



Drumbeat: October 28, 2011

Posted by [Leanan](#) on October 28, 2011 - 9:25am

[The Peak Oil Crisis: The Energy Trap](#)

The Energy Trap study found cases in which more than 50 percent of a family's income was going into paying for and fueling the car. What is most alarming is that 30 years ago the spike in gasoline led to a 12 percent reduction in the demand for gasoline as consumers drove less, switched to smaller cars, and sort of adhered to the 55 mph speed limit that had been put in place to save gasoline. It is now more than three years since the \$4+ price spike of 2008 and demand has only fallen some 3 percent.

[Oil Drops, Paring Biggest Gain Since March After Japanese Output Declines](#)

Oil fell in New York, paring its biggest weekly gain since March, as a drop in Japanese industrial output prompted traders to lock in profits from yesterday's price surge.

Futures slid as much as 1.5 percent after Japanese factory production declined 4 percent in September, almost twice as much as the median estimate of economists surveyed by Bloomberg News. Oil rallied yesterday after data showed the U.S. economy grew in the third quarter at the fastest pace in a year and European leaders agreed on a plan to curb the region's debt crisis.

[Qatar not cutting oil output, sees no surprises at Dec meet](#)

(Reuters) - OPEC member Qatar is not cutting production as supplies from Libya come to market, the Gulf country's oil minister said here on Friday, adding he did not expect any major changes in output from the oil producers' group when it meets in December.

"Qatar is not cutting (oil output)," Oil Minister Mohammed al-Sada said after a meeting in New Delhi when asked about the impact of increased Libya supplies.

[Gasoline Cargoes to U.S. May Rise as Refineries Cut Production of the Fuel](#)

Gasoline shipments from Europe across the Atlantic Ocean may jump during the next two weeks as U.S. refineries cut production.

Thirty-five tankers were booked or due to be chartered for loading in the two weeks,

according to the median estimate in a Bloomberg News survey of six shipbrokers, one owner and two traders yesterday. That's the highest number since the survey began four months ago, and eight more ships than last week.

[PetroChina Third-Quarter Net Beats Estimates, Sinopec on Higher Oil Prices](#)

PetroChina Co.'s third-quarter profit growth outpaced gains by rival China Petroleum & Chemical Corp. as higher crude oil prices helped counter refining losses at Asia's biggest company by market value.

[Total profits up 17 percent for third quarter](#)

PARIS, France (AP) - French oil company Total said Friday that soaring crude prices boosted its third-quarter profits despite a weak dollar.

France's largest company by market value saw its net profit rise to euro3.3 billion (\$4.6 billion) in the third quarter, up 17 percent from the same period last year. Revenue was euro46.2 billion in July to September, up from euro40.2 billion last year.

[Exxon's Tillerson Needs Record Oil Output to Meet Production Growth Target](#)

Exxon Mobil Corp. (XOM) Chief Executive Officer Rex Tillerson may struggle to reach his full-year production target after rallying oil prices reduced the company's take from wells in Africa and output slumped in the U.S. and Europe.

Exxon, the world's largest company by market value, needs to boost production in the current quarter to the equivalent of 5 million barrels a day to meet the 4 percent growth target for 2011 that Tillerson set forth during a March presentation to analysts in New York.

[Higher oil prices help Chevron more than double 3Q net income, but production slips](#)

Chevron Corp.'s quarterly profit more than doubled as a jump in oil prices made up for declining production.

[Why is gas still priced so high?](#)

I can't understand why the TV news says that the price of oil is about \$80 a barrel but the price of gas nationwide averages \$3.40 a gallon. When oil was that price two years ago, a gallon of gas was about a dollar less. Why is gas still priced so high? Also, the politicians are always talking about reducing our dependence on foreign oil and saying we should allow a pipeline from Canada to Texas and also drill offshore more. Where's

the oil really coming from? Can pipelines and drilling really solve our problem or is this some sort of conspiracy by the oil industry?

[Missouri's Cold Weather Rule Takes Effect November 1](#)

"The Cold Weather Rule has helped more than two million Missourians maintain heat-related service during the harsh winds of a Missouri winter," said PSC Chairman Kevin Gunn. "A temperature moratorium and notice requirements prior to a service disconnection are two of several Cold Weather Rule provisions that exist for customers during the winter."

[Heating Oil Dealers Steering Away From Price Lock-In Contracts This Winter](#)

Around the state, fewer heating oil dealers are offering customers fixed-price plans this winter with many citing the oil market's volatility as their reason for discontinuing the option. The U.S. Department of Energy is predicting that this winter's heating oil prices will be among the highest ever.

