

Ric Dolphin's

# Insight into Government

Alberta's independent newsletter on government & politics

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## PIPELINES & POLITICS

### WHAT DONALD'S TRUMPETING MIGHT MEAN FOR ALBERTA OIL?

Once the shock and awe of the presidential election subsides, can we expect Trump's protectionist promises to hurt our major export to the US? And if the Keystone XL is resurrected, does it that mean the regulatory process must start from scratch?

**T**he official response in Edmonton and Ottawa to the election of President Donald Trump reminded us of the junior and subservient position of Canada on the North American continent. For although we know full well that Premier Rachel Notley and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau loathe virtually everything about the vainglorious vulgarian who will occupy the White House for the next four years, neither Canadian leader would admit to having anything but respectful feelings towards the man when reporters on Wednesday attempted to draw them out at their respective press conferences.

"I wonder if you'll tell us your actual personal reaction to Donald Trump being elected president of the United States?" a reporter asked Notley.

Smiling knowingly, she tried, "You know, I think, er, it's, er, very important to respect the rule of law and the rule of law is founded on the democratic institution of elections and so now Americans have elected a new president and, er, we, er need to respect that..."

Reporters had been trying to draw Trudeau out on his thoughts about a potential Trump presidency for months now, giving him plenty of time to practice his diplomatic obfuscations. At a press conference on Thursday morning in Sydney, NS, a reporter asked how he would explain to children that a "sexist, racist, bully" was taking office, Trudeau, who on Wednesday morning had taken a "brief" call from Trump expressing warm feelings towards Canada, stressed the need to promote a strong working relationship with anyone who the American people elect.

"It's important to work constructively with whomever is president because that's what Canadians expect," he said. "Canadians expect me to stand up for Canadian rights, Canadian opportunities, Canadian jobs and Canadian values. And I will do that in a way that continues to benefit our country and its position in the world." Bless him.

Jobs and the economy, of course, are the big concern for the country that former Vancouver MP Andrew Saxton, one of the 12 federal Conservative leadership candidates, described in Wednesday evening's inaugural debate as "a little brother" to big brother America. "...sometimes you don't get along but you're still part of the same family," he

Continued on next page...

## POLITICAL PULSE

ROSERS ENVIGORATED

### THE US ELECTION RE-ARMS THE LOYAL OPPOSITION

**I**t was a good week in the Legislature for Brian Jean and his Wildrosers, in large part because of the gifts from the south. For what seems like forever, Jeanie and the Prickles—to use the vernacular (and hasn't Donald made that okay again?)—were banging away at the NDP's carbon tax and other climate change measures with blunderbusses of dubious accuracy. To loosely paraphrase:

*Jean: "Mr. Speaker, Albertans are suffering as never before; the vast armies of the unemployed are burning our Premier in effigy on main streets across our great province; they're roasting babies in the embers, Mr. Speaker. And just yesterday I saw a dark figure striding along 4th Ave SW, Mr. Speaker, kicking aside the tumble weeds and beckoning with his scythe to the gaunt faces of those lost souls pressed against the windows of towers. Jump! he seemed to say. And thousands chose that route to Purgatory, Mr. Speaker. This gov't's ideological pushing through of its carbon tax comes at the absolute worst time, Mr. Speaker. It's killing Albertans at a rate not seen since the Black Death."*

*Notley: "Mr. Speaker, what the historically challenged hon. member opposite refuses to acknowledge is that our gov't is not responsible for the low price of oil that is driving this recession. That responsibility lies with a cabal of white, middle-aged, male corporatists in a castle atop a Swiss Alp patrolled by Rottwailers and Vladimir Putin. Alberta's only hope of building pipelines to tidewater, Mr. Speaker, is by showing the world that we are serious about climate change by taxing the emitters to death, razing the coal plants, and diversifying the economy by investing in renewable energy, craft breweries, and transgendered child care cooperatives. Climate change is real, Mr. Speaker, something the mouth-breathing, CO2-spewing hon. member opposite can't quite grasp."*

If only. However, he opposition's tack had been getting a bit stale and drifts of late. Now with Donald Trump headed for the White House intent on scrapping Obama's climate plan before it even started, reopening coal mines, ripping up trade deals, and reversing the Keystone XL pipeline, Brian has suddenly been gifted with a fresh bag of balls for his muzzle-loader.

During Wednesday afternoon's Question Period, Jean's performance was diminished somewhat by the absence of Rachel, meaning his questions "to the Premier" were fielded by Rachel's proxy: deputy-premier (and Health Minister) Sarah Hoffman.

