

Graffiti for intellectuals



Simon says



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By Si Frumkin

THE NON-EXISTENT MYTHICAL OIL PROBLEM. Yes, really!!

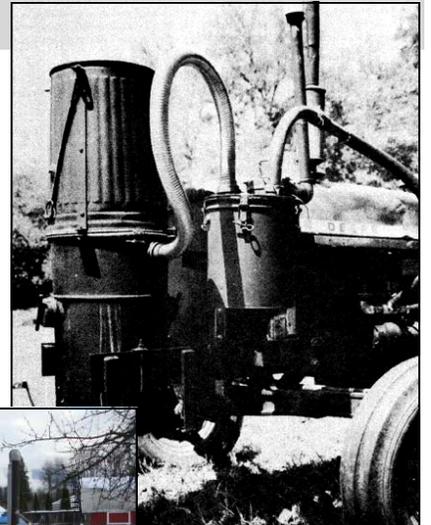
The year was 1942. I was a 12-year old in the ghetto of Kovno, Lithuania. It was then that I first saw, looking through the barbed wire fence, the strange-looking, smoke-belching civilian cars and trucks. They all had tall mechanical devices – like very large samovars or cylindrical water heaters - attached to back bumper and, nearby, a box filled with small pieces of firewood. I was puzzled – none of the German military vehicles had this thing on them.

Later my father explained to me that there was no gasoline available for non-military vehicles and that some of them had been converted to burn wood that was combusted at high temperatures to release methane gas which powered the internal combustion engine.

This was my first experience with what is very much in the news these days: alternative fuel!

After the war I saw newsreels of German occupied France and Holland with the same clumsy wood burning cars moving on the streets there. I guess human inventiveness is not limited by geography.

Firewood wasn't the only alternative fuel source. The Allies had destroyed the Rumanian Ploesti oil fields and Germany failed to capture the oil rich Caucasus region. There



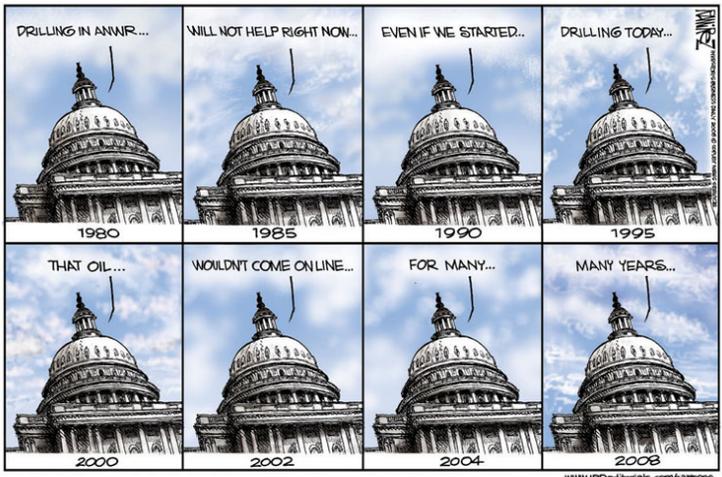
was a critical shortage of oil to run the trucks, tanks, airplanes and U-boats. German scientists alleviated the problem by the problem by developing gi-



ant factories that liquefied coal into gasoline – another alternative fuel. Decades later, during the international boycott of South Africa, that country activated three similar coal conversion plants that still produce 150,000 barrels a day – the output of a medium-sized oilfield. **The United States has 27% of the world's recoverable coal** – the coal in the ground in Illinois alone has more energy than all of Saudi Arabia. Since two barrels of synthetic fuel can be converted from a ton of coal America's reserves are 20 times the proved crude - **enough for 200 years!**

But coal's potential is exceeded by tar sands which may hold 2/3 of the world's petroleum. They occur in many parts of the world and Canada alone has estimated at 1.7 trillion barrels of which about **10% is recoverable at today's prices and existing technology.**

(Continued on page 3—"MYTHICAL OIL PROBLEM")



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Investigative reporter Joel Mowbray pointed out the absurd errors made by Frank Rich in the New York Times regarding the pro-Israel pastor, John Hagee.

