



Drumbeat: December 8, 2010

Posted by [Leanan](#) on December 8, 2010 - 10:23am

[The Peak Oil Crisis: The Future of Government](#)

What all those calling for reduced government fail to grasp, however, is that 200 years of cheap abundant fossil fuel energy has transformed this country into something completely different. Take food as an example, 200 years ago, some 90+ percent of us were involved in its raising or otherwise procuring food -- or we would simply not eat. Now, thanks to cheap fossil fuels, less than 3 percent of us are engaged in agricultural endeavors and I suspect only a fraction of our "farmers" still have all the requisite skills to feed themselves and their families in the style to which they have become accustomed. Take away the diesel for the tractors and farming is going to become mighty different. Has anyone yoked an ox lately?

In short, 200 years of abundant energy have allowed us to build an extremely complex civilization based on dozens of interrelated systems without which we can no longer live - at least not in the style to which we have become accustomed. Food production and distribution, water, sewage, solid waste removal, communications, healthcare, transportation, public safety, education --- the list of systems vital-to-life and general wellbeing goes on and on.

[Kessel Sees Mexican Crude Oil Production Falling For Seventh Straight Year](#)

Petroleos Mexicanos, the state-owned oil company, is likely to post a seventh straight year of output declines in 2011 after the company faced delays to attract private investment for exploration projects.

Output will likely average 2.55 million barrels a day next year, down from 2.58 million in 2010, Mexican Energy Minister Georgina Kessel said today in an interview. "From there on, we'll continue to increase, very gradually, our production," said Kessel, who is also chairwoman of the state-owned company.

[Venezuela tells foreign players to boost output](#)

Venezuela's government has ordered foreign oil companies to present higher production targets at more than 20 joint ventures within a month, as the Opec nation struggles with falling output of its main export.

[Lyondell seeks new Houston refinery crude supply](#)

HOUSTON (Reuters) - LyondellBasell said on Wednesday it is seeking new crude suppliers for its Houston refinery in order to replace some of the oil provided by Venezuela, which is looking to diversify its customer base beyond the Americas.

[Enbridge Oil Pipeline Shipments Are Being Curtailed on Full Storage Tanks](#)

Canadian Oil Sands Trust is shipping less crude oil than normal on Enbridge Inc.'s pipeline system because tanks along Enbridge's system are full, Alison Trollope, a spokeswoman for the producer, said in a telephone interview.

"There may be some barrels that are produced in December that are shipped in January, but we don't expect any material impact at this time," she said. All western Canadian producers are probably affected by the situation, which developed about five days ago, Trollope said.

[Syncrude cuts shipments due to pipeline rationing](#)

(Reuters) - Syncrude Canada Ltd, one of the biggest oil sands producers, is delaying crude shipments to cope with the tight pipeline space that is plaguing the country's oil market, the joint venture's largest owner said on Wednesday.

[Quebec shale gas play defies industry M&A trend](#)

While leading energy firms scramble to buy a slice of the Marcellus shale in the United States, a potentially much richer shale gas deposit in Canada is drawing few buyers, and even fewer sellers.

[Companies say fuzzy rules slowing Gulf permits](#)

(Reuters) - New regulations for oil and gas exploration after the BP Plc oil spill remain unclear and continue to slow the issuance of drilling permits in the Gulf of Mexico, executives with Anadarko Petroleum Corp and Apache Corp said on Wednesday.

[ANALYSIS - Saudi Arabia plays Yemen double game - experts](#)

(Reuters) - Saudi funding of Yemeni tribes for help against al Qaeda risks undermining central authority in the kingdom's poor neighbour at a moment when the government there needs all its clout to fight security threats.

The West relies heavily on the top oil exporter to help stabilise Yemen: Saudi Arabia is the largest financial donor, bankrolling the government of ally President Ali Saleh

Abdullah, helping supplying Yemeni forces and building hospitals.

But analysts and diplomats say Saudi Arabia is at the same time sidelining Sanaa by directly supporting tribes who dominate much of the unruly country located strategically on the southwestern tip of the Arabian Peninsula.

[Sudan, South Sudan Armies Pledge to Safeguard Oil Flow](#)

The Sudan Armed Forces (SAF), the Khartoum-based government's army, and its former enemy, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) of south Sudan, have signed an agreement to secure the flow of crude oil from Sudanese oil fields, irrespective of the outcome of the upcoming referendum on south Sudan self-determination.

