

**Trans Mountain 1953:  
Public Response in Alberta and British Columbia**

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A graduating Essay Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements, in the  
Honours Programme.  
For the Degree of  
Bachelor of Arts  
In the  
Department  
Of  
History

The University of Victoria  
April 26, 2019

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## Introduction

The term “Trans Mountain pipeline” (TMPL) has come to represent so much more than simply an oil pipeline. What once referred to a way of fueling British Columbians and their industries and an outlet for Albertan natural resources is now viewed considerably more divergently. On the one hand, it is celebrated as an opportunity for economic growth, a source of income for infrastructure, and an opportunity for jobs; on the other hand, it is seen as synonymous with the destruction of the environment, the failure to acknowledge indigenous land rights, and an intrusion on provincial sovereignty by the federal government. In 2018 protests about the TMPL expansion dominated the news, with Alberta pitted against British Columbia. One did not need to look far to find evidence of TMPL animosity throughout not only Alberta and BC, but all of Canada. However, this was not always the case: Trans Mountain sentiment was not always so polarized. This paper will demonstrate why the publics of both provinces received the original TMPL of 1953 so well. Far from being demonized as it often is in British Columbia today, “Trans Mountain” was celebrated as a facilitator of economic growth and was honoured as an outstanding achievement in engineering. It is this popular sentiment as it was expressed in Alberta and BC that this thesis will examine in order to understand why exactly Albertans and especially British Columbians were so enthusiastic about the project. The story of the pipeline will be placed within two larger contexts: Alberta’s and BC’s historical developments and political cultures as well the history of Alberta’s oil industry and how its growth shaped both provinces. This examination will provide information crucial to understanding the shifting popular opinion towards Trans Mountain. This research will ultimately demonstrate why Alberta and BC recognized the project as an overwhelmingly positive endeavour. Finally, the paper will include a description of current sentiment in Alberta and BC towards the proposed Trans Mountain expansion to offer a comparison in public

opinions. In light of current debates surrounding this expansion, which proposes building another line along the same route, it is worthwhile to examine the history of popular opinion in each province not only on pipelines, but on oil and gas industries in general.

But first, what is Trans Mountain? The Trans Mountain Oil Pipe Line Company (The Company) now Trans Mountain Corporation, refers to the company that operates the pipeline system, also named Trans Mountain.<sup>1</sup> This name change occurred after the Government of Canada bought the TMPL system and expansion project in August 2018.<sup>2</sup> Trans Mountain is a 718-mile, 24-inch “big inch” steel pipeline that carries Alberta oil from Edmonton to Vancouver.<sup>3</sup> It is Canada’s only pipeline system delivering crude oil and refined petroleum products across the Rocky Mountains and to the West Coast. Today, it delivers 300,000 barrels of petroleum products daily, although this capacity was only 75,000 barrels per day when it first began operating in October 1953.<sup>4</sup> By providing this transportation service, The Company offered oil companies the opportunity to transport their Alberta oil products to markets along the Pacific North West. This included British Columbia as well as several American markets such as those in Washington, Oregon, and California. The line begins near Edmonton and ends near Vancouver in Burnaby’s Westridge Marine terminal, where oil is further transported to nearby refineries or shipped to different markets.

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<sup>1</sup> Ian Anderson, “Trans Mountain Corporation. Our name has changed, but our commitments remain,” Trans Mountain, <https://www.transmountain.com/news/2018/trans-mountain-corporation-our-name-has-changed-but-our-commitments-remain> (accessed 21 January 2019).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> This paper will use imperial measurements in keeping with primary and secondary sources, all of which use imperial system units of measurements when referring to the pipeline. “Big inch” pipelines refer to pipelines that are greater than “Little Inch” pipelines at 20 inches.

<sup>4</sup> Neil C. Wilson & Frank F. Taylor, *The Building of Trans Mountain: Canada's first oil pipeline across the Rockies* (Vancouver: Trans Mountain Oil Pipe Line Company, 1954), 30.

The TMPL transports crude oil and petroleum products- two related, but unique goods.

The American Heritage Dictionary defines petroleum as:

a thick, flammable, yellow-to-black mixture of gaseous, liquid, and solid hydrocarbons that occurs naturally beneath the earth's surface, can be separated into fractions including natural gas, gasoline, naphtha, kerosene, fuel and lubricating oils, paraffin wax, and asphalt and is used as raw material for a wide variety of derivative products.<sup>5</sup>

As this definition demonstrates, natural gas comes from petroleum. What is less obvious in this definition is that crude oil also comes from petroleum, and when refined can produce a number of the products (“petro/petroleum products”) mentioned above, such as gasoline, diesel fuel, heating oil, lubricating oils, asphalt, and others.<sup>6</sup> Although Alberta has both major oil and natural gas industries, this thesis will be focusing predominantly on the oil industry, as Trans Mountain transports crude oil and refined crude oil petroleum products, not natural gas. Furthermore, when “oil” is referred to throughout this thesis, it will refer to unrefined crude oil while “gas” and “natural gas” will be used interchangeably, unless otherwise specified.

The history of the Alberta oil industry really begins in February 1947 when the Imperial-Leduc No.1 discovery well was drilled in Leduc, Alberta, roughly 32 miles from Edmonton.<sup>7</sup> This historic discovery is widely recognized as the birth of Alberta’s commercially viable oil industry for the millions of barrels of recoverable oil that was discovered in this field and the millions of dollars of investments received for further oil exploration afterwards.<sup>8</sup> The Company in 1963 acknowledged that a project such as the TMPL would not have come to fruition without

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<sup>5</sup> “American Heritage Dictionary Entry: Petroleum,” The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, <https://www.aapg.org/about/petroleum-geology/petroleum-through-time/what-is-petroleum#3428309-about> (accessed 21 January 2019).

<sup>6</sup> “Oil: Crude and Petroleum Products Explained,” U.S. Energy Information Administration, [https://www.eia.gov/energyexplained/index.php?page=oil\\_home#tab1](https://www.eia.gov/energyexplained/index.php?page=oil_home#tab1) (accessed 21 January 2019).

<sup>7</sup> “Leduc Well Blows In,” *Vancouver Province*, February 14, 1947, p. 32

<sup>8</sup> For sources acknowledging the importance of the Leduc discovery, see: Paul Chastko, *Developing Alberta’s Oil Sands* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2004), 71; Gerald Freisen, *The Canadian Prairies* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), 427; Alan J. MacFadyen and G. Campbell Watkins, *PETROPOLITICS: PETROLEUM DEVELOPMENT, MARKETS AND REGULATIONS, ALBERTA AS AN ILLUSTRATIVE HISTORY* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2014), 20. ISBN 978-1-55238-769-6.

“the continued expansion and development of Alberta crude oil reserves since the discovery of the Leduc oil field in 1947,” and so it seemed appropriate to start here.<sup>9</sup> By beginning here, this thesis will first track public sentiment towards Alberta’s, and then BC’s, oil and gas industries and later, sentiment towards the pipeline itself.

Primary research collected on popular opinion towards these industries and the Trans Mountain pipeline has come almost exclusively from two newspapers: *The Vancouver Province* (the *Province*) of Vancouver, BC and *The Calgary Herald* (the *Herald*), of Calgary, Alberta. Vancouver was chosen as it is British Columbia’s industrial center and houses the province’s largest population. Calgary was also chosen for having Alberta’s largest population and because it has come to be the recognized home of Alberta’s oil and gas industry because so many oil and gas companies have national and regional headquarters there. This paper will also refer to several CBC televised broadcasts to place these provincial sentiments within a broader, national perspective. Primary research centers around four key events: February 13, 1947, the date the Leduc No. 1 discovery well was drilled; March 1951, when The Company was established with the mandate to build the pipeline; February 1952, when construction was begun; and October 1953, when the construction was completed, and oil shipments begun shortly after. This places this project’s timeline for the original TMPL between February 1947 and October 1953. The concluding section – “Trans Mountain Today” – consults additional news sources for a review of public opinion regarding the expansion, which consults reports published as recently as March 2019.

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<sup>9</sup> British Columbia Archives (BCA), Series GR-0442, Box 18, File 10, Trans Mountain Oil Pipeline, Accession number: 88-0056, "The Manifold: The Magazine of the Employees of TRANS MOUNTAIN OIL PIPELINE COMPANY," October 1963.

## The “Far West”: Brief Histories & Political Cultures

Nelson Wiseman proposes a definition of culture as a “society’s way of life,” and differentiates this from political culture: “the way of life of a political community or polity.”<sup>10</sup> Going further, political culture may be understood as “a set of shared views and normative judgments held by a population regarding its political system.”<sup>11</sup> For this paper’s purpose, the most important aspect of political culture is the understanding that at the heart of political culture lays a society’s fundamental values.<sup>12</sup> These values are key to understanding not only political culture, but culture in general. While neighbouring provinces Alberta and BC do share a few key characteristics with regards to their political cultures and histories, Wiseman explains that as a single unit, “the Far West,” these provinces are an “improbable regional category.”<sup>13</sup> Although both provinces have been noted for their “lack of tradition and an upstart and recalcitrant political character,” beyond this their political cultures are quite dissimilar.

Wiseman argues that being familiar with these political cultures becomes more important in today’s globalized world as paradoxically, globalization undermines “the policy-making capacities of national governments” and at the same times gives rise to “the significance of regional and local governments.”<sup>14</sup> He adds that Canada is no exception in the drive for more regional autonomy and local self-government, as is evident in the country-wide push “for more regionalist agendas in public policy and regional power in public administration.”<sup>15</sup> This rise in importance of regional governments and regional political culture is surely reflected in the TMPL’s history. Now more than ever regional values dominate the discussion in Alberta and BC

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<sup>10</sup> Nelson Wiseman, *In Search of Canadian Political Culture* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007), 13.

<sup>11</sup> Jürgen R. Winkler, “Political Culture,” Encyclopaedia Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/political-culture> (accessed 28 January 2019).

<sup>12</sup> Wiseman, *In Search of Canadian Political Culture*, 13.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, 237.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, 112.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*.

regarding the proposed expansion project. Examining both province's histories and political cultures allows for an understanding of the foundation from which Alberta and BC's public received the pipeline, which helps to simultaneously explain the positive reaction towards the original project, and the polarized opinions today.

