



## The Bullroarer - Saturday 26 April 2008

Posted by [Big Gav](#) on April 26, 2008 - 8:57am in [The Oil Drum: Australia/New Zealand](#)

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

Courier Mail - [Pain for families set to deepen as crude oil price keeps on rising](#)

MOTORISTS have been warned their petrol price nightmare is far from over. The warning came yesterday from Caltex chairwoman Elizabeth Bryan as bowser prices soared to record highs in response to a spike in world oil price that shows no sign of abating. With the average Australian household spending about \$200 a month on fuel, every cent-a-litre movement is hitting already stretched budgets.

Engineers Australia - [SSEE & Transport Panel: Peak Oil - The Broader Sustainability and Engineering Implications in South East Queensland](#)

World oil production is nearing its historic peak and will likely begin to decline within several years. Australia, whose oil production peaked in 2000, is among 60 other "post-peak" countries already on the down-slope of domestic production.

Peak oil presents enormous challenges for Australia's economy, particularly its transport system, which is highly dependent on growing supplies of affordable petroleum fuel. Compounded by the impact of geopolitical circumstances, extreme weather events and other economic trends, the decline in world oil production will see dramatically increasing and highly volatile oil and fuel prices, oil supply shocks and impacts on economic growth, employment, demographics and transport patterns. With its high car dependence, urban sprawl and poor public transport, South East Queensland is particularly vulnerable to oil shocks.

The threats and opportunities associated with peak oil mean that this phenomenon will become the defining challenge for South East Queensland's infrastructure planners over the coming decades.

Speaker: Stuart McCarthy Brisbane Co-ordinator, Australian Association for the Study of Peak Oil and Gas. Stuart McCarthy has 20 years of experience in engineering, logistics, disaster relief, security, risk analysis and planning in Australia, Africa, the Middle East, Southeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific. ASPO-Australia is a network of professionals working to reduce Australia's oil vulnerability, by bringing the probabilities, risks and opportunities presented by peak oil to the attention of decision-makers.

IT'S 40 years since Stanford University entomologist Paul Ehrlich predicted that hundreds of millions of people would die of starvation in the 1970s and '80s because the world could no longer produce enough food for its rapidly growing population.

Ehrlich outlined his theories in *The Population Bomb*, a bestseller that offered policy prescriptions ranging from compulsory birth control, cutting government payments for dependent children, applying a luxury tax to cribs and nappies, and ceasing food aid to the Third World.

Not surprisingly, Ehrlich was branded a crackpot and his basic premise that a terrible age of famine was at hand never eventuated. In fact, there was less famine in the last quarter of the 20th century than at any time in history, the result of world food production growing at 15 per cent annually and outstripping the growth in population. The famines that did occur arose from natural catastrophes or the interruption of food supply and cultivation in war zones.

But today, with the cost of staples such as rice, corn, wheat and soybeans skyrocketing, with food riots breaking out across the globe and with the UN's World Food Program warning of a "silent tsunami" of hunger threatening the lives of 20 million of the world's poorest children, galloping food inflation is raising Ehrlich-like fears of a world where famine is no longer confined to war zones and sub-Saharan Africa.

The Dominion Post - [Questions surround price, availability of oil in NZ](#)

With petrol approaching \$1.90 a litre in New Zealand, heading for the highway and looking for adventure is just wildly expensive. For the average family car, the annual petrol bill is probably up by about \$450. So, do record oil prices mean this is as bad as it gets?

If the New Zealand dollar drops suddenly by US10c, as some economists expect once interest-rate falls are clearly in sight, then petrol will easily shoot through \$2 a litre. If we get back to US70c and oil is above \$US120 a barrel, expect petrol closer to \$2.17 a litre, based on an economist's rough estimates. Recent reports in Australia said Caltex predicted petrol at more than \$A3 a litre inside a decade.

The Australian - [How to meet demands of 'sexy' sector](#)

He is well known in the resources industry for a blunt, no-nonsense style. He may be a former union leader but he has earned great respect from the boards and management of Australia's biggest resource companies over many years in opposition. Now, as their minister, his decisions are about to have a huge impact on their bottom line. And the biggest test of that -- and the new Government -- will clearly be how the new carbon emissions trading system is implemented. These major companies will be looking to the minister to protect their interests; he is working closely with Climate Change Minister Penny Wong.

It's extremely complicated. But Ferguson seems most unlikely to back Ross Garnaut's

insistence that there should be no special assistance for trade-exposed industries in the resources sector. "Garnaut represents a contribution to the debate, an important contribution, but decisions on the system will be made by the Government," he says.

"The last thing we want to do is develop a system that means that we force offshore industries which are highly energy intensive, potentially making no impact on reducing global emissions whilst penalising the Australian economy." It's a statement that will help warm the heart of the NSW Government as it prepares to sell off its coal-powered electricity assets. But there are plenty of other companies in a range of industries across the country which remain extremely agitated about the impact of the Government's climate change plans.

Don Voelte, chief executive of Woodside Petroleum, for example, has given a particularly tough warning about the potential impact on the domestic economy. He says Australia is the country with the most to lose -- a prospect that apparently keeps him up at night worrying. "It's not that the intention isn't good -- it's the unintended consequences," he says. "Australia has an economy that is an extraction economy. It is not a service economy," he says. "It is digging it up and sending it overseas. "Trying to manage an extraction economy with a carbon tax on top of it -- that has never been done before."

