

**Andrew Scheer - My Vision For Canada: A Closer and Freer Federation  
June 4, 2019 - CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

Thank you very much. What a great honour it is to be here.

And thank you, Premier Jason Kenney. Boy that rolls off the tongue so nicely, doesn't it? Premier Jason Kenney from the Province of Alberta! Thank you very much.

Now, it is always a pleasure to be back in Alberta. But even more so after the last few weeks.

I have been truly inspired by what Premier Kenney and the United Conservative Government have accomplished in just a few short weeks on the job.

After winning the most votes of any political party in the province's history, Alberta's new government has already moved very quickly to deliver on the mandate that voters gave them to get Alberta working again.

They've introduced the Red Tape Reduction Act, which is a bold and necessary move that will restore investor confidence in Alberta to where the rest of Canada needs to be.

The Job Creation Tax Cut, which will allow job creators to keep more money that they earn in their own pockets, to reinvest and grow their businesses.

And of course, as he mentioned, Premier Kenney has made good on his promise to eliminate Alberta's carbon tax.

Now, Jason Kenney and I have a lot in common. We served together for many, many years. We agree on a lot of things.

But there is one thing on which we disagree.

We both claim credit for the promise that job number one will be to repeal the carbon tax. I think I came up with it first, he thinks he came up with it first. But, credit to him for being able to introduce it first!

I'll be second. But I will repeal Justin Trudeau's carbon tax grab. That is a promise.

And Alberta should know that it will have an ally in Ottawa come October. A new federal government that recognizes the precious role it plays in creating opportunity for all Canadians.

And I want to start at the beginning of this speech, talking about Canada as the country that we know today from its very beginnings.

...Those critical years in the early 1860s when a brutal civil war raged to our South.

...When a union from sea-to-sea was just an audacious idea.

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...and when 36 visionary leaders assembled to hash out their differences, to dream big, and to put in place a framework for what would become the greatest country on earth.

Forging our federation took courage, it took strength, and it took singular determination over many years.

But making it work has been another story altogether. An ongoing story of co-operation, of compromise, of friendship, and mutual respect.

Confederation was at the time, and it remains today, sometimes an unlikely and fantastic dream.

...A “political nationality,” in the words of one of its fathers, Sir George-Étienne Cartier, of ‘different races competing and emulating for the general good.’

Canada was built on the idea that it is possible to achieve a common prosperity while also preserving local identities of language and belief and self-determination.

That idea powered our founders in the drive toward ‘A Mari Usque Ad Mare.’

And it must continue to guide us in the second half of our second century, and beyond.

For, as Canada’s first Prime Minister once said:

“Everything... is to be gained by Union, and everything is to be lost by disunion.”

Now sadly, the wisdom of our first Prime Minister appears lost on our current Prime Minister.

By now it is obvious that Justin Trudeau is not as advertised.

He was elected in 2015 on a wave of big promises, the vast majority of which are now broken.

*Vous m’avez peut-être entendu dire que Justin Trudeau n’est pas ce qu’il avait promis.*

*Il a été élu en 2015 en promettant d’être différent.*

*Malheureusement, il n’a pas respecté la vaste majorité de ces promesses.*

But of all of them, his careless mismanagement of the federation ranks among the most damaging.

You may recall that he promised to “Maintain open and collaborative relationships with provinces and territories, with the goal of working together to serve and improve the lives of Canadians.” That was his quote.

But in just three short years, relations between provinces and governments are at their coldest in generations.

Look no further than right here in Alberta.

Instead of recognizing the nation-building potential of the west's natural resources and the people who make them work, Trudeau's done the exact opposite.

He wants to phase out the industry – and put hundreds of thousands of people out of work here and across the country.

Conservatives will champion Alberta's and western Canada's natural resources and ensure that we are able to get them to market, not just around the world, but here in Canada as well.

Now sure, he met with Premiers at the beginning, when they were mainly fellow Liberals and allies he could count on.

