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THE HONOURABLE BILL BARISOFF, SPEAKER

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(Entered Confederation July 20, 1871)

LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR
His Honour the Honourable Steven L. Point, OBC

SECOND SESSION, 39TH PARLIAMENT

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Honourable Bill Barisoff

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TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2010

The House met at 2:04 p.m.

[Mr. Speaker in the chair.]

This being the first day of the second session of the 39th Legislative Assembly of the province of British Columbia for the dispatch of business, pursuant to a proclamation of the Hon. Steven Point, Lieutenant-Governor of the province, hon. members took their seats.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the Rev. David Wells, coordinator of the multi-faith centres of the 2010 Olympic Winter Games villages, will say prayers.

D. Wells: Shall we pray. Our heavenly Father, we honour you today as the Lord who is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in love and faithfulness.

We do thank you that you have granted us the privilege of welcoming the world to our province at the Olympics and Paralympic Games, and we will celebrate with the athletes the joy of effort, the value of good example and respect for the fundamental ethical principles.

[1405]

So I pray for these legislators, as well, that with your wisdom, knowledge and understanding, they too will know the shared joy in their efforts to serve this province, that you will strengthen them to exhibit good example and fundamental ethical principles, even as the athletes do throughout the games.

As Jesus taught us to pray, may your kingdom come and your will be done in British Columbia, as it is in heaven. Amen.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, noting the guests that are in the galleries today and noting that I know that every one of you would love to individually welcome them, on your behalf, I want to welcome all the guests that are here today.

Hon. Members, on Thursday, February 11, the Rt. Hon. Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada, has agreed to address this Legislative Assembly. This is the first time a sitting Prime Minister has agreed to address the House, and in keeping with the established precedents of this House, I ask that leave be given for this historic event to proceed.

Leave granted.

Mr. Speaker: Now, if the members would remain in their seats, the Lieutenant-Governor is in the precinct and will be arriving shortly.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor entered the chamber, took his seat on the throne and was pleased to deliver the following gracious speech.

Speech from the Throne

Hon. S. Point (Lieutenant-Governor): Good afternoon to everyone in the gallery and to everybody in the House.

As we open this session of the 39th parliament, we pause to honour the memory and contributions of British Columbians who have passed since this assembly last convened. Members mourn the loss of former members of this assembly: Art Cowie, Ted Nebbeling, Angus Creelman Ree.

We recognize the sacrifice made by Lt. Andrew Nuttall and Pte. Garrett Chidley, as well as journalist Michelle Lang.

We join First Nations communities in honouring the memory of Nisga'a Lisims President Nelson Leeson, and the arts community, who remember Doreen Jensen and Patricia Kathleen Page.

[1410]

We recognize the contributions of those who've helped build our province: civic leaders Brian Given, Greg Kamenka and Reg Easingwood; former B.C. Supreme Court judges David Vickers and George Lamperson; longtime Victoria fire captain Robert John; and 25 members of the B.C. public service who have passed since we last met. We salute those who gave of themselves for the betterment of our province: philanthropist Dr. Don Rix and visionary Jack Poole.

British Columbians joined the world community in shock and sadness at the devastating destruction, injury and loss of life as a result of the earthquake in Haiti. Our thoughts go out to all those who lost their families and friends.

We gather today together at an exciting time in our history. In just three days we will host the 21st winter Olympiad. Then in March we host the Paralympic Games. As athletes, visitors and media arrive, we welcome them all to our home — British Columbia, Canada.

This is an incredible opportunity to showcase our province and our country in all its diversity and grandeur. Our province will be centre stage as over three billion people around the world watch us host the games.

This Friday the Olympic torch will complete its journey when it sparks to life the Olympic cauldron. As it passed through over 1,000 communities in its long odyssey throughout Canada, it fired up our pride as a nation. Some 12,000 Canadians held it high, but millions more were inspired by its enduring light. The Olympic flame connects us in celebration of Canada and of all the Olympic spirit it represents.

Canada stands as a testament to the power of the human spirit, partnership and enterprise. We are a na-

tion of promise. This is our Canada, this is our British Columbia, and this is our Olympic moment.

Thousands of designers, tradespeople, contractors, volunteers and professionals have made this happen. Under the unflagging leadership of Jack Poole and John Furlong, the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games team has set an exceptional example and united us in pursuit of the highest goals. VANOC deserves the heartfelt thanks of all Canadians. They remind us of who we are.

