



## DrumBeat: January 27, 2007

Posted by [Leanan](#) on January 27, 2007 - 10:14am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

### [Is oil-rich Mexico spending too much?](#)

The country saves little of its petroleum riches and spends lavishly on vanity projects. Analysts fear a day of reckoning as crude output falls.

### [Oil prices settle above \\$55](#)

Tank tracker Lloyds Marine Intelligence Unit said Friday that oil exports from the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries fell to less than 23 million barrels a day in December from just under 24 million barrels a day in November, according to a Dow Jones newswire report.

Saudi Arabia, the world's largest crude oil producer and exporter, was the quickest to implement OPEC's production cuts; its exports in December were 1.1 million barrels a day lower than before the OPEC's October call for production cuts.

### [Nashville's Urban Development Policy Revealed: Out With the Old?](#)

OK, the tourist thing—I have strong doubts about the long-term viability of tourism as a revenue source. I think that over the next ten or twenty years, it's going to get harder for people to move around, because the infrastructure is going to go downhill. We will see higher fuel prices, poorer roads, no money to develop large-scale public transportation—and fewer people will have the financial means to undertake travel of any sort—including business travel. The backers of this hotel are also backers of a new, larger convention center here in town, a project which I think is also sadly misguided. Nobody wants to look at the long-term trends, because they're so scary. It is not going to be business as usual any more, people, and it's time to drop the denial and get ready for a future that's going to be local and hands-on rather than global and high-tech.

[Preparing for Peak Oil](#) - local TV coverage (streaming video) from Madison, Wisconsin.

### [Peak Oil, Peak Nonsense](#)

It's been less than a year since the world was nearly as awash in writings about "peak oil" as it is in crude oil itself. The psychology of the moment was so twisted that, for example, the op-ed page of the *New York Times* ran a 2,850-word piece titled "The End of Oil" (March 2006). It argued, among other things, that while the world's crude supplies may be more than half gone, not enough was being said about peak oil.

Still, a bogus argument will always seem less so in the ears & eyes of an audience that's predisposed to believe it: oversimplification, misstatement, and ignoring the inconvenient (for starters) create nodding heads instead of furrowed brows.

### [Peak Oil Passnotes: Oil at \\$35? It's Being Said](#)

The oil market has been shaken recently. The break down to \$49.90 intraday two weeks ago was a new step after eighteen months of a \$55 floor price. And on the way, what has become of the notion of 'peak oil'? One guy I know who has been relatively at ease with the idea, who supports the idea, found himself questioning it recently. It was a surprise.

### [Canadian Cure for the Middle East Blues](#)

Perhaps the most critical aspect of curbing our appetite for oil is decreasing our dependence on the Middle East. But if we are ever going to get serious about it the question then becomes, where will we make up the shortfall? The answer may lie with our neighbor to the north.

### [US Senators Push for Full Review of OCS Oil, Gas Resources](#)

Some U.S. senators, realizing their plans for a new Outer Continental Shelf, or OCS, drilling bill are unlikely to succeed in a Democratic-controlled Congress, are now pushing for a more thorough review of OCS oil and gas resources.

### [Merkel's carbon master plan](#)

The Merkel formula assumes that global growth will continue despite her proposed cut in emissions, so she is relying on technology change. She did not spell out the extent of emission curbs or the technologies she favours.

### [New life for US nuclear power plants](#)

The US nuclear power industry is planning for a renaissance, drawing up its first applications to build nuclear plants since the 1970s.

## [O, pioneers in Pasadena](#)

One family unplugs from technology and lives off the land. Even the blender is pedal-powered.

## [Proton Power says first fuel-cell powered ship to sail in 2008](#)

Proton Power Systems, a German developer of hydrogen fuel-cell technology, said it expects the world's first fuel-cell powered ship to operate from the middle of 2008.

## [Lester Brown - Davos Notes: Considering the Real Costs of Our Energy Economy](#)

## [Carnegie Mellon engineers devise new process to improve energy efficiency of ethanol production](#)

The key to the Carnegie Mellon strategy involves redesigning the distillation process by using a multi-column system together with a network for energy recovery that ultimately reduces the consumption of steam, a major energy component in the production of corn-based ethanol.

## [Bush's Dangerous Energy Proposal](#)

Some critics are skeptical of the president's proposal to rely largely on ethanol to reduce gasoline consumption by 20 percent in a decade. Indeed, this could do more harm than good, says David Victor, director of Stanford University's Program on Energy and Sustainable Development.

## [Farmers can profit from biofuel growth, says European Commission president](#)

## [Biofuels expansion seen raising risk of famine](#)

Switching more land from food to biofuel production raises the risk of future famines, a conference organised by the Soil Association, the country's leading organic certification body, was told.

## [NTR chief warns of 'dysfunctional consequences' in rush to green energy](#)

There was a risk of "dysfunctional consequences, such as rainforests being burned in South America and south-east Asia to make way for plantations to provide food oil for European biofuels," he said.

### [Organic body tackles food miles](#)

The Soil Association standard's board has announced it will consult on a range of options to tackle the environmental impact of airfreighting organic food.

### [Academic predicts rising oil prices will prompt a local food renaissance](#)

A renaissance in local food for local communities is coming and the UK will need a huge increase in the agricultural workforce to deliver it.