As one of a handful of NDP ministers proficient in House debate, Sarah deflects with aplomb and standing her ground like a linebacker, that wide face, jutting chin, and severe harlequin-framed spectacles combining to form a thick opacity of resistance. But she lacks the twinkle and mocking humour that Notley, the lawyer and Legislative veteran, brings to the game.

For Hoffman is the socialist ideologue with a divine mission: to rid the health care system of every last vestige of private sector stench. This is no game; it's serious. And when she's standing in for the premier, she treats whichever NDP policy she's tasked with defending as the siege of Leningrad.

Jean, who's QP skills have improved markedly in the 18 months he has been leader, still needs to work on his wit and spontaneity. He likes to tell us what a funny guy he is in informal settings, Better

Turn to Political Pulse on pg. 4

said.

Canada is dependant on its big brother not only for protection (Norad, NATO) but for its livelihood, with about a fifth of the country's workforce supported by jobs that produce the 75% of Canada's exports that flow to the US. The dependency is even more pronounced in Alberta, where more than 90% of our total \$92.3B in exports in 2015 went south, \$70B of it in oil, gas, and petrochemicals (down 29% from 2014)—industries that directly or indirectly account for 45% of Alberta's jobs. If Canada is America's kid bro, then Alberta is the boy's devoted pooch (a bitch we'll call Yuman).

Accordingly we can expect no criticism of President Trump voiced by any Canadian leader. For not only is *Don Trumpioni* the most powerful democratically elected leader in the world, his Republicans have control of the House of Representatives and *almost* control of the Senate.

We say "almost," because it requires 60% of the 100 Senators to carry a bill. And, as we discovered a year ago when 61% of the Senate voted to approve the Keystone XL pipeline, the President can override the vote with a veto. Which is just what **Barack Obama** did, and the Senate was unable to muster the 66 votes required to overturn the veto.

After that, it was assumed that Trans-Canada Pipelines' 1,897-km, 830K-bbl/day, \$5.5M Keystone XL, seven years in the works, rerouted to satisfy Nebraskan farmers, and approved by the US Environmental Protection Agency, was dead. Or at least it would be until a Republican administration came along to revive it—which seemed the unlikely-est of prospects until Tuesday midnight.

So now the man that Canadian politicians mustn't offend has it in his power to resurrect the Keystone Pipeline—something he has said he will do, albeit with conditions.

Keystone is not the only measure promised by Trump that would have major repercussions for kid brother and his bitch Yuman—but it is perhaps the most immediately beneficial one.

During the campaign, Trump called the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the "worst trade deal in history" and said he would rip it up. He also rejected the Trans-Pacific Partnership,—"a disaster!"—which the Trudeau gov't plans to sign. And he repeatedly vowed to apply tariffs to imports to somehow resurrect America's moribund manufacturing industries (45% on Chinese, and 35% on Mexican imports have been mentioned). As well, Trump has threatened to remove the U.S. from the World Trade Organization—a body that has helped out Canada in disputes with America, most recently in resolving the country-of-origin labelling (COOL) requirement on beef and pork exported to the U.S.

Trump's protectionist promises may bode ill for little brother. But like a number of Trump's over-the-top campaign promises, the trade positions seem to be softening post election. NAFTA, for example, will no longer be "ripped up" but "renegotiated."

We suspect that in demonizing NAFTA as an American job stealer, Trump was thinking more about Mexico than Canada. The North American auto industry, to cite a prominent example, is rapidly transferring its operations to Mexico to take advantage of wage and benefit costs that average US\$8/hr compared with around US\$50/hr in both Canada and the US.

And while the US has seen only a slowing in growth of its automobile manufacturing, Canada's vehicle production is actually declining: from 3M units in 2000 to 2.4M in 2014—at 14% of North American production, the lowest level since 1987. Meanwhile in the same 16 years the Mexican share has risen from 3% to 20%. And in terms of the US-Canada trade balance, Canada imported \$80.2B worth of motor vehicles and parts in the first nine months of this year, compared to the \$72.5B worth that it exported.

The day after Trump's election, **David MacNaughton**, Canada's Ambassador to the United States, announced that Canada was ready to come to the table and renegotiate NAFTA. "I think any agreement can be improved on," he said.

Perhaps Canada is as worried as Trump is about Mexicans taking jobs and would like the country removed from the deal. Or maybe Canada is taking a proactive position to ward off possible trade sanctions against Canada, such as the a tariff on lumber that now looms with the expiry of the Softwood Lumber Agreement last month.

