



From The Wilderness

A Nonpartisan Non-sectarian MAP for the Here That Is, Into the Tomorrow of Our Own Making

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BLOCKING THE GRETNA BRIDGE

Racism and Resource Scarcity May Be Siamese Twins in a Post-Petroleum World

by
Michael C. Ruppert

September 15, 2005 0800 PST (FTW) – **B**ack in the 1950s a black and white film – I forget the title – posed a dilemma that will soon confront all of mankind. It is without doubt a question that most people are totally unwilling to face. In the wake of the sinking of a cargo ship, a group of survivors take refuge in an overcrowded lifeboat. The dilemma, which soon becomes apparent to the tiny ship's officer in charge, is that there are too many people aboard the small craft and that it will sink and kill all of them unless someone is cast overboard. This actually happened in real life and the officer who made a decision to cast people off was subsequently exonerated. Instead of sacrificing all lives in a politically correct gesture, he saved some lives that would otherwise have been lost.

What happened after Hurricane Katrina is a different story.

In the aftermath of the storm we are seeing many ominous warnings of choices that will come to us all sooner or later as hydrocarbon energy reserves diminish in America and around the globe. None are easy. None are palatable. And none are politically correct. But hard science doesn't care about being politically correct. Below is a story of what happened when the occupants of one lifeboat felt threatened at the prospect of taking on too many survivors – so they took on none. I neither agree with this nor endorse it. In fact it fills me with rage. The people of Gretna and Tarrytown, places I visited in 1977 during my heartbreaking discovery that the CIA was bringing drugs into this country, could and should have done better as thousands of New Orleans refugees started streaming across the Mississippi into these relatively unscathed communities. Instead of blocking the bridge and threatening to shoot the “unwashed” masses comprised largely of African-Americans, they had an obligation to extend aid to whomever they could. At some point also they would have been justified to say, “That's enough, we just can't take any more.” The fact that no attempt was made at all is what will remain forever unforgivable about this tragic episode.

It is a lesson for all of us.

As I continue to lift my eyes above the immediate horizon I see choices like this soon coming at all of us. Will it be the unwashed of Phoenix fleeing to Scottsdale? The gay, lesbian and Democratic hordes of San Francisco fleeing north into Marin County? The undereducated poor of Boston heading towards Martha's Vineyard or Vermont? Or will it be millions of Manhattanites and Washington office workers eyeing the Amish farmlands of Pennsylvania and Ohio?

We are all only one hot, soothing shower away from being unwashed.

The racism of Gretna is obvious and despicable. But it is also predictable. Psychology 101 in almost all college courses directs our attention to fruit flies and red sturgeon. It tells how species recognize each other and form into societies based upon visual recognition. This is neither

(“Blocking the Gretna Bridge” cont'd on page 7)

From the Wilderness

Michael C. Ruppert
Publisher/Editor

Editor/Publisher.....Michael C. Ruppert
Senior Staff Writer... Jamey Hecht, Ph.D.
Contributing Editor.....Peter Dale Scott, Ph.D.
Military /Veterans' Affairs Editor.....Stan Goff

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From The Wilderness

P.O Box 6061 – 350, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413

www.fromthewilderness.com

editorial: editor@copvcia.com

subscriptions and customer service:

service@copvcia.com

(818) 788-8791 * (818) 981-2847 fax

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OIL SHOCKWAVE:

Torrance, CA Emergency Simulation Targets Big Business and Local Government Managers

Ominous Timing in Advance of Hurricane Katrina

by

Zac Evans and Michael C. Ruppert

September 1, 2005 1030 PST (FTW) – **O**n August 17th, little more than a week before Hurricane Katrina captured our attention, Securing America's Energy (SAFE) and the National Commission on Energy Policy (NCEP) held their third *Oil Shockwave* event in three months in Torrance, California. Torrance was appropriately chosen as it is home to 36% of California's refining capacity and is home to both LA International airport and much of Southern California's aerospace industry. Dubbed an "oil crisis simulation," *Oil Shockwave* addressed the precarious nature of U.S. oil dependence via mock cabinet meetings wherein both current and former government officials played roles as key cabinet members, discussing how to advise the president in the midst of an escalating energy crisis caused by terrorism or political unrest – not, as the title of the event might suggest, problems caused by a dwindling supply of oil.



This was a big-budget event, complete with simulated and slickly produced CNN-like broadcasts of developing news and carefully scripted roles for each of the key participants. Perhaps most revealing was the fact that this was not an event aimed at the general public. The live audience of about 100 was mostly local government officials and executives of major corporations. This suggested to *FTW* that these events have been early-warning fire drills for specific key localities throughout the nation as the first big hits from Peak Oil draw near.



This was not a general public audience.

The actors at the Torrance event included: R. James Woolsey, former Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (as National Security Advisor); Rand Beers, President of the Coalition for American Leadership & Security and former Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Combating Terrorism (as Secretary of Homeland Security); Robert E. Grady, Managing Partner, Carlyle Venture Partners, the first of two U.S. venture funds of the Carlyle Group (as Secretary of Treasury); Congresswoman Jane Harman of California's 36th Congressional District (as Secretary of Defense); Mary Nichols, Director of the Institute of the Environment at UCLA and former Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (as Secretary of Energy); Matt Peterson, President and CEO of Global Green USA, and member of the Council on Foreign Relations (as Secretary of the Interior); Dr. Steven Spiegel, Director of the UCLA Burkle Center Mideast Regional Security Program (as Director of National Intelligence); and Pete Wilson, former governor of California (as Secretary of State).



The Carlyle Group's Robert Grady (Treasury Secretary) looking appropriately reflective

Harman, who was the host of the event in her congressional district boasts some other interesting credentials. She is the ranking Democratic member of the House Permanent Select Committee

on Intelligence (HPSCI) and her district is also home to 36% of all refineries in the state of California. Harman was also sitting on the dais in 1996 when *FTW* Publisher/Editor Mike Ruppert had his now-infamous confrontation with then-CIA Director John Deutch over the agency's involvement in drug smuggling into the US.



Seated at table, clockwise from lower left: 1) Secretary of Energy Mary Nichols, Director of the Institute of the Environment at UCLA; 2) Matt Peterson, President and CEO of Global Green USA, and member of the Council on Foreign Relations; 3) Pete Wilson, former governor of California; 4) R. James Woolsey, former Director of the Central Intelligence Agency; 5) Jane Harman, Member of Congress from California's 36th Congressional District; 6) Robert E. Grady, Managing Partner of Carlyle Venture Partners (of the Carlyle Group); 7) Rand Beers, President of the Coalition for American Leadership & Security; 8) [not visible] Dr. Steven Spiegel, Director of the UCLA Burkle Center Mideast Regional Security Program.

