



## DrumBeat: April 2, 2007

Posted by [Leanan](#) on April 2, 2007 - 9:05am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

### [Supreme Court rebukes Bush on global warming](#)

In a defeat for the Bush administration, the Supreme Court ruled on Monday that a U.S. government agency has the power under the clean air law to regulate greenhouse gas emissions that spur global warming.

The nation's highest court by a 5-4 vote said the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency "has offered no reasoned explanation" for its refusal to regulate carbon dioxide and other emissions from new cars and trucks that contribute to climate change.

The ruling came in one of the most important environmental cases to reach the Supreme Court in decades. It marked the first high court decision in a case involving global warming.

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### [Stay in the City and Don't Buy Guns or Gold](#)

Albert Bates doesn't think that either peak oil or global warming will usher in the apocalypse. Nor does he advise citizens to start stockpiling firearms and Krugerrands.

"There's a contingent of peak oilers who are survivalists at heart," Bates told me. But he isn't one of them. "We don't need to think of defending ourselves from packs of feral animals, we need to think of getting together quilting bees and sowing bees to make things.

### [GM considers bringing mini cars to U.S.](#)

General Motors Corp. GM's top global product planner said Friday the company is taking a serious look at bringing low-cost mini cars to the U.S. market capable of achieving as high as 50 miles per gallon of gasoline and breaking ground in a virtually nonexistent segment in the world's biggest auto market.

### [Iran's Long Term Energy Problems](#)

While Iran has the world's second largest reserves of Natural gas and also one of the world's largest reserves of oil the long term energy situation here is far from bright. This is the life line of its economy yet the Iranian government is investing surprisingly rather small sums in maintaining the infrastructure and or increasing current production. Daily production is coming at 3.9 million barrels which is actually 5% under its OPEC quota; they have not been able to meet their quota for over 21 months now. Shortage of technical skills and huge delays in new projects are the main culprits for falling production. In fact if nothing is done soon within a decade Iran's net oil exports could fall to zero. Oil minister Kazem Vaziri-Hamaneh has stated that without additional new investment daily output could fall by as much as 13% a year more than double what outside experts had expected.

### [China's wind power generation capacity may top 5 million kw next year](#)

China's installed wind-power generation capacity is likely to top five mln kilowatts next year, two years ahead of what was envisaged in the national development plan, Xinhua news agency reported.

### [EU biofuel push 'to ruin forests'](#)

One government official told the BBC: "The policy is running ahead of the science; we have to be very careful that this doesn't all go badly wrong."

### [EU's new Central Asia Policy and its Energy Dimension](#)

Central Asian republics' desire to optimize their benefits through increasing the number of players in this "New Great Game". It can be interpreted that EU's wish to be active in the regional policies is an indication of increasing competition in the region.

### [DOE Regional Partnerships Find More Than 3,500 Billion Tons of Possible CO2 Storage Capacity](#)

The Department of Energy's Regional Carbon Sequestration Partnerships have identified the powerplant and other stationary sources of more than 3.8 billion tons a year of the greenhouse gas CO2 in the United States and Canada and companion candidate storage capacity for more than 3,500 billion tons. The results are detailed in the new Carbon Sequestration Atlas of the United States and Canada which became available online today.

### [Reflective scientist sees a red roof and he wants to paint it white](#)

SYDNEY'S red-tiled roofs should be painted white to help battle global warming. That is one idea of a thermodynamics expert who believes that besides cutting carbon dioxide emissions, we should also be cooling the world by reflecting solar energy.

### [Scientists weigh downside of palm oil](#)

Only a few years ago, oil from palm trees was viewed as an ideal biofuel: a cheap, renewable alternative to petroleum that would fight global warming. Energy companies began converting generators and production soared.

Now, it's increasingly seen as an example of how well-meaning efforts to limit climate-changing carbon emissions may backfire.

### [UK report calls for wider climate change fight](#)

The world needs to fight more polluting gases, and not just focus on carbon emissions, in the fight against climate change, according to a report published by the UK's Air Quality Expert Group (AQEG) on Monday.

