

## **Premier Christy Clark keynote at the Premier's BC Natural Resource Forum**

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Premier Christy Clark: I am delighted to be here today on the traditional territory of the Lheidli-T'enneh First Nation. And of course if there was anything that was missing last night at the roast of Pat Bell, it was hearing Chief Dominic Frederick. He didn't get up last night. I think he would have provided an even more entertaining, maybe even a little bit more inappropriate jokes about Pat Bell than we even heard from Ben Meisner. So thank you for welcoming us to your territory today, and thanks to all of you for coming.

Mike Morris has taken this conference on in its 11th year, ten years of Pat Bell organizing it and with so much help from the local community here, people like Byng Giraud from Vancouver and of course Kevin Brown from Prince George and many, many other volunteers who helped with it and now in its 11th year, the biggest, the brightest we've ever seen in a resource forum.

As Byng said last night in his comments, this really has become the must-attend event of the year in British Columbia. In Canada if you are in resource development, if you care about the resource economy, if you recognize, as you should, that British Columbia is the centre of the resource in this country, you're here at this event. So thank you very much, all of you, for coming. Thank you to Shirley Bond, of course, for her assistance in bringing this together, too, and in particular Mike Morris. Thank you, Mike.

Of course it's not just members of the resource industry who are here. Also almost more than a third of our Legislature is here; upwards of 35 members of the BC Liberal caucus and cabinet are joining us here today. I hope you'll take a minute to bend their ears. They all know a lot about resource development, but we can all stand to learn a little bit more. So don't be shy. Make sure you find them, you talk to them and you make sure that they know what your concerns are and what your hopes are for the future. I'm going to ask every member of our caucus to please stand up so that you can recognize them and know who they are.

I have to say we don't do a very good job of spreading out in a crowd. Marvin Hunt is single-handedly holding down the northwest corner of the room, all the way from Surrey. Thank you, Marvin.

Now, we are here very much to talk about the future, the future of our province, the future of our country and the role that we are going to play in shaping the future of the world as an energy powerhouse here in British Columbia and in the west.

Now, five years ago we suffered here in Canada and around the world the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression, and a lot of western countries still have not recovered from that recession. But what did you do in the resource sector? You used your typical determination and your creativity to adapt, to survive and now begin to thrive as we see some real upside, and I'm

glad that you are doing that because we as a generation are faced with a stark choice. We built this country. Our parents and grandparents, more precisely, built this country in an era of growth where governments were seeing the economy grow by 7 and 8% in the 1950s and 60s. That was when they built the institutions that we love and that we've come to depend on, institutions that in many ways define us as Canadian. But we haven't seen that kind of growth since I was a kid in the 1970s. We've been looking at about 3% growth on average since then. Now today we're looking at about 1.5% growth.

So we have a choice as a generation. Do we grow so that we can maintain those institutions that our forebears built, the institutions that in many ways define this country? Do we grow, or do we manage decline? Do we watch those institutions crumble because we can no longer afford to look after them?

I say we grow. I believe we have to grasp this opportunity to make our economy bigger because our parents left us an incredible legacy that is Canada and we have to do the same for our children and their children by maintaining and growing that legacy. But the only way to do that is to say yes to economic growth.

So we are determined, my government, our team, our cabinet and our caucus, we are determined to make British Columbia the fastest-growing economy in Canada. We are determined to make this province, the most western province in this nation, the economic engine of Canada, and in order to do that we know one thing. We have to stand by you in the private sector. We have to stand by you in the resource sector. We have to make sure that we know our job every day is to try and get to yes rather than trying to erect barriers that are essentially intended to make sure we get to no, because we know it is the private sector that grows an economy, not government. We also know that you cannot grow an economy by digging ourselves in a hole, hoping that our children will dig us out of the deep debt we've left for them. That's why our most important priority in growing our economy begins with balancing our budget, controlling and constraining government spending.

In 2013 there was a lot of debate about whether or not we did, indeed, balance our budget, and time has proven those critics wrong. We have balanced our budget, and in February Mike de Jong, our Finance minister, with a lot of sweat and a lot of hard work, is going to introduce the second consecutive balanced budget here in British Columbia. It was a promise we made and it's a promise we are going to keep because fiscal discipline is where all of that economic growth has to begin. Balancing budgets, controlling spending is at the core of good government, and if Saskatchewan manages to balance their budget this year it's worth noting that we will be one of two jurisdictions, only two jurisdictions in Canada that are balancing our budgets in these difficult economic times. But that is the most important single legacy that we can leave our children because you can't pay off your debt if you don't start by balancing your budget.

