

Ric Dolph's

# Insight into Government

Alberta's independent newsletter on government & politics

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## Plain paper packages...

# POT SHOPS RARING TO GO AS REGS ARE ROLLED OUT

On Friday, Justice Minister Ganley announced the austere regulations by which Alberta's pot shopkeepers must live. But with prices going down, does the rush for retail licences reflect the realities of supply, demand, and a price cutting black market?

**A**lberta was the first province out of the gate Friday in announcing regulations governing the distribution and retail sale of cannabis. Potential pot purveyors with puckish names immediately rushed to the Alberta Gaming & Liquor Commission (AGLC) website to download the long and convoluted application forms that—assuming they pay the fees, pass the criminal checks, and are deemed free from the taint of organized crime—will enable them to open stores and retail dried marijuana and cannabis oil in plain, 30-gram packages to adults (18+) once the retail licenses have been approved.

Justice Minister **Kathleen Ganley**, making her first official appearance since the birth of daughter **Wren** on Nov. 27, outlined the new regulations at Calgary's McDougall Centre, flanked by **Dave Berry**, an AGLC boffin versed in the minutiae of the regulations, and by Calgary Economic Development President **Bruce Leslie**, there to pat the gov't on the back for growing the "agri business" sector.

Ganley reported "an enormous amount of interest" from those anxious to open cannabis stores. Based on this interest and the experience in pot-legal states like Colorado and Oregon, the AGLC anticipates it will issue 250 retail licences in the first year.

(We must remember, however, that those states were islands of legalization that attracted pot shoppers from the majority of states where pot was still illegal. The demand in Alberta, which is but one of 13 provinces and territories in a green sea of legality, will not benefit nearly as much from inter-jurisdictional tourism.)

The new regulations place no limits on the number of licenses that can be issued to approved applicants. But no one company, group, or individual can own more than 15% of the licenses. This means that a corporation like Aurora Cannabis Inc., which is building an 800K-sq.-ft. cannabis greenhouse near the Edmonton air-

Continued on next page...

## POLITICAL PULSE

TRUDEAU CHIDES HORGAN

### HINTS OF AN ARMISTICE IN THE AB-BC TRADE-WAR

**W**hile most of the country moved its attention to other matters, Premier Rachel Notley did her best this week to keep herself and the pipeline fight with BC alive in the minds of Albertans, ever aware that no Trans Mountain means no NDP gov't come the election in 2019 (or 2020)r.

If any actual progress was made this week resolving the three-way impasse between Notley, BC Premier John Horgan, and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, it was, not widely apparent, but there were a couple of developments that suggested a minor shifting of the political tectonics.

Rachel, as expected, gave us a bit more theatre—though most was of the drawing room sort; nothing to match last week's wine offensive. Trudeau offered a little more encouragement for Alberta in an interview in which he actually criticized Horgan by name. (Which might not sound like much to normal folk, but it had the ladies & gents of the Press Gallery reaching for their smelling salts.)

Notley, as suggested by the charming photo above, has been busy visiting oilfield-related worksites for photo-ops—the latest on Friday to something called the Alberta Pipe Trades College in Edmonton; a union shop, of course.

Wooing the workers of the world serves a double purpose: reminding the hardhats that the NDP is their traditional political ally, and also underlining the point that the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion promises good jobs for the beleaguered Alberta working stiff.

For while she may be dead to her erstwhile pals with Greenpeace, the Pembina Institute, and the Sierra Club, Rachel still has friends in low places. And higher places too.

You may recall the previous week ending with Notley's appointment of a task force of eminent elders including former New Brunswick Premier and Canadian Ambassador to the US **Frank McKenna**, former deputy Prime Minister & Natural Resources minister **Anne McLellan**, and uber Constitutional expert **Peter Hogg** (*Insight* Feb. 10).

In another photo-op on Wednesday, Rachel bade cameras and reporters enter the cabinet room to take a look at this Alberta Defence Force. Well, sort of. Most were scattered elsewhere in North America and had to join the meeting via telephone or video conference. And the venerable Mr. Hogg wasn't even available. The cabinet table was arrayed mostly with senior bureaucrats, the ministers of energy and economic development, the NDP's pet economist (the U of C's **Trevor Tombe**), and former Syncrude President **Jim Carter**, the only defence force member present in the flesh.