In a particularly harsh New York Times column, Frank Rich recently painted a persuasive portrayal of high-profile evangelical Christian minister John Hagee as a nutty anti-Catholic bigot who doesn't much like Jews, either. Simply put, it is a lie. Certain facts cited are, in fact, true. The most damning "facts," however, are not. Therein lies the problem.

Mr. Rich flipped the truth on its head — and it would stretch credulity to think he made an honest mistake. In the YouTube video the Times columnist parades as evi-

iconic blond never would have become, well, iconic.

But those are simply deceptive tactics. This is the big lie: Mr. Hagee never said that "the Great Whore" was the "Roman Church." Certainly not in the video, and it appears, not ever. Mr. Hagee quite clearly said that she represented "the Apostate Church."

Later in his monologue, Mr. Hagee cited Adolf Hitler's boast that he was merely following in the footsteps of the "Roman Church." (Many Protestants have used the "Great Whore" to further anti-Catholicism, but Mr. Hagee has not.) So shoddy was Mr. Rich's research that not only did he not call for comment, but he even declined an offer from Mr. Hagee's publicist to answer any questions — an e-mail that was only sent the day before publication, because the publicist had heard that the column was in the works. (Mr. Rich did not respond to a request for an interview for this column.)

often does, of the long history of Christian anti-Semitism. Mr. Hagee wastes no opportunity to teach Christians that one of the surest ways for a Christian to become a member of the "apostate church" is to engage in anti-Semitism.

For decades, Mr. Hagee has easily been one of the most prominent Christian leaders fighting anti-Semitism. To him, loving Jews as much as one's Christian neighbors is a core tenet of his faith. In his book "In Defense of Israel," Mr. Hagee wrote, "Show me an anti-Semitic Christian, and I'll show you a spiritually dead Christian whose hatred for other human beings has strangled his faith."

If anything, Mr. Hagee is obsessed with purging anti-Semitism from Christendom. Thus, the book contains a lengthy discussion of the history of Christian anti-Semitism.

(It is from this section that his critics have pulled quotes to argue that Mr. Hagee is anti-Catholic. The leading critic, though, the Catholic League's Bill Donohue, this week announced a truce with Mr. Hagee.)

If only Mr. Rich had spent roughly 20 minutes to peruse the relevant chapter, he would have learned two important tidbits: 1)

Mr. Hagee's criticism was directed solely at the Catholic Church's past deeds, and 2) Mr. Hagee also attacked Protestant anti-Semitism, with an in-depth exploration of Martin Luther's considerable influence on Nazi ideology.

Throwing stones from inside his glass house, Mr. Rich wrote, "Any 12-year-old with a laptop could have vetted this preacher in 30 seconds, tops." Given how far off the mark he was, it is only fair to ask of Mr. Rich: Could he not find a "12-year-old with a laptop"? ✱



dence of bigotry, Mr. Hagee is actually doing what he has done for decades: combating anti-Semitism. In other words, Mr. Rich branded Mr. Hagee a bigot when, in fact, he was actually fighting bigotry.

Describing a now-infamous YouTube video clip — which lasts all of one minute and 17 seconds — Mr. Rich wrote: "Wielding a pointer, [Mr. Hagee] pokes at the image of a woman with Pamela Anderson-sized breasts, her hand raising a golden chalice. The woman is 'the Great Whore,' Mr. Hagee explains, and she is drinking 'the blood of the



"The Great Whore of Babylon" by William Blake

Jewish people.' The Great Whore represents 'the Roman Church,' which, in his view, has thirsted for Jewish blood throughout history, from the Crusades to the Holocaust." What the columnist neglects to note is that "the Great Whore" is not Mr. Hagee's term, but rather the Bible's. And suffice it to say that if Pamela Anderson had the same breast size as the rather plain-looking "Great Whore," then she

