
Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?
Posted by [Blazer](#) on Wed, 25 May 2005 09:24:27 GMT
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Strange that I never heard about this...even on its opening day. And please, serious replies only...I think you are all adult enough to stop saying "I can't be arsed to read all that but omg lol" everytime you are presented with more than a paragraph of text.

<http://news.independent.co.uk/world/asia/story.jsp?story=641172>

Website

The pipeline that will change the world

It is 42 inches wide, 1,090 miles long and is intended to save the West from relying on Middle Eastern oil. Nothing has been allowed to stand in its way - and it finally opens today

By Daniel Howden and Philip Thornton

25 May 2005

The first drops of crude will snake their way along a pipeline that traverses some of the most unstable and war-ravaged countries on earth. This is the oil flow that was meant to save the West, and this morning the taps were turned on.

Only 42 inches wide, the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan was supposed to alter global oil markets forever. The 1,000-mile project has transformed the geopolitics of the Caucasus and its impact is now being felt in the vastness of central Asia.

Output is supposed to reach one million barrels a day - more than 1 per cent of world production - from an underground reserve that could hold as many as 220 billion barrels.

Its architects and investors claimed the pipeline would shore up energy supplies in the US and Europe for 50 years, protecting our gas-guzzling way of life and easing our reliance on the House of Saud.

The goal of the ambitious project, which makes its tortuous way from the Caspian in Azerbaijan, through Georgia to the Mediterranean coast of Turkey, is to ease the reliance of the West on the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) and bring cheaper fuel to our filling stations. The pipe threads its way through the region in a seemingly modest private corridor only 50 yards wide but nothing has been allowed to stand in its way. From forests to labour laws and endangered species to democracy protesters: all have given way to the costliest and most significant pipeline ever built.

The project, known as BTC, has driven a wedge between the US and Russia, triggered political unrest in the countries it passes through and their neighbours and sparked concern at extensive damage to the environment.

Since the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks in the US, concern at the West's dependence on Persian Gulf oil has intensified. For Washington, the opening is a cause for celebration. "We view

this as a significant step forward in the energy security of that region," said Samuel Bodman, the American energy secretary, who stood next to the three heads of state at today's ceremony.

With him at the pumping station controls was the president of the tiny former Soviet republic of Azerbaijan. The BTC has allowed Ilham Aliev to become a firm friend of the West while overseeing a government condemned for human rights abuses and sitting at the head of an administration placed 140 out of 146 in Transparency International's global corruption index.

The politics of the pipeline have also changed the face of Georgia, where the battle for control with Russia saw immense US influence deployed in support of the so-called "Rose Revolution". The popular protest ushered the American-educated Mikhail Saakashvili into power two years ago. Washington's new ties with Tbilisi were amply demonstrated when George Bush became the first US president to visit the country earlier this month.

In the long-term US ally Turkey, where the pipeline crucially delivers its oil direct to the Mediterranean - bypassing the tanker-clogged Bosphorus straits, it is no accident that it does so right next to the American airbase at Incirlik.

When big oil companies turned their attentions to the potential Caspian energy reserves released from behind the collapsing walls of the Soviet Union, the region was billed as the "new Middle East". If only the reserves could be securely transported from the landlocked sea to the Mediterranean, the West would be gifted a vital alternative to the volatile Persian Gulf and the region would be freed from the iron grip of Russia, which had previously monopolised the export routes of their former Soviet satellites.

Once the Soviet empire fell, the Caspian found itself surrounded by five nation states - Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkmenistan.

The region's supply of cheap oil and key position on the historic border between the West and the East meant that countries quickly moved into position like pieces on a chessboard.

Three rival plans were drawn up - a northern route through Russia, a southern alternative through Iran and the central option through the Caucasus to the Mediterranean.

The winner could be in little doubt: the middle road was the only one which guaranteed Washington and its corporate allies a corridor of control.

The US Vice-President Dick Cheney, who was then chief executive of oil services giant Halliburton, was among the first to be swept away in the excitement.

"I cannot think of a time when we have had a region emerge as suddenly to become as strategically significant as the Caspian," he said in 1998.