Before kicking the media out, Rachel delivered a brief bit of bellicosity, vowing to keep



Notley

Turn to Political Pulse on pg. 5...

port, recently acquired Saskatchewan medical marijuana producer CanniMed for \$1.1B, and is planning a retail chain, will have to satisfy itself with 37 stores in the first year.

We can see nothing in the regulations that limits the size of a store.

The rules prohibit a cannabis shop from adjoining a liquor store or pharmacy, and stipulate premises be at least 100 metres from schools, playgrounds, and medical facilities. But municipalities have the power to apply their own zoning rules on set-backs. Calgary, for example, is currently working on a bylaw that may keep pot stores at least 50 metres from liquor stores. (The belief that pot smokers will suddenly abandon their standard practice of imbibing while toking if forced to make two stops, is a credo our matriarchal lawmakers seem incapable of renouncing.)

The provincial regulations limit the stores to selling the pre-packed, unmarked, AGLC warehouse-provided, 30-gram packages of weed or oil, but also allow the sale of pot paraphernalia such as pipes, papers, and vaporizers. Advertising signage can only appear in the stores (where minors are not allowed).

The shops won't be allowed to sell liquor, soft drinks, cigarettes, or food—at least not until the feds draft legislation governing cannabis edibles, probably next year. Cannabis lounges are also expected to be regulated in 2019.

As far as one can see, however, there's no provincial prohibition preventing a cannabis store from locating next door to a convenience store, a pharmacy, or a liquor store in, say, a strip mall—Aurora, incidentally, is buying liquor licences—although municipal zoning regulations, like

Calgary's, might produce impediments.

Municipal killjoys notwithstanding, one can envisage a marijuana mall—possibly outside of Edmonton or Calgary's nanny limits—anchored by a big box pot 'n' paraphernalia store, with a liquor store, a medical pot dispensary, fast food outlets, a cannabis lounge (to be regulated later), a club, a video arcade, skateboard park... Well, it blows one's mind, dude.

Of course none of the provincial regulations can be applied until the feds have passed Bill C-45, which amends the Criminal Code and other laws to enable the recreational use of cannabis. The bill is currently before the Senate, and is not expected to be back in the House for a final reading until early June.

By the time it has been debated, read a third time and passed, **Justin Trudeau's** original legalization target date of July 1, will have passed. Federal politicians recently predicted Cannabis Day will occur in late August or early September. By then the federal gov't may have come up with the Holy Grail, a roadside THC tester able to produce evidence of impairment that won't be laughed out of court. This had always been a sticking point.

Also, by summer's end the Alberta gov't may have finally figured out how to handle the on-line sales of cannabis, which is to be administered by the AGLC. The only thing we learned Friday about this potentially lucrative gov't enterprise was that the gov't won't be undercutting the retailers by charging on-line customers wholesale prices, but will charge the going retail prices for the various grades.

[See 'Cheap weed'...p. 4](#)

## THE DOPE ON ALBERTA'S CANNABIS RETAIL RULES

### LICENCES & SCREENING

- ✘ The Alberta Gaming & Liquor Commission (AGLC) will limit the number of licences that any one company or individual can hold to 15% of the total licences extant.
- ✘ There will be no limit on the number of licenses issued. The AGLC expects to hand out 250 in the first year.
- ✘ Applications for cannabis store licences are posted on [aglc.ca](http://aglc.ca). The Alberta Gaming & Liquor Commission (AGLC) will begin accepting completed applications on Mar. 6
- ✘ Completed applications must be submitted with a \$400 application fee, a signed criminal background check consent form, detailed financial information, the first year's licensing fee of \$700, and a \$3,000 deposit that pays the administrative costs for a thorough background check.
- ✘ Applications must be accompanied with the written approval of the municipality where the store is to be located.
- ✘ Processing of applications will take 2-4 months. Approval of a licence allows the applicant to build a store. Distribution and sale of cannabis, however, cannot take place until Bill C-45, the federal legalization currently crawling through the Senate, is passed by Parliament, maybe in late August.
- ✘ Those wishing to work in cannabis stores (*weedwackers*?) will be required to complete the AGLC's mandatory on-line "Sell Safe" staff training certification program, similar to the Pro-Serve course for alcohol servers, which will be available May 1. The training takes 4-6 hours followed by a test with an 80% pass threshold.
- ✘ Cannabis workers (*buddistas*?) must obtain police checks at their own expense. A record for a minor offense including simple possession of cannabis will not prevent a worker from being approved; a trafficking conviction will.

