



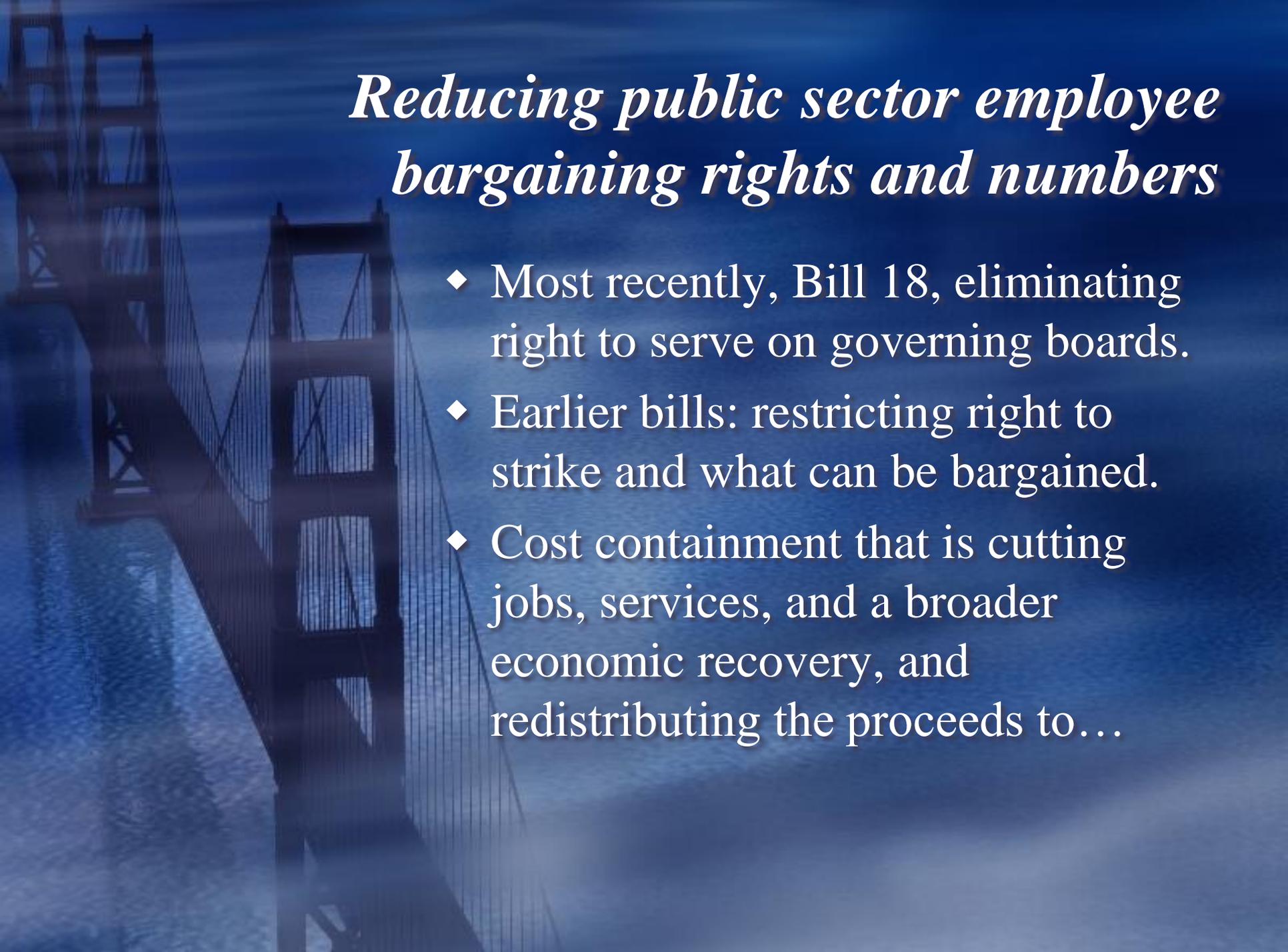
*Re-embodiment the re-aligning of hed:  
Bringing students/communities back in*

*Gary Rhoades, Professor and Director  
Center for the Study of Higher Education  
University of Arizona*



## *Public policy in the U.S.: A three-pronged strategy*

- ◇ Political: Demean, de-invest in, & diminish public sector employees and unions, as a political force.
- ◇ Economic: Regressive tax policies to redistribute monies to corporate vs small business & to a wealthy few.
- ◇ Educational: Privatize, ration, & stratify postsecondary ed by class/race/ethnicity, monetizing the majority & growth demographics, & redistributing the proceeds to profiteers.