An explanation for each province's political cultures lies in a review of their historical development, for as Wiseman reminds "contemporary attitudes are rooted in historical experience."<sup>16</sup> What has been most influential in the provinces' histories in terms of shaping political and cultural attitudes has been their settlement patterns and dependency on natural resource industries. While for BC, continued British immigration was most influential on the province's policy making, in Alberta it was large influxes of American farmers.<sup>17</sup> Many of BC's British immigrants came at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, leaving behind a Britain divided by class.<sup>18</sup> These immigrants were either trade unionists or of "Edwardian England": those people who "wished to dissociate themselves from manual workers."<sup>19</sup> These divisions were reflected and strengthened in the many natural resource-based company towns that formed the basis of BC's development, where there existed sharp divisions between left-leaning workers and right-leaning management.<sup>20</sup> Dyck has pointed out that Vancouver was the exception to BC's series of single-industry company town developments, although these class differences remained even in the city which served to unite working-class elements across the province.<sup>21</sup> This division formed the foundation for what is now the most important aspect of BC's political culture: the polarization between left and right ideological camps.<sup>22</sup> Although *The Vancouver Province*

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<sup>16</sup> Wiseman, *In Search of Canadian Political Culture*, 241.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 242.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 242-3

<sup>19</sup> Dyck, *Provincial Politics in Canada*, 511.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*



revealed no evidence of polarization with regards to the 1953 pipeline sentiment, current discussion of the expansion project is very divided.<sup>23</sup> Wiseman describes BC's political polarization as one that "is riven and conflicted" and has resulted in "ideological storms" where premiers are constantly being voted in and out.<sup>24</sup>

Alberta's political culture is much more homogenous, and again its settler patterns and reliance on natural industries plays a role here, too. Unlike BC, Alberta's left is "marginalized" and instead of facing "ideological storms," Alberta politics are much more prone to single party hegemony.<sup>25</sup> American farmers emigrating from places such as Dakota and Nebraska brought with them agrarian populist traditions.<sup>26</sup> This helped to set the foundation for the United Farmers Association, later followed by the Social Credit and then the Conservative parties, all of whom enjoyed long periods of power.<sup>27</sup> The Conservatives in fact held power longer than any provincial or federal party at 44 years between 1971 and 2015 until the NDP gained power. This speaks to the very conservative nature of the province, but also to a growing awareness of its class divisions.<sup>28</sup> As well, Alberta's political history demonstrates that although Alberta has strong American Great Plains tendencies in terms of its religious makeup and "redneck image," the province's history of right-wing agrarian hegemony should not be overexaggerated.<sup>29</sup> Because Alberta, like BC, relies on the "boom and bust of primary production," it has experienced labour socialist movements generally stemming from its resource towns.<sup>30</sup>

Continuing with Wiseman's "Far West" categorization demands justification, for as previously stated the political cultures of Alberta and BC are quite different. He attributes their

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<sup>23</sup> See "Trans Mountain Today" section for more information.

<sup>24</sup> Wiseman, *In Search of Canadian Political Culture*, 239 & 248; Jean Barman, *West Beyond West* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 345.

<sup>25</sup> Wiseman, *In Search of Canadian Political Culture*, 239 & 248.

<sup>26</sup> Wiseman, *In Search of Canadian Political Culture*, 242; Dyck, *Provincial Politics in Canada*, 510.

<sup>27</sup> Dyck, *Provincial Politics in Canada*, 451.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> Wiseman, *Provincial Politics in Canada* 246.

<sup>30</sup> Freisen, *The Canadian Prairies* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), 295.

categorization to their common upstart character, as previously mentioned, explaining that: “These provinces brim with the promise of advancement for their residents. This region, more than any other, has beckoned migrants from other parts of Canada with its prospects of entry to a charmed circle.”<sup>31</sup> In addition, he argues that Albertans have come to have more in common with British Columbians than with Saskatchewanians or Manitobans – Wiseman’s “Midwest”—due to Alberta transitioning from a “have-not” to a “have” province such as BC.<sup>32</sup> These commonalities are strengthened by both provinces’ “vigorous disputes with Ottawa,” which is characteristic of them being more provincially than federally-oriented.<sup>33</sup> This anti-Ottawa sentiment was a key component in shaping opinion on natural resource projects such as the 1953 TMPL. Both provinces rely on these industries (as they make them “have” provinces) and the ability to export their products, and therefore it has been in their best interest to push for greater provincial jurisdiction over these industries, as both provinces have done in the past. However, this opposition to the federal government plays a greater role in shaping Alberta’s political culture, where the provincial government may be characterized as hostile towards Ottawa, whereas in BC the provincial government is more isolated and indifferent.<sup>34</sup> For both provinces, this antipathy has been heightened by a sense of “Western alienation” from central Canada, a force which Rand Dyck argues is especially relevant to Alberta’s political culture.<sup>35</sup> On natural resources, Wiseman points out that the 1914 opening of the Panama Canal is what gave BC an “efficient opening to the world for its natural resources,” which helped to propel the province’s growth.<sup>36</sup> For Alberta,

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 237.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, 217.

<sup>33</sup> Rand Dyck, *Provincial Politics in Canada* (Scarborough: Ontario, Prentice-Hall Canada Inc., 1986), 510.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 452.

<sup>36</sup> Wiseman, *In Search of Canadian Political Culture*, 237.

economic and population growth was spurred by the mid-century oil discovery that began with Leduc, while the TMPL is what expanded this industry's access to markets.<sup>37</sup>

To move past these similarities and more clearly differentiate the political cultures, a review of Dyck's description of each province will be beneficial starting points. On Alberta's political culture, he shares:

Albertans have a very positive self-image. They reside in a rich, beautiful, confident and increasingly sophisticated province, and their only problem often seemed to be that they were restrained by federal government policies and the corporate practices of central Canada.<sup>38</sup>

He adds that Albertans are very close to political consensus "on internal objectives" and because of this they "feel particularly affronted when others stand in their way."<sup>39</sup> He attributes this largely to the province's "wealthy, Western conservative sub-culture" but also to Alberta's tradition of unusual political movements, such as the United Farmers and Social Credit parties.<sup>40</sup> This is reflected in consensus on attitudes towards the oil and gas industries in general, as well as towards both the original Trans Mountain pipeline and its expansion. Quite contrastingly, he describes BC's political culture as lacking in a realized self-image.<sup>41</sup> He attributes this lacking self-image to continued and increased immigration into the province, especially by those who either have never had any contact with the rest of Canada or those who have "turned their back to some extent on more eastern Canadian values."<sup>42</sup> He argues that this means BC's "society has hardly had time to congeal, and it is unstable and lacks traditions."<sup>43</sup> This thesis will later demonstrate how British Columbians' desire to establish an identity as a powerful, industrial

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Dyck, *Provincial Politics in Canada*, 450.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 250.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, 509-510.

<sup>42</sup> Dyck, *Provincial Politics in Canada*, 510.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid

province shaped their attitudes towards oil and gas industries, which was influenced by their Albertan neighbour becoming an economic powerhouse themselves.

## Oil and Gas Industries

Both Alberta and British Columbia are resourced-based economies, meaning that their non-renewable resources are (and always have been), integral to each of them. As the 20<sup>th</sup> century progressed, both provinces worked towards establishing oil and gas industries to compliment and diversify their resource economies. Although Alberta saw considerably more success with its petroleum industries, and indeed these industries have come to define the province, British Columbians were also interested in oil and gas exploration during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. That is to say that both provinces historically have viewed these industries with enthusiasm. It is therefore unsurprising that British Columbians and Albertans positively viewed the 1953 TMPL.

While Alberta's commercial oil industry did not take off until after Leduc in 1947, Alan J. MacFadyen and G. Campbell Watkins explain that the province's petroleum industry was "well-established" by 1946.<sup>44</sup> The geological potential for such an industry had long been recognized and in fact both Indigenous groups and immigrant settlers were familiar with "tangible evidence of petroleum . . . exemplified by natural gas seepages . . . and surface crude showings along the shores of the Athabasca River near Fort McMurray."<sup>45</sup> Early natural gas discoveries in fact provided enough fuel to heat towns such as Medicine Hat starting in 1902 and Calgary in 1912.<sup>46</sup> Despite these early findings and the discovery of a "huge reservoir" in Turner Valley in 1913, at the time natural gas was considered a nuisance rather than a valuable resource.<sup>47</sup> Paul Chastko explains that it was not until after World War II that natural gas was considered a viable alternative energy source rather than an "unwanted by-product," unlike oil

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<sup>44</sup> MacFadyen and Watkins, *PETROPOLITICS*, 20.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> Freisen, *The Canadian Prairies*, 440.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

which was highly venerated.<sup>48</sup> The perceived value of these industries, however, was somewhat inconsequential until the 1930s, when control over natural resources was transferred from federal to provincial governments, a shift spearheaded by the Brownlee government in Alberta.<sup>49</sup> The urgency to govern these industries was already well established by a previous oil boom in Turner Valley in 1914 that began a roar of excitement comparable to that of the Klondike Gold Rush.<sup>50</sup> The desire for oil was clearly recognized. However, this boom and those that followed in the area were short-lived.<sup>51</sup> This was largely to do the beginning of World War I, but also because the quantities found in these discoveries would not have supported a viable commercial oil industry.<sup>52</sup> The letdown of these Turner Valley discoveries and other “small exploratory successes” of the 1930s and 1940s, meant that “Alberta’s potential as a major oil producer was in doubt.”<sup>53</sup> While these episodes helped to establish a provincial oil and gas conservation board in 1938, by 1946, most major oil companies exploring in the province had lost interest.<sup>54</sup> By the time Leduc No.1 was drilled in 1947, Albertans had nearly lost hope in establishing their petroleum industries.

Perhaps because of Alberta’s minor successes in oil exploration, BC too exhibited some interest in oil and gas industries, although it did not take off until the completion of Trans Mountain.<sup>55</sup> By this time, Alberta’s oil and gas industries clearly positioned the province as an economic powerhouse. Though discovery efforts were rather limited in BC before this time, there are still a handful of accounts of drilling prior to Trans Mountain. An example of this early exploration is the BC Lands Department, which was in charge of the province’s coal and oil,

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<sup>48</sup> Chastko, *Developing Alberta’s Oil Sands*, 69.

<sup>49</sup> Freisen, *The Canadian Prairies*, 440.