[Iran to raise petrol production](#)

Iran says it plans to boost its domestic gasoline production by 10 million liters per day in the face of Western efforts to cripple the country's energy sector.

"With the inauguration of development projects in the country's oil refineries by late March, the country's oil production will increase by at least 10 million liters per day," Iranian Oil Minister Massoud Mirkazemi was quoted by SHANA as saying on Tuesday.

[Tehran citizens blame smog on domestic petrol](#)

Tehran residents are blaming the Iranian government's production of poor-quality petrol for the serious air pollution affecting Iran's capital city.

[Russia, Belarus fail to agree on oil export terms](#)

(Reuters) - Russia's Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and his Belarussian counterpart Sergei Sidorsky failed to reach an agreement on oil export terms on Wednesday, raising the possibility of a new energy dispute between Minsk and Moscow. In June, Minsk threatened to cut Russian gas transit to Europe in a pricing dispute, and this time round it is oil which is causing tensions.

[FACTBOX-Key political risks to watch in Russia](#)

(Reuters) - Russia is one of the world's most lucrative markets but is heavily dependent on energy and commodity exports, plagued by corruption and its political stability rests on one man, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin.

[Asia Distillates-Dec/Jan in small backwardation](#)

SINGAPORE (Reuters) - Asian gas oil's prompt timespread swung to a small backwardation on Wednesday, its highest level in 3-1/2 weeks with sentiment supported by signs of firm heating fuel demand in the West.

Higher heating fuel demand in Europe and the U.S. due to a cold snap could help reduce a persistent glut of distillate inventories in Asia, which have held above the 14-million-barrel mark for eight consecutive weeks.

[Gasoline: \\$3 by Christmas and a 'Mini-Apocalypse' in Spring?](#)

With crude oil prices at the highest level in more than two years, holiday shoppers face the agony of \$3-a-gallon gas this holiday season -- and much higher prices likely by springtime. "It now look as if December 2010 is probably going to be the most expensive month for gasoline in the U.S. since September 2008," says Tom Kloza, chief oil analyst at Wall, N.J.-based Oil Price Information Service.

[Analysis: Demand for High-Spec Jackups to Keep Growing](#)

Drilling contractors are renewing their jackup fleets with high-specification jackup rigs through both construction and acquisition as operators renew exploration efforts following the 2008 global financial crisis.

[Pertamina Says Saudi, Kuwait Oil Deals in Pipeline](#)

Jakarta. Pertamina plans to sign agreements early next year with Saudi Arabian Oil Company and Kuwait Petroleum for two oil refinery projects in Java.

[OPEC: Kazakhstan to Boost Liquefied Hydrocarbon Supplies in 2014](#)

OPEC forecasts an increase in supply of liquid hydrocarbons by Kazakhstan from 1.5 million barrels per day in 2009 up to 2 million bpd in 2014.

According to the OPEC report-2010 on the prospects of the oil market, the volume of liquid hydrocarbons delivered by Kazakhstan in 2010 will hit 1,6 million barrels per day, in 2011 -- 1.7 million, 2012 and 2013 -- 1.8 million barrels per day.

[China May Postpone Fuel Price Increases on Inflation, CICC Says](#)

China, the world's fastest-growing major economy, may delay increases in fuel prices because of inflation concerns, the nation's largest investment bank said.

Adjustments may be postponed even after crude prices have risen 5 percent since the

last fuel-price adjustment in October, Bin Guan, an analyst at China International Capital Corp., wrote in an e-mailed note dated yesterday.

[The Gross Mismanagement of Mexico's Oil Industry](#)

Sayulita, Mexico – Mexico should be rich. Instead, the country provides a disheartening example of what author P.J. O'Rourke might call “making nothing from everything.”

[Stung by protests, NOC throws ball into govt court](#)

KATHMANDU: Nepal Oil Corporation (NOC) General Manager Digamber Jha on Wednesday said the state-owned entity would roll back the price hike on petroleum products provided that the government provides a fund of Rs. 40 crores.

[Arabs in drive to tap unconventional gas](#)

Arab countries are set to embark on a drive to tap their massive unconventional gas resources following a sharp rise in production in the United States and development plans in other nations, according to an Arab study.

