



The Road from Hel is paved with wind turbines!

Posted by [Heading Out](#) on October 1, 2006 - 10:55am

Topic: [Demand/Consumption](#)

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On our way to the airport we stopped at a mall, and saw one of the new Smart cars, which is retailing in the US for between \$30k and \$35k depending on the options. After finally getting to our first destination I was amused to find that some 3 of the seven cars in the parking lot were of that geometry, but my host almost went into giggles when I told him of the price being charged for such a car in the US. Gas prices here - depending on grade, run around \$1.50 a liter, and, apart from the minivan carrying us around, most cars are much smaller than in the US, and with the poorer state of the roads, move somewhat slower, and thus more efficiently (though I suspect that the cause is police enforcement rather than energy cost).

This is true of most traffic, and while I prefer trains there are abandoned tracks, and overgrown sidings along our path, and our first journey took over 5 hours to go not very far. (For those really curious as to where I was, the church that I could see from my window burned on the 22nd of May this year). And while there is some concern about energy costs, there does not appear to be much concern, as yet, with the folk that I have talked to about energy security of long-term supply. Most of the power stations in the North are running on natural gas, with steam generation for local heating, and in this part of the world that means only one supplier.

Yet there are some realities that seem to be creeping into the picture, unemployment is quite severe, though with many of the educated classes moving west, there are jobs going begging in critical parts of some industries. As we turned south we ran through a wind farm with some 27 turbines turning lazily in the morning wind, towering over producing fields, and the comment was made that the investors expect that the turbines will be paid for in five years. And yet there is little thought that we have encountered so far, as to a greater investment in alternate fuel sources.

Further south the exceptionally warm season is holding off discussions as to what must be done, since in the warm of a late summer, it is hard to focus on the fuel problems of the winters that lie ahead. And there are still, for a few more precious days, tourists (and a certain beauty contest) that are distracting the public. But the worries are there as a nervous undercurrent in some of the discussions. And there is a concern that when bureaucratic regimes collide, even less will get done.

Because of the fleeting access to the Internet it is hard to find out all that is going on in the rest of the world, our days are full with the work of my day job, but in glancing at the site a couple of times I see that there is a suggestion that the Cornucopians are winning. Would that they really were - but a return to that debate will have to wait another week until I get back to the US.



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