curriculum guidelines established by the Province spell out clearly that schools must give top priority to seeing that each pupil develops essential specific abilities and background knowledge. It is more important than ever that children in elementary schools receive a solid grounding in the basic skills of reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic and other fundamentals.

In the secondary schools also, the traditional subjects are still the basis of the program. English and Canadian Studies have been made mandatory, and subjects such as history and science continue to attract as many students as ever.

At the same time, the curriculum policies of the Davis Government have enabled dedicated teachers to work with children more individually. Many secondary school students can supplement their basic curriculum with contemporary new courses such as Consumer Studies, World Religions and Urban Studies.

In recent developments, a new Special Education Branch in the Ministry of Education is focussing greatly-increased attention on children with learning disabilities, steps have been taken to ensure that almost all approved texts are written and published by Canadians and special courses are now offered for native peoples who want to become teachers.

Great emphasis is being placed on helping pupils know Ontario and Canada better. A new subsidy program has already helped hundreds of Northern Ontario children visit the Ontario Legislature and other educational places like the Royal Ontario Museum and the Ontario Science Centre.

A high priority of the Government is to ensure a strong and viable education system for French-speaking young people. Great strides have been made in just a few years. There are now 82,000 French-speaking Ontario children receiving their elementary school education in French. A system of French-language secondary schools has been developed, more than doubling the enrolment (to over 30,000) in just five years. Many new French-language texts and teaching aids have been made available.

A five-member Languages of Instruction Commission has recently been created to help resolve disputes between parents and school boards over the provision of education programs in the language of a minority group (French or English).

Energy

The Ministry of Energy was formed in July, 1973 to develop an energy policy for Ontario to ensure adequate and secure supplies of energy at reasonable costs and with an acceptable environmental impact. The Ministry is being organized to act as a catalyst and co-ordinator for energy policies. In the administration of policy, it will be engaged in co-ordinating the energy-related activities of other Government Ministries and agencies associated with energy. The Ministry will concentrate on policy matters, but is also responsible for providing technical support to the Ontario Energy Board and for maintaining liaison between the Government and the Ontario Hydro Corporation.

The Ministry of Energy and the Government of Ontario have devoted considerable time and effort to conservation. Threatened shortages of fuel oil and gasoline led to an extensive voluntary conservation advertising campaign in late November and early December 1973. The response was positive—including increased sales of insulation, a two-thirds reduction in the normal Christmas lights load and a decrease in heating oil deliveries.

A Steering Committee on voluntary conservation was formed in November 1973, consisting of a number of Ministries with direct interest in the voluntary conservation advertising program.

Longer term measures and a broader approach to conservation generally are necessary, and to meet these goals the Ministry retained the Ontario Research Foundation to co-ordinate and develop a government-wide conservation program. The aims of the conservation program are to: alleviate supply problems, reduce the need for capital investment, reduce environmental impact, extend the life of non-renewable resources, save money for those practising conservation, reduce the impacts of higher energy prices. These aims can be realized through improved management, reduced consumption and increased efficiency.

Environment

Recently, the Ministry of the Environment has taken a number of steps to come to grips with the growing mountain of garbage produced in the Province of Ontario. The disposal of solid waste is becoming the foremost problem of the many facing the Ministry and has become a concern to almost every municipality in Ontario.

The first step in the attack on solid waste was the announcement of a \$5 million Government of Ontario contribution to the "Watts from Waste" project, a joint undertaking of Metropolitan Toronto, the Ministry of the Environment and Ontario Hydro, to convert garbage into fuel to help fire the giant boilers at the Lakeview Generating Station in Mississauga.

Next, a \$7.5 million experimental resource recovery centre was announced to test the various garbage reclamation processes being developed around the world for adaptation to Ontario requirements in the future.

The third step was the release of the report of the Beverage Packaging Working Group of the Solid Waste Task Force, which through its 16 recommendations pointed the direction in which it felt the Government of Ontario should move on carbonated beverage containers to reduce non-returnable containers in solid waste and landscape litter.

Further programs are being studied to help such urban areas as London, Kingston, the Regional Municipality of Peel, Sudbury and Metropolitan Toronto solve their critical solid waste problem.

Air polluters in all parts of Ontario are coming under closer scrutiny as the result of a reorganization of the Ministry resulting in a decentralization of staff to bring them closer to all areas of the Province.

The Ministry is continuing the work of the former Ontario Water Resources Commission in providing water and sewage treatment facilities for municipalities. Since 1956, the policies of the Government of Ontario have led to the expenditure of more than \$2 billion to provide these basic necessities across the Province.

New legislation will require an assessment of the impact that large-scale undertakings will have on the environment. By this means, the aim is to avoid environmental damage before it occurs, rather than search for a remedy after it has occurred.

