

**[THE PAST]**

**WISCONSIN'S RICH HERITAGE OF NATURAL  
RESOURCES BROUGHT THE FUR TRADERS  
HERE TO GREEN BAY ABOUT THE SAME TIME  
AS THE PILGRIMS CAME TO PLYMOUTH ROCK  
MORE THAN 300 YEARS AGO.**

**SLOWLY, AT FIRST, BUT THEN FASTER AND  
FASTER, SETTLERS MOVED TO THIS  
TERRITORY TO MAKE USE OF THE ABUNDANCE  
OF WILDLIFE, TREES, MINERALS AND WATER  
UNTIL 150 YEARS AGO THEY FORMED THE  
STATE OF WISCONSIN.**

**WE'VE BEEN IN THE FUR TRADER REPLICA  
CANOES FOLLOWING THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE  
EARLY EXPLORERS...WE CAN'T EXPERIENCE  
THE HARDSHIPS AND THE WONDER AT THE  
ABUNDANCE AROUND THEM.**

**[THE PRESENT]  
BUT AFTER THESE DAYS ON THE FOX RIVER  
WE HAVE GOTTEN A BETTER SENSE OF WHAT  
WAS HERE, HAVE SEEN THE STILL-IMPRESSIVE  
RESOURCE, AND ARE EVEN MORE DEDICATED  
TO CLEANING UP AND MAKING THE RIVER  
AVAILABLE TO THE CITIZENS OF THE STATE.**

**TODAY WE ARE ON THE VERGE OF A GREAT  
PARTNERSHIP. SECRETARY MEYER  
HAS CHALLENGED THE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS  
OF THE FOX VALLEY TO DO TWO THINGS...**

**BY JANUARY 1ST 1999, TO COME UP WITH  
RESOLUTIONS COMMITTING THEIR SUPPORT  
TO THE FOX LOCKS PROJECT AND ...TO  
DEVELOP A PLAN TO RAISE \$2.65 MILLION  
OVER 7 YEARS AS THEIR SHARE OF THIS  
PROJECT.**

**AT THE STATE LEVEL WE ARE DEVELOPING A PROPOSAL FOR MY 99-01 BUDGET WHICH WILL FUND THE OTHER HALF OF THE PROJECT AND CREATE A SYSTEM TO OPERATE AND MAINTAIN THE LOCKS.**

**THIS PARTNERSHIP WILL ALLOW TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP OF THE LOCKS FROM THE ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS TO THE STATE OF WISCONSIN...AND THE CITIZENS OF THE FOX RIVER VALLEY TO MAKE THE IMPROVEMENTS TO THIS WATERWAY THAT WILL ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE ALONG THE RIVER.**

**[THE FUTURE:]  
AND WE ALL KNOW THE IMPORTANCE OF THESE RESOURCES THAT BROUGHT TRADERS AND FARMERS AND CHEESE MAKERS TO WISCONSIN ALL THOSE YEARS AGO – AND STILL BRING THOUSANDS OF IMMIGRANTS TO OUR LAND TODAY.**

**IT IS TO THIS FUTURE THAT WE PLEDGE TO  
CONTINUE THE WORK WE HAVE BEGUN TO  
CLEAN UP THE FOX RIVER, TO DEDICATE  
SPECIAL PLACES LIKE OBSERVATORY HILL  
WHERE JOHN MUIR LOOKED OUT OVER THE  
WORLD SO MANY YEARS AGO...**

**AND TO ENSURE THAT OUR CHILDREN AND THE  
CITIZENS OF WISCONSIN 150 YEARS FROM  
NOW ENJOY THE QUALITY OF LIFE AND  
RESOURCES WE HAVE HERE TODAY.**

**I WANT TO THANK GEORGE MEYER AND HIS  
STAFF FOR SPONSORING THIS INCREDIBLE  
VOYAGE ...PADDLE THROUGH TIME TO OUR  
JOURNEY'S END TODAY.**

Source: Marquette University Libraries; Tommy G. Thompson Collection; Series 2:  
Gubernatorial Speeches

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