

Harper's refusal to attend global climate summit a shame unacceptable

To the Editor,

As world leaders gathered at the recent United Nations Climate Summit, one absence was especially galling: Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

Despite being in New York when the summit was held, Stephen Harper was one the very few world leaders invited who refused to attend. It underscored how little environmental stewardship factors into his government's agenda.

His Conservative government has failed to advance strong environmental policy?including transparent oversight, tougher penalties and a price on carbon pollution?and this inaction has had serious consequences for our environment, our international reputation and our economy.

Our greenhouse gas emissions are growing, not slowing. Canada will miss its agreed-to 2020 emission reduction targets. Canada has earned an unfortunate international reputation for inaction and obstruction on climate change.

It's all par for the course under Mr. Harper, who manages to go to the Arctic every summer without ever uttering the phrase ?climate change??despite that being where its effects are most abundantly clear. Since 2008, his government has been promising regulations for industrial emissions?and we're still waiting. Even American President Barrack Obama has said that Canada could be doing more, and that his concern impacts the decision on the Keystone XL pipeline.

Climate change is a global problem that requires a global solution. We need determined leadership to make progress, but that can't happen if our Prime Minister can't even be bothered to show up.

As well, if Canada does not demonstrate to the world that we as a country are serious about GHG emissions, we will find it harder and harder to export our resources to global markets. That is why Liberals are committed to responsible resource development, while promoting clean energy and reducing carbon emissions.

As Prime Minister, Mr. Harper continues to get the big things wrong. After nearly a decade in power he has failed to take any meaningful action on Canada's GHG emissions. His legacy will leave our children with an environment that is ever more threatened.

Yours sincerely,

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