Family Law

The Ontario Government recognizes the vital importance of the family in Ontario today and acknowledges the fact that if it is to continue to be a dominant institution, the law related to the family must be adjusted to reflect today's social and economic realities and to provide rules to govern the relations of men, women and children of different cultures, educational backgrounds and levels of expectations.

As a first step in the reform of family law, the Attorney General recently introduced to the Legislature a Bill which removes all remaining legal disabilities from married women, making them the legal equals of other adults. The Bill also ensures that in Ontario, married persons contributing to a family business, including a farm, will not be deprived of rights with respect to the business by reason only of the marital relationship. The Davis Government realizes that the process of developing a new body of law to govern family relations must seek consensus, and to this end, the Government has undertaken a program to increase the public's understanding of the issues involved through public meetings and through the production of material explaining and illustrating the various proposals for change.

This process of public consultation will continue and ultimately will culminate in legislation which reflects the needs and desires of the people of Ontario.

Health Care

Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP)

With all health services in the Province combined under one plan known as the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP), the emphasis is now on the improvement of health care services and facilities. The Davis Government has taken new initiatives recently that will have a major impact on the health care delivery system in the years ahead.

Extended Care and Home Care programs

Plans are proceeding in the formation of district health councils throughout the Province. The chief purpose of these councils is to return the responsibility for decision-making to the local level. The councils will determine priorities and submit recommendations to the Ministry of Health.

In those areas where there is a regional government, the Province has agreed that the district health council can report through the regional government to the Ministry. In other areas, recommendations of the council will go directly to the Health Ministry.

The Government's Extended Care and Home Care programs are designed to offer equally satisfactory and less costly alternatives to hospital-based treatment. During the next year, some 2,000 additional nursing home beds will become available as part of the insured benefits of the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (Extended Care). In addition, Home Care provides insured benefits to those who can receive convalescent and other medical care in their own homes without being hospitalized. This service is now available in every county in the Province.

There is an increased emphasis by the Ministry in its Community Mental Health Program to transfer residents of Ontario's psychiatric facilities to treatment in a community setting. A similar program is gaining emphasis in the treatment of emotionally disturbed children, with a transfer of the children from an institutional setting to group homes.

Housing

In recognition of the severe rises in dwelling costs, the Government of Ontario has given high priority to attacking the housing problem. In November 1973, the Government created the Ministry of Housing and charged it with the responsibility of ensuring an adequate housing supply at reasonable cost, while at the same time, recognizing that this must continue to be done within a sound planning framework. The Premier stressed the need for the continual support of all other areas of Government that have a direct or an indirect influence on the housing sector.

Since that time, the Government has taken a number of initiatives toward fulfilling this commitment. Within six months, the Ministry had made public a statement of policies, *Housing Ontario/74*, which detailed the extent of the Government's involvement in the housing field. Of the total of approximately 100,000 dwellings which are produced in Ontario annually, it is expected that the Ministry of Housing will be directly involved in the production of about 31,000 units in 1974. Included in this total are 6,000 senior citizen's units and about 2,000 additional dwellings for families within the lower income brackets. The successful Home Ownership Made Easy (H.O.M.E.) Program has been expanded and

Housing Ontario/74

Home Ownership Made Easy (H.O.M.E.)

new programs, among them the Housing Action Program, will ensure that several thousand other units will come into production in 1974. Existing dwellings will be preserved through the Ontario Home Renewal, Residential Rehabilitation and Neighbourhood Improvement Programs.

In addition to the approximately \$226 million already committed by the Government for housing programs in 1974, the Ministry of Housing announced on June 20, that an additional \$58 million will be available for first mortgages to families with incomes less than \$20,000. These funds will be applied in Housing Action Areas.

Fight Against Inflation

Inflation is the most critical, and in many cases, the most cruel problem facing citizens of Ontario today. Those who have some control over their incomes are able to cope with inflation by raising their prices or their fees, or they can negotiate for higher wages. But there are thousands of our citizens who can do very little because their incomes are fixed by pensions, by poor health or limited by job skills or job opportunities.

The first priority of the Government is to give them some share in the rising prosperity of Ontario. The thrust of the 1974 Provincial budget is designed to help them while we try to contain and combat inflation.

This year 300,000 residents of Ontario who are over 65 or are blind or disabled, will be entitled to an income under the GAINS program of at least \$2,600 a year and the Government will provide \$75 million to bring their incomes up to that level. At the same time, prescription drugs will be provided free to 540,000 needy, disabled and elderly citizens.

While these measures will soften the impact of inflation, our new policies will make land speculation unprofitable by taking half of the speculators' profits away in taxes.