But let's talk a little bit about how we want to get to yes. We have been guided since February 2011 by a plan, a plan we introduced at the Port of Prince Rupert to British Columbians called the BC jobs plan. We've been guided by that and the clear goals that it set ever since. We've updated it. We've added to it. Where we've reached our goals we've introduced new ones. But we've stuck with it with dogged determination because the only way you get to your goal is if

you stick to your plan. You don't veer off and change your plan every time you hit a bump in the road. And God knows we hit a few bumps over the last two years. Our plan is premised on getting our economy, getting our government to yes.

Last week I spoke to the Truck Loggers Association and it was a good way to start the year of speaking events for me because forestry really is British Columbia's founding industry. There's no question about it. I talked to them about how my family has its roots in the resource industry. My great grandfather when he came to the west coast of Vancouver Island and my grandfather as the third non-aboriginal child born at Clayoquot in 1899 were all born into the fishing industry, a resource industry that, again, is a founding industry of British Columbia. And I reminded them about the fact that it reminds me every day of how all of us stand on the shoulders, in some way, of someone who has made their living and created wealth in the resource sector. That is where we all come from.

My great grandfather was a fisherman. My grandfather was a fisherman. My father was a fisherman. He made his way to university on my grandfather's salary at the cannery and he became a teacher, the first one of his family to ever go to university or even graduate high school. Then I became the Premier of our province. All of that happened because of the resource sector in this province, and British Columbians, no matter where they live, no matter what they do for a living, need to remember that, that we stand on your shoulders and without you the wealth and the benefits that we enjoy every single day would disappear.

In forestry there are about 56,000 people directly employed in the sector today, and Minister Thomson is working to try and make sure that we continue to support the forest industry, which is now starting to see real upside as their economy grows, making sure that we examine the effectiveness of BC timber sales, which is something the industry has asked us repeatedly to do, make common sense improvements to make sure that all forest operators have access to the timber that they need so that they can grow their business and the jobs that go with it, continuing to cut needless red tape so it's easier to put people to work, continuing to diversify, most importantly, our customer base, opening up new markets.

I've led four trade missions to Asia in the last two years and they are really paying dividends, building on the work that Mike de Jong and then Pat Bell did in opening up Asia for our forest market. We are now setting export records to China and Japan in 2013. At the end of October softwood lumber exports to the US are now up again, \$2.13b compared to \$2b for all of 2012. In Japan they're at \$703m compared to \$674m for all of 2012. Those are promises we made to expand our export markets and promises we've kept.

And if forestry is our founding industry, mining is our comeback industry. It was a very rough decade in the 1990s. I won't go into that; I don't think we need to. But in 2001 there were 15 operating mines and today we have 19. The production value of mines in our province has gone up by a \$0.5b. In 2012, more than 30,000 people were employed in mining, mineral exploration and related sectors. Since the jobs plan was released, two new mines have opened, New Afton and Mount Milligan. Five more are under construction or are permitted. Mount Milligan alone has created more than 350 permanent jobs. It is the first new metals mine in British Columbia in a decade, and I am immensely proud of the businesses, of the community, of the First Nations and of government policy-makers who brought Mount Milligan to life with all of its economic

potential. Thank you.

And with Bill Bennett in charge of mines, we are working on more. We are going to reach that goal we set by 2015, aren't we, Bill? Absolutely, we are, because in the jobs plan we have committed to eight new mines and nine expanded by 2015. That is going to mean annual mine operation revenue will increase by \$1.6b. There will be approximately 2,000 construction jobs, 2,000 direct new jobs, 3,000 indirect new jobs, and it will maintain those 12,500 existing jobs that all of those families depend on when those workers bring home those cheques and those high wages.

We are already more than halfway to meeting our goal that we set in the jobs plan for the mining sector. Promise made, promise kept.

The third sector I'd like to touch on today is the biggest and newest opportunity in resources that British Columbia has on the horizon, and that's LNG. For BC, LNG plants and the supporting pipelines could create more than 39,000 construction jobs, 75,000 permanent operational jobs. The cumulative gross domestic product could total \$1 trillion over the next 30 years, literally transforming the face of our province and our country forever.

