

OPINION & EDITORIALS



The CENTRAL NEWSPAPER

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Net Zero Is Collapsing Why Is Canada Still Clinging to It?

By Gwyn Morgan

After decades spent pursuing net-zero dreams at great cost to their economies, many of the world's industrialized nations are waking up. War, geopolitical instability and the threat of disrupted oil and natural gas supplies have refocused attention on energy security. More and more governments are adjusting accordingly.

Canada's Liberal government, however, is among those that is not. As the climate change policy responses of countries increasingly diverge, it is worth reviewing how we even got here.

What began nearly half a century ago as a primarily scientific concern soon evolved into a sweeping political project. At the 1979 World Climate Conference, delegates called on governments to "foresee and prevent man-made changes to the climate that might be adverse to the well-being of humanity." By the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio, that caution had hardened into a global mandate to combat "dangerous human interference with the climate system." The chief villain behind this alleged interference? The oil and natural gas industry.

From Rio, the movement accelerated. The 1997 Kyoto Protocol and subsequent agreements imposed emissions targets primarily on Western economies. Meanwhile, many of the world's largest emitters — including China and India — continued expanding their energy use, and the associated greenhouse gas emissions, without comparable constraints. The result was a fundamental imbalance: countries like Canada accepted economic sacrifice for negligible global effect.

For years, governments could sustain this contradiction. They imposed carbon taxes, subsidized wind and solar energy, and promised that technological innovation would reconcile environmental ambition with economic growth. That illusion is now breaking down. Recent events have exposed the fragility of the global energy system. Conflict in the Middle East and threats to critical shipping routes have sent oil prices soaring above US\$100 per barrel. Countries that once championed rapid decarbonization are now demanding that supply lines be restored and fossil fuel flows maintained. The same governments that pledged to eliminate crude oil and natural gas (along with dirty coal) are now scrambling to secure more of it.

Even some of the climate change movement's most committed voices are retreating. As prominent climate journalist Lucy Biggers was forced to admit: "Solar and wind production just aren't as energy-dense or reliable as oil and gas." Despite trillions of dollars spent on renewables, Biggers noted, fossil fuels still furnish 86 percent of the world's primary energy.

That is the reality policymakers in net-zero-obsessed countries like Canada have tried to ignore.

Energy forms are not readily interchangeable. Modern economies depend on sources that are reliable, scalable and energy-dense. Wind and solar, while useful supplements, cannot yet replace oil and natural gas at the scale required. Attempts to force that transition prematurely have led to rising costs, supply instability and, increasingly, public backlash.

The consequences are visible everywhere. Even in places once held up as models of green transition, governments are quietly reversing course. The recent collapse of energy supply in Cuba — where electricity shortages have become widespread — offers a stark illustration of what happens when energy systems fail to meet basic demand. Net zero, when it actually arrives, is a lot less pleasant than promised.

Yet Canada continues to pursue policies that ignore these realities.

The federal government may have removed the consumer carbon tax, but this was largely cosmetic. The industrial carbon tax remains, hidden from public view — and is scheduled to rise to \$170 per tonne of CO2-equivalent emissions within a few years. These costs do not disappear; they are passed through the economy in the form of higher prices for goods, services and energy.

At the same time, Canada's share of global emissions remains small at a mere 1.6 percent. Even drastic domestic reductions will have no measurable impact on global climate outcomes. What they will do is weaken Canada's economy.

This is not theoretical. Years of restrictive policy have already contributed to declining capital investment in all critical sectors of the economy, with mounting pressures on productivity, unemployment and affordability. For an energy-producing and -exporting nation, the consequences are particularly severe.

Meanwhile, the rest of the world is moving on. The shift is practical. Governments are recognizing that energy security, economic growth and human welfare cannot be subordinated indefinitely to emissions targets that are neither globally coordinated nor technologically feasible.

Canada under Prime Minister Mark Carney has yet to make that adjustment.

Instead, his Liberal Cabinet remains committed to a net-zero framework that is increasingly detached from global conditions. Industrial carbon taxes continue to rise. Public funds are directed toward energy sources that cannot deliver consistent reliability. And the assumption persists that domestic sacrifice will meaningfully influence global emissions. It will not.

Canada's energy policy must begin with a basic fact: the world still runs on crude oil and natural gas. Until alternatives can match their scale and reliability, attempts to force a rapid transition will impose ruinous costs without delivering real results.

The global retreat from net zero is already underway. The only question is how long Canada will wait before acknowledging it.