### STORE REQUIREMENTS

- ✘ Stores must be stand-alone facilities with discreet entrances & without connected sections selling other products.
- ✘ Cannabis stores will be allowed to sell only dried marijuana and cannabis oil in the plain, 30-gram packages shipped from the AGLC warehouse & displayed in locked showcases accessed only by staff. The only other merchandise permitted is cannabis paraphernalia (pipes, papers, etc.) No Cheetos!
- ✘ The province recommends retail facilities be located 100 metres away from schools, playgrounds, & medical facilities. Municipalities, however, can vary the set-backs, limit the number of stores in a given area, or prohibit them entirely. (Hello, Cardston).
- ✘ The province allows cannabis retailers to open between 10 am & 2 am (same as liquor stores), although municipalities can set reduced hours.
- ✘ Stores are required to have security cameras with alarms & video surveillance.
- ✘ No one under 18 is allowed inside a cannabis store.
- ✘ Advertising signage is only allowed inside licensed stores.
- ✘ No consumption of the product is allowed in any licensed retail outlet. Consumption is allowed in the same places as those for tobacco, with the exception of motor vehicles.
- ✘ Transactions are limited to 30 grams—the maximum amount a person is allowed to carry outside the home. There is no limit on the amount kept at a residence, where up to four pot plants at a time can be cultivated indoors.
- ✘ AGLC can set a price floor if the prices charged are deemed to be too low. (Similar to the price floor once imposed on alcohol when bars were selling 25¢ shots)

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**To contact Ric Dolphin, phone: 780-914-3425 or email: [dolphin@insightalberta.ca](mailto:dolphin@insightalberta.ca)**

## DATA Bank ...

## EXPORTS COMPARED

Alberta's overall export value was 26.5% higher last year, driven largely by increased oil prices and production which, for most of the year, was not greatly affected by the higher discounts caused late in the year by a TransCanada pipeline disruption, which increased the amount of crude having to be transported more expensively by rail. Industrial machinery, mostly oil-patch related and headed south, also enjoyed a 39% jump, while other commodities saw modest gains. Alberta remained Canada's second largest exporter, with roughly 50% of the total of Ontario, a province with three times our population, while our exports were 129% greater than those of British Columbia, whose population is 12% higher than ours. Exports to four of our five export markets increased modestly, while those to the United States, of course, jumped by 30% because of the increases in oil prices & production and machinery sales.

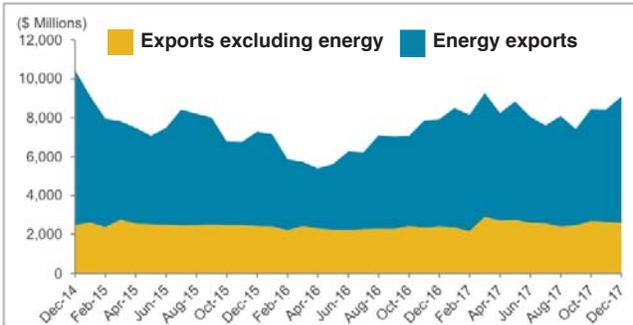
## ALBERTA EXPORTS

PRODUCT	2017	2016	2007	'16- '17 CHG	'07- '17 CHG
ALL MERCHANDISE	\$100.20B	\$79.21B	\$81.56B	26.5%	23%
ENERGY PRODUCTS	\$69.58B	\$51.59B	\$55.23B	35%	26%
BASIC & INDUSTRIAL CHEMICAL, PLASTIC & RUBBER PRODUCTS	\$8.99B	\$8.67B	\$7.89B	4%	14%
FARM & INTERMEDIATE FOOD PRODUCTS	\$7.30B	\$6.28B	\$4.40B	16%	66%
CONSUMER GOODS	\$4.28B	\$3.99B	\$2.55B	7%	68%
FORESTRY PRODUCTS & BUILDING & PACKAGING MATERIALS	\$4.03B	\$3.61B	\$2.86B	12%	41%
INDUSTRIAL MACHINERY, EQUIPMENT AND PARTS	\$2.06B	\$1.49B	\$2.73B	39%	-24.5%
AIRCRAFT & OTHER TRANSPORTATION EQUIPMENT & PARTS	\$1.73B	\$1.57B	\$1.21B	10%	43%