Now, more than a decade and \$4bn (£2.2bn) later, almost three quarters of which came from bank loans which were underwritten by government agencies and £320m in taxpayers' money, the pipeline is open. But this chapter of what Rudyard Kipling called the "Great Game" - the secret battle to dominate central Asia - has only reached the end of its first phase.

The fanfare at the British oil giant BP's gleaming new terminal at Sangachal in Azerbaijan may yet prove to be premature.

Stripped of the American hype of the 1990s, the crude that began a very modest flow this morning is the first instalment of a reserve many analysts are now convinced is actually only 32 billion barrels - equivalent to that of a small Gulf player such as Qatar.

The game now moves to the transCaspian pipeline and to the immense plains of Turkmenistan and the political cauldron of Uzbekistan, Afghanistan and beyond.

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?

Posted by [SuperFlyingEngi](#) on Wed, 25 May 2005 11:28:41 GMT

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That's good, because if gas goes to \$4 a gallon or OPEC starts pricing crude oil in Euros, the U.S. economy is dead in the water.

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?

Posted by [DaveGMM](#) on Wed, 25 May 2005 16:56:40 GMT

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No matter how many fantasmical pipelines sent Cheney away in sheer excitement, the fact remains that Oil is running out.

It's a fossil fuel, it is finite.

In my opinion, that \$300 million in taxpayers' money would be better spent solving the problem of what the fuck we're going to rely on for fuel when the oil finally runs out.

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?

Posted by [MrBob](#) on Wed, 25 May 2005 17:47:35 GMT

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We're going to need oil for the short-term, like it or not. So spending money on this is a great temporary solution to help free us from reliance on the Saudis (Who support terrorists).

Gas-Electric Hybrids are a great transitional vehicle since it still uses gas but much less than a normal vehicle would. Also, biodiesel is (supposedly) becoming more popular. Let's not forget hydrogen vehicles, but they're a long way away.

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?

Posted by [Renx](#) on Wed, 25 May 2005 18:35:42 GMT

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If it has 220 billion barrels, and they export 1 million barrels a day, that means it would take 220000 days(600+ years) to clean out that well.

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?
Posted by [Kanezor](#) on Wed, 25 May 2005 19:18:59 GMT
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RenX: Quote:Stripped of the American hype of the 1990s, the crude that began a very modest flow this morning is the first instalment of a reserve many analysts are now convinced is actually only 32 billion barrels - equivalent to that of a small Gulf player such as Qatar.

I wholly unsupport the idea of paying money to a foreign country just for energy. Why pay shitloads of money to greedy terrorist-supporting punks when we could instead pay that same money for a pipeline from Alaska.

That, and we could also spend that same money on research for alternate (eg, CLEAN) fuels.

Sure, not *all* of the middle easterns are greedy terrorist-supporting bastages... but it sure seems that way, especially when you're paying \$2.50 for gas in one state and \$4 in another state, both well over the prices of only a few years ago. I remember not long ago paying less than a dollar for a gallon, and still screaming out because it was so expensive. Not to mention that we're still getting shot at in a war that's over. Were we still being shot at by Germans OR Japanese when we ended World War II?

Now they're pulling every little penny out of you. Not everyone can afford it, but they must be able to get to their jobs. So what's the first to be given into to pay for it? Well, looks like we're not going to be able to take the whole family to grandma's funeral, kids. Well, looks like we're not going to be able to pay for scout/girl camp this year, kids. Well, looks like we're not going to be able to pay for your high speed internet connection this month. And we could always tighten our belts a little, as far as food is concerned.

Yeah... did I mention I passionately dislike the oil crisis? It's reasons like this that I try to stay out of politics; these things go hand-in-hand and almost never turn out the way you want them unless you're on *their* side.

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?
Posted by [Jecht](#) on Wed, 25 May 2005 19:36:35 GMT
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My stance: bout damn time, we are going to use oil anyways so don't kid yourselves, so why not get it at a more economical price. If sick of sending a full Saturday's worth of tips down the shitter to pay for gas.

I believe there are other sources of fuel possible, but until then, gas companies got us by the

nads.

Does a doubletake SFE and I agree!

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?
Posted by [Renx](#) on Wed, 25 May 2005 20:09:48 GMT
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Which would leave that well with less than 100 years worth of oil, assuming they stay at 1 million barrels a day(unlikely).

