

**B.C. Road Builders and Heavy Construction Association
Premier Gordon Campbell
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Check against delivery

It's great to be back at the Road Builders' annual convention, and it's equally great to be here celebrating your fortieth anniversary. Congratulations. You're looking good for 40, very good. I can say that because I'm a lot older than you guys.

You know, it's interesting to come in and chat with you and sense the excitement that's taking place across the province, particularly in the Road Builders of British Columbia where you've been such a big part as we've tried to turn the province's economy around. You've made a huge change in the lives of British Columbians in every single region of the province. On behalf of all my colleagues I want to say thank you.

I want to thank your president, Jack Davidson. Jack is a relentless advocate on behalf of the Road Builders, but more importantly, he's a relentless advocate on behalf of the province of British Columbia and what we can do when we work together. We should never underestimate the difference that it makes to have someone who is upfront, who tells you what's going on, who tells you what's working and tells you what's not working.

When he gives you the second bit of news, what's not working, he comes and says: here's how we could make it work. I want to say thanks to Jack for all the time and effort you've put into finding solutions on behalf of all of us.

I am pleased to be here with a number of my colleagues, because this all happens because of an awful lot of people who are working long and hard to try and make it happen. First of all, I want to introduce a person whose every second word is "roads". And it's not the Minister of Transportation; it's Dick Neufeld from the Peace River, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources.

Another person who's been working very hard since she was elected in the spring of 2005 is the Minister of Labour and Citizens' Services, someone who's been involved in the building industry for a long time; Olga Ilich joins us today. Thanks for coming, Olga.

My parliamentary secretary for rural development: the MLA for Kamloops–North Thompson, Kevin Krueger is with us today. Kevin, thank you for coming.

And an MLA who's spent an awful lot of time trying to point out how important it was that we have a good, safe, secure, environmentally sound, cost-effective

road system in the Sea-to-Sky Highway: Joan McIntyre, from West Vancouver–Garibaldi, also joins us today.

I've saved the two other ministers for now; I want to introduce the one that you know the best. Kevin Falcon has been not just a relentless advocate but a real leader in terms of building the transportation infrastructure of the province. If you want to hear someone who's excited about transportation, talk to Kevin Falcon. In fact, if you could take some of the time that he gives to me on the transportation subject, I'd appreciate it. He is just relentless.

And I can tell you this: he is someone who really understands the full scope of what we're trying to do in terms of building a new Asia-Pacific gateway not just for British Columbia but for all of Canada. He's someone who you have confidence in. You should know this: I've got great confidence in him too; in his vision, in his leadership, in his ability to solve problems. He's doing a great job on behalf of all of us: Kevin Falcon, the Minister of Transportation, the MLA for Surrey-Cloverdale.

Now, I should tell you I went away to Asia for two weeks; I came back, and I found out that *Vancouver Magazine* had made Kevin Falcon the number one, most important guy in Vancouver. I was a little ticked about that. But, you know, what can you do? There's a guy who's doing his job, so way to go.

Finally, I want to introduce the Minister of Economic Development and the minister who is responsible for the Asia-Pacific Initiative and the Olympics and for creating the framework that will continue to build on the momentum of the last five years and drive British Columbia forward into the 21st century with a sense of confidence. I think he's doing a great job. He's got a huge portfolio, and I can't imagine how much work it takes to keep it all together, but he does a superb job for all of us. Colin Hansen is with us, from Vancouver-Quilchena.

I wanted to talk to you all today about something that you know about after 40 years and that's teamwork. It's understanding how we can take advantage of the changes that are taking place in the world to really drive an incredibly exciting future, not just for British Columbia but for Canada.

Think back 40 years, think back to 1966 and think how much the world has changed in that time, and recognize how much faster it is changing today than it was changing then. In 1966 there was a Premier who had a true vision for British Columbia. In fact, his campaign "Roads to Resources" was what really drove this province to the future that we enjoy today, not just in terms of energy development but in terms of road development, in terms of resource development. Without that vision, without that commitment, without that drive, we would be living in a completely different province in 2006.

You know, in the 1960s it wasn't always as clear to people then as it is to us today, the immense benefits of W.A.C. Bennett's vision. There isn't anyone in British Columbia today who doesn't recognize the contribution that W.A.C. Bennett made to the long-term future of the province. He thought about the future. He thought about the next generation, and he committed himself and the government's resources to building that next generation — sometimes in spite of significant opposition.