### [UN experts set to issue grim warming on climate impact](#)

BRUSSELS (AFP) - The world's top climate scientists were gathering here Monday to hammer out the summary of a massive report that predicts dire consequences from global warming, especially for poor nations and species diversity.

Even if dramatic measures are taken to reduce the carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions that drive warming, temperatures will continue to climb for decades to come, the experts conclude.

By 2080, according to the report, it is likely that 1.1 to 3.2 billion people worldwide will experience water scarcity, 200 to 600 million will be threatened by hunger, and each year an additional two to seven million will be victims of coastal flooding.

The brunt of these problems will fall squarely on to the world's poorest inhabitants, who are least to blame for the fossil-fuel pollution that drives global warming.

### [Climate change could carry huge, hidden costs: UN report](#)

Climate change will inflict steadily rising costs that could become astronomical if greenhouse gas emissions rise unabated and countries delay preparations for the likely impacts, UN experts will say next week.

### [Oil prices at seven-month highs](#)

World oil prices rose on Monday, trading at seven-month highs above 68 dollars a barrel in London, on supply concerns caused by the Britain- Iran sailor crisis, traders said.

### [DIW warns of rising oil prices over Iran-UK row](#)

The ongoing crisis between Iran and Britain over the arrest of 15 British sailors who violated Iranian territorial waters, may trigger a rise in crude oil prices, according to an energy expert at the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW), IRNA reported.

"The oil price will develop towards the 70 dollar mark and won't drop again," DIW expert Caludia Kemfert told Saturday's edition of the Duesseldorf-based Rheinischen Post.

She warned that a military escalation in the Middle East could spark a major energy crisis.

### [Azerbaijan doesn't cut gas exports to Georgia after April 1](#)

Azerbaijan has not halted gas exports to Georgia while it had been expected to do on April 1.

If the agreement is prolonged, Georgia may completely refuse to buy high-priced Russian gas during summer.

### [Jordan plans nuclear energy by 2015](#)

"Ynet" news reported today that Jordan is planning to construct a nuclear reactor for peaceful purposes. Quoting a report in London today by "Al Hayat," Ynet said that Jordan intended to operate its first reactor for the purpose of energy production in 2015, "to ensure a better future and achieve continuous development" for the kingdom, which lies in a desert region and suffers from a severe energy shortage.

### [Kenya: Row Over Fuel Metre Rule](#)

A row is brewing between the Kenya Revenue Authority and some major oil companies over the introduction of fixed flow metres.

The meters are being used to check quantities of petroleum products pumped into the country.

This, according to sources could be behind the 'artificial' shortages of diesel being experienced in major towns of the country this week.

## [Ghana: Getting Serious With Energy](#)

The most pressing issue confronting Ghanaians today is dwindling power supply, which has resulted in load-shedding affecting many homes and enterprises.

## [Ghana: Don't Force Our Hands, President Warns GHACEM](#)

In a rare display of indignation, President J.A. Kufuor has expressed concern about the current high prices of cement on the local market and warned the Ghana Cement Works Limited (GHACEM), the sole local manufacturers, to check the trend otherwise the government would be compelled to revoke the monopoly it enjoys in the country now.

## [How to counter the 'curse' of North Sea oil](#)

ECONOMICS has been characterised as the "dismal science" and Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, did little to dispel that image with his statement in the Budget that tax revenues from North Sea oil had failed to reach his earlier forecasts.

However, taking a broader and longer view, there may be more reasons to be cheerful about the potential contribution that North Sea oil can make to public finances.

## [Russia's 'cool war' against the US in the Middle East](#)

Moscow's growing attention to the Middle East continues, part of a new global strategy espoused by a more assertive and ambitious Russia. President Vladimir Putin pays much more attention to the region than his predecessor, Boris Yeltsin, ever did. In the last two years, he has paid a historic first visit to Israel, visited oil- and gas-rich Algeria and, in another diplomatic first, toured the Gulf states.

## [Saudi Relations With U.S Cooling](#)

Recently there has been a shift in Saudi King Abdullah's attitude, behavior, and rhetoric towards the U.S. Based on this, some analysts are reporting that their alliance is crumbling -- but is it?

## [Foreign workers sue U.S. companies](#)

Labor leaders overseas are turning increasingly to an obscure 18th-century law that could for the first time make U.S. companies liable at home for the violent and sometimes murderous actions of their employees around the world.

...Chevron, headquartered in San Francisco, is fighting a lawsuit filed by Nigerians who say the company should be held responsible for the killing of protesters by Nigerian security forces outside a refinery owned by its subsidiary.

### [Why Growth Is Bad, Gardens Good and Cuba Key to Oil-Free Future](#)

Bill McKibben makes it clear what he abhors: Wal-Mart (the scourge of small retailers) and Archer Daniels Midland (the bane of family farms).

Instead of a growth-oriented economy, he writes in ``Deep Economy," we need one that meets deep human needs, such as the sense of community that he says has been vanishing from the U.S. along with all those businesses and farms.

### [The implications of peak oil and the shortcomings of alternatives](#)

I'm always hoping to find books that I think will speak in an engaging way to people who would not be drawn to the subject of oil: the people who are not activists, scientists or business people in the energy field, the people who think about oil only when they fill up their cars, pay their heating bills, or happen across a rare reference to oil in the corporate news on Middle East war.

For that audience, *Crude* is the best of the lot I've read.

Dale Allen Pfeiffer: [Connecting the dots between energy depletion and the "War on Terror"](#)

If the population realized that the glory days of our oil-based civilization were over, and that no alternative energy source can provide the quantity of energy that we require for continued socioeconomic prosperity (see How much Energy do We Consume? in The Mountain Sentinel, Vol. 1, No. 4), the economy would collapse overnight, before the major players are ready. What is worse, armed with such an awareness, the public might just rise up and demand a better accounting. They might seek to transform our society into something more egalitarian, threatening to completely unseat the major players. And they certainly cannot have that.

### [Crude Impact](#)

On balance, I give *Crude Impact* a "thumbs-up". Without falling into despair, it clearly tells a number of stories related to petroleum through various lenses, and weaves these stories together to paint an overall damning picture of oil in a compelling manner.



### [Climate change, rising oil prices imperil B.C. food supply](#)

The report, titled B.C.'s Food Self-Reliance, says that the area of farmland with access to irrigation in B.C. would have to increase by nearly 50 per cent by 2025 to provide a healthy diet for all British Columbians.

### [European Energy: Role Reversal](#)

Knowingly or not, Britain's geologists may have deceived their nation. Contrary to forecasts and models, oil and gas production has dropped precipitously. Britain, once the hub of European energy, is no longer energy self-sufficient.

By stark contrast, Germany has for years been jockeying to become the new source to fill European energy needs. It has a strategy to take good care of British energy security. But should Britons be concerned about growing too reliant upon their former enemy?

### [Photovoltaic solar energy: new map and interactive information](#)

A new map published by the European Commission shows the photovoltaic solar energy potential of different parts of Europe. Photovoltaic Solar Cells convert sunlight directly into electricity. In addition the interactive on-line Photovoltaic Geographical Information System (PVGIS), developed by the Commission's in-house scientific service, DG Joint Research Centre, allows users to estimate solar energy performance at any given location in Europe.

The information in the map shows that an identical solar system will generate twice as much energy in sunny areas of Europe, such as Malta and Southern Spain, than in areas such as Scotland or Northern Scandinavia.

### [Secession anyone? The Once and Future Republic of Vermont](#)

We secessionists believe that the 350-year swing of history's pendulum toward large, centralized imperial states is once again reversing itself.

Why? First, the cost of oil and gas. According to urban planner James Howard Kunstler, "Anything organized on a gigantic scale . . . will probably falter in the energy-scarce future." Second, third-wave technology is as inherently democratic and decentralist as second-wave technology was authoritarian and centralist. Gov. Jim Douglas wants Vermont to be the first "e-state," making broadband Internet access available to every household and business in the state by 2010. Vermont will soon be fully wired into the global social commons.



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