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?
Posted by [DaveGMM](#) on Wed, 25 May 2005 20:16:33 GMT
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I rememeber seeing a movie once - I can't remember the title, but it involved America being able to control hurricanes and send them over countries that they didn't like to destroy them.

And the evil guy said something that's always stuck with me.

"A lot of Americans wouldn't care if a country got bombed, so long as they got gas a dollar cheaper at the pumps" (Paraphrasing, it's been a while since I've seen it.)

And it seems as though that is the general attitude. People, no matter if you believe the most liberal estimates that there are 220billion barrels down there (or one barrel, if the barrel is 220billion the size of a normal one), it will run out.

Whether that day comes in 30 years, 50 years or 600 years (No way jose, best estimate last I read in class was 100 years tops), it's coming, and unless we invest more in so-called alternate fuels, (Gasohol, Biogas, Wind, Solar etc), we're all going to be using candles to have these arguments, huddled around a campfire, starving to death.

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?
Posted by [Renx](#) on Wed, 25 May 2005 20:57:12 GMT
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Hydrogen would be our best bet if they could make it safe enough.

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?
Posted by [warranto](#) on Wed, 25 May 2005 21:21:20 GMT
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heh, and all they would need to do is have the public showing of it's safety be in a modified Pinto.

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?

Posted by [DaveGMM](#) on Wed, 25 May 2005 22:10:57 GMT

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Hydrogen itself isn't a fuel, you know.

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?

Posted by [rm5248](#) on Thu, 26 May 2005 01:05:14 GMT

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I think that we rely waaaaay too much on fossil fules. We're going to have to change that soon...

Electric energy would be good for most things; although coal is going to run out eventually too, and nuclear energy is relatively clean but takes several thousand years to decompose and be non-radioactive.

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?

Posted by [Nodbugger](#) on Thu, 26 May 2005 01:24:47 GMT

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Why would we be starving to death?

You seem to forget people ate just fine before gasoline was invented.

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?

Posted by [Kanezor](#) on Thu, 26 May 2005 01:42:27 GMT

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NodbuggerYou seem to forget people ate just fine before gasoline was invented.The United States has been in a major depression since then, as well. A lot of people starved during that time.

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?

Posted by [DaveGMM](#) on Thu, 26 May 2005 09:09:03 GMT

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NodbuggerWhy would we be starving to death?

You seem to forget people ate just fine before gasoline was invented.

Think about it, and you'll get the answer.

How many people rely on us (That is to say, rich nations and humanitarian aid) to provide them with food? Water? Basic human requirements?

Now that you've thought of a number, add a few more million to it and you've got the right answer.

So tell me - now that oil has gone and we can't fly food to those people...

I'm NOT saying that we didn't eat before gasoline was discovered (not invented). However, we use that gasoline to provide power to refrigerate things, to gather crops, to plant crops, to get things from farm to shelf, to do all SORTS of agricultural things.

So unless we find a reliable way of getting energy NOW....

You'll be measuring the starving in billions, not millions.

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?
Posted by [Aircraftkiller](#) on Thu, 26 May 2005 09:56:33 GMT
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FYI, coal, oil, and natural gas will all replenish themselves eventually due to human and animal deaths. It just won't happen for a few million years.

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?
Posted by [Jzinsky](#) on Thu, 26 May 2005 12:26:57 GMT
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SuperFlyingEngiThat's good, because if gas goes to \$4 a gallon or OPEC starts pricing crude oil in Euros, the U.S. economy is dead in the water.

gbullMy stance: bout damn time, we are going to use oil anyways so don't kid yourselves, so why not get it at a more economical price. If sick of sending a full Saturday's worth of tips down the shitter to pay for gas.

Oh no, you might pay a whole \$4 a gallon for your gas! Take your price for a gallon of gas, and that's about our price for a litre. If I was sending Friday's, Saturday's AND Sunday's tips into my tank I'd be happy.

Sarchasm aside, and purged of the gas price rant I have in the UK, they've been building this pipe for 10 years, going through all these countries, and we never heard anything about it until it opened? This is a joke, and I hope most of you saw it that way too...