## EXPORTS BY PROVINCE - ALL MERCHANDISE

PROVINCE	2017	2016	2007	'16- '17 CHG	'07- '17 CHG
ONTARIO	\$199.67B	\$205.46B	\$177.38B	-3%	12.5%
ALBERTA	\$100.20B	\$79.21B	\$81.56B	26.5%	23%
QUÉBEC	\$83.24B	\$78.52B	\$67.15B	6%	24%
BRITISH COLUMBIA	\$43.80B	\$38.78B	\$31.52B	13%	39%
SASKATCHEWAN	\$28.88B	\$26.64B	\$19.33B	8%	49.5%
MANITOBA	\$13.83B	\$13.47B	\$12.20B	3%	13%
NEW BRUNSWICK	\$12.81B	\$10.64B	\$11.18B	20.5%	14.5%
NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR	\$10.16B	\$8.40B	\$11.69B	21%	-13%
NOVA SCOTIA	\$5.42B	\$5.23B	\$5.29B	4%	2.5%
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND	\$1.32B	\$1.26B	\$738.5M	5%	79%

## ALBERTA'S MERCHANDISE EXPORTS



A recently completed upgrader expansion in Alberta's oil sands continues to drive production growth. Alberta crude oil production increased by 2.1% month-over-month (m/m) to reach a new high of 3.5 million barrels per day (Mbd) in December. The completion of the Horizon Phase 3 upgrader boosted synthetic crude oil production (+13% m/m). Conventional oil also rose for the fourth consecutive month. Compared to the previous year, crude oil increased 10% year-over-year (y/y), with gains across all crude types. Overall in 2017, Alberta production averaged 3.2 Mbd, up 9.5% from 2016.

## ALTA'S TOP 10 EXPORT DESTINATIONS (2017)

COUNTRY	2017	2016	2007
UNITED STATES	\$87.67B	\$68.44B	\$70.57B
CHINA	\$3.88B	\$3.05B	\$2.82B
JAPAN	\$1.76B	\$1.69B	\$1.46B
MEXICO	\$1.30B	\$927.6M	\$720.0M
SOUTH KOREA	\$413.9M	\$360.7M	\$463.2M
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	\$257.3M	\$247.1M	--
INDONESIA	\$252.0M	\$188.8M	--
FRANCE	\$247.0M	--	--
INDIA	\$221.1M	--	--
HONG KONG	\$212.9M	\$188.845	--

NOTE: Blank squares indicate country was not among the top ten destinations for those years.

SOURCES: STATISTICS CANADA

### Cheap weed...from p. 2

As one who has bought online medical cannabis oil for a severely arthritic mother from CanniMed (which turned out to be as useless as we suspect the majority of therapeutic pot claims to be), the process doesn't seem difficult. Presentation of two pieces of ID to the delivery person should be enough to establish one's identity and age. But maybe we're missing something.

**Meanwhile, there are the questions of pricing and revenues, for both the retailers and the gov't.** And here's where the question marks start popping up like Triffids.

Last year the federal government announced a tax of 10% on what, at that time, was predicted as a retail price of \$10 a gram. The feds and the provinces agreed to a split the tax revenue 75-25 in favour of the provinces. The provinces in turn would pass a third of their take on to the municipalities (to cover policing, "education," and whatever crises the social workers might devise). But the \$10/gm was optimistic.

One of the stated objectives for both the federal and provincial gov'ts is to set a price low enough to moot the illegal trade, much of which is controlled by organized crime, including the Hell's Angels. But gov'ts don't want the price to go so low that it a) encourages excessive use, and b) fails to generate enough revenue for gov'ts to police and regulate the industry, mollify the munis, and have a little left over for NDP priority spending: solar panelled teepees, sexual reconstruction operations for transgendered woodland caribou, etc. At her presser, Ganley said it would probably take two or three years before the gov't would recoup the costs of setting up the system—a new AGLC bureaucracy, training cops in stoned-driving interdiction, purchase of the new types of roadside screening devices, new hospital facilities for research into marijuana's effects, etc.

