



DrumBeat: May 27, 2007

Posted by [Stoneleigh](#) on May 27, 2007 - 9:00am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

[Crude - the Incredible Journey of Oil \(Broadband Edition\)](#)

This is an excellent presentation by Australian ABC television which includes a 90-minute presentation on "Crude" for general audiences, and which also has excellent side-interviews and resources. Top-notch, a good free resource you can send people to.

[Oil industry wary as hurricane season nears](#)

Already this spring, gasoline prices have climbed even higher than post-Katrina-and-Rita prices. Analysts say prices are certain to shoot higher — \$4 a gallon, perhaps — if and when the season's first storm enters the Gulf of Mexico.

The average U.S. retail price of unleaded, regular gasoline hit an all-time high of \$3.227 a gallon on Thursday, AAA reported. That's closing in on the inflation-adjusted peak of \$3.29 a gallon in March 1981, according to the U.S. Energy Department.

As they prepared to fix the Gulf's devastated oil and gas facilities, industry representatives realized standard repairs weren't enough. So the companies that own the platforms, drill the wells and manage the pipelines have spent hundreds of millions of dollars to improve and strengthen their operations. Moorings are stronger, pipelines deeper, backup power in greater supply.

The entire text of *The Upside of Down*, by Thomas Homer-Dixon is now available at [ASPO Canada](#)

[Climate change conflict](#)

Stephen Harper, whose government has repeatedly failed to connect with Canadians on the environment, is likely to join U.S. President George W. Bush as the odd men out when world leaders try to tackle global warming at this year's G-8 summit.

The meeting in Germany June 6 to 8 promises to be a challenging exercise in other ways for Harper, whose two closest international allies Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair suffer from the status of lame ducks in their own countries.

[Environmentalists: U.S. preparing to reject G-8 climate change deal](#)

The United States is preparing to reject new targets on climate change at a Group of Eight summit next month, dashing German and British hopes for a new global pact on carbon emissions, according to comments on a document released by the environmental group Greenpeace.

[Iran's newly explored Paranj holds 1.6b in situ barrels of oil](#)

The newly traced Paranj oilfield's in situ reserve is estimated at 1.6 billion barrels, said the National Iranian South Oil Company's (NISOC) technical manager on Sunday.

Hassan Shokrollahzadeh-Behbahani said that the field's extractable oil amounts to 431 million barrels.

[Iran to finalize oil deal with Belarus](#)

Iran aims to finalize in two weeks' time a deal allowing Belarus to extract oil from the Islamic Republic's southern Jofeir deposit, the Oil Ministry's web site Shana reported on Sunday.

The agreement was first announced on May 21 when Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad visited his counterpart Alexander Lukashenko in Belarus, which seeks new sources of energy for its economy amid frosty relations with Russia.

Iran, which faces a possible third round of UN sanctions over its nuclear ambitions, is keen to attract foreign investment to develop its oil sector. Belarus has defended Teheran's right to pursue its nuclear programme.

[Darfur: No. "It's the oil, stupid."](#)

This is defining a major new front in what, since the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, is a new Cold War between Washington and Beijing over control of major oil sources. So far Beijing has played its cards a bit more cleverly than Washington. Darfur is a major battleground in this high-stakes contest for oil control.

In recent months, Beijing has embarked on a series of initiatives designed to secure long-term raw materials sources in one of the planet's most endowed regions - Sub-Saharan Africa. No raw material has higher priority in Beijing at present than oil.

Today China draws an estimated 30% of its crude oil from Africa. That explains an

extraordinary series of diplomatic initiatives which have left Washington furious. China is using no-strings-attached dollar credits to gain access to Africa's vast raw material wealth, leaving Washington's typical control game via the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) out in the cold. Who needs the painful medicine of the IMF when China gives easy terms and builds roads and schools to boot?

[Pakistan-Ukraine sign protocol for oil and gas cooperation](#)

The Minister held significant meetings with technical experts of oil and gas state owned related companies to explore and identify the opportunities in the field of oil and gas exploration, construction and operation of transnational oil and gas pipeline projects, storage of liquefied gas etc in Pakistan.

[Higher oil prices or carbon tax: Take your pick](#)

Tax is not a word anyone in Ottawa seems to want here and yet almost all the advice going to Parliament suggests a carbon tax is essential to meeting any of the parties' climate-change objectives.

In fact, it is so bad in Ottawa these days that government reports are filled with euphemisms for it, "carbon charge," "financial disincentives," and "price signals." My favourite is "ecological fiscal reform measures" or EFR. Call it any of these things but don't call it a carbon tax.

[Iran could scrap petrol rationing plan - MP](#)

Iran could scrap a plan to ration petrol that was expected to have a profound impact on the economy of OPEC's number two oil producer, the head of parliament's energy committee said.