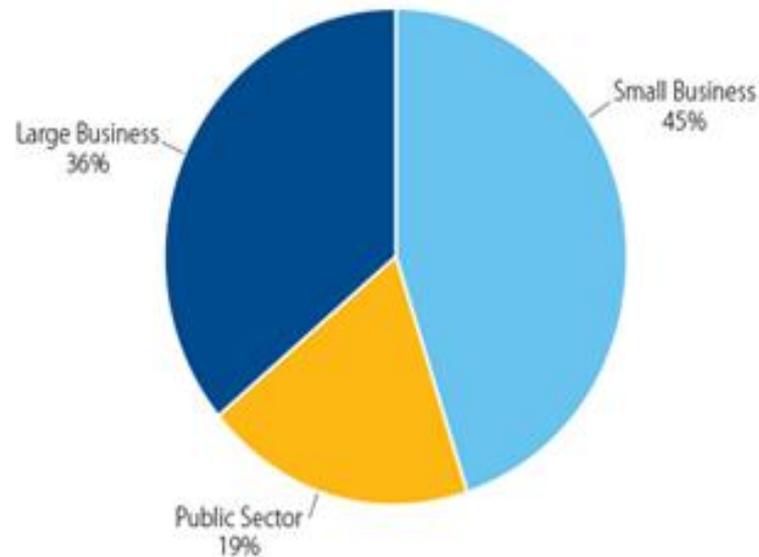
# *Reducing public sector employee bargaining rights and numbers*

- ◆ Most recently, Bill 18, eliminating right to serve on governing boards.
- ◆ Earlier bills: restricting right to strike and what can be bargained.
- ◆ Cost containment that is cutting jobs, services, and a broader economic recovery, and redistributing the proceeds to...

