

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES



CANADA

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 63/24 THE 1967 WORLD EXHIBITION - WORK IN PROGRESS

Text of an address by Mr. R.F. Shaw, Deputy Commissioner-General, Canadian World Exhibition, before the eighteenth Federal-Provincial Tourist Conference, Ottawa, November 26, 1963.

I very much appreciate this opportunity to report to the eighteenth Federal-Provincial Tourist Conference on the Universal and International Exhibition to be held in Montreal in 1967. Believe me, we are fully aware of the important part which those who are represented here today will play in the success of the Exhibition.

We of the Canadian World Exhibition Corporation can plan, construct and operate, but we look to you to bring our visitors to us in comfortable convenience, to take care of them while they are outside the gates of the Exhibition and to persuade them to visit other parts of Canada before or after their visit to Montreal. Believe me, we will do everything possible to assist you in this endeavour but we are certainly depending on you to take the lead. The 1967 World Exhibition will be a success only in as much as it will draw people from the four corners of the earth and send them back to their homes happy and satisfied and carrying with them the image of a growing and powerful Canada - a nation which has reached maturity after 100 vigorous years.

If you are to accept this important assignment, you should begin to know now the details of our policy and our progress.

Theme of Exhibition

Our theme is "Man and his World" and we hope that we will never lose sight of this theme in our development of the Exhibition and its policies. Even in our emblem we have attempted to capture the feeling of the theme. We have used one of the most ancient representations of man, as found in a pre-historic cavern. A vertical line, joined by two arms forming a "Y" and reaching up to the heavens in a gesture of exultation or prayer. But this man is not alone. The arm of his brother or neighbour reaches out towards his extended hand, leaning on it and supporting it. In this way, around the world, a vast network of human solidarity is created.

We have carried this thought also into our plans for the presentation of our theme exhibits.

Commissioner-General Dupuy has said that an International Exhibition is a photograph of the world at a given point in time. Each World Exhibition has had its science building, or its medical building, or its arts building. These have shown, in museum form, the achievements of man and the wonders he has produced.

We plan to adopt a different approach. We propose for our science and cultural exhibits to show man in his environment, to show how he has attempted to study, explain, and to alter his environment for the better. Finally, he has created a new environment in which his descendants have had the opportunity to study, explain and change.

Therefore, in 1967 you will find exhibits with such names as "Man and the Polar Regions", "Man and the Oceans", "Man in Space", and "Man and the City".

Let me explain one of our dreams.

We can visualize that "Man of the City" might be demonstrated through the use of the new moving-picture technique known as "Labyrinth", in which the viewer is surrounded by the picture as if he himself were standing in the middle of it. I am sure that you can imagine the fascinating fashion in which the viewer can be taken through the history of men, living together in communities. Finally, imagine stepping from the theatre into a room with a large picture-window facing across the St. Lawrence River toward the Montreal sky-line. Around the other three walls would be some of the famous paintings of the old city of Montreal, and on the floor, a model of the city as it might be 100 years from now.

Let your thoughts wander also to the story which can be told of man's efforts to conquer the polar regions and to create a useful and prosperous community life under conditions of extremes in climate. We can illustrate man's progress by pointing out to our visitors that the ground upon which Montreal stands was considered - only 200 years ago - as a useless frozen wasteland.

In every exhibit the central figure will be man and what he has done, is doing and hopes to do with his environment.

The Location

Let us move now to the more practical considerations in which I, for one, feel more at home. A beautiful and spectacular site has been chosen in the middle of the St. Lawrence River across which the visitors can look at the sky-line of old and new Montreal.

The beauty of this spot was recognized by its discoverer, Samuel de Champlain, who named it after his wife, Helene, in 1612.

For over 100 years, the island was owned by the Le Moyne family, descendants of the deuxième Baron de Longueuil and one of a famous family of explorers who travelled from Hudson Strait down to Montreal - up through the

Great Lakes - down the Mississippi - and across to Cuba. They left their mark. There are no less than three cities named Le Moyne in the United States of America.

St. Helen's Island became a fortress for the protection of the city but, when it was no longer required for this purpose after 1812, it became a park and picnic ground for Montrealers and has remained so to this day.

Thirty-five years ago a plan was presented to the City of Montreal which suggested the development of the park, which would leave the original island untouched but extend the area by filling downstream over Ile Ronde, upstream over Ile Verte, and create new islands along the south shore of the river.

Following an Old Idea

It is remarkable how closely the present plan for the World Exhibition follows this old idea. On the upstream side, to the left, St. Helen's Island will be increased by 55 acres to incorporate the present Ile Verte. On the downstream, or righthand side, St. Helen's Island has been extended to provide 135 acres and to incorporate Ile Ronde. Along the river side of the St. Lawrence Seaway, a group of islands will be combined to form the 310-acre Ile Notre Dame. And finally, over 100 acres of Montreal island, known as MacKay Pier, will form the entrance and approach to the main centre of the Exhibition. The original St. Helen's Island of about 120 acres will be left untouched to form a natural park - resting place for exhibition visitors. A total of about 720 acres.