Whatever the motive, **Rob Merrifield**, Alberta's agent general in Washington DC before Notley replaced him with a female career bureaucrat a year ago, believes the federal gov't's priority should not be NAFTA just yet, but the "low hanging fruit" that is the Keystone XL pipeline deal.

As Alberta's agent, and before that as Prime Minister **Stephen Harper's** "special envoy" to Congress, Merrifield, 62, amassed an impressive Rolodex of contacts in the House and Senate, which he's kept up as a part-time consultant (he also runs a grain farm near Whitecourt).

With Trump having given his tacit approval to Keystone, Merrifield thinks MacNaughton and other Canadian representatives should concentrate on working the representatives and senators to make sure majority support is still there for the

pipeline.

Merrifield says that although a minority of Republican representatives supported Trump's candidacy—a level of unpopularity aggravated by the leak of the "grab-'em-by-the-pussy" *Access Hollywood* tape—their support for Keystone remains largely intact, based on the thousands of construction jobs that will be created, the traditional Republican (if not Trumpian) belief in free trade, and a desire to avoid the risks and emissions of the oil trains that thrive in the absence of pipelines.

Even if the President and Congress support the pipeline, however, the question becomes: will the protracted regulatory process, with its hearings, demonstrations, and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approval—a seven-year process last time—begin all over again. Merrifield doesn't think it will, although some updating of EPA data may be necessary. Nebraskan landowners were suing TCPL prior to Obama's veto. That litigation may be revived along with the pipeline.

That's if TransCanada Pipelines chooses to proceed. The Calgary-based company is currently weighing its option, and one of the factors in its deliberations may be the levy that a campaigning Trump *vowed* (if that's the right word for a Donaldism) said he'd apply to Canadian oil imports. (see "Verbatim" below).

Economists estimate that the Keystone XL would provide a boost to Canadian oil producers by a way of a \$5-bbl

### KEYSTONE XL FACTS

**OWNER.....TRANSCANADA PIPELINES**  
**LENGTH.....1,897 KM**  
**FROM.....HARDISTY, ALBERTA**  
**TO.....STEELE CITY, NEBRASKA**  
**CAPACITY ..... 830,000 BBL/DAY**  
**COST.....US\$8B**  
**CONSTRUCTION TIME.....2 YEARS**  
**NO. OF CONSTRUCTION JOBS..... 3,900**  
**TAX PAID TO 3 STATES .....US\$56M P.A.**  
**REGULATORY DELAYS SO FAR... 8 YRS.**

reduction in the discount paid by Americans for Canadian oil. But the kind of levies Trump has mused about would more than cancel out that bonus.

Meanwhile, there is renewed hope in the oilpatch that Kinder Morgan's 890M bbl./d Trans-Mountain Pipeline expansion between Edmonton and Burnaby, BC, may actually get the green light from the Trudeau cabinet on Dec. 19 when it makes a decision on ratifying the National Energy Board's earlier approval of the project.

Trudeau's recent announcement of stepped-up Coastguard capabilities off the west coast to deal with possible tanker spills is seen as a good omen for the pipeline, which the Canadian gov't is under pressure to approve, not only from Alberta and Saskatchewan, but also from the Chinese, part owners in several oilsands projects, and anxious to bring their share of the crude home across the Pacific.

There is still, though, the problem of local opposition to Kinder Morgan: from the mayors of Burnaby and Vancouver, who've threatened to lie down in front of the bulldozers, and from the environmental groups and the Indian bands they fund. The latter coalition successfully blocked the Northern Gateway pipeline in federal court. And BC Premier **Christy Clark**, up for reelection in May and cognizant of the votes to be lost in the Lower Mainland if she supports Kinder Morgan, will no doubt be sticking to her own onerous list of conditions to be met before her gov't gives the project the nod. So it seems the pipe dreams are, for the nonce, just that.