# *A small and getting smaller public sector*

FIGURE 2.1

SHARE OF TOTAL EMPLOYMENT, B.C., 2012

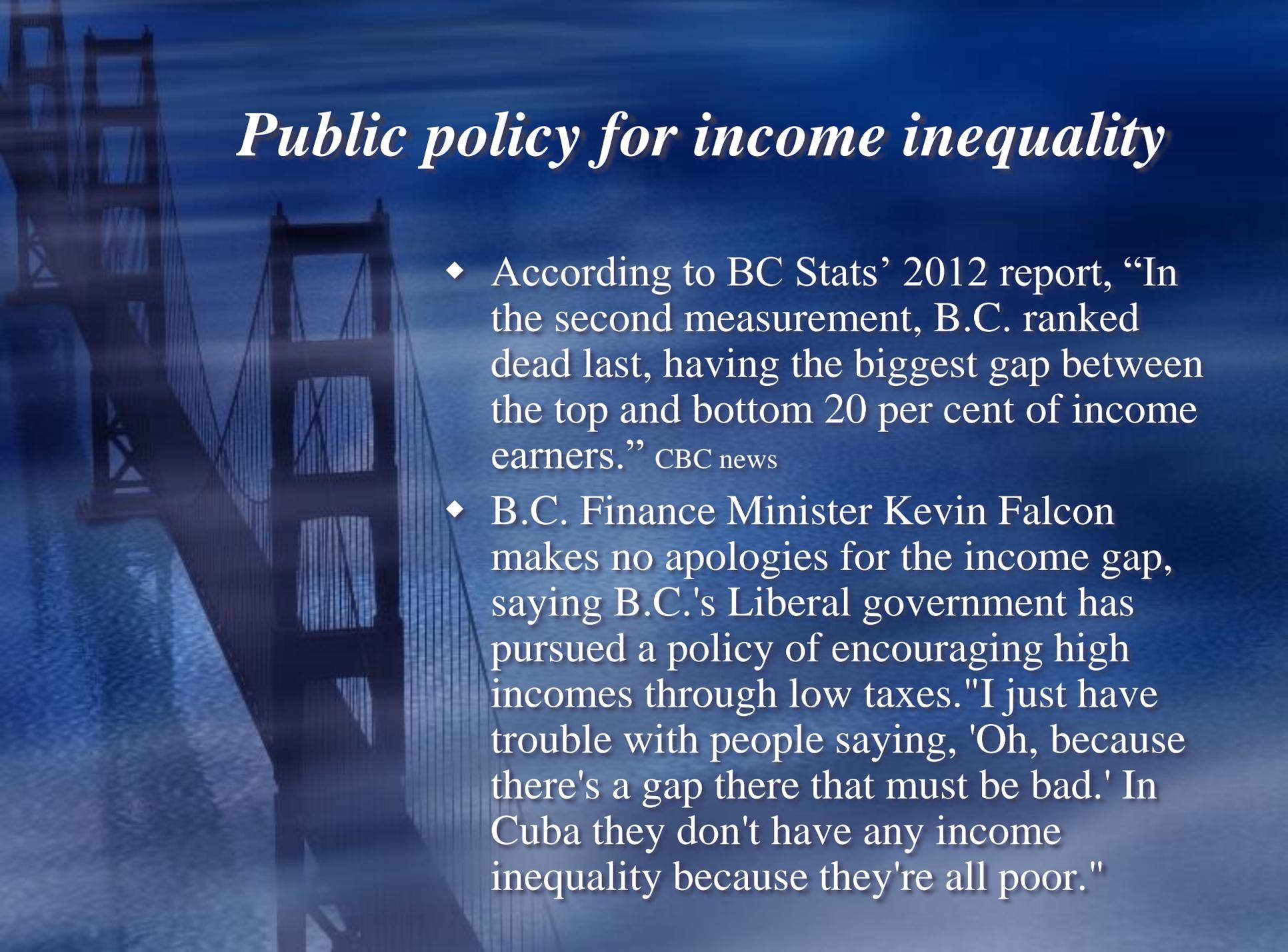


Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

(Total: 2,312,500)

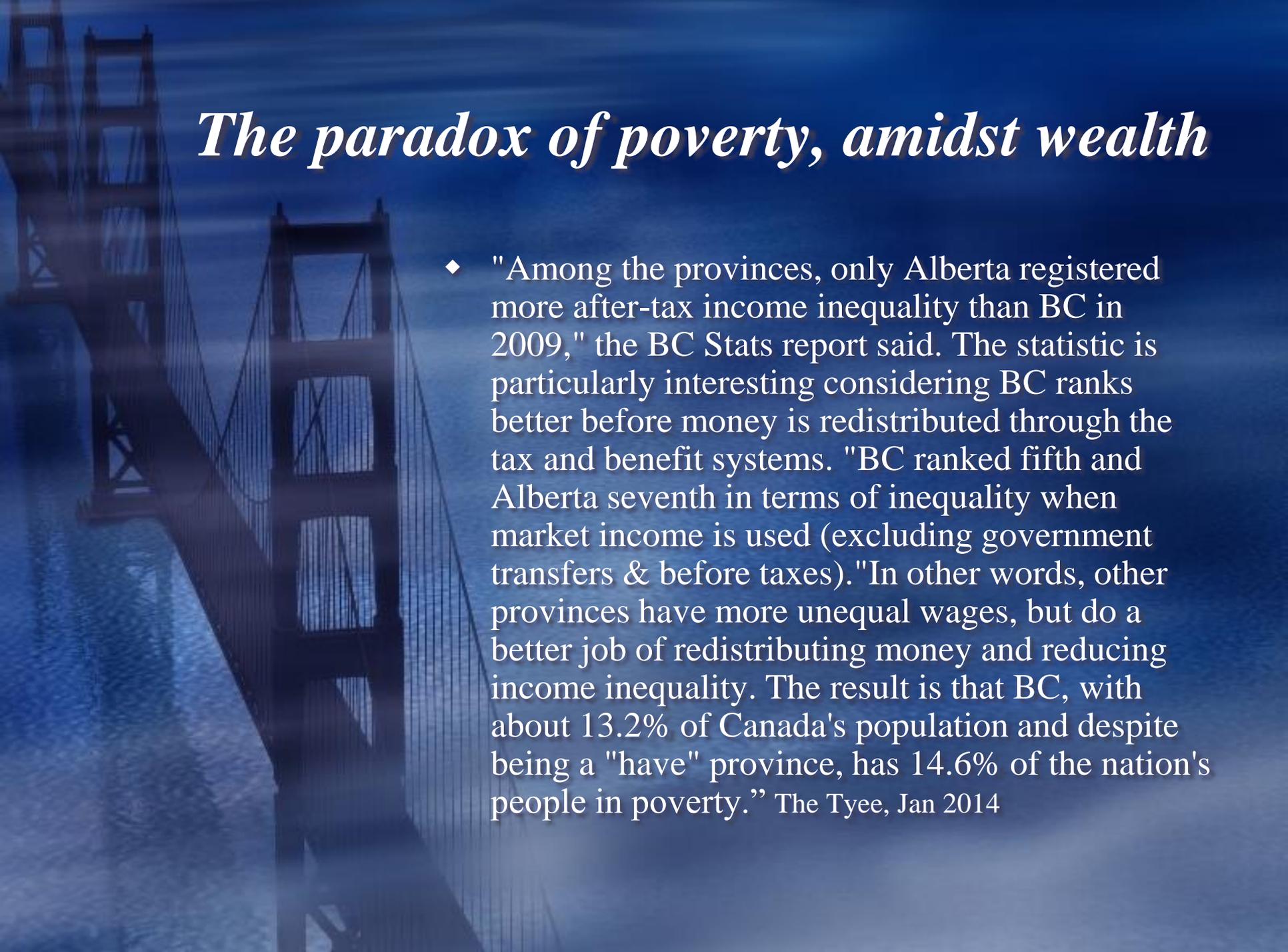
*Public sector share of GDP is 2.3% less than in 2000.*