These games are Canada's games. The federal government has been our greatest partner on every step along this Olympic path. Provincial and territorial governments, sponsors and legions of selfless citizens have all contributed in this national endeavour. To all those who have helped deliver these games — the visionaries, volunteers, trainers, coaches, athletes, elected officials, public servants and community groups — British Columbians say thank you.

A new standard of performance has been set in pursuit of our Olympic dream. For the first time ever, every Olympic venue was completed a year ahead of schedule and on budget. For the first time ever, four host First Nations will welcome the athletes of the world to the games. And we are all confident that for the first time ever, Canadian Olympians will win gold medals here in their country. We will raise our voices in support of Canada's athletes as they strive to be the best they've ever been. Their country is with them. Across Canada in every community, Canadians are united by these three words: "Go, Canada, go." [Applause.]

Every Olympic athlete dreamed a dream that seemed impossible when it was first imagined. Their aspirations and achievements now inspire us all to reach higher. The Olympic platform is a launching pad to lift British Columbia and Canada to new heights and new prosperity.

[1415]

A new decade is upon us that demands we leave the past behind and embrace new solutions for this new century. In this age of relentless change and global transformation, standing still is not an option.

We must ask how we can best lead change for our children's advantage. In the year ahead we will build on our Olympic momentum with decisive actions that will reward the generations that follow.

A new budget will set the foundation for the province we want in the year 2030 with a new agenda that strengthens our economy, reinforces our fiscal framework and creates new jobs; capitalizes on our strategic advantage as Canada's Pacific gateway; maximizes our potential as a clean energy powerhouse and a global leader in climate action; assists and supports families with children; modernizes our education system and creates new opportunities for early learning, smarter use of education resources and new choices for students;

and expands innovation in health delivery that gives patients new choices, that rewards performance and that secures public health care for future generations.

These priorities will help advance this government's five great goals. They demand collaborative partnerships, smart action and firm commitment.

Your government is working hard to build a new relationship with First Nations. New revenue-sharing opportunities, new reconciliation agreements and new treaties create social and economic opportunities for aboriginal people that include them in the promise of future prosperity.

The Yale final agreement is complete and ready for community ratification. Other treaties are on the cusp and nearing reality. New reconciliation protocols have been reached with the Haida and six other coastal First Nations. They welcome First Nations into our economy as true partners with new opportunities and shared decision-making in their traditional territories.

The aboriginal name of the Queen Charlotte Islands, Haida Gwaii, will be restored and utilized in all government documentation. British Columbia will join with Washington State in officially naming the area covered by the Georgia Basin–Puget Sound ecosystem the Salish Sea. The Salish Sea will not change existing names but will serve to designate the body of inland salt waters stretching from Campbell River and Desolation Sound to the southern reaches of Puget Sound.

Our government's economic mission is clear. We must foster job creation with faster approvals, lower costs, open trade and labour mobility to encourage economic growth and foster opportunities for families in every region.

The recent Supreme Court of Canada ruling on the Red Chris mine project demands immediate action to rationalize public approvals both within our government and between governments. The government will work with other provinces and the federal government to establish one process for one project. There is no time to waste. Canadian taxpayers cannot afford the extra cost, the uncertainties and the lost jobs that are the products of the current system.

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Act must be amended to create a unified federal-provincial review process that does away with redundancies and unnecessary costs. Multiple governmental reviews replicate work, add costs, increase uncertainty, delay decisions, reduce investment and, ultimately, cost jobs.

We will redouble our efforts to conclude equivalency agreements with Ottawa to ensure that environmental reviews are cost-effective, timely and thorough.

Currently over \$3 billion in provincially approved projects are stranded in the mire of federal process and delay. This is unacceptable. Time is money. Duplication is waste. Tax dollars are limited. We cannot afford to hold investment in jobs hostage. Byzantine bureaucratic

practices have no place in the 21st century. That means "overcomplicated." I had to look it up. [Laughter.]

[1420]

The government will fully respect and adhere to First Nations rights to consultation and accommodation. That essential ingredient will be complemented with a new unified process for environmental assessment and permitting in British Columbia.

The one-project, one-process approach will create a single framework that is timely, diligent and science-based. A new investment process review will be launched to identify opportunities for simplifying and expediting approval processes across government. Local governments will be asked to partner in this endeavour that requires us to look at all impediments to reasonable investment, including zoning, licensing and permitting requirements.