The setting for the simulation began in December 2005 and ended in July 2006. During that time situations were provided to the panelists through simulated news broadcasts and notes given to them throughout by event moderators. As the simulation unfolded there were bombings of oil facilities in Saudi Arabia and Alaska; civil unrest in Nigeria; instability in Iraq; and stagnation of Russian oil production. Consequently the price of oil rose...and kept rising mercilessly, eventually breaking \$100 per barrel. The solution to the tightening economic vise-grip was simple enough, according to the panelists: Increase Supply, Reduce Demand (demand destruction was not specifically mentioned), and Develop Alternatives. While the What and Why are easy-enough to see in this context, the panelists all agreed that the How was another matter -- although the display line of Honda and Toyota hybrids in the venue's parking lot (the Torrance Civic Center), along with rows of booths manned by representatives of the renewable energy industry in the courtyard suggested otherwise.

OVERLY SIMPLE SOLUTIONS, FAULTY ASSUMPTIONS, OR BOTH

Plenty of short-term solutions were casually suggested as possible means of weathering the storm caused by any one of the problems presented during the *Oil Shockwave* brainstorm.

Since terrorism and political strife were accepted as the root causes of the imagined oil supply disruption (as opposed to Peak Oil), the message was simply this: the United States must find a way to become more self-sufficient energy-wise in order to avoid the economic rollercoaster that it's currently on due to its dependence on oil from unstable nations. It stood to reason – from the

panelists' perspective – that in this context a little fine-tuning of the public and corporate consciousness, and a broadening and reallocation of investment, are all that's needed.



What's missing from this slide?

From *FTW's* perspective, such an approach is both futile and recklessly dangerous. For example, in response to political unrest in Nigeria the pseudo-cabinet acted as though a simple request to Saudi Arabia to increase oil production would be adequate for the time being. It was asserted that this was possible because the Saudis had already stepped up production and had given every assurance that they would be able to continue doing so. The panel left no room for the contingency that the Saudis simply could not increase production, except in case of a terrorist attack to one or more refineries — rather than a lack of reserves, or collapsing reservoirs.



Nigeria unrest makes a bad situation worse.

The solution to the Nigeria crisis was three-pronged. One prong was the request to the Saudis; the other two were tapping into the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR), and the consideration of military options. In this context, the SPR (called "Spro" by the participants), although possessing as little as sixty days worth of oil for the entire country, would best be used for a rainy day

such as this, and be built back up again in brighter days. Military options, too, could calm the choppy waters, stabilize affected regions quite effectively, and get oil production back on line and humming. One need only observe the current situation in Iraq to be thoroughly unconvinced of this.

The Artic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) was another ace up the cabinet's sleeve. Although ANWR is the only oil deposit in the United States that has not been drilled, as federal law prohibits doing so, the cabinet refused to take that option off the table, seeming to regard the Alaskan field as one of the true saviors in the game. For this to be the case, ANWR would have to hold at least 17 billion barrels (Gb), which is the most liberal estimate of actual reserves cap there. Most experts place Ultimately Recoverable Reserves in ANWR at around 3-5 billion barrels – a six month supply for the US. However, even if the wildly optimistic figure is correct, the cabinet failed to take into account the time and money needed to establish the operation necessary to extract, pump and deliver this oil – years. Therefore, ANWR is no quick fix for anything.

ULTRA FUEL-EFFICIENT CARS, TRUCKS... AND TANKS?

James Woolsey doesn't have just one hybrid car, but a few. Rep. Jane Harman drove hers to the *Oil Shockwave* event. They practice what they preach; maybe they're onto something. Woolsey uses solar panels on his house. In fact, his whole house is one big freaking solar panel; he was, after all, the Director of the CIA – whose intense focus on Peak Oil goes as far back as the 1970s (*FTW* has established as much through declassified documents). Coincidentally, Harman mentioned that she had just driven from her full-solar home in Venice, California. At the event, *FTW* also noted that several [Coca-Cola](#) bottling plants have already gone solar. We may be starving and freezing with Peak Oil but there will always be a Coke around.

Knowing that George Bush, Al Gore, and Dick Cheney also have complete off-grid, solar-powered rural residences we might conclude that this is a clue that they know something they aren't telling us.

Probably the most often-mentioned solution to the pickle of the *Oil Shockwave* event was the hybrid car. Cars that run on any combination of hydrogen, natural gas, and electricity, either exclusively or cooperatively with gasoline, would lower emissions and definitely decrease consumer and corporate fuel consumption. Hearing this outside of the context of real life, stated simply and confidently by the cabinet members, one could very easily leave the "board room" full of hope for the future and all our progeny present and hereafter, walk outside to the courtyard, and have a very lively conversation with any one of the representatives from Honda who are there purely to serve you.

But there's a lot they didn't tell us.

Amid all the mentions of hybrid technology, not once were the true energy economics of that technology articulated. In the context of a fuel crisis, real or imagined, as in the case of *Oil Shockwave*, a hybrid car is no panacea. It takes an average of 2500 gallons of oil to make one mid-sized hybrid car. Ore must be mined, transported, smelted and formed. Most of the body, interior, and some of the parts are all petrochemically based (i.e. plastic) – not to mention the energy expended in the actual production of the vehicle. In the city, the hybrid enjoys the highest

fuel economy, as the constant use of the car's brakes keeps the battery charged. But on the highway, over long distances, the hybrid is the least fuel efficient because the brakes are engaged so rarely.

An interesting (and possibly quite telling) suggestion by Rep. Harman was that it would be a good idea to overhaul the entire military fleet with hybrid vehicles. We wonder how much that would cost and whether it wouldn't be a boondoggle for failing US automakers while actually increasing oil consumption.

What would happen to all the surplus vehicles? Wouldn't they be auctioned off and actually increase the number of vehicles out there as they wind up on the road?

There is not, at this time, any legislation that is proposing any such thing and there is a good reason for that. Not surprisingly, the military, particularly the Army, has been experimenting with the concept of hybrid [light-armored vehicles](#) for years. The hybrid is a very appealing prospect for the military, as the relative quiet of the propulsion system (compared to that of a diesel-powered truck, for instance) would impede detection in the field. The problem is that the battery's cells run low and have to be recharged about every hundred miles. Batteries are also sensitive, toxic and degenerative. They suffer a reduction in energy carrying capacity over time. The current opinion of the Army is that the technology is too immature. At the current rate, the Army expects to produce a workable light armored hybrid vehicle by 2012. So much for that solution.

Although open to the public and the press, it was clear where *Oil Shockwave's* advance announcements were targeted. The event was held in a small off-off-Broadway-sized theater at the Torrance Convention center, of which the maximum capacity was between 75 and 100. At least six news cameras stood at the back of the small room, each with an attendant reporter, producer, and camera man. There were print reporters and at least one news photographer.



Lots of mainstream press but little real effort. Independent journalist Lisa Pease at far left.