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?
Posted by [Sir Phoenixx](#) on Thu, 26 May 2005 13:38:56 GMT
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DaveGMMI'm NOT saying that we didn't eat before gasoline was discovered (not invented). Crude oil was discovered, gasoline was invented. (To make gasoline, we have to refine oil, and mix certain chemicals together, etc., so gasoline itself is an invention.)

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?
Posted by [Kanezor](#) on Thu, 26 May 2005 15:49:29 GMT
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Sir PhoenixxDaveGMMI'm NOT saying that we didn't eat before gasoline was discovered (not invented). Crude oil was discovered, gasoline was invented. (To make gasoline, we have to refine oil, and mix certain chemicals together, etc., so gasoline itself is an invention.)

Even if you do find an alternate means of creating energy tomorrow, you still need to find a way to efficiently implement it in every single current-generation vehicle that uses gasoline. Isn't diesel an oil product as well? If that's the case, then you'd need to find an efficient method of implementation for roughly 95% of every vehicle on the planet, correct?

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?
Posted by [DaveGMM](#) on Thu, 26 May 2005 17:14:38 GMT
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Sir PhoenixxDaveGMMI'm NOT saying that we didn't eat before gasoline was discovered (not invented). Crude oil was discovered, gasoline was invented. (To make gasoline, we have to refine oil, and mix certain chemicals together, etc., so gasoline itself is an invention.)

Gasoline is just... er... from about 4-10 carbons on a plain simple hydrocarbon, if I'm right.

I.E C₄H₁₀ to C₁₀H₂₂ (Or something like that).

At a push we invented the distillation process that makes all these things. Seriously, that's all it is, just crude oil being fractionally distilled off into all the hydrocarbon chains that crude oil contains. We didn't invent gasoline, it was there in the first place.

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?
Posted by [DaveGMM](#) on Thu, 26 May 2005 17:15:26 GMT
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AircraftkillerFYI, coal, oil, and natural gas will all replenish themselves eventually due to human and animal deaths. It just won't happen for a few million years.

While true, we still need to find a source of energy to last us the interim

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?
Posted by [glyde51](#) on Thu, 26 May 2005 20:39:33 GMT
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NodbuggerWhy would we be starving to death?

You seem to forget people ate just fine before gasoline was invented.

Without gasonline various transportation and food shipment routes would shut down, leaving people without food. You need to think of everything as a chain of events.

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?
Posted by [Nukelt15](#) on Fri, 27 May 2005 18:50:57 GMT
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Points out, with a blinding flash of the obvious, that the US imports more oil from Canada than from the top four oil producing countries in the Middle East combined.

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?
Posted by [Javaxcx](#) on Fri, 27 May 2005 18:59:30 GMT
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A little fact that most people tend to forget.

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?
Posted by [_ToXiN_](#) on Fri, 27 May 2005 19:00:35 GMT
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So really America should invade ...Canada? W00T!

We'll call it "Operation Free Bacon" Free the Canadian Bacon from those evil Canadians!
Fuckin'a!

<_< No really, it would be fun, eh?

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?
Posted by [Jecht](#) on Fri, 27 May 2005 19:17:23 GMT
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Nukelt15*Points out, with a blinding flash of the obvious, that the US imports more oil from Canada than from the top four oil producing countries in the Middle East combined.*

never knew that.

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?
Posted by [Nukelt15](#) on Fri, 27 May 2005 21:53:52 GMT
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I did a research project for school on the subject of oil a while ago...the most recent figure I found was that 17% of our oil imports came from Canada (our #1 import provider). Saudi Arabia was actually #3 on the list, at 8% (I forget what #2 was, and I lost the linkage). It was either the '03 or '04 report...I'm fairly certain I got it from the Dept. of Energy website, but it DID take some digging to locate.

Subject: The pipeline that will change the world?
Posted by [msgtpain](#) on Fri, 27 May 2005 22:56:32 GMT
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Nukelt15*Points out, with a blinding flash of the obvious, that the US imports more oil from Canada than from the top four oil producing countries in the Middle East combined.*

Sorry, your "facts" are about 4 years old. Mexico is currently our largest supplier, followed by Saudi Arabia, then Canada, Venezuela, Nigeria, etc..

The top four "middle east" countries are currently supplying us with about 2.4 million barrels a day, Canada provides about 1.4 million.