<sup>50</sup> Ed Gould, *Canada’s Oil and Gas Industry* (Surrey, British Columbia: Hancock House Publishers, 1976), 73.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid*, 77.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>53</sup> MacFadyen and Watkins, *PETROPOLITICS*, 20.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>55</sup> Gould, *Canada’s Oil and Gas Industry*, 106.

beginning an investigation in 1919 of the Dominion Peace River Block, which they eventually drilled in 1921.<sup>56</sup> This and other attempts to drill yielded much fewer results than even those early efforts in Alberta; BC would not see its first producing oil well until 1951 in Fort St. John, four years after Leduc.<sup>57</sup>

Ed Gould highlights that BC and Alberta were not the only provinces whose petroleum industries took off after Leduc, explaining that: “The arrival of the Leduc, Alberta, discovery well gave the whole Canadian oil industry a shot in the arm and established two calendars: Before Leduc and After Leduc.”<sup>58</sup> The drilling of Leduc No.1 by Imperial Oil marked the end of 130 dry holes drilled by the company, who had named the Leduc well as one of the last exploratory sites they had planned for Alberta.<sup>59</sup> The following oil boom, which saw a long series of discoveries, was exactly what Albertans had been dreaming of, and was marked by “long-awaited development funds pour[ing] into the province.”<sup>60</sup> Gerald Freisen describes Alberta in the post-1940 decades as “Canada’s Cinderella,” and shares that:

Nowhere was growth so rapid, the increase in wealth so obvious, the atmosphere of confidence so palpable. The discovery of oil at Leduc in 1947 was as significant an event in regional history as the original influx of homesteaders before the First World War, and the implications of the windfall were still being worked out in the 1970s and 1980s.<sup>61</sup>

While the implications of Leduc had long-lasting effects, perhaps the most immediate effect was that it got crews working again and saw companies reversing decisions to pull out of exploration in Western Canada.<sup>62</sup> What became the most obvious outcome of the oil boom was the

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid, 107.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, 108.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid, 99.

<sup>59</sup> MacFadyen and Watkins, *PETROPOLITICS*, 20.

<sup>60</sup> Chastko, *Developing Alberta’s Oil Sands*, 71; Gould, *Canada’s Oil and Gas Industry*, 105-6.

<sup>61</sup> Freisen, *The Canadian Prairies*, 427.

<sup>62</sup> Gould, *Canada’s Oil and Gas Industry*, 99-103.

population growth of Alberta, making it the largest prairie province in terms of population thanks to its “booming economy.”<sup>63</sup>

BC’s own petroleum industries saw much more success in the “After Leduc” era, especially after Trans Mountain. As early as 1950 evidence regarding “accumulations of petroleum and natural gas” in the province were reported by the controller and assistant controller of Petroleum and Natural Gas, British Columbia.<sup>64</sup> This report noted that geological evidence indicated “there is reason for believing that British Columbia will soon be a petroleum producing Province.”<sup>65</sup> In fact, the report also references the promotion of the Petroleum and Natural Gas Act of 1947 which for BC “marked the beginning of a new phase with regard to the exploration of the development of [their] petroleum and natural gas resources.”<sup>66</sup> One such development was the successful establishment of BC’s first producing oil well in 1951. The province’s first commercial oil strike found near the original Fort St. John well followed shortly after in 1955.<sup>67</sup> Clearly, there was a desire to develop the province’s own oil industry.

Newspapers from the time certainly acknowledged the importance of the Leduc discovery. This was especially true in *The Calgary Herald*, where news of testing the No. 1 discovery well was front-page news from the start.<sup>68</sup> This front-page article highlighted the well’s potential success, quoting Imperial Oil president Mr. Taylor that ‘The results are encouraging and Imperial Oil Limited is at long last hopeful of developing a commercial oil field in the plains of Alberta.’<sup>69</sup> The first article to report on the well’s expansive reserves, dated

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<sup>63</sup> Freisen, *The Canadian Prairies*, 427.

<sup>64</sup> BCA, Series GR-1222, Box 220, File 3, T.B. Williams and J.D. Lineham, "Petroleum and Natural Gas Exploration in British Columbia," Annual Western Meeting, November 1950.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Gould, *Canada’s Oil and Gas Industry*, 108.

<sup>68</sup> C.V. Meyers, “Leduc No.1 Swabbing Today For Oil Test: Well May Come-In This Afternoon, Officials State,” *Calgary Herald*, February 13, 1947, front page.

<sup>69</sup> Meyes, “Leduc No.1 Swabbing Today For Oil Test,” front page.



February 14<sup>th</sup>, was also front-page news.<sup>70</sup> This piece described the well's strike as something out of a fairy tale:

The well made its debut in somewhat spectacular fashion. Snorting and puffing with great bursts of gas and watery oil. They put a flame to the pipe then and the flame rose 30 feet in the air as the well belched oily black smoke. With professional perfection it blew a dense black ring in a perfect circle, a ring 30 feet in diameter which rose 50 feet in the air and hung there for several minutes, as the monster puffed and heaved, struggling for breath.<sup>71</sup>

This grand description was surely in keeping with how Albertans received the news that they had finally achieved a discovery of this magnitude. The article especially highlighted Imperial Oil's role in the discovery, having invested 19 years and \$17,000,000 into oil exploration, representing roughly half of the total geological work done in Western Canada over the previous ten years.<sup>72</sup> The immediate economic impact of the Leduc No. 1 on stocks was also duly noted in this paper in an article that shared "the market was up right across the board."<sup>73</sup> While *The Vancouver Province* also reported multiple times on the Leduc Discovery Well, it was not given as much attention as it was in the *Herald*. This is in keeping with BC's oil interests not peaking until after the TMPL's completion and also, of course, with the fact that Leduc is in Alberta. However, the paper did recognize that this was a significant event, stating "officials of Imperial Oil Limited said it has the best prospects of any well the company has drilled in western Canada outside Turner Valley."<sup>74</sup>

Over the course of the next few years, as both provinces and the nation came to better understand the Leduc discovery's monumental impact, recollections of Leduc honoured the

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<sup>70</sup> C.V. Meyers, "New Imperial Considered Well of 'High Order': Leduc No. 1 Blows Flame, Oily Smoke 50 Feet High," *Calgary Herald*, February 14, 1947, front page.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> "Oil Stocks React to Discovery Well," *Calgary Herald*, February 14, 1947, p. 19.

<sup>74</sup> "Leduc Well Blows In," *Vancouver Province*, February 14, 1947, p. 32.

event as a historic landmark.<sup>75</sup> A CBC broadcast released January 1, 1950 not only venerated the event for the development of Alberta's oil industry that it facilitated, but also romanticized the history of the industry's growth. According to this broadcast, the lands from which farmers tilled were rightfully transferred to the care of the oil industry for the benefit of the whole: "Good earth for grain, but other men sought a harvest from it. A harvest we needed."<sup>76</sup> Once this needed harvest was secured and vast reserves of oil were available to serve markets beyond the prairies, what came to be unanimously accepted as "needed," was a pipeline.

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<sup>75</sup> Both the *Vancouver Province* and the *Calgary Herald* released five-year anniversary articles: Larry A. Frantz, "Leduc Discovery Still Pointing To New Finds: 39,000,000 Barrels Of Oil Produced In That Area," *Calgary Herald*, February 13, 1952, p. 33; "Leduc Hit Oil Five Years Ago; Flow Still On," *Vancouver Province*, February 18, 1952, p. 15.

<sup>76</sup> "Huge Oil Reserves Struck Near Leduc, Alberta," *CBC*, January 1, 1950, <https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/1719759795>.

## Trans Mountain

Having laid the foundations from which both provinces received the Trans Mountain project in terms of political culture and oil industry histories, this paper will now examine the popular sentiment towards the pipeline itself. In reviewing several key events – the establishment of The Company, the beginning of the pipeline’s construction, and the completion of construction/ beginning of oil shipments – this positive public opinion will be explored. These events will reveal that BC was in fact more invested in the project’s development for reasons such as the inevitable industrial growth that preceded the pipeline and the sense of nationalism spurred by the great feat. Albertans on the other hand, who recognized the economic benefits and necessity of the pipeline, did not devote as much spotlight to Trans Mountain as BC, likely due to the many additional oil-related projects already underway.

The Company came into being on March 21, 1951 with the passing of a Special Act of Parliament that granted a charter to the company to construct a pipeline between Alberta and BC’s west coast.<sup>77</sup> The charter mandated the creation of the company with the sole purpose of building the pipeline.<sup>78</sup> For this reason, it is odd that neither *The Vancouver Province* nor *The Calgary Herald* mentioned the company’s establishment throughout March of 1951, a key event in the project’s development. While the *Herald* did not comment at all on Trans Mountain during this month, the *Province* published several articles on the project’s overall progress. This suggests that, at least during the pipeline’s inception, British Columbia displayed more public interest in Trans Mountain than Albertans.

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<sup>77</sup> For a list of key dates relating to the Trans Mountain Pipe Line Company and the pipeline itself, see “Our History,” Trans Mountain: Who We Are, <https://www.transmountain.com/history> (accessed 25 February 2019).

<sup>78</sup> BCA, Series GR-0442, Box 18, File 10, Trans Mountain Oil Pipeline, Accession number: 88-0056, "Trans Mountain Oil Pipe Line Company: General Article," September 15, 1953, 2-3.

Throughout March of 1951, the *Province* published ample reports on Albertan oil development in general, as well as several reports on the pipeline specifically.<sup>79</sup> What these articles clearly expressed was the excitement amongst British Columbians to develop Alberta's oil fields and the need to bring that oil to BC. One such article published two days before the company's establishment spoke to the BC market's past oil usage (37,000 barrels/ day), and how oil carried through the pipeline would serve this large, quantifiable demand.<sup>80</sup> The remainder of the oil would be sold to Northwestern American markets, thereby capturing American dollars that were previously purchasing U.S. and Venezuelan oil.<sup>81</sup> The *Province* further emphasized the profitability of pipelines by citing the success of the Interprovincial Pipeline, which runs east from Alberta, as well as the vast reserves available to be exploited in Alberta.<sup>82</sup> By highlighting the 1,672,000 barrels of oil to be recoverable by January of 1953, of which 75,000 (and later 300,000) could be transported daily by Trans Mountain, the advantage of a pipeline to integrate these provincial economies was clearly stated.<sup>83</sup> This desire to integrate the two economies was supported in additional articles such as that of March 6th, 1951, which shared that "It is believed [the pipeline] will provide \$50,000,000 income to Alberta in the first year of operation."<sup>84</sup> This demonstrates that British Columbians were keenly aware of the potential economic value Trans Mountain might offer them.

Another feature of British Columbian's positive public opinion as expressed in the *Province*, which was subtler than any economic benefits, was the sense of national pride that came with completing such a complex project. On this, a handful of articles highlighted the

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<sup>79</sup> See, "Production of Alberta Oil Boosted" and "Reservations Issued in Northern Alberta," both from the "Oil News" Section, *Vancouver Province*, March 3, 1951, p. 17.

<sup>80</sup> Tom Mills, "Iran Oil Problem May Rush Pipeline," *Vancouver Province*, March 19, 1951, p. 13.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid; Tom Mills, "CCF Crown Pipeline Voted Down," *Vancouver Province*, March 7, 1951, p. 8.

<sup>82</sup> Mills, "CCF Crown Pipeline Voted Down," p. 8.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Tom Mills, "City M.P. to Demand Action on Pipeline," *Vancouver Province*, March 6, 1951, page unknown.

likelihood of an all-Canadian route being chosen, as opposed to one that crossed the American border.<sup>85</sup> Although there was a brief acknowledgement that the line would be partly owned by private American companies, meaning that it was not in fact a purely Canadian project, overall the pipeline was described as a project made by Canadians, for Canadians.<sup>86</sup> This nationalistic pride was especially evident in reports published once Trans Mountain was completed in 1953.