#### Brisbane Times - [Oil pipeline to stay closed after spill](#)

Energy giant Santos has abandoned plans to reopen the Moonie to Brisbane oil pipeline after a leak last July which forced the evacuation of 500 homes in Algester in Brisbane's south. And an Ipswich councillor, who has fought for more than a decade for the pipeline to be scrapped, believes it could see many house values rise dramatically.

The 300km pipeline was originally laid in 1964, running from Moonie, then south of Toowoomba to the Lockyer Valley, Ipswich and across the Logan Motorway into Brisbane's southern suburbs terminating at the oil refineries at Lytton.

#### ABC - [Geothermal industry given boost by Victorian Government](#)

The geothermal industry has received additional exploration land from the Victorian Government. Hot water will be forced to the surface from underground aquifers, then converted to steam to drive turbines in the state's south-west.

#### The Age - [Move to let off steam](#)

ANOTHER 19 areas, mostly in northern Victoria, are being opened up to explore their geothermal energy potential. Following the issuing of 12 permits for geothermal exploration on the south coast of Victoria last year, the Government has allotted permits for 154,000 square kilometres in the rest of the state. Greenerth Energy, Geogen Victoria, Granite Power, Hot Rock and Torrens Energy already have licences.

#### The Age - [500 properties face demolition](#)

HUNDREDS of homes, offices and factories in the city's inner east and west will be compulsorily acquired if Sir Rod Eddington's \$18 billion plan to solve Melbourne's transport woes is implemented. Analysis of the Eddington study shows that under one option for the proposed 18-kilometre cross-city road tunnel – which would begin at one of two sites in the inner west and meet the Eastern Freeway in Clifton Hill – 496 properties would have to be demolished.

That plan would link the Eastern and West Gate freeways via a tunnel emerging near the Maribyrnong River. An elevated freeway would then travel from Dynon Road to the West Gate, and require later widening of the West Gate. The proposal would result in scores of properties being acquired between Footscray Road and the West Gate in a corridor near the Maribyrnong River.

#### The Australian - [Is he on the right track?](#)

Everyone is aware of the growing pains being experienced across the world as China and India undergo an economic revolution every bit as significant as the industrial revolution that reshaped Europe in the 19th century. Two billion people are being lifted from poverty to middle-class affluence, many of them resettled into new cities that are springing up throughout China.

The result has been a spike in oil and commodity prices. In Australia, the high oil price has pushed petrol to more than \$1.50 a litre. A similar boom has pushed food prices to record highs, exacerbated by a high oil price feeding into increased fertiliser and transport costs. Food prices are being further inflated by the diversion of crops to biofuels in a bid to boost fuel security and combat global warming.

The big question for economists is whether higher interest rates really are the answer to the inflationary forces being unleashed by China's transformation.

#### The Australian - [Ease bottleneck or lose port deal](#)

AUSTRALIA'S competition watchdog has put Hunter Valley coal producers on notice that they have until the end of the year to find a solution to bottlenecks at the Port of Newcastle or face losing approval for their current capacity-sharing arrangements. Infrastructure at Newcastle, the world's biggest coal terminal, has failed to keep pace with surging demand for coal, leading to congestion and delays at the port.

#### Radio New Zealand - [Genesis says Huntly station to run another 20 years](#)

Genesis Energy says it will be at least 20 years before it shuts down its coal-fired Huntly power station. The Green Party is calling for the closure of the power station and a moratorium on consents for new coal mines to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. But Genesis Energy spokesperson Richard Gordon says New Zealand's largest power station is still the backbone of the country's supply.

UNELECTED Labor Party members secretly commandeered a CityTrain yesterday for a fully catered tour of suburban stations. The party members set off on their three-hour tour just after the morning peak hour, while commuters crammed into overloaded suburban trains.

New Scientist - [North Pole could be ice free in 2008](#)

You know when climate change is biting hard when instead of a vast expanse of snow the North Pole is a vast expanse of water. This year, for the first time, Arctic scientists are preparing for that possibility. "The set-up for this summer is disturbing," says Mark Serreze, of the US National Snow and Ice Data Center (NSIDC). A number of factors have this year led to most of the Arctic ice being thin and vulnerable as it enters its summer melting season.

In September 2007, Arctic sea ice reached a record low, opening up the fabled North-West passage that runs from Greenland to Alaska. The ice expanded again over the winter and in March 2008 covered a greater area than it had in March 2007. Although this was billed as good news in many media sources, the trend since 1978 is on the decline. ... "There is this thin first-year ice even at the North Pole at the moment," says Serreze. "This raises the spectre – the possibility that you could become ice free at the North Pole this year."

SMH - [John Howard a 'war criminal'](#)

Former Malaysian prime minister Mahathir Mohamad has called for Western leaders including Australia's former prime minister John Howard to be charged with war crimes over the war in Iraq. In a speech at Imperial College in London, Mahathir called for an international tribunal to try US President George Bush plus former prime minister Tony Blair of Britain and Howard for their part in the conflict, said a spokesman for the Ramadhan Foundation, a Muslim group that organised the event.



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