*BC's public sector share of employment (18.3%) is well below Canada's average (21%)*

A dark, atmospheric photograph of the Golden Gate Bridge at night, with its towers and suspension cables silhouetted against a deep blue sky. The bridge spans across the water, and the overall mood is somber and contemplative.

# *Public policy for income inequality*

- ◆ According to BC Stats' 2012 report, "In the second measurement, B.C. ranked dead last, having the biggest gap between the top and bottom 20 per cent of income earners." *CBC news*
- ◆ B.C. Finance Minister Kevin Falcon makes no apologies for the income gap, saying B.C.'s Liberal government has pursued a policy of encouraging high incomes through low taxes. "I just have trouble with people saying, 'Oh, because there's a gap there that must be bad.' In Cuba they don't have any income inequality because they're all poor."

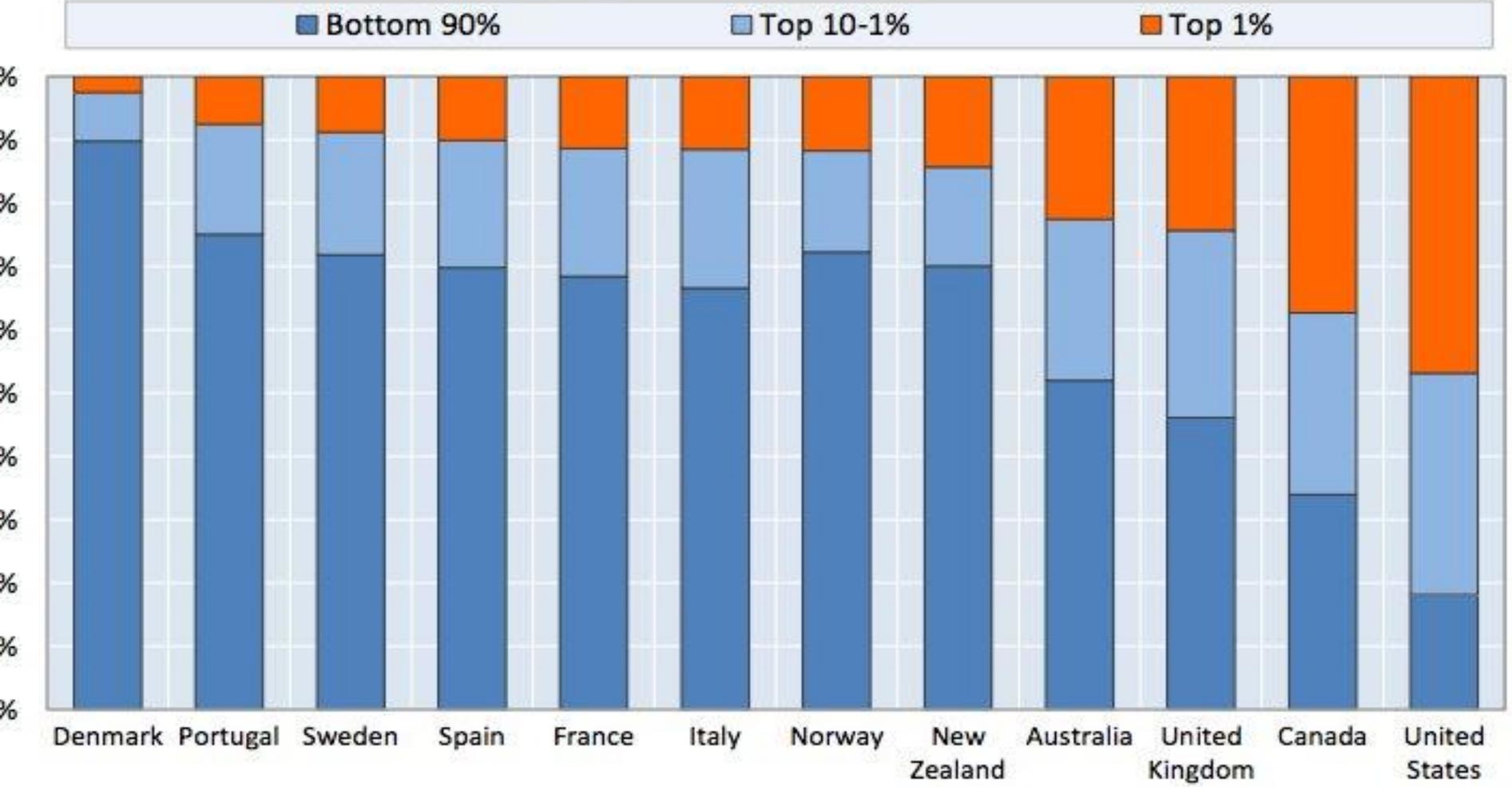


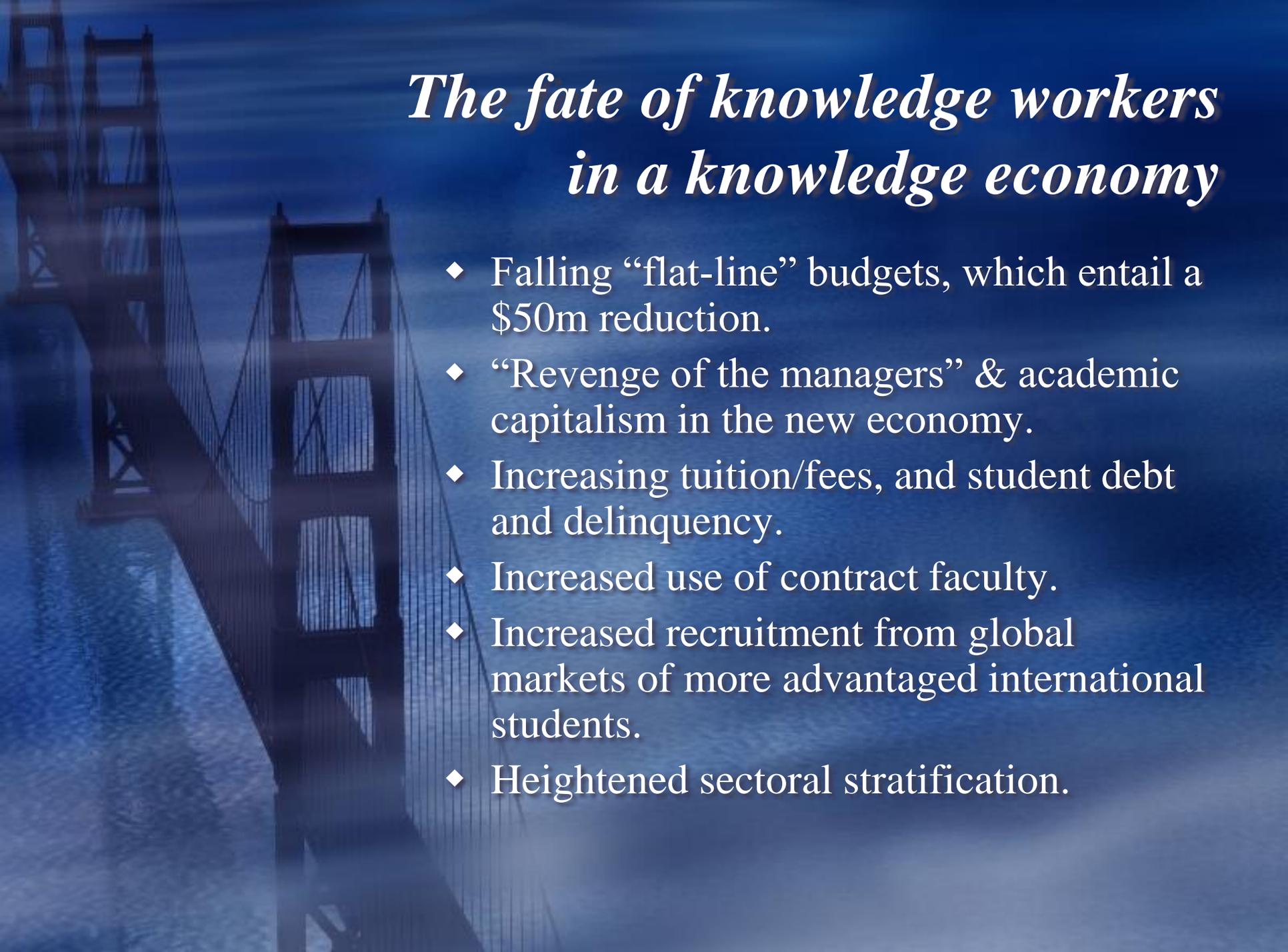
# *The paradox of poverty, amidst wealth*

