



DrumBeat: January 23, 2007

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[Bush to call for sharp cutback in gas consumption](#)

President Bush, in Tuesday's State of the Union address, will propose a plan to cut U.S. gasoline consumption by 20 percent while bolstering inventory in the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, Republican sources say.

The president's plan to cut gasoline use includes tightening fuel economy standards on automakers and relying on alternative energy sources, such as hybrid cars, the sources say.

Bush would propose achieving the 20-percent cut in gasoline use in the next 10 years, according to the sources. He will also propose the U.S. produce 35 billion gallons of renewable fuel such as ethanol by 2017, according an official who was briefed on the speech.

[How Iraq and climate change threw the right into disarray](#)

Global warming poses a fundamental challenge to the right's faith in markets. It is, as Gordon Brown, chancellor, puts it "the world's biggest market failure".

Worse, most of the proposed remedies for global warming involve things the right traditionally abhors. There is global governance in the form of monster international accords such as the Kyoto treaty. There are restrictions on individual liberty as the clamour grows to tax people out of their cars and off their cheap flights. There is a new emphasis on localism as opposed to globalisation. There is also a backlash against the idea that faster economic growth is always desirable or sustainable.

[Calderón ready to press for reforms](#)

On Pemex, the state-run oil monopoly, Calderón is also clear on the need for big changes.

"We are experiencing a real fall in oil reserves ... and that forces us to innovate and seek mechanisms which, without giving up hegemony or sovereignty of our reserves, provide Pemex with investment schemes that give it much greater margin to invest more, to

explore more."

[Norway Energy Minister: Arctic Reserves Key for Energy](#)

"If the U.S. Geological Survey is right, 25% of the world's undiscovered petroleum reserves could be found in the Arctic. Thus, the Arctic region could be part of the solution to the growing energy needs of the world," said Oil Minister Odd Roger Enoksen in opening a conference on the northern region.

[We need to act quickly on energy crisis](#)

Connecticut has to act quickly in the face of an impending global energy crisis, according to House Speaker James Amann.

...The demand for oil around the world, especially in countries like China and India where industrial growth is soaring, is changing the dynamics for energy, he said.

"We have competition for oil like never before," said Amann.

[Reports: Russian audit chamber says 'significant' violations at Total oil project](#)

MOSCOW: France's Total SA had committed "significant" environmental violations at an Arctic oil and gas development, Russia's financial watchdog said Monday, according to news reports.

[Uganda: Reduce Your Power Costs, Use Energy-Saving Bulbs](#)

There are two sides to the imbalanced energy equation - supply and demand, making strategies for increasing energy efficiency an equally important consideration.

[The draining of Africa's wealth](#)

For example, in Gabon, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita in 2002 was \$3,370, which is fairly high because of oil wealth. But net savings per capita is negative \$1,183. That's the most extreme case. But the pattern is true of virtually all of the African resource-extractive economies. The two most intensive cases, by the way, Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), aren't even listed because they don't have enough data.

There you see the process of extraction of Africa's wealth without reinvestment.

[NATO's Hidden Terrorism](#)

However, the true reason for this war is the control of energy resources. This is due to the fact that the geology, the richness in gas and oil, are concentrated in the Muslim countries. He who wants to monopolize them, must hide behind this type of manipulations. We cannot say that there is not a lot of oil left because the global production - the 'peak oil' [12] - is going to arrive probably before 2020, and that therefore oil must be taken from Iraq, because people would say that children must not be killed to obtain oil. And they are right. They can't be told, either, that in the Caspian Sea there are huge reserves and that there is a plan to create a pipeline that would go to the Indian Ocean but, given that it's is not allowed to go through the South of Iran or the North of Russia, it must pass through the East, Turkmenistan and Afghanistan, and therefore, this country must be under control. That is why Muslims are labelled as "terrorists".

[South Africa: Eskom Has R97bn Plan to Beef Up Electricity And Beat Cuts](#)

Amid a growing furore over countrywide powercuts this week, Eskom said the government had approved a R97 billion plan to boost infrastructure as part of a range of long-term measures to avert future cuts.

But consumers would have to pay more for electricity to sustain the infrastructure, which is set to come under even heavier pressure as demand grows over the next two decades.

[Japan's demand for small cars hits profits](#)

Japan's carmakers, on a global expansion spree, are seeing margins increasingly squeezed in their home market as consumers turn to cheaper, more fuel-efficient minicars.