Gas producers in the Arab world and other countries are already following with strong interest what is commonly described as the "revolution" represented by the breakthrough of unconventional gas, including shale gas, tight gas and coal-bed methane, the first of these forms being the most developed at present in the United States, the Paris-based Arab Oil and Gas magazine said.

[Range Hedges 80% of 2011 Gas Production](#)

Range Resources wants to ensure that it has a steady stream of cash to pay for its 2011 developmental drilling program. The Fort Worth-based company will focus on the Marcellus Shale natural gas play in Pennsylvania, where it has a huge leasehold of 1.2 million net acres and steadily escalating production.

Accordingly, Range already has "hedged" more than 80 percent of its 2011 gas production, Rodney Waller, senior vice president, said Tuesday. Hedging involves entering into contracts to secure a guaranteed price for future production.

[Crude Oil Price Ten Year Forecast to 2020](#)

You can look the whole story up on Wikipedia, but I remember in 1995 Dr. Colin Campbell made a presentation to the British Parliament explaining to them in words of one-syllable that oil would peak worldwide in 2007 (something that the IEA has

conceded four years late (they say it was 2006)), and that there would be a dramatic increase in prices (then they were about \$15).

No one listened; they just kept pumping out Scotland's oil and selling it at a ridiculously low price, until it ran out. Short term political gain trumps long-term strategy every time, in democratic systems weighted towards lofty sound-bites, cheatable expense-account living and index-linked pensions for the "in-crowd", and avoidance of pain today.

[BP, Contractors 'Breathtakingly Inept,' Reilly Says](#)

(Bloomberg) -- BP Plc, Transocean Ltd. and Halliburton Co. were "breathtakingly inept" and made mistakes that were "largely preventable" at the doomed Macondo well, a leader of a panel investigating the disaster said.

[Michael Economides: BP Full Of Fault For Gulf Spill But Obama Guilty Of Propagating Economic Disaster](#)

Environmental activists and renewable fuel lobbyists have leveraged one company's unorthodox missteps to push for onerous policies meant to cripple the entire U.S. industry. From the president's hastily initiated deepwater moratorium to BOEM's continued de facto drilling ban via its permitting process to last week's Interior announcement to reverse plans to open up lucrative development in areas like offshore Virginia, BP's isolated and avoidable incident has been wielded as an instrument of punishment for a thriving American industry.

[Barton Loses Bid to Lead House Energy Panel](#)

Rep. Joe Barton failed Tuesday in his bid to lead one of the House's most powerful committees despite an aggressive campaign that involved mobilizing the support of tea party groups.

Barton's seniority placed him in line to chair the Energy and Commerce Committee, but he was weakened from the start by the fallout from his apology to BP PLC during a congressional hearing on its oil spill. He also needed a waiver of a term-limits rule to remain the top Republican on the committee for a fourth term.

[U.K. Pledges Faster Review of Support for Renewable Electricity Projects](#)

U.K. developers of large-scale renewable electricity projects will get earlier indications about how much support they will receive under the Renewables Obligation from 2013, Energy Minister Charles Hendry said today in a statement.

[Iran plans wind farm for Pakistan](#)

TEHRAN (UPI) -- An Iranian company linked to the country's Energy Ministry said it plans to build a massive wind farm in Pakistan's southern Sindh province.

[U.S. Daily Ethanol Production Soars 6.1% to Record, Energy Department Says](#)

U.S. ethanol production jumped 6.1 percent last week to a record 939,000 barrels a day, according to the Energy Department.

Output gained the most since July 30. Stockpiles of the gasoline additive sank 4.2 percent to 16.4 million barrels, the steepest decline since Aug. 20 and the lowest level since Nov. 5, the department said today in Washington.

[Electric cars flooding the market in 2012](#)

NEW YORK (CNMoney.com) -- If you want to buy an electric car today, good luck, it's slim pickins. But fast forward three years and you could be facing more plug-in choices than you'll know what to do with.

That could be a problem for carmakers because most Americans still have little or no interest in buying electric cars.

[PANRC: The Witch of Hebron I](#)

When he was finally at the podium he began with, "I'm going to address the woman thing right up front. I'm appalled that educated, intelligent women of the boomer generation are so incapable of imagining a world where a completely different economic status has evaporated the gains of women. You need to get over it."