After the event, a press conference was held amongst the hybrid cars on display, and when it came time for the Q&A no one from the mainstream press had anything to ask. Standing at the

front of the press line, *FTW* Publisher Michael Ruppert raised his hand and asked the first question:

Congressman Roscoe Bartlett of Maryland has delivered eight special-order addresses on the floor of the House about Peak Oil. I met with him in his office in Washington two months ago, after which he had a private briefing with President Bush where he took some material I had prepared. We have a report from Science Applications International Corporation, February of this year, at White House direction on the subject of Peak Oil and recently in the House Armed Services Committee, as they discussed CNOOC's suggested purchase of Unocal, the term Peak Oil was thrown about in very candid terms in an open-house hearing. Peak Oil seems to be overriding what I see here as an attempt to blame Saudi Arabia for not producing more oil when in fact there may be no more oil to produce and these shortages may be inevitable anyway. How does the panel react to that?



The press conference begins.

In response to Ruppert's question Woolsey acknowledged the concept of Peak Oil with a nod to M. King Hubbert, who in the 1950's accurately predicted when the peak of oil production in the U.S. would occur. Concerning Saudi Arabia, Woolsey made reference to a recent report that concluded "that the Saudis may, in their huge fields, be at a point such that they are either approaching very soon or even have already approached such peak production, but you need to realize what that means."

Woolsey continued, "Since oil production costs are so low in Saudi Arabia, at most a few dollars a barrel, it may well be the case that a field hits its peak and production costs go up substantially, but that just means they're going up to five, six, seven, eight dollars a barrel instead of something huge. So even if the fields of the Persian Gulf and the Middle East, particularly in Saudi Arabia, are coming to peak production, this may not substantially affect the fact that Saudi Arabia and the Gulf will still be the low cost producers in the world and we're all still be more and more dependant on them as time goes on; however expensive they get to be in the near term, it's not going

to be as expensive as production in, say, Russia which is hindered by lack of pipelines, by cold weather, and the rest.



Woolsey responds to Mike Ruppert's question.

"I know Congressman Bartlett, I think very highly of him, I think his concern about peak production, which I talked with him about, is well taken, **it's an important issue, but it doesn't negate any of the things we were saying in here, this morning, about what could come from an immediate crisis. We may have a chronic problem with peak production, and an acute problem with respect to near-term terrorist attacks.**"

Rep. Harman agreed: "I would just say after that it points out the importance of accurate, timely, and actionable intelligence, which hopefully we'll begin to field in larger amounts now that we have set up the Director of National Intelligence function."



Jane Harman delivers predictable "solutions" at the end of the drill.

Immediately after the Press Conference all in attendance were invited to stay and inspect the cars on display and visit the booths in the courtyard. Lunch was provided.

Having just made his way off stage, Woolsey found himself face to face with Ruppert.



Mike Ruppert meets his second DCI face-to-face.

After laughing uproariously as Ruppert reminded him that he was the former LAPD narcotics investigator who had confronted his predecessor, John Deutch at Locke High School, Woolsey reiterated, "I do think the world outside the Middle East is going to hit peak sometime between now and a decade from now. The Middle East – God knows! – may have already hit, or it may be a while, but whatever happens we're going to be so – in that regard – so damn dependant on them that we have to fix this problem. So whether you come at it because you're concerned about Peak Oil... or terrorism, or global warming – you end up in the same place." (<http://www.fromthewilderness.com/mp3/Woolsey.rm>)

Really, Mr. Woolsey? Do we?

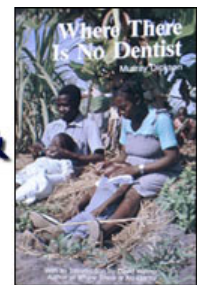
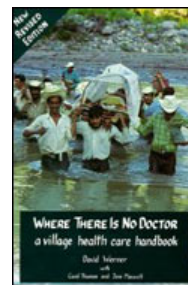
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("Blocking the Gretna Bridge" cont'd from page 1)

good nor bad. It just is and it is also ingrained in human behavior. What this story tells us is that we must choose to act differently if we are to survive as a species or even in a few fortunate communities. It's easy to distinguish black, brown and yellow from white. It's also a cop out (pardon the pun). What happened in Gretna is an archetypal model of what is coming for all of us and a warning; a very clear warning." Throughout, the official relief effort was callous, inept and racist... Lives were lost that did not need to be lost."

As we confront Peak Oil and Gas, and as we march headlong into a winter of devastation for the US economy from which there will likely be no recovery, all of us must force discussion of these issues now so that we can be prepared when the time comes and not linger in denial until the only option we have left is to revert to the level of the red sturgeon in panic or of the Gretna police department – also in panic.

Gretna also reinforces my stated position that local police agencies are going to become uniquely important as collapse becomes evident. Scientists like Richard Heinberg and I both see a "devolution" into feudal societies. Feudal societies were maintained by cadres of local knights and their first duties were to the people of their barony or fiefdom. This horrible tragedy took place in a region where racism is about as easy to find as a freshly shucked oyster used to be, so I am not surprised to see how it played out. I am only heart-broken.

My fear is how other, supposedly homogeneous communities will react.

How will all the "have" places react when they see the unwashed "have not" hordes approaching. At some point they will have to say we can't take any more. At some point, they will have to defend their supply or risk hastening a total ecological collapse. But the decisions about whom and how many to save must be based upon some other criteria than race. Always, wherever possible, attempts must be made to save those who can be saved. It may be ultimately necessary to decide whom to save based upon skill sets. These decisions must be made by the people themselves in each place and not by Dick Cheney, David Rockefeller, Hillary Clinton or any other elite person or persons. Ultimately each locality will be forced to make its own choices and what will decide whether they are correct or not will be solely whether the community itself survives in nature. Diversity is a key to sustainability. I pray that we can do better than Gretna and the only way that we will is if we start talking about it right now.

'Racist' police blocked bridge and forced evacuees back at gunpoint

By Andrew Buncombe in Washington

Published: 11 September 2005

<http://news.independent.co.uk/world/americas/article311784.ece>

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A Louisiana police chief has admitted that he ordered his officers to block a bridge over the Mississippi river and force escaping evacuees back into the chaos and danger of New Orleans. Witnesses said the officers fired their guns above the heads of the terrified people to drive them back and "protect" their own suburbs.

Two paramedics who were attending a conference in the city and then stayed to help those affected by the hurricane, said the officers told them they did not want their community "becoming another New Orleans".

The desperate evacuees were forced to trudge back into the city they had just left. "It was a real eye-opener," Larry Bradshaw, 49, a paramedic from San Francisco, told *The Independent* on Sunday. "I believe it was racism. It was callousness, it was cruelty."

Mr. Bradshaw said the police blocked off the road on the Thursday and Friday after Hurricane Katrina struck on Monday 29 August. He and his wife Lorrie Slonsky, also a paramedic, had sheltered with others in the Hotel Monteleone in the French Quarter.

When food and water ran out they were forced to head for the city's convention centre, but on the way they heard reports of the chaos and violence that was taking place there and inside the Superdome where thousands of people were forced together without running water, toilets, electricity or air conditioning. So Mr Bradshaw spoke with a senior New Orleans police officer who instructed them to cross the Crescent City Connection bridge to Jefferson Parish, where he promised they would find buses waiting to evacuate them.

