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Column Article Title: Arguing Over Oil Is Awesome
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I guess I'm not done talking about oil.

As Congress leaves for their August recess, Democrats and Republicans bicker over what plan would do the most to alleviate the high cost of gas. Shall we open up more of the Outer Continental Shelf for oil drilling? How about releasing some of those barrels of crude from the strategic petroleum reserve? And what about that comment that we should properly inflate our tires to reduce fuel use?

It seems that tires aren't the only things that are improperly inflated in the political circus that surrounds energy cost and just like any other public servant with a podium, I've got my own oil ideas.

These concepts were put to the test when my buddy Gnu sent me an article from last month's *New American*, saying that the ideas put forth in the conservative editorial were what he had "been preaching for a year." I suppose it goes without saying that Gnu has one or two thoughts on the future of the oil economy, and they are very, very different than mine.

All of this got me thinking. While Gnu and I trade jabs about the feasibility of domestic oil production and the profit margins of gas peddlers, there is a deeper issues that is being overlooked. After writing reams of arguments to my contrarian friend, it eventually occurred to me that the debate about oil is not just about how much it costs to fill up my Nissan.

I typed up my thoughts to Gnu: "[The *New American* author] says, quite matter-of-factly, that our society will remain dependent on oil for the foreseeable future and so, dear friends, let's keep repeating the same mistakes we've been making since 1973 and keep fouling environmental resources to dredge up fuel that we can then use to keep fouling the environment... I'm not even talking about the dozens of estimates that claim that tapping the currently off-limits oil supplies in the US will produce only miniscule relief from the cost of gas and won't even do that for at least ten years. I'm not even talking about the ecological devastation incurred with drilling or mining. And I'm not even talking about burning fossil fuels and its impact on global climate change.

"What I'm talking about is a refusal to believe in a real change in the way our society and economy works. Sure, I'm a hippy-dippy optimist but even the most rational among us knows that oil is history. It is bad news and sometime, there won't be any of it left to be news. Quite frankly, what we as a society really need to do is come up with a way to help the poor cope with the climb in price and cushion the transition as the US adjusts to a different way of life."

Gnu replied simply, "We should do lunch and discuss this."

So maybe Gnu and I didn't achieve much more than the objections and obfuscations tossed about Congress. So what? What we did realize is that our discussion and the debate fomenting on the national scale, is more evidence that the fossil fuel paradigm is shifting and new realizations about our way of life are on the horizon.

That's as good a reason as any to keep talking about oil.

Find links to the *New American* article and read my full debate with Gnu at <http://kvecogeek.blogspot.com/>.

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