## Verbatim ...

### TRUMP'S KEYSTONE POSITION

*In the past few years, Donald Trump, who has investments in pipeline construction companies in North Dakota, has periodically expressed his support for the Keystone XL pipeline, which was vetoed by President Obama a year ago, but which President-Elect Trump has said he will resurrect—albeit with conditions. He suggested what those conditions might be during an early campaign rally on Oct. 28, 2015, in Sioux Falls, Iowa, when a woman asked “Keystone pipeline: what would you do with that?”*

**“The Keystone pipeline? First of all I'd approve it 'cause its thousands of jobs, okay? (cries of “thankyou” from the audience) So fast. So fast. And Hilary should have approved it. Hilary wanted to approve it but she's been dragged so far left that she's, you know, forget it. It's a disaster. I'd approve it. But with that being said, I may want to make a better deal. Because you know what, we're bringing oil from Canada, right? I may say, 'I want 10%. I'm gonna approve it, but I want 10%, 15%' The truth is the Keystone pipeline was better a while ago than it is now because we have so much because of new technology, we have so much energy underneath our own feet with the fracking and all the other things that have emerged in the last five years. So much energy, and it's great stuff. We have really great quality; higher than Canada, you know they have the tarsands which is a problem for them—very expensive to get it out. We have great stuff. So I would approve it, because I love the jobs of building it; I love the jobs of building it. But I may say, 'Maybe we should get 10%, 15%, maybe 20% as that oil flows through our land. Maybe we should do that (applause). So I'm gonna look into that. But I tell you what, when I approve it, it will be a great deal for the United States. 'Cause right now we're approving it, they're putting it underground—and that's actually good environmentally, better than having trucks going down the roads, everything else—but we're not getting anything much for it. When I'm finished with the Keystone, they'll be happy, we'll be happy, okay? ”**

# Insight into Government

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# DATA Bank

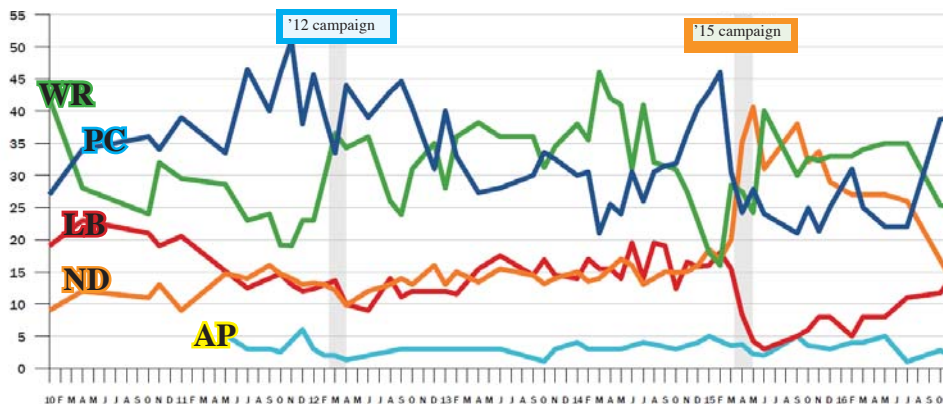
Average Alberta Monthly Polling averages from Jan. 2010 to Nov. 2016

Aggregate polling by  
ThreeHundredEight.com

|                 |       |
|-----------------|-------|
| PC Alberta      | 38.5% |
| WILDROSE        | 25.2% |
| NDP             | 16.6% |
| Alberta Liberal | 11.7% |
| alberta party   | 2.7%  |
| Others          | 5.2%  |

Nov. 11, 2016

# THE GARDEN ELECTORAL



## POLITICAL PULSE ... from Page 1

Better he should learn how to work from notes outlining the topics. This might allow for that spontaneity and wit to out. Nonetheless, Jean now has Donald in his camp.

Noting that one of the “good-news items” from the US election was Trump’s support of the Keystone XL—a pipeline that Notley spoke out against during her election campaign—Jean asked, “Will the Premier reverse her position on the Keystone pipeline and make seeking its approval her very top priority?”

“I’m really proud to have a Premier and to be part of a government that works to make sure that every day we are fighting for Albertans and Albertans’ best interests, Mr. Speaker,” Hoffman hedged. “A big part of that is making sure that we continue to diversify our markets. That’s why we’re not going to give up on Kinder Morgan and we’re not going to give up on other pipelines that are in the works. We certainly are going to find ways to benefit Albertans when it comes to improved market access, and we’ll be proud to work towards that.”

Moving on to his favourite bugbear, Jean continued, “A carbon tax now makes less sense than ever before. How can this Premier possibly defend this new tax on Alberta’s industries and families when our number one trading partner and competitor will simply not have one anywhere?”

