

The Wonkiness of Gasoline Boycott Emails

by Stephen Elliott-Buckley - Thursday, April 14, 2005

<http://politicsrespun.org/2005/04/the-wonkiness-of-gasoline-boycott-emails/>

Everyone once in a while there is an email going around explaining how consumers can use the free market to force a reduction in gas prices [see below]. These gas campaigns are always so alluring, but ultimately they ring hollow for me, and not just because I sold my car.

I think the following quote is somewhat contentious; I don't believe it anymore [as much as I'd love to hate oil companies]:

- > *We all know that we're being controlled by the oil companies. Does everyone*
- > *remember how they drove up the prices way past a dollar and got the gas*
- > *prices to where they wanted them, claiming there was a shortage of oil?*
- > *Well, there isn't any shortage now, and the oil is more abundant than it*
- > *was 35 years ago when the price of a litre of gas was 29 cents!!!*

And while the supply and demand subtleties of consumer gas prices are in the realm of elasticity voodoo, there has been a huge traffic spike recently in the whole debate about when we as a planet cross the point of increasing consumption, maximized extraction capacity, maximum refining capacity [may have been 8-12 months ago], and decreasing growth in new finds of deposits.

The Hubbert's Peak idea may sum it up best. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hubbert_peak and <http://www.HubbertPeak.com>

- > *all of you that buy Petro Can and Shell....read on....*
- > *It is rumoured that we are going to hit close to a \$1.42 a Litre by the*
- > *summer. Want gasoline prices to come down? We need to take some*
- > *intelligent, united action. Phillip Hollsworth, offered this good idea:*
- > *This makes MUCH MORE SENSE than the "don't buy gas on a certain day"*
- > *campaign*
- > *that was going around last April or May! The oil companies just laughed*
- > *at that because they knew we wouldn't continue to hurt ourselves by*
- > *refusing to buy gas. It was more of an inconvenience to us than it was a*
- > *problem*
- > *for them. BUT, this is a plan that can really work. Please read it and*
- > *join with us!*
- >
- >
- > *We all know that we're being controlled by the oil companies. Does*
- > *everyone*
- > *remember how they drove up the prices way past a dollar and got the gas*
- > *prices to where they wanted them, claiming there was a shortage of oil?*

> Well, there isn't any shortage now, and the oil is more abundant than it
> was 35 years ago when the price of a litre of gas was 29 cents!!!
>
>
> Now that the oil companies and the OPEC nations have conditioned us to
> think that the cost of a litre of gas is CHEAP at \$0.78-\$0.85, we need
> to take aggressive action to teach them that BUYERS control the
> marketplace....not sellers. With the price of gasoline going up more
> each day, we consumers need to take action. The only way we are going to
> see the price of gas come down is if we hit someone in the pocketbook by not
> purchasing their gas! And we can do that WITHOUT hurting ourselves. How?
> Since we all rely on our cars, we can't just stop buying gas. But we CAN
> have an impact on gas prices if we all act together to force a price
> war.
>
>
> Here's the idea: For the rest of this year, DON'T purchase ANY gasoline
> from the two biggest companies (which are now one), PETRO CANADA, SHELL.
> If they are not selling any gas, they will be inclined to reduce their
> prices. If they reduce their prices, the other companies will have to
> follow suit.
> But to have an impact, we need to reach literally millions of PETRO
> CANADA and SHELL buyers. Its really simple to do!! Now, don't whimp out on me
> at this point...keep reading and Ill explain how simple it is to reach
> millions of people!!
>
>
> I am sending this note to at least thirty people. If each of you send it
> to at least ten more ($30 \times 10 = 300$) ... and those 300 send it to at
> least ten more ($300 \times 10 = 3,000$)...and so on, by the time the message
> reaches the sixth generation of people, we will have reached over **THREE MILLION**
> consumers! If those three million get excited and pass this on to ten
> friends each, then 30 million people will have been contacted! If it
> goes one level further, you guessed it..... **THREE HUNDRED MILLION PEOPLE!!!**
>
>
> Again, all You have to do is send this to 10 people. That's all.
>(after all we all forward messages to people every day that have no impact
> other than entertainment!- why not something that could make a difference
> in our pocket books!)
>
> How long would all this take? If each of us sends this email out to ten
> more people within one day of receipt, all 300 MILLION people could
> conceivably be contacted within the next 8 days!!! Ill bet you didn't
> think you and I had that much potential, did you?! Acting together we can
> make a difference!! If this makes sense to you, please pass this message

> *on.*

>

> *PLEASE HOLD OUT UNTIL THEY LOWER THEIR PRICES TO THE \$0.64 OR LESS*

> *RANGE AND KEEP THEM DOWN. THIS CAN REALLY WORK!!!!!!*

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