Now...not so much.

Now he is picking fights with the provinces because he thinks he can score a few points.

...He sends his ministers to attack provincial counterparts.

...He intrudes into areas of provincial responsibility.

...And he's dividing province against province and region against region.

...And, blaming others when his failed strategies blow up in his face.

Most egregious, though, is Trudeau's carbon tax.

And the profound arrogance and disregard he has shown for duly elected provincial governments that have constitutional authority over their natural resources.

Trudeau's carbon tax is a betrayal of confederation's early promise. And the discord he has sown has prompted an unprecedented number of legal actions against his government coming from provincial government's frustrated at his overreaching.

More are sure to follow.

Worse, though, his approach has stoked regional alienation. Provinces fighting against each other, as the federal government fails to assert its jurisdiction. Legislation like Bill C-69 and C-48 that threaten national unity as they are being pushed through, without consideration on the impact on industries that are vital to economic growth.

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This is the very threat of disunion that Macdonald warned about, and the polar opposite of the sunny ways that Trudeau campaigned on in 2015.

It's clear that every time there's a Trudeau in the Prime Minister's Office, our union begins to crack.

We've been hearing it here in the West, both in my home province of Saskatchewan and here in Alberta.

And I'm here to tell you, unequivocally, that Canada has not turned its back on the West. Only Justin Trudeau has.

Friends, I believe there is a better way. A much better way.

My vision for our country is one of open federalism that recognizes that decisions should be made by the smallest and closest authority to the people affected.

A federation built on respect for provincial jurisdiction, with provinces as full partners and Quebecers as a nation within a united Canada.

*Ma vision pour notre pays se fonde sur le fédéralisme d'ouverture et le respect des compétences provinciales et territoriales.*

*Une fédération construite sur le respect des compétences provinciales et territoriale, avec des provinces qui sont des partenaires et une nation québécoise dans un Canada uni.*

A Canada that makes meaningful progress with Indigenous peoples leading the way as full partners in their own prosperity.

And a country where rights come with certain responsibilities: a two-way street of nation-building, where transparency and accountability are the cornerstones.

So allow me to elaborate on a couple of key principles.

First, the idea of making decisions at the point of most accountability.

Often these days, there are so many complex funding arrangements between jurisdictions, with different strings attached and conditions applied, and acronyms used, that often nobody quite knows which level of government the money comes from.

But everybody knows whose pocket the money came from. And that's you, the taxpayers who pay for it all.

The federal government should empower lower levels of government, provinces and municipalities with greater flexibility in terms of program delivery. Too often, people sitting in desks in Ottawa design programs with a one-size-fits-all approach.

Instead, we should trust local representatives to know their communities better than a government official in Ottawa. And the accountability and transparency would naturally follow along with that.

Related to that is a genuine respect for provincial jurisdiction.

The federal government should commit to stable and predictable levels of transfers for important social services, while at the same time recognizing that each province will have its own approach to best manage and deliver those programs.

Respecting provincial jurisdiction doesn't just apply to areas that are constitutionally the provinces' responsibility, like healthcare and education.

It also applies to those areas in which both governments have policy and jurisdictional authority.

Here again, the Trudeau carbon tax is an example of overreach.

Five provinces' governments have found different ways to fight climate change without a carbon tax.

But Trudeau's "My Way or the Highway Federalism" has forced Premiers to fight the federal government in court on behalf of their citizens.

Now, history tells us that decentralization has led to more creative program delivery and more co-operative federalism. But imposing a carbon tax on those provinces that have found other ways to lower emissions, is both unfair and it betrays the spirit of confederation.