Speaking at the Soil Association Conference in Cardiff, on 26 January, American author Richard Heinberg said the peak oil theory where production plateaus and prices sky rocket could force dramatic changes on UK and world farming.

### [Drilling must be part of the energy solution](#)

The plain truth is that we can't conserve our way out of the energy crisis. The costs would cripple the economy. Everyone likes alternative energy; the trouble is, solar power and biofuels have been promoted for decades, and they still only account for a small percentage of the nation's consumption.

### [New Report Challenges Blair's Views on Iran](#)

Iran holds the world's largest supplies of oil after Saudi Arabia and Iraq, and holds more oil and gas combined than any other country on the planet. As Peak Oil rapidly approaches, the US demand to control the lion's share of what is left. Iran has also just shifted its petrodollars into a Euro-based bourse. The effect on the value of the dollar will be significant.

### [Shell Still Eyes Russian Invest Despite Debacle - CEO](#)

Anglo-Dutch oil major Royal Dutch Shell PLC (RSDA.LN) intends to continue searching for new investment opportunities in Russia despite recent problems with the Russian government over the management of its Sakhalin-II oil and gas project, Shell's Chief Executive Jeroen Van de Veer said Friday.

### [Trashing Peak Oil - Garbage will save us.](#)

### [TXU lobbying Congress on coal-plant plan](#)

TXU Corp., facing a string of global-warming bills, is ramping up efforts to lobby the new Congress over its controversial plans to build coal-fired power plants across Texas.

### [Green energy: Lots of choice, lots of risk](#)

There is a slew of small -- and some not so small -- public companies trading on Canadian exchanges that are involved in the alternative energy game. They're in sectors as far reaching as hydro and wind power, geothermal power, solar energy, tidal and wave power and biofuels. There's even a tiny firm, Peat Resources Ltd., listed on the TSX Venture Exchange that is trying to make money producing and marketing peat as fuel.

But investing in these companies is not for the faint of heart. Because of technological uncertainty, fickle government support programs, and an uncertain energy future, most are clearly for risk-taking investors who want to gamble on the chance for big gains in the future.

### [A Tour of the Energy Future](#)

MIT had organized a dinner featuring three of its scientists and their alternative energy technologies, and you knew it was a hot ticket when you walked in the door. The grotto held only about 60 people beneath its vaulted stone ceiling, but among them were venture capitalists John Doerr and Vinod Khosla, Google co-founder Larry Page, and the shaggy, newly minted YouTube billionaire Chad Hurley. First Tom Friedman, the New York Times columnist with a gift for the marketing of ideas, riffed about the coming clean-energy revolution. "Green is the new red, white and blue," he said, "and this is not your parents' energy crisis." Once he'd warmed up the crowd, the MIT scientists took turns presenting their visions of the future.

### [Biofuel trade disadvantages poor nations](#)

A combination of rich nation import controls and excessive pricing power among too few western importers is disadvantaging biofuels producers in developing countries, a London-based research institute said.

### [Brazil Eyes Ethanol Export Boom after Bush Speech](#)

Ethanol producers in Brazil, the world's biggest and cheapest exporter of the alternative fuel, see a fantastic business opportunity in US President Bush's aim to cut his country's gasoline use by 20 percent over a decade.

### [Gazprom says deals with Belarus, Ukraine will halt disruptions to Europe; EU regulator advises](#)

[caution](#)

Russia's OAO Gazprom sought to assure jittery Europeans on Friday that new deals for the sale of natural gas to Belarus and Ukraine would prevent any more disruptions to western Europe.

But EU Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs said the continent should steel itself for future disruptions regardless.

[Nigeria: Fuel Scarcity is Killing the Economy, Labour Laments](#)

The protracted fuel scarcity in the country is pushing Nigeria into zero-productivity and zero growth thereby making the nation to sink deeper into underdevelopment, the National Union of Textile, Garment and Tailoring Workers of Nigeria (NUTGTWN), has warned.

[Prince Charles on anti-global warming trip to US](#)

Charles and his wife Camilla took a British Airways flight for Philadelphia, with the couple and their staff using all the first class and some business class seats, the Press Association news agency said Friday.

The couple were traveling aboard a commercial flight after Clarence House announced sweeping changes to the royal household's travel plans as part of the fight against global warming.

[Landowners plant trees to consume gases](#)

Some landowners in the Pacific Northwest are planting new forests of trees to consume greenhouse gases and potentially buffer climate change, in a business called carbon forestry.

[We're ruining Earth, scientists warn](#)

Droughts will be longer, flooding rains will be rarer but heavier. Cyclones will hit harder. Violent storms and extreme heatwaves will strike more frequently. Evaporation will suck up scarce inland water. Sea levels will creep up half a metre. Oceans will be so acidic that in some places shells and reefs will dissolve.

And humanity, not nature, will be to blame.

[Parent demands "alternative theories" of global warming be taught in school](#)

"No you will not teach or show that propagandist Al Gore video to my child, blaming our nation -- the greatest nation ever to exist on this planet -- for global warming," Hardison wrote in an e-mail to the Federal Way School Board.

The 43-year-old computer consultant is an evangelical Christian who says he believes that a warming planet is "one of the signs" of Jesus Christ's imminent return for Judgment Day.



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