

## **Speech to PNWER Annual Summit**

**Premier Gordon Campbell**

**July 12, 2004**

### *Check Against Delivery*

When I say this is the best place on earth to live, is there anyone in this room that doesn't think this is the best place on earth to live? The fact is that we have everything going for us in this region. In the Pacific Northwest we have incredible resources. But more important than the resources, we have incredible people. As you've come together as a group in PNWER, it is you as people working on behalf of your citizens that truly unite us. Each of us can learn from one another.

We have in the last three years in this province taken a number of steps that we hope make the province an even better place for people to live. In many cases they were difficult steps. They were challenges that confronted us in terms of trying to get our economy back on a solid foundation that would allow us to move forward on behalf of all the families that live in British Columbia. I believe that they are starting to see some of the results of those initiatives that we've undertaken. We now are the number one employment growth region in the country. We've had thousands and thousands of people find new jobs here. What's exciting for us is they're finding new jobs in a whole array of sectors of the economy.

You've been talking about energy. Let me just tell you that energy has been one of the true successes that we've seen, and we've seen that success for two reasons: one, we've had both an exceptional minister and exceptional staff working in the Ministry of Energy and Mines.

The minister you heard from today, Dick Neufeld, is here. Dick set out a plan, and he's actually outperformed that plan because he started by doing something that sometimes we forget about doing. He went and he talked to people in the industry. He said: "What do we need to do in British Columbia to make us competitive, to make us a place that people want to invest and open up opportunities in the energy field?"

We heard from the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, and they gave us a pretty long menu. We looked at that menu, and Dick said: "I can't do all 427 of these things, but I would like to start."

He started some major initiatives last year. Those major initiatives included new incentives to drill deep wells and new incentives to encourage summertime drilling in the province of British Columbia. All of those things resulted, in September of last year, in the largest single rights sale in the history of the province. Dick's been building on that and we've seen energy opportunities expand across the province.

There is a major energy basin just to the southwest of Prince George called the Nechako Basin, which is starting to generate significant new interest among those who would like to explore. We also have another major energy basin in the Bowser Basin, just to the northwest of Terrace, stretching up towards the Alaska Panhandle. And, of course, we have magnificent offshore oil and gas potential.

We believe that if we look at those reserves and we look at managing those in an environmentally sound, scientifically secure way, we have an awful lot to offer the energy consumer in British Columbia and, equally importantly, in North America.

When you look at British Columbia today, I mentioned a whole range of reserves, literally billions of cubic metres of natural gas and millions of barrels of oil. You also have 90 trillion cubic feet of coal bed methane that's available for energy development in a sensible and sound manner.

When you take that and match it to the oil sands in Alberta, when you look at the natural gas in the Beaufort Sea - which they're planning a pipeline down along the Mackenzie Valley into the south - when you look at the potential for gas extraction from Alaska through the pipeline that they're proposing and you look at that region of our province and imagine the future, ask yourself this one question: Would you rather depend on Saudi Arabia for your future energy and security or would you rather depend on the communities in PNWER? I'll tell you, the answer is simple. I'd rather depend on the communities in PNWER every single time.

I'm pleased that British Columbia has now joined the Energy Council as well, because it gives us an opportunity to begin to think of how we can work together. The western Premiers have said to the federal government, we want to work with you in establishing an energy strategy that can provide for long-term energy security for the people that we serve but also for the continental markets that are so important for all of us. I think it is a goal and an objective that we share, and it's one that we can accomplish if we keep working in the spirit of cooperation that we've seen in PNWER in the past.

I don't want to pretend that everything is rosy all the time. We have the largest single trading relationship in the world between Canada and the United States. We should recognize there are times when we face challenges.

I would be less than frank if I didn't tell you in British Columbia we've been disappointed with a lot of the lumber producers in the United States and the protectionist policies that they've been pursuing. We've been pleased with the progress we've made through the courts, but it takes an awfully long time, and I can tell you there are people in Washington State today that have lost their work because of the protectionist measures that have been taken in terms of softwood lumber. We are going to win that.

If you think of the power that we can have by uniting our goals and objectives around energy, you should understand that we can have the same economic power when we unite

our goals and objectives around softwood. And we can have the same kind of power when we unite our goals and objectives around the environment.

I had a letter from the Governor of Montana the other day concerned about what she had heard might be taking place with regard to a coal mine in the Flathead River watershed. We are not proceeding with that coalmine. We recognize the importance of the Flathead River. We also recognize the importance of the Governor of Montana who can pick up the phone or write a letter and say: "We don't think this makes sense. Would you please consider what you're doing on your side of the border and how it might impact us on our side of the border?"