They were in the middle of a group of up to 800 people - overwhelmingly black - walking across the bridge when they heard shots and saw people running. "We had been hearing shooting for days. What was different about this was that it was close by," he said.

Making their way towards the crest of the bridge they saw a chain of armed police officers blocking the route. When they asked about the buses they were told there was no such arrangement and that the route was being blocked to avoid their parish becoming "another New Orleans". They identified the police as officers from the city of Gretna.

The following day Mr. Bradshaw said they tried again to cross and directly witnessed police shooting over the heads of a middle-aged white couple who were also turned back. Eventually, late on Friday evening, the couple succeeded in crossing the bridge with the intervention of a contact in the local fire department.

Arthur Lawson, chief of the Gretna police department, said he had not yet questioned his officers as to whether they fired their guns.

He confirmed that his officers, along with those from Jefferson Parish and the Crescent City Connection police force, sealed the bridge and refused to let people pass. This was despite the fact that local media were informing people that the bridge was one of the few safe evacuation routes from the city.

Gretna is a predominantly white suburban town of around 18,000 inhabitants. In the aftermath of Katrina, three quarters of the inhabitants still had electricity and running water. But, Chief Lawson told UPI news agency: "There was no food, water or shelter in Gretna City. We did not have the wherewithal to deal with these people. If we had opened the bridge our city would have looked like New Orleans does now - looted, burned and pillaged."

Mr Bradshaw and his wife were evacuated to Texas and have since returned to California. They condemned the authorities, adding: "This official treatment was in sharp contrast to the warm, heartfelt reception given to us by ordinary Texans."

[Mike Kane enters the heart of the establishment and finds big investors, CIA men, and the descendants of presidents discussing renewable energy. Where will it lead? – FTW]

Renewables

PART 3

Renewable Energy Finance Forum – Wall Street

By
Michael Kane

“Global oil production will peak within the next decade, maybe sooner.”

Steve Westly, Controller of California

‘Global oil production will likely peak by 2010.’

**Michael Eckhart, [ACORE](#) President,
Former Principal of Booz, Allen & Hamilton**

September 6, 2005 0730 PST (FTW): The Second Renewable Energy Finance Forum (REFF – Wall St.) held on June 23, 2005, opened with California’s Controller, Steve Westly, telling the renewable energy industry to invest in China, followed by ACORE President Michael Eckhart’s power-point presentation where the opening slide presented global oil production peaking in 2010. The event was sponsored by Euromoney Energy Events (EEE) and the American Council On Renewable Energy (ACORE).

Investors and financiers asked themselves the questions that hang over the threshold of renewable energy: How can we make this work with minimal risk? How much equity do we want in a wind project? How much credit are we willing to supply to a solar initiative? How do we make this profitable? How do we make lemonade out of lemons?

This reporter asked Michael Eckhart if – in the context of Peak Oil – there was enough time to build a renewable infrastructure to sustain economic growth. The [Hirsch Report](#) seems to say that such an effort needed to begin 30 years ago to be successful.

“We’ll never know what the economic growth would’ve been if we weren’t facing this problem,” said Eckhart at an REFF press conference in the Waldorf Astoria, NYC. “We’ll know what economic growth we can have; it’s what we will have.”

Que sera, sera.

It seemed Eckhart was throwing his hands up and saying, “Time will tell.” This may be the only logical response outside of “No!” which Eckhart could never say in his position as ACORE president. He followed this by saying he believes we are already being

severely economically constrained.

With the Bush administration doing little to nothing to assist renewable energy development, it has been left up to the states to set high renewable portfolio standards (RPS) and lead the way in constructing renewable energy infrastructure. How successful those endeavors will be ultimately is the trillion-dollar-question. Eckhart went on to say biofuels would be needed to transition into a hydrogen economy.

“How can we get to a hydrogen based transportation system, and is that real?” asked Eckhart.

It was refreshing to hear a leader in the field of renewable energy question the feasibility of a hydrogen-based economy. We have yet to see any significant indication that hydrogen fuel cells will be capable of successfully moving the transportation sector away from fossil fuels.

Can biofuels bridge the gap Eckhart *hopes* we will have?

Day Two of the conference opened with New York Governor (and possible 2008 Republican Presidential candidate) George Pataki announcing \$4 million in state funds for what will be the largest biofuels facility in the Northeast – now a defunct beer brewery north of Syracuse.[1](#)

China

It was somewhat odd to hear the Controller of California tell the renewable energy industry and Wall Street to invest in China. But after Steve Westly met with Chinese heads of state, he says, he was convinced they are committed to seeing renewable energy grow in their country.

China is well aware that despite their growing thirst for oil, hydrocarbons are a finite energy resource. In June of 2004, at the International Conference for Renewable Energy (*Renewables 2004*), China pledged to raise its renewable generating capacity to 60,000 MW, representing 10% of its total capacity, by 2010.[2](#) This is equivalent to 60 giant power plants. In June of this year the World Bank – headed by its [newly appointed president](#), former Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz – awarded China over \$87 million to invest in renewable energy infrastructure.[3](#)

Why isn’t there \$87 million in the Republican energy bill for renewable infrastructure in America?

Wind: European or American Style?

Everyone seems to agree that wind energy is an economic winner. But how far can wind go? The answer to that depends on who you ask.

The wind finance panel at REFF - Wall St. was high profile. It included Randall Swisher, president of the American Wind Energy Association (AWEA); Jim Murphy, Senior Vice President and CFO of Invenergy; and Sylvain Santamarta of Shell Renewables. There were two lawyers on the panel as well; Edward D. Einowski, partner in Stoel Rives LLP, and Michael Garland, partner in Babcock & Brown LP.

Jim Murphy said he had been up all night. His presentation was

focused specifically on one deal that Invenergy closed right before he took to the podium. The ink barely had time to dry as Murphy spoke to a sizeable percent of the 600 people in attendance that day. A number of companies used REFF to make PR announcements.

Sylvain Santamarta stated that Shell will continue to invest in renewables – especially wind – since they view them as a valid and valuable supplement to hydrocarbons. As stated in [Part 1 of this series](#), supplementing over-consumption is the primary focus of the major players in the renewable energy industry.

Randall Swisher spoke to how far wind energy has come despite the lack of significant policy support from Washington. But how far can it go?

That was *FTW's* question.

Wind Report 2004, published by the German power corporation E.ON Netz,[4](#) shows that there are physical limitations to the contribution wind energy can make to a centralized grid. The primary concern published in the German report is that wind energy's intermittency currently requires 60% to 80% of traditional energy generating capacity on stand-by in case the wind forecast is wrong. In that context, how much wind energy can be utilized on America's grid?

Edward Einowski responded first by saying we can harness "much, much, much more wind energy than we are currently." He added that forecasting methods are significantly more reliable than people realize. That contradicts *Wind Report 2004* which states that forecasting methods are improving yet remain limited.