- ◆ "Among the provinces, only Alberta registered more after-tax income inequality than BC in 2009," the BC Stats report said. The statistic is particularly interesting considering BC ranks better before money is redistributed through the tax and benefit systems. "BC ranked fifth and Alberta seventh in terms of inequality when market income is used (excluding government transfers & before taxes)." "In other words, other provinces have more unequal wages, but do a better job of redistributing money and reducing income inequality. The result is that BC, with about 13.2% of Canada's population and despite being a "have" province, has 14.6% of the nation's people in poverty." The Tyee, Jan 2014

# In some countries, one fifth or more of total income growth was captured by the top 1%

Share of income growth going to income groups from 1975 to 2007





# *The fate of knowledge workers in a knowledge economy*

- ◆ Falling “flat-line” budgets, which entail a \$50m reduction.
- ◆ “Revenge of the managers” & academic capitalism in the new economy.
- ◆ Increasing tuition/fees, and student debt and delinquency.
- ◆ Increased use of contract faculty.
- ◆ Increased recruitment from global markets of more advantaged international students.
- ◆ Heightened sectoral stratification.

# *A neo-liberal postsecondary ed policy*

*Student delinquent debt due to low paying jobs*

**T  
H  
E**

*Match skills we need w/ skills  
we are graduating*

*Skills for growth (2010)*

*Core review to  
ensure student  
seats are being  
filled*

**R  
I  
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QuickTime™ and a  
decompressor  
are needed to see this picture.

