



DrumBeat: February 23, 2007

Posted by [Leanan](#) on February 23, 2007 - 9:24am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

Dale Allen Pfeiffer: [The Fallacy of Bleed-Out](#)



The idea is that, although Bush was wrong to get us into this war, we are there and we cannot simply pull our troops out. If we do so, then Iraq will collapse into civil war and Iran could very well take over the whole country, including its oilfields.

This seems plausible. But when you look closely at this argument, you will see that there is nothing to support it other than the delusion that the US is fighting the good fight. There were no terrorists in Iraq before we invaded the country. The so-called insurgency is in reality a resistance. This has been a war of conquest from the start. The US troops there must terrorize the Iraqis in order to maintain any sort of ascendancy. In so doing, they demoralize the Iraqis and themselves.

[Pemex to Get More Budget Control Under Senate Bill](#)

Petroleos Mexicanos, Mexico's state-run oil company, would gain more control over its budget and pay reduced taxes under a 10-part energy bill the Senate Energy Committee plans to approve.

[DuPont teams on Iowa biofuel plant](#)

DuPont Co. is licensing technology to a company that will build a cellulosic ethanol plant

in Iowa within the next four to six years, company officials said Wednesday.

[Farmland the new hot property](#)

Farmland from Iowa to Argentina is rising faster in price than apartments in Manhattan and London for the first time in 30 years.

Demand for corn used in ethanol increased the value of cropland 16 per cent in Indiana and 35 per cent in Idaho in 2006, government figures show. The price of a Soho loft appreciated only 12 per cent, while a pied-a-terre in Islington near London's financial district gained 11 per cent, according to realtors.

[The climate change revolution](#)

The world is in the midst of a great political transformation, in which climate change has moved to the center of national and global politics.

[As earth warms, lawsuits mount](#)

But problems arise when it comes time to pin down those responsible for climate change.

[A Battle Over the Costs of Global Warming](#)

The rest of us can usually ignore these spats, but once in a while there is an academic fight that really matters. The economics profession is engaged in one of those right now and, as luck would have it, it's even more entertaining than most.

[Southern Ocean Being "Strangled" by Greenhouse Gases](#)

The pristine Southern Ocean, which swirls around the Antarctic and absorbs vast amounts of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, is slowly losing a fight against industrial gases responsible for global warming, scientists say.

[Turkey, Egypt try to avert tension over Cyprus oil](#)

Oil reserves in the sea around the island of Cyprus have been estimated to be worth around \$400 billion.

Turkey had warned Greek Cyprus not to search for oil and gas in the area, where it says it also has legal rights and interests.

[The Senate slaps sustainable ag](#)

As a new farmer, I can't imagine a world without ATTRA, which stands for Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas. That's why my blood began to boil this morning when I found out that the Senate had voted to defund ATTRA's ultra-modest \$2.5 million annual budget.

[Higher renewable energy standard will create jobs](#)

Raising the state's standards for electricity produced by renewable energy will create thousands of new jobs and increase Colorado's gross domestic product by nearly \$2 billion, Gov. Bill Ritter said Thursday.

Podcast: [Dmitry Orlov interview](#)

[University of Nevada professor demonstrates new hydrogen fuel system](#)

Thanks to research done by a University of Nevada, Reno professor in the area of hydrogen energy generation, soaring power bills could become a thing of the past. And, finding a power source for your car that costs as little as \$1 per gallon could also soon become a welcome reality.

[Xcel Energy Study: with a Smart Grid, Plug-In Hybrid Electric Vehicles Could Have System Benefits](#)

The study found that PHEVs may result in a reduction of the overall expense of owning a vehicle and, with the help of smart-grid technologies, eliminate harmful vehicle emissions by up to 50 percent.

[Ties that Bind](#)

Media talk of 'resource wars' is one expression of the connections being created by the capitalist class as is all the talk of 'peak oil', 'energy security' and 'over-population'. But no matter how sophisticated the propaganda is it cannot hide the devastating effects of climate change, especially its impact on the poor of the planet and sooner rather than later, the climate change chicken will come home to roost.

Rather than be taken in by these myths as some on left have been, we have to articulate a vision of an alternate economy based on a rational and sustainable utilisation of resources, made all the more critical by the realisation that the major effect of climate change is going to be on the production of food and the impact rising sea levels is already

having the millions people who live in low lying areas of the planet.