Popular sentiment in BC also stressed the “strategic importance [of the pipeline] in the event of war.”<sup>87</sup> This concern was largely a result of contemporary developments in Iran, where the government proposed the nationalization of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. This threat was explicitly highlighted in the petition to Parliament to establish the Trans Mountain Oil Pipe Line Company, which argued that the construction of this line was an “urgent requirement of the national defense of Canada and the United States in view of the existing world situation.”<sup>88</sup> This issue was also manifested in a handful of *Province* articles, such as one published March 7<sup>th</sup> that stated: “Should the Middle East fields be cut off from the western democracies, then the trans-mountain line would be of vital importance.”<sup>89</sup> Another article published March 19<sup>th</sup>, 1951 in fact clearly stated that these international developments “spurred approval of [The Company’s] bill by the committee.”<sup>90</sup>

Unlike the *Province*, the *Herald* did not mention Trans Mountain at all throughout March of 1951, suggesting that during this time the project was not of much importance to Albertans. Newspapers published during this month do, however, bear some similarities in the sense that they both reported on developments in both the oil and gas industries in the two provinces.<sup>91</sup> The

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<sup>85</sup> Mills, “CCF Crown Pipeline Voted Down,” p. 8.

<sup>86</sup> Mills, “Iran Oil Problem May Rush Pipeline,” p. 13.

<sup>87</sup> Mills, “CCF Crown Pipeline Plan Voted Down,” p. 8; Mills, “Iran Oil Problem May Rush Pipeline,” p. 13; Mills, “City M.P. to Demand Action on Pipeline,” page unknown.

<sup>88</sup> Wilson and Taylor, *The Building of Trans Mountain*, 13.

<sup>89</sup> Mills, “CCF Crown Pipeline Plan Voted Down,” p. 8.

<sup>90</sup> Mills, “Iran Oil Problem May Rush Pipeline,” p. 13.

<sup>91</sup> See, “New B.C. Gas Strike May Speed Pipeline,” *Vancouver Province*, March 22, 1951, p. 19.

*Herald* especially commented on developments in these industries.<sup>92</sup> One such article published March 21<sup>st</sup>, 1951 titled “Compared With U.S. Development: Great Future Forecast For Alberta Oilfields,” argued for the very encouraging future for Alberta’s oil industry.<sup>93</sup> Rather than comment on the Trans Mountain project, attention was drawn towards a defense project requiring Albertan natural gas based out of Montana, which was reported on several times through the month.<sup>94</sup> These articles share the British Columbian’s concern regarding international conflict and the need for secured defense. Although the *Herald* did not report on Trans Mountain specifically, oil and gas in general as well as international events were certainly high on Albertan’s radar.

Continuing with the trend of March 1951, the *Herald* has no reports on the beginning of the line’s construction in February of 1952. Rather, it featured countless articles on oil and natural gas development, further demonstrating public interest in these industries.<sup>95</sup> These articles unanimously venerated both industries, their growth, and the positive impact they have had and would continue to have on Alberta. The *Herald* particularly focused on the five-year anniversary of the Leduc discovery, commenting on the industry’s rampant growth since 1947.<sup>96</sup> These articles recognized and celebrated the impact this discovery made, stating:

Imperial-Leduc No. 1, the discovery well which went on production on February 13, 1947, with a 1,000 barrel per day potential, started the present exploratory and development oil boom which has spread throughout various sectors of Alberta, to northeast British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> See, “Compared With U.S. Development: Great Future Forecast For Alberta Oilfields,” *Calgary Herald*, March 21, 1951, p. 13; “B.C. Well Showing Heavy Gas Flow,” *Calgary Herald*, March 24, 1951, p. 30; C.O. Nickle “Second Nestow Test To Be Drilled Soon: Seaboard Group, B.A. and Pacific Join in New Venture On Nine-Section Lease,” *Calgary Herald*, March 29, 1951, p. 31.

<sup>93</sup> “Compared With U.S. Development,” p. 13.

<sup>94</sup> See, Andrew Snaddon, “Montana To Get Alberta Gas For Vital Defence Project: Five-Year Export Plan Effective Immediately,” *Calgary Herald*, March 22, 1951, front page.

<sup>95</sup> See, “Expansion In Oil Outlined,” *Calgary Herald*, February 26, 1952, page unknown.

<sup>96</sup> See, Larry F. Frantz, “Leduc Discovery Still Pointing To New Finds: 39,000,000 Barrels Of Oil Produced In That Area,” *Calgary Herald*, February 13, 1952, p. 2.

<sup>97</sup> Frantz, “Leduc Discovery Still Pointing To New Finds,” p. 2.

This suggests that while the *Herald* did not explicitly mention Trans Mountain during this time, the public would have warmly received the project as a feature of Alberta's beloved oil industry. As in March of 1951, the *Herald* in February of 1952 addressed the increasing importance of Alberta's national resources in times of international tumult: "the unsettled situation in the Middle East has increased the importance of Canadian oil."<sup>98</sup> Other non-oil-related international events – namely, the King's death and then Queen's succession—take the spotlight throughout most of the month of February in both the *Herald* and the *Province*.<sup>99</sup> This perhaps explains why projects such as Trans Mountain were not featured in this paper throughout February 1952.

In addition, both papers commented on the economic boom period that the provinces and the country entered during this period. Industrial development in particular was highlighted in BC and Alberta, with both papers citing increased foreign capital as a contributor to this economic success.<sup>100</sup> Moreover, other oil-related articles published by both papers directly linked increased foreign investment to the oil industry.<sup>101</sup> This means that Albertans and British Columbians were made explicitly aware of the economic benefit brought by oil and its projects, such as Trans Mountain. The satirical cartoon below demonstrates that, although Alberta was economically prospering during this period, their burgeoning federal antipathy did not allow them to forgo commenting on what they perceived as the federal government's response to the boom:

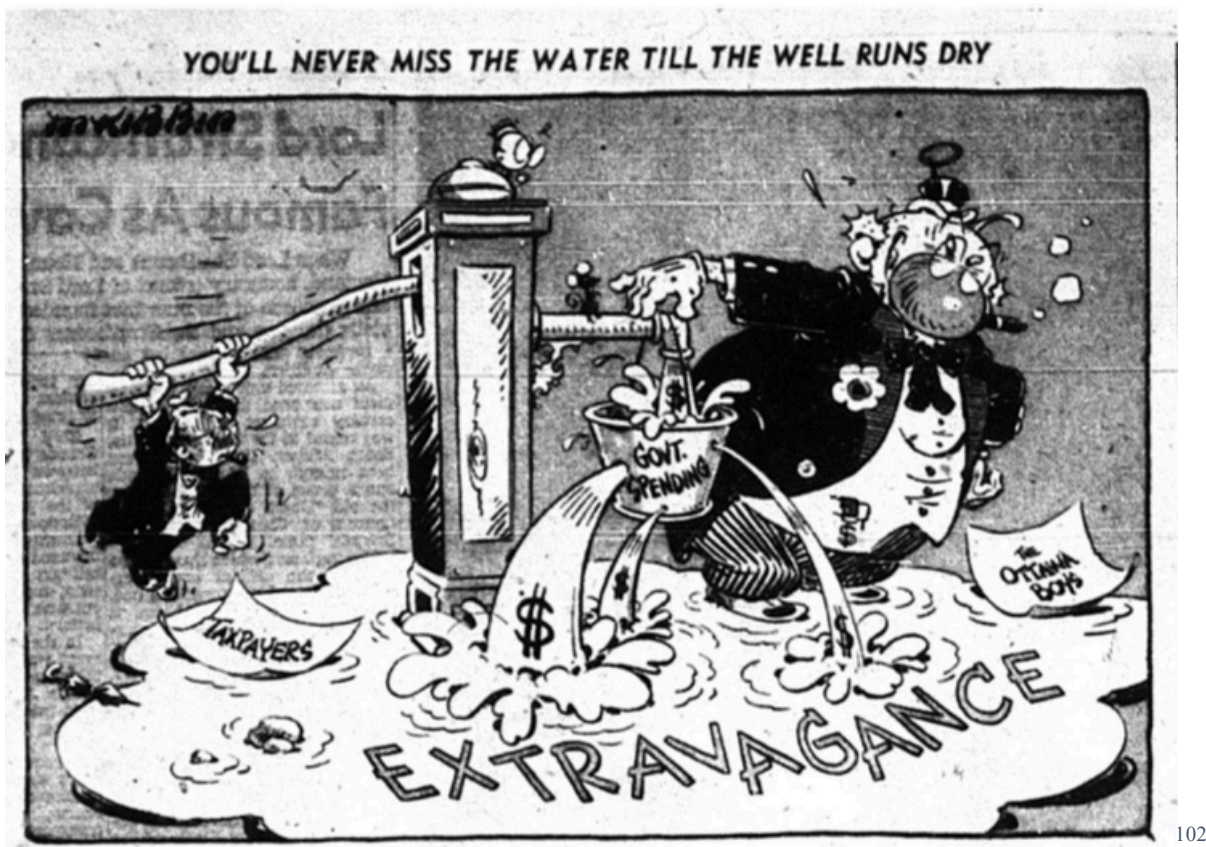
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<sup>98</sup> "Expansion In Oil Outlined," page unknown.

<sup>99</sup> Like *The Calgary Herald*, news of the King's death and Queen's succession dominates front page news for much of *The Vancouver Province's* February 1952 issues. Reports on other events such as on Egypt and the Suez Canal, the Iranian oil situation, and reports on NATO forces also take the spotlight throughout this month.

<sup>100</sup> "B.C. Holds Spotlight In Eastern Canada," *Vancouver Province*, February 12, 1952, p. 11; Jack Steepler, "Canada Experiencing Greatest Period Boom: But Inflation Is Big Worry," *Calgary Herald*, February 23, 1952, p. 12.

<sup>101</sup> Examples: "Expansion In Oil Outlined," page unknown; "Oil Rights Bring Alberta \$82, 436," *Vancouver Province*, February 8, 1952, p. 19.



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Figure 1: Political Cartoon Against Federal Spending

The *Province*'s economic boom articles focus less on displeasure with the federal government and instead are more concerned with BC's own industrial development. These articles celebrated the province's industrial growth, with one exclaiming: "An old dream may be realized--an industrial West in Canada to match an industrial East--if the present pace of British Columbia development keeps up."<sup>103</sup> British Columbians continued to praise BC's industrialization upon the pipeline's 1953 completion and in many cases attributed this growth to the completion of the pipeline. British Columbians surely recognized this potential for industrialization as an opportunity to support their resource-based economy.