**S  
K  
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*Minimize  
overhead*

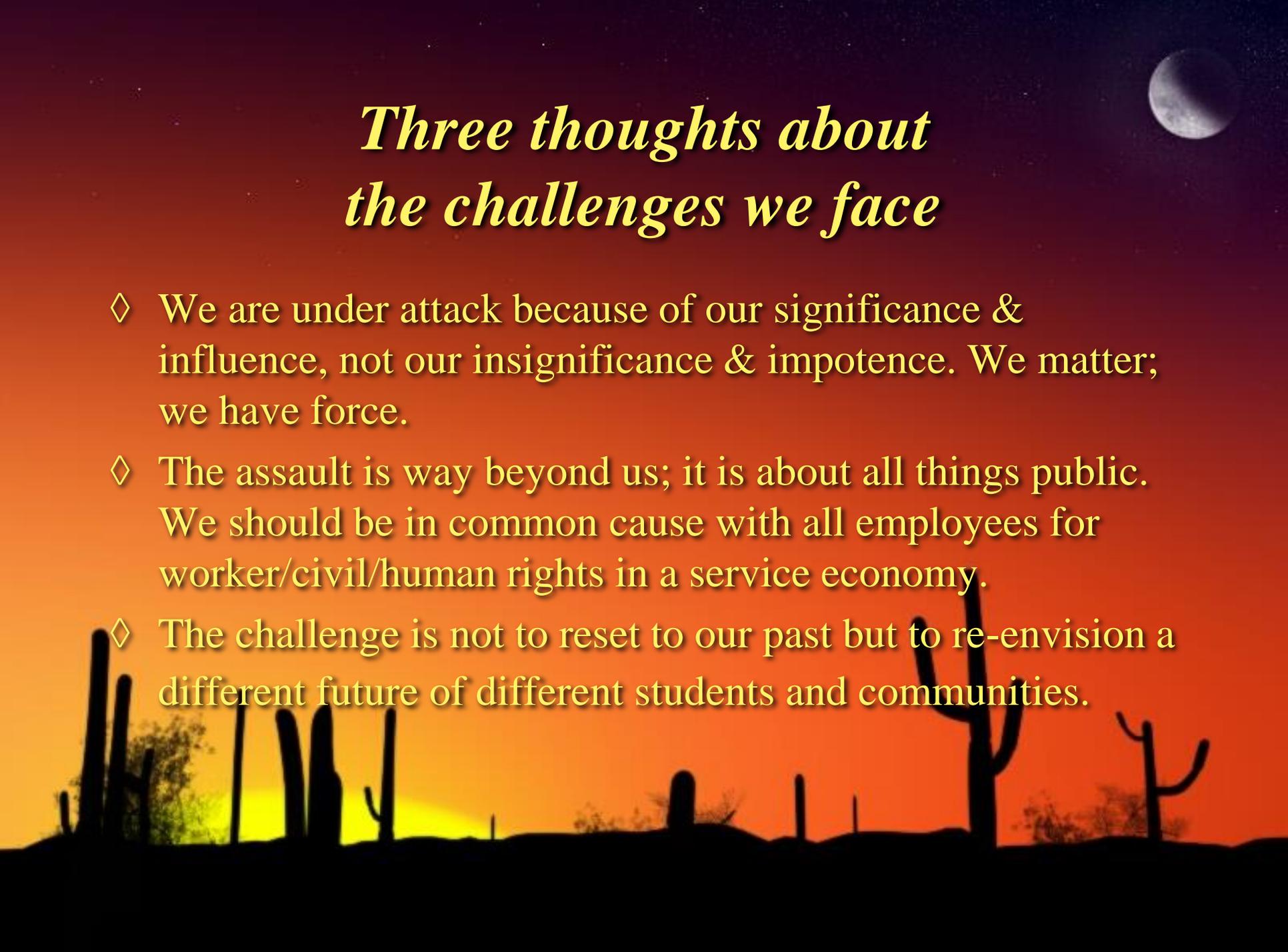
*Science & technology skills*

*Postsec ed aligned with B.C.'s economic needs (2014)*

*...at the right place...at the right time*

*Just in time  
aligned  
curriculum  
& staff  
are not,  
for students*

*Student debt*

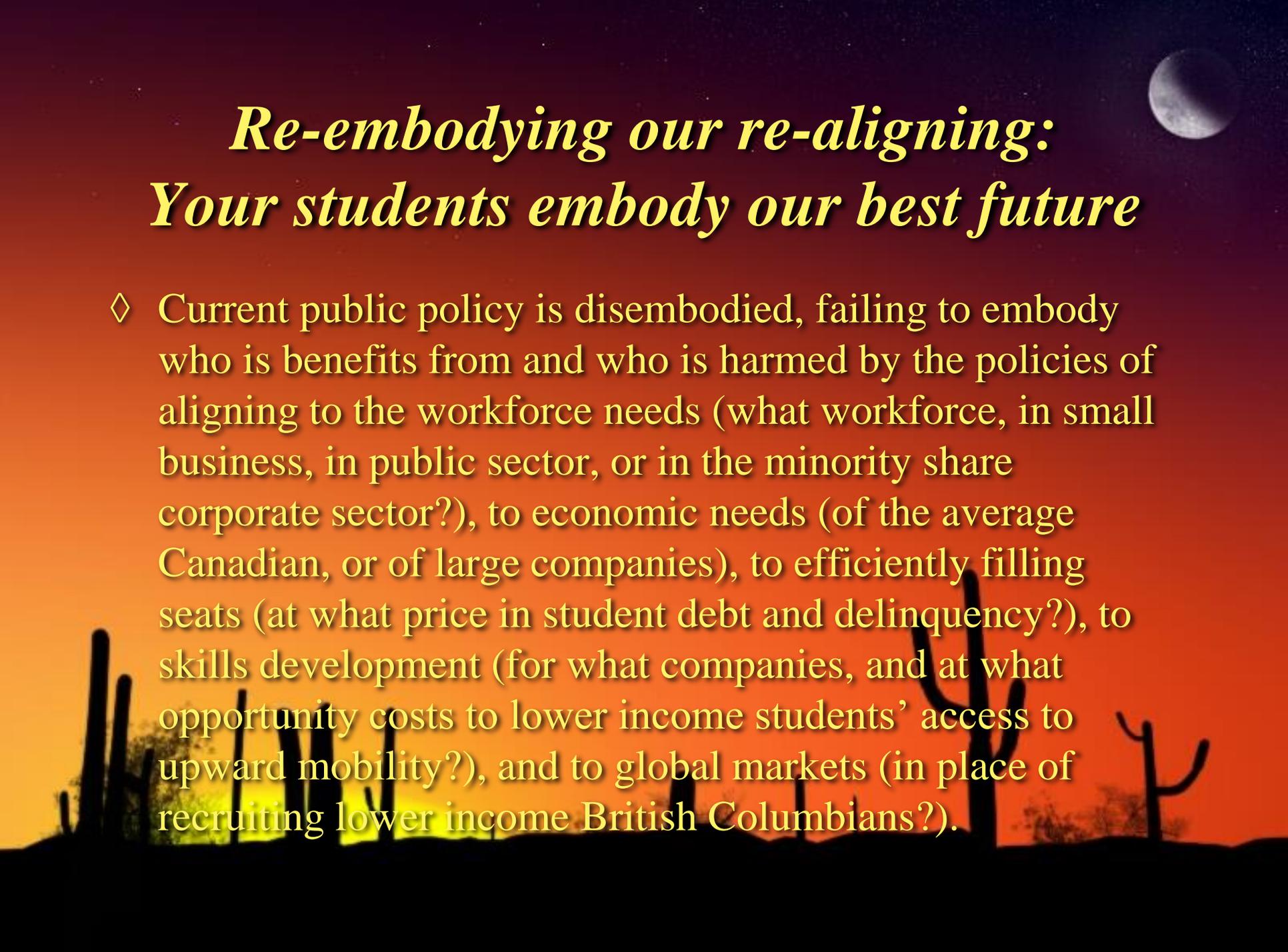


## *Three thoughts about the challenges we face*

- ◇ We are under attack because of our significance & influence, not our insignificance & impotence. We matter; we have force.
- ◇ The assault is way beyond us; it is about all things public. We should be in common cause with all employees for worker/civil/human rights in a service economy.
- ◇ The challenge is not to reset to our past but to re-envision a different future of different students and communities.

# *Creatively leveraging weaknesses into strengths*

- ◇ Amidst structures of employment that disperse and exploit contingent/contract faculty, turning that to our advantage: a changed consciousness and new organizing strategies-- SEIU's metro strategy. Strength in our place.
- ◇ In the face of well-resourced opponents & assaults, forming common cause and coalitions within and beyond higher ed. An inside/outside strategy. Strength in #s.
- ◇ In the face of changes in attending and delivering postsec ed, realigning our work to our students' and communities' lives and aspirations. Metro curricular cooperatives relevant to the locale. Strength in our creativity.



# *Re-embodiment our re-aligning: Your students embody our best future*

- ◇ Current public policy is disembodied, failing to embody who is benefits from and who is harmed by the policies of aligning to the workforce needs (what workforce, in small business, in public sector, or in the minority share corporate sector?), to economic needs (of the average Canadian, or of large companies), to efficiently filling seats (at what price in student debt and delinquency?), to skills development (for what companies, and at what opportunity costs to lower income students' access to upward mobility?), and to global markets (in place of recruiting lower income British Columbians?).



