

## My interventions during the debate on Transport, 5 February 2020

**John Redwood (Wokingham) (Con):** I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman. Would he accept that the UK has done more than practically any other country in the world to cut its carbon dioxide emissions since 1990, whereas China, for example, is greatly expanding its coal extraction and coal power? What is the Labour party's message to China in the run-up to the conference?

**Shadow Secretary of State for Transport (Andy McDonald):** My message is that our country is about to miss its own targets for the fourth and fifth carbon targets, and that is an appalling record. That is on the Government's own statistics, so we really need to focus on getting our own house in order.

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**John Redwood (Wokingham) (Con):** Does my right hon. Friend agree that a lot of our public want us to bust congestion and get people on the move, so that they can get to school and work more easily? That requires short-term measures to improve junctions, change light arrangements and so forth, and medium-term measures to put in bypasses and additional capacity. That is a very green thing to do, because then we stop people churning out emissions in traffic jams.

**The Secretary of State for Transport (Grant Shapps):** I agree with my right hon. Friend on the importance of stopping those pinch points, where traffic just idles, pumps out all this CO<sub>2</sub> and creates pollution. That clearly is not sensible, so we have a big programme in place; we are putting £28 billion into our roads. We will shortly be announcing more developments on our road investment strategy, RIS2, and getting rid of more of those pinch points. It is also important to get the traffic that runs on those roads to be greener and to get greener quicker, with electric and other forms of lower carbon and zero carbon production. I will talk a little more about that shortly, but I am clear that simply saying that we will not build any roads anywhere will increase pollution and the toxins in our atmosphere, not reduce them.

The targets have to be tough, and they have to be challenging. That will help to focus the minds not just of the consumer and business but of Government, and that is absolutely right. Targets also have to be viable and practical. That goes to the point made by my right hon. Friend the Member for Wokingham (Mr Redwood). It will not be easy to meet these goals if we simply try to do it by destroying industry along the way. That point is easily forgotten, but if we do forget it, we will not get the miracle that we have had of a 42% reduction in the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> at the same time as a 73% increase in the size of the economy.