At 38, I'm a bit crushed to find that Kunstler, who I've met several times at some length, apparently thinks I'm a baby boomer, when I'm young enough to be his daughter. I'm not sure which of us that reflects more poorly on. Given that I've spent at least as much time thinking and writing about the role of women in the post-peak future than he has I'm willing to make the case that the problem is not our failure to consider the subject. So I do want to talk about the gender issues in the book, particularly since Kunstler remains so defensive about his position on gender, but I'll save that and give it its own post, because there's a larger issue in The Witch of Hebron.

[Turn challenges into opportunities - Cull](#)

The global issues of climate change and peak oil must not only be faced, but Dunedin's response to them should be turned into opportunities for the betterment of the city, mayor Dave Cull says.

Fresh from receiving a report on peak oil, which followed another earlier this year on climate change, the issues were clearly at the centre of Mr Cull's thinking as he put together his state-of-the-city address.

[Jeff Rubin: What will 2011 bring? Triple-digit oil](#)

The strongest manufacturing numbers coming out of the Chinese economy in a seven-month period, coupled with plunging oil inventories in the world's largest energy consuming economy, have sent oil prices to a 25-month high. With no let-up in China's fuel demand, the world should be looking at triple-digit oil prices again within a quarter.

That may come as a shock to those who thought the bloated oil inventories that came in the wake of the last recession would provide a buffer against future oil price spikes. Suddenly, that buffer has literally gone up in smoke.

[North America: The new energy kingdom](#)

The American Petroleum Institute reports that the United States produced more crude oil in October than it has ever produced in a single month, "peak oil" or not.

This reversal of trend helps explain why U.S. domestic production for the year will be 140,000 barrels a day higher than last year (which was 410,000 barrels a day higher than 2008). Although the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) says U.S. production will decline next year, who knows?

Could these numbers reflect the beginning of the end for U.S. dependence on Mideast oil?

[Oil Falls a Second Day, Dropping From 26-Month High on Europe Debt Concern](#)

Oil declined after breaking through \$90 a barrel yesterday as on concern Europe's debt crisis will hurt fuel consumption, and after an industry report showed U.S. gasoline supplies surged the most since January.

Futures fell a second day as traders secured profits from a rally to \$90.76 a barrel, the highest in 26 months. The dollar strengthened after European ministers ruled out immediate aid for debt-ridden Portugal and Spain, dulling investor appetite for commodities. The American Petroleum Institute said gasoline stockpiles increased 4.8 million barrels last week.

[Is Another Oil Spike Upon Us?](#)

Once again Goldman Sachs has lifted its oil price forecast into triple digits. GS is not

forecasting oil to reach US\$100 in 2011, it is forecasting oil to average US\$100 in 2011. To put that into context, oil is currently around US\$90 but the 2010 average to date is only US\$79. In other words, oil may yet spike in a similar fashion as it did in 2008.

[OPEC has been down this road once before](#)

Just a few days before OPEC ministers gather in Quito, Ecuador, for their final meeting of the year, crude is again hovering near US\$90 per barrel. Could this be a replay of the last quarter of 2007, when crude rose 19 per cent in three months from about \$80 in early October to more than \$95 by the end of the year?

So far, the trading pattern looks similar.

[OPEC to Maintain Quotas as Crude Exceeds \\$90](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Oil's rally to a more-than-two-year high is unlikely to coax OPEC into raising production quotas at this week's meeting in Ecuador, as member nations consider the global recovery strong enough to withstand price gains.

[Energy commodity report: December 8, 2010](#)

Oil bears are likely to be disappointed by the forthcoming OPEC meeting, judging by comments made by oil ministers from Angola, Venezuela and Libya, which suggest that the cartel will leave its output target unchanged at 24.845mbpd. Harder to interpret are recent comments made by Iran's representative, Mohammad Ali Khatibi, who said that in 2011, it will be natural for crude to be supplied at US\$100/bbl and that it is possible that OPEC members could be forced to decrease their output in the mid-term, given that the era of producing and supplying "cheap oil" is already over. While this ties into the narrative of peak oil which has gained significant traction over the past year, most recently thanks to the IEA's World Energy Outlook 2010 which reports that conventional oil production peaked in 2006, Iran has long been one of OPEC's most hawkish members and has a clear vested interest in "talking up" the oil price.

[U.K. Power Consumption Reached Highest Level of The Year, Grid Data Show](#)

Britain's power use climbed to 60,085 megawatts yesterday, the highest daily consumption this year, according to National Grid Plc data.