Global demand for energy is expected to double over the next 20 years. We have the resources, we have the infrastructure, we have the drive, we have the people to turn all of that demand into a debt-free future for our kids and grandkids. So let's talk about that future, because we have 3,000 billion cubic feet of natural gas, some of the biggest gas resources anywhere on this globe. We have the shortest shipping routes to Asia. We have a competitive regulatory tax environment. We will soon announce details about our tax structure for the industry. We have the goods. We have the means. We have the people. We have the market. China has decided to nearly double the use of natural gas in their energy supply, an economy that's growing at 7.5% and 8%.

Petronas has announced its intention to invest \$16b into BC. The next biggest investment is, of course, from Rio Tinto Alcan, a \$3b investment up in Kitimat. Until Petronas came along, that was the largest single private sector investment ever in British Columbia. Petronas aims to beat that.

Recently it was announced that Chevron Apache has awarded the contract to lead all engineering procurement and construction services for the Kitimat LNG plant. Last week we reached an agreement with Woodside for the exclusive right to build an LNG export terminal on the south portion of Grassy Point. They will be neighbours to Nexen CNOOC, who are on the northern half. That is momentum, and it is building.

But any discussion of a better future needs to include a discussion of a better environment. We have a responsibility to leave this province as beautiful and as clean, if not cleaner, than it was when we found it. Just as we owe it to our children to create new opportunities for them, we owe to them a legacy of clean air, of clean water and unspoiled landscapes. There is no contradiction there. British Columbia is already a leader in climate change and in developing clean energy. Washington, Oregon, California, one of the biggest economies in the world, are looking at how they can emulate what we have done here.

And while we are a climate leader and we continue to grow our economy faster than the national average, let's not forget that by exporting our clean natural gas to Asia, we help diminish global greenhouse gas emissions. China generates almost a quarter of the world's greenhouse gases, mostly from coal-fired power. They have a goal to reduce that by 90 megatonnes. Just to give you a picture of how much 90 megatonnes is, if we shut down every hospital, school, mine, factory, mill, house -- anything that produces greenhouse gas emissions in British Columbia, all of it -- for a year and a half, we reduce emissions by the same amount that China is intending to reduce theirs. They need our help, they need our clean energy, and we will be there to help them.

Now, as thousands of new jobs come on the horizon, as new revenues come into communities, to governments across this country, we have another job to do as a generation, and that is to make sure that First Nations are full participants and beneficiaries of the new economic growth. Too many First Nations communities have been left out of economic growth for far, far too long, and it's a tragedy. But we can be that generation that not only puts British Columbia on a path to new economic growth. We can also be the generation that makes sure that First Nations are an integral part of that growth so that they can become the self-sustaining communities that their leaders envision -- healthy, safe, wealthy communities where every child gets a great education; communities where every child has an equal shot at getting a great job when they're ready.

First Nations are hungry to be a part of economic growth, but they also want to benefit from it. I agree. Let's bring them inside the tent.

But if we want to build that future; if we want to change the future for First Nations, for our children, for our grandchildren; if we want to do something about global greenhouse gas emissions; if we want to be a leader in Canada and help make sure that Canada realizes its potential as an economic and energy powerhouse; we have to be ready to meet that need. It is one thing to create jobs, but it is another to be able to fill them. You cannot build a resource economy without people, and we have to ensure that British Columbians have the skills that they need to be first in line for those jobs that will be created.

Forestry alone will create 25,000 new jobs over the next ten years, so we're working to try and make sure that we can fill those jobs. Some of the programs we're instituting including the First Nations forestry training project; the forestry industry job-ready training program for log and chip truck drivers and heavy equipment operators; the BC new faller program, which is going to provide entry-level skills for people looking for employment as certified and qualified fallers.

The mining sector will have over 16,000 direct job openings in the next decade, and that doesn't take into account the indirect jobs. We're investing more than \$1m to support the mineral exploration and mining industry labour shortage task force, \$2.2m for mining-related employment skills access programs, \$0.5m for the labour market solutions program that goes through the Aboriginal Mine Training Association in the Kootenays. Those are just some examples of what we're trying to do to target funding to make sure that people get the skills that they need to be able to fully participate in the workforce.

We spend \$2b, almost, on post-secondary education in British Columbia, but we need to spend some time thinking about where we spend it. Do we spend it wisely? Do we spend it effectively?

So that's why we have Shirley Bond. She is our Jobs, Skills and Training minister. She is responsible for what I regard as perhaps the toughest job in government -- that is, making sure that our ten-year jobs and skills training strategy does what it needs to do. She is working with business, she is working with private sector labour union leaders, to map out how we can build a workforce to meet the needs ten and 20 years from now all across all of the sectors of our economy. She is working with her cabinet colleagues Amrik Virk in Advanced Education and Peter Fassbender in Education to re-engineer, based on the needs that we have determined, our post-secondary and secondary systems so that we are supplying the needs of the economy.