The bottom line in Einowski's response was that we won't have to deal with such issues for many years because we currently utilize a mere fraction of wind's potential energy in America. Randall Swisher claimed that Germany's numbers for wind energy generation to date were driven by financial issues – specifically the country's resistance to a feed-in tariff. But Swisher then admitted he was not familiar with the E.ON Netz report. [5](#)

The major issue in wind infrastructure is intermittency — the dependence upon a consistent flow of adequate wind into the turbines, and the back-up measures designed to compensate in periods when that flow is inadequate. Swisher stated that the handling of intermittency depended upon the size of the utility buying the wind energy. The bigger the utility, he said, the less of an effect wind intermittency has on grid reliability. Until penetration reaches 20% (that is, until 20% of the energy provided to the utility comes from wind), he said, intermittency causes few problems.

But Swisher then quoted a study done in Minnesota claiming that 1500 MW of wind energy (spanning hundreds of square miles), would require only 6 MW non-wind backup capacity.[6](#) The study is based on a hypothetical situation of future, not current, wind energy capacity. A quick review shows that it raises many of the same difficulties mentioned in the E.ON Netz report, but the wording seems less direct than that of the Germans. The Minnesota report explicitly states that transmission issues were not addressed, and that improved forecasting methods are needed. These issues were neglected due to the study's "aggressive schedule for completion."

Immediately following the panel's response, a European stood up

in the audience and seconded *FTW's* concerns (unfortunately, this reporter was unable to follow-up with this man afterwards). He stated that in Europe the numbers they are being told regarding wind are far different from what the Americans are saying. The panel responded that every utility is different, and that America is very big, and therefore, much different from any individual European nation.

Now, when you ask the Europeans about the limits of wind energy, you tend to get sober answers based on real-world data obtained from wind-farms currently producing a significant amount of European electricity. Their American counterparts seem far more interested in just getting windmills installed than focusing on the complexities of transmitting large amounts of intermittent wind energy to the grid. In the near term *FTW* will be comparing the European data with American figures for a clearer picture of just how much electricity generation wind can ultimately provide.

Cape Wind

Theodore Roosevelt IV, the great grandson of the 26 th President of the United States, Teddy Roosevelt, is a Managing Director of Lehman Brothers and Chair of the Pew Center on Global Climate Change. Cape Wind has chosen Lehman Brothers to provide them with financial advisory services on what will be America's first offshore wind farm in Cape Cod, Massachusetts.

During lunch at REFF, Roosevelt spoke about the Cape Wind project. Instead of speaking to the financing of Cape Wind, which he said is best done "quietly and soberly," he spoke to the massive political ([NIMBY](#)) opposition Cape Wind is receiving.[7](#)

Roosevelt lives on Martha's Vineyard, is a registered Republican, and says both the Republican energy bill and so-called "liberal environmentalists" in Massachusetts who oppose Cape Wind leave him dumbfounded. He praised the CEO of Cape Wind, [Jim Gordon](#), for not losing his cool with the opposition. By treating their concerns with the utmost respect, Roosevelt says, Gordon is on the path to making the Cape Wind project a success.

During his speech, Roosevelt made the following comment that should resonate profoundly with anyone familiar with Peak Oil or global climate change:

"I think that we can expect opposition to always be with us just by virtue of today's society, where our citizens feel they can have it all without paying a price for that."

Situated on Martha's Vineyard, Roosevelt's home will certainly be receiving electric power from the completed Cape Wind project.

Senator Ted Kennedy (D-MA) is opposing the Cape Wind project making veiled-NIMBY claims about Cape Cod's tourist industry. But according to one lunchtime conversation overheard by this reporter at REFF, the Senator's opposition may be related to natural gas pipeline interests held by the Kennedy family that might face competition from Cape Wind. This is especially true now that, according to ACORE Director Michael Ware, wind is competitive with gas-fired electricity.

Industry Buzz

The loudest issue in the power industry today is climate change.

It seems no one in the finance community denies it any longer. In fact, there are now 500 hedge funds set to invest in the trade of carbon emissions. Since Russia's recent embrace of the Kyoto Protocol, global warming has become a reality in the international finance community despite the Bush administration's sophomoric cronyism and denial.

There were also investors at REFF who could care less about climate change, the environment, or science in general, and weren't even energy investors; they merely viewed 2005 as the year to invest in renewables for purely economic reasons.

One Wall St. investor says he is closely watching Distributed Energy Systems Corporation. This company is supplying energy generation to be distributed where it is actually used. Their [stock has rapidly risen from \\$1 to \\$5](#) with almost no earnings, and is now trading over \$6. They are using partnerships to provide office spaces equipped with distributed energy systems, some with combined heat and power generation. That will be quite valuable when blackouts become more frequent.

Distributed Energy Systems Corp generally relies on hydrogen fuel cell technology, but in the context of energy shortages and blackouts, even low efficiency energy storage methods may be valuable to those who can afford them. Some are now wondering if renewable energy stocks are forming a Wall Street bubble as Tech and Internet stocks did in the 1990's. Energy is on everyone's mind, and rightfully so.

Whatever the energy future of the U.S., it will not be a centralized national power grid. This is the point made by John C. Pennie, president of Land's End Corporation, with his [communication of support](#) for FTW's position on renewables as stated in [Part 1](#) of this series.

The EIA recently stated that the grid loses 60% of the energy it transmits. A quick Internet search reveals that the efficiency of our current centralized power structure is 33%.⁸ So 77% of the energy produced is lost. Now there are distributed energy systems that achieve efficiencies of 65% to 90% with combined heat and power generation (CHP). Just think of all the heat energy lost as steam from a nuclear power plant producing electricity. In the science of electrical power, centralization is the very opposite of efficiency.

"The problem is the grid." That's what some were saying at REFF – Wall Street.

But others were calling for a "national grid" for "national security" purposes. Michael Eckhart was one of the voices supporting such a massive project. Previously, Eckhart was a Principal of Booz, Allen & Hamilton Inc., where former CIA Director James Woolsey is a Vice President. Woolsey sits on ACORE's advisory board, where Eckhart is the President. Whom will a national grid benefit?

As the price of centralized energy inevitably increases, a national grid will certainly not benefit the working class or the poor. This sounds like a bulky, expensive, and wasteful project to implement given the oil and natural gas crunch that is soon to be upon us.

Risks

Jerome Peters, Senior Vice President of Hudson Bank, gave a presentation at REFF – Wall Street on how he assesses the risks involved in financing renewable energy projects. He provided

what was perhaps the most memorable quotation of the forum:

"Renewable Energy projects have as much environmental risk as traditional energy projects, if not more."

This is crucial. No one should hope that renewable energy infrastructure will be installed to replace the equivalent of what we consume in hydrocarbons. It can't be done, for reasons that include (but transcend) both Peak Oil and climate change: the ecological footprint of such a project – even without climate change – would be so large as to disrupt food production. And even on a more moderate scale, Peters said, biomass projects involve even more risk than other renewable energy projects.

Clearly, wind will be part of the way forward. But survival will ultimately depend upon [powerdown](#).