I think it's important for us to realize that because today we live in a time of phenomenal change. It is change that we all have difficulty embracing because it is so different than the world we're used to living in. In fact, sometimes I think the only thing this world has in common with the world of the 1960s is the need to invest in transportation infrastructure so we can take advantage of it and ride the waves of change that are in front of us. We continue to have to do that.

There are two big words — they both start with 'A' — that I want to underline today.

One is "aging", and the other is "Asia". Both of those things drive huge changes. You know, they're not something you necessarily see day-to-day in the ups-and-downs of what's going on, but they are big currents that are sweeping across our province, our country. They're sweeping across the western world.

You couldn't find a better place to take advantage of those huge currents of change that are confronting us than in British Columbia, because we know we have the resources and we have the people. We have people who are creative, who are thoughtful and who will find answers, if we can just be clear about where it is we want to go.

Let me just talk quickly about aging. You know that infrastructure ages. Those investments that were made in the sixties set us on a long-term course and, frankly, if we had maintained that level of investment through the seventies and the eighties and the nineties, we wouldn't be in as difficult a challenge as we are today of taking advantage of what lies before us. We didn't maintain them, so when we think of aging infrastructure, we also have to think of the fact that we're aging. I know that some of us don't like to think of the fact, but we're aging. Ken mentioned that I was first elected in 1984. It's shocking for me to think that I was first elected in 1984.

As I mentioned, I just went to Asia. The first time I went to Tokyo I was with a delegation and I was the Mayor of Vancouver. On one side of me was David Strangway, who was the president of the University of British Columbia, and on the other side of me was Bob Kadlec, who was the chair of the Vancouver Board of Trade. We walked into a delegation meeting in Tokyo. The Mayor from Tokyo came in, and he looked at this delegation. There was a grey hair on one side, a

grey hair on the other, and a kid in the middle. They had to actually point at me and say: no, that's no kid, he's the Mayor of Vancouver.

This time, when I came back from Tokyo, no one had any questions about who was the premier. No one thought I was the young guy in the crowd anymore.

I was also in Guangzhou. Now, here is an example of the changes that we're facing in the world. The first time I visited Guangzhou, China, it was called Canton. It's the capital city of Guangdong province, which is a sister province for British Columbia. Guangdong province is about a hundred million people.

When I first visited Guangzhou, I got off the plane and then got on a bus with the delegation. A Chinese fellow came in and said I can't sit on the bus, I had to sit in the limousine, in the back by myself. I went out, and I got in the limousine. The limousine drove down the road, and there were four motorcycle policemen in front of me and four motorcycle policemen behind me. Now, these guys know how to treat their elected officials!

We were driving down this road, and there is a phalanx of bicycles coming towards us, 12 abreast — it's 1987. The four policemen in front have little sticks with them and they were swatting at the guys on their bikes, to clear a path so the car could pass through them. Now, sitting in the back seat I'm thinking to myself: 'Oh, my goodness, I'm by myself here. What's going on? I can't believe these guys are doing this.' It was a totally different world.

When I was there this year I probably saw five bicycles in Guangzhou. I haven't seen so many cars, so many roads, so many elevated highways, so many cloverleaves. That's change. That's 19 years and that made me feel just a little old too. But that city's changed dramatically: 100,000 people a month were moving into Guangzhou. It's now a city of ten million people.

You know how we've got an Olympics coming? Now, if you want to see an Olympic story, you look at Deidra Dionne, an incredible athlete — she was a medallist in Salt Lake City in 2002. She breaks her neck, heals and says, 'By the way, folks, I'm going to win a medal in Vancouver in 2010.' That's what I call the Olympic spirit. I want to say thanks for coming, Deidra, it's great.

Now, our federal-provincial budget, is about \$1.2 billion for the Olympics and we're going to meet that budget. But in Beijing they are building ten Olympic venues, including one Olympic stadium they call the bird's nest, which they have told us has a budget of about \$600 million by itself and will house 91,000 people. Their total budget for the Beijing Olympics is estimated at \$33 billion. Actually, they're not 100% sure about the budget, but their 2008 Olympics is about showing the world what China is, has and all it can do. It's incredible, and it is spectacular what they are doing. But it is huge. It is bigger than anything that we can imagine.

