

Foolish leaders and LNG

Posted by Joan Russow

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I cannot help but reflect this morning on what foolish leaders we have at the head of Canada and BC. They are so happy and excited to announce a \$40 billion LNG facility that will increase Greenhouse gases by 9 million megatonnes per year in BC per year and that includes the GHG from fracking.

If anyone thought Trudeau and Horgan were visionary leaders that would bring positive change to Canada they are sorely mistaken. These two like others are driven by capitalism, the need for money and jobs at the top of their agenda and not pursuing a world where our grandchildren and great grandchildren will be able to survive increased temperatures, forest fires, flooding and other natural disasters caused by climate change and global warming. Instead of taking direct action on climate, Horgan tells people that forest fires are the new normal? Excuse me? It is easier to say that when it is not your forests, homes and businesses that are burning down. He should be stating what actions he and his government will take immediately to prevent forest fires next year.

I was appointed to BC Climate Solutions and Clean Growth Advisory Council that was announced shortly after the election of the BC NDP government. I was excited to work with a group of like minded individuals that would work on solutions to climate Change and make strong recommendations to government to actually make effective changes to slow down or stop climate change.

But then in December 2017 the BC government announced they would proceed with the Site C dam that would create more GHG. I was devastated that a government I thought would kill the dam decided to proceed with it. I told the Minister I wasn't sure I could remain on the advisory council in light of this decision. Could I work with a government that had these kinds of values? I took a couple of months to think on this and couldn't bring myself to attend these meetings any more.

Then early in the new year they announced they were in favor of LNG and promoting it. I knew then that I had to step off this council. How could I put considerable time, energy and expertise in a group that was trying to achieve solutions when the government was working against us to increase GHG.

I know this was the right decision for me. I can put my efforts into things that can make a

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difference.

Now I watch the BC government seemingly hesitate over whether they should back out of the equivalency agreement on the TransMountain Pipeline when they say they are opposed to it. If they were serious about BC's interest, that decision would have been made months ago and not just be considered now because of the TseilWaututh court case at the court of appeal.

I wonder what kind of world our children, grandchildren and generations to come will live in? Will they live in constant air conditioning because it is too hot to be outside? Will there be enough food to go around as our ocean warming will have killed off our fish? Or our forests have burned down and there is no wildlife to rely on for meat? Will there be special housing for flooded areas?

First Nations people are the most vulnerable and are greatly at risk for the impacts of global warming. Rising water levels and temperatures, flooding, location of communities in remote areas, and lack of commitment from the federal and provincial governments on funding for fighting fires, natural disasters relief during and after.

We saw many instances this summer where First Nations territories were ravaged by fires and had one helicopter trying to put out a fire. Areas that could be quickly contained so as not to wreak so much damage burned longer than they should have. Yes, I understand the lack of available resources, but should BC not be prepared to fight all these fires? They did not follow all the recommendations from the Abbot-Chapman report so they should have known conditions would be worse this year.

Trudeau and Horgan look at the jobs for people. But if these people have no homes because they have been destroyed by fire or flooding What good does a job do? Or if they have a life that has little quality to it?

Rebuilding our world will take lots of money, time and in some cases, relocation if that is possible. That is one option if we don't act now.

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The other option is to make wise decisions that don't require building businesses that create and increase GHG. Sustainability has to be more than a buzz word.

These two governments, the federal and provincial governments talk about reconciliation with First Nations people. Their actions and decisions don't come close to understanding what reconciliation is. Similarly they say they are implementing The Universal Declaration of indigenous rights that ensure indigenous peoples territories and lands are not developed without their free prior and informed consent. Their actions say they don't want reconciliation. They want what will get them re-elected-or so they think.

Just when you think your opinion of Prime Minister Trudeau and Premier can't go any lower, your opinion sinks to greater depths.

We as a people need to be more vocal and pro active and fight for a world that future generations can live in. We don't want to be responsible for actions that cause hardship and heart ache to them. Trudeau and Horgan will wear this decision and its effects but it is all of us who will have to live with it. These leaders may be fools but if we don't call them on it, we are allowing the foolishness. The time to act was yesterday and time is running out.

Kekinusuqs Judith Sayers