

ARE WE RUNNING OUT OF OIL? by L. B. Magoon

A! Wrong question! The question is "When is THE BIG ROLLOVER?"

Q! What's **THE BIG ROLLOVER**?

A! It's when the demand for oil outstrips the capacity to produce it.

Q! Has **THE BIG ROLLOVER** occurred before? A! On a smaller scale, yes! The U.S. ROLLOVER occurred in 1970 (Figure 1, A). Remember those long lines at the gas stations in 1973? It has also occurred in the Former Soviet Union (Figure 1, B). THE BIG ROLLOVER is global, not local.

Q! Does that mean we are running out of energy? until now, it has been a buyer's market but after THE BIG ROLLOVER. it will be a seller's market

Q! Whose fault is it? Who's holding out? sea,' they are just less plentiful. Same with oil, there is a limit to how much oil the world can produce every day. We are not running out of oil, it will just become more precious.

Q! Should we do something to prepare for THE BIG **ROLLOVER?**

A! As somebody once said, "You can't solve a problem until you know you have one."

A! After we get through the finger pointing, then real solutions will come forth from very creative people in science and technology, in business and politics, in city, state, and Federal governments, and in our other institutions. We all are the stakeholders!

Q! Wouldn't it be better to get started solving this problem before THE BIG ROLLOVER is upon us? A! Absolutely! There's no substitute for planning and implementing that plan before the oil shortage occurs. We can turn a lose-lose situation into a

This paper is published with approval of the director of the U.S. Geological Survey, but the interpretations and opinions presented are the author's, not those of the U.S. Geological Survey, whose scientists have diverse opinions on this and

Q! Are we running out of oil?

A! Not exactly! It means we are going to be running short of a very convenient form of energy, one that propels our **Planes**, **Trains**, and **Automobiles**! Up (Figure 1, C)

A! Nobody, just like the 'buffalo' and 'the fish in the

A! Just like preparing for the Y2K BUG... talk about it, talk about it, and talk about it!

Q! What good is talk?

Q! Then what?

win-win situation if we start now.

TOTAL: 75 million barrels of oil per day Source: International Energy Agency & Associated Pres From: San Jose Mercury News, March 25, 2000, p. 20

