

Economic triage for Canada in the face of green agendas and net-zero

November 20, 2020 7:51 AM Maureen McCall 9 Comments

As the Canadian federal government proposed net-zero legislation this week in the House of Commons, issues around net-zero and the green agenda could mean big problems for consumers and significant disconnects for the Canadian economy.

This week, in a virtual panel discussion, MP Pierre Poilievre, Jack Mintz, Dan McTeague, and Catherine Swift discussed the UN World Economic Forum's "Great Reset", sustainable development goals, zero-emission goals, the clean fuel standard and attempts to exploit the pandemic to advance green agendas and what they mean for the Canadian economy.

Their discussion of the green agenda started with a discussion of the unprecedented UN WEF plans that economists are saying undertake a complete reorganization of our western market-based economies. The plan is laid out by the World Economic Forum in several different documents and both Justin Trudeau and Joe Biden express their support for these concepts. The plan is intended to remodel western economies and societies in exchange for a globalized socialized structure and the panelists agreed an international financial elite would be in charge of that structure with national sovereignty at risk. The UN 2030 targets a phase-out of economic sectors – fossil fuels and other resource industries-despite the fact that resource industries have greatly contributed to Canada's prosperity over the decades. In addition, the pandemic is being used to speed up progress on the agenda.

Panellist Catherine Swift, President, and CEO of Working Canadians pointed out that the UN 2030 agenda favors big government industries such as the "green sector" which require huge taxpayer subsidies – tax dollars funnelled to social entrepreneurs, non-governmental organizations, and other businesses that otherwise could not exist without government support. She observes they compete with private businesses and the growth of this business sector in Canada has been "explosive" in the last 20 years. In addition to consuming tax dollars, they operate in a partisan way in elections to help the politicians and political parties that perpetuate big government. She also commented on the consequences of the UN SDGs the sustainable development goals policies like carbon taxes and punitive measures toward the oil and gas sector that the current Canadian liberal government, some provincial governments, most major Canadian cities, and large corporations have signed on to. In her words, the effects would be:

"A lowered standard of living for average Canadians, less freedom, threats to things like private property ownership and the small business sector – things are bulwarks of the middle class in any

society, as well as a move away from the open market economic model that has succeeded so well to reduce poverty and create opportunity globally.”

Not surprisingly, a coalition of concerned manufacturers and businesses in Canada has established a lobby group called Canadians for a responsible recovery to try to voice their misgivings.

Panellist Dan McTeague turned the conversation to how governments have used the distraction of the pandemic to implement the UN agenda. Certainly in Canada, the suspension of parliament has been exploited. He stated,

“Canadians weren’t consulted about what this government is doing or plans to do, and the implications are on you. They are not just policies that you did not vote for, they are policies that are going to have dramatic impacts on your livelihood and your standard of living. So whether it is a ban on plastics or whether it is the imposition on the clean fuel standard, we’re looking at a government that is simply willing to throw consultation aside in favour of an agenda that is unknown, unheard of, and certainly untested.”

He went on to point out that where green agendas have been tested, they lead to extremely high cost distorting impacts and cited Ontario’s Green Energy Act which was so disastrous it ended up being scrapped. He questioned Ottawa’s willingness to stand behind the Paris accord- an accord that McTeague says uniquely punishes Canada for the good work. Even though Canada dropped CO2 emissions before 2005, he says it gets no credit for emissions reduction. Even if Canada were able to sell natural gas and greater forms of clean energy and ensure that supply is adequate and at affordable prices for the manufacturing sector, McTeague says it will still get no credit for being able to sell natural gas as a clean green alternative to India, China, and Indonesia deterring them from building coal plants. He thinks the Paris Accord is bad policy – it is not only bad internationally, but it’s also bad for Canada.

Panellist Pierre Poilievre asserted that the pandemic has led to an explosion in the size, scope, cost and power of government. Government spending as a share of GDP has risen to 55% – that is the combined spending of all three levels of government. That is higher than at any time in Canadian history with the possible exception of the Second World War. He says we are witnessing a massive explosion in the size and cost of government and says it is not exactly clear who’s benefiting from it. Poilievre says the deficit is now 380 billion dollars which he says will fall on the shoulders of 38 million Canadians equaling \$10,000 for every man woman and child or \$40,000 in new debt for the average family of four. He adds that he doesn’t know any family that has received \$40,000 in government pandemic response benefits like CERB etc. He questions the 380 billion dollar deficit saying,

“Where is all of this money going? The answer is it is being vaporized by the ecosystem of entities that have latched themselves onto this government in Ottawa. There has been a boom in two sectors

in the Canadian economy -government- which has grown exponentially and lobbyists. The amount of registered lobbyists has exploded in this regime because businesses understand that now you can get a return on investment by investing in political influence rather than by investing in machines, knowledge, and technology. Now you invest in purchasing political interest by renting influential people who can convert their influence into money for your business. Where in the free market system you get ahead by having the best product, in state-controlled economies you get rich by having the best lobbyists.”

