



Written by on May 18, 2011

The Energy Story: NIMBYS, BANANAS and Greens

Prices at gas pumps are at some of the highest levels ever and rising. Americans want answers. In particular they want the names and numbers of those to blame. To answer that question perhaps they should simply consult the phone book or look in the mirror. Because the main culprits in the rising gas prices aren't necessarily members of OPEC, but the American people who support policies that block new drilling and the building of new refineries on American soil. It's that simple.



The real political parties in America are the NIMBYs (Not In My Back Yard) and the BANANAs (Build Absolutely Nothing Anywhere Near Anything). These two political forces are driving the future of the nation by dictating the policy agendas of the Republicans and Democrats. Soon, the national bird will no longer be the noble eagle, but the ostrich.

Americans are becoming adolescent children who want towns to remain small, yet they themselves have children who must have schools, jobs, and homes of their own. They want to build their homes in rural areas with beautiful vistas, yet complain when someone else wants to do the same thing. They argue that a neighbor's new home has blocked their "view shed," never considering that their home used to be someone else's view shed or open space. Americans support programs to lock away land to keep wilderness pristine, free of human development, power lines, and cell towers. Yet they want to use their cellphones and computers wherever they go. They want three car garages to house the family van, the daughter's little bug and the husband's sports car; but don't blight the landscape with filling stations, refineries, or power plants.

There's no place in our pretty, clean, politically-correct, well-ordered world for industry to make the things we need, yet when all of our toys don't work, Americans are outraged and they want heads to roll. Fix it!

Yes, what silly children Americans have become. But, one can hardly blame the results of three decades of implementing the radical agendas of special interests like the Sierra Club and The Nature Conservancy. These rich and powerful groups have spent billions of dollars to push their agenda of no growth (called Sustainable Development) through Congress and into our local communities. And they use the news media and corporate commercials to constantly barrage us with the "Go Green" message to indoctrinate the rest of us to feel guilty about our very existence. We're sorry we need to use energy. We're sorry that we have to grow food to eat. We're sorry that we keep inventing creature comforts for ourselves.



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The answer from a sorry society, while not giving up our toys, is to just ban the building of the things that make them work. It all sounds so noble. We pack public meetings to express our outrage over the idea of building a power plant in the community. We certainly don't want that smelly thing around here! Did you know that new cell tower would interfere with the view of the historic battlefield? General Robert E. Lee didn't see that tower during the battle, so we must ban it now. So, just get on your cellphone and call everyone you know to come to the meeting and oppose it. And also, make sure you let them know that we are all properly indignant about those evil developers trying to build more houses. Tell everyone in your new neighborhood to join our protest.

Such is today's modern American society. We are indeed properly indignant with no responsibility for the consequences. Now the chickens are indeed coming home to roost. Energy we so desperately need to run our homes, cars, airplanes, and industry can't be produced fast enough. As a result, the cost of heating and cooling our homes, driving our cars, and flying our planes is spinning out of control.

Eighty-eight percent of the energy for America's transportation, industry, government, and residential needs comes from oil, gas, and coal. Without them the nation shuts down. Yet there is no drive in Congress to ease regulations to allow for domestic production. Instead, government sees only one solution — stop using energy. They call it "sustainable."

Government pretends to address the energy shortage with massive grants for "alternative energy," like wind mills and solar cells. This is the answer, says Barack Obama, to get us off of our dependency on foreign oil. These green myths provide only about one percent of our energy needs without much hope soon for improvement. Alternative energy is fast coming to mean no energy.

Of course, a few well-placed oil wells would do much more to reduce that dependency — and actually reduce the costs at the pump. But, if you want to see a green turn blue — just suggest such a simple solution. Through pressure from environmental organizations, Congress and federal agencies have banned oil activity from more than 300 million acres of federal land onshore and more than 460 million acres offshore in the past 20 years. An estimated 67 percent of oil reserves and 40 percent of natural-gas reserves are locked away on federal lands in America's western states. One accident in the Gulf, caused by negligent government regulators not enforcing the law, resulted in the complete banning and destruction of the U.S. off-shore supply.

Research now shows that America has perhaps the largest oil reserves in the world, yet it is locked away. Today's domestic oil production comes from a diminishing number of wells scattered throughout the country. The most important discovery of new oil reserves has been in Alaska in the Arctic National Wildlife Reserve (ANWR). Yet, Congress has refused to allow drilling for this urgently needed American resource because of lies told by environmentalists that the drilling will damage the Alaskan ecosystem. Such Green scare-mongering is simply not true. Technology allows for a very small footprint for the wells in an area that is nothing but a frozen tundra wasteland. For this America starves for energy.

Instead, Congress plays to the whims of the Greens, NIMBYs, and BANANAs by ignoring domestic resources and importing oil from unstable political sources. By doing that, Congress eliminates pressure from highly paid green lobbyists who want the land locked away. Of course, the politicians also sidestep town meetings with angry NIMBYs who don't want oil wells in their backyards.