[Africa's oil scramble heads east](#)

Africa's new scramble for oil is heading east, where the potential could be huge but the risks are far higher than in the well-established sector on the continent's west coast.

Waters off East Africa have yet to produce a commercially viable oil source but gas discoveries off Mozambique and Tanzania have prompted lots of interest.

[Is Asia heading down the wrong energy path?](#)

The focus of Asian countries appears to be more on grabbing as many energy resources as they possibly can in order to boost economic growth so the region's economies can industrialize as fast as possible.

The underlying philosophy is that Asia deserves the kind of lifestyle enjoyed by the developed world and that energy is necessary to power societies where consumer goods are king.

The problem with all this is that it is just not going to be possible to reach the level of energy intensity needed to match the lifestyle of the average American, European or Australian.

[Direct subsidies to fossil fuels are the tip of the \(melting\) iceberg](#)

The problem with tallying up direct subsidies is that it misses the two greatest sources

of public support for fossil fuels, both of which are indirect, both of which *dwarf* direct subsidies.

[EU Seeks Stricter Offshore Oil Rules After Spill, Extends Liability Zone](#)

European Union regulators proposed stricter safety standards for offshore oil and natural-gas exploration to curb the risk of a major accident after BP Plc (BP/)'s spill in the Gulf of Mexico, the largest in U.S. history.

[Pipeline Plan Stirs Debate on Both Sides of Hudson](#)

A debate that pits energy needs against safety risks is playing out in the New York region as federal officials weigh approval of a natural gas pipeline that would terminate in the West Village in Manhattan.

[N.Y. Advisory Panel Delays Report on Fracking](#)

In a sign that New York State may have to slow down a bit before authorizing a new kind of natural gas drilling, an advisory panel is delaying its recommendations on how the state should pay for new staff members to enforce regulations on the drilling operations.

[Nuclear Promotion Dropped in Japan Energy Policy After Fukushima](#)

Japan's government abandoned its policy of promoting atomic power, saying it will reduce reliance on the sector in its first annual review of energy since the Fukushima nuclear disaster.

The energy white paper, approved by the Cabinet today, calls for a reduction in the nation's reliance on atomic power in what was the third-biggest user of the fuel before the March 11 earthquake and tsunami. It also omits a section on nuclear power expansion that was in last year's policy review.

[5 Myths About Energy in America](#)

Myth No. 1: The world is about to run out of oil.

Yergin believes that this isn't exactly true. In his book, he discusses evidence from studies of oil fields and oil wells that show that "the world is clearly not running out of oil." In fact, the "estimates for the world's total stock of oil keep growing."

Yergin understands that this is very surprising for people to hear. Essentially, "[T]echnology opens up new frontiers and there's new supply coming on, including in the United States." Ultimately, Yergin disagrees with the peak oil adherents, those who believe we're running out of oil. He writes, "[T]he world has decades of further

production growth before flattening out into a plateau -- perhaps sometime around mid-century -- at which time a more gradual decline will begin."

[Welcome to Earth](#)

Peak oil is the moment when the maximum rate of global oil extraction is reached. You've probably heard the rumors: Once the easy oil is pumped from the ground, corporations will go after the hard-to-reach oil that's located in more remote areas of the world and ever greater depths of oceans—potentially resulting in environmental degradation like the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. Some say we've already reached this point.

And, guess what? Difficult oil is expensive oil.

The success humanity has had in the daily feeding of 7 billion people is reliant on inexpensive (dollarwise) oil products. All those bulldozers for deforestation, tractors for tilling fields, computers for calculating yields, diesel fuel for shipments, nitrogen for fertilizer—all of it, everything—called “modern agricultural techniques” are utterly dependent on cheap petroleum products.

[America's Predicament: The 7Th Billion Human On Planet Earth](#)

The biggest question: as we face water shortages, Peak Oil energy exhaustion, resource depletion, accelerating air pollution and quality of life decaying in our cities--why aren't Americans concerned and why aren't American leaders taking any steps toward a stable and sustainable future for all citizens and fellow creatures? Why do we think we enjoy immunity from the problems out there in Haiti, Egypt, India, Mexico and Bangladesh?

Today, the United States imports 7 out of 10 barrels of oil. In other words, we exceed our carrying capacity for energy. It's not sustainable. Every added American equates to 25.4 acres of wilderness being destroyed to support that person known as "ecological footprint." Take 100 million X's 25.4 acres, which means 2.54 billion acres of land must be destroyed to support that massive addition of humans to America.

