

# And now for our next hundred years...

## PREMIER RALPH KLEIN

"In 2105: Alberta will be celebrating its bicentennial, as well as its ranking as Canada's economic leader for the 104th straight year. "As one of the few parts of the world that still has large volumes of energy resources, Alberta will have international recognition as the world's top energy supplier.



Klein

"But the real key to Alberta's economic success will be the productivity of the research and high-tech sector, centred in Edmonton (now Canada's national capital city, thanks to the province's success and the effective lobbying work of the province's elected senators).

"Canada's prime minister in 2105 will be from Fort McMurray, the country's third-largest city. Oh, and you read it here first — the Oilers (coached by Kevin Percy-Lowe IV) will take the Cup in six."

## MARY GRIFFITHS

Environmental policy analyst, Pembina Institute

Griffiths sees a future that unfolds in one of two ways.

"Having succumbed to the 'black gold' rush of the early 21st century, Alberta's vast oil sands have been largely exploited. The Athabasca River is devoid of fish, and the surrounding boreal landscape is a patchwork of linear scars and moonscapes of sand and grass that are undergoing reclamation, which has thus far proved largely unsuccessful.

"The once bustling centre of Fort McMurray is largely a ghost town, with empty commercial space, homes for sale and strangely quiet six-lane highways. This scene is replicated in both Edmonton and Calgary.

"But the Institute prefers an alternate scenario. In this future, the province has harnessed production of oil from



Griffiths

*The Journal* asked a number of prominent Albertans to look into their crystal balls and make some predictions about what life in Alberta will be like in 2105 when the province celebrates its bicentennial. Here's what they said.

the oilsands by measured development that protects local land and water resources. A healthy and diverse boreal ecosystem retains a few, small and highly efficient oilsands production facilities that produce high value-added production of plastics and other synthetic materials. Having developed a vision for long-term ecological, social and economic sustainability, the province of Alberta remains prosperous.

"Alberta's population has grown rapidly, as a result of environmental disasters caused by climate change elsewhere in the world, but the new people join all Albertans in maintaining a sustainable economy."

## MARTY CHAN

Playwright

"I came up with two possible futures. The first one is that our government's obsession with privatization will reach a crescendo about the same time that our oil reserves become depleted.

"As a result, everything in our province will become privatized. Albertans will have to pay to travel down the Pepsi Highway if they want to visit Microsoft Mountains. They'll have to go to hospitals owned and operated by Pfizer drugs and our province will sell its name so that in every atlas across the world our province will be known as onlinepok-er.com.

"That's the dark future. The other possible future is that in 10 years scientists will discover that mad cow disease was really an evolutionary step and the cow will become the dominant species. By 2105, it will be the Province of the Cow. They'll be ruling. Just like Planet



Chan

of the Apes.

"Cows will feed on ground up human beings. Unfortunately, they won't be able to eat elected officials, because cows are too smart to swallow anything a politician has to give. We'll live in cattle pens.

"The one that's likely is the privatization. The one that I hope for is the province of the cow."

## CHIEF JIM BOUCHER

Fort MacKay First Nation

"The aboriginal community will get more and more educated as time goes on and with that, of course, our influence will be enhanced.

"I think climate change is going to have an effect in the next 100 years. For northern Alberta it might be better for us in the sense that we're going to have a combination of long daylight and a long growing season.

"Farming might be a possibility in this area at that point. I think raising food is something that's going to be new, especially in the northeastern part of the province. There will be a lot of crops being grown."

The Fort MacKay First Nation also will own and operate its own oilsands company by 2105, Boucher predicted.

"I think it's just a natural evolution and I think it will be a good fit for the community. I think what we will be doing is producing oil as a company with the infrastructure right from the extraction process right down to the upgrading process. I think that's just a natural step forward for the aboriginal community."

In terms of transportation, "There will be an eight-lane highway between Fort McMurray, the oilsands plants



Boucher

## ALBERTA'S 1905-2005 CENTURY

and Fort MacKay, unless they put in some high-speed transit systems. It's been assessed and the numbers haven't come back positive, so it's not sustainable at this point in time. It could be in 100 years."

## LESLEY PRIMEAU

630 CHED talk show host

"Ralph Klein will have finally said goodbye and meant it. We'll have a bona fide leadership race with people who care about politics.

"The Tories will lose power because the oil will have run out and they'll have no oil in which to grease the palms of other people and finally the province will wake up — as will the rest of the country — and we'll finally elect people who care about what's actually happening regardless of party politics.

"In Edmonton, the Fringe Festival will be celebrating Fringe-A-Go-Go Part II and it will naturally be an unqualified success.

"The 200th Anniversary committee will realize that they should actually leave a legacy and, in doing so, will look to the arts community for input on statues, fountains, walks of history, which, of course, we have done none of this year.

"We will celebrate the birth of all Alberta children by actually giving them a four-year university tuition plan.

"The city of Edmonton, having taken an environmental approach to life, has realized there is a need for bicycle paths and alternative transportation. It could be LRT, could be bicycles, I don't know if it will be electric cars, but it could be possible.

"The city of Edmonton is celebrating its



Primeau

incredible night life, its arts and entertainment communities are thriving as it has curbed urban sprawl. We've realized that people living in downtown Edmonton is a really good thing."

## ERIC NEWELL

University of Alberta chancellor and retired CEO of Syncrude Canada Ltd.

"In 2105, Canada will still be a country. We will not become the 51st state and we will not see the West separate, nor will we see Quebec separate, and we will thrive based on our multicultural background.

"Alberta will still be the energy province, but the energy will be different. Around the world, as the standard of living comes up, the thirst for energy is huge with the increased world population. We will need every form of energy that we know of and we'll need to be using it as efficiently as possible.

"If we did our work right in 2005, we will still see the oilsands going. Albert will be one of the major suppliers of crude oil.

"Natural gas will still have a role, but now we'll move much more into the alternate energy forms, including nuclear, wind, solar, geothermal.

"We have tremendous coal resource so we'll have clean coal technology. We'll be using coal in great amounts, but without the pollution effects.

"Post-secondary education won't be just for 18- to 24-year-olds. We will finally have figured out how to really live up to life long learning. Albertans will be continually able to refresh and upgrade their education. Aboriginal students today, less than half of them graduate from high school. One hundred years from now there will be no difference in the education outcomes for Albertans whether they be aboriginal or non-aboriginal. I definitely think that's within our reach. If we don't do it, I would have a very different outlook for our future.

"Also in 2105, the Edmonton Oilers will win the Stanley Cup and the trophy will be accepted by the team captain, who is a woman."



Newell