Power for immediate delivery traded as high as 464 pounds a megawatt-hour on the National Grid's balancing market at about 5 p.m. London time yesterday, the data show.

[Discussing Gold, Bonds, Fiat Currencies, Economics And Investing With Nick Barisheff Of Bullion Management Group](#)

Peak oil does not mean we are out of oil it just means we're at peak production. So as production declines and demand increases (from the emerging economies), we're obviously going to have an increase in the price of oil which will lead to an increase in the price of everything. Apart from printing money, oil is the only thing that can cause massive inflation across the board. So as we get into those conditions, there will be a global decline in GDP. The importing countries will face an increase in trade deficits that will have to be financed, which results in more money being printed. In each of these cases we are also generating higher and higher levels of unemployment that is basically systemic unemployment.

[A united front will help region take on 'magnificent seven'](#)

Thirty nine years after it was founded, the UAE faces two challenges on the energy front.

As Nejib Zaafrani, the secretary general and chief executive of the Dubai Supreme Council of Energy, astutely observed last week, the MENA countries need to co-operate to satisfy their future energy demands in an environmentally acceptable way.

And, as well as working with its neighbours, the UAE needs to strengthen its internal energy policy.

[Govt may consider diesel price hike - oil secretary](#)

NEW DELHI (Reuters) – India could consider raising diesel prices before planned share sales of state-run companies Indian Oil Corp and Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC), Oil Secretary S. Sundareshan said on Monday.

"It is extremely difficult for the government to pass on the entire burden to the consumers. We will have to go before the Empowered Group of Ministers (EGOM)," he said.

[Aramco plans early start at Wasit](#)

Saudi Aramco plans to bring the giant Wasit gas plant on line in 2013, earlier than expected, as it speeds up gas output expansion to meet rising domestic demand.

[Saudi Aramco Wants Five-Fold Rise in Gulf Petrochemical Sales by 2020](#)

Gulf petrochemicals producers should seek to raise their sales by as much as five-fold to \$200 billion a year by 2020, Saudi Aramco's chief executive officer said today.

[Cheniere Plans to Export U.S. Gas Into Caribbean Power Markets, CEO Says](#)

Cheniere Energy Inc., the Houston- based liquefied natural gas terminal owner, said it plans to sell shale gas in the Caribbean to cut the region's dependence on power generated from burning oil.

Jamaica, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic are among those that could save money by burning gas to generate electricity instead of crude oil-based products such as fuel oil, Charif Souki, the company's chief executive officer, said in an interview in Barcelona last week.

[EU Proposes Regulations Against Power, Gas Market Abuse, Insider Trading](#)

The European Commission, the regulator for the 27-nation bloc, proposed new energy market rules to prevent insider trading and manipulation and ensure consumers pay a fair price for electricity and natural gas.

[Dick Cheney and others face charges in Nigeria](#)

Lagos, Nigeria (CNN) -- Nigerian investigators say they have filed charges against former U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney and others connected to the energy services company Halliburton, accusing them of paying bribes to secure a lucrative natural gas project in the 1990s.

Cheney and nine others are accused of charges that include "conspiracy and distribution of gratification to public officials," Femi Babafemi, a spokesman for the country's Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, said Wednesday.

[Cities seek to cut strings tying up gas money](#)

BEAUMONT, Texas – Advances in drilling have helped American towns and cities strike natural gas, and just in time, it would appear. With many facing cash crunches, the millions of dollars they're reaping in royalties could go toward saving public services, jobs and badly needed road projects.

Not so fast. Because of restrictions built into deeds and federal grants, municipalities can't use most of to their newfound wealth to plug budget shortfalls.

And so, while elected officials struggle to make ends meet, the money sits there, close enough to smell but just out of reach.

[Nigeria oil industry at risk despite military success](#)

OKRIKA, Nigeria (Reuters) - Wearing sunglasses, a gold necklace, and sitting outside his home in a village in the Niger Delta, ex-militant leader Ateke Tom is happy for the army

to take over what were once training camps for his fighters.

Along with other former gang leaders who accepted a government amnesty last year, Tom now finds himself working with the security forces he long fought in Nigeria's southern oil region, trying to persuade those still carrying arms to surrender.

[Nigeria: Militants claim gunfight in oil delta](#)

WARRI, Nigeria -- A militant group in Nigeria's oil-rich southern delta says the military started a gun battle with its members despite ongoing peace talks.