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Hagee and Ariel Sharon

Were Mr. Rich interested in being fair, he would have noted that Mr. Hagee, for over a decade, personally supported a San Antonio-area Catholic convent which

provided free housing for retired nuns. (Mr. Rich knew this, as it was referenced in the publicist's e-mail.) His failure to adhere to basic journalistic standards might explain why Mr. Rich (perhaps unintentionally) created the impression that Mr. Hagee is, at best, no friend of Jews, or at worst, an anti-Semite. It's an ugly implication — and dead wrong.

Theologically, Mr. Hagee believes that one of the greatest sins a Christian can commit is anti-Semitism — hence the reference in the video to the drinking of the blood of the Jews. He was reminding Christians, as he



Pastor John Hagee received 14 standing ovations at the AIPAC conference in Washington, DC





MYTHICAL OIL PROBLEM from page 1

If you listen to our media and the politicians you may assume that alternate fuels are the primary solution to our energy problems. It is seldom explained how our economy can be quickly converted to ethanol, wind, sun- and hydro energy. At the same time, drilling in Alaska and the coastal waters are off-limits, while the dunces in Washington believe that reducing oil executives' salaries would produce more oil, and that restrictions on building new nuclear plants will somehow make more energy available.

I firmly believe that human ingenuity will eventually discover new and feasible solutions – nuclear fission, no-loss transmission of electricity are just two possibilities. But meanwhile it is imperative to use the energy that is available to us – and the rest of the world – today, in almost endless quantity. It is not an alternative fuel – it is the same old fuel that we now buy from our enemies at extortionate prices.

A recent survey has shown that seventy percent of people worldwide think that the planet is running out of oil. This pessimism – stoked by the irresponsible media and the know-nothing greens is especially strong in the U.S.

Here are some facts as presented by the Energy Information Administration in 2007:

There are more than 1.3 trillion barrels of proved crude oil on earth. We use about 85 million barrels each day so there is enough for about 40 years.

But this is only a tiny fraction of earth's oil. It refers only to what can be extracted under current economic and operating conditions. And the numbers keep growing – in 1882 we reported 95 million barrels of proved reserves; 4.5 billion in 1926; 10 billion in 1936; 20 billion in 1944; 648 billion in 1980, 999 billion in 1993 and 1.3 trillion today. The reason? New exploration and advancements in surveying technology result in new finds each year. At the end of 2007 a giant reserve of oil was found in Tupi, Brazil. It is estimated to hold 8 billion barrels – a second largest find in 20 years! Two months later a neighboring deposit was found; it supposedly holds 30 billion barrels. This compares with the largest Saudi and Kuwait fields. The current high prices will surely lead to similar discoveries elsewhere.

But this is only the tip of the iceberg. The largest availability of **unproved** oil is now from the gigantic reserves of oil shale and oil sands that are more expensive to access and process. They were not economically feasible when oil was \$40 a barrel. Now, the oil is around \$130 and rising. This makes these sources economical, inexpensive, practically inexhaustible, seamlessly absorbed into our economy and, as an extra, punishing the Middle Eastern moguls who will no longer be able to manipulate us.

The notion that we are running out of oil is a myth. There is more available oil today than there was hundreds, fifty or ten years ago and there will be more in the future. Human ingenuity will see to this unless it is stopped by mindless bureaucrats, ignorant politicians and star-eyed environmentalists.