However, based on what's been happening to the price in other jurisdictions—and indeed in Canada—the prospects of reasonable revenue for either the retailers or the gov't seem less likely.

A recent Statistics Canada survey of marijuana users found that they were paying an average of \$7/gm for their illegal weed.

Let's assume for a moment that the street price remains at \$7 (it won't, but bear with us). That means the retail price is going to have to average about the same or only slightly higher. Let's assume that people will pay an extra buck a gram for the convenience of a store and for the benefit of buying a precision product where the THC level is listed on the package and chances of the dope being tainted are slim.

**Greg McLeish**, a financial analyst who studies the big Canadian marijuana producers like Aurora and Canopy Growth Corp., recently told the *Financial Times* that these companies are currently selling most of their product to the European medical cannabis market for \$12/gm wholesale.

"Longer term in Canada you'll be selling it wholesale for probably around \$5 a gram or less."

So let's say the AGLC buys pot for \$5/gm, and takes a 20% markup of \$1 (less than the average 35% markup it takes from alcohol), and then wholesales it to the retailer for \$6/gm. If the retailer sells it for \$8, his gross margin is \$2/gm, out of which he must pay his employees, his business tax, his rent and utilities, the carbon tax on his heat, his federal and provincial corporate taxes, his office expenses, his provincial licensing fees, the cost of store renovation and security, liability insurance, and the 10% federal tax (80¢/gm).

This does not leave him a big profit margin. So he's going to have to sell an awful lot of pot and apply large markups on his paraphernalia in order to make a reasonable living.

Another possible headache for wholesalers and retailers alike, could be a drop in price caused by oversupply, and by a reduction in the price charged by the illegal market. This occurred in Washington state, where the retail price dropped to US\$3/gm last year.

Thus cannabis legalization may not turn out to be the bonanza for retailers that many of those estimated 250 storekeepers were anticipating. One must therefore expect that a significant weeding-out process will occur.

## Insight into Government

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## People ...

**Recent appointments by cabinet  
and highlights of recent cabinet orders**

### Appointments...

- **Jane Edmundson**, curator of the University of Lethbridge Art Gallery, and **Sithara Fernando**, a wildlife biologist with Suncor Energy in Fort McMurray, as members of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts, each for a two-year term.
- **Susie Eve Nixon**, an advocate for sexual violence victims with the Calgary YWCA, to succeed **Mark**

**Timothy Nicoll**, as a public member to the council of the Alberta College of Combined Laboratory and X-ray Technologists for a three-year term

● **Tiffany Poltz**, a Calgary chartered accountant in the energy industry, to succeed **Kurt Emery Paterson**, as a public member to the council of the Alberta College of Occupational Therapists for a three-year term.

### Orders in Council...

● Proclaiming the prorogation of the Third Session of the Twenty-ninth Legislature effective Mar. 7, and the convening of the Fourth Session on Mar. 8 at 3 pm. This order was expected and means there will be a Throne Speech to start the new session, with the main order of business being the budget with its promised "compassionate cuts."

## en passant...

**The United Nurses of Alberta became the** second major public sector union to take one for the team this week, with 98% of the union locals voting to accept 0% pay raises for the first two years of a three-year contract, retroactive to April 2017. The contract, which also contains job-security provisions (e.g. no involuntary layoffs), provides for renegotiation of wages in the third year (2019-20), but those negotiations likely won't hit their critical point until after the next election. The UNA, which represents 30,000 registered nurses whose regular hourly wages range from \$37 to \$58, joins the Alberta Teachers' Association in accepting zero-raise contracts (*Insight* April 28), which will help the NDP gov't in a reelection campaign wherein it tries to shed its spendthrift image. The last of the big public unions yet to reach a collective agreement is the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees (AUPE), 75% of whose 93,000 members are still without a contract. On Thursday the union's bargaining team sent out a release to members stating, "We're disappointed there seems to be no movement on many of the union's priority items like job security, workload, job classifications, hiring practices, contracting out and more. Unfortunately these items remain to be seriously discussed and are tied to a monetary agreement." Unlike their comrades in those other two unions, AUPE members seem less anxious to aid the NDP reelection campaign, and appear to be negotiating on the premise that the NDP will not win reelection and that the union had better grab what it can before Kenney and his austerity mongers bring back *KleinNacht*.