[GM places bets on alternative fuel vehicles](#)

By showing the Chevrolet Volt plug-in electric concept car this month at the North American International Auto Show, General Motors Corp. has staked its reputation -- and a large chunk of change -- on developing cars and trucks that can be propelled by something other than just gasoline.

[Saudi's Naimi aims for moderate oil price](#)

Saudi Arabia is aiming for moderate oil prices and assured Japan on Tuesday of supplies from the world's top crude producer in case of emergencies, during a tour by its oil

minister Ali al-Naimi of key Asian consumer nations.

[Alternative fuel research might prevent crisis](#)

In tonight's State of the Union address, President George W. Bush may borrow a few ideas on energy from former President Jimmy Carter. News organizations anticipate part of Bush's speech will address calls for increased funding of alternative fuels research and less dependence on foreign oil.

[Congress will end up reducing energy supply](#)

It's simple economics: The more Washington taxes the oil companies, the less money they have to invest in developing new energy sources.

[Bush set to give ethanol industry its biggest boost yet](#)

In his State of the Union address, President George W. Bush is expected to call for a huge increase in the amount of ethanol that refiners mix with gasoline, perhaps to as much as 60 billion gallons, or 227 million liters, annually by 2030 — an amount equal to more than 40 percent of the country's current gasoline consumption.

[27th annual Eco-Farm Conference starts Wednesday](#)

For every calorie of food produced by agriculture, 10 calories of fossil fuel is burned.

It's an expensive habit the United States is going to have to change as the supply of oil and gas dwindles and the prices continue to skyrocket, according to Richard Heinberg, a noted author and professor from Santa Rosa.

[Solar Power Goes to Washington](#): *Solar power's success in lobbying Congress could benefit investors.*

[Brazil To Gain 123 New Biofuel Plants By 2010](#)

Brazilian companies and other investors are likely to invest an estimated 17.4 billion Brazilian reais (\$8.1 billion) in the country's biofuels sector over the next four years, which should yield a confirmed 77 new ethanol mills and 46 new biodiesel plants by 2010, said the Energy Ministry on Monday.

[Phillipine government projects P1.3-B savings with biofuels](#)

The Phillipine government projects a savings of \$26-million or about P1.3-billion worth of fuel imports with the initial implementation of the 2006 Biofuels Act.

[Crown to assess NZ biofuel potential](#)

A deal announced today between two Crown Research Institutes and a US company is said to open up the possibility of New Zealand's entire vehicle fleet ultimately running on biofuels grown and manufactured in this country.

[Patrick Holden \(Soil Association director\) on Peak Oil and the Transition Towns concept](#)

[Weighing In on City Planning: Could smart urban design keep people fit and trim?](#)

Lawrence Frank is no couch potato. Taking full advantage of his city's compact design, the Vancouver, British Columbia, resident often bikes to work and walks to stores, restaurants, and museums. That activity helps him stay fit and trim. But Frank hasn't always found his penchant for self-propulsion to be practical. He previously lived in Atlanta, where the city's sprawling layout thwarted his desire to be physically active as he went about his daily business.

[Back from the Grave: A Look at U.S. Nuclear Power](#)

[Sharon Astyk: Am I romanticizing poverty?](#)

Someone who reads my blog recently emailed me with the accusation that my Community Solutions Paper and my writings in general are a call to mass, collective return to poverty, and that I'm intentionally romanticizing subsistence agriculture. And I started wondering, am I?

[Calling an end to oil alarmism](#)

OIL PRICES have ended their steep ascent -- for now -- and are headed downward. The near-universal alarm among politicians, pundits, and consumers over America's dependency on foreign oil has yielded to a wary sense of relief. But both the prior alarm and the current relief are misguided.

[Oil Sands Projects Steam Ahead in Alberta, Despite Harper](#)

The Bush administration last week urged Canada's natural resources agency to increase oilsands production in the Alberta province five-fold to 5 million barrels per day, but a

spokesman for Prime Minister Stephen Harper said "not at the expense of the environment." Meanwhile, while Harper turns his back on Alberta, oil companies are steaming ahead with plans of their own to develop the world's largest oil reserve and by the looks of things, one junior producer appears to be ahead of the pack.

[West left in the cold in Arctic oil boom](#)

Moscow has closed the door further to Western participation in Russia's Arctic energy wealth with a proposal to grant Rosneft and Gazprom, the state oil and gas companies, exclusive rights to develop offshore oil and gas.