<sup>102</sup> "You'll Never Miss the Water Till the Well Runs Dry," *Calgary Herald*, February 5, 1952, p. 2.

<sup>103</sup> "BC Industrialization 'Dream Coming True,'" *Vancouver Province*, February 23, 1952, p. 16.



Beyond reports of economic growth, the *Province* in February of 1952 continued to frequently report on oil and gas developments in Alberta as well as BC and on the pipeline itself.<sup>104</sup> These reports further demonstrated to British Columbians the profitability of these industries and celebrated their growth since the Leduc discovery five years before.<sup>105</sup> Similarly to March of 1951, the *Province* featured eight articles on the pipeline itself whereas the *Herald* had none. This suggests that British Columbians were again more excited about the project than Albertans, whose major daily newspaper had no reports at these crucial stages in the pipeline's construction. The majority of the *Province*'s articles provided updates on the line's construction, demonstrating an interest in Trans Mountain's progress and anticipation for its completion.<sup>106</sup> Articles that explained the steps involved in constructing the pipeline spoke to the monumental task that building Trans Mountain was, which helped readers to appreciate the project as a major accomplishment achieved through great engineering and hard work. For example, one such article explained that 1,200 men were to be employed for the clearing and leveling of the route alone, the first of many steps in completing the line.<sup>107</sup> In addition, the *Province* advertised another anticipated advantage the pipeline would bring to British Columbians: lower gasoline prices.<sup>108</sup> Here is yet another explanation for British Columbian's welcoming response to Trans Mountain.

Excitement towards the pipeline took off in both provinces once Trans Mountain was completed on October 13, 1953. In BC, the *Province* reported enthusiastically and continually throughout the month of October; in Alberta, the *Herald* also featured several articles on the

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<sup>104</sup> See, R. J. Moore, "BC Oil Hunt Hits New High," *Vancouver Province*, February 20, 1952, front page; "USA Gets First Alberta Gas," *Vancouver Province*, February 8, 1952, p. 8.

<sup>105</sup> See, "Oil Rights Bring Alberta \$82, 436," p. 17; "Leduc Hit Oil Five Years Ago; Flow Still On," p. 15.

<sup>106</sup> See, "Pipeline Starting At Once," *Vancouver Province*, February 1, 1952, p. 18; R.J. Moore, "Pipeline Builder Gets Job Going: Construction Firm Setting up Camp Near Blue River," *Vancouver Province*, February 14, 1952, p. 11.

<sup>107</sup> "Pipeline Starting At Once," p. 18.

<sup>108</sup> R. J. Moore, "Pipe Line Likely to Cut Oil Cost: It Depends on the U.S. Markets, Says Imperial President," *Vancouver Province*, February 23, 1952, p. 17.

pipeline's completion. In keeping with past trends, the papers also published many articles on oil and gas developments in both provinces, throughout the country, and internationally. The *Herald* especially had countless articles on Alberta's natural resource industries and understandably had many more oil and gas developments to report on than in BC.<sup>109</sup> While the Trans Mountain was positively received by both publics for similar reasons (economic development, cheaper gasoline prices, pride in completing a challenging task, etc.), the extent to which the pipeline and its benefits were advertised in the *Herald* was much less than it was in the *Province*.

What is perhaps most interesting about the *Herald's* five pipeline-related articles is the fact that most of them focus on the rewards that the pipeline would bring to BC, as opposed to focusing on the huge market expansion into the North-West Pacific that Alberta's oil industry would enjoy. This suggests that Albertans were very aware of and perhaps irritated by others reaping the benefits of their good fortune. Although men of The Company recognized the necessity in a means to move Alberta's oil beyond the prairies, at the time the *Herald* focused mostly on benefits available to British Columbians: lower gasoline prices and economic development.<sup>110</sup> One such article clearly articulated these pipeline advantages to be enjoyed by British Columbians: "For British Columbia motorists it will mean all-Canadian gasoline, and for the fast-expanding industries of Vancouver and other industrial centres will come a future of cheaper oil supplies."<sup>111</sup> Other articles such as that titled "Alberta's Oil Plays Part: Millions Spent on B.C. Development" went further to explain the growth BC would enjoy thanks to the pipeline while at the same time complemented their industry: "Opening of the \$93,000,000

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<sup>109</sup> See, Larry Frantz, "Alberta Reaps Riches From Oil: Alberta Treasury's Take Is Expected To Increase By Tens Of Millions," *Calgary Herald*, October 24, 1952, front page; "Power Supply Second To None: Canada's Oil Reserves Hold Untold Potential," *Calgary Herald*, October 7, 1953, p. 20; "Oil Settlement Moves Expected This Month: Either From U.S. Or Iran," *Calgary Herald*, October 2, 1952, p. 41.

<sup>110</sup> Wilson and Taylor, *The Building of Trans Mountain*, 13.

<sup>111</sup> George Finlay, "Cost \$97,000,000: Coast Oil Pipe Line Officially Opened," *Calgary Herald*, October 15, 1953, p. 34.

Edmonton-to-Vancouver pipe line focused attention on new pulp and paper plants, plywood and lumber mills, hydro electric [sic] and aluminum production, oil refineries and manufacturing projects."<sup>112</sup> The remaining two Trans Mountain articles praised the project and the men involved in completing the pipeline in spite of the extremely challenging terrain that the route followed over the Rocky Mountains.<sup>113</sup> The caption of a photo of the pipeline at a particularly difficult location explained that one of the biggest challenges was “negotiating the Coquihala canyon and pass into Hope, B.C. The terrain was the most rugged encountered and only skilled engineering and modern equipment could overcome the difficulties.”<sup>114</sup>

The *Province* echoed tenfold the advantages of the pipeline and compliments directed towards it featured in the *Herald*. October 1953 saw well over twenty pages that featured pipeline articles, eight of which the paper dedicated to an entire “Trans Mountain section” celebrating the project’s completion.<sup>115</sup> Similarly to the *Herald*, many of these articles focused exclusively on the benefits incurred by BC specifically. Furthermore, the Trans Mountain section was filled with advertisements for companies who participated in the pipeline’s construction, which proves that involvement in the project was considered grounds for promotion. The following image of the third page of the Trans Mountains section is representative of the articles and advertisements found throughout these eight pages:

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<sup>112</sup> "Alberta Oil Plays Part: Millions Spent On B.C. Development," *Calgary Herald*, October 16, 1953, p. 25.

<sup>113</sup> Finlay, “Cost \$97,000,000: Coast Oil Pipe Line Officially Opened,” p. 34; *Image of Trans Mountain construction at the Coquihala canyon*, *Calgary Herald*, October 16, 1953, p. 25.

<sup>114</sup> *Image of Trans Mountain construction at the Coquihala canyon*, p. 25.

<sup>115</sup> This section is part of the paper published October 15<sup>th</sup>, 1953.

**COAST DEMAND HELPED OUT**  
**Alberta Oil Boom 'Pushes' Pipe Line** **ROUTE PARALLELS RAILWAY**  
**FOR 600 OF 718 MILES**

Crude oil pipelines in this part of the world are being built at a rate that is almost unprecedented. In Alberta, the boom is being pushed forward by the oil boom in the west. The province is now producing more oil than it consumes, and the surplus is being shipped to the coast. The Trans Mountain pipeline is the largest of these projects.

**DEMAND BOASTS**  
 The boom in the oil business has helped the province to build up a strong industrial base. The province is now producing more oil than it consumes, and the surplus is being shipped to the coast. The Trans Mountain pipeline is the largest of these projects.

**Oil Consumption Doubled Since '46**  
 The province's oil consumption has doubled since 1946. This is due to the rapid growth of the oil industry in Alberta. The province is now producing more oil than it consumes, and the surplus is being shipped to the coast. The Trans Mountain pipeline is the largest of these projects.

**RADIO COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT**  
 Used on this project was designed and manufactured by  
**KVA VICTOR COMPANY LTD.**  
 VANCOUVER CALGARY WINNIPEG TORONTO MONTREAL HALIFAX

**Congratulations To TRANS MOUNTAIN OIL PIPE LINE COMPANY**  
 Home and Rumble Ltd. was chosen to undertake the existing electrical installations at selected pumping stations on the Trans Mountain Oil Pipe Line.  
 Home and Rumble Ltd. has been associated with similar outstanding developments in the west for over thirty-five years.

**HUME & RUMBLE**  
 THE ENGINEERING CORPORATION

**OIL THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS**  
**KEPT FLOWING BY EFFICIENT COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE**  
 We congratulate the Trans Mountain Oil Pipe Line Company upon the successful completion of one of Canada's great engineering feats. The unusual and hazardous difficulties faced in being the pipe from Edmonton to Vancouver through the mountains were overcome by the skill, determination and experience of the contractors.  
 The successful operation of this pipe line, so all each line, relies in a special way on adequate and dependable communications. To guarantee such operation, the engineering and communications know-how of the CANADIAN NATIONAL TELEGRAPH has been engaged to provide the essential communications service.  
 CANADIAN NATIONAL'S years of experience in providing specialized communications service is now assisting in keeping an uninterrupted flow of oil flowing.  
**CANADIAN NATIONAL TELEGRAPHS**

**Advancing An Empire**

**BECHTEL**  
 BUILDERS FOR INDUSTRY

**CANADIAN BECHTEL LIMITED**  
 TORONTO • VANCOUVER

Figure 2: Trans Mountain Section

While the *Herald* did touch on the difficulty in completing the project, articles published in the *Province* went into much greater detail. News of the line's completion was front page news in the *Province* on October 13<sup>th</sup>, 1953, the day it was finished.<sup>117</sup> On the other hand, the *Herald* did not report on Trans Mountain that month until October 15<sup>th</sup>, on page thirty-four no less.<sup>118</sup> In stark contrast, the *Province's* October 15<sup>th</sup> issue featured the Trans Mountain section,

<sup>116</sup> *Vancouver Province*, October 15, 1953, p. 3.

<sup>117</sup> "Oil Pipe Line Now Complete: Welders Finish Job Today," *Vancouver Province*, October 13, 1953, front page.

