

After the Sands, “Alberta and Big Oil are on the Wrong Side of History”

A Talk by Gordon Laxer. Global Research News Hour 2017 Summer Series 1

By [Michael Welch](#) and [Gordon Laxer](#)

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“Alberta and Big Oil are on the wrong side of history. They are betting that the age of carbon fuels will continue for decades. That is unlikely. Alberta must now join the international transition to a low carbon future, or be left behind in a fossil fuel backwater of abandoned oil wells and tar ponds that resemble US rust belt states and coal states.”
- Gordon Laxer (June 2016)

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Discourse around Canada’s fossil fuel energy reserves typically centres around the environmental hazards associated with such projects, specifically, climate impacts and the hazards associated with pipeline spills and breakages.

Less common is a conversation about the ramifications of continued reliance on such resources from the standpoint of political economy.

Gordon Laxer has made the point that Canada, a supposed ‘energy super-power’ continues to import a third of its oil, that it has no strategic energy reserves in case of shortage, and that big-moneyed interests and corporate trade deals like NAFTA favour satisfying the US market over what makes sense for a cold northern country.

On this special summer edition of the Global Research News Hour, we explore how Canada can not only satisfy its commitments under the Paris Accord and other international climate agreements, but also secure its own energy security without long term costs to the Canadian economy as the world makes the inevitable transition away from carbon-based fossil fuels.

This week’s show consists of a single speech he gave at Winnipeg’s downtown Millenium Library on June 1, 2016.

Gordon Laxer is a Political Economist and professor Emeritus at the University of Alberta. He is the founding Director and former head of the university’s [Parkland Institute](#), a non-corporate research institute that does public policy research to serve the public interest . He is the author of several books, including [Open for Business: The Roots of Foreign Ownership in Canada \(Oxford Univ Press 1989\)](#) as well as [After the Sands. Energy and Ecological Security for Canadians \(Douglas & McIntyre 2015\)](#). His Winnipeg talk was sponsored by the [Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives Manitoba Office](#).

NAFTA Renegotiation

For the first time in nearly a quarter of a century, the terms of the North American Free trade Agreement (NAFTA) will be subject to renegotiation with Canada's partners, the United States and Mexico. The Canadian government is soliciting advise on what the public would like to see in a renegotiated NAFTA.

Gordon Laxer's main beef with the NAFTA, as explained in his speech, is the energy proportionality clause which compels Canada to continue exporting its resources to the US, even in times of shortages. (Neither the US nor Mexico agreed to such a constraint on their energy security!)

If listeners/readers wish to offer their feedback, they can fill out the on-line form at this link...

<http://www.international.gc.ca/trade-commerce/consultations/nafta-alena/form-formulaire.aspx?lang=eng>

The deadline for Canadians citizens to offer their written feedback is July 18th 2017.

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The [Global Research News Hour](#) airs every Friday at 1pm CT on [CKUW 95.9FM](#) in Winnipeg. The programme is also podcast at [globalresearch.ca](#) . The show can be heard on the Progressive Radio Network at [prn.fm](#). Listen in everyThursday at 6pm ET.

Community Radio Stations carrying the Global Research News Hour:

[CHLY 101.7fm](#) in Nanaimo, B.C - Thursdays at 1pm PT

Boston College Radio [WZBC 90.3FM NEWTONS](#) during the Truth and Justice Radio Programming slot - Sundays at 7am ET.

[Port Perry Radio](#) in Port Perry, Ontario -1 Thursdays at 1pm ET

[Burnaby Radio Station CJSF out of Simon Fraser University](#). 90.1FM to most of Greater Vancouver, from Langley to Point Grey and from the North Shore to the US Border.

It is also available on 93.9 FM cable in the communities of SFU, Burnaby, New Westminister, Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody, Surrey and Delta, in British Columbia, Canada. - Tune in at its new time - Wednesdays at 4pm PT.

Radio station [CFUV 101.9FM](#) based at the University of Victoria airs the Global Research News Hour every Sunday from 7 to 8am PT.

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[Cowichan Valley Community Radio CICV 98.7 FM](#) serving the Cowichan Lake area of Vancouver Island, BC airs the program Thursdays at 6am pacific time.

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Caper Radio CJBU 107.3FM in Sydney, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia airs the Global Research News Hour starting Wednesday Morning from 8:00 to 9:00am. Find more details at www.caperradio.ca

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