# *Bringing students & communities, and ourselves back in*

- ◇ We need to bring students, and communities, and our own identities and humanity, back in to our public policy debates, re-aligning those discussions with their & our lived experiences, needs, and aspirations, and forming common cause coalitions with them. That will be a step to creatively leveraging and negotiating a better future for BC

# *Bringing our identity & humanity back in*

*In neo-liberal policy  
we are totally absent,  
or are labor costs,  
or are third party,  
big (bad) labor*

QuickTime™ and a  
decompressor  
are needed to see this picture.

*But the neo-liberal  
surveys reveal that  
our students are  
VERY satisfied w/ us,  
at all levels.  
We are their teachers,  
the direct providers.  
We need to reclaim  
our identity publicly.*

*Approval ratings that politicians would kill for: 95% overall satis  
and over 80% for quality of teaching, at each level*



## *Economically central to communities, & markers of neo-lib wealth extraction*

- ◇ In rural and urban communities, colleges and univs are central to the economic (and cultural) life of the places in which they are situated. And we are the markers of neo-liberal wealth extraction from the public sector, clarifying that getting an education does not necessarily translate into jobs/security.
- ◇ Policies are extracting wealth from the many to give to the few, and OUR policy proposals need to feature that reality, our shared experience of that, and our alternatives to it for students and communities.



*Educationally, our working conditions  
are our students' learning conditions*

- ◇ Looking forward, negotiating contractual language that opens LEARNING possibilities for students' needs--e.g., in support/training for use of technol.
- ◇ Re-branding “streamlining” as unjust tracking and closing the doors on learning opportunities of growing numbers of students, including intl.
- ◇ Embodying the narrowing of faculty working conditions and freedoms as constraining the learning conditions and opportunities of students.



*Thank you...*

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