

Feds betting on a sure thing

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Canada's Finance Minister Jim Flaherty delivers his budget in the House of Commons on Parliament Hill in Ottawa March 29, 2012. REUTERS/Chris Wattie

When critics of last week's federal budget claim the Harper Conservatives are "betting" on the West for Canada's future prosperity, they chose the wrong word.

"Betting" indicates a gamble.

The West is no roll of the dice.

What lies in the ground in Alberta, whether in the oilsands or under an oil rig, is black gold. Saskatchewan, too, is ramping up its programs, and relishing the reality that it is already rich in potash.

British Columbia is the gateway to the Pacific Rim.

The Conservative government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper is investing in pipelines, not pipedreams.

They understand that fossil fuels, as "dirty" as critics dismiss them, will not be replaced anytime soon. It has seen through the pipedreamers.

The federal Tories have seen Ontario's Liberal Premier Dalton McGuinty lose billions in taxpayer dollars by selling the false bill of goods that wind power, and solar energy, are sustainable and effective.

They proved to be a sucker bet.

In order to quicken the process to access what the West has to offer, the budget vowed that red tape will be cut, that regulatory reviews of resource-development projects will never take longer than 48 months, and that environmental assessments will be done on the basis of "one project, one review." In other words, gone will be the redundancy of dual provincial-federal reviews taking place at the same time.

Not only does it streamline the process, it will impede unrealistic and mischievous enviro-activists from tossing a spanner into the works with their bogus science and their fearmongering.

Remember David Suzuki at Christmas when he went on television and told our children to send him money or poor old Santa would drown?

Well, thanks to Finance Minister Jim Flaherty, we now have more than Sun Media keeping an eye on Suzuki's charitable foundation, and the way it uses donations for political causes.

We now have the Canada Revenue Agency watching too.

There is no argument that getting our resources mined and into the market -- whether it be drilling or digging, shipping or piping -- will be a key to wiping out Canada's deficit by 2015-16, even though it was a year later than we would have hoped.

Streamlining reviews was key.

But never was the West a gamble.

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