The Niger Delta Liberation Force, led by a militant calling himself John Togo, says the military attacked its fighters Wednesday morning with three gun boats. The group says the attack came as it had negotiated a temporary cease-fire.

[Petrochemicals investment 'can tackle Gulf jobs crisis'](#)

Investing in petrochemicals research and development is one way for Gulf countries to tackle the growing jobs crisis in the region, the chief executive of the world's biggest oil company said today.

[Pipeline a 'hazard' U.S. letter warns](#)

Warning that a proposed Alberta oil sands pipeline poses "major environmental and public health hazards" to the United States, more than two dozen members of Congress are pressing the Obama administration to conduct a new eco-review of the controversial project.

[Utah oil sands project draws fire](#)

NEW YORK (CNMoney.com) -- A plan to bring the first oil sands development to the United States is drawing stiff opposition from environmentalists concerned about global warming and water use, but backers of the project insist their new process is safe.

[Report Finds Oil-Drilling Inspectors in Disarray](#)

WASHINGTON — Federal inspectors charged with ensuring the safety of offshore oil drilling are overwhelmed, insufficiently trained, work without official procedures for some of their most crucial decisions and sometimes have insufficient support from their supervisors for resisting industry influence, according to a report released Tuesday by the Interior Department's inspector general.

[Transocean oil rig suffered start of blow-out in North Sea](#)

Drilling company Transocean had an incident on one of its North Sea rigs similar to that which caused the biggest oil spill in US history earlier this year, it emerged today.

[Obama should step in over Gulf spill fund: Alabama governor](#)

ATLANTA (Reuters) – President Barack Obama should intervene to stop the \$20 billion BP oil spill compensation fund from depriving claimants of their rights, Alabama Governor Bob Riley said on Monday, calling the way the fund was operating "extortion."

[National monument status urged for Arctic refuge](#)

ANCHORAGE, Alaska – President Obama is being urged to bestow national monument status on the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for its 50th anniversary in what supporters say would finally put the refuge's coastal plain beyond the reach of oil companies.

[Russia looks to extend PSAs](#)

Russia may extend production sharing agreements to new oil and gas fields, Energy Minister Sergey Shmatko said today.

[Russia approves Sakhalin-1 budget of \\$2.7 bln for 2101](#)

The Russian government has approved a 2010 budget estimate of \$2.7 billion for the Sakhalin-1 oil and gas project, Energy Minister Sergei Shmatko said on Wednesday.

"Sakhalin-1 budget has recently been approved ... at \$2.7 billion. We have seriously reduced the demands of the project operator," Shmatko told the State Duma lower chamber.

[Gazprom to supply 150-155 bcm of gas to Europe in 2011](#)

(Reuters) - Russian state gas monopoly Gazprom will supply 150-155 billion cubic meters of gas to Western Europe in 2011, the group's export CEO Alexander Medvedev said.

[Gazprom eyes Belgian storage](#)

Gazprom signed a gas storage accord with Belgian pipeline operator Fluxys today, a move which may see the Russian gas giant take up long-term storage capacity in Belgium.

[WikiLeaks list of 'critical' sites: Is it a 'menu for terrorists'?](#)

Undersea cable landings off Japan, Hong Kong, and China; vital energy terminals in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Kuwait; natural gas pipelines from Canada to United States population centers; transformer plants in Mexico; vaccine manufacturers across Europe.

It's a laundry list of "critical infrastructure" – a global grab bag as big as the world – hundreds of sites listed in a cable marked "secret." It was compiled by US embassies and sent to Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton as a cable in February 2009 – but released over the Internet by WikiLeaks Sunday.

[Upton backed for House energy panel chair](#)

WASHINGTON (Reuters) – Representative Fred Upton was chosen by a Republican organizing panel on Tuesday to become the next chairman of the House of Representatives' Energy and Commerce Committee, considered one of the most powerful panels in the U.S. Congress.

[White House open to nukes as 'clean energy'](#)

The Obama administration may consider caving to GOP demands to include nuclear and some coal production in a "clean energy standard," Energy Secretary Steven Chu said Tuesday.

A national "clean" or "renewable" energy standard would require utilities to purchase a percentage of their electricity from nonfossil fuel sources and is seen as one of the administration's few options for a broad energy policy after the death of the cap-and-trade bill.