We will discourage the sale of Ontario property to non-residents of Canada with special taxes and we will provide incentives to small businesses, family farms and mortgage investment corporations.

Through our new system of municipal grants, we will provide approximately \$2.3 billion to municipalities, school boards and other local agencies to hold down property tax rates this year.

GAINS Program

Industrial and Economic Development

Ontario
Development
Corporations

The Davis Government is committed to the economic development of all regions of Ontario and the encouragement of Canadian-owned small businesses to play a full and productive role in this development. Toward this goal, the three Development Companies of the Ontario Government: The Ontario Development Corporation (ODC), The Northern Ontario Development Corporation (NODC) and The Eastern Ontario Development Corporation (EODC) provide financial and advisory services to business in order to stimulate industrial growth, economic development and employment opportunities in the Province.

ODC is governed by a Board of Directors composed of representatives from the business community and serves Central and Southwestern Ontario. Similarly, NODC and EODC Boards of Directors are composed of Northern Ontario and Eastern Ontario businessmen respectively.

Incentive Loans

Under the Ontario Business Incentives Program (OBIP) incentive loans are provided to encourage industrial and economic growth in Ontario. Those businesses eligible for incentive loans include secondary manufacturing industries, service industries in support of manufacturing, tourist operations and tourist attractions which will benefit local resort operators.

In Northern Ontario, incentive loans may be up to 90 percent of approved costs to a maximum of \$1 million. In Eastern Ontario, incentive loans may be up to 75 percent of approved costs to a maximum of \$1 million. In Southwestern and Central Ontario, incentive loans may be up to 50 percent of approved costs to a maximum of \$500,000.

Term Loans

Term Loans are tailored to meet a variety of business and development requirements, in locations and situations where financing is not available from conventional lending institutions on reasonable terms and conditions. Term Loans are normally available to secondary manufacturing companies and qualifying service industries.

Loans are available to assist small Canadian-owned companies to expand, create employment, establish or increase exports, replace imports and generally to stimulate economic and industrial growth.

Tourist industry loans are available in order to strengthen and improve the tourist industry of Ontario and are made to establish new facilities and to upgrade, winterize or expand existing facilities.

In the fiscal year, 1973-74, the number of loans and guarantees approved amounted to 401 with a dollar volume of \$59 million. This compares to 343 loans approved during the previous year with a dollar volume of \$35 million.

Ontario Business
Incentives Program
(OBIP)

Labour

Historically, the public has felt that any Ministry of Labour has as its main thrust Labour Relations . . . how to assist in solving strikes and lockouts. There is no doubt that this is the most visible part of Labour's duties. However, Labour Ministries traditionally are also responsible for safety, employment standards, women's programs, and human rights. The Ontario Ministry of Labour spends more money and devotes more resources to these areas than any other single area of its responsibility.

In workmen's compensation benefits the Government has recently raised the pensions of the 33,000 injured workmen who are on permanent disability awards and the 5,000 widows receiving benefits from the Workmen's Compensation Board. This, combined with a major reorganization of the Board has moved the W.C.B. into a position of leadership in Canada.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission has recently released a report designed to ease the implementation of the regulations regarding equal pensions for men and women. Increased pregnancy leave and minimum employment standards have also been made law along with a new Construction Safety Act which calls for an industry funded but provincially controlled inspection of safety on construction sites.

In the area of women's rights, the Ministry of Labour is now responsible for an office designed to encourage women Crown employees to move into higher paid jobs with added responsibility.

In order to make these programs meaningful, it is incumbent on the Government to inform the public and ensure that the service is available in a variety of languages and on a neighbourhood level. This is the purpose behind a trend to storefront offices throughout urban areas of Ontario which can in turn provide the needed information quickly, personally, and inexpensively.

Local Government Reorganization

As a result of the program to strengthen local government, Ontario now has ten regional governments (Durham, Haldimand-Norfolk, Halton, Hamilton-Wentworth, Niagara, Ottawa-Carleton, Peel, Sudbury, Waterloo, York), a district municipality (Muskoka), a metropolitan municipality (Metro Toronto) and two merged or expanded cities

(Thunder Bay, Timmins). These contain more than 60 per cent of Ontario's population.

The objective has been to combine small municipalities into stronger ones with broader assessment bases and better capability for planning over broad areas instead of competing with one another for new assessment. Many special-purpose bodies, most of them appointed rather than elected, have been dissolved and their functions transferred to the elected councils for better accountability and more rational priority-setting.

Now, in a new phase, reorganization is being undertaken only on the initiative of counties and their neighbouring cities and separated towns. The Province provides guidelines, advice and financial help with studies and reorganizational work. A restructured county will have the same privileges and responsibilities as a region (including provincial grants) and, unlike traditional counties, will include neighbouring cities and separated towns.

