

Peak Oil *continued from page 6*

The US economic infrastructure was built on oil that cost \$1 to \$5 dollar per barrel. Considering what alternative energies could be used to replace the dwindling oil supplies, huge problems are encountered. Alternatives are in no position to match the sheer scale of the amount of energy supplied by oil, and all its varied uses. Also huge infrastructure that would be required for alternative energy will come up against the astronomical cost that would be necessary for nationwide usage.

The world currently runs on an energy system set up to use hydrocarbon energy, mostly in its liquid form. Newly envisioned alternative energy schemes will need massive inputs of some source of energy to create the infrastructure of the new source. When oil supplies become prohibitively expensive and in short supply, what energy will build the new infrastructure? This is a key problem with alternative energy. Even at this stage, various huge proposed energy projects around the world are being canceled, due to insurmountable cost realities. The fact is, not only oil is showing signs of reaching it's peak. Some other critically important resources are also showing signs of nearing peak production such as natural gas, uranium, coal, copper, silicon for solar panel production, etc. Biofuels will never come close to compensating for the volume of energy provided by oil, coal and natural gas. Biofuels require massive amounts of water, huge tracts of farmland, and compete with our own food supply. We are facing the imminent decline of the energy that runs our economies, with nothing substantial on the horizon to replace it with.

Many in the US public believe high oil prices are just a Big Oil scam, and even though it is true that US Big Oil has made obscene profits, and they clearly have great influence on politicians, they are not in a position to forestall the upcoming increase in oil prices, and the growing depletion of world reserves. Big Oil is scrambling to try and redirect their future operations into emerging alternative energy markets. The many energy related commercials that are now com-

mon on mainstream TV clearly show how Big Oil companies are trying to morph themselves away from their oil production and distribution base that has carried them to enormous profits in recent decades.

Drastic climate changes now occurring will also put massive pressures on the world's energy supplies. Disruptions in climate will require increasing inputs of energy as societies attempt to rebuild and recover from dire climate events such as droughts and storms of all types, rising sea levels and loss of water supplies. Climate changes will destroy the supporting structures for world societies that were initially built by abundant and cheap energy. Much of the poorer nations of the world will find that rebuilding after disasters will not be possible because the energy to do so will be far too expensive for their weakened economies.

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Wars and social disruptions are happening now because

of tensely growing energy situations, as exemplified by the militaristic moves of the current US administration. Mathew Simmons, energy advisor to Bush, advised him of the looming energy crisis in early 2001. Shortly afterwards, Cheney held his secretive energy meetings, with US Big Oil in attendance. The wars in Afganistan and Iraq have provided this administration great locations for US military bases seen as key to US ambitions of maintaining the flow of energy from the oil rich Middle East. Iraq also has the number two stated oil reserves in the world, and the "Production Sharing Agreements" as pursued by the US would provide US Big Oil unprecedented access to Iraqi oil supplies, from which they would profit for the next 30 years in percentages that are far above those seen in any other world oil contracts.

In Afganistan, oil and gas pipelines are in the works to bring precious energy resources from energy rich countries north of Afganistan, down to the Gulf of Oman, for transport to western countries. Since the invasion of Afganistan, the US has built key military bases along the pipeline routes to protect the oil pipeline projects. Iran, with the world's fourth largest oil reserves, is seen by this administration as representing a threat to the US dominance of energy flow in this region, and

therefore may soon be targeted for air strikes and bombing. In these war endeavors, the huge United States' military complex uses more energy than the US economy, and uses more energy than most other countries combined. World conflicts over energy are now, and will increasingly use vast quantities of oil, and other forms of quickly depleting hydrocarbon energy resources. The current US administration knows the perils facing the economy because of the coming oil depletion, and has chosen a desperate path of war in the Middle East under false pretenses. The real reason is to gain access to the oil rich regions, and to protect oil flow to the West. These wars have no reasonable moral basis.

Oil prices in the last 5 years have quadrupled, further increases are inevitable.

All of the above issues indicate big problems for the world regarding its ability to produce the energy it needs to run its various economies.

The United States could face increasing energy constraints due to geopolitical realities. A growing array of energy institutions, oil industry leaders and other various world leaders are recognizing the dilemma and admitting a problem is close at hand.

Oil has been the indispensable force behind worldwide mass transportation and the astronomical increases in worldwide agricultural production, which represent two key factors that have driven the huge increase in global population. The worldwide capitalistic economic paradigm of endless growth and the super abundance this system has created (as a result of cheap abundant hydrocarbon energy) in the last century, is an amazing mirage that we all thought would go on and on. The reality is, it was a unique and transitory event, and inevitable declines of oil, natural gas and coal will mean a leaner quality of life for humanity, and will precipitate worldwide social disruptions and crisis situations.

Energy reports researched from a multitude of Internet sources from all over the world suggest the world is at, or very near reaching maximum oil production. This is an exceedingly serious situation that will create dramatic changes in the quality of life for all citizens of the world.

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