[Nuclear 'Renaissance' Is Short on Largess](#)

The federal aid now in place for new nuclear plants is far from sufficient for the so-called "nuclear renaissance" that backers are seeking, a panel made up of members of Congress, high-ranking federal officials and leaders of major nuclear companies agreed on Tuesday.

[After a bout of power cuts, Egypt looks to alternatives](#)

In the summer, during the heat of a sweltering Ramadan, a number of Cairo's elite experienced something of an unpleasant surprise: power cuts.

"That was a big one actually; electricity in some high net worth parts of the city was cut,

maybe two to three hours, this never used to be the case," says Omar Taha, an analyst at the private equity company Beltone Financial.

The outages were just the latest indication of Egypt's faltering power infrastructure. Six years of fast-paced economic growth along with a concomitant expansion of its industrial and manufacturing sector has led to demand for electricity increasing some 8 per cent a year - pushing the country's supply of 23 million megawatts (mw) to the limit.

[Egypt's nuclear ambition reignites](#)

Four years ago, Egypt announced it was to restart its nuclear power programme - 20 years after cancelling it following the disaster at Chernobyl in Russia.

[Uranium Prices Surge on China's \\$511 Billion Investment in Nukes](#)

China's push for energy security is igniting a boom in the country's nuclear power plant construction, rekindling demand for uranium and leading its price higher.

[Chinese Tycoon Focuses on Green Construction](#)

CHANGSHA, China — Zhang Yue has grounded his three private jets and personal helicopter. He has stored the midnight blue Rolls-Royce stretch limousine and canary-yellow Ferrari behind the conference center he built here as a reproduction of a French palace. This past summer, he kept the thermostat in his office at a steamy 81 degrees.

Mr. Zhang has embraced frugalities like working in heat rather than turning on an air-conditioner not because of any financial setback. He still shows up on lists of China's wealthiest entrepreneurs, with a personal fortune estimated at \$850 million. But Mr. Zhang, 51, has also emerged as China's most outspoken tycoon on environmental issues.

[GM, more than a dozen companies to build 20 hydrogen fueling stations by 2015 on Oahu](#)

General Motors is partnering with more than a dozen companies to build 20 hydrogen fueling stations by 2015 on the Hawaiian island of Oahu, ahead of the expected arrival of fuel-cell vehicles.

[Hertz Puts Electric Cars on the Fast Track, Starting in New York](#)

Early adopters unwilling to drop around \$32,000 on a new Nissan Leaf will be able to rent that and several other electric cars from Hertz as soon as next week. On Monday, Hertz announced it would be adding electric cars and plug-in hybrids to its urban and college fleets worldwide, starting with New York City, where they'll be available in Connect at Hertz car-sharing locations beginning Dec. 15.

[China seeks to mine deep sea riches](#)

Humans have long dreamt of diving deep into the oceans, but economic pressures are an additional incentive, with new world powers such as China and India showing a limitless hunger for raw materials. Mineral resources take various forms: polymetallic nodules, manganese crusts and massive sulphides, a source of lead, zinc and copper mainly produced by magma spilling out of cracks in the Earth's crust.

[Clean Energy Sector Scrambles to Save Incentives](#)

Representatives of the renewable energy industries are scrambling to salvage what they say is a crucial federal incentive that has helped keep them afloat during the worst of the recession.

[Buy Anything that Burns: Billionaires Want Coal for Christmas](#)

About a month ago, two of the world's richest men abruptly visited the country's least populated state.

You probably didn't hear about it.

With seemingly only local fanfare, Warren Buffett and Bill Gates took a one-day trip to Gillette, Wyoming, the self proclaimed "Energy Capital of the Nation."

[Change is Upon Us, Part 4: Decarbonizing Our Economy](#)

We are at a crossroads. The future is not going to be like the past. Our economic model, which requires growth to occur through economic development, is not sustainable. Climate change is happening as a result of human industrial development. We are currently living in an age of Peak Oil, where less oil is now being produced each year than there has been in the past, since about 2005-06, despite demand generally tending to grow year by year. As demand outpaces supply, the price of oil will increase. Higher oil prices will affect everything we do, especially the way in which we grow, harvest, and transport our food.

