High Gasoline Price is Good

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Many are complaining about the high price of gasoline. Oil companies are being blamed for the high prices as price gougers.

There are several reasons why gasoline prices are rising. The underlying reason is that world oil extraction is peaking. The oil companies know this. That is why they have not been building more refineries; they know that there will be less oil to refine in the years ahead. To keep track of the decline in oil extraction in the months and years ahead, view http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/ipsr/t14.xls regularly.

The decline in oil extraction is inevitable. Oil discoveries for the world peaked in 1966 at about 56 billion barrels per year and now we are lucky if the discoveries are 5 to 10 billion barrels per year. We cannot extract oil from the Earth if it has not been discovered.

Even worse is the oil discovered per capita for the world, because of the increase in world population. In 1966 at the discovery peak it was about seventeen barrels per person per year, now it is about one barrel per person per year. Since extraction follows discovery by about forty years later, in forty years there will be about 95% less oil available for use by each person in the world. We must start planning now for that huge decrease. We could increase the oil use per capita by reducing population with preconception birth control.

Since oil must be discovered and then extracted to make gasoline, get used to increasingly higher prices for gasoline forever. The faster gasoline prices rise the quicker we will be forced to be more efficient in our use of energy and use other sources of energy for transportation. That is why European countries have high gasoline taxes, and therefore higher gasoline prices than the United States has, and why they are ahead of the United States in developing alternate sources of energy.

It has been known for some time what those efficiencies and alternate sources of energy are. Railways are much more efficient than cars and trucks for mass passenger and freight transport and can be run on electricity generated by renewable sources. For personal transportation, electric vehicles and hybrid vehicles that use biofuels that can do without gasoline are much more efficient than gasoline or diesel vehicles. Because of their high efficiencies and use of biofuels, their greenhouse gases emissions are much lower than gasoline and diesel vehicles. That is another reason that we need to quit burning gasoline and diesel, which are made from oil. We need a crash program to greatly quicken the pace of converting transportation to railways and electric/hybrid/biofueled vehicles.

We need oil for useful chemicals we get out of it. It is a shame that we are burning it, instead of saving it for those needed chemicals. Our descendants will blame us for wasting it.

Getting liquid fuels from coal is not the answer. The efficiency is low and the greenhouse

gases are high. Hopefully we will learn how to sequester the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide when burning coal to produce electricity, since we have enough coal to last about 200 years.

Using safer nuclear reactors for electricity production will probably increase, but the uranium will run out in about 200 years. The energy efficiency of using uranium, when all aspects are considered, is not very high.

So, for long-term energy use, greater than about 100 years or 4 generations, our only source is solar through photosynthesis, photoelectric and thermal energy (including wind and water movement)

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