“In case the members opposite aren’t aware, climate change is real,” Hoffman began, tossing off the gibe that has become the NDP’s obligatory opener in baiting Rosers, before falling back on the familiar talking points from the Rachelite hymnal: “Albertans expect us to act in the best interests of their families and for our shared economy, and that’s what we’re doing. That’s why we have a made-in-Alberta solution, Mr. Speaker, that’s going to lead to greater economic diversification, something the members opposite don’t care about, and making sure that we have clean air, water, and a protected land for future generations.”

Jean shifted to the election night referendum in Washington (“one of the more liberal states in the union”) where 60% had voted against a carbon tax.

“When our single biggest trading partner and competitor flatly rejects a carbon tax, joining countries like France and Australia, why won’t the Premier hit the brakes on her carbon tax plan or at least put it to the people of Alberta? Listen to the people in a provincial referendum?”

“Mr. Speaker,” Hoffman rejoined, “we did have an opportunity a year and a half ago to have an election, and the people of Alberta voted for a government that said clearly that we were going to take action on climate change, and we are doing that. This is a smart thing to do for Alberta. It’s smart for our economy and for our families. We’re moving forward with helping two-thirds of families recover some of the costs that will be impacted to their individual households, and we’re very proud of that. But we’re not going to pretend that climate change isn’t real, because climate change is real.”

Apparently, however, the American President believes it isn’t real—as do a good number—perhaps the majority—of Republicans who control Congress. Which makes it highly unlikely that

the United States will be imposing any kind of national carbon tax in the next four years. And Trump’s vow to revive the coal industry will also mean an end to Obama’s accelerated conversion of coal-fired power plants to natural gas.

Which has given the Wildrose and Conservatives additional ammunition in their opposition to the Notley gov’t’s intention of shutting down the province’s 30 coal-fired generators by 2030—a plan that, argues the opposition, will destroy hundreds of jobs, turn coal-dependent communities like Hanna into ghost towns, and create great expense for the electricity companies in conversion costs—costs that will be passed onto residential, municipal, and commercial consumers already struggling from the straitened economy.

With the United States on the verge of a fossil fuel renaissance, therefore, and Alberta taxing emissions and mothballing coal mines and plants, investors will be far less likely to put their money into Alberta’s energy industry, including the power companies.

But we’ll give the final words to Liberal Leader Dr. David Swann, (Calgary-Mountain View), a long-time environmentalist, who philosophically supports the NDP’s climate leadership plan, but on Thursday, during debate on Bill 25, *The Oil Sands Emissions Limit Act* (see next page), expressed concern

“I stand today to speak on a very difficult new reality for Albertans who believe the science of climate change and the urgent need for greenhouse gas mitigation. Strong leadership was long overdue in Alberta. All of us must share in the cost of reducing emissions. This government has shown welcome leadership, but real change is never easy. It’s even less easy following the election of an unpredictable U.S. President who denies man-made climate change.

“While I support the targets and time-lines for cleaner energy development with its triple benefit for climate, jobs, and an alternate economy, we must hit pause on other parts of our energy-focused legislation, especially on less urgent bills such as Bill 25. Given Alberta’s deep dependence on oil and gas, our current economic weakness, and the yet unknown economic threat from the U.S., I see merit in pausing and allowing the new reality and expert views to inform further our decision on the bill before us. Not stop, just pause, a pregnant pause, perhaps.

“I’ve heard the Premier say that her climate plan was developed independently and that actions of our biggest customer and competitor will have no effect. Even so, I don’t believe that anyone planned for the U.S. to go full speed in reverse. Proposals announced by Mr. Trump in his truth-challenged campaign have already begun to unfetter the U.S. fossil fuel industry and may drastically alter the investment climate and competitiveness here in Alberta. The ramifications of this election are sending shock waves through the global and Canadian economies. From free trade to energy, many U.S. policies are now in doubt. We have no idea yet what economic effect these changes will have on Alberta, nor have we in opposition yet seen a reasonable analysis of the effects our Alberta carbon policies might have. “