<sup>118</sup> Finlay, "Cost \$97,000,000," p. 34.

which was entirely made up of Trans Mountain-related articles and advertisements. These pieces offered plentiful reports on the logistics of the line's construction and operation.<sup>119</sup> This suggested that British Columbians were interested in every aspect of the line—that is, not only the advantages the line would bring to them, but also how the line was built and how it is operated. The section began with a full-page image depicting the construction progress:

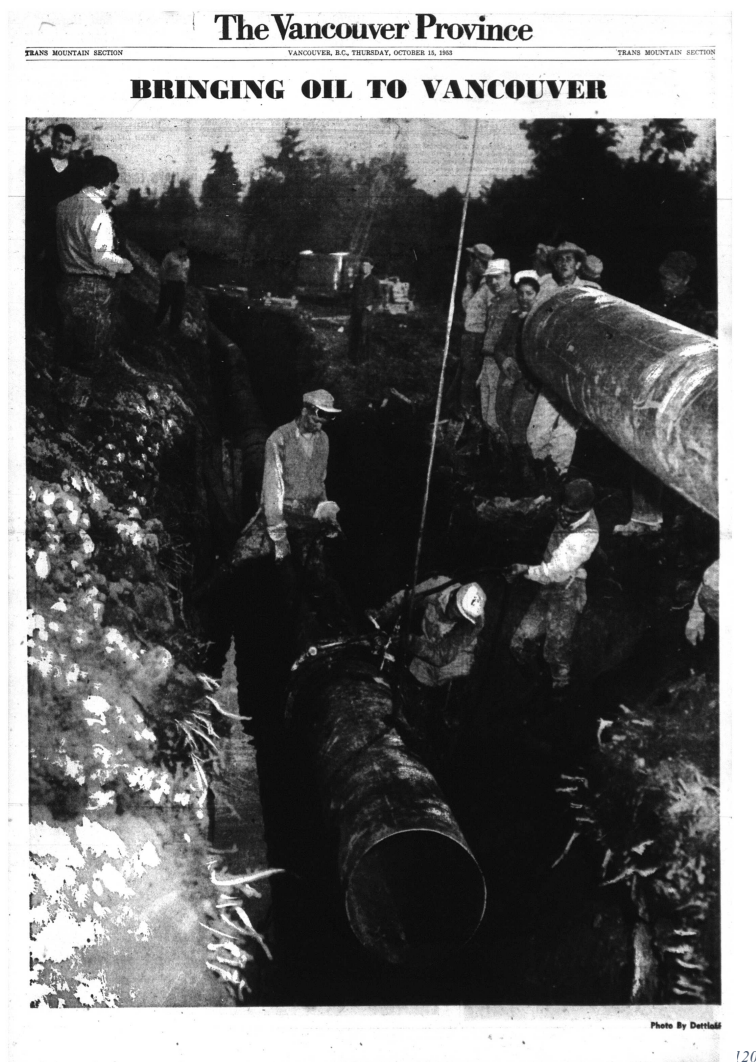


Figure 3: First Page of Trans Mountain Section

<sup>119</sup> See, "Gravity Helps and Hinders: Oil Is Given 'Push' By Pumps," *Vancouver Province*, October 15, 1953, Trans Mountain Section, p. 6; "Valves Close To Limit Oil Pressure," *Vancouver Province*, October 15, 1953, Trans Mountain Section, p. 7.

<sup>120</sup> Dettloff, "Brining Oil To Vancouver," *Vancouver Province*, October 15, 1953, Trans Mountain section, p. 1.

Popular sentiment in BC also espoused a profound sense of pride in the project. This was reflected in the many articles published by the Province that focused on how the line's construction overcame extremely challenging terrain. In many cases this pride stressed Trans Mountain as a great Canadian achievement, even though both Canadian and American companies funded and owned the pipeline. This sense of nationalism was demonstrated in a statement by The Company published in the Trans Mountain section which shared:

Trans Mountain takes this opportunity to express its thanks and appreciation to the thousands of individuals throughout Canada who have worked and cooperated to make possible this 'Big Inch' pipeline. Only through the joint efforts of all concerned was it possible to put this oil transportation system into service so promptly and efficiently.<sup>121</sup>

Here, there is no acknowledgment of the crucial financial support provided by private American companies, nor the fact that The Company hired American pipeline operators to train the Canadian crew. While another article published in the Trans Mountain section did acknowledge this American involvement, it stressed the “temporary basis” from which these Americans were employed for training purposes.<sup>122</sup> An advertisement in this section also compared Trans Mountain builders to the early explorers of BC's history:

In the tradition of the men who came down the Fraser River, and the rough, tough pioneers who pushed the first steel through the open golden West, follow the builders of the Trans Mountain Pipe Line. . . . We once said, 'Give us men to match our mountains.' Well, we've got 'em. Standard of B.C. joins in congratulating the men who planned and carried out the roughest pipeline job in the world. As one tough railroad man remarked, 'They were damn fools but I guess they've built it.' They sure did.<sup>123</sup>

British Columbians, desiring a more realized self-image, would have enthusiastically received this comparison of Trans Mountain men to BC's early frontiersmen. The arduous nature of the

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<sup>121</sup> Trans Mountain Oil Pipe Line Company Advertisement, *Vancouver Province*, October 15, 1953, Trans Mountain section, p. 2.

<sup>122</sup> "Qualified Personnel Scare: Training of Pipeline Crews," *Vancouver Province*, October 15, 1953, Trans Mountain Section, p. 5.

<sup>123</sup> Standard Oil Company of British Columbia Ltd., “Damn Fools . . . but I guess they've built it!” *Vancouver Province*, October 15, 1943, Trans Mountain section, p. 7.

Trans Mountain task was further validated by an article which highlighted that even the oil industry “tycoons” who toured the pipeline acknowledged that Trans Mountain was one of the toughest “big inch” pipeline jobs in the world.<sup>124</sup>

The *Province* also spared no efforts in stressing the economic advancements Trans Mountain was to bring to British Columbians. A large focus of the Trans Mountain section was in fact on how the pipeline would help BC to progress economically and become more industrial. In many instances, articles described these benefits as impacting all Canadians, not just British Columbians.<sup>125</sup> These articles explained that the pipeline was made possible by the increase in Albertan oil production as well as the “soaring demand for petroleum products on the Pacific slope,” highlighting the necessity of oil for the West Coast.<sup>126</sup> One article explained the increased demand as a result of “population growth, increase in the number of automobiles, increased use of oil for domestic and industrial heating and energy” and argued that the pipeline was necessary for Alberta to meet these BC demands.<sup>127</sup> The article continued to outline how the pipeline facilitates “one economic development lead[ing] to another,” referring to the expansion of oil refineries around BC that would follow the pipeline’s completion.<sup>128</sup> It then described the pipeline’s opening as an event that “means a secure and plentiful supply of petroleum products for British Columbia industry. Availability of oil heat and energy, or as a raw product for further processing, broadens the base of the province’s economy.”<sup>129</sup> The following comic and accompanying article perfectly reflected the enthusiasm British Columbians held towards their province’s long-awaited industrial expansion:

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<sup>124</sup> "Big Pipeline Builders Agree Trans Mountain Route Tough: Oil Industry Tycoons Given Tour of Western End," *Vancouver Province*, October 15, 1953, p. 21.

<sup>125</sup> See, Government of the Province of Alberta, “Feed Lines for Canadian Industry,” *Vancouver Province*, October 15, 1953, Trans Mountain Section, p. 4.

<sup>126</sup> "Coast Demand Helped Out: Alberta Oil Boom 'Pushes' Pipe Line," *Vancouver Province*, October 15, 1953, Trans Mountain section, p. 3.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*



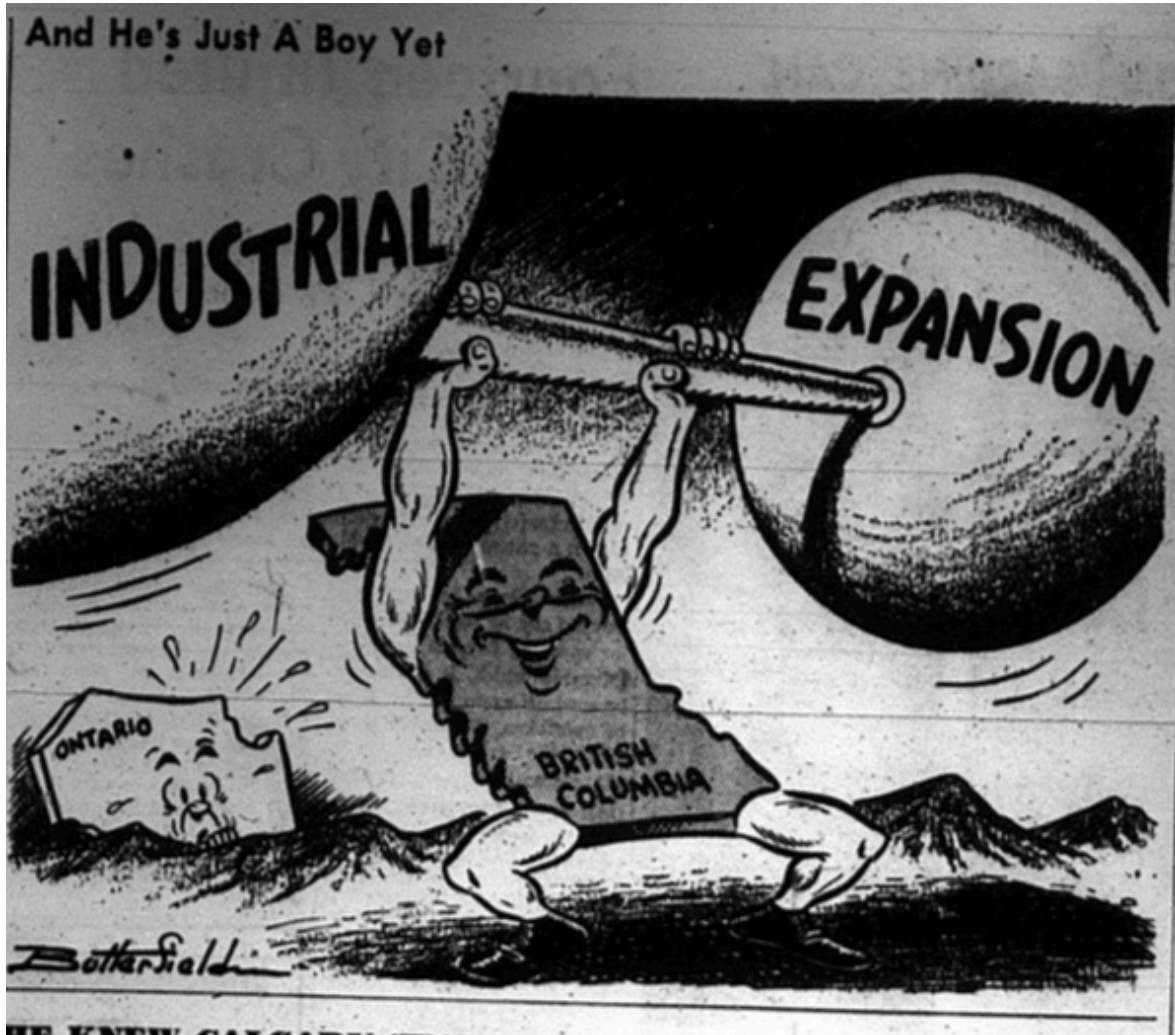


Figure 4: Cartoon Regarding BC's Industrial Expansion

In British Columbia in the past few years we have been making history quickly. Last Thursday our page one reminded us how this province has been jumping ahead industrially since the end of the war. The occasion was the opening of the new pipeline from Edmonton and the opening of the new Continental Can Co. plant.<sup>131</sup>

On top of this industrial expansion, the newspaper reminded British Columbians of another benefit they had finally incurred with the TMPL's completion: cheaper gasoline.<sup>132</sup>

<sup>130</sup> Butterfield, "And He's Just A Boy Yet," *Vancouver Province*, October 19, 1953, p. 2.

