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“The Price of Oil”

by
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Has anyone noticed how the price of a gallon of gasoline has been tracking pretty much the cost of one pack of cigarettes? Coincidence you say? I think not. Being the conspiracy theorist that I am I know it has got to be a plot by the bit tobacco and oil companies to gouge the American citizen for as much as they can. They can't fool me.

Speaking of high gasoline prices, how many folk out there actually think every oil company in the world have suspended their competition between themselves and agreed to keep gas prices up at sky high levels? How do they do that? Is there a monthly meeting they hold to determine just how they will do it and what the minimum price allowed will be? I'm amazed at how they do that, aren't you. Let's get serious guys... conspiracy schmiracy... nothing but a bunch of hogwash and fear fables.

Of course folks, I don't like paying 3 bucks a gallon anymore than you do but do you really think that we should ask the government to get into price fixing as Nixon did back in the 70s and negate the supply and demand system that has worked so well for so many years? Do we really want to get socialistic in our approach to what we drive and how much it costs to run our vehicles? Let's hope it won't come to that although there are many out there who would like nothing better.

Hopefully, through all this oily hubbub sane and rational people will come to realize that for us to truly take charge of our own country's dependency on oil and start allowing legislation to pass that will allow us to do something that will actually help, such as:

- **Begin drilling in some of the oil rich areas of our own country that have been deemed to be massive fields of oil deposits, i.e., off-shore on the Gulf Coast and the Alaska interior, to mention a couple.**
- **Construct at least 10 more oil refineries throughout our country so we can take all the raw oil we produce and turn it into valuable fuel. A lack of refineries in our country is one of, if not the greatest contributor to high gas prices around the nation. According to industry figures there are between 144 and 149 operating oil refineries in the United States today, the majority concentrated in Texas and California. U.S. production stands at 17 million barrels of oil per day, according to the Department of Energy. U.S. capacity -- the amount of oil the industry infrastructure has the ability to refine -- is running at a near maximum, between 94 percent and 98 percent. There have been no new refineries built in the United States since 1976 while our consumption rate has more than tripled and no steps have been taken to increase our production capacity.**

- **Stop being so scared of nuclear power plants and come into the 21st century by allowing the building of many more throughout the United States.**

I won't name the faction that is responsible for blocking all three of the above viable remedies to satisfy the environmental radicals out there, but their initials are DEMS. They love to talk about our foreign dependence on oil and how we need to become independent but no one on the left wants to do what's necessary to make it happen.

The automobile manufacturers have it within their power and knowledge to produce vehicles with higher MPG numbers but it is the public, not the government, which should put pressure on them to do so. It is said alternative fuels such as ethanol and the like are usually not viable alternatives because their ultimate production costs would be greater than oil.

While something must be done if we want lower oil prices and less dependence on foreign oil, we cannot expect it to get done unless we are willing to take some steps that are minimally risky to the environment. We can't have our cake and eat it too.

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