

Time for a Change Part Two

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In my previous essay I made the outlandish (to some, notably foreign based readers) suggestion that the USA should start tying the cost of goods and services provided to oil producing countries to the cost of a barrel of crude oil purchased from that country.

For example the following countries derive a great deal of benefit from selling the USA oil:

Venezuela - Leader virtually destroyed the middle class, says he wants to model country after Cuba

Nigeria - Place where genocide is an established practice

Mexico - Believes the solution to their problems is to send them to USA

Iraq - Need I say more

Libya - Need I say more

Algeria - Another fun spot

If we were to turn this dependency on their oil into a dependency on our money we would have the leverage, add to that the amount of aid we provide several of these countries (whether from loans or charities) and we should not have issues with them. Instead they threaten us with a price increase and we back down, they refuse to help their own, and we step in, they commit genocide and we look away. Ties into the same idea that you give your wallet to a robber and let the principles of civilized behavior be damned. Let's all be a victim!

Yes, we also get a great deal of our Oil (at least by 2002 numbers) from Canada however, as far as I know Canada doesn't practice genocide, ship their poor to us, chop off various arms and legs of innocent villagers, threaten our other allies, threaten us with nuclear war, or have several civil wars going at a time. Another large source are the countries Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, and while I may not agree with their style of government, for the most part their people appear well kept, well fed and peaceful, do they have problems? Yes, but not like many other countries in that region. However, OPEC is OPEC, and if they choose to run with the OPEC herd, then if such a policy as I have stated were to go into effect, they could choose which side to be on.

I am not sure what the detractors would have us do...I guess just sit back and take it like always. Of course most are from other countries so it isn't any skin off their noses if we do. Many of them have governments which tack on huge taxes on their gas prices to pay for their free medical and other dole out programs so they have had high prices for years. I guess they just feel it was our turn.

What I would really like to see is the full development of a proper mass-transit infrastructure in the USA. However, this isn't going to spring up overnight. Many places are starting to do this, many need to. The high prices will force more conservation, so in the long haul they may be a good thing, however, increases of nearly 60% in a years time, when oil company profits are at an all time high, aren't.

Do I hate the countries that are doing this to the USA? No, I do not. I may detest their leaders and their leader's policies that have driven the countries to this horrible state but I am sure many of the people there are good, decent folks just trying to survive the follies of their governments (as we all do).

Do I want to see children starve? No, however, I am not responsible for their current or future state, their government is, until their governments are "shown the light" they will continue to starve regardless of what we do or don't do. In fact, by forcing their governments to take responsibility we will be saving more in the long term. I believe there is an old saying about "Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day, teach him to fish and he will never be hungry" we need to teach their governments to fish.

As to whether my Christianity is being used as a shield, no, it is not, I was using it to show my own discomfort at the feelings I am having. Yes, by a literal interpretation of the Christian teachings we should just roll over and take whatever is handed us, however, I am not a believer in the literal word-for-word blind following of any teaching. For one, there are many errors in translation in all testaments (Christian or otherwise), add to that deliberate shall I say "shadings" and you need to be very careful when reading for meaning. If we all followed the teachings to the letter, there would be no more Christians after this generation.

Remember, everyone pays the same for a barrel of oil, if your prices are high, look to your government and oil companies, as we in the USA need to look at ours. We should all be looking at ways to cut back. We need to look at oil not as gasoline, but as medicine, plastics, chemicals, things which in many ways are much more important than gasoline.

Yes, we need to look at hydrogen, electric, hybrid vehicles (which by the way I am looking at for a replacement of my current vehicles, when it makes economic sense to do so) and other ways of saving oil. I have been accumulating technologies to use to build an "off the grid" home (solar, wind, etc) and plan to do so as soon as I can, am I going to bankrupt my family and do it right now? No.

However, as worthy as conservation is for our consideration and implementation, that doesn't forgive price gouging, and other things that point to greed, not need, as the reason for price increases.