A joint committee on municipal property tax reform will identify specific steps to make property taxes more conducive to investment while ensuring municipal services are fairly provided for all taxpayers. In addition, government will take a fresh look at B.C.'s regulatory regimes, including the B.C. Utilities Commission, the B.C. Ferry Commission, the TransLink Commission and others.

We must identify new ways to achieve our goals at lower costs with faster decisions and integrated approval mechanisms if our economy is to thrive and job creation is to revive. New economic growth and smarter government is at the heart of our new west partnership with Alberta and Saskatchewan. It will build on the success of the Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement to foster free trade, investment and labour mobility across our three provinces.

We will pursue unified and mutually beneficial purchasing, procurement and licensing opportunities. We will encourage Canada and other provinces and territories to join with us in our continuing efforts to remove all internal trade barriers.

All three western provinces contribute equalization payments to Canada. We are glad to do so, but the burdens of unnecessary protection for other regions at the expense of our provincial economies and jobs must be removed. Airports should be opened to trade, commerce and tourism through Open Skies agreements. That step alone would add \$800 million and thousands of jobs to our provincial economy. Open Skies enables international air carriers to bring new business and visitors to communities like Abbotsford, Comox, Cranbrook, Kamloops, Kelowna, Prince George and Vancouver.

As we build partnerships at home, we will build new international partnerships as well. With California, Washington and Oregon we will commit to a common vision for sustainable prosperity and sign new agreements to work together on innovation, economic development, ocean

conservation and climate change adaptations through the Pacific Coast Collaborative.

Our partnerships with the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region, the Western Climate Initiative, the Climate Registry, the International Carbon Action Partnership and a number of trade initiatives are also yielding results for British Columbians.

A new partnership with Montana will sustain the environmental values in the Flathead River basin in a manner consistent with current forestry, recreation, guide-outfitting and trapping uses. It will identify permissible land use and establish new collaborative approaches to transboundary issues. Mining, oil and gas development and coalbed gas extraction will not be permitted in British Columbia's Flathead Valley.

We will build on our Olympic advantage to develop other new partnerships with international investors and prospective buyers for B.C. products. Over the next two weeks your government is hosting dozens of events to engage more than 9,000 top-level business leaders, potential investors and dignitaries from around the world. This is a golden opportunity to promote global investment in forestry, manufacturing, clean tech, tourism, film, entertainment, digital media, life sciences and more.

As we build vital partnerships with Japan, China, Korea and India, we are attracting new customers for our technologies, manufactured goods, education products, clean energy solutions and natural resources. We are expanding the markets for B.C. wood products both at home and abroad.

[1425]

Our Olympic showcase elevates the international marketing efforts and the North American tourism strategy now underway. Thanks to our celebrity partners and the Olympics, an unprecedented campaign is introducing British Columbia to billions around the world as we all proudly proclaim: "You gotta be here."

B.C.'s success in private-public partnerships has also sent a resounding message around the world. We will expand those partnerships with new P3s in transportation, health delivery, education, support services, systems management and more.

One of our great strategic advantages is our unique position as Canada's Pacific gateway. Expanding our transportation and logistic infrastructure is critical to that vision. Working with the federal government, we will improve the competitiveness and reliability of our ports. The government will encourage the new high-speed rail link between Vancouver and Seattle. The success of our new Canada Line has reinforced government's commitment to invest record amounts in public transit, fix TransLink and get on with the Evergreen line.

New accountability and transparency will be brought to B.C. Ferries as it continues improving services with new ferries, terminals and amenities. B.C. Rail will be

brought into government and wound down as a Crown corporation. The Gateway project will create new arteries of commerce and reduce travel times, congestion and emissions.

Our natural resources will remain the foundation of our economy. We will add new, competitive value to them with emphasis on technology, culture, art and design. This is an age of innovation and invention. The creative economy will shape our future.

The new film tax credit program will make us more attractive as a world presence in digital media and film. We will build a new campus for the Emily Carr University of Art and Design near the Centre for Digital Media at the Great Northern Way Campus. It will be a showcase for B.C. wood, natural building materials and the best in environmental design.

A new wood innovation and design centre will be created in the heart of Prince George. It will amplify our expertise and our global reputation as leaders in wood construction, engineered wood products and design.