But by the way, this isn't just about you. Of course we want to make sure you have the workers you need to build your business and grow our economy. It's also about the people who are trying to build families in British Columbia, who want their children to have a fulfilling life, who want to make sure that their kids have something interesting and that they're good at to do while they're still in the secondary system so that they can graduate and get out with a credential, get straight to work, if that's what they choose to do, or go on to get a specialized post-secondary credential that will allow them to participate in a way that meets their needs so that they can start their family, so that they can buy a home, so that they can begin to map out their own futures in a fulfilling life, in a fulfilling job, right here in the province and the communities where they grew up.

But it doesn't end with just a supply of skilled workers. We also want to make sure that you are not competing for the same workers at the same time. Our plan means that we will have the people that you need to be able to fill the jobs that you create, because that is at the core of economic growth.

Now, there's another piece of this puzzle, and that's transportation infrastructure, getting goods to market. We've set a target to invest \$25b into transportation infrastructure by 2020. And when you transport goods, you also need to transport energy, so we need to consider how we'll get that energy. The northwest transmission line is underway, as you know; a project that is going to ensure we open up the northwest of this province, a region that has waited far too long for economic growth. We also need to consider how we will create that energy, which is why we are hoping Site C will go ahead. Site C will create enough electricity to power 450,000 homes for more than 100 years, but it will also create the electricity and the clean power that we need to make sure that we are creating economic growth at the same time that we're minimizing impacts on our environment.

Now, as we grow together, we have to remember that there are some things that can never change. One thing that we have to make sure of, that we always have to pay attention to, is that when people go to work in the morning, their families can rest assured that they're going to come home safe at the end of the day, and we all have a responsibility to make sure that we do everything we can to make every workplace as safe as we possibly can. Despite those efforts, sometimes, it's true, tragedy happens, as happened in Burns Lake and as happened in Prince George at Lakeland.

In Burns Lake we had a number of jobs to do. The first one was in the immediate aftermath of the mill explosion to make sure that everyone who was injured and hurt was looked after.

Emergency workers came out, volunteered, got up in the middle of the night without being called to clear the roads. Doctors, nurses, everyone, pitched in to make sure that everyone had the care that they need, and many said it was nothing short of a miracle that as many people came out as healthy as they did because of the hard work of provincial employees and the community.

We did that. Job two was to make sure that we helped the community transition in that time when people were looking for work so that they didn't have to leave the community permanently to find a job. We did that. Job three was to ensure that a fibre supply was available so that we could get that mill up and running and open again so that community could have some hope again. We did that, and the mill will be opening again soon.

Job four was to make sure that justice was seen to be done. Now, as you know, the criminal justice branch recently announced that they had reached the decision not to press charges in the Babine mill case. I know many people are angry about that decision, but as Premier I have to respect the independence of the prosecutors and the investigators. But if there are lessons to be learned from the way that case was handled, we will learn them. I have asked my deputy minister, the head of the civil service, John Dyble, to review the case, to find the fact pattern and report back to me so that we can understand what we need to do next, if anything, to make sure that this never happens again.

We need to ensure that we do everything we can to make sure that justice is not just done, but justice is seen to be done. The citizens and the workers of our province deserve nothing less. Your communities deserve nothing less.

So let me close with this. On May 14 British Columbians were confronted with a question, and the question was: do you want to grow the economy of British Columbia, or do you want to make a different choice and manage decline? Do you want to grow the size of the government and the debt that we'll leave for our children, or do you want to constrain that growth and pay off the debt for our children, leave them with choices, the kinds of choices that we all had? Do you want to grow the economy? Do you want to create jobs for citizens in every region of our province? And on May 14 British Columbians were absolutely clear. They said they want a strong economy. They want us to say yes to economic growth. They want us to grasp the opportunity that the resource sector poses for our entire country. They want us to create jobs for working people. They want us to guarantee a secure tomorrow for their kids.

And so that's what we're doing. That's what we're doing in pursuing our plan with determination and with focus. May 14 was the culmination of a battle of ideas, a battle of values -- values that I believe are fundamental to what makes us great as a province, values that built Canada. British Columbians endorsed those values. They said together we want to build a strong economy for our province, not just for today but to make sure that future generations have a chance to enjoy what we did; that they have a chance to compete; that they have a chance to compete; that they have a chance to win on the world stage. That will be our legacy. Together we can do it. Thank you.