[Must We Embrace the 'Sacred' to Survive Peak Oil?](#)

There's no doubt that religion and spirituality can be a divisive subject. I've asked before whether green religion will sink us or save us, and suggested that preaching at people is not the best way to win green converts. A similar debate seems to be hotting up within the Transition Movement, with some people suggesting that to survive peak oil, rediscovering the sacred is not just a collective imperative—but a personal one too. In fact, say the proponents of a spiritual transition, "...if you're not spiritually connected to

the Earth and understand the spiritual reality of how to live on Earth, it's likely you will not make it." That kind of talk has some other people worried. Very worried.

[Scarcity, Sustainability & The Illusion of Choice](#)

Energy scarcity intrinsically implies lack of wealth, lack of abundance, not enough to go around, or a serious depletion of a finite resource. With it comes fear, the need to control what resources are available and ensuing power struggles. We are hearing more about peak oil, and that demands on current energy infrastructures in many countries are reaching their limits. Peak oil means we will approach oil scarcity at some point, perhaps sooner than we think. Within the context of energy scarcity we begin to fall apart, but not because of scarcity, but because our definitions and concepts about energy are wrong, like a bad math equation that keeps us going in circles. The oil zoo on the planet is not the prevailing equation, as it's now frankly being shown the door and on the decline. It's only the prevailing equation for those who continue persist on working the energy monopoly game.

[O&G Book Review: Tom Bower's Oil](#)

John Jennings, a former Shell chairman, once remarked, "Oil breeds arrogance because it's so powerful." And where arrogance and power meet stand the world's top oilmen, wielding obscene amounts of money and influence while providing the world with its most critical resource. Tom Bower's new book details how their behavior over the last two decades has made them some of the most hated and mistrusted people on the planet, and why that has had little effect on the world price per barrel.

[FREE: #1 Best Selling Amazon "Energy" Book](#)

Author Craig Shields makes available his best-selling energy book as a free download. The book is based on interviews with 25 of the world's top researchers, authors, analysts and industry leaders. A surprisingly large percentage of these experts point to these "tough realities" that exist in the technology migration, the economic implications, and the political issues that affect the world energy industry. Says Shields, "The truth is, the energy industry faces tough realities in several forms, not only technology readiness, but more importantly the pushback from powerful vested interests."

[Justices to Rule on States' Emissions Case](#)

The Supreme Court agreed Monday to hear arguments on whether plaintiffs can turn to the courts to seek reductions in emissions by coal-burning utilities on the ground that the emissions are a "public nuisance."

[U.S. and China Narrow Differences at Climate Talks in Cancún](#)

CANCÚN, Mexico — The United States and China have significantly narrowed their

differences on the verification of reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, officials said, providing hope that a United Nations conference here on climate change can achieve some modest success.

[Single, Overarching Climate Pact 'Unrealistic,' Former U.S. Officials Say](#)

A single, legally binding global climate treaty is impossible to craft and the United Nations should give up trying, focusing instead on a series of measures to reduce global warming, two former U.S. State Department officials said.

[Tentative Signs of Life for Greenhouse Gas Controls](#)

For a patient suffering from paralysis, the movement of a single finger is momentous. So, in the face of a threatened hiatus in government-led action on climate change, what the Environmental Improvement Board of New Mexico has done in the last month or so is worthy of note. It has twice approved plans to cap and/or reduce greenhouse gas emissions, most recently on Monday evening, when a plan for annual 3 percent reductions beginning in 2013 won approval in a 4-to-1 vote.

[If an island state vanishes, is it still a nation?](#)

The rising ocean raises questions, too: What happens if the 61,000 Marshallese must abandon their low-lying atolls? Would they still be a nation? With a U.N. seat? With control of their old fisheries and their undersea minerals? Where would they live, and how would they make a living? Who, precisely, would they and their children become?

[The Ice Man Warneth](#)

CANCÚN, Mexico -- As the main plenary session at climate talks here was getting under way on Tuesday, I received word that Lonnie Thompson, a longtime student of ice and climate at Ohio State University, has a paper coming out in a behavior journal, The Behavior Analyst, concluding with unusual bluntness that humanity is in deep trouble.

[A warning at climate talks: Glacier melt speeding up](#)

CANCUN, Mexico (AP) — The lives and livelihoods of people in South Asia are at "high risk" as global warming melts glaciers in the Himalayas, sending floods crashing down from overloaded mountain lakes and depriving farmers of steady water sources, U.N. and other international experts reported Friday.



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