New budget measures will make our International Financial Centre more attractive to international investment and head offices. We will establish a national centre on contemporary Asia in partnership with the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada and the government of Canada.

We will act to make British Columbia a destination of choice for international students that capitalizes on the strengths of our schools, colleges, universities and institutions.

Productivity gains and global competitiveness are essential to improving people's take-home pay. They will be the hallmarks of the government's economic strategy. Nothing is more important in that regard than the harmonized sales tax. It is more transparent and less regressive than the current tax regime. It will eliminate the current provincial sales tax on business inputs that is a hidden tax on productivity and will ensure B.C. taxpayers the lowest HST in the country.

The HST will help our job creators compete on a level playing field with businesses across Canada and around the world. Over 130 other countries have a value-added tax for good reason: it creates jobs.

The HST will cut the effective tax on new business investment in B.C. by 40 percent. That creates jobs. It will remove \$2 billion in costs that are hampering growth in forestry, construction, mining, oil and gas, transportation, manufacturing and small business. It will save B.C. taxpayers \$150 million in annual compliance costs and save your government \$30 million a year in administrative costs.

[1430]

In addition, the federal government has provided \$1.6 billion in transition assistance. Those dollars support vital public programs.

Lowering taxes remains a core feature of this government's prosperity agenda. The government has introduced

over 120 tax cuts. Personal income taxes are the lowest of any province in Canada. The corporation capital tax has been eliminated. Corporate income tax rates and the property tax for industry have been dramatically reduced, and the small business corporation income tax will be eliminated in the year 2012. This session will feature additional measures to restore our economy and to create jobs in every sector.

Clean energy is this century's greenfield of opportunity. British Columbia is blessed with enormous untapped energy potential. We can harness that potential to generate new wealth and new jobs in our communities while we lower greenhouse gas emissions within and beyond our borders. Clean energy is a cornerstone of our climate action plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by one-third by the year 2020.

Building on the contributions of the Green Energy Advisory Task Force, your government will launch a comprehensive strategy to put B.C. at the forefront of clean energy development. We have enormous potential in bio-energy, run-of-the-river, wind, geothermal, tidal, wave and solar energy. We will put it to work for our economy.

A new clean energy act will encourage new investments in independent power production while also strengthening B.C. Hydro. It will provide for fair, predictable, clean power calls. It will feature simplified procurement protocols and new measures to encourage investment and the jobs that flow with it.

New investment partnerships in infrastructure that encourage and enable clean modes of transportation — such as electric vehicles, hydrogen-powered vehicles and vehicles powered by compressed natural gas and liquid natural gas — will be pursued.

We will support new jobs and private sector investment in wood pellet plants, cellulosic ethanol production, biomass gasification technologies and fuel cell technologies. Bioenergy creates new uses for waste wood and beetle-kill forests and new jobs for forest workers.

A new receiving licence will give bioenergy products new certainty of fibre supply, while a new stand-as-a-whole pricing system will encourage utilization of logging residues and low-grade material that was previously burned or left on the forest floor.

Government will optimize existing generation facilities and report on the Site C review this spring. It will develop and capture B.C.'s unique capability to firm and shape the intermittent power supply that characterizes new sources of clean energy to deliver reliable, competitively priced clean power where and when it is needed most.

New conservation measures, smart meters and in-home displays will help to maximize energy savings. New smart grid investments and net metering will provide more choices and opportunities for reduced energy costs and more productive use of electricity.

New transmission investments will open up the Highway 37 corridor to new mines and clean power.

New transmission infrastructure will link northeastern British Columbia to our integrated grid; provide clean power to the energy industry; and open up new capacity for clean power exports to Alberta, Saskatchewan and south of the border. We will seek major transmission upgrades with utilities in California and elsewhere.

If we act with clear vision and concerted effort now, in 2030 people will look back to this decade as we look back to the 1960s today.

[1435]

Investment in our natural capital must be matched with investment in our human capital if we are to secure and protect our grandchildren's future. Strengthening families is at the centre of our economic and social agenda.

Government will take steps to renew and revitalize education to assist families with children and to secure affordable health care for our grandchildren. Education investments will focus on the individual and unique needs of our children. New research gives us a clear view of a way ahead that will provide for the special gifts and special needs of every child in this province.

Early childhood development creates brighter prospects for all our children. As we help children discover their passions and interests, so we will find our future as a province.