¹ "Brewing a New Biofuels Market for the Northeast," *RenewableEnergyAccess.com*, July 27, 2005: <http://renewableenergyaccess.com/rea/news/story?id=33833>

² *Renewables 2004 concludes successfully in Bonn* <http://www.worldwatch.org/features/renewables/bonn/part3/>

However the *New York Times* recently reported that China anticipates 10% of its total energy capacity will come from renewable energy by 2020, not 2010, though they plan on surpassing that goal.

"In Search of a New Energy Source, China Rides the Wind," by Howard W. French, *New York Times*, July 26, 2005 <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/07/26/international/asia/26turbine.html?ex=1280030400&en=25bd397afb927647&ei=5090&partner=rssuserland&emc=rss>

³ "World Bank Helps China Scale Up Renewable Energy,"

<http://www.worldbank.org.cn/English/Content/674u63371351.shtml>

⁴ E.ON is one of the world's largest independent energy producers based in Germany.

<http://www.eon.com/en/422.jsp>

E.ON-Netz is the company's wind division in Germany. They are also a transmission grid operator. Germany is further along in wind energy production and transmission than any nation in the world. All of these factors make's E.ON's numbers among the best in the world when asking *how far wind can actually go*.

"Wind 2004" can be ordered here: http://www.eon-netz.com/frameset_reloader_homepage.phtml?top=Ressources/frame_head_eng.jsp&bottom=frameset_english/energy_eng/ene_windenergy_eng/ene_windenergy_eng.jsp

⁵ Feed-in tariff is defined at the following link: http://glossary.eea.eu.int/EEAGlossary/F/feed-in_tariff

Randall Swisher's comment that the numbers produced by E.ON Netz on wind are related to tariffs (pricing schemes) does not seem to be correct. The essence of E.ON's report – which Swisher admits he is unfamiliar with – deals with the production and transmission of wind energy, not its financing. The percentages E.ON came up with for "shadow stations" needed on stand-by capacity were based upon Germany's grid reliability, not tariff methodology. Certain tariff schemes make it easier for wind to compete with traditional energy sources, but that is a different topic from grid reliability.

⁶ Xcel Energy and the Minnesota Department of Commerce. Wind Integration Study – Final Report http://www.state.mn.us/mn/externalDocs/Commerce/Wind_Integration_Study_092804022437_WindIntegrationStudyFinal.pdf

⁷ Read Theodore Roosevelt IV's entire speech at the following link: <http://www.capecodtoday.com/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=0186>

GREEKS BEARING GIFTS

Paul Krugman at the *New York Times* and Clinton FEMA Director James Lee Witt Leading America Into the Next Slaughter

By
Michael C. Ruppert

September 6, 2005 1100 PST (FTW) – Following is a story by Paul Krugman of the *New York Times* which basically lays the blame for all these “failures” (how sick we are of hearing that word after 9/11) at the feet of Bush funding cuts at the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) since 2001. If you have been watching TV at all – who hasn’t? – you have also seen former Clinton FEMA Director, James Lee Witt emerging as a knight in white armor saying basically the same thing. Yes, it’s true that under the Clinton administration many of these challenges were better addressed and planned for. But that was before Peak Oil and climate collapse.

Can you hear Hillary and Bill chuckling? The Clinton administration also helped create the greater canvas on which these new brush strokes are being placed. Have you forgotten that Bill Clinton and Bush I are great buddies, traveling the world together? George Herbert Walker Bush just loves Bill Clinton. Why is that?

Beware America. Beware.

If we’re to follow the current media line, the litany of errors and deliberate, callous decision making which has cost so many lives with Katrina is to be blamed solely upon the White House. It is now a virtual certainty that a Democrat will be placed there in 2008 (I did not say elected and will not until we have verifiable paper ballots returned to us). What we now see emerging clearly is that the Democrats will make it a major plank in their platform that FEMA’s budget will be enormously expanded, along with its authority to act independently in a “crisis.” The poor, dispossessed and fearful will likely cheer for and demand these steps without having the slightest clue what they are asking for. Already I have heard Jesse Jackson pointing at FEMA and calling for hearings. The Democrats have found their sheet music.

Intelligent critics from both left and right have for years painstakingly documented FEMA’s paramount leadership role in Continuity of Government (COG) operations and planning. Better described, COG is what will happen if Congress is nuked, if a major catastrophe makes “normal” government operations impossible, or if there is major civil unrest (or total economic collapse). Much of FEMA’s infrastructure is really dedicated to this task and not to disaster relief. The COG function and authority has been greatly expanded since 9/11. At *FTW* we have written about FEMA many times and discussed it at length in my book *Crossing The Rubicon: The Decline of the American Empire at the End of the Age of Oil*.

There is no shortage of verifiable government records confirming all this including about two score Executive Orders, The Patriot Act, The Homeland Security Bill, and a couple of pieces of legislation having to do with biological warfare enacted in the post-9/11 climate. COG work was initially begun way back in the late 1970s, and involved early input from the likes of Iran-Contra criminal Oliver North. That’s where FEMA actually came from.

If this thinking is not curtailed, then as the economic collapse of the United States becomes ever harder to conceal, FEMA will have been given a green light to impose the most draconian and heartless of measures in our country. FEMA will have the ability to divide the US up into ten autonomous regions, independently governed. [Denver will be key to that decentralization and I note with irony that the CIA recently announced it was moving its National Resources \(formerly Domestic Operations\) Division to Denver \(Washington Post, May 5, 2005\)](#). FEMA will have the authority to confiscate any private property, food, medicine, personal vehicles, water supplies and even to impress citizens into forced labor and relocation as needed. FEMA will be able to override all local governments in a declared national emergency, quarantine neighborhoods and compel people to receive untested (for efficacy) vaccinations of drugs which may be dangerous (remember the smallpox vaccines?) and which will only enrich the pharmaceutical companies. FEMA will have the authority to confiscate firearms and gold held by private individuals. The government records proving what I say here are available in abundance and have been widely circulated over the internet for years. The little that remains of our Bill of Rights will simply cease to exist with a Code Red terror alert or another Katrina. And global warming makes another Katrina somewhere inevitable.

In short, what is being set up here is a massive, misguided and stupid effort to take convenient retribution for Katrina in a way that only ensures the more rapid demise of this once great nation. Do not put the blame on FEMA or believe that giving FEMA more money and power will solve anything. Too many of the bad decisions which cost lives in New Orleans, Mississippi, and Alabama were made at the White House, probably by Dick Cheney who has yet to make a public appearance. Condi’s been too busy shopping for \$7,000 shoes in New York to do anything.

The poor, distressed, homeless people out there, the ones who have lost families, all physical belongings and, in some cases, their sanity, are vulnerable and exploitable and they will continue to be so for years. We cannot afford to let them – and all of us – be sold out one more time in Katrina’s wake. American collapse will be evident soon enough. Simply throwing money and power at FEMA, without at the same time addressing the corruption, depravity and outright evil that has become official Washington is probably more dangerous than Katrina was and I sure hope we don’t have to find that out.