However, the nation's energy problem is much worse than just not being able to drill our American oil. Even if we could drill our own oil or even had a glut of imported oil, the crisis couldn't be averted to bring oil prices down. That's because the United States hasn't built a new oil refinery since 1976. All



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remaining American refineries are running at full capacity. There is barely time for the plants to shut down to perform needed upkeep and repairs because such activity will cause a bump in the system and force prices up. The industry can do nothing to keep up with demand. Rules and regulations, both federal and state, are blocking the industry's ability to build new refineries.

Even worse: old, worn-out refineries are closing, reducing capacity even more. In California, 10 refineries representing 20 percent of the state's refining capacity were closed between 1985 and 1995. With California energy policy literally dominated by radical environmental groups, it is unlikely that any new refineries will ever be built.

To build a new refinery would take a risk of at least \$2 billion in a 10-year undertaking. In the end, even if permits are obtained there is no guarantee that the refinery will ever be built. Nobody wants to invest in new refineries because there is no money to be made. If there were investors willing to take the risk, where would it be built? What town would welcome it? What land would be used? Radical environmentalists are well organized to build pressure on any politician who might support such an endeavor. They know how to energize the NIMBYs and BANANAs. All the greens have to do is voice concerns about air pollution or the dangers of large trucks carrying hazardous materials or the potential for leakage into the environment. Just a hint at these things and poof, the refinery is history. Scientific facts are rarely heard in the din of the argument.

The Department of Energy predicts domestic oil consumption will increase 43 percent by 2025, but production will grow only by 23 percent. So, as our nation's future teeters on the brink, Congress plays a coward's game by producing an energy policy that pours more than \$23 billion of taxpayer money into alternative energy sources like windmills, solar panels, and ethanol, all in the name of conservation. The truth is, no combination of conservation, technology, or alternative fuels can come close to replacing the fossil fuels system already in place. It will take years for research, testing, permitting, construction and distribution systems for replacement alternatives to be realized. Meanwhile, we need oil and gas now!

As Congress ignores its responsibility to the needs of the nation, the United States imports more than 60 percent of its oil from unstable nations in the Middle East who uniformly hate us and would gleefully aid our demise. The entire Middle East is in a state of revolt. U.S. government energy policy has left us at the mercy of Libya's revolution and is the immediate cause of the current jump in oil prices. Saudi Arabia, the largest exporter to the United States, is in grave danger of destabilization. Arab radicals are angry over the Saudi royal family's aid and support to the United States in the war on terrorism. If a coup or assassinations were ever to take place in that country by the radical factions that have successfully launched several recent terrorist attacks in the Kingdom, the world's oil supplies would go into a tail spin. The U.S. economy would be pulverized.

Moreover, Saudi Arabian oil fields are manned in great numbers by foreign workers who live in compounds run by the oil companies. These are tantalizing targets for the terrorists anxious to hit back at the United States. One has already been kidnapped and beheaded. The U.S. State Department has issued warnings for the American workers to get out of Saudi Arabia. If those workers obey that warning, who will run the oil fields and who will supply our oil? Our leaders have made us nothing but pawns to Middle Eastern kings and potentates, and to anti-American communists in South America. They call this a policy?

Now is the time (in fact, it's way past time) to put a long-term plan in place with bold policies to keep the nation's lights on and transportation and industry moving independent of world conflict. It must



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include reopening the off-shore fields as well as opening access to energy-rich areas currently off limits for exploration. Such areas include offshore sites and the Outer Continental Shelf, and the mere 2,000 acres in the ANWR.

Typically, as the nation's urgently needed resources are locked away and the existing oil market grows more unstable by the day with prices rising to new heights, our politicians are playing the usual blame game. The Democrats want an investigation of the oil companies to see if they are gouging the consumer, ignoring the fact that the real gougers are federal and state governments which tax every gallon by as much as 50 cents. This is on top of the increased costs of environmental regulations on the oil industry. Perhaps it's time for a congressional investigation into how much the taxpayers have been gouged by the "Green" industry through the billions of dollars in grants shelled out to this fraud.

As the corporations, which take those grants, rev up their propaganda for "green" cars, "green" light bulbs, and "green" smart meters, the only solution permitted in the public energy debate is energy shortages, higher costs and sacrifice. Anyone attempting to talk about real solutions is shouted down by the green "ecologarchy" that now controls nearly every decision on the federal, state, and local level. Real solutions to assure our nation and our civilization survive are not even on the table.

The United States plays dumb as the Middle East grows ever more dangerous and unstable. We have allowed ourselves no running room, no bargaining chip, and no alternative should the region completely implode into terrorist anarchy. Our economy would quickly resemble the World Trade Center on 9/11 and our national security would face severe threat. Energy has become the molten lava of an inferno burning just under the surface of the U.S. economy, which is primed for meltdown.

So oil prices continue to rise as demand increases and supply gets locked away in a national park, or bottlenecked in an ever-shrinking number of American refineries. Our elected representatives play silly games. The Greens relentlessly push their anti-civilization agenda. And the indignant NIMBYs and BANANAs continue to sleep, satisfied that their world is well controlled. These are the cadre of self-serving brats who now are selling out America to their whims.

***Tom DeWeese** is one of the nation's leading advocates of individual liberty, free enterprise, private property rights, personal privacy, back-to-basics education, and American sovereignty and independence. Go to americanpolicy.org for more information.*

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