StrongStart B.C. centres will continue to support the learning needs of children and their families. Voluntary full-time kindergarten for five-year-olds will begin this September. It will be fully funded and in every school by September 2011.

New partnerships with the private sector and parents will enable the establishment of neighbourhood preschools for four-year-olds and three-year-olds within communities over the next five years. They will provide families new voluntary options for public and private preschool across B.C.

Several other initiatives will improve services for children and families. A new extended family program will modernize and improve upon the Child in the Home of a Relative program to provide increased assistance, broader supports and new safeguards for children.

A new \$180 million integrated case management information technology system will deliver better front-line services and supports to women, children, income assistant recipients and those most vulnerable.

Significant changes will be introduced to improve timely access to justice, combat crime, reduce impaired and dangerous driving and improve public safety.

Your government will work with municipalities to dramatically reduce housing costs for young families and to provide increased opportunities for homes they can afford in existing neighbourhoods.

Government recognizes that families with children face additional costs. A new family-with-children property tax deferral option will be provided to all B.C. families with children under the age of 18. Those families will be

given the right to defer their property taxes under a new property tax deferral program similar to the one already available to seniors and those facing financial hardship.

There are few services that can do more to lift a child to the full opportunities of life than an unequivocally great education. That is our goal for all the children of British Columbia.

Several significant reforms will be advanced to modernize our education system for the 21st century. New emphasis will be placed on parental involvement and on tailoring our education system to each child's individual needs, interests and passions. New forms of schooling will be developed to provide greater choice and diversity centred on students' special interest and talents. Smarter approaches will allow more resources to be focused on students' learning needs while less is spent on administrative costs.

In concert with local governments, neighbourhood learning centres will integrate neighbourhood needs with available capital resources and underutilized spaces. Seven-day-a-week facilities management is fundamental to providing critical community services that meet the needs of B.C.'s families affordably.

A new master teacher program will be developed.

Improvements will be launched in advanced education as well. Legislation will be introduced enabling our universities to remove themselves from the government reporting entity. We cannot let accounting policy stand in the way of our students' interests or hold our universities back from pursuing their unique areas of excellence in partnership with others.

[1440]

The University of British Columbia's living laboratory initiative will be expanded and enhanced so we all benefit from the new products and new knowledge that it fosters.

The government will increase access to residencies for Canadians who have received their medical undergraduate training outside Canada.

Innovation is the watchword of the new creative economy that requires imagination, ingenuity and new implementation strategies. Innovation is also central to making health care more responsive to patients' needs and more sustainable for the future. Several innovations will be introduced to give patients new choices, to reward performance in health delivery and to protect public health care for the future generations.

Innovation in health support services, new hospitals and public-private partnerships all make our health services more sustainable. We must manage health care within the massive budget increases that swamp all other public goods. Stemming the unaffordable growth of health costs is essential to meeting our obligation to balance the budget by 2013.

Ongoing financial discipline is essential. It is the responsibility of all in this House to guide our economy

and our public finances back to balance. Balancing our budget is more than a financial imperative. It is a social imperative as well. As long as we are spending more money to pay for our services than we are generating in revenue, we are living beyond our means. We are adding to our children's debt. We are handing them our problems rather than giving them opportunity.

The tasks ahead are daunting, but future generations deserve all the effort and wisdom we can muster in meeting this challenge. We must curtail expectations of government and look for new ways of meeting our needs within the substantial spending increases already provided.

Our dreams for the future will not be won with our eyes shut, our heads down and our minds closed to today's hard realities. They will be won with our eyes wide open, our sights set on the future and with common resolve.

Members of this Legislature are the fortunate few who have the opportunity to put in place the fundamentals for a prosperous future. This will not be an easy path, but it is the right one.

The spirit of 2010 is the promise of what we can accomplish when we put old divisions behind us and work together for the common good. It inspires us to rise above selfishness and division, to build a better British Columbia and a stronger Canada. We must choose a new path that meets the tests of today and shapes the future where our grandchildren will live with the knowledge that we did all we could for them.

Let us reach beyond what is imaginable today to what we want for tomorrow. Let us prove to ourselves that we are still able to dream large and exceed our expectations. To paraphrase Nelson Mandela, sometimes it falls upon a generation to be great. We can be that generation.

[1445]

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor retired from the chamber.

[Mr. Speaker in the chair.]

