

Stéphane Dion's Clean Air Plan rips off a David Suzuki Foundation report

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Stéphane Dion, one of the leading candidates for the leadership of the Liberal Party of Canada, and a former professor at the University of Montreal, released his "Clean Air Plan" exactly one week after the David Suzuki Foundation released its report, "The Air We Breathe".

Compare the two and see the ideas, and in some cases, the actually words, Dion rips off from the Suzuki report. No credit is given to the Suzuki Foundation report, either for general references or for inspiration. Not good. Not good at all.

The David Suzuki Foundation issued a report "The Air We Breath" on August 25. On September 1, exactly one week later, Stéphane Dion, candidate for the leadership of the Liberal Party of Canada, released his "Clean Air Plan".

It makes good environmental sense to recycle. But recycling ideas without giving credit is not good. It is intellectual theft. And when you recycle the very same sentences, that's called plagiarism.

From page 3 of the Suzuki report:

Across Canada, air pollution causes thousands of premature deaths, tens of thousands of hospitalizations, and hundreds of thousands of days absent from work and school annually.¹

Also from page 3 of the Suzuki report:

The Ontario Medical Association (OMA) estimated that there were 5,800 premature deaths due to air pollution in Ontario alone in 2005.²

The opening paragraph of the Dion report:

In Canada, air pollution causes thousands of premature deaths, tens of thousands of hospitalizations, and hundreds of thousands of days

¹David Suzuki Foundation, "The Air We Breathe," August 25, 2006 [cited 4 September 2006], page 3. Online <http://www.davidsuzuki.org/files/SWAG/DSF-HEHC-Air-Web2r.pdf>

²Suzuki, page 3.

absent from work and school annually. The Ontario Medical Association issued a report in 2005 saying that every year 5,800 Ontarians will die prematurely because of smog related illness...³

This is a blatant rip off. I can't believe he did this. But it continues.

How about legal opinions? From page 11 of the Suzuki report:

All of the substances that contribute to smog have already been added to Schedule 1 of CEPA, 1999, known as the List of Toxic Substances. As a result, the federal government now has both the statutory and the constitutional authority, confirmed by the Supreme Court of Canada, to regulate these substances.⁴

Dion's view?

Since the pollutants that contribute to smog were added to Schedule 1 of CEPA a few years ago, the federal government now has the statutory and constitutional authority, confirmed by the Supreme Court, to regulate these substances.⁵

OK, they share the same interpretation of the legal elements concerning pollution control. Surely Stéphane Dion has his own ideas?

Page 15 of the Suzuki report:

Ensure that Canada's air quality standards meet or beat the air quality standards of other industrialized nations.⁶

Stéphane Dion, remarkably, has the same goal:

³Stéphane Dion, "Building a Sustainable Future for Canada: Stéphane Dions Clean Air Plan," September 1, 2006 [cited 4 September 2006]. Online <http://stephannedion.ca/?q=en/Issues-Climate-060901Sustainable>

⁴Suzuki, page 11.

⁵Dion.

⁶Suzuki, page 15.

I will develop National Air Quality Regulations for smog-forming pollutants and toxic emissions, which meet or beat the air quality standards of other industrialized nations.⁷

How do we entice people to pollute less? How about a cap-and-trade program described on page 13?

Market-based regulations played a key role in American efforts to reduce sulphur oxides during the 1990's, as a cap and trade program was established under the U.S. Clean Air Act.⁸

Sounds good to Dion:

We will develop a cap-and-trade program for smog-forming substances. Internationally, cap-and-trade programs have had great success in reducing air pollutants.⁹

OK, so he ripped off David Suzuki's timetable too (page 16):

A report published by the David Suzuki Foundation in 2004, Sustainability Within A Generation: A New Vision for Canada, proposed a long-term goal of reducing emissions of the criteria air pollutants 80 per cent from current levels by 2030.¹⁰

Dion:

We will establish regulatory targets and timelines for the reduction of key air pollutants, including those that contribute to smog. If Liberals were back in power in 2007, we could set targets to be achieved beginning in 2010, and advance further emission reductions for 2015 and 2030.¹¹

Stéphane Dion includes a list of references at the end of his plan. No mention of the Suzuki Foundation report. No mention of the Suzuki Foundation report anywhere in the plan.

⁷Dion.

⁸Suzuki, page 13.

⁹Dion.

¹⁰Suzuki, page 16.

¹¹Dion.