

## Gas prices

by BRIAN LOCKHART

If you are planning on taking a road trip any time soon, you might want to re-think your budget for how much it will cost you to finally cruise the ocean highway along Cape Breton.

It looks like we are about to get hammered again as gas prices are already on the rise and they are predicted to get a lot higher.

There's a whole list of reasons behind this, many of which, of course don't make a lot of sense, but the spin doctors have a whole list of factors that affect the price of this commodity which fluctuates on a global scale and hammers us here at home ? and relentlessly so.

Remember when gas prices went through the roof last year and so did the cost of everything else because of the transportation costs?

Okay, that does make sense.

However, when prices dropped down to below .80 cents at the start of the pandemic, we didn't see any kind of relief due to the lesser cost of transporting goods. Nope ? prices stayed at the inflated rate even though the cost of getting those goods to you went down by around 35 per cent.

The ?experts' give us several reason that the price of gas is going to up.

Production of crude oil is expected to go up, and so is the price per barrel. Oil production in Alberta has actually decreased by 20 per cent, and along with it a lot of jobs have disappeared.

As pandemic restrictions are eased, more people are expected to travel, which of course means a demand for more fuel.

As summer approaches, the price of gas always goes up for some reason. Go figure ? people are more likely to drive somewhere in the summer to actually enjoy life, so let's make sure they pay extra for having some fun.

Finally, the liberal government's plan to raise their so called ?carbon tax' will increase the price per litre by .37 cents by 2030.

The government says we will all reap the benefits of a carbon tax through rebates and a whole other bunch of nonsense.

Nope, I don't buy it. Whenever government tells us we will have extra money or savings, we never see it unless it's some tax credit where each family will save ?\$40 on some tax credit annually.? Whoopee!

There are those that try to tell us that having a vehicle and driving is a luxury and not a necessity.

Of course, the only people who say that are the ones who are driven to work in a government provided limousine or some guy who lives in downtown Toronto and lives next to a subway line and their knowledge of the world is based on a train stop. I actually know people like that.

Maybe the experts should look at a map of this country. This isn't some tiny European nation where riding a bicycle will get you from one end of town to the other in five minutes.

Vehicles are indeed a necessity in this country.

Unless you think would you like to start jogging the 30 km to work, or walking 10 km to the grocery store while pulling a bundle-buggy before walking to the soccer field for the kid's game practice and returning home by midnight, would be a good lifestyle.

Some people like to reference public transit. Well, it's too late. We do not have the public transit in most areas that is suitable. Trying making your trip one town over in Ontario by transit to do business and see how that goes.

Vehicles all need fuel to move and that includes the trucks that supply food, clothing, and all other goods, ambulances, and the fire trucks that get to your burning house in a couple of minutes rather than having a bucket brigade arriving on foot.

Rising fuels costs just mean we all will be paying more to drive across town and paying more for goods, and our salaries are not keeping up with the cost of living. And that will affect business because people will have less buying power ? and forget about giving that extra money to charities because there won't be any extra.

The government can regulate the cost of items when they want to. Ever notice the difference between prices in a free-economy American liquor store and the fixed prices in the LLBO?

If the government wants to help the economy, the first priority should be getting fuel costs under control.

They can do it while relaxing in the limo we pay for on their way to Parliament Hill.