Poilievre asserts that when the government has control over “ who gets what “ then businesses invest in getting a larger share from the government at the expense of everyone else. He says the WE scandal was just a small glimpse into the feeding frenzy on Parliament Hill, as businesses look to secure grants leading to the most expensive combined cost of government at any time in Canadian history. He is dismayed that 45% of the Canadian economy is the free market and 55% is governmentally controlled. He also noted that the government is now talking about permanent expansions – taking over daycare, drug plans, and senior’s homes. He asserts that since this government has lost track of the cost and the project description of 20,000 infrastructure projects and can’t properly pay its employees... do you really want them running your daycare, your drug plan, and your senior’s home? He also commented on a report from the World Economic Forum that is pushing forward the idea of a great reset. The report says they want “the great lockdown generation” to be transformed into “the great reset generation” and it states “certain restrictions, especially electronic surveillance, could be maintained beyond the pandemic”. It also asks “ How can the declaration of victory over the virus be timed correctly and the opportunity to build back better be seized?” Poilievre noted that the WEF is callously timing victory over the virus to achieve some political objective rather than humanely trying to end the pandemic as soon as possible.

Jack Mintz, Fellow of the School of Public Policy at the University of Calgary also criticized the Federal Government for its intentions to fund child care, pharmacare, and the NDP of proposed dental care – elements of what Mintz says is “rebuilding the social contract” and asserts “it will cost billions of dollars to do.” Decarbonization is also on the “social contract list” and Mintz notes proponents are insisting that we must move faster and quicker on decarbonization now. He identifies that the problem in Canada, even before Covid hit, was that is our investment climate has been very poor, pointing out that in Canada, we are now investing less in every industry except for residential real estate. He says it’s not just oil and gas but also trade, manufacturing, the service sector, and more. Canadian productivity has been flat as the amount of output we produce for every working hour has not increased since 2014. Mintz points out that simply, “you can’t pay for anything if we’re going to have low productivity in this country”.

Mintz has a bone to pick with the clean fuel standard being a misnomer because we’ve already achieved clean fuel standards in this country in terms of tailpipe emissions. He’d prefer it be called the carbon reduction program but says it amounts to taxation and it is not just applied to end-users

as we see currently with diesel, gasoline, natural gas, or propane. He notes it's also extending, beyond liquid fuels like gasoline into solid fuels like coal and gaseous fuels like natural gas. It is also applied at every stage of development of a particular hydrocarbon so from extraction to distribution to transportation to production and then finally end-use, so it is a cascading tax that is applied and ultimately paid for by consumers. Mintz says,

"It is really a second carbon tax. It is a stealth tax. No other country in the world has ever dared undertake it. I think the federal government is going to put this into legislation. If the legislation is passed it's going to make it law as early as next week along with plans to introduce legislation on net-zero so all this really means big problems for consumers but it also means significant disconnects for our country."

It is evident to Mintz that the federal government did not provide adequate, accurate, or informed reasons and data to support its assumptions about the clean fuel standard concept. He is not a fan of net-zero either, saying that Canada has a federal government that likes to identify a target but it does zero research on the economic impacts of that target. He says Canada has to think of a plan that lays out all the costs to evaluate whether the target is reasonable and achievable. Mintz says unfortunately we aren't doing that.

"We basically have a government that's committed to moving in a certain direction even faster than most other countries around the world. Canada working on its own won't solve the problem. It has to have all the other countries working as well. As we know China which is a major emitter in the world - responsible for almost a third of all emissions- is still building coal plants. It's not planning to start reducing emissions for another decade at least. If you look at emissions around the world since 2010, the countries outside of the advanced countries have let their admissions go up by 22% over the past decade so if people are going to address this problem, Canada has to be harmonized with the rest of the world and not be trying to move ahead of the rest."

Maureen McCall is an energy professional who writes on issues affecting the energy industry.

9 Comments

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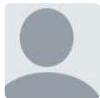
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Name

Maureen Matthew • a month ago

On my last Sask Energy bill I'm paying 30.7% for the carbon tax, GST and various municipal taxes/surcharges; for my SaskPower bill, the rate is 18.1%. Just wait until the various 'wealth' taxes kick in with the magnificent reset.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›

Ba Ha · a month ago

Maureen - you are using Trudeau math - @\$10,000 debt - that would be 38 million Canadians (not tax-payers). If you want answers - ask gerald butts and his "comrades".

^ | v · Reply · Share ›

millerkv · a month ago

This all looks very bad for Canada's future. Every new law and directive seems to increase government power and burden the taxpayers. I sure hope the West can separate before the country is devastated beyond the point of no return.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›

Rhett Namtrab · a month ago

Finally they are starting to deliver the message of the real problem. Freedom, or lack of it. I had been asking what the real consequences of government spending is as many in our population were not understanding. Yes, we keep saying our taxes will go up, but who cares if you are getting what you want. That doesn't have meaning and no impact. But start taking your freedom away and deliver the message and consequences around that and you might start getting some attention.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›

Chris Hamilton · a month ago · edited

I just wrote a post on LinkedIn that show that given the current growth in renewable energy in Canada, we will be at a shortfall in energy of nearly 92% by 2050. This will absolutely kill our economy.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›

old timer · a month ago

If this is real summary of Liberal caucus meeting, it spells out implementation of the Great Reset over next 12 months:

<https://parler.com/post/16b...>

It will be the end of a free market economy.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›

Ross · a month ago

Can see now why everyone is stocking up on ar-ammo in the US. History is repeating itself, it was only about hundred years ago that millions lost their lives because of ideological idiots.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›

Matt · a month ago

Press re-set. Lets see what happens.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›

Ross → Matt • a month ago

Do you want the Blue pill or the Red pill ?

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