The plan, which aimed to reduce the colossal subsidies paid by the state to finance Iran's frenzied petrol consumption, envisaged forcing consumers to pay a much higher sum for any purchases in excess of a rationed quota.

Iran last Tuesday implemented an initial stage of the plan by raising pump prices by 25 pct and making consumers use smart cards to keep track of their petrol purchases.

'In the past few days, the use of smart cards has yielded good results in preventing fuel smuggling and encouraging consumption control,' said Kamal Daneshyar, the head of the energy committee which drew up the rationing plan.

[Iranian president:"certain big powers" misusing nuclear energy](#)

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad accused "certain big powers" of misusing nuclear energy on Sunday, the official IRNA news agency reported.

"Instead of make a proper use of nuclear energy at service of humanity, certain big powers misuse it," Ahmadinejad said in his speech to local residents of Semrom city in the central province of Isfahan, adding that "They have built bombs and dropped them on nations."

"These powers threaten other nations with their bombs," said Ahmadinejad, who was visiting Semrom on the fourth day of his five-day provincial tour of Isfahan.

[Nuclear's regeneration hots up](#)

Speaking after the announcement from BE's HQ in Livingston, Coley said the White Paper demonstrated a growing acceptance that nuclear is needed to meet rising power demands.

But vitally for BE, Darling said a decision on building new nuclear must be taken this year and this was an unexpected fillip for Coley and his team.

"There was only one surprise," Coley says, "and it was a good one."

[... and the debate on how best to keep the lights on in Scotland](#)

Nowhere is the new politics more apparent than in energy policy, but it's not all sweetness and light. On Wednesday morning industry secretary Alistair Darling warned darkly on BBC radio that the lights would go out if the SNP maintained its antipathy to nuclear power. It was irresponsible, he said, to rule out a new nuclear generation when there was no evidence that renewables could fill the energy gap.

[UK presses Norway to direct new gas pipeline to Scotland](#)

The Government, backed by Britain's leading power groups, has launched a high-profile lobbying effort to persuade Norway to build a vital gas export pipeline to the UK rather than to continental Europe.

Gas from the new pipeline is considered crucial if Britain is to have access to a diverse range of energy supplies, especially from a politically stable country such as Norway. With a capacity of more than 20bn cubic metres a year, the pipeline would be capable of meeting around 18 per cent of Britain's gas demand by the time it came online in 2012. It would also help reduce Britain's reliance on gas imports from Russia which come via the Continent. President Putin's government has come under fire for cutting off supplies to several former Soviet bloc countries which disrupted exports to western Europe.

[Lukoil to gain sway with Gazprom venture](#)

The creation of a joint venture between Lukoil and Gazprom Neft, the oil arm of state gas monopoly Gazprom, is set to help privately-owned Lukoil win access to large oil projects at a time when it risked being sidelined.

Lukoil signed off on the creation of the joint venture with Gazprom Neft on Friday that will see them co-operate on new projects at home and abroad.

The deal will give Gaz-prom Neft a 51 per cent stake and Lukoil 49 per cent, while ConocoPhillips, which currently holds a 20 per cent stake in Lukoil, will be excluded from the venture.

[Gusher of job openings expected in oil industry](#)

The great crew change is coming.

And executives in the oil and natural-gas industry can only hope they're ready for the departure of thousands of aging employees who will retire over the next decade after years working onshore and aboard offshore rigs.

To prepare for this exodus, energy corporations have begun recruiting college graduates and experienced workers to replace their departing laborers.

[Nigeria's Ogoni People Resist Oil Companies](#)

Oil insiders say Shell is trying to resume production in Ogoniland. Nigerian authorities have warned the company they may revoke their prospecting license in the area due to inactivity.

Dumnu warns the government and Shell not to do anything without the permission of the Ogoni people. "If the federal government just signs a contract with Shell and they do not give us our rights, there will be trouble. Everybody, every youth, they will not be happy," he said.

[Algeria, Brazil sign accord on liquified natural gas](#)

Algeria is to deliver liquified natural gas to Brazil under an accord signed Saturday between the state-run Sonatrach and Brazil's Petrobras.

A Sonatrach statement, which did not specify the quantity or price of the gas, said the agreement would allow Algeria to diversify its liquified natural gas sales "notably in the Atlantic basin."

[Maxed out, spent down and busted](#)

Unlike my wife and I, who couldn't qualify even for department store credit when we started out, college students today are awash in credit come-ons.

One of the mothers in the film describes taking her son to freshman orientation and seeing a line of tables encouraging kids to sign up for credit. The card companies paid the university — the film didn't name names — \$13 million for the privilege of tapping into the student body.

Maxed Out examines the full range of consequences for our spending habits. It shows debt collectors boasting of their techniques for harassing people who fall behind on their bills.

Their gloating is juxtaposed with the story of a woman who secretly ran up \$40,000 in credit debt, and then, after getting one such threatening call, killed herself by plunging her car into the Ohio River.



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