A Can't-Do Government

By Paul Krugman
New York Times
September 2, 2005

<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/09/02/opinion/02krugman.html?ei=5090&en=3bad12fcbf7ee0ae&ex=1283313600&partner=rssuseland&emc=rss&pagewanted=print>

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Before 9/11 the Federal Emergency Management Agency listed the three most likely catastrophic disasters facing America: a terrorist attack on New York, a major earthquake in San Francisco and a hurricane strike on New Orleans. "The New Orleans hurricane scenario," The Houston Chronicle wrote in December 2001, "may be the deadliest of all." It described a potential catastrophe very much like the one now happening.

So why were New Orleans and the nation so unprepared? After 9/11, hard questions were deferred in the name of national unity, then buried under a thick coat of whitewash. This time, we need accountability.

First question: Why have aid and security taken so long to arrive? Katrina hit five days ago - and it was already clear by last Friday that Katrina could do immense damage along the Gulf Coast. Yet the response you'd expect from an advanced country never happened. Thousands of Americans are dead or dying, not because they refused to evacuate, but because they were too poor or too sick to get out without help - and help wasn't provided. Many have yet to receive any help at all.

There will and should be many questions about the response of state and local governments; in particular, couldn't they have done more to help the poor and sick escape? But the evidence points, above all, to a stunning lack of both preparation and urgency in the federal government's response.

Even military resources in the right place weren't ordered into action. "On Wednesday," said an editorial in The Sun Herald in Biloxi, Miss., "reporters listening to horrific stories of death and survival at the Biloxi Junior High School shelter looked north across Irish Hill Road and saw Air Force personnel playing basketball and performing calisthenics. Playing basketball and performing calisthenics!"

Maybe administration officials believed that the local National Guard could keep order and deliver relief. But many members of the National Guard and much of its equipment - including high-water vehicles - are in Iraq. "The National Guard needs that equipment back home to support the homeland security mission," a Louisiana Guard officer told reporters several weeks ago.

Second question: Why wasn't more preventive action taken? After 2003 the Army Corps of Engineers sharply slowed its flood-control work, including work on sinking levees. "The corps," an Editor and Publisher article says, citing a series of articles in The Times-Picayune in New Orleans, "never tried to hide the fact that the spending pressures of the war in Iraq, as well as homeland security - coming at the same time as federal tax cuts - was the reason for the strain."

In 2002 the corps' chief resigned, reportedly under threat of being fired, after he criticized the administration's proposed cuts in the corps' budget, including flood-control spending.

Third question: Did the Bush administration destroy FEMA's effectiveness? The administration has, by all accounts, treated the emergency management agency like an unwanted stepchild, leading to a mass exodus of experienced professionals.

Last year James Lee Witt, who won bipartisan praise for his leadership of the agency during the Clinton years, said at a Congressional hearing: "I am extremely concerned that the ability of our nation to prepare for and respond to disasters has been sharply

eroded. I hear from emergency managers, local and state leaders, and first responders nearly every day that the FEMA they knew and worked well with has now disappeared."

I don't think this is a simple tale of incompetence. The reason the military wasn't rushed in to help along the Gulf Coast is, I believe, the same reason nothing was done to stop looting after the fall of Baghdad. Flood control was neglected for the same reason our troops in Iraq didn't get adequate armor.

At a fundamental level, I'd argue, our current leaders just aren't serious about some of the essential functions of government. They like waging war, but they don't like providing security, rescuing those in need or spending on preventive measures. And they never, ever ask for shared sacrifice.

Yesterday Mr. Bush made an utterly fantastic claim: that nobody expected the breach of the levees. In fact, there had been repeated warnings about exactly that risk.

So America, once famous for its can-do attitude, now has a can't-do government that makes excuses instead of doing its job. And while it makes those excuses, Americans are dying.

E-mail: krugman@nytimes.com



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THE DANGER OF IRAQI PARTITION

An update on the progress of the Energy War

By
Stan Goff

[The increasing pressure on the Bush administration at home in the wake of the Cindy Sheehan catalyst and an impending mass mobilization against the war on September 24 th lends more urgency to show a result in the Iraq war – the latest one being a draft Constitution. But not only is this issue so arcane to the average American ear fails to provide any resonant symbolism, the real result of the forced pace of the draft is exacerbating an extremely adverse political situation for the US in Iraq and the region.

The primary forces remaining in the Iraqi “government” are semi-puppets. On the one hand, they are dependent on American military power for the time being to maintain the current balance of forces in their favor. On the other hand, they clearly have an agenda that is designed to consolidate that long-term power through a pact of some sort with Iran.

This has created a polarization between current direct participants in the Iraqi government and the minority – strategically located and well-armed – Sunnis/nationalists in the north. That is not a cultural polarization but a political one that further entrenches the Faustian alliance between the government and the US occupiers each day, though there is no inhering reason among the general populations – who have for years seen inter-ethnic and inter-denominational marriage, etc. – for any pressure to partition the country.

The so-called Iraqi government does not in fact exercise real governance over any but a fraction of Iraq, and the “city-state” phenomenon throughout the country is setting the stage for a universally unacceptable Balkanization of Iraq, at the same time that it is developing the probable (and yet largely unknown) future local leadership of Iraq.

At some point in the future, most of these actors will have to deal with one another politically.

The Shia interim government and the US have maneuvered themselves into the same corner with antagonistic goals if and when they ever find their way out. The Sunnis and nationalists of the north have no stake in partition, and with the withdrawal of occupying forces would be freer to negotiate a political settlement with the south. This leaves one hugely influential local leader in the most flexible position in Iraq right now – Muqtada al Sadr.

He is the man to watch in Iraq for now.

Meanwhile, the greatest impediment to a political solution to post-invasion Iraq is not some cauldron of inter-ethnic rivalry. It is the politico-military distortion produced by the American occupation. – SGJ

September 7, 2005 0900 PST (FTW) – **T**here's weather, and then there are storms.

It was a weather scientist, Edward Lorenz, who unintentionally created a revolution in science when he was trying to model weather on a primitive computer in 1961.



Lorenz had been puttering around with his toy, trying out a set of 12 equations to see what their value might be for predicting weather. He was in a rush one day, so instead of running the whole sequence, he typed in the values part-way through the sequence and let it run for an hour. (I told you, these were very slow computers by today's standards.) But something happened.

When he checked his figures after that hour, he found not some minor variations, but some sho' 'nuff, holy-shit! variations. In his investigation of what had “gone wrong,” he

realized that he had set the computer to calculate to six places beyond a decimal point, but to print out only to three places. So when he has started the mathematical process with unintentional differences that are generally considered to be statistically insignificant, he got wildly differing results – not differences of quantity, but of quality.

This was one of those aha! moments for Lorenz, whereupon he decided that predicting the weather would always be impossible because in any complex system, extremely tiny variations at one point in time develop into massive variations in possibility... which translates into “randomness” even in deterministic systems, ergo, unpredictability.