# BILLS BEFORE THE HOUSE THIS PAST WEEK

(For more detail go to: [http://www.assembly.ab.ca/net/index.aspx?p=bills\\_home](http://www.assembly.ab.ca/net/index.aspx?p=bills_home))

| Bill | Title (Sponsor)/<br>Status  | P U R P O S E   | R E A C T I O N  |
|------|---|---|--|
| 21   | <b>Modernized Municipal Government Act (Larivee)/2nd reading debate adjourned</b>                 | The long-awaited update to the MGA, five years in the works and clocking in at 120 pages, was introduced in the spring session ( <i>Insight</i> , June 3), with further consultations taking place over the summer, and with further regulatory changes to the act still to be made between now and proclamation next year prior to the fall municipal elections. Among the existing changes: mandatory growth management boards (GMBs) for Edmonton & Calgary; “mandatory inter-municipal collaboration frameworks” (ICFs) that will require neighbouring rural municipalities to collaborate in the planning and, notably, sharing the costs of regional services; a 5:1 cap on the ratio of non-residential to residential taxes; allowing municipalities to charge developers additional “off-site levies” to subsidize rec facilities, fire halls and police stations; and an allowance for municipalities to allot a portion of new development for affordable housing  | Concern expressed by Wildrose about the GMBs and the IMFs and the lack of specified rules and regulations concerning such matters as dispute mechanisms, veto powers for larger members, and other governance details—details that the opposition fears will be added by regulation without consultation and debate. The Wildrose also fears that adoption of the mechanisms to accommodate the new measures, in particular the cost of preparing the soon to be mandatory municipal development plans for communities of less than 3,500 people, will kill off cash-strapped burgs. |
| 24   | <b>Forest &amp; Prairie Protection Amendment Act, 2016 (Carlier)/3rd reading debate adjourned</b> | Increases fines (up to \$1,000) for careless fire use or lighting fires during fire bans or engaging in other risky activities such as operating ATVs during periods of high fire risk. The bill also extends the fire season by advancing its start from Apr. 1 to Mar. 1 and enhances the powers of forest officers including giving them and the Crown immunity from any action for damages resulting from fire-fighting activities conducted “in good faith.”.  | The Tories proposed an amendment that would have put a two-week time limit on when a forest officer had to respond to a fire plan submitted by a business in a forested area, and a one-year limit on the time for investigating and cordoning off a business’ property or timber lease following a fire. The NDP majority rejected the amendment.   |
| 25   | <b>Oil Sands Emissions Limit Act (Phillips)/2nd reading debate adjourned</b>                      | Establishes a 100-megatonne per year limit on oilsands emissions, as promised in the Climate Leadership Plan announced a year ago. The limit will apply to in situ sites, processing plants, upgraders, primary production, enhanced recovery, experimental schemes, and all the buildings, equipment, structures, and vehicles associated with those sites. Exemptions include the cogeneration portion of heating units and new upgrading facilities. Suitable regulatory mechanisms will be adopted following the report of the 15-member Oil Sands Advisory Group (OSAG) in February.   | Criticized by the Rosers as yet a further impediment to economic development in the future. Wildrose energy critic Leela Aheer (Chestermere-Rocky View) cited a study by the conservative Fraser Institute (reference to which invariably brings derisive laughter from the gov’t benches) that estimated the cap would reduce the cumulative production of oil by between 2B and 3B barrels between 2025 and 2040. Much vociferous debate. An amendment to delay passage until after OSAG reports was shot down by the NDP.   |
| 27   | <b>Renewable Electricity Act (\$) (McCuaig-Boyd)/2nd reading adjourned</b>                        | Creates a framework for meeting the climate plan’s goal of having 30% renewable electrical generation by 2030 (with the NDP well into its fourth term). The Alberta Electric System Operator will run the program. The gov’t claims the legislation will “facilitate \$10.5 billion of new private investment” in the economy and create 7,200 jobs over the next 14 years (offsetting a similar number of jobs lost in closing all the coal plants). A competitive process will be developed by AESO to promote and fund large scale renewable energy generation to a total of 5,000 MW. (Current capacity is 16,242 MW; gas generation will make up for any shortfall in 2030). Funding will be provided by carbon taxes charged to large emitters.   | Opposition members criticized the minister for introducing this bill before Terry Boston, the US electrical transition expert hired for six months for \$600K to head a review into the switch from coal to renewables, had delivered his report. ( <i>Insight</i> March 18) He was supposed to have delivered his report by the end of September, but still hasn’t, and the gov’t has avoided answering questions on why not.   |
| 28   | <b>Public Health Amendment Act, 2016 (Hoffman)/awaits 3rd reading</b>                             | This act allows Alberta Health to collect student enrolment data from Alberta Education and match it with immunization records in the provincial immunization repository. This will enable the health authorities to better identify children with missing or incomplete immunization histories for vaccine-preventable diseases like measles and whooping cough—between 15% & 25% of students. Public health workers will be asking parents of these students to provide their child’s immunization records, complete any needed immunizations, or, alternately, to get a letter from a doctor indicating a medical exemption, or, after being briefed on the benefits of immunization, sign a form indicating they declined shots for their child. Children of those paranoid parents refusing to have their children immunized, will be excluded from school in the event of a serious vaccine-preventable disease outbreak such as measles.   | Some minor concerns from the opposition about the costs associated with the administration of the program and about possible privacy infringements. But on the whole there seems to be general support for a bill that aids in the prevention of communicable diseases and relief from MLAs in tinfoil hat land that the choice to have one’s child immunized remains with the parent. If only the same could be said about some of the things the Education ministry is about to foist on students and parents, but let’s save that until next week.                                |
| 30   | <b>Investing in a Diversified Alberta Economy Act (\$) (Bilous)/passed 2nd reading</b>            | This two-pronged, three-year, \$156M attempt at creating jobs through tax breaks—similar to programs in other provinces including BC— is bound to prove more effective than last fall’s effort (a \$10K tax deduction for each new job hire that created exactly zero jobs). The first prong is an Alberta investor tax credit (AITC), available on a first-come, first-served basis that offers a 30% refundable credit for investments in small businesses retroactive to April 14, 2016, and continuing until Dec. 31, 2019, or until the \$90M allotment runs out. Eligible businesses are allowed to raise up to \$5M privately, or \$10M through an Alberta venture capital corporation. Prong two is a capital investment tax credit (CITA) offering a nonrefundable 10% tax credit of up to \$5M to corporations making capital investments of \$1M or more in manufacturing, processing, and tourism infrastructure. Applicants must apply for conditional approval. The gov’t predicts the two initiatives will generate up to \$700M in investment over the three years. | General approval by the opposition of the intent of the bill, although some concern about its targeted nature (i.e. “picking winners and losers”), and worry that the AITC funds will run out long before the demand is met.   |