**Devin Dreeshen, 32, has become the second** candidate in the race for the UCP nomination in the recently vacated riding of Innisfail-Sylvan Lake. Premier **Rachel Notley** has yet to announce a byelection date. The other announced candidate is Penhold town councillor and junior high school teacher **Mike Walsh, 39**. Dreeshen, who farms near Pine Lake, was a policy advisor to former Agriculture Minister **Gerry Ritz** between 2008 and 2015, and has been

a volunteer on UCP Leader **Jason Kenney's** various campaigns since 2016. He has been endorsed by former provincial Transportation Minister **Luke Ouellette**, for whom he worked as an executive assistant in 2007. His father is the low-profile, three-term federal Conservative MP **Earl Dreeshan, 64** (Red Deer-Mountain View). The riding was held by UCP MLA **Don MacIntyre**, who resigned Feb. 2 after being charged with sexual assault and sexual interference with a girl under 16. In Red Deer Provincial Court on Thursday, MacIntyre's case was put over until Mar. 22. He is out on bail with several conditions, which include having no contact with the complainant or anyone under 16, and being within 100 metres of a playground, swimming pool, daycare or school ground.

**The members of the Alberta Party, bless 'em,** were delighted to report this week that they had 6,500 members signed up at the close of sales prior to the leadership contest on Feb. 27. That number may pale in comparison to, say, the UCP's 100K+, or however many the NDP might have (the Dips don't release their numbers). But that 6,500 is a 600% gain from what the AP had when it announced its leadership race in November, and it is thrice the number of members the Alberta Liberals had when they held their leadership contest last June (*Insight* June 9). As for which of the three AP candidates—**Rick Fraser, 46**, **Kara Levis, 35**, or **Stephen Mandel, 72**—sold the most memberships, our guess is that veteran campaigner Mandel, the popular former mayor of Edmonton is winning the sweepstakes. And his membership sales are rumoured to have been augmented by strategic UCP buyers who believe that the Alberta Party with Mandel as leader will split the progressive vote in Edmonton, enabling the Unicons to pick up a handful of seats there. But Levis, a lawyer and past campaign organizer for the federal Liberals, is said to have a deep red well from which to draw, which might stand her in good stead on the preferential ballot if Mandel fails to get a majority. Fraser (Calgary-South East) is the wild card. He was endorsed by AP MLA **Karen McPherson** (Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill), the former Dipper who defected to the AP last fall, and whose loyal constituents may have bought memberships to support Rick.

## POLITICAL PULSE ... from Page 1

up the good fight for Alberta oil access, and hinting that last week's boycott of BC wine was just a taste of what she might be prepared to do if Horgan and his gang persist in their plan to limit bitumen imports into BC.

"Today we are going to discuss further responses to BC beyond the wine ban and we are going to talk about potential responses to any attempt—any attempt—to frustrate progress on this important question. We are going to make the point again, and again, and again, for as long as it takes, that this project was approved in the national interest and it must be built in the national interest. We're not going to stand down until this happens... We're going to keep the pressure on." Following the session, there was no announcement on what had or hadn't been decided.

We suspect more useful work has been occurring west of the Rockies. For while Notley was hunkering down with her boffins, senior federal bureaucrats were continuing to have a quiet words with their counterparts in Victoria.

From what we have seen and heard, we are beginning to believe that Trudeau—although beset by anti-oil policy advisers like chief of staff and former World Wildlife Fund president **Gerry Butts**—is willing to support Trans Mountain as a sop to Alberta (where he hopes to repair the political damage done by his father) and to reward Notley, whose climate plan and carbon tax he sees as a model for other provinces.

Tuesday's BC Throne Speech, contained a single paragraph on the subject of the pipeline on its final page.

"Government is considering new protections that would improve our ability to prepare for and respond to bitumen spills," read Lt.-Gov. **Judith Guichon**.