Political Washington, major media and two of the three Presidential hopefuls have made "Big Oil" a dirty word. American oil companies are the most efficient, state-of-the-art, productive entities when compared to those that are run by governments. They keep our economy, our jobs and our cars, trucks and planes running. Their scientists are working every day to improve efficiency, keep costs down and, yes, make a profit for millions of Americans—the shareholders. The oil they pump is one of the major factors in sustaining the high living standard we enjoy. I can only hope that they will be allowed to do so for the future generations. Ω



For something totally different: a few interesting trivia facts

Cause	Annual deaths	One-year odds	Lifetime odds
Heart disease	934,110	One in 300	One in 4
Cancer	551,883	One in 510	One in 7
Alzheimer's disease	49,044	One in 5,700	One in 75
Motor vehicles	41,821	One in 6,700	One in 88
Homicide	15,517	One in 18,000	One in 240
Electrocution (wires/appliances)	925	One in 300,000	One in 4,000
Trains	770	One in 370,000	One in 4,800
Airplanes	747	One in 380,000	One in 4,900
Drowning in bathtub	337	One in 840,000	One in 11,000
Lightning	93	One in 3,000,000	One in 39,000
School bus	58	One in 4,900,000	One in 63,000
Flood	41	One in 6,900,000	One in 89,000
Hurricane	17	One in 17,000,000	One in 220,000
Amusement park rides	4	One in 70,000,000	One in 920,000

Note: Statistics for motor vehicles, homicides, airplanes, trains and floods are for 2000; cancer, Alzheimer's, heart disease and school buses are for 1999; drowning in bathtub and electrocution are for 1998; lightning, hurricanes and amusement park rides are averages over several years.

Source: Risk: A Practical Guide for Deciding What's Really Safe and What's Really Dangerous in the World Around You, by David Ropeik and George Gray of the Harvard Center for Risk Analysis

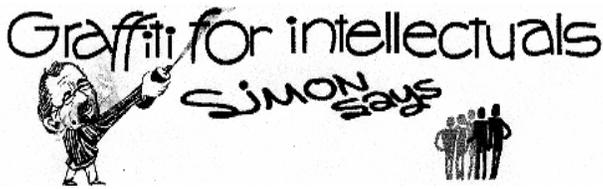
Los Angeles Times

Rank	City	Population (in millions)	—Per 100,000 city residents—			
			Police officers	Officers	Violent crimes	Homicides
1	New York	8.21	36,000	438	634	7
2	Los Angeles	3.85	9,511	247	793	12
3	Chicago	2.83	13,500	476	na	16
4	Houston	2.14	4,800	224	1,131	18
5	Phoenix	1.51	3,000	198	740	15
6	Philadelphia	1.45	6,600	456	1,580	28
7	San Antonio	1.30	2,085	161	615	9
8	San Diego	1.26	1,871	149	508	5
9	Dallas	1.23	2,977	241	1,221	15
10	San Jose	0.93	1,365	147	383	3
11	Detroit	0.87	3,057	351	2,459	48
12	Jacksonville, Fla.	0.79	1,501	189	839	14
13	Indianapolis	0.79	1,600	204	979	18
14	San Francisco	0.74	2,288	308	878	12
15	Columbus, Ohio	0.73	1,829	249	809	12

Source: Census Bureau 2006 population estimates, FBI Crime Reports 2006, the city police departments. Graphics reporting by Steve Meyers

Los Angeles Times

THE OTHER REFUGEES		
	1948	2001
Jewish Population in Arab Countries		
Algeria	130,000	0
Egypt	75,000	200
Iraq	90,000	100
Libya	30,000	0
Morocco	286,000	5,800
Syria	20,000	100
Tunisia	70,000	1,500
Yemen	53,000	200
TOTAL	754,000	7,900



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Fax: 818-766-4321
 Phone: 818-769-8862
 Esfrumkin@roadrunner.com

www.sifrumkin.com

A GAFFE, AN ABSURDITY, A POLICY Charles Krauthammer May 23, 2008

When the House of Representatives takes up arms against \$4 gas by voting 324-84 to sue OPEC, you know that election-year discourse has gone surreal. Another unmistakable sign is when a presidential candidate makes a gaffe, then, realizing it is too egregious to take back without suffering humiliation, decides to make it a centerpiece of his foreign policy.

