

Tories' Energy Plan Mostly Gets it Right

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The United States reduced carbon emissions, more than any other nation on earth between 2007 and 2017, thanks in part to the fossil-fuel-based shale revolution, and the fact that natural gas has come to replace coal in the generation of electrical power. In fact, America's CO₂ emission reductions were more than those achieved by Britain, Italy, Germany, France, Greece, Spain and Japan.

Germany, with the world's biggest renewable energy sector, struggled to reach its ambitious emissions targets during this period of time. That's because it burned coal to keep generating electricity when the wind doesn't blow and the sun doesn't shine. Renewables, as Germany illustrates, cannot do the job alone and the government is investing billions in natural gas pipelines and infrastructure to replace coal.

Such counter-intuitive facts are not acknowledged by environmentalists or by Canada's Green, NDP, or Liberal Parties, which are slavishly anti-fossil fuel and pro-renewables. But the inconvenient truth is that fossil fuels — notably natural gas — are critically important in helping transition the world to lower emissions by eliminating coal, the world's dominant source of energy.

The CO₂ output to generate electricity by burning natural gas is 50 per cent less than coal and lower than by burning diesel, heating oil, gasoline, or propane.

This is good news for Canada, which has more natural gas than many other countries.

Unfortunately, Canadian politicians don't understand how energy works, much less its importance to its resident's standard of living. The Greens would stop all new fossil fuel development, and would also shut down nuclear facilities in Ontario and New Brunswick. These goals would end up stranding the most important energy assets in the country as well as leaving Canadians in the dark and cold, without an economy.

The NDP believes that public transit, vehicle rebates, and housing retrofits would dramatically reduce emissions and create hundreds of thousands of new jobs lost in the auto and energy sectors. Wrong.

Then there are the ruling Liberals who cloak themselves in environmental morality. But consider the cynicism: Last week they declared a “climate change emergency” in parliament, then held a big press conference to announce their re-approval of a \$10-billion expansion of an existing oil pipeline they nationalized to the B.C. coast that won’t ever happen, especially once their Bill C-69 is rolled out this summer. This law — with its endless and goofy consultation requirements — will effectively end resource investment and development.

The Conservatives’ new energy plan has it mostly right because it accedes to the reality that the economy must be protected and that investing in fossil fuel infrastructure (namely liquefied natural gas (LNG) and gas pipelines) is consistent with creating a cleaner planet. And so is investing in green tech innovation.



Andrew Scheer, Leader of the Conservative Party of Canada, speaks about the idea of a national energy corridor in Calgary on Saturday, May 25, 2019. Azin Ghaffari/Postmedia Calgary

This means that the best course for Canada is to move our oil to the east by pipeline, export as much as possible, then reinvest those proceeds in building renewables and exporting LNG to Asia.

Tragically, Canada was on its way to doing just that, until the NDP and Greens declared war, notably against British Columbia’s gigantic LNG projects, driving all but one out.

The Conservatives’ energy plan is the only option: Build pipelines to exploit our assets, cut carbon taxes, develop LNG and green technology, fine big emitters and conserve through a “green homes tax credit.”

This fall, Canadians must vote for parties that realize the country's greatest competitive advantage is oil and natural gas, and that pipelines must be built to get landlocked assets to domestic and export markets in order to best transition to a cleaner world.

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