

CALGARY AWAITS...



by **RALPH KLEIN**

MAYOR OF THE OLYMPIC CITY OF CALGARY



“We reached the north hill... and looked down on the scene below us... (a) Corporal was dispatched to find a suitable fording place for the 50 men and wagons... He splashed his way across... By evening, small tents were pitched at the joining of the two rivers. The mounties had arrived...”. And thus was born the settlement of Calgary in the summer of 1875. Nineteen years later, in 1894, the Olympic Games were re-established, and eighty-seven years later still, in 1981, that small settlement, now a great city, was awarded the right to host the most ancient of Games in the most modern of worlds.

The City of Calgary and her citizens have met many challenges before, and have done so with confidence and courage and grace. Now, she awaits the opportunity to display those qualities to all who will join us in our Olympic celebration of youth and sport and culture.

The importance of these Games to Calgar-

Since 1981, when the City of Calgary was awarded the honour of hosting the XVth Olympic Winter Games, the citizens of Calgary have come to learn more and more of these original Olympic ideals.

Perhaps the most important has been the concept of legacy; the principle that Olympic



ians is reflected in our commitment to the original intent of the Games. The Olympic Games provide for a regular meeting of all the peoples of the world in friendly competition. Calgarians share in the belief that the best hope for humanity lies in the ability to understand others.

The promise of the Olympics is that an ancient culture can be married some two thousand years later to a modern world, simply because people and nations, then as now, desire to meet in peace through sport. The unity of place and time so revered by Coubertin is thus perpetuated with each lighting of the Olympic Torch.

Games leave a Host City with far more than they take. In the first instance there is the legacy left to the athletes, who, for the rest of their lives, will cherish their time spent as part of the Olympic ideal. In the second instance, there is the legacy of facilities; Calgarians have always been a sporting people in a sporting country, but not even the most ambitious of winter sportsmen could have imagined the wealth of facilities now being enjoyed by Calgarians because of construction for the Games. From world-class arenas to new ski resorts, and from new housing for students to new roads for travellers, the Olympic Games have truly created a legacy for the people of

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Canada that will remain for generations. Indeed, the people of Calgary are utilizing these facilities now, and thus are drawing from the legacy some fifteen months in advance of the Games themselves.

The desire of the International Olympic Committee to introduce the Games to new areas of the world ensures that the legacy will continue to grow. It is for this same reason that the City of Calgary has committed itself to assisting all future Host Cities, so that our legacy of success can become the foundation upon which better and more perfect games are staged.

The Games are important to Calgarians for many other reasons as well. For if the most important concept of the Games is the legacy they leave, then the most purely enjoyable concept is the celebration of sport itself.

In the same way that, for many centuries, sport was a festival for the Greek people, sport has also been part of the very history and culture that is unique to Canada.

In Calgary, almost from the day that the first soldier splashed across the Bow River to establish the site for the original Fort, sport has been the diversion, pastime and love of every generation of Calgarian. We have always believed that sport is an essential part of the educational system from infancy to maturity. It has an educational value that nothing can supplant, because no participant is worried about another race, religion or wealth; the only concern is "Have you come to play?"

Therefore, when the right to host the Olympic Games is awarded to a City with such a deep and abiding commitment to all that sport means, it is only natural that the entire citizenry becomes captive to the excitement.

Calgarians also share in the belief that the Olympic Games should not just be limited to sport. Coubertin saw Olympism as a philosophy encompassing all the interest and ideals of the modern man, and thus encouraged the Arts to flourish in conjunction with the Games. As a result, each Olympic event is a powerful source of inspiration for the Arts.

In Calgary, the Olympic Arts Festival is the vehicle by which we will show the excellence and maturity of arts and culture in this country to the entire world. It will be a celebration of our achievements and diversity as a nation. The com-

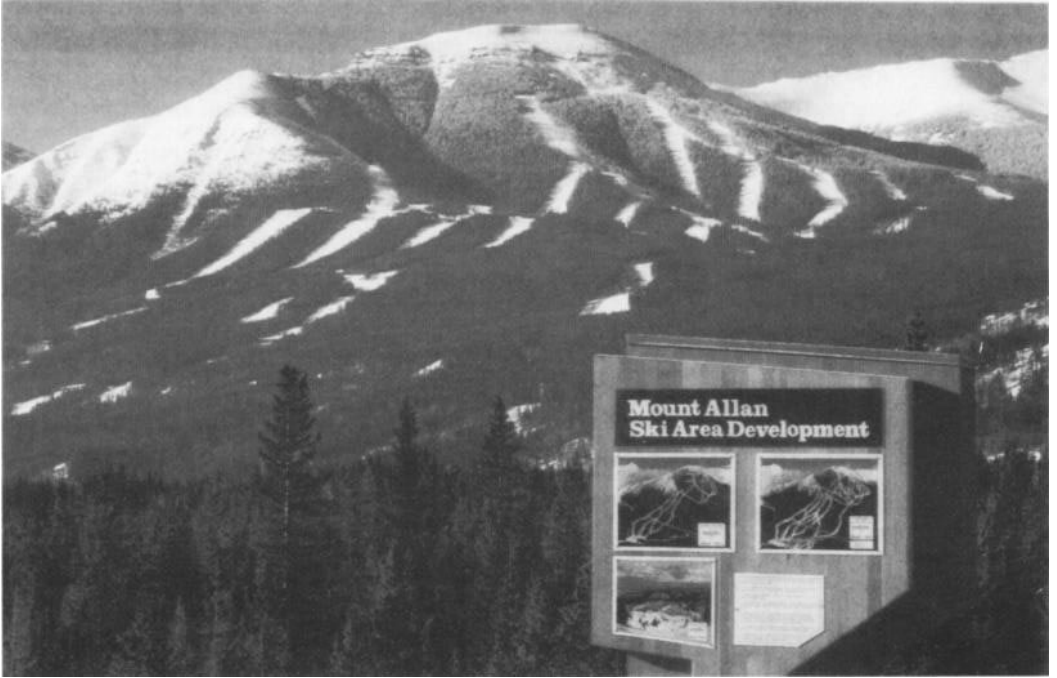
mitment and enthusiasm of individuals and organizations from amateur, professional and academic ranks will assure an Arts Festival of which we can all be proud. It will complement the Olympic experience for Calgarians and our visitors.

In doing so, the City of Calgary reaffirms our commitment to ensure that the Olympic Games celebrate all of mankind's disciplines.

Finally, when discussing the importance of the Olympic Games to Calgarians, we must look beyond the very tangible results such as new facilities for amateur sport, or the celebration of an Arts Festival. We must look to the sense of pride and accomplishment that has become instilled in Calgarians as the date approaches when the Olympic Flame is lit in Calgary.

The decision of the International Olympic Committee to award the Games only to cities was courageous. Long before there were countries and provinces and sporting organizations, people gathered in cities to advance common goals and interests. Cities grow when those common goals are sustained through success, and cities mature when adversity is overcome. But a





city truly comes of age when it reaches out from its local setting to assume a task involving all the world. It is then, when one city can bring together in peace all the people of the world, that the citizens of a city have taken the momentous step of understanding their fellow man.

In the true spirit of the Olympic Games, Calgarians look far beyond the accomplishment of sport, art, and culture. The people of Cal-

gary accept the honour of hosting the Games because they support the ideals as set down with the motto of the Olympic Congress in Varna in 1973 — "Sport for a World of Peace".

It is in that spirit, and on behalf of all the citizens of Calgary, that I invite you to join us in February 1988 to celebrate the Olympic Winter Games.

R. K.