That's one of the messages that I have to bring to you about one of the A's — Asia — Asia is changing the world. Frankly, when I say it that way, it's not correct. Asia has changed the world. All of the world is in China right now.

An industrial worker in China is paid approximately the same wage as an industrial worker in England in the mid-1800s, and they save 50 per cent of their salary to send it home. In Beijing there are 500,000 new cars a year coming into Beijing. Guangdong province, where we were visiting, is actually called the "factory to the world".

What happens when there's all that economic activity taking place? It creates opportunity – there and here. If we look at what's taking place in the world, if we look at whether it's aging or whether it's Asia, these are great currents that we can ride. We can't resist them. I think that's what's really important, because it's not enough to ride the world that we maybe got comfortable with in the fifties and sixties and seventies. We're now in the 21st century; it's the Pacific century.

And we are Canada's Pacific province. We are the only province in Canada that's a Pacific province. You know, sometimes it's hard for us to understand why the rest of the country doesn't quite get the Pacific. But we should remember this. When Lorne Calvert, the Premier of Saskatchewan, looks out to the Pacific, his view is blocked by the Rocky Mountains.

Earlier on when I was a mayor, I was sitting in a mayors' conference, and I was being very nice because it was between when I was elected mayor and when I was first sworn in. I was sitting there very quietly and politely. There were two mayors there from Alberta: one from Edmonton, Laurence Decore, and another was from Calgary, Ralph Klein. I was being very polite until they said they were Pacific Rim cities. I had to point out that, actually, the Rocky Mountains were between them and the Pacific Ocean.

Everyone wants to be in the Pacific, but we're the only one that is in the Pacific. If you go to British Columbians and ask them, "Are you a Pacific province?" 70 per cent will say, Yes. If you ask them across the country, 32 per cent.

We have to fashion a change in how we think. We have to get Canada to understand what the Pacific means to Canada because if we do that, we will have Canada as a true partner of the Pacific.

I want to just take a moment here to remind you of what's happened over the last few years in British Columbia, because what I want to outline when we finish this video is what has to take place in the next few years. Allow me to underline this for you: if we commit ourselves to this, we can accomplish our goals. It won't happen if we don't focus on it and don't drive towards it.

Let me just take you back to 2002 and what we talked about doing, and have a look at this video, and see the progress that we've made over the last few years in building a transportation infrastructure that's essential to the future of the province.

Today we have to look out to the future and ask what can we do and how do we invest together? \$2.3 billion is planned at this point for the next three years in terms of transportation investment, \$790-some-odd million has been invested this year by the province of British Columbia. Every single cent that we get for fuel tax goes towards transportation infrastructure, and then we invest some more. Because this is going to be the answer to the long-term economic future for not just British Columbia, but for Canada.

So we're being very clear with our federal colleagues and friends in Ottawa. We're saying we need a major national investment to open this infrastructure as well. Why do we do that? Because this is Canada's Pacific gateway; it's Canada's port to Asia.

Eighty-five per cent of all of the goods that are shipped by ocean from Canada goes through British Columbia's ports, Canada's Pacific ports. That's a huge amount. And the future is going to be locked into our resource development and in getting our resources to markets quickly. So we've asked the federal government to be a major partner in building Canada's Asia-Pacific gateway. But frankly, we can't wait. We have to get on with it now.

In Shanghai — they're building a new port. Currently, it's seven million TEUs. To ensure efficient access to that port, they built a 32.5-kilometre bridge. They're intending to expand that port from the seven million TEUs to 14 million TEUs within the next five years. In Hong Kong the ports are 20 million TEUs. Even in Yokohama, our sister port with the city of Vancouver, they have three million TEUs in that one port. But when we talk about British Columbia's ports, we're talking about two million.

So we're looking to the future; we're looking to expand our ports to accommodate their capacity. And as we expand our ports, we have to recognize there have to be connections between the water's edge and the city centres and the markets shippers are trying to serve.