### ***Confédération***

*L'histoire qui unit le Parti conservateur et la nation québécoise est aussi ancienne que la fédération canadienne.*

*En fait, sans la collaboration entre les chefs conservateurs ontarien et québécois John A. Macdonald et George-Étienne Cartier la Confédération ne serait jamais née en mille-huit-cent-soixante-sept.*

*Elle n'aurait sans doute jamais pu refléter aussi efficacement et aussi justement l'esprit de respect et d'égalité qui a fait d'elle une des grandes réussites politiques des 19e et 20e siècles.*

*Dans notre histoire récente, d'autres gouvernements conservateurs ont démontré une ouverture semblable envers les aspirations de la société québécoise et de son gouvernement.*

*Brian Mulroney a notamment consacré le caractère privilégié des relations entre le Canada et la France, l'une de nos deux mères patries.*

*Il a aussi rendu possible la création du Sommet de la Francophonie.*

*Quelques semaines avant l'élection de 2006, Stephen Harper s'est engagé à gouverner selon un fédéralisme d'ouverture, qui respecte les responsabilités et les besoins des provinces, y compris la situation spéciale du Québec.*

*Le gouvernement conservateur précédent a éliminé le déséquilibre fiscal, qui empoisonnait les relations entre Ottawa et Québec depuis plus de 50 ans.*

*Il a aussi fait reconnaître par le Parlement canadien que les Québécois forment une nation au sein d'un Canada uni.*

*Bien sûr, ni conservateurs ni libéraux ne peuvent réclamer la paternité de tous les bienfaits que nous partageons tous et toutes comme citoyens et citoyennes canadiens.*

*À diverses époques, à tour de rôle, des premiers ministres de nos deux grandes formations politiques ont apporté leur pierre à l'édifice national.*

*Comme chef des conservateurs du Canada, je suis très fier de ce qu'ont accompli mes prédécesseurs pour cimenter l'union entre Canadiens francophones et Canadiens anglophones.*

*Si les Canadiens et Canadiennes nous confient la responsabilité du gouvernement, le 21 octobre, j'ai l'intention de suivre le modèle qu'ils ont tracé dans la pratique du fédéralisme canadien.*

*J'ai aussi l'intention de demeurer vigilant dans la protection et le développement des droits de minorités de langues officielles.*

### **Strong federal leadership**

That is not at all to say that federal leadership is unimportant.

Quite the contrary.

There are clear, constitutionally prescribed areas of federal jurisdiction.

And, on matters where provinces disagree, especially when it involves the national interest, strong and effective federal leadership is not only desired, it's required.

Take pipelines and interprovincial trade.

We live a country where no one has a veto on matters of national interest clearly in federal jurisdiction.

Confederation is predicated on increasing our collective prosperity.

Just as the national railway would not have been built without strong federal leadership, the Canada of tomorrow will not realize its full potential without a federal government that is willing to do some heavy lifting.

It strikes me that this federal Liberal government has abdicated its responsibility to fight to get those pipelines built in court. But it will fight in court to impose a carbon tax on the people of provinces that don't want it.

That's quite a double-standard.

We don't need a government of Ottawa-knows-best, but rather we need a government of yes.

Yes to energy self-sufficiency.

Yes to breaking down trade barriers, and,

Yes to getting our products to market, together.

Nothing frustrates me more when I see so many groups and political parties protesting Western Canadian energy from being exported to Asia and other markets around the world.

I see them tie themselves to trees and lay down in front of bulldozers, blocking Canadian exports of our resources.

But I don't see them lined up and down the St. Lawrence, blocking tanker after tanker of foreign oil coming in from Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, or the United States. That's something that's never made sense to me.

Conservatives have a vision of energy independence for Canada.

Often, we say that the world needs more Canadian energy. I believe that's true. But I believe Canada needs more Canadian energy, and we will work to make sure that that is a reality.