Figure 2

6.22

3.48

3.33

China 3.20

United Kingdom

Canada

2.68

Brazil 1.42

Other non-OPEC

14.19

OPEC

29.46

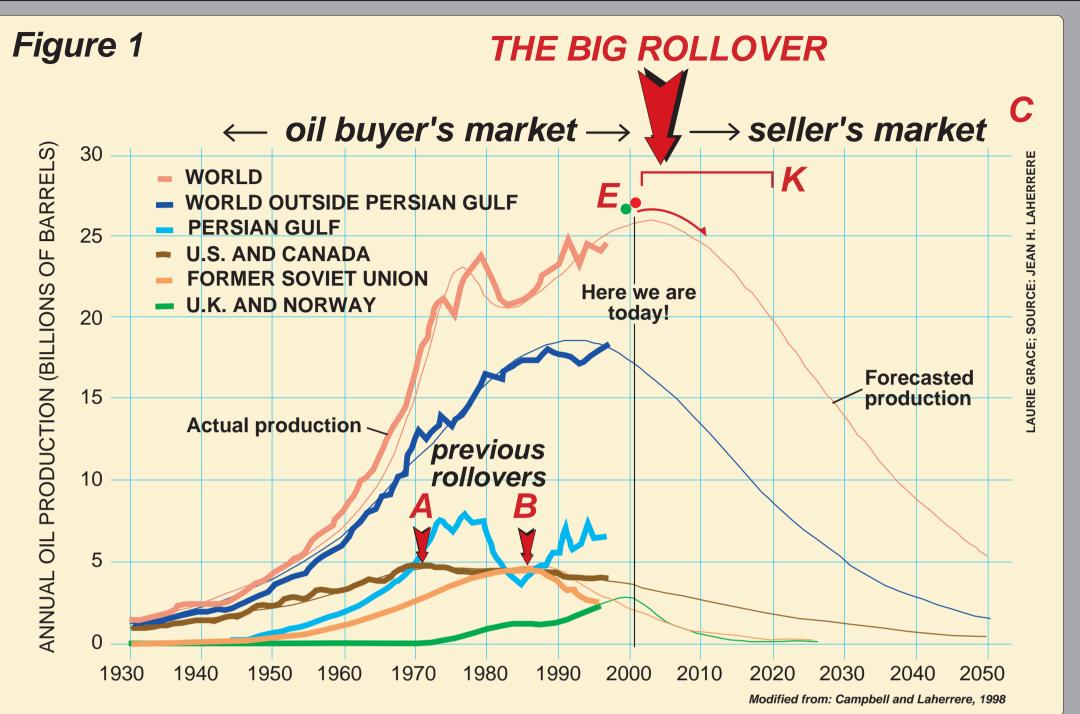
Mexico

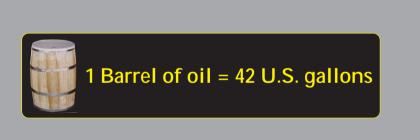
World oil production

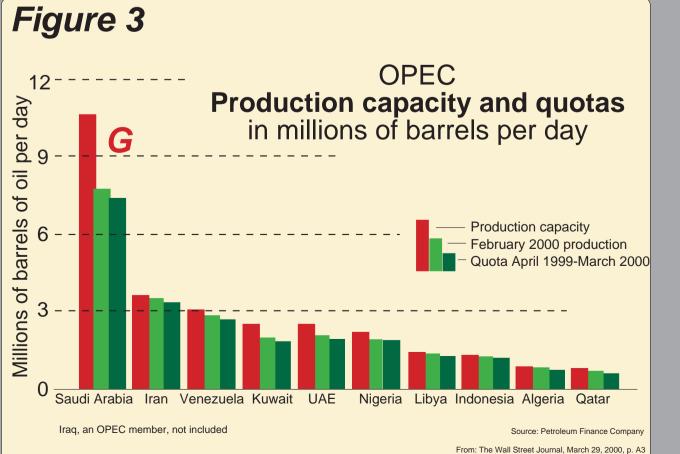
in millions of barrels daily

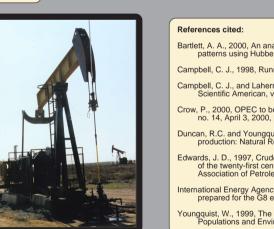
Non-OPEC

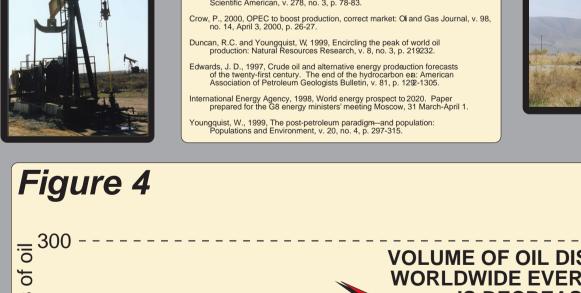
producers











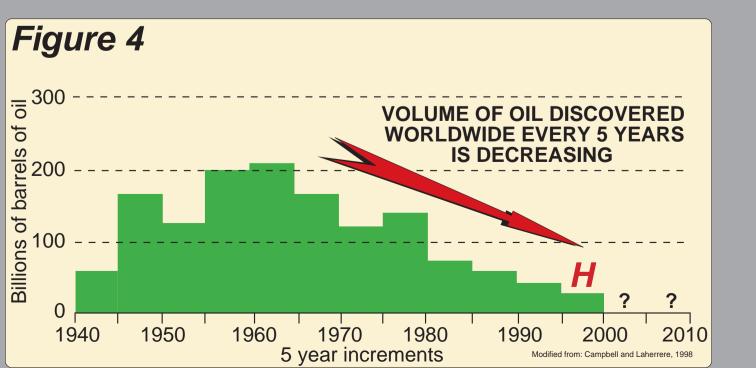


Table 1

Table 2

2003

2004

2007

2019

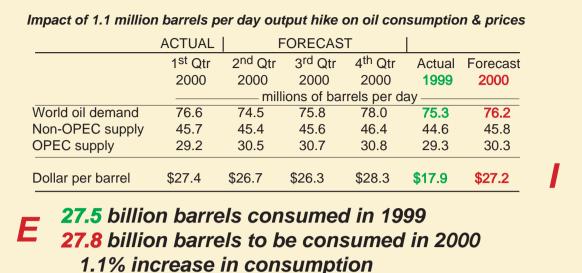
2020

2010-2020

Year of

THE BIG

ROLLOVER



From Oil & Gas Journal, April 3, 2000, p. 27

FORECASTER

Duncan and Youngquist, 1999

International Energy Agency, 1998

Campbell, 1998

Bartlett, 2000

Bartlett, 2000

Edwards, 1997

Q! How much of that do we produce? A! The U.S. produces 8 million barrels of oil a day,

so we import 11 million barrels, or 58% of what we use (Figure 2, F)!

Q! What is the world's oil production now?

(Figure 2, **D**), or 27 billion barrels a year

(Figure 1 and Table 1, **E**).

Q! How much do we consume?

A! The world produces 75 million barrels a day

A! The U.S. consumes just over 19 million barrels

a day or just over 7 billion barrels of oil a year.

every day! Or, 300 million U.S. consumers out

of 6 billion world consumers, that's 5 % of us.

The U.S. consumes 26% of the world's oil

Q! What about Saudi Arabia?

use 26% of the oil.

A! Saudi Arabia has about 3 million barrels a day of excess production capacity (Figure 3, G). Depending upon world oil demand, it could last a few more years, but then what?

Q! Whew! That's a lot of oil. With all our technological advances, aren't we finding enough oil to replace what we use?

A! No! Technology is great, but it can't find what's not there. In the last 5 years, we consumed 27 billion barrels of oil a year, but the oil industry discovered only 3 billion barrels a year (Figure 4, *H*). So, only 1 barrel was replaced for every 9 we used!

Q! With demand so high, what will the prices do? **A!** The price of oil is quite likely to stay above \$25 per barrel (Table 1, /)

Q! So when is **THE BIG ROLLOVER**?

A! Nobody is sure, but those willing to forecast say somewhere between 2003 and 2020 (Table 2, J). Most everybody seems to agree that it will most likely be within our life time, and possibly quite soon (Figure 1, K)!

Q! What should we do to prepare for THE BIG ROLLOVER?

A! Hang on tight, if we don't recognize the problem soon and deal with it, it's going to be quite a ride!

http://geopubs.wr.usgs.gov/open-file/of00-320/