Asked if this meant the BC gov't was backing down, a somewhat chastened-seeming Horgan told the CBC, "It's our intention... to certainly lower the temperature so we can have a more reasonable discussion." He emphasized that no restrictions would be considered while the review of potential tanker spills — which hasn't started yet and has no end date — was ongoing.

That same day, Trudeau was interviewed by *The National Observer*, a left-wing, online newspaper, in which he accused Horgan of potentially scuttling the national climate plan by blocking Rachel's pipeline.

"By blocking the Kinder Morgan pipeline," said Justin, "he's putting at risk the entire national climate change plan, because Alberta will not be able to stay on if the Kinder Morgan pipeline doesn't go through."

"And you will get politicians who are picking and choosing parts of the national plan they don't like, and if we don't continue to stand strongly in the national interest, the things that people don't like within the agreement—which is always filled with compromises—are going to mean that there is no agreement, and there is no capacity to reach our climate targets."

Trudeau's inference: if Rachel fails to get the pipeline built, **Jason Kenney** will be elected, and Kenney has repeatedly stated that his first act will be to rip up Notley's Carbon Tax. This would throw Trudeau's national plan into disarray and would, in Justin's opinion, be Horgan's fault.

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

### Unicons rampant in field of fading orange...

● The rush of United Conservative nomination declarations continued this week, especially in Calgary, with as many as a half dozen candidates lining up for some ridings in a city the Unicons expect to turn deep blue in the next election. Nomination contests are expected in all 25 Calgary constituencies.

So far the only former Conservative MLA to announce in Calgary is **Jason Luan**, 54, (PC Calgary-Hawkwood, 2012-15), who was replaced by the NDP's gay tub-thumper **Michael Connolly**, 23. Hawkwood no longer exists, so Luan will likely run in the redrawn riding of Calgary-Edgemont.

Former PC Attorney-General **Jonathan Denis**, 41, is still contemplating a run in his former two-term riding of Calgary-Acadia. He lost it to NDP yoga instructor **Brandy Payne**, now associate minister of Health, largely because of an ugly court case involving his estranged wife which occurred during the campaign (*Insight* May 8, 2015). Memories of the lurid details are still fresh in the memories of many Conservatives, some of whom blame Denis for the entire Tory implosion in Calgary and wish he'd just keep away.

**Doug Schweitzer**, 39, the corporations lawyer who placed third in the October UCP leadership race, had been considering a run for the federal Conservative nomination in Calgary-Centre, where ten Tories are jostling for nomination in the riding currently held by the #MeToo-marred Liberal MP **Kent Hehr** (*Insight* Jan. 27).

But this week Schweitzer decided instead to seek the provincial UCP nomination in Calgary-North West, currently held by the notorious (in UCP circles) NDP Infrastructure

Minister **Sandra Jansen**, 55, she who crossed from the PCs to the NDP in late 2016.

As a moderate who never fails to profess his love for the LGBT minority, Schweitzer could well prove the ideal Jansen interceptor. Unless of course Sandy tries for granola-rich Calgary-Mountain View, which is being vacated by retiring Liberal **David Swann** and is considered a prime NDP target.

### Kim's diss-arming tweet...

● Not a lot had been heard from former Prime Minister (for two minutes) **Kim Campbell**, 70, who was appointed founding principal of the Peter Lougheed Leadership College at the UofA in the spring of 2014 and is currently completing her final academic year in the role, which requires her to spend two weeks of each month in Edmonton.

This week, however, Campbell made a bit of a splash when she tweeted out her disapproval of all things, bare arms on female TV news readers.

"I am struck by how many women on television news wear sleeveless dresses—often when sitting with suited men. I have always felt it was demeaning to the women... Bare arms undermine credibility and gravitas!"

Although the tweet had a few defenders, most responses ranged from the withering to the incredulous, with several tweeters posting the notorious **Barbara Woodley** photo of Campbell taken in 1990 where she held up her justice minister's robes in front of her apparently naked body.

Campbell protested that she wasn't presenting the news, tweeting, "Photo was art—juxtaposition of bare shoulders (femininity) and legal robes—(male dominated power structure)." Ah, yes art; *those tender strokes that wake the soul.*

The best response came from Conservative MP **Michelle Rempel** who tweeted: "I firmly believe in the right of Canadians to bare arms."