*Avec raison, tous les Québécois et Québécoises sont très fiers de l'hydro-électricité, de la création d'Hydro-Québec et de son rôle dans le développement du Québec.*

*Je souhaite aussi que les Québécois comprennent et respectent que les Canadiens des autres provinces souhaitent pour leur part que le Canada puisse profiter de l'exportation de notre richesse pétrolière et gazière.*

*Quand la première découverte majeure de pétrole a été faite au puits Leduc No. 1 en Alberta, en 1947, une vague d'espoir a déferlé dans l'Ouest canadien, comme quand les turbines des barrages de la rivière Manicouaganont commencé à tourner.*

*Cette richesse naturelle a profité à toutes les régions du Canada.*

*Nous possédons une des plus importantes réserves pétrolières du monde, après l'Arabie Saoudite et le Venezuela, mais nous sommes incapables d'en profiter pleinement à cause d'un manque de pipelines.*

*C'est un obstacle comme l'hydro-électricité n'a jamais connu.*

*C'est pourquoi j'ai proposé récemment la création d'un corridor énergétique pancanadien.*

*Il va de soi que cela ne se fera pas contre la volonté d'une ou de plusieurs provinces.*

*Je souhaite que tous les Canadiens, y compris les Québécois, reconnaissent qu'il y a assez de place au Canada pour une industrie pétrolière et une industrie hydro-électrique dynamiques et concurrentielles.*

*Comme premier ministre, je vais faire de mon mieux pour aider les deux à développer leurs exportations.*

### **National Energy Corridor**

No concept better illustrates being a country of yes – or indeed, my whole vision for how provinces can and should work together – than a national energy corridor.

Last month, I spoke about the idea of working toward that national energy corridor to get our natural resources moving.

A coast-to-coast route dedicated to infrastructure that will move Quebec electricity west as much as it will move Alberta oil and gas east and west.

Let me be clear: this would entail a great deal of dialogue with provincial governments and Indigenous populations.

And I know it will take a lot of hard work. I know it's a big idea.

But so was Canada at one point in time.

And I think it's time for Canada to draw on its history, to summon the vision and the courage that at one time we had in spades, and deploy our collective will on a project that will unite our country.

Because I believe a national energy corridor can do for Canada what the Canadian Pacific Railway did in the days of Sir John A. Macdonald;

Or what the St. Lawrence Seaway did – not only for commerce and trade but also our long-standing relationship with the United States – during the days of Prime Minister Mackenzie King and President Roosevelt.

We are a sprawling nation, whose people at important moments in our history have been brought together by ideas and big projects.

However, recognizing the need to get our natural resources to new domestic and international markets is a matter of national importance.

It is, therefore, a federal government responsibility.

With my proposal, and as Prime Minister, we will tackle the 'how' of getting our energy to market.

I will work with the provinces on the 'how' and the 'where' of a future energy corridor.

But the 'what' – making Canada energy-independent – that will be the key goal of a Conservative government.

And to be clear: the goal of this corridor is not to replace what the private sector has done throughout our history. By creating the regulatory path, multi-billion dollar projects can be built without taxpayers' money.

### **Overlapping jurisdictions**

Now, some issues cross boundaries, and jurisdictions.

And in those cases, every order of government needs to be actively involved.

The health of our environment, for instance, is something that all levels of government need to address.

And while I will have more to say on our plan for the environment later this month, for now, let me say this:

A Conservative government will not take an adversarial, top-down approach.

Instead, we will work together with provinces, cities, and other partners.

And it was in this spirit that I announced, earlier this year, that we will work with local governments in cities across the country to help eliminate the dumping of raw sewage and wastewater into our rivers and lakes.

On issues of immigration, we will continue to work with provinces and municipalities to ensure that the best possible start is available for newcomers to Canada.

On infrastructure, too, collaboration is essential.

Local communities generally know which roads and bridges need fixing.

However, the federal government should be a funding partner on big projects with an economic competitiveness rationale: ports, highways, transit, and more.

And a Conservative government will be that partner.

### **Interprovincial trade**

As Prime Minister, I will also undertake a government-wide effort to remove the interprovincial trade barriers that have held back our federation for so long.

These barriers prevent the free flow of people, and goods, and services across provincial borders. And they cost our economy untold billions of dollars.

They make it more expensive to run a business, they hurt consumers with higher prices and less competition, and frustrate big-dreaming innovators who want to change the world.

