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## **Recycling nuclear waste fuel is better option to meet greenhouse targets over burdening Canadians with a carbon tax, Hon. Deepak Obhrai tells Parliament during debate calling the government to cancel plans for new taxes**

### **Hon. Deepak Obhrai (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC):**

Madam Speaker, it is again a pleasure to rise and speak to this subject, which is now being spoken about all over the provinces due to the government's carbon tax. Before I begin, I will say that I will be sharing my time with the member for Prince Albert.

Throughout the day, my colleagues have outlined the dangers of the carbon tax, which is not very well thought out. The government has been saying that it will bring in a carbon tax, but we have a problem when it says that it is revenue neutral and we have found out time after time that it is not revenue neutral. The impact of a carbon tax on the economy is very strong, and we have seen what the PBO has said on the impact it would have on the Canadian economy. The issue here at the end of the day is that we all have an interest in meeting the greenhouse gas emissions targets. We all agree that climate change is happening and we that need to address this issue of climate change.

My colleague from the NDP talked just now about coming up with new solutions and new ideas. The question here is this: Why are we fixated on a carbon tax? Why do the government members think that a carbon tax is the only issue that we need to address to meet the greenhouse gas emissions target that the government signed in Paris? There are other options available in this country that we can look at without putting the burden on Canadian taxpayers.

During the leadership debate, I brought up the issue of recycling nuclear waste as fuel to be used in Canada. I laid down the advantages that this initiative would have. The research done by Professor Peter Ottensmeyer of the University of Toronto has clearly indicated that this is not only cost-effective but is also a carbon-free form of energy. Let me provide some figures.

Nuclear waste fuel could provide up to \$1.5 billion to the Canadian economy, and then turn major industries like the oil sands in my province into a low-carbon-emitting industry, something that everybody is striving to do. This is the right solution from this new idea.

Recycling of nuclear waste fuel is a made-in-Canada solution. If we were to harness and recycle the nuclear waste fuel from existing CANDU nuclear plants in Ontario, we could reduce the emissions from industries that output high amounts of carbon as a result of their electricity needs, as in the example of the oil sands that I just pointed out.

Canadian technology and investment into fast neutron reactors, FNRs, has given us an alternative energy that we could use to help our industries in Canada, and not hurt them, while meeting our global carbon commitment.

Harnessing this fuel and recycling it into an energy source producing a high carbon output would also put more than \$1.5 billion worth of electricity into our economy. Let me point out that right now the plan for this waste fuel is to bury it in the ground. It will be buried there for 1,000 years. We are burying it in the ground. Do members not think that it is common sense that we reuse this fuel?

By reusing the fuel, we would reduce the carbon output of this country without putting a major tax on Canadians. What is even more interesting is that the money that would be going toward this is already under the mandate of the federal Nuclear Fuel Waste Act under subsection 20(2), so there would be no new taxes and no new levies required by any government with this solution. A start-up fund already exists.

The fast neutron reactor employs incredible safety measures, and if this technology had been used in Japan, there would have been very little environmental impact during the Fukushima nuclear reactor meltdown.

From all levels this seems to be the right kind of a solution, and it is Canadian made. We have the nuclear fuel already available, the reused fuel rods that, as I mentioned, are to go into the ground. Recycling them would produce electricity for large users of electricity, reducing their carbon footprint. This could be a solution. The member who spoke before me talked about the Conservative Party coming up with solutions. Here is one of the solutions.

As another example, I had a chance to go to the Bay of Fundy, and I saw the tidal wave. The tidal wave is producing electricity. Although this is in its infancy stage, there is a great potential out there for us to reduce our carbon footprint.

Therefore, there are solutions that would not put a burden on the taxpayer. We keep hearing that the money will be given back to the poorer groups. We have programs to help them, and it is always great to see if we can assist them in any way through our social safety network, but we cannot just turn a blind eye and deny the impact to every sector right across the country from a carbon tax. It would be a major burden on the Canadian taxpayer.

We also have this problem of how high we are going to go with a carbon tax. The government has failed to look at other options or ways we could go. As for a plan to meet the Paris targets, all we hear from the environment minister is shouting and screaming that the world is falling apart or something.

There are solutions that are taking place. Solar energy is something else. Here in Canada, we do have this nuclear reactor technology for reusing our waste fuel. We have that technology, which is very safe, and if we employed it, our carbon footprint would be reduced. That is one of the options.

My colleague, my other leadership contender friend, brought that up during the leadership race. However, jokes aside, the fact of the matter is that we need to address climate change. Our leader has already said that he will be presenting a comprehensive policy that will take all solutions into account.

Therefore, let me again remind members that the NDP members gave the example of carbon tax in British Columbia, but what is the gas price today in British Columbia? It is pretty expensive. We just heard the Liberals talking about the prices in Australia. There are other factors in Australia that will make the price go up. It is not just taking away the carbon tax.

We are in a position in Canada to come up with innovative solutions. I have outlined one, and we can do it. Then everybody will come out here. Let us just say that while the Conservative Party is speaking out against the carbon tax, it is not saying that climate change is not be addressed. It definitely needs to be addressed, but options are there.

Once more I will say that there are other solutions. I have outlined one of the solutions, the recycling of nuclear waste and nuclear fuel rods. Thank you for this opportunity to discuss it.