Mr. Speaker: Hon. members, in order to prevent mistakes, I've obtained a copy of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor's speech.

Introduction and First Reading of Bills

BILL 1 — AN ACT TO ENSURE THE SUPREMACY OF PARLIAMENT

Hon. M. de Jong presented a bill intitled An Act to Ensure the Supremacy of Parliament.

Hon. M. de Jong: I move this bill be read a first time now.

Motion approved.

Hon. M. de Jong: The introduction of this bill prior to consideration of the throne speech expresses the established right of parliament, through its elected members, to deliberate independently of the Sovereign. As such, it is an important part of our parliamentary democratic process. It was a right that was first asserted by Parliament at Westminster in the year 1603, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I.

Mr. Speaker, I move that the bill be placed on orders of the day for second reading at the next sitting of the House after today.

Bill 1, An Act to Ensure the Supremacy of Parliament, introduced, read a first time and ordered to be placed on orders of the day for second reading at the next sitting of the House after today.

APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY SPEAKER

Hon. M. de Jong: I move, seconded by the member for Port Coquitlam electoral district, that Linda Reid, member for Richmond East electoral district, be appointed Deputy Speaker for this session of the Legislative Assembly.

Motion approved.

APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANT DEPUTY SPEAKER

M. Farnworth: I move, seconded by the member for Abbotsford West electoral district, that Claire Trevena, member for North Island electoral district, be appointed Assistant Deputy Speaker for this session of the Legislative Assembly.

Motion approved.

APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHAIR, COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Hon. M. de Jong: I move, seconded by the member for Port Coquitlam electoral district, that Harry Bloy, member for Burnaby-Lougheed electoral district, be appointed Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole for this session of the Legislative Assembly.

Motion approved.

PRINTING OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Hon. M. de Jong: I move that the *Votes and Proceedings* of this House be printed, being first perused by Mr. Speaker, and that he do appoint the printing thereof,

and no person but such as he shall appoint do presume to print the same.

Motion approved.

APPOINTMENT OF SELECT STANDING COMMITTEES

Hon. G. Campbell: Hon. Speaker, I move that the select standing committees of this House for the present session be appointed for the following purposes:

1. Aboriginal Affairs;
2. Education;
3. Finance and Government Services;
4. Health;
5. Public Accounts;
6. Parliamentary Reform, Ethical Conduct, Standing Orders and Private Bills;
7. Crown Corporations;
8. Children and Youth;

which said committees shall severally be empowered to examine and inquire into all such matters and things as shall be referred to them by this House and to report from time to time their observations and opinions thereon, with power to send for persons, papers and records; and that a special committee be appointed to prepare and report, with all convenient speed, lists of members to compose the above select standing committees of this House under Standing Order 68(1), the committee to be composed of the Hon. M. de Jong, convener; Ron Cantelon; Joan McIntyre; Jane Thornthwaite; John van Dongen; Katrine Conroy; Mike Farnworth; and John Horgan.

Motion approved.

Reports from Committees

J. Rustad: I have the honour to present the report of the Special Committee to Appoint a Merit Commissioner. I move that the report be taken as read and received.

Motion approved.

J. Rustad: I ask leave of the House to suspend the rules to permit the moving of a motion to adopt the report.

Leave granted.

J. Rustad: I move that the report be adopted. In doing so, I'd just like to make a few brief comments. I'd like to thank the members of the committee for their work and effort. I'd also like to thank the Clerk of Committees — in particular, the work that they did. It was exceptional. [1450]

I'd also like to thank Fiona Spencer for accepting the position. Fiona brings an incredible amount of passion, experience and strength to the position, and I think that she will do a good job.

Motion approved.

J. Rustad: I ask leave of the House to permit the moving of a motion requesting the Lieutenant-Governor to appoint Miss Fiona Spencer Merit Commissioner for the province of British Columbia.

Leave granted.

J. Rustad: I move that this House recommend to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor the appointment of Miss Fiona Spencer as a statutory officer of the Legislature, to exercise the powers and duties assigned to the Merit Commissioner for the province of British Columbia pursuant to the Public Service Act, *RSBC 1996*, chapter 385.

Motion approved.

Hon. M. de Jong moved adjournment of the House.

Motion approved.

Mr. Speaker: This House stands adjourned until 1:30 tomorrow afternoon.

The House adjourned at 2:51 p.m.

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