



## Drumbeat: August 20, 2011

Posted by [Leanan](#) on August 20, 2011 - 9:53am

### [Sixty-five arrested outside White House in oil pipeline protest](#)

Police arrested 65 environmentalists outside the White House Saturday as they staged a demonstration urging President Obama to block a proposed pipeline that would bring oil from Canada's oil sands projects to Gulf Coast refineries.

The civil disobedience launched two-weeks of White House demonstrations – with more arrests to come – as activists seek to increase political pressure on Obama over the proposed Keystone XL pipeline.

### [Is Canadian Oil Bound for China Via Pipeline to Texas?](#)

The proposed Keystone XL pipeline that would ship oil from Northwest Canada south through Mid-America to the Texas Gulf Coast has drawn sharp opposition from environmentalists worried about Canadian forests, greenhouse gases, and potential leaks.

But one line of attack is more about economics and geopolitics than land and water. And it strikes at pipeline proponents' central argument that Keystone XL would buttress U.S. energy security. Opponents contend instead that the pipeline's petroleum could largely bypass the American markets and be shipped to Asia.

### [Libya rebels take two more cities](#)

ZAWIYA, Libya (AP) — Libyan rebels are in full control of the strategic western city of Zawiya, pushing Moammar Gadhafi's troops back on the road east to Tripoli.

An Associated Press reporter on Saturday visited positions held by Gadhafi troops over the past week — all of which are now under rebel control.

### [Better radiation education needed to end prejudice](#)

Ever since the accident at Tokyo Electric Power Co.'s Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant, many evacuees from Fukushima Prefecture have been subjected to discrimination

and prejudice.

A student who transferred from the prefecture to a primary school in the Kanto region was shunned by classmates and eventually stopped going to class. Some gas stations in the Tokyo metropolitan area have refused to serve cars bearing Fukushima license plates.

### [Two Voices Are Heard After Years of Futility](#)

Yuichi Kaido and Mizuho Fukushima have battled to alert people about the dangers of nuclear power, and are seeing major results only after this year's tsunami.

### [Falling oil and gas prices: A blessing and a curse](#)

NEW YORK (CNMoney) -- Oil prices are falling once again, and relief at the gas pump is likely on the way too.

But be careful what you wish for. Low gas prices can sometimes be more a symptom of a weakening economy, than a cure to consumers' woes.

### [Crude Oil Caps Fourth Weekly Decline; Brent Extends Record Premium to WTI](#)

Crude oil fell, capping a fourth weekly decline, on concern that slower global economic growth will reduce fuel demand. Brent oil traded at a record premium to the U.S. contract.

Futures in New York have dropped 18 percent since July 22, the biggest four-week decline since October 2008. Citigroup Inc. and JPMorgan Chase & Co. cut their U.S. growth forecasts as officials struggle to stem Europe's sovereign-debt crisis. Oil pared losses as the dollar weakened, making commodities more attractive as an alternative investment.

### [Britain downplays likelihood of ban on Syrian oil](#)

LONDON (AP): Britain is not urging Europe to join the United States in imposing a ban on Syrian oil in a bid to increase pressure on President Bashar Assad, a government minister said Saturday.

Foreign Office Minister Alistair Burt said sanctions should target the regime, not ordinary Syrians.

### [Libyan Rebels Claim to Advance on Tripoli](#)

Libyan rebels say they are advancing toward Tripoli after overcoming a force commanded by Muammar Qaddafi's son Khamis to capture the western town of Zlitan.

### [Oil minister does not return to Libya-Tunisia source](#)

TUNIS - Libya's oil chief, Omran Abukraa, is in Tunisia after deciding not to return to Libya from a trip abroad, a Tunisian official source said Saturday, the third apparent defection this week of a senior figure associated with Muammar Gaddafi's rule.

### [Fracking Oversight Raises Staffing Questions](#)

A panel charged with advising New York officials on regulating a controversial form of natural gas extraction known as hydrofracking will first examine whether the state government has enough staff members to properly monitor and enforce new drilling regulations.