[Community Solutions: Seeking local answers to a global issue](#)

The use of oil permeates the fabric of American life. It fuels our transportation, heats our homes and businesses, provides us with plastics, fertilizers, pesticides and helps puts food on the table. If the oil supply dries up, what does that mean for our way of life? Grassroots groups across the country are calling for relocalization as a way to help secure the things that are essential to our daily lives — food, water, shelter, warmth — and to create a lifestyle that is sustainable and ensures a viable future for our children, using resources that are renewable.

[Iran Is Iraq](#)

Iran is not Iraq, except that it is. Most intelligent people today recognize that the U.S.A.'s adventures into Iraq were not about an evil dictator, or about democracy, it was about, as James Kunstler so eloquently puts it: "setting up a police station in Iraq." Not to steal their oil, but simply to insure world access to Iraqi oil.

[Oil Industry Magical Thinking](#)

We don't need to scratch our heads and wonder how responsive the oil industry will be to voluntary targets and public subsidies; it's never worked before. The only measure that produces real improvements in pollution and energy efficiency is firm standards backed by meaningful penalties.

[Yankee Doodle's World Turned Upside Down](#)

But the Saudis face their own inconvenient truths. Matthew Simmons, an industry banker, shocked the oil world when he questioned whether Saudi Arabia would be able to continue to expand production at the very same time that Wood Mackenzie, an Edinburgh-based oil industry consultancy, calculated that much of the future production expansion is likely to come from expensive and environmentally damaging unconventional sources within 15 years. If this projection holds up, the Saudis would need every dollar, euro, and riyal to maintain their currently all-too-lavish lifestyles. There won't be any left over in the Wahhabi cupboard to care for Mother Bandar's poor little Anbar doggies. That will only mean that We, the People of the United States of America, will be expected to foot the energy trough feed bill with our blood and our bounty, and we already aren't very thrilled with that prospect as it is currently configured.

[James Howard Kunstler: "America, Think Downscale!"](#)

In his book, "The Long Emergency," Kunstler predicted that the age of the cheap oil economy is quickly passing, and that "globalism...will fizzle out." One of its victims will be "suburbia." Another victim, he added, and this brought cheers from the audience, will be that "warehouse on wheels--Wal-Mart."

[Ghana, Nigeria power talks in final phase](#)

The Nigerian deal and another 100 megawatts expected from Ivory Coast would augment electricity supply to the country to ensure regular power supply during the highlights of Ghana's Golden Jubilee celebrations on March 6.

[Do we desire a streetcar?](#)

My 48 minutes on the free Trolley are not particularly important, except that with global warming and "peak oil" fears approaching the boiling point, some Charlottesville area planners are considering creating a regional transit authority and possibly tearing up the Trolley route to run a modernized-- and environmentally friendly-- electric streetcar down West Main Street.

[California: Rolling Blackouts Likely by '09](#)

A plan to discourage new power plants in Southern California's most polluted communities could lead to rolling blackouts in Riverside, city officials said.

[California Senate Democrats Unveil "California First" Global Warming Bill Package](#)

Saying that "Senate Democrats believe there is a simple, direct, cost-effective path we can take now to reduce greenhouse gases," Senate President pro Tem Don Perata announced yesterday the introduction of a sweeping eight-bill package that aims to improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in California in the most practical ways.

[Oil Workers Evacuated from Accommodation Rig in North Sea](#)

Total Norge is evacuating nearly 300 workers from an accommodation rig in the North Sea after two of the unit's twelve anchor chains broke during a storm with winds reaching near hurricane strength.

[Oily truth emerges in Iraq](#)

The President presumably would have us all believe that if Iraq had the world's second-largest supply of bananas instead of petroleum, American troops would still be there.

Now comes new evidence of the big prize in Iraq that rarely gets mentioned at White House briefings.

[Venezuela, Argentina to Issue Joint Bond](#)

Venezuela and Argentina will offer a US\$1.5 billion (euro1.1 billion) joint bond issue next week, the two countries said Wednesday.

President Hugo Chavez said the "Bond of the South" will go on offer Monday. His Argentine counterpart Nestor Kirchner said the bond will have an "excellent" coupon rate.

[Top Five US Cities for Cleantech](#)

Since their launch in fall 2006, SustainLane.us has been growing in spades, building out an extensive resource base for government agencies and employees to share best practices in an open-source network.

...On Friday they released their newest piece of research: a rating and review of the nation's top five cities for cleantech development.

[German Biodiesel Sales Slump on New Tax](#)

Germany's once-booming biodiesel industry has reduced output by 30 to 40 percent so far this year as new biofuel taxes cut demand at fuel stations, biofuels industry association VDB said on Thursday.

