



How many SBSP plants could we have made, with the money wasted in the Gulf of Mexico? - A time of urgent decisions is coming...

By Adriano V. Autino – Space Renaissance Initiative, President

Recent news say that the Gulf of Mexico broken well is losing 60,000 barrels of oil per day. If the leakage will last 3 months, it will be more than 5 million barrels wasted in the sea. At 80.00 \$ per barrel we reach near 500 million, just for the oil waste. Can the damage to the fishing and tourism industries be calculated? Harte Research Institute estimated a figure of around \$1.6 billion in loss of economic activity. What about the cost of cleaning? The total clean-up cost of the Exxon Valdez oil spill in 1989 has been put at \$1.4 billion. The accident of Gulf of Mexico is estimated the worst ever occurred, and the Exxon Valdez 1989 is a very little event, compared to it. Therefore we can easily estimate around 5 - 6 billion, maybe near 10 billion, the total cost of the Gulf of Mexico disaster. And what will be the effect of this catastrophe on the price of fuel?

But let me make a step up, and include in this reflection also other events of this year. The economic impact of the Iceland volcano eruption for sure can be accounted in several billion. Several earthquakes of big entity struck around the planet: Mexico, Haiti, Chile.

The crisis of Greece will cost 120 € billion, and already costed 150 € billion losses in the stock exchange.

If we are going toward a new ice age, as many serious scientists say, the atmospheric conditions will be very bad for years (see references at the bottom of this message). A continuously clouded sky will make all of our earthly solar panel fully unproductive. Volcano ashes in the air will force our jet liners at ground. The extremely dangerous oil technologies will worsen, since the general economy will worsen, and we can expect very old tank-ships going around... the sea platforms will have the necessary maintenance? The price of fuel will raise, and we already saw, in 2008 fall, what is the effect of a very high price of oil: the general debts system simply cracked, and we're still in the middle of such crisis.

We could be quickly immersed in a socio economic environment quite different from the one of the Twentieth Century. We believed the Twentieth Century was a nightmare, because of two world wars, a cold war and hard ideological confrontations. Well, the Twentieth First Century is announcing quite another scenario, where combined natural and human crashes are rapidly forcing a change of gear in our reasoning and capability to take decisions.

This means that we shall move ahead. To give a chance to the civilization to survive all the above conditions (and maybe other ones, that we don't yet know), it is more and more clear that only developing, very quickly, the space technologies, can be effective.

The Space Based Solar Power is the only way to get 1400 w/m² 24/24, 356/365. Microwave beams will reach Earth even with cloudy time.

The suborbital flight (100 km quote) can replace the long distance liners, decreasing the cost and the pollution. Since the flight is 90% out of atmosphere, the consume is near zero for the most part of the flight.

The development of low cost access to orbit will launch the world economy, something we absolutely need, to face the recurrent crisis and menaces of nations defaults.

Mastering the Geo-Lunar region can assure a very huge field of development, for this century, even if the conditions on Earth should worsen. The progressive relieve of human pressure on the planet will help from many points of view.



This vision is a humanistic vision, since we don't want to lose even one of the current 7 billion human intelligences. We have to provide room and safe economy for everybody, with the help of everybody. My hope is that, having to face nature again, humans will find new feelings of solidarity, and will decide to unify the efforts, to win the challenge. Any alternative to space will be a series of failures. "TO SPACE, NO WARS!" could be something to write on all walls... and maybe T-shirts..., along with the Space Renaissance logo (the Vitruvian man with the shuttle).

Of course even space is a risk, but at least there are many possibilities of success, while all the pure earthly "solutions" are not solutions at all.

I am coming to comment some of the recent threads, issued in our forums. Some of us, including Rick Tumlinson, are still expressing doubts about the SBSP. Will it be effective? Will it give a decent ROI in reasonable time? All reasonable questions, but I think we don't have time anymore for solving doubts before moving.

Some other members, scientists, are proposing technical discussions: they will always have room in our forums, of course!

But what I am trying to focus, is the very urgent need of a strategical reflection. SBSP, together with nuclear power, is the only serious alternative energy source to oil and coal. I am skeptical about nuclear power, just for a problem of safety: if we are going toward worse environmental conditions, the maintenance of the plants will be even more critical. Unfortunately, our culture of the safety, testing and accuracy in systems engineering is not at the degree it should be, for a safe management of our plants. Shortly: I do prefer to risk in space --- since this is progressive --- than to risk nuclear pollution or disasters on Earth (another kind of catastrophe, that would add to the already long list of armageddon plagues...).

Therefore we have to decide, to put aside our doubts, and support the space alternatives with all of our personal and collective energies.

It means to put money where they will be worthy used. Think about our proposal to give birth to Space Investment Funds, that will request a huge effort, to talk with financial institutions, to bring them very convincing motivations. Something that becomes more urgent hour by hour.

And think about giving some support to the Space Renaissance: we absolutely need to go professional, in order to multiply our efforts. <http://www.spacerenaissance.org/sri-donate.htm>

All the best

Adriano V. Autino

References:

1) see what Burt Rutan says about the climate change:

http://rps3.com/Pages/Burt_Rutan_on_Climate_Change.htm

2) see also this site, by Robert Felix: <http://www.iceagenow.com/>