Letters To The Editor:

WHAT IS ON YOUR MIND? Send letters to newspaper@ocentral.com

Dear Editor:

While our provincial debt and deficit spending have reached record highs under the PCs, they saw fit to throw another \$29 million taxpayer dollars away on a private jet for Doug Ford. They only backtracked and announced they would sell the luxury aircraft after they were criticized by the political Left.

This is a recurring theme with the Ontario PCs. They are uninterested in grassroots conservatives' concerns, and only react once left-wing critics start talking.

After announcing that the jet would be sold this week, Doug Ford lamented that he is "under scrutiny more than the prime minister, more than any premier in the entire country."

Pathetic. The Ford PCs abandoned the conservative principles they once campaigned on. The obvious first step to avoid plunging Ontario further into debt is saying "no" to new, unnecessary spending.

Belinda Karahalios

Dear Editor:

I am writing to formally file a complaint and demand immediate action following a violent and life-threatening incident involving my Grade 12 son at Eastdale Collegiate and Vocational Institute in Oshawa. On April 16th, my son was robbed at gunpoint by another student while on school property during school hours. His personal belongings were stolen, and he was threatened with his life. This is not a minor disciplinary issue—it is a criminal matter that has caused significant trauma and ongoing fear for his safety. His phone and AirPods were stolen, and he was threatened with his life. This occurred during the school day. No parent should ever receive a call like the one we received. Also, how would other parents feel knowing this and not being informed???

We attended the school immediately and met with the administration, along with the police. During our time in the acting Vice Principal's office, there were multiple radio calls for assistance regarding student behaviour, including a teacher requesting help with a disrespectful student. This points to a much broader issue of lack of control, supervision, and discipline within the school. It is evident that the current conditions at Eastdale CVI present a serious and unacceptable risk to student and staff safety. The apparent lack of enforcement around identity concealment (including masks and face coverings), the ability for students to carry bags without meaningful oversight, and the general breakdown of discipline and accountability are deeply concerning.

ALL students involved, whether they were direct or indirect need to be removed from the school. This includes where we found S. W who robbed my son at school, threatening to kill on and off school property. and my son's AirPods (Cell phone never was recovered), he is in grade 10 at Eastdale. THIS is not okay!!!! Not even in district, and attending a different out of area school. My son is now fearful of returning to school. As a graduating student, he should not have to choose between his safety and completing his education. Compounding this issue is the fact that the individual responsible resides in close proximity to our home, creating ongoing safety concerns beyond school grounds. Samson lives at 454 Okanagan Path. How dangerous are we allowing this to continue? This same family attempted robbery, and a police file was made 2 years ago because of Samson and his brother Vincent. The same family were the cause of the house fire within that same neighbourhood. Same family that you keep allowing to ruin your streets, society, etc.... please stop! While that incident alone is deeply concerning, what is even more troubling is the broader context in which it occurred. It has become apparent that the individual responsible is not unknown to authorities. This raises serious questions about how known risks are being managed within both the school system and the broader youth justice framework.

I want to be clear: this is no longer about a single incident. This is about a pattern of behaviour that appears to be escalating and the apparent inability of current systems to effectively intervene before serious harm occurs. The current approach is failing to protect students.

The Youth Criminal Justice Act is intended to balance rehabilitation with public safety. However, when individuals who are known to pose a risk are able to continue attending school without sufficient safeguards in place, that balance is not being achieved in practice.

My son, along with other students and staff, should not be placed in an environment where they are exposed to foreseeable harm. The duty of care owed by the school and the Board extends to taking reasonable steps to mitigate known risks—not simply reacting after incidents occur.

Given the seriousness of this incident, I expect the following:

Immediate confirmation of what actions have been taken in coordination with law enforcement.

A documented safety plan specific to my son, including safe access to and from school and protection while on school property. Clear communication regarding disciplinary measures and enforcement policies currently in place.

Immediate implementation of enhanced safety and supervision measures within the school.

Access to appropriate supports for my son, including academic accommodations if required to ensure he can graduate safely.


Please be advised that this email is being shared with elected officials and relevant oversight bodies, including municipal leadership and victim support services. I am also exploring all available avenues to ensure accountability, including formal complaints and potential legal action if necessary. The current situation reflects a failure to provide a safe educational environment, which is a fundamental obligation. I expect a prompt and substantive response outlining concrete steps being taken to address this matter. Chantel P. OSHAWA

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