Actual experience of other World Exhibitions has shown that we probably do not need as much acreage as is now proposed and, in fact, the Bureau of International Exhibitions has suggested a total of 500 acres to provide for a World Exhibition of the first category, including approaches, parking and "elbow room". It may be, therefore, that not all of the acreage possible will be developed.

To solve our approach and access problem, we have made surveys of the number of visitors and the directions from which they will approach the Exhibition. On our absolute peak day, approximately 400,000 people will visit the Exhibition and most of them will come from the Island of Montreal. Stated in other words, our more than 6,000,000 tourists who will come to the Exhibition from outside the Montreal area will go first to hotels or the homes of friends and relatives to arrange their lodgings before they actually visit the Exhibition site.

Approach Routes

Visitors will approach the Exhibition by car or from the airport, railroad stations and shipping terminals by a system of expressways to be completed before 1967. Through the longitudinal centre of Montreal Island will run the Trans-Canada Expressway, which picks up the traffic from the mountain resort area to the north coming down the Laurentian Autoroute.

Through the centre of the city a new expressway will run along Decarie Boulevard and down to join the new Champlain Bridge and this will be tied in with an extension to Highway No. 2 running closer to the river and picking up traffic from the Mercier Bridge upstream and to the left. On the south shore, a new Highway No. 3 will be constructed, joining the four bridges - Mercier, Champlain, Victoria and Jacques Cartier - and will carry on to the new Boucherville Tunnel crossing downstream. Finally, a short highway will take traffic from the north end of the Champlain Bridge along the river front to the Exhibition and then swing up into the centre of the city and the hotel area.

To gain access to St. Helen's Island, the City of Montreal will extend its new subway under the river to stations on the extension of St. Helen's Island, on the new Ile Notre Dame and in the south shore community of Longueuil.

The Exhibition will construct a new bridge from the MacKay Pier to the upstream extension of St. Helen's Island, and this bridge may be continued by a tunnel under the St. Lawrence Seaway to permit the entrance of automobile traffic from the south shore.

Exhibition Sub-Areas

The Exhibition itself will be on four main areas:

The MacKay Pier, where the stadium, Palais des Congrès, administration buildings, temporary housing and probably some boutiques and restaurants will be located.

Pavilions and theme buildings will be located on the two extensions of St. Helen's Island.

And the amusement park and possibly some pavilions will be located on Ile Notre Dame to complete the complex.

The internal transportation system will be required to transport some 30,000 people per hour from one end of the Exhibition to the other - in about 20 minutes. We plan to use a monorail or similar system from the centre of the hotel area at the Central Station down to the Exhibition entrance at the end of MacKay Pier, along the Pier, across the bridge and then looped into the parking area at Ile Notre Dame. The mass-transportation system will continue from the upstream end of St. Helen's Island, around the present park to the downstream extension and then by a spectacular ride across the Jacques Cartier Bridge, 150 feet above the harbour level, and on to the City again.

To date, our planners have made several further developments and refinements of this plan and we expect to have our completed plot plan or master plan by December 20.

The bridge from MacKay Pier, the internal transportation system, the crossing of the Seaway and the site services are all under design.

The basic design of our theme buildings is also scheduled for December 20.

The dykes outlining the extensions to St. Helen's Island and Ile Notre Dame beside the Seaway are well advanced.

The approach ramps from the existing Jacques Cartier Bridge to St. Helen's Island are being reinforced to take heavy construction traffic and the dredges are at work filling inside the dykes.

There are at present a total of 5 dredges digging up the river bottom to make our islands, ranging in size from the huge "Hydro Quebec" and the "Canadian" down to the lighter "24-inchers". It is quite a sight to see the combination of boulder, pebble, sand and water spewing from the pipe discharges.

I think I should tell you that we have a young, hard-working, rapidly-growing and enthusiastic organization. Practically all of our top people have been given to us by government departments and companies who recognize the vital importance of this great project to Canada. We are led by His Excellency M. Pierre Dupuy, who has spent 42 years in the foreign service of Canada, climaxed in recent years by his appointment to the post of Canadian Ambassador to France.

I would like to conclude by quoting the answer of our new General Manager to a newsman who asked him why he had accepted such an important post with an organization which had been in so much trouble. "It is true" said Mr. Andrew Kniewasser, "that the Canadian World Exhibition Corporation has had some trouble in the past. It is equally true that it still has some troubles, and that it will most certainly find more trouble in the future. That's why I accepted the job."

This statement is typical of the present atmosphere on the twenty-fourth floor of Place Ville Marie.

If we can keep it up - and I'm sure we can - there will be a first-class Exhibition in Montreal in 1967.

S/A