## Talk ... ... in the Corridors

### Sandra & Donna leave in a huff...

● Apropos of her former job in the Redford shop as head of the bullying secretariat (official title: associate minister of Family & Community Safety), Calgary-North West MLA **Sandra Jansen** dropped out of the PC leadership race on Tuesday, claiming she'd been harassed and, yep, bullied by the mouth-breathing Cro-Magnons dragging their knuckles about the corridors at last week's Tory Policy Conference (*Insight* Nov. 4).

Jansen, 53, implied that these antediluvian monsters, who wrote profane things on her campaign literature, tweeted unpleasanties that employed the c-word, and were heard to yell "baby killer" in reference to her pro-abortion position, were members of front-running candidate **Jason Kenney's** contingent of bused-in youths, apparently plucked from Catholic enclaves in Calgary.

Jansen had been poorly disposed towards Kenney since the former federal cabinet minister announced his intentions—including his plan to dissolve the party and unite its conservative membership with that of the Wildrose—in early July. She declared that she would quit the party if he became its leader.

We suspect that her decision to step down from the race, had much to do with her poorly received performance at last Saturday's leadership forum where the conservative Kenney and the progressive Vermilion-Lloydminster MLA **Richard Starke**, 56, emerged as the crowd favourites.

We recalled what former deputy premier **Thomas Lukaszuk**, another progressive and no fan of Kenney's, told

us during a lunch in August when asked if he'd run for the leadership: "I don't think I could beat Jason. I think he's got it sewn up." Perhaps Jansen reached the same conclusion, and having already sacrificed a \$20K deposit was not willing to risk the additional \$30K on a long shot.

The bullying accusations, however, lent a political and topical spin to her withdrawal, which coincided with the failure of **Hilary Clinton** to become the first female US president, not to mention the election of the man characterized by many as a "sexist, racist, bully." At a presser on Wednesday, Premier **Rachel Notley**, no stranger to on-line abuse and death-threats (a standard hazard for most premiers), described Jansen's allegations as "deeply troubling" and hoped the PC party would investigate and "report back."

Kenney condemned such conduct and called on the perpetrators to apologize. Later, however, he said that he too had been the subject of "abusive language" from the progressive camp, though he would not go as far as to call it "bullying."

The same day as Jansen withdrew, so did the other woman in the race: former Calgary-Varsity MLA **Donna Kennedy-Glans**, 56, another under-performer at the forum. She had no tales of harassment to tell, however, but bemoaned the "polarizing of politics" in Alberta and the "limited opportunity for centrist voices to be heard." Perhaps she should attend Alberta Party Leader **Greg Clark's** "Centre Together" event next weekend (see below).