What Lorenz had discovered was that Einstein's dismissal of quantum physics “randomness” as “God playing dice with the universe” was wrong, but only partly wrong. Lorenz discovered that “God plays dice with the universe, but the dice are loaded.” Lorenz didn't see his experiments as momentous beyond weather prediction, and he published a meteorological paper on his discovery – which then lay idle for several years.

Then a biologist named Robert May ran across Lorenz's publication and decided to conduct similar experiments in biology – another science involving very complex systems. May was looking at population growth rates, and he noted that when he accelerated the *rates* of growth, even using the same figures, his progressions would hit points where two distinct deterministic possibilities occurred – one identical cause with two possible effects. He called these points of dual possibility “bifurcations.” He also discovered that the faster he accelerated his progressions, each “branch” of the bifurcations would itself bifurcate, faster and faster, until a point of absolute unpredictability occurred – chaos. After the “chaotic” interlude, a new period of relative stability would return, but on a wholly different mathematical basis, and then the “agitation” would set in again.

The way I visualize this process is by thinking about a cigarette burning in an ashtray. There is a fairly steady up-streaming column of blue-gray smoke (called lamina flow), but at some point on that column you see this smoke-ropes begin to sway then very suddenly ripple all over the place, then reassume a stable but different pattern (vortex flow) above the ripple. We have all seen this.



Bifurcations can be social and political, too.

The bifurcations are reproducing like rabbits right now in Iraq.

The most interesting one, and my point of departure for this update, is the series of armed confrontations that occurred in Baghdad this August 23-24 between the former Badr Brigades and the Mahdi militias of Muqtada la Sadr. It is interesting because it represents the boil-over of a situation in Iraq that does not conform to the Bush administration fable of ethno-religious division as the primary political fault line. The former Badr Brigades, now a militia serving as the extralegal armed wing of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), and Sadr's Mahdi militia are both Arab and both Shia.

This fact should lead us to examine all the assumptions revolving around the official US narrative on Iraq, particularly the one that supports continued liberal support for the occupation – and that is the notion that the abrupt withdrawal of US troops will result in an Iraqi bloodbath.

I, and others, have said for some time now that Muqtada al Sadr is not merely a complicating peculiarity in Iraq, but that he may end up being the canniest of all the current well-known Iraqi leaders – politically and militarily.

SADR AND SISTANI BIFURCATION

In describing a situation that has acquired higher and higher levels of complexity, the entry point for such an analysis is arbitrary. I choose the Sadr phenomenon because it is in the news, and because it throws the deep inaccuracy of public discourse on the whole war into bold relief.

On January 12, this year, Michael Schwartz wrote a very comprehensive overview of this phenomenon for *Asia Times* in his article, "The taming of Sadr City." His essay was valuable not only for gaining a more detailed understanding of the social forces behind the Sadrist movement. It also lays out a framework for looking at the whole of Iraq, which Schwartz describes as a for-

mer country that has now been practically divided into independently operating martial city-states as a direct result of the Anglo-American invasion and occupation.

In attempting to exert control over the national lines of communication and transportation, the occupying forces created these



politico-military pockets, and with the failure of US forces to establish any effective post-invasion administrative apparatus, Iraqis self-organized locally in response to the multiple crises created by the invasion and to ensure the daily necessities of housing, food, commerce, education, and security.

This self-organization was met in some cases, such as Fallujah in 2003, with

violent suppression by the Americans even though the Americans had no viable alternatives on hand, nor apparently even the inclination to provide them. Any organization of governance instantly takes on a political character in any case, but the specific actions of the Americans in confronting the Iraqis with a no-win situation – that is, no provision of basic services and governance combined with violent suppression of any genuinely organic remedies – forced these emerging Iraqi structures to take on a political character that was decidedly military and largely *opposed* to the American occupation.

The massive 3-million-soul Shia slum in Baghdad, called Sadr City, was one such pocket. This "neighborhood" alone represents close to 20% of Iraq's Shia population; and Iraq's Shia population represents around 60% of Iraq's total population. This numerical breakdown is the first small step in deconstructing the narrative of regionally-fixed ethno-religious homogeneity. This conception is inscribed between the lines of virtually every Bush administration and big-media account of the war.

Once we begin to understand the fundamental failure of this premise to either describe or predict the social, political, and military dynamics in Iraq, we are immediately confronted with two questions: (1) How, in fact, can those dynamics be more accurately described? And (2) Why does the administration insist on creating this false description?

In his analysis of this "city-state" situation emerging in Iraq, Schwartz writes:

The Sadrists have developed an effective political-military strategy aimed at converting Sadr City into a "liberated area", in the classic guerrilla warfare model.

- Their main military strategy is to expel the US from their domain; only when they are under attack themselves do they venture outside Sadr City to attack US bases or supply routes.
- The al-Sadr organization is attempting to construct a coherent "dual" government that replaces the central government and which administers the usual set of public services - from traffic control to apprehending street criminals - within limits set by their inability to coordinate with a national government.

This proto-government has been particularly assiduous in addressing the number one problem of public order, street crime, and has actually cooperated with the local police in this campaign.

- Mehdi soldiers - the guerrilla forces led by the Sadrists - though prone to thuggery, are largely under the control of this dual government, which is led by civilians - tribal leaders and Muslim clerics. The Mehdi soldiers act as the police force within the community.
- The Sadrists have been surprisingly successful in co-opting the Iraqi police, by rewarding them for working on community issues and fighting them when they participate in efforts to suppress the rebel political-military structure. American military complaints about the unreliability of their Iraqi trainees is actually a reflection of successfully applied guerrilla policy.
- The Sadrists have begun to enforce strict Islamist fundamentalism by suppressing such "moral crimes" as liquor sales and prostitution. They have utilized an ugly brand of vigilantism (firebombing, assaults and even homicide) to remove moral criminals from the community.
- The Sadrists, and parallel groups in other cities (notably Fallujah), have publicly denounced the spectacular bombings perpetrated by various terrorists groups, complaining about their negative impact on the lives and livelihoods of Iraqi civilians and calling for an active alliance with the Iraqi police in suppressing foreign jihadis and domestic terrorists.
- The organization in Sadr City is an echo of similar developments in Sunni cities (with Fallujah as the center), and it may foreshadow similar developments in the all-important Shi'ite south. The American attacks on various Iraqi cities, including the brutal battle of Fallujah, was an attempt to reverse this trend toward self-governed cities into which American forces rarely intrude.
- The existence of these dual governments in many cities rebuts American claims that US withdrawal would result in chaos. Ironically, just the reverse is true; US success in defeating the guerrillas would result in chaos, whereas a guerrilla victory would bring greater stability (and perhaps too strict an order) to the Iraqi cities.

Muqtada al Sadr did not provoke the battle with the Americans in March and April 2004 (in which the well-known antiwar mother, Cindy Sheehan lost her 24-year-old son, Casey). In fact, quite to the contrary, the Coalition Provisional Authority, still under Vice-roy Paul Bremer, provoked it – seemingly gratuitously. The CPA arbitrarily shut down the Sadrist newspaper, then killed unarmed demonