

Premier Gordon Campbell
Address at the 2010 Olympic Bid Supporters Conference
May 13, 2003

Check Against Delivery

Long before I was elected Premier two years ago, there were already people involved in this bid from all walks of life and from all parts of the province, and I want to say thank you to them.

It's important that we recognize as a province that this bid is for everyone in B.C. – and it's B.C.'s opportunity to do something special for Canada.

You should all know as sponsors that support for the bid stretches from coast to coast to coast. Every Premier is supportive of our bid for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games. As I have visited other provinces, the corporate communities from other provinces have supported our bid.

Last week I was in Toronto where Roots came on as a major corporate sponsor. That was a very positive and successful program for us, and I hope it will be successful for Roots. The 2010 Olympics will be a Canadian success story for Roots and for all the rest of the sponsors that we have here.

Those of us who were fortunate enough to be at the special event held for IOC delegation at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre exploded with pride in what Canada is, what Canada can be, and what Canada represents to the world – that great diversity, that commitment to one another, the equal open sharing with one another.

This is Canada's bid, it's British Columbia's bid, and it's the Squamish First Nation's bid, it's the Lillooet First Nation's bid. The First Nations Summit has come out in favour of their bid. From community to community to community in this province, people see that Olympic dream and they're ready to grab it.

Already, 42,000 people across this province have volunteered for the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games. We are already building our Olympic legacy. Our Legacies Now program is a program that will be a lasting legacy for British Columbians, for our athletes, and for our sporting communities throughout this province.

Across this country there is 102,000 people who have already signed their names in support for our bid. I think that is an exceptional tribute to the work that all of you have done. It's an exceptional tribute to the commitment you have shown to us and to future generations of British Columbians and Canadians.

I remember the Saturday before the IOC evaluation committee came it was a gorgeous day. It was one of those Vancouver days you can't beat. You could see the mountains,

they were a perfect line against the sky, and it was just gorgeous. We went through our presentation for our province and our city. On Sunday, the sky came down on top of us.

It was very grey, and we were sitting there saying, “I hope it’s going to clear up.” And it did – for those who were worried about the road to Whistler from Vancouver, it was the best sightseeing tour they could have possibly had. It was just gorgeous that day.

I met with the Committee Chair and he was pumped. He liked this place; he could see this place as the home for the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games. One of the reasons he could see it is how he felt with not just the sights that we had, not just the work that had been done by our professionals and our volunteers, but how he felt in that village and in this city.

He told me there is no question whether or not we want to host the games, and there is no question whether or not we can host the games. And I told him that, when we do host the games, they are going to be the best games he’s ever seen.

Since I was last here at a sponsor’s event, Canada won two gold medals in hockey. We had our best Winter Olympics ever, with incredible success for our Canadian team.

Yesterday I was in Ottawa talking with the Prime Minister, and the Prime Minister wants us to win the 2010 Olympic Games. He’s thinking about it, he’s working on it, he’s talking to folks about it, and that’s a real tribute to our bid and to what it means to Canada as well.

It is equally important, as we build towards the future, to remember one of the most important sporting events ever held in Vancouver – the miracle mile that was run at Empire Stadium by John Landy and Roger Banister.

John Landy heard that gun go and he took off. He went once around the stadium and he was in front. He went twice around the stadium and he was in front. He went three times around the stadium and he was still in front.

On the last lap, John Landy is running and pushing and going for under four minutes. He can’t see anyone in front of him, he’s moving ahead and thinks just before the finish line let me check, and he looks over his shoulder and loses his stride and Roger Banister goes ahead and wins.

My dad used to say, “Never look back. Keep focused on the job.” The job at hand is to get through that finish line on July 2nd and come out number one.

We’ve tried this before in Vancouver, in 1976. We came second. Second is no fun – believe me, I’ve tried it and it’s no fun.

First is what’s fun. Getting the gold is what’s fun. We have the talent, we have the commitment, and we have the drive because of people like you coming together, working

with us. Across the country, people are excited because of your leadership, because of your commitment, because of the things that you have done, and now we are almost ready to win that gold.

On July 2nd we are going to win gold for Vancouver, for B.C., for Whistler, for Canada, for the Lillooet, for the Squamish, for future generations of British Columbians, and I can't think of anyone better to teach us about how to get through that finish line and get that number one prize than Catriona LeMay Doan.

She's not just an Olympic gold medallist; she's a world record holder. The consistence of her excellence is something that we can all aspire to. The example that she has set for young people across our country is something that can excite us all and inspire them all to be the best they can possibly be.

I want to say thanks to all of you who have been sponsors as we have gone through this quest for greatness, this quest to find the best in ourselves as a province, as a city, and as a country. And I want to say thank you to Catriona for being here today because, if we follow her lead, on July 2nd we're coming out number one.