### [Japan Quake Is Causing Costly Shift to Fossil Fuels](#)

YOKOSUKA, Japan — The half-century-old, oil-fueled power generators here had been idle for more than a year when, a day after the nuclear accident in March, orders came from Tokyo Electric Power headquarters to fire them up.

“They asked me how long it would take,” said Masatake Koseki, head of the Yokosuka plant, which is 40 miles south of Tokyo and run by Tokyo Electric. “The facilities are old, so I told them six months. But they said, ‘No, you must ready them by summer to prepare for an energy shortage.’”

Now, at summer's peak, Yokosuka's two fuel-oil and two gas turbines are cranking out a total of 900,000 kilowatts of electricity — and an abundance of fumes.

### [Japan's Crude-Oil Imports Fall 11.2% in July; Coal Declines, LNG Increases](#)

Japan's crude oil imports fell 11.2 percent in July to 16.03 million kiloliters from a year earlier, the finance ministry said in a preliminary trade report today.

### [All Deliberate Speed for Nuclear Reforms?](#)

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is moving forward on recommendations made by an internal task force studying the Fukushima Daiichi triple meltdown. But it is not moving quite the way its chairman wanted.

### [Belarus Suspends Pact to Give Up Enriched Uranium](#)

MOSCOW — Belarus said Friday that it would suspend an agreement to give up its supply of highly enriched uranium, torpedoing, at least temporarily, what was considered a significant victory by the Obama administration in curtailing the spread of dangerous nuclear material.

The move comes in response to the latest wave of economic sanctions imposed by Washington this month as punishment for a ruthless crackdown on government opponents, including widespread arrests, that has continued unabated for months.

### [Review of Index of U.S. Energy Security Risk \(U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 2011\)](#)

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce recently released its *Index of U.S. Energy Security Risk: Assessing America's Vulnerabilities in a Global Energy Market, 2011 Edition* (80 pgs). This is an update of last year's inaugural edition and is published by the Chamber's Institute for 21st Century Energy.

### [Green Way to Social Network With Like-Minded People](#)

Code Green is an open-source website created by a former St. Petersburg College student who wants to spark a green movement in Tampa Bay.

### [Book Review: \*Independence Days: A Guide to Sustainable Food Storage & Preservation\* by Sharon Astyk](#)

Unless you keep current on peak oil predictions, you already live off the grid, or you entertain notions of a coming apocalypse, you probably haven't given much thought to your pantry or how long you could feed yourself without making a trip to the grocery store. Most of us, myself included, could go a week. Maybe a week and a half, at the most. In *Independence Days: A Guide to Sustainable Food Storage and Preservation* (2009), Sharon Astyk encourages us to shed some of the negative assumptions that come with storing food for the future and makes a rational case that all of us should give far more thought to feeding ourselves, independently of the current "just-in-time" supermarket system.

### [More colleges offer organic, sustainable ag courses](#)

Experts said those graduates shouldn't have trouble finding jobs as the agriculture industry replaces aging farmers — the average age of a U.S. farmer is 57 — and farmers increasingly look to diversify their operations.

### [Two Oklahoma Indian Tribes Contest State for Water Rights](#)

The Choctaw and Chickasaw Indian tribes in Oklahoma have filed a federal lawsuit to protect water rights they say derived from long-ago treaties and to prevent exports of water from their traditional homelands without their permission.

The dispute had been simmering for more than a year, since the export of water from Sardis Lake in southeastern Oklahoma to Oklahoma City was proposed in June 2010.

### [Britons Face Insurance 'Crisis' as U.K.'s Government Trims Flood Defence](#)

Direct Line and Aviva Plc (AV/) are among British insurers threatening to tear up an agreement with the government that commits them to cover high-risk properties, even after claims rose threefold to 4.5 billion pounds in the last decade, because the U.K. is cutting spending on flood defenses. Smaller insurers not party to the so-called Statement of Principles are also cherry-picking low-risk homes and undercutting rivals, according to Aviva's head of claims, Dominic Clayden.



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