

National Affairs by Claire Hoy ? Carbon tax a giant con

In addition to devoting over half of its entire Focus section for a loving article on just how terrific Sophie Gregoire Trudeau is ? apparently aimed at those who have missed several previous promos about her ? Saturday's Globe and Mail gave over the entire editorial page (minus a cartoon on the Blue Jays) to the equally wonderful notion from Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to impose a carbon tax on all Canadians, whether they want it or not.

Those neanderthals out there who do not think that a) ? a carbon tax is not a tax; and b) ? it won't do a bit of good to save the planet, are dismissed as ?climate-change deniers,? an offensive example of using a moral equivalency as if questioning the politicized ?science? of climate is in the same category as those bigots who defiantly deny the Holocaust.

The Globe really should know better than to use such unsavory terminology to defame those who disagree with it, but one supposes they have become so enamoured of all things Trudeau that it likely didn't occur to them just how hurtful their words can be to a lot of upstanding and well-informed Canadians.

They even buy into the twisted logic of Trudeau and his accolades in politics, the media, academia and environmental circles, that a carbon tax is really not a tax at all. That's because, we're told, it is to be ?revenue neutral.? We've heard that song before.

But here's how the Globe explains why this particular tax is not a tax (they call it a ?levy,? as if there's a difference to those paying it, i.e. you).

?Yes, any extra tax, no matter how small, is deplorable if the levy is unnecessary, or the money wasted. But in the case of the carbon levy, every cent raised remains within the province. Each province can design its own system and use the money however it likes.

Not one red cent has to go to Ottawa.?

So what? Lots of taxes go to Queen's Park or City Hall, but they're still a tax. It's incredible to me that people use this old canard that because it's going to another level it's not you at this level who pays, it's those others who pay. Well they're the same people.

Provincial taxpayers are also federal taxpayers and municipal taxpayers, for heaven's sake.

In any event, let us look at the argument about a ?levy? being a good thing as long as it is necessary and not wasted.

The fact is, a carbon tax is a giant con, particularly at Trudeau's rate of \$10 a tonne starting in 2018, rising to \$50 in 2022, or from two cents per litre of gas to 11 cents a litre on top of the enormous federal and provincial taxes you already pay for gas.

It has been pointed out before, here and elsewhere, that Canada is such a minor player in the world of carbon emissions, that even if we completely shut our country down it wouldn't amount to a bleep in total carbon going into the atmosphere from human use.

The Liberals have adopted the Paris climate accord targets of reducing carbon emissions to about 30 per cent of what they were in 2005 (and what they remain at the moment) by 2030, a ?target? they adopted from former prime minister Stephen Harper after having spent years ridiculing Harper because his ?target? was too low to have any real impact. In any other field outside politics, that would be dismissed as hypocrisy. But there you have it.

In any event, even if you still pretend that Canada can have a real impact (while the big polluters in China, the U.S. and India continue to do nothing to reduce their mammoth carbon footprints) adding a few cents to gasoline, while raising lots of money for overspending provincial premiers to waste, is demonstrably ineffective in cutting back on gasoline usage.

How can we know this? Well, consider the fact that between 2000 and 2016, the price of gasoline in Canada virtually doubled but the demand for gasoline kept right on rising despite this. Yes, there are more cars and other vehicles now. But countless studies have shown people keep driving their cars even when prices go up.

Why? Because they need them to go to work, to school, shopping, delivering goods, heading out to the first tee at your local golf club and any number of reasons why people continue to drive.

That's not going to change. And a carbon tax is simply another in a long series of government money grabs; only this time it's cloaked in a phony moral story about saving the planet.

Please.