Before the Democratic debate of July 23, Barack Obama had never expounded upon the wisdom of meeting, without precondition, with Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Bashar al-Assad, Hugo Chavez, Kim Jong Il or the Castro brothers. But in that debate, he was asked about doing exactly that. Unprepared, he said sure -- then got fancy, declaring the Bush administration's refusal to do so not just "ridiculous" but "a disgrace."

After that, there was no going back. So he doubled down. What started as a gaffe became policy. By now, it has become doctrine. Yet it remains today what it was on the day he blurted it out: an absurdity.

Should the president ever meet with enemies? Sometimes, but only after minimal American objectives -- i.e. preconditions -- have been met. The Shanghai communiqué was largely written long before Richard Nixon ever touched down in China. Yet Obama thinks Nixon to China confirms the wisdom of his willingness to undertake a worldwide freshman-year tyrants tour.

Most of the time you don't negotiate with enemy leaders because there is nothing to negotiate. Does Obama imagine that North Korea, Iran, Syria, Cuba and Venezuela are insufficiently informed about American requirements for improved relations?

There are always contacts through back channels or intermediaries. Iran, for example, has engaged in five years of talks with our closest European allies and the International Atomic Energy Agency, to say nothing of the hundreds of official U.S. statements outlining

exactly what we would give them in return for suspending uranium enrichment.

Obama pretends that while he is for such "engagement," the cowboy Republicans oppose it. Another absurdity. No one is debating the need for contacts. The debate is over the stupidity of elevating rogue states and their tyrants, easing their isolation and increasing their leverage by granting them unconditional meetings with the president of the world's superpower.

Obama cited Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman as presidents who met with enemies. Does he know no history? **Neither Roosevelt nor Truman ever met with any of the leaders of the Axis powers.** Obama must be referring to the pictures he's seen of Roosevelt and Stalin at Yalta, and Truman and Stalin at Potsdam. Does he not know that at that time **Stalin was a wartime ally?**

During the subsequent Cold War, Truman never met with Stalin. Nor Mao. Nor Kim Il Sung. Truman was no fool.

Obama cites John Kennedy meeting Nikita Khrushchev as another example of what he wants to emulate. Really? That Vienna summit of a young, inexperienced, untested American president was disastrous, emboldening Khrushchev to push Kennedy on Berlin -- and then near fatally in Cuba, leading almost directly to the Cuban missile crisis. Is that the precedent Obama aspires to follow?

A meeting with Ahmadinejad would not just strengthen and vindicate him at home, it would instantly and powerfully ease the mul-

lahs' isolation, inviting other world leaders to follow. And with that would come a flood of commercial contracts, oil deals, diplomatic agreements -- undermining precisely the very sanctions and isolation that Obama says he would employ against Iran.

As every seasoned diplomat knows, the danger of a summit is that it creates enormous pressure for results. And results require mutual concessions. That is why conditions and concessions are worked out in advance, not on the scene.

What concessions does Obama imagine Ahmadinejad will make to him on Iran's nuclear program? And what new concessions will Obama offer? To abandon Lebanon? To recognize Hamas? Or perhaps to squeeze Israel?

Having lashed himself to the ridiculous, unprecedented promise of unconditional presidential negotiations -- and then having compounded the problem by elevating it to a principle -- Obama keeps trying to explain. On Sunday, he declared in Pendleton, Ore., that by Soviet standards Iran and others **"don't pose a serious threat to us."** (On the contrary. Islamic Iran is dangerously apocalyptic. Soviet Russia was not.) The next day in Billings, Mont.: **"I've made it clear for years that the threat from Iran is grave."**

That's the very next day, mind you. Such rhetorical flailing has done more than create an intellectual mess. It has given rise to a new political phenomenon: the metastatic gaffe. The one begets another, begets another, begets another...Ω