[The Geopolitical Consequences of Peak Oil](#)

"You'll forgive me if I sound a little shrill," began Professor Michael T. Klare, the author of "Resource Wars" and its sequel "Blood and Oil", who directed his presentation at the 2006 Association for the Study of Peak Oil conference at Boston University to the families and loved ones of young people under 25 "who may chose to or be coerced to put on the uniform of the United States military."

[Vinod Khosla: President Bush, Please Declare a War on Oil!](#)

To win the war on terror, we must first stop funding terrorists with our oil money. Let's instead use our money to fund a war on oil.

[Raymond J. Learsy: Taking a Page From John D. Rockefeller - Foreclosing America's Energy Security \(Agenda Part VIII\)](#)

Our energy neck is in a tightening noose. Between 75 percent and 90 percent of the world's oil and gas reserves are held by national oil companies that are partially or fully controlled by their governments. As such, the distribution and marketing of oil has become so highly politicized as to cripple the power of market forces to assure access and security of supply.

[Report has 'smoking gun' on climate](#)

Human-caused global warming is here, visible in the air, water and melting ice, and is destined to get much worse in the future, an authoritative global scientific report will warn next week.

"The smoking gun is definitely lying on the table as we speak," said top U.S. climate scientist Jerry Mahlman, who reviewed all 1,600 pages of the first segment of a giant four-part report. "The evidence ... is compelling."

Andrew Weaver, a Canadian climate scientist and study co-author, went even further: "This isn't a smoking gun; climate is a battalion of intergalactic smoking missiles."

[Natural gas rises as temps plunge](#)

Natural gas prices soared Monday to the highest in 5½ weeks as cold weather spread across much of the USA, leading investors to predict increased demand for the nation's most popular heating source.

[U.S., British workers seized in Nigeria](#)

Unidentified assailants seized two foreign oil workers Tuesday in the latest kidnapping to hit restive southern Nigeria, police said.

[Saudi: U.S. will need Mideast oil for years to come](#)

U.S. policymakers should be talking about interdependence with Middle East suppliers, not independence, said Prince Turki Al-Faisal, the kingdom's U.S. ambassador, speaking at George Washington University.

[Nissan's car navigation to offer fuel-saving tip](#)

Drivers of some Nissan cars in Japan from Monday will begin tracking the fuel efficiency of their vehicles on the Web thanks to a new system that ties in with the car's existing navigation system.

[Ford unveils plug-in hybrid vehicle](#)

Ford Motor Co. is joining the list of automakers working on a plug-in hybrid — with a twist. It combines the convenience of plugging in your car with a zero-emissions hydrogen fuel cell.

[U.S. automakers push for battery, fuel tech help](#)

U.S.-based automakers will this week underscore their push for government help on alternative fuels and advanced battery technology, riding what is anticipated to be an updated White House prescription for greater national energy independence.

[Global warming bubbles to the surface in Davos](#)

An exceptionally mild and barren first half of winter in the Swiss Alps is helping to fuel growing concern about climate change at the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum beginning on Wednesday.

[Berlin warned on phasing out nuclear energy](#)

Germany will miss its CO2 emission targets, face rising electricity prices and become "dramatically" more reliant on Russian gas if it keeps to its policy of phasing out nuclear energy, a new study warns.

[Nuclear firm targets clean power](#)

French firm Areva - the largest maker of nuclear reactors - has tabled a \$1bn (£506m; 772m euro) bid for leading clean energy firm Repower of Germany.

Areva said it would pay 105 euros a share for the wind turbine firm, a move that would allow it to tap into the growing wind energy sector.

[Post Carbon Institute Energy Experts Available for Pre- and Post-State of the Union Address Comments on Energy](#)

Post Carbon Institute Fellow Richard Heinberg warned that we should be skeptical about what the president proposes: "Just because the president says some energy source is good doesn't make it good," Heinberg said. "For example, a big push for coal-to-oil technologies might eventually reduce petroleum imports, but it would only worsen the problem of global warming. And the nuclear power industry claims there are no CO2 emissions connected with nuclear power, which just isn't true if you take account of the processes of plant construction and fuel production. We can't forget the more than 50-year failure to dispose of nuclear waste, and uranium is getting more scarce and expensive. Since all of the energy supply alternatives have problems, we need much more focus on conservation"



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