Meanwhile, the two other underwhelming forum participants, former St. Albert MLA and Service Alberta Minister **Stephen Khan**, 50, and Calgary lawyer and failed Calgary--Bow candidate **Byron Nelson**, 45, have committed to staying in the race along with Kenney & Starke.

## The week ahead ...

**Nov 14-18**—The Legislature recesses for its fall "constituency break," with MLAs expected to spend time with their constituents. Cabinet ministers tend to use the week for foreign junkets (Bilous & Carlier) or speechifying at assorted events.

**Nov 14-17**—Alberta Association of Municipal Districts & Counties (AAMDC) convenes at the Shaw Convention Centre for its fall confab. The *Modernized Municipal Government Act*, which has yet to make it back to the House following the summer's consultations, will likely be one of the main topics of discussion (along with the carbon tax) among delegates, and the focus of the speech by Municipal Affairs Minister **Danielle Larivee** on Tuesday at 9:30 a.m. The ministerial forum is on Thursday from 9:45 to 11:30 a.m., capped with a speech from **Rachel Notley**. For a full schedule go to: <http://www.aamdc.com/events-programs/aamdc-convention>

**Nov. 12-14**—Environment Minister **Shannon Phillips** and a small entourage, which includes Chief **Charlie Weaselhead** of the Blood Tribe, will attend the final week of the 22nd Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP22) in Marrakech. The focus was to be on the measurement, reporting and verification of the Paris Agreement, ratified by 106 countries who have pledged to jointly limit the rise in global temperature "well below 2°C" compared to pre-industrial levels (1880-1899) by reducing CO2 emissions by 50% by 2050 and 100% by 2100. Since last Tuesday, however, the delegates have been preoccupied with the election of US President **Donald Trump**, who calls anthropogenic climate change "a hoax" and has promised to pull the US out of the Paris agreement—a move that may inspire similar recalcitrance by big emitters China and India. To watch webcasts of all the fun go to: <http://unfccc.cloud.stream-world.de/ondemand> Cost of the trip for Phillips et al: \$32K.

**Nov. 13-19**—Economic Development Minister **Deron Bilous** and 70 business people will journey to Beijing and Shanghai, China hoping to sign some deals that will boost Alberta's exports to the Middle Kingdom, which have stagnated in recent years. The ministry failed to provide any further details on the junket by press time.

**Nov 15**—Agriculture & Forestry Minister **Oneil Carlier** completes a two-week trade mission to Asia having met with Chinese officials in Beijing, food and wood product importers in Shanghai, attended a commemoration of the 35th anniversary of the Heilongjian-Alberta sister province relationship in Harbin, and met with Korean ag. and wood sector stakeholders in Seoul. The estimated cost of the trip and hosting events for Carlier and two department staff is \$64.5K.

**Nov. 16**—The first of what will be 87 delegate selection meetings for the March 18 PC leadership convention takes place in Edmonton-Ellerslie between 7:30 and 10:30 pm. Those attending can expect to be handed a sheet of paper containing the names of Jason Kenney's slate of preferred delegates. For details on this and other upcoming delegate selection meetings, go to: <https://www.pcalberta.org/Events>

**Nov. 17**—*Calgary Herald* columnist **Don Braid** and wife **Sydney Sharpe**, a freelance journalist, will launch their admiring book on the rise of the Alberta NDP, *Notley Nation* at Calgary's Owl's Nest Books, 815A 49th Avenue SW between 7 and 8:30 pm. *Insight* will run a short excerpt next week. For more info: <http://www.owlsnestbooks.com/events/>

**Nov. 18-20**—**Greg Clark's** Alberta Party is holding what it calls a "Centre Together event" for "centrists from across the province" to discuss "bold ideas" and "move Alberta forward." Featured panelists include ATB economist **Todd Hirsch**, UofC Economics prof. **Ron Kneebone**, and Canadian Federation of Small Business VP **Richard Truscott**. The AP says this will be the "first of several events that will develop a vision for effective government policy and ideals." Looks like they're trying to get a jump on the Liberals in bolstering their membership with refugee red Tories fleeing the PCs in anticipation of a **Jason Kenney** leadership win. With the Libs consistently polling at around 15% and the AP at a steady 4%, however, one wishes former Liberal Clark would just bury whatever hatchet he has out for his alma mater and become an independent so he may run in the Liberal leadership contest next spring. The AP event is being held at the Sheraton Cavalier hotel, 2620 32 Ave NE. Info & registration: <http://www.albertaparty.ca/centretogether>