<sup>131</sup> "Inside Out: a memo from the Editor," *Vancouver Province*, October 19, 1953, p. 2.

<sup>132</sup> "B.C. Gasoline, Fuel Oil Prices Cut: Pipeline Lowers Cost: Alberta Crude Delivered Here Cheaper Than From U.S.," *Vancouver Province*, October 16, 1953, front page.



When it came to reporting on these landmark stages on Trans Mountain's progress, the public opinion of Albertans and British Columbians was nothing but positive. The same enthusiastic sentiment was expressed on a more national stage in the form of a televised CBC broadcast that reported on the line's completion. This program honoured the arduous nature of building the line, comparing undertaking its construction to fighting a war: "but when the battle lines in the line of survey runs over rocky grounds that's when the going gets tough. Dynamite is the weapon now..."<sup>133</sup> This broadcast previously described the difficulty in obtaining oil from the ground before going on to share that the issue of transportation was in fact as "great and complicated as the discovery and drilling of oil."<sup>134</sup> The report earlier reflected Alberta and BC's enthusiastic sentiment towards the oil industry as a whole, romanticizing the industry with descriptions such as "where once a cow grazed contentedly, now strange [oil] machinery dances a mechanical ballet, graceless but rhythmic, crude but practical."<sup>135</sup> Ending the broadcast with another romantic description venerating Trans Mountain, CBC certainly helped to facilitate an appreciation for Trans Mountain that expanded far beyond Alberta and BC: "From Alberta to Vancouver, through the toughest country in the world, across 72 rivers and streams, up sheer cliffs, through 400 miles of mountains and valleys, guiding oil from the earth to Canada's West coast: the Trans Mountain Pipeline."<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> "Trans Mountain Pipeline to carry Alberta oil to Vancouver," *CBC News*, November 1, 1953.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*

## Trans Mountain Today

The bilateral enthusiasm for the TMPL shown between 1947 and 1953 is a thing of the past. Today, concerns regarding impacts on the environment, specifically to do with increased marine traffic necessitated by the delivery of oil to the coast, as well as inadequate Indigenous consultation, has strained Trans Mountain Expansion (TMX) conversations and progress. Not only were these two issues completely absent in 1953 TMPL discussions as featured in *The Calgary Herald* and *The Vancouver Province* but public opinion overall in both provinces has changed significantly. Sentiment in BC is far from unanimously accepting of Trans Mountain and instead has become very polarized. Although 1953 Trans Mountain sentiment did not hint at BC's burgeoning divided political culture, current TMX discussions certainly feature a left-right dichotomy with some residents very pro- and others very anti-expansion. On the other hand, in Alberta, sentiment towards TMX is more passionately in favour of the project than it was towards the 1953 TMPL. This is partly due to the popular narrative surrounding the expansion describing the project as mostly benefitting Albertans (and the Canadian economy in general), whereas the public understood the 1953 pipeline as benefiting mostly British Columbians.<sup>137</sup> Alberta's public opinion is also in keeping with the province's political culture, which features consensus on internal issues such as Trans Mountain. What this change in sentiment suggests is that the provinces' political cultures have come to define Trans Mountain conversations much more than they did in 1953. This section will examine in greater detail the two arguments presented by residents of these provinces: one, for the economic necessity of expansion to benefit the Albertan and Canadian economies; the other, for proper consultation with Indigenous communities and protection for BC's environment.

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<sup>137</sup> See, "Alberta's Message: We Have to Keep Canada Working," Government of Alberta, <https://www.alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=62187394A9B1D-9AB7-D628-6F9933D0CBAA233A> (accessed 29 March 2019).

The TMPL's current owner Kinder Morgan first proposed the TMX project in 2012, which involves building a second oil pipeline to twin the route of the original so that Albertan oil has better access to markets beyond the United States.<sup>138</sup> In May 2016 the National Energy Board (NEB) determined that the TMX project was in the national interest and recommended that the federal government approve the project, subject to 156 conditions, which it did later that year. In 2018, the pipeline's owner, Kinder Morgan, said it would back out of completing the project should the government fail to guarantee support and as a result the federal government under Prime Minister Justin Trudeau bought the TMX in August of 2018. However, the Federal Court of Appeals overturned the Trudeau government's decision to move forward with construction on the basis that the government had inadequately consulted with affected Indigenous groups and failed to consider the project's environmental impacts. As a result, the government stopped construction on the line and re-opened negotiations with these communities. As recently as February 2019, the NEB reviewed the project again and in their "Reconsideration" report concluded for the second time that the TMX is in the national interest and that the federal government should move forward with the project, with an additional fifteen conditions. A ninety-day timeline was set for Ottawa to make its decision, though reports contest whether it will meet this timeline.<sup>139</sup> During these developments, the Trudeau government introduced the Impact Assessment Bill C-69, designed to change how the government reviews major resource projects for their environmental, social, and economic effects.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> For an explanation of the reasons to expand, see: "Why we're expanding Trans Mountain," Keep Canada Working, <https://keepcanadaworking.ca/why-expand> (accessed 29 March 2019).

<sup>139</sup> See, Don Braid, "Braid: Amaze us, Liberals- grant quick Trans Mountain approval," *Calgary Herald*, February 22, 2019, <https://calgaryherald.com/news/politics/braid-amaze-us-liberals-grant-quick-trans-mountain-approval> (accessed 2 March 2019).

<sup>140</sup> The Canadian Press, "Energy reform bill will fail if not accepted by Senate, granted royal assent by spring," *Global News*, March 2, 2019, <https://globalnews.ca/news/5015395/bill-c-69-fail-senate-committee/> (accessed 2 March 2019).

TMX discussions in Alberta and BC are both firmly rooted in these provinces' political cultures.<sup>141</sup> One of the most relevant features of Alberta's political culture is its consensus on internal issues, making for a united, right-leaning front on issues such as Trans Mountain. This is notwithstanding an NDP government being currently in power, who commentators forecast will be voted out in the upcoming provincial election this April—an unprecedented short-lived term for Albertan governments.<sup>142</sup> For BC, it is the left-right divide, a defining feature of the province's political culture, that is most prominent in TMX arguments. Another aspect of their political cultures this paper has yet to examine that became especially relevant with the 1988 Canada-US Free Trade Agreement is the provinces' opinions on continental economic integration with the United States. On this, Wiseman points out that the Free Trade Agreement demonstrated that of Canadians, Albertans were most in favour of economic integration, whereas British Columbians (and Ontarians) were most opposed.<sup>143</sup> This speaks to the Albertan government being “less fearful and less critical of the American behemoth than are British Columbians.”<sup>144</sup> Furthermore, it explains why projects such as TMX that attract foreign investment is welcomed in Alberta and resisted in BC, which is “home to a vibrant anti-globalization movement.”<sup>145</sup> In addition to housing an anti-globalization movement, Wiseman highlights that BC also has a strong presence of environmental networks, who are most attracted to leftist parties.<sup>146</sup> With that said, the most significant commonality in Alberta and BC's political cultures – antipathy towards Ottawa—is also featured in TMX public sentiment in both

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<sup>141</sup> See, The “Far West”: Brief Histories & Political Cultures section, p. 5 for review of political cultures.

<sup>142</sup> See, Jason Markusoff, “Alberta Has Never Had a One-Term Government. Will Rachel Notley's NDPs be first?” *Macleans*, December 20, 2018, <https://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/alberta-has-never-had-a-one-term-premier-will-rachel-notley-be-first/> (accessed 28 March 2019); CBC News, “The Pollcast: Rachel Notley's re-election hopes look grim,” *CBC News*, December 12, 2018, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/pollcast-henry-alberta-1.4935165> (accessed 28 March 2019).

<sup>143</sup> Wiseman, *In Search of Canadian Political Culture*, 259.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid*, 260.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid*, 260.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid*, 258-9.

provinces. While both sides have expressed various reasons for their displeasure, rage against the federal government is pervasive in these conversations.

Whereas in 1953, Albertans viewed the TMPL positively but did not consider it as front-page news, the project has become a hot topic throughout the province. The current general sentiment is one of pessimism expressed by the oil industry and provincial government for any tangible progress on resuming the pipeline's construction. An article by the *Herald* entitled "Ho hum, another win for Trans Mountain – but still no pipeline 1,010 days later," reflects this dissatisfaction.<sup>147</sup> Public opinion in Alberta agrees with the NEB's "Reconsideration" report which concludes the project's economic benefits outweigh the environmental effects. The NEB report states:

The Reconsideration report concludes that Project-related marine shipping is likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects on the Southern resident killer whale and on Indigenous cultural use associated with the Southern resident killer whale. The NEB also found that greenhouse gas emissions from Project-related marine vessels would likely be significant. While a credible worst-case spill from the Project or a Project-related marine vessel is not likely, if it were to occur the environmental effects would be significant. While these effects weighed heavily in the NEB's consideration of Project-related marine shipping, the NEB recommends that the Government of Canada find that they can be justified in the circumstances, in light of the considerable benefits of the Project and measures to minimize the effects.

The considerable benefits of the Project include increased access to diverse markets for Canadian oil; jobs created across Canada; the development of capacity of local and Indigenous individuals, communities and businesses; direct spending on pipeline materials in Canada; and considerable revenues to various levels of government.<sup>148</sup>

Just as this report is quick to move past environmental concerns and instead focus on the economic benefits of the TMX, so too does Alberta's public opinion focus on the positives. This is exemplified in a *Herald* article which skims over these concerns before going further to

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<sup>147</sup> Chris Varcoe, "Varcoe: Ho hum, another win for Trans Mountain - but still no pipeline 1,010 days later," *Calgary Herald*, February 23, 2019, <https://calgaryherald.com/business/energy/varcoe-ho-hum-another-win-for-trans-mountain-but-still-no-pipeline-1010-days-later> (accessed 2 March 2019).