We are missing out on a whole new frontier of opportunity and prosperity. The IMF estimates that eliminating interprovincial trade barriers could add \$90 billion to Canadian GDP.

That's almost equivalent to the entire economic output of Canada's transportation industry.

This is so frustrating, it breaks my heart. Think of all the people we could lift out of poverty and help get ahead in life if we simply got government restrictions out of the way.

And right now is the moment to tackle this.

We have a once-in-a-generation opportunity, with a new wave of free-enterprise, pro-trade premiers in place across the country, to fix this economic injustice once and for all.

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And that is why, in the first 100 days of a new Conservative government, I will convene a First Ministers meeting with internal trade at the very top of the agenda.

*Dans les cent premiers jours d'un nouveau gouvernement conservateur, je vais convoquer les provinces à une rencontre dont le premier article à l'ordre du jour sera le commerce intérieur.*

*Notre objectif sera simple :*

*Conclure une nouvelle entente de commerce interprovincial véritablement vrai.*

Our goal will be simple:

A brand new and truly free interprovincial trade agreement.

The Interprovincial Free Trade Agreement.

And to do it, I will appoint a Minister of Interprovincial Trade, whose sole responsibility will be to lead the negotiations and the implementation.

Now, I am not talking about a simple memorandum of understanding.

Our previous Conservative government made huge progress on this issue, with the Canada Free Trade Agreement.

However, since coming into force two years ago, the Liberals have done virtually nothing with it.

In fact, there are 130 pages of exemptions.

The Interprovincial Free Trade Agreement that we will propose will be a real free trade deal. Like NAFTA. Like CETA. Like the TPP.

And negotiated freely in the spirit of open federalism, with nothing more than the basic promise of greater prosperity bringing all parties to the table.

It will be a huge step forward, well beyond the current agreement.

Because with the current agreement, despite its name, there is nothing free about it. And Justin Trudeau hasn't lifted a finger to fix it.

But our proposal will be comprehensive. And it will be approached in the same way that we approach international trade deals, with professional commissioners and negotiators.

And it will have the full support and capacity of the federal government behind it.

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Canadians have sat across from some of the toughest international trade negotiators in the world and we've been able to strike deals with the likes of Chile, Japan, the United States and the European Union.

Surely, we can do the same within our own borders.

We are one free country. We should have one free market.

The fathers of confederation enshrined this principle into our very first constitution.

Section 121 of the British North America Act states "All Articles of the Growth, Produce, or Manufacture of any one of the Provinces shall, from and after the Union, be admitted free into each of the other Provinces."

But tell that right now to the brewer in Fredericton who has to pay for a second inspection if he wants to sell his beer in another province.

Or the Alberta rancher who needs a federal inspection of her beef, if she wants to sell it one province over, even though she's already passed a provincial inspection.

Or the journeyman welder from Saskatchewan who has to jump through more hoops than a circus tiger to earn a living in another part of the country.

This is a betrayal of our founding values. And I intend to make it right.

In 1861, with Confederation still six years off in the distance, Sir John A Macdonald said of Canadian union:

"We are a great country, and shall become one of the greatest in the universe if we preserve it;

We shall sink into insignificance and adversity if we suffer it to be broken."

Some 158 years later, I stand before you to say that I am ready to stand for our union...

And to reimagine it for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond based on three simple pledges:

I will commit to open federalism, recognizing that you cannot exercise authority without true accountability.

I will push ahead with a transformative corridor project that will both unite our people and liberate our resources.

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And I will work tirelessly to tear down trade barriers between provinces and territories that have held captive our nation's potential for far too long, so we can fully realize the benefits of Confederation that were promised 51 years ago.

That is my vision for Canada, ladies and gentlemen.

One where Canadian unity is brought about through shared success and shared prosperity.

That is what I am excited to bring to the Canadian people this October's election.

I hope I can count on your support.

Thank you very much. *Merci beaucoup.*