[Women Dethrone Malthus](#)

At its heart the book conveys a simple fact. The rate of population growth has been decelerating for decades – well before the publication in the 1970s of Paul Ehrlich's alarmist, implicitly racist, and dead wrong neo-Malthusian tract, *The Population Bomb*. It is amazing that many environmentalists are unaware of the crucial fact of slowing population growth, and that some react with hostility to it. Further, somewhere between 2050 and 2100, growth will stop and then come crashing down. It is not the sky that will be falling but the population. From Eastern Europe to Southern Italy to Singapore, that day has already arrived and sooner or later it will come to all parts of the planet. In fact, it may well be that in the next century the problem will be a population that is not large enough to be optimal; but that will be for the 22nd century humans to decide and act on.

[Satellite shots show human impact on Earth](#)

(CNN) -- On the last day of October 2011, the U.N. says the world population will hit seven billion people -- an increase of one billion since 1999.

To show some of the impacts of this vast human upheaval, Canadian anthropologist Felix Pharand has created a series of visualizations mapping the presence of technology onto a selection of satellite images showing the Earth from space.

[Ignoring gen Y while the world sleepwalks to catastrophe](#)

On the denial of the limits to growth, *The Australian* is more hardline in my opinion than say *The Age* or *The Sydney Morning Herald*, but in general the major dailies push this line, especially with respect to immigration and population issues. So lend me your ears, I implore you, for what I have to discuss today affects not only human beings but every single species on the planet.

[Fixing instead of fretting](#)

Boulder's Bioneers sets out to conquer fears of something much scarier than the typical Halloween mask: Visions of a post-peak-oil apocalypse, pictures of the collapse of the world food system, the dismal view of a country run by corporate monopolies.

[Mr Unflappable, the great green persuader](#)

The head of Irena, the UN's clean-power agency, is tasked with persuading nations to sign up to a renewable-energy agenda. He says being based in a major oil producing country is an advantage.

[Drive For Free](#)

The premise of this article is that every American household with a place to plug in an electric vehicle (EV), and a place to put in solar photovoltaic system (PV), should get that EV and that PV, because then you drive for free and thereby save over \$60,000. This opportunity might apply to 100 million of America's 256 million vehicles. In addition to saving a great deal of money, you'll be supporting the American economy, reducing global warming, and improving health, and even helping to bring peace to the world. Yes, dare to think big.

[Exclusive Q&A With Elon Musk And Chris Paine: How The Electric Car Got Its Revenge](#)

Documentary filmmaker Chris Paine is obsessed with electric cars: he's driven one for the last 12 years, and his 2006 movie, "Who Killed The Electric Car?", followed GM's recall and forced destruction of the EV-1, one of the first mass-produced electric cars.

But the electric car is back, and Paine is documenting its return.

[Brazilian Amazon Groups Invade Site of Dam Project](#)

BUENOS AIRES — Waving bows and arrows and dressed in war paint, hundreds of members of indigenous communities in the Brazilian Amazon invaded the construction site of the Belo Monte hydroelectric dam on Thursday.

[Windmillers' Tradition Hangs on in Remote Areas](#)

Windmills were crucial to 19th-century settlers of West Texas and the Great Plains because little surface water existed. Thousands of them, far smaller than the giant electricity-producing turbines that have sprouted around West Texas in recent years, still twirl in remote pastures. The windmills go where electricity cannot reach and cattle need to drink, though cheaper solar pumps are starting to push them out.

"Obama wants everybody to go green," said Bob Bracher, the president of Aermotor Windmill, a company that has manufactured windmills for more than 100 years and still makes a few thousand a year in a warehouse in San Angelo. "Well, hell, we've been green since 1888."

[White House Garden Activist Calls for National Garden Strategy](#)

"Although a kitchen garden revolution has started, we're still scratching at the surface of what gardens can do and will need to do in an increasingly hot, crowded and malnourished world," says Doiron who is Founding Director of the nonprofit Kitchen Gardeners International. Citing statistics about obesity, hunger, projected population growth and peak oil production, Doiron makes a strong case for investing more heavily in food garden education and promotion as part of the solution to the world's health, economic and environmental challenges.

[Industry warns carbon tax could cause huge job losses](#)

By setting a minimum price, he was hoping to introduce some certainty and stability.

He hoped that would provide ideal conditions for investment in low carbon forms of energy and encourage businesses to cut their emissions.

But it also looks likely to cause a big cut in jobs amongst the biggest energy users.

[Denmark welcomes China in from the Arctic cold](#)

(Reuters) - China has legitimate economic interests in the Arctic, Denmark's ambassador said on Friday, welcoming partnership with Beijing in the rapidly thawing polar region but adding that a possible resource rush would come with obligations.

With climate change linked to melting ice caps in the Arctic, the prospect of untapped hydrocarbons, fishing grounds and new summer shipping lanes has whetted China's appetite for polar research and exploration capabilities.



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