<sup>148</sup> National Energy Board, "NEB releases Reconsideration report for Trans Mountain Expansion Project," National Energy Board, <http://www.neb-one.gc.ca/bts/nws/nr/2019/nr04-eng.html> (accessed 2 March 2019).

suggest that the environment may actually benefit from this project: “And it’s worth pointing out a recommendation the federal government examine the long-term regional cumulative effects on the Salish Sea could actually improve the current situation, if steps are taken to remedy it.”<sup>149</sup>

Other *Herald* articles that also comment on the NEB’s approval suggest some Albertans are less reserved in expressing their position towards the expansion and its opponents<sup>150</sup> This piece, titled “Amaze us, Liberals- grant quick Trans Mountain approval,” proposes that the TMX issue can be easily dealt with: the project simply must be approved. In keeping with popular sentiment, the article does not address concern for the environment and only briefly acknowledges the federal government’s obligation for Indigenous consultation. It reads:

The simplest and best solution would be to approve the pipeline by the end of May and get construction moving as quickly as possible. There would be controversy on the coast, and more legal challenges, but at least the thing would be a fait accompli by federal voting day, likely in October. The pipeline could well be a fading national issue by then. And the Liberals would win back approval among many westerners. . . A quick approval would take courage and decisive leadership, though. The Liberals don’t show much of either these days.<sup>151</sup>

It is interesting to note that the newspaper tagged this piece as “political” on their website, as opposed to other TMX pieces which are tagged as “energy.” This suggests the project represents much more than simply a pipeline but is also a battleground for Liberals and Conservatives.

While there is some evidence of an appreciation for British Columbians’ concerns by Albertans, the agreement that the expansion’s benefit outweighs its consequences remains strong. Take for example a *Herald* article that acknowledges the necessity for Indigenous consultation and condemns the federal government for doing a poor job of this but proceeds to quote an oil industry executive that discredits the validity of its opposition’s argument: “...it seems like each

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<sup>149</sup> Varcoe, “Varcoe: Ho hum.”

<sup>150</sup> Braid, “Braid: Amaze us, Liberals- grant quick Trans Mountain approval.”

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

time we move along the path of due process, the anti-development rhetoric becomes less rational.”<sup>152</sup>

Popular sentiment in BC also focuses on the NEB’s second recommendation for approval although does not unanimously support the decision to move forward with the expansion. Rather, the concern for Indigenous consultation and the marine environment has left many British Columbians criticizing the NEB. Take for an example an article published by the *Province* that highlights that the NEB approved the project in spite of the anticipated environmental damage and cites several quotes by influential opponents to the project such as the David Suzuki Foundation, BC Premier John Horgan, BC Green Party Leader Andrew Weaver, as well as several Indigenous chiefs.<sup>153</sup> David Suzuki foundation director-general for Western Canada Jay Ritchlin explains the concern for southern resident orcas along BC’s coast: “There simply isn’t room for more tanker traffic and vessel noise, let alone a catastrophic spill. The marine life in the area is already at its maximum threat level.”<sup>154</sup> John Horgan similarly maintains: “(Environment) Minister George Heyman and I remain convinced Trans Mountain is not in the best interests of British Columbians. We will continue to stand up for B.C. and defend our environment, the tens of thousands of jobs that depend on it, and southern resident orcas from the risk of an oil spill.”<sup>155</sup> Additionally, Andrew Weaver argues that the NEB’s review process was set up to fail the public interest and also suggests that “federal approval of this project was always political,” echoing the sentiment expressed in the *Herald*.<sup>156</sup> BC’s antipathy towards Ottawa and concern

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<sup>152</sup> Geoffrey Morgan, "Crisis of our own making!: Regulatory logjam has cost \$100B in cancelled resource projects," *Calgary Herald*, February 21, 2019, <https://calgaryherald.com/commodities/crisis-of-our-own-making-regulatory-logjam-has-cost-100b-in-cancelled-resource-projects/wcm/89b3cb32-ebce-473f-a6dc-61dd10e42aba> (accessed 2 March 2019).

<sup>153</sup> Scott Brown, "National Energy Board says Trans Mountain pipeline project should be approved," *Province*, February 22, 2019, <https://theprovince.com/news/local-news/national-energy-board-says-trans-mountain-pipeline-project-should-be-approved/wcm/ffb6b343-82c9-492c-888c-4ceff6a8ed1c> (accessed 2 March 2019).

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.* This echoes Braid’s article “Braid: Amaze us, Liberals- grant quick Trans Mountain approval,” referenced in the previous paragraph.

for the province's provincial sovereignty against federal intrusion is explicitly highlighted in a further quote by Weaver:

B.C. needs to be in control of our own environmental review process, to make sure it is objective and evidence-based. We cannot rely on the Federal government. The province should terminate the equivalency agreement with the Federal government, and conduct our own environmental assessment for this project. We must do all we can to ensure that our environment is protected from the costs of this project.<sup>157</sup>

Public sentiment regarding Indigenous concerns centers around the fates of the orca and salmon populations against increased tanker traffic as well as the fact that affected groups feel the federal government inadequately consulted them for the second time. On this, Stewart Philip of the BC Union of Chiefs' remarks that it is "astonishing how terrible this second round of consultations were."<sup>158</sup> He goes on to argue that Trudeau announcing the pipeline will be built mocks the consultation process and that the decision on the TMX ultimately comes down to choosing between BC's orcas or the expansion.<sup>159</sup>

With that said, the other half of public sentiment in BC presents arguments in favour of the expansion as featured in several articles also published by the *Province*.<sup>160</sup> One such piece covers Alberta Premier Rachel Notley's speech to B.C. steelworkers, which warned that their jobs were at risk without the expansion.<sup>161</sup> This echoes the concern by Alberta's government for the \$80 million that is lost every day to the Canadian economy as a result of Albertan oil having to be sold to the United States for lower prices.<sup>162</sup> On this, Notley shares: "We happily let billions of dollars evaporate from our economy so that Americans can pocket [it]. . . This is just

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<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid.

<sup>160</sup> The Canadian Press, "Alberta premier tells B.C. steelworkers jobs at risk without Trans Mountain," *Province*, October 31, 2018, <https://theprovince.com/business/energy/alberta-premier-tells-b-c-steelworkers-jobs-at-risk-without-trans-mountain/wcm/10517978-fdf9-429b-a6a4-9159b0fbaa68> (accessed 2 March 2019); Derrick Penner, "B.C. Chief says First Nations preparing bid for Trans Mountain Pipeline," *Province*, January 15, 2019, <https://theprovince.com/news/local-news/b-c-chief-says-first-nations-preparing-bid-for-trans-mountain-pipeline/wcm/8c3e0c30-9cc0-4abd-84d3-4b9673711fe1> (accessed 4 March 2019).

<sup>161</sup> The Canadian Press, "Alberta premier tells B.C. steelworkers job at risk without Trans Mountain."

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.



dumb. . . It should be our money that is in our economy. Not the American's. It should be invested in Canadian priorities, not border walls and private prisons. But that is exactly what is happening right now.”<sup>163</sup> This warning provides British Columbians an understanding of Alberta's position and surely resonates with those in BC who support the TMX. Another *Province* article highlights the fact that not all Indigenous communities who are affected by the expansion are against the project; rather, a number of these groups have signed impact benefit agreements with Trans Mountain and are hoping to become stakeholders in the project to have a tangible influence on it.<sup>164</sup> Here is another example of pro-TMX sentiment within BC. It is interesting to point out that all the BC TMX articles examined thus far were published by the same paper (*The Province*), demonstrating that there truly is a left-right divide on this issue that needs to be satisfied by the media.

A survey sponsored and published by *Global News* provides tangible evidence of the polarized nature of TMX discussion in BC.<sup>165</sup> The Ipsos survey of 1,907 Canadians of April 2018 suggests that the majority of Canadians support the TMX, with the strongest support coming from Alberta, and that, unsurprisingly, most of the opposition came from BC.<sup>166</sup> However, the survey results demonstrate that even within BC, 55% of the population supports it, with only 37% opposed, and the remaining 8% unsure whether they should or should not give support.<sup>167</sup> This provides a quantifiable example of the polarized nature of BC, and suggests that many residents within the province may share more opinions with the 84% of Albertans who support the project than expected.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> Penner, “B.C. Chief says First Nations preparing bid for Trans Mountain Pipeline.”

<sup>165</sup> Rebecca Joseph, "Majority of Canadians support Trans Mountain pipeline expansion: Ipsos poll," *Global News*, May 2, 2018, <https://globalnews.ca/news/4180482/majority-of-canadians-support-trans-mountain-pipeline-expansion-ipsos-poll/> (accessed 2 March 2019).

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

It is evident that the conversation towards Trans Mountain has dramatically shifted from 1953 to today. The original TMPL was warmly received by British Columbians and there was no evidence of polarity on the issue, however, current discussions in BC are now representative of the divided nature of BC's political culture and provide arguments that are both for and against the expansion. On the other side, in Alberta, the sentiment towards Trans Mountain remains unanimously positive and has only grown stronger in favour of the pipelines. This is perhaps representative of the fact that, since the 1953 TMPL, the oil industry continued to bring in millions of dollars of capital investment into the Albertan economy, making oil related projects such as Trans Mountain even more vital to its residents.

## Conclusion

Albertans and British Columbians received both the TMPL of 1953 and the oil industry within which it was situated with open arms. As both provinces are historically rooted in resource-based economies, it would have been natural for both Albertans and British Columbians to take steps to develop oil and gas industries as part of their economies. Given the dramatic transformation Alberta's economy undertook with the flourishing of their oil and gas industries in the "After Leduc" era, it is no wonder that British Columbians were eager to establish their own oil and gas industries. Going further, it is also unsurprising that the BC public was so excited for the completion of the TMPL, as demonstrated in *The Province*. With anticipated outcomes such as cheaper gasoline, boosts to industrial expansion, defense security in times of conflict, and pride in the "toughest big-inch pipeline" being "Canadian," there are plentiful reasons for BC's positive reaction. Considering British Columbian society's historical struggle to establish a firm identity for itself, it is feasible that British Columbians were eager to unite towards a common, nationalistic project such as Trans Mountain that would facilitate the expansion of their economy. Although Albertans were not as expressive in their excitement for the TMPL as demonstrated in *The Calgary Herald*, there were countless more oil-related projects and developments which the paper did report on in a positive light. This unanimous response is in keeping with Alberta's political culture of which a defining feature is political consensus on domestic objectives, such as those relating to the province's beloved oil and gas industries.

Recent debates surrounding the TMX do not feature the same consensus from Alberta and BC and it is within these debates that the provinces' political cultures become more relevant. Albertans have retained their united front on the desire and necessity for an expansion and are much more invested in the project's outcome than they were towards the 1953 TMPL. On the other hand, in BC, the province's polarized political culture has manifested in divergent public

opinion with one side supporting the project and the other refuting it based on concerns for Indigenous consultation and the environment. This shift suggests that the provinces have come to define themselves more based off resource projects such as Trans Mountain: Alberta, as a conservative, economically-driven powerhouse apathetic towards the federal government; BC, a politically divided province where issues relating to economics and the environment dominant public opinion.

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