[Weekly Offshore Rig Review: Jackup Lovers](#)

As we continue our ongoing examination of the offshore rig market, this week we will be looking at the companies that are contracting the largest competitive jackup fleets in the world. Looking at this information over the past year and into the future helps to paint a picture of which operators have been and will be the most active.

[Nigerian Militant Group Claims Hostage Escaped](#)

The Movement for Emancipation for Niger Delta (MEND) said in Lagos Thursday that a

Lebanese hostage named Imad Saliba escaped from its custody Wednesday.

[Peak Performance?](#)

Peter Odell, one of the most astute, life-long observers of global oil scene, calls them "peak-oilers." Some of them were quite unhappy when I pointed out (in Energy at the Crossroads, in these pages, and in Worldwatch in January 2006) their propensity for wholesaling catastrophic scenarios of the world once the global oil production peaks and begins to decline. But how else can one label such writings as Richard C. Duncan's "Olduvai theory" according to which the declining oil extraction will plunge humanity into life comparable to that experienced by some of the first primitive hominids who inhabited that famous Kenyan gorge some 2.5 million years ago?

[Nuclear plant's safety rating takes hit](#)

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission on Thursday downgraded the safety rating of the nation's largest nuclear plant, subjecting it to a level of scrutiny shared by just one other plant in the nation.

The NRC made the announcement following three years of problems in various safety systems at the Palo Verde nuclear plant west of Phoenix.

[UK nuclear plans delayed until May](#)

Ministers have confirmed that the government's plans for new nuclear power stations are to be delayed after a High Court judge last week ordered Tony Blair to rethink his flagship energy reform.

[Minnesota raises renewable energy goal](#)

Minnesota has a new law that will require utilities to use wind, sun and cleaner-burning fuels to produce a quarter of the state's electricity by 2025, a standard that advocates called among the most aggressive in the country.

[Sequel to gasoline](#)



Peak oil. Heard about it?

It is supposedly the biggest nightmare of our times - or, at least, it's going to be.

It's the point when the world's petroleum production maxes out and then starts declining. You know: beginning of the end of the world economy....

If that's not made you sit up and think, this will! Peak Oil will be circa 2011 AD. That's another five years from now.

[The big-car problem](#)

EARLIER this month Germany's carmakers were hit by new emission limits proposed by the European Commission. There were howls of protest, not least from Angela Merkel, the German chancellor. So the proposed ceiling was raised a little, to 130 grams of CO₂ per kilometre to be met by 2012. This still left the makers of many of the world's most prestigious cars with the most work: in the European Union only six German-made models meet the target, but 34 of those made by competitors do. Moreover, of all the cars on sale in Germany which pump out more than 200g of CO₂ per kilometre, most are German.

[Sempra Energy shows sharp earnings drop](#)

Sempra Energy, the parent of Southern California's two major gas utilities and an energy trading business, on Thursday posted a 65 percent drop in fourth-quarter profits, hurt by investments in Argentina that soured when that country's economy collapsed five years ago.

[Peak Oil Passnotes: The Oil Market Heats Up](#)

The oil and energy markets like to paint themselves as very scientific places. From the geology to the deep water technology, from the super tankers to the powerpoint presentations. But as we all know the truth is nothing of the sort.

[The Time is Right for the Majors to Seek Bigger Fish](#)

There is plenty of optimism among the deal-making community in the upstream oil and gas sector. Much is in the pipeline and some deals and refinancing initiatives are already in the public domain.

[Scramble for Iraq's oil begins as troops start to pull out](#)

We are about to find out if the invasion of Iraq really was a war for oil. The country is on the verge of passing a petroleum law, which will set down rules for investing in its oil industry. That will set off a race among the foreign oil giants, scrambling for their slice of Iraq's vast oil riches.

[Nigerian oil minister says oil output capacity rising six pct per year](#)

Nigerian oil minister Edmund Daukoru said that exploration had raised the country's oil reserves to about 35 bln barrels from five bln barrels in 1999, and that production capacity was rising.

"Reserves now stand at about 35 bln barrels and this underpins a steady growth in production capacity," Daukoru told a news conference here.

[Film maker, Yahoo team to fight global warming](#)

Yahoo and the producer of the documentary "An Inconvenient Truth" launched a website devoted to rallying US consumers to fight global warming by switching light bulbs.

[African trade fears carbon footprint backlash](#)

A recent bold statement by UK supermarket Tesco ushering in "carbon friendly" measures - such as restricting the imports of air freighted goods by half and the introduction of "carbon counting" labelling - has had environmentalists dancing in the fresh produce aisles, but has left African horticulturists confused and concerned.



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