The same issue comes up when we deal with something like SE2. That was an enormous issue for us in British Columbia. I can tell you that Governor Locke was very open to the presentation that we made from British Columbia. We thought it was wrong. We thought it would hurt our airshed in the Fraser Valley. In fact, it doesn't look like it's going to go ahead now.

But I want to tell you what will go ahead. We are willing to work with Washington State to try and ensure that they have the energy that they need to meet their goals without having a degradation of our environment and our airshed. If we work together we can find answers to those things. That's one of the true values that an organization like PNWER has. Again, I want to say thank you for providing that framework and providing that foundation that allows us to work together. Working together means we're working on both sides of the border to accomplish our goals.

As you look at this region, you recognize again how much we have in common as we look at creating a balanced energy platform. In British Columbia, we're looking for 50 per cent of all of our new energy to come from clean energy and from alternative fuel. In the last year we have let \$800 million in contracts for alternative energy, independent power producers. We have established the opportunities for wind power, for tidal power, and for run-of-the-river power.

We're very proud of the fact that in British Columbia we have the largest concentration of hydrogen fuel cell research and development activity taking place on the continent. We have a goal for ourselves: we would like to create a Vancouver to Whistler hydrogen highway between now and 2010 for when we have the Winter Olympics.

We can share that and transfer that technology to other communities, and if we work together we don't just create opportunities in British Columbia; we create opportunities in Washington and Oregon and Idaho and Montana and Alaska. That's, indeed, what our goals and objectives should be: to have a vision that embraces all of us so that we can move forward together and create the kind of progress that the people we serve want and expect. I believe working together we will succeed in making that vision a reality.

As we do that, we have to recognize that even with the hydrogen highway we're going to have to improve our transportation infrastructure. We are investing hundreds of millions

of dollars in British Columbia with the help of the Canadian government in improving our infrastructure along the southern border of British Columbia.

We are investing \$670 million in improving the Kicking Horse Pass which goes between Alberta and British Columbia. We are about to complete a \$1 billion B.C. Rail investment partnership which will open up enormous opportunities in our north, in our port in Prince Rupert for container facilities, for prairie farmers, for the northeastern farmers and people from Alberta.

All that is a part of creating a gateway to opportunity in the northwest, opening our part of the world up to investment, opening our part of the world up to resource development, opening our part of the world up to tourism development so that we have jobs and the economic activity we need to support families whether it's Alberta or British Columbia or the Yukon.

There's no single thing, for me at least, over the last three years that has been as telling in terms of our benefits in British Columbia as what happened as we approached the day we were awarded the 2010 Winter Olympics.

I can tell you, when you go to Prague and you're dealing with the International Olympic Committee and you have one of those landslide victories - we won by three votes - every single bit helps. What you did in your Legislatures in Washington and Oregon and Alaska and Idaho and Montana to say you were behind us, what they did in Alberta and the Yukon, made an enormous difference to us. We will all benefit from that.

As we think of those benefits, I should tell you this. It doesn't matter whether it was in Salt Lake or whether it was in Sydney, whether it was talking to the people from Lillehammer in Norway or the people in Calgary in Alberta, they all told us this: the sooner you pick up the Olympic torch, the sooner you pick up the Olympic ideal and start working your way towards the Olympics the more benefits you're going to get from them.

You may get those benefits if you're a small sewing company like the Idaho Sewing for Sports Company that generated 25 per cent of its sales supplying hats for corporate sponsors at the Salt Lake City Winter Olympics, or like Kootenay Knitting, which doubled its production and quintupled its employment. You might get it from Idaho's Fleetwood Homes who got a \$1.5-million contract to build modular housing for cross-country skier or from Sitka Log Homes in 100 Mile House in British Columbia who built three major alpine lodges for Salt Lake.

There is no end to the opportunities that are there for people if you want to reach out and grab them. But it requires all of us to think of those opportunities and then to be willing to pursue them.

The Olympics creates enormous opportunities for all of us. It creates enormous economic opportunities for the small businesses and large businesses. But it's not really the economic opportunities that are the spirit of the Olympics. This was a time for us, I can

tell you, in British Columbia where we brought everyone together. This is an Olympics for the Tsleil-Waututh First Nation, for the Musqueam, the Squamish, and the Lillooet. It is an Olympics for British Columbia. It was an Olympics for Canada.

And the Olympics is always about reaching out to be the best that you can possibly be, finding what it is that you value and coming together as a community in trying to attain those goals and striving for one's best.

We want to share that spirit. There are huge opportunities for all of us. The world is coming to Canada. It is coming to Vancouver and to Whistler. It is coming to the Pacific Northwest. So I ask you to join us in celebrating that spirit of excellence, join us in showing the rest of the world that we, indeed, live in the best place on earth.

Thank you very much.