When we talked to our federal friends, we point out to them the importance of moving goods through the major transportation corridor in the Lower Mainland. Right now the congestion costs, according to Transport Canada, are about \$1.5 billion a year. That's an economic drag on all of us. So we're saying to the federal government: come and be a partner with our public sector, with the private sector. Be a partner as we capture those huge Asian opportunities.

We've set a goal for ourselves of quintupling the number of TEUs that we put through our ports in the Pacific. That will mean a major expansion in Prince Rupert to 600,000 TEUs. It seemed like a large number when we started, but we have to think three or four million TEUs coming through Prince Rupert and the northwest. Combining Prince Rupert, in the northwest; with Kitimat, with Terrace, with its potential for an inland port, sorting the goods and logistics. And we have to invest in the rail and the road to make sure they connect with the marketplaces that they have to serve. That's part of our objective. That's why it's so critical the federal government be involved.

In case you hear someone tell you that we're asking for too much, I want you to think back 50 years to before you were even created as an organization. In the early fifties the government of Canada joined the government of Ontario and said: You know, the world is changing; we have emerging economies taking place in northern Europe; we want to make sure those emerging economies can plug in to North America. And they invested in the St. Lawrence Seaway. The St. Lawrence Seaway cost approximately \$6.1 billion of investment from the federal government. In case you didn't know this, you paid for that in British Columbia. We didn't say we shouldn't pay for it; we paid for it.

All we're asking for is the same kind of commitment to British Columbia and the northern Pacific economies as Canada invested in the North Atlantic and Atlantic economies 50 years ago. And we will have the same benefit for the entire country. We will lead it, but we need to be partnered, both with the federal government and with the private sector.

We know that when we work together with the federal government and the private sector through public-private partnerships, we create real value for taxpayers. Public-private partnerships like the Sea-to-Sky Highway: the auditor general confirmed an estimated \$131 million additional dollars in value to the taxpayer over what would have been expected if we'd gone through the traditional public procurement process.

We should recognize they've done great work together. I haven't talked to anyone who's used that road who hasn't said how well it has been managed. Congratulations to you and thank you for all that you've done on the Sea-to-Sky.

Sea-to-Sky is just one example. We're going to build a South Fraser Perimeter Road. We're going to build a North Fraser Perimeter Road. We're going to twin the Port Mann Bridge so we can move not just goods but people and transit through that corridor again, after 20 years of it not being able to move through that corridor. These will help us open up roadways to air cargo at YVR, where they're investing \$1.4 billion additional dollars in improving that.

We're going to look at the great city of Prince George in the north, to develop an inland logistical port where rail and road and airports come together, where we

meet the needs of the great northern cargo transportation that's taking place across the north Pacific. They're landing in Anchorage, and Anchorage has run out of space and capacity. We believe that we can give them Prince George as a positive alternative.

So today as you celebrate your fortieth anniversary, I'd ask you all to think about the next 40 years and think what you'd like your province to look like and what you'd like your province to be and what you'd like us to be able to contribute to the country.

Because this is the time for British Columbia to contribute to Canada. It's the time for us to shape Canada's vision of itself; to join with the provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and talk to them about what we can do to take advantage of the Pacific world that's upon us. The Pacific century is here. We are at the edge of the Pacific century for North America. It is a huge strategic geographic advantage that we have in British Columbia.

So I mention two A's: aging and Asia. There's one other A: Act. We can't talk about it. We can't hope somebody else does it. We can't wait for Ottawa. We've got to get on with it.

Our government intends to get on with it. Our government intends to lead Canada into the Asian century. Our government intends to make sure that the people of British Columbia have a transportation infrastructure they can depend on: it connects communities; it connects people; it connects our ports to the people of Canada and to the markets of North America. To do that, we're going to need your help.

For 40 years you've provided that help. For 40 years you've brought your creativity, your expertise, your enterprise to the creation of an infrastructure that connects people to the world. We need that as we look to the future.

I believe that working together with the Road Builders of British Columbia, with the province of British Columbia, with the government of Canada, and with the great strength of the private sector, we will open up our province for the next half century, in the same way, with the same kind of vision that Canada was opened up from the 1960s to the end of the twentieth.

The 21st century is ours; the 21st century is yours. Join us in taking advantage of it, so our children say thanks for doing the right thing, thanks for doing it on time, and thanks for making British Columbia Canada's Asia-Pacific gateway.