Oxford will become the first restructured county in January, 1975. Fifteen other counties have either initiated studies or expressed serious interest in the idea.

Responsive Decentralized Government

Over the past few years, the Government of Ontario has undergone careful restructuring to ensure greater responsiveness in meeting the needs of the public. Active, ongoing programs of restructuring local government, decentralization in the Ontario civil service, wider use of green papers and public forums, and many other initiatives are being undertaken to attain this goal.

Through unconditional grants to local municipalities, the Provincial Government provided \$133 million in the 1973/74 fiscal year for local use. Decentralization of spending also takes place through formal agencies set up by the Government to receive and administer large transfer payments. School and hospital boards, universities, children's aid societies, conservation authorities, development corporations, road boards and library boards all fit under this category.

The Government has made the successful effort in recent years to ensure a uniform distribution of civil servants across the Province on a per capita basis. Examples of this decentralization are the recently reorganized Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Ministry of Treasury, Economics and Intergovernmental Affairs which have established regional offices in Northeastern, Northwestern, Eastern, Central and Western Ontario to enable local decisions to be made on the spot by senior staff.

The Provincial Municipal Liaison Committee, established by the Province, enables local municipal representatives to meet monthly to review provincial policy respecting municipalities. This Committee provides valuable contributions to the policy-making system.

Provincial Municipal
Liaison Committee

Another means employed by the Provincial Government to remain responsive to the public is to invite public opinion before decisions are made. This process takes place through the use of Green Papers containing policy proposals and through public hearings.

Transportation

In recognition of the fact that transportation is one of the most vital problems of the day, particularly in urban areas, the Davis Government has been expanding the scope of its transportation efforts since the early 1970's in order to achieve an integrated and balanced transportation system throughout the Province.

The Government's urban transportation policy is encouraging, through subsidization, greater use of public transit and the development of techniques to make the most efficient use of existing roadways. The Province now pays 75 percent of the cost of all transit capital expenditures and 50 percent of operating deficits, road construction and maintenance costs. Special subsidies are available for signal systems, traffic computers and transportation studies.

Illustrations of the Province's interest in urban transportation are the GO-Urban program, in connection with which construction of an intermediate capacity transit demonstration system is underway at the CNE grounds in Toronto and, the establishment of the Urban Transit Corporation, which has responsibility for the development and marketing of transit equipment and the establishment of a viable Canadian transit industry.

The success of the GO Transit program in eliminating an estimated 14,000 daily car trips in and out of Toronto along the Lakeshore, led to the opening earlier this year of a GO train line between Georgetown and Toronto, and to the planning for a service scheduled for operation late next year, between Richmond Hill and Toronto.

Over the years, Ontario has established an extensive, high quality highway network which is largely credited with the rapid economic development of the Province. Highways are still the backbone of Ontario's transportation system.

Multi-modal operations in Northern Ontario include the norOntair service in the northeast and its pending introduction to more than ten centres in the northwest, along with the expanded role of the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission in bus, trucking, rail and marine services. Priorities in Southern Ontario include greater reliance on expanded rail and bus capacity to satisfy future needs. In Northern Ontario highway development remains a priority.

In June, 1974, a bill was passed in the Ontario Legislature setting up the Toronto Area Transit Operating Authority. The Authority will operate inter-regional services and will have the overall responsibility for co-ordinating regional and inter-regional transit services in the Toronto area.

Urban Transit
Corporation

Toronto Area Transit
Operating Authority

Youth Secretariat

The Davis Government established the Ontario Youth Secretariat in 1972 in recognition of the need for an agency which could focus on the concerns of the Province's young people. The Ontario Youth Secretariat and the Province's youth have direct access to the Cabinet through their own Cabinet Minister. It provides both information to the Government about youth concerns, and information to youth and youth agencies about Government youth programs.

The Ontario Youth Secretariat is presently involved in an examination of the legislation dealing with the age of consent and the age of majority; it is developing information exchange networks to minimize duplication of services in Ontario's communities; it is examining the utilization of youth hostels and the future direction of hostelling in Ontario; it is studying ways and means by which up-to-date information on career opportunities can be made available to young people in the community or school setting; and it is examining the employment opportunities for handicapped youth in the Ontario Government.

Experience '74

In response to youth's expressed concern for meaningful summer employment, the Youth Secretariat coordinates the Experience '74 Special Summer Employment Program. Ontario Experience '74 is made up of 18 component programs which involve young people in a wide range of worthwhile work activities, including conservation, education, recreation, social services, and culture. This \$9 million program employs 7,400 young people, in addition to the more than 10,000 students who work for the Ontario Government in the regular summer replacement program. These jobs are tied to local concerns and can be administered by agencies that are accountable to the communities in the Province.