## The week ahead ...

**Feb. 19**—Family Day events at the Legislature include a magic show, puppetry, roving musicians, movies, and art displays. Elsewhere museums and historic sites will offer free admission. For more info go to: <https://albertaculture.wordpress.com/2018/02/09/for-family-day-enjoy-free-admission-to-provincial-historic-sites-museums-and-alberta-parks/#more-2767>

**Feb. 20 & 22**—The Environment & Parks ministry holds information sessions on its Draft Provincial Woodland Caribou Range Plan, a land-management initiative aimed at recovering and achieving self-sustaining populations of the threatened species in northern Alberta. Tuesday's session is in Whitecourt from 3 to 8 pm at St. Joseph Parish Hall, 5538 Mink Creek Rd.; Thursday's session is in Edmonton between 3 and 8 pm at Kingsway Legion 14339 50 St. More info at: <https://talkaep.alberta.ca/caribou-range-planning>

**Feb. 20-27**—Culture & Tourism Minister **Ricardo Miranda** journeys to Seoul & PyeongChang Korea in support of Travel Alberta and Canada Beef promotions at the Olympics, to meet with the vice-governor of Gangwon province (a sister province to Alberta since 1974), and to "observe Olympic events." Total cost for this trip and the Olympic junket by Deputy-Premier **Sarah Hoffman** the preceding week, is estimated at \$45.2K.

**Feb. 21**—The Economics Society of Northern Alberta hosts an event entitled "The Pros & Cons of a Sales Tax for Alberta," with speakers arguing for and against a PST (aka "Political Suicide Tax."), including Alberta Federation of Labour president **Gil McGowan** (con?), UofC economist **Bev Dahlby** (pro?). 7:30 am - 12 pm, Chateau Lacombe Hotel, Tickets \$45-\$60 at: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/the-pros-and-cons-of-a-sales-tax-for-alberta-tickets-42488029841>

**Feb. 21**—"Shindig with Shannon," a \$250-a-head fundraiser in support of the reelection of Banff-Cochrane

NDP MLA **Cam Westhead** (who will be running in the redrawn riding of Banff-Kananaskis) and featuring an appearance by Environment & Parks Minister **Shannon Phillips**. Starts at 6:30 pm at the Canmore Nordic Centre. For tickets and info on this & other NDP fundraisers go to: <https://act.albertandp.ca/events>

**Feb. 21-22**—The 9th annual Growing the North Conference, an economic development, innovation, & networking event for businesses & municipalities happens in Grande Prairie. Speakers include Economic & Trade Minister **Deron Bilous** (12:30 pm, Wed.), Energy Minister **Marg McCuaig-Boyd** (12:15 pm Thu.), Aurora Cannabis VP **Cam Battle** (3 pm, Wed), & retired Fort McMurray fire chief **Darby Allen** (3 pm, Thu); at the Evergreen Park ENTREC Centre; registration & info: <http://www.growingthenorth.com/index>

**Feb. 22**—Calgary-Acadia UCP constituency association holds a \$100-a-head fundraiser featuring former PC cabinet minister and, later, interim Wildrose leader **Heather Forsythe**. 5:30-7:30 pm, Carriage House Inn, 9030 McLeod Tr. SE. Tickets: [https://unitedconservative.ca/Event?name=acadia\\_reception](https://unitedconservative.ca/Event?name=acadia_reception)

**Feb. 23**—The Alberta Liberals hold a "February Fiesta" \$50-a-head fundraiser in Calgary, with leader **David Khan** and MLA **David Swann** (Calgary-Mountain View), and featuring Mexican food, at the Rosedale Hall, 901 11 Ave. NW. More info: [http://www.albertaliberal.com/take\\_action](http://www.albertaliberal.com/take_action)

**Feb. 24**—The yet-to-be-registered V32 No. 19 Final Edit red Alberta Advantage Party announces its leader & outlines its party platform for the 2019 election. The rightist party was started by Wildrose members who turned against Wildrose leader **Brian Jean** last summer after his decision to unite with the **Jason Kenney** & the remaining conservative PCs to form the United Conservative Party. The event will be held at the Springbrook Multiplex, 3216 22 St. Springbrook (near the Red Deer airport), starting at noon. Admission \$25. For more info: