



## Drumbeat: March 19, 2011

Posted by [Leanan](#) on March 19, 2011 - 11:02am

### [World leaders meet to discuss action in Libya](#)

After Gaddafi broke his pledge of a ceasefire overnight, sources close to the Paris talks said military strikes could start as soon as the meeting ends on Saturday afternoon, with France, Britain and Canada in an initial operation and any participation by the United States or Arab nations coming later.

"The strikes could start around 3 or 4 o'clock (10 a.m.-11 a.m. EDT)," one source said, adding that Gaddafi's advance into the eastern city of Benghazi had increased pressure to act fast.

A second source said it was "certainly possible" that strikes would start straight after the meeting.

### [Gadhafi strikes rebels as diplomats mull action](#)

Moammar Gadhafi took advantage of international indecision to attack the heart of the 5-week-old uprising on Saturday, sending troops, artillery and warplanes to swarm the first city seized by the rebels. Crashing shells shook buildings, and the sounds of battle drew closer to Benghazi's center.

"Where is France, where is NATO?" cried a 50-year-old woman in Benghazi. "It's too late."

### [Gadhafi: Libyans ready to 'die for me'; forces square off in Benghazi](#)

Tripoli, Libya (CNN) -- Tanks from both pro-government and opposition sides headed toward each other Saturday in the Libyan city of Benghazi as families -- fearing a massacre by the government -- fled the rebel stronghold.

### [Libya says may give oil deals to China, India](#)

(Reuters) - Libya is considering offering direct oil block contracts to China, India and other nations it considers friends in its month-long conflict with rebels, Libya's top oil

official said on Saturday.

### [Gaddafi could turn to Libya's mustard gas stockpile, some officials fear](#)

Over the past several weeks, Western reconnaissance satellites have been focused on a small garage at a remote site in the Libyan desert.

In the garage, south of the city of Sirte, the Libyan government keeps around 10 tons of mustard gas in roughly a half-dozen large canisters. If he chose to do so — and could determine how — Libyan leader Moammar Gaddafi could use the caustic chemical to kill untold numbers of his own people.

### [The West practises selective dudgeon](#)

This week, with the world distracted by Japan's mounting calamities, the remote Bahraini royals sent their armed forces into central Manama to crack the democratic heads that have reared recently in what last year was a most unlikely theatre of discord.

...The silence from Western countries has been deafening, a marked contrast with the revulsion delivered in spades to the wacky Gaddafis further west in Libya.

### [Three killed in Syrian protest](#)

A prominent Syrian activist says three people have been killed and 44 wounded when security forces tried to disperse hundreds of protesters calling for political freedoms in Syria.

### [Yemen State of Emergency Declared After Deadliest Demonstration](#)

Yemen declared a state of emergency yesterday after government forces attacked protesters in Sana'a in the deadliest crackdown in two months of unrest.

At least 46 people were killed and hundreds injured as police and pro-regime gunmen shot at a crowd of tens of thousands of protesters in the capital's Taghyeer Square and snipers opened fire from rooftops, doctors treating the wounded said. U.S. President Barack Obama condemned the violence, and the opposition called for an international investigation.

### [Pemex Boosts Oil Production Forecast to 2.6 Million Barrels a Day for 2011](#)

Petroleos Mexicanos, the state-owned oil company, expects 2011 oil production to be more than 2.6 million barrels a day, said Chief Executive Officer Juan Jose Suarez

Coppel.

### [Iran: Oil output hikes won't ease price pressures](#)

(Reuters) - Iran's oil minister said on Saturday any output increase by individual OPEC members aimed at reducing oil price pressures caused by the Libyan crisis would not have the desired effect.

### [Officials Say Drilling Oversight Feasible Despite Cuts](#)

The state's two top environmental officials told lawmakers that their agencies have enough resources to oversee gas drilling, despite continued cuts to their state funding.

### [Analysis: Oilsands to play role in growing transport demand](#)

LONDON — The current mix of prices and policies will favour substantial growth in gas-fired electricity generating capacity, and expansion of unconventional oil to meet growing transport demand.

If policy-makers want a different outcome — for example more clean power generation to limit CO2 emissions — they will have to tilt the playing field much more aggressively to provide a different set of incentives.

### [Pakistan: Passengers suffer as 8 trains run out of fuel](#)

Hundreds of passengers suffered badly on Thursday after Pakistan Railways halted the functioning of more than eight trains running on different routes due to the shortage of fuel.

According to sources, Kohat Passenger Train, Attock City Passenger Train, Khewra Passenger Train and Pind Dadan Khan up and down trains were halted because of non-availability of fuel. “If arrangements for fuel are not made then there is a possibility of closing down all 22 passenger trains operating from Rawalpindi,” sources added.

### [Japan's Showa Shell starts full output at 4 refineries](#)

(Reuters) - Japanese refiner Showa Shell Sekiyu KK said on Friday that it has started full output at its four group refineries as part of efforts to ease a severe supply shortage after a powerful quake hit northeast Japan a week ago.

### [Natural Gas Gets Boost Amid New Nuclear Fears](#)

It's too soon to know the outcome of the crisis at Japan's Fukushima Daiichi nuclear-power plant. But watching the events in Japan has already had a profound impact on public perceptions world-wide in at least two ways.

Most obviously, it has deepened popular concerns about the safety of nuclear power. But it has also underlined how dependent modern life in even the richest countries in the world is on a continuous, reliable supply of electricity.

### [Japan Energy Crisis Shows Need for Diverse Fuels, SunPower Says](#)

Japan's nuclear crisis underscores the need for a diverse fuel supply, according to executives at SunPower Corp. (SPWR), the second-largest U.S. solar-module maker.

"Of course these macro events affect public policy," Thomas Werner, SunPower's chief executive officer, said today in an interview at Bloomberg's Washington office. Werner is among Silicon Valley executives meeting members of Congress and the administration this week to push an immigration overhaul, extension of a tax credit for research and development and more spending on energy programs.

### [German green industries say can fill nuclear gaps](#)

(Reuters) - German renewable industry lobby BEE said on Wednesday it would be able to supply 47 percent of German power requirements by 2020, joining a debate on how to replace nuclear generation capacity.

### [How Should China Solve Its Energy Problems?](#)

China's economic model propels its energy consumption, concentrated among heavy industry and manufacturing to fuel an export juggernaut. In other words, China's energy problems are a direct outgrowth of being an industrializing "producer," which is the opposite of the U.S., a consumer-led energy guzzler. Viewed this way, it becomes obvious that the energy pattern in each country reflects a major symptom of the central economic imbalance of production and consumption between China and the U.S. It is no surprise then that Beijing persistently argues that China's energy consumption per capita is just one-tenth that of the U.S. So to the extent that China exits its current hyper-industrialization phase and restructures its economy, the process should naturally lead to improvement in what seems to be unbridled energy consumption.

### [Ohio gov seeks to halve utility watchdog funding](#)

Ohio Gov. John Kasich's proposed budget would cut more than half the funding to a state agency that advocates for residential phone, gas and electric customers at a time when another utility watchdog agency is rescinding some of its rules.

## [Aerotropolis: The Way We'll Live Next by John D Kasarda and Greg Lindsay – review](#)

Lindsay and Kasarda dismiss the idea that air travel should be curtailed due to concerns about greenhouse gas emissions and climate change as fatal for economic growth. Similarly, fears about peak oil are countered by the prospect of synthetic fuels. If the oil really does stop flowing, then they believe electrification of cars will allow reserves to be prioritised for aircraft. This dramatic option is one that Laurence Smith also raises in his book, *The New North* (322pp, Profile, £20). But Smith does not minimise the challenges facing our oil-addicted societies. He points out, for instance, that to meet the expected demand for oil in 2030 we would need to discover the equivalent of nine Saudi Arabias.

## [Senate Ally Defends Obama on Gas Prices](#)

Senator Jeff Bingaman, Democrat of New Mexico, delivered a long floor speech rebutting claims that Obama administration policies rather than Middle East uncertainties have driven up prices.

## [Expect Calls for More Drilling, Until Somebody Tells the Truth About Gas Prices](#)

Within the green transportation community there's little argument over whether the longterm interests of the United States and world would be better served by having slightly-to-significantly more expensive gas. Hybrid and electric car owners aren't the only ones who understand this though. Secretary Chu seems to as well, and President Obama himself is almost certainly at least aware of the arguments supporting such a policy (even if it's one he wouldn't touch with a 10-foot poll.)

But in continuing to coddle the public by attributing “high” gasoline prices to temporary factors like political unrest in North Africa, the President is setting himself up to be hit again and again by the “drill baby, drill” crowd.

## [Long Island's Coming Energy Crisis](#)

The big news here isn't that the U.S. government does business with nasty people, for a variety of reasons that sometimes work at cross purposes. No kidding. The real story is that the unrest is exposing, once and for all, that OPEC nations, particularly Saudi Arabia, don't have the excess production capacity or the deep reserves they've claimed. Sooner or later, somehow, for some period of time, the petroleum trade routes are going to be disrupted.

## [Biggest barrier to using less oil? Our reluctance to embrace new ways of life](#)

So here we go with the latest round of spiking oil and gas prices and the subsequent outrage about the very real anguish such prices are causing people caught in this officially-ended, but still horrendously painful, Great Recession. At the risk of sounding

like a Cassandra, without oil scientist or economist credentials to support me, I'm nevertheless one of many (including lots of oil scientists and economists) who are pretty certain the days of "cheap" oil and gas are over. For real. And I know that saying so makes many cringe.

### [Richard Heinberg: Earth's Limits: Why Growth Won't Return - Climate Change, Pollution, Accidents, Environmental Decline, and Natural Disasters](#)

Accidents and natural disasters have long histories; therefore it may seem peculiar at first to think that these could now suddenly become significant factors in choking off economic growth. However, two things have changed.

### [Google Ventures Leads Financing of Biofuels Start-Up](#)

Google Ventures has led a \$20 million financing round in CoolPlanetBiofuels, a Southern California start-up that is developing mobile refineries to turn wood chips, agriculture waste and other biomass into biofuels.

CoolPlanetBiofuels, an 18-month-old company, has also attracted the attention of ConocoPhillips, GE Capital and NRG Energy, which participated in the financing round along with North Bridge Venture Partners.

### [Scotland Energy Plan Nixes Offshore Wind Projects Planned by E.ON, Dong](#)

Scotland has declared unviable three proposed locations for offshore wind farms, a potential setback for E.ON AG and Dong Energy A/S, which are planning projects at some of the sites.

### [Renault in Deal to Provide Electric Cars to Ex-Soviet Republic of Georgia](#)

Renault SA (RNO) signed an agreement to provide electric cars to Georgia starting next year, the former Soviet republic's economic development ministry said today.

The French carmaker will initially conduct feasibility studies and help develop infrastructure, the statement said.

### [Another Assault on Coal, Another Push to Natural Gas](#)

These new standards will apply to 31 states and the District of Columbia. That makes for a considerable impact. But even in those states where the rules will not apply (at least initially), interstate power transmission lines will still extend the EPA's jurisdiction.

### [Delay in Coal Pollution Rules Took Toll in Lives](#)

That it would take more than 20 years for federal regulators to finally propose toxic emissions standards for the power industry is testament to both the slow wheels of bureaucracy and the clout of the nation's utility and coal interests, which bitterly — and for years, successfully — fought the controls, even as other industries bowed under.

### [World Needs to Choose Between Nuclear and Climate Risks, Orbeo Says](#)

“Runaway” climate change may be the price of retreating from nuclear energy in the wake of Japan's nuclear crisis, according to an analyst at Orbeo.

Failing to replace or expand nuclear capacity will boost global emissions by 1.7 billion metric tons in 2030, said Emmanuel Fages, an analyst in Paris at the carbon-trading venture of Rhodia SA (RHA) and Societe Generale (GLE) SA. That estimate includes 1.3 billion tons from replacement coal and 381 million from natural gas, he said today in an e-mailed research note.

### [Deadly heatwaves will be more frequent in coming decades, say scientists](#)

'Mega-heatwaves' like the one estimated to have killed tens of thousands in western Europe in 2003 will become up to 10 times more likely over the next 40 years, a study suggests.

### [How not to change a climate sceptic's mind](#)

HOW do you get your point across over an issue as contentious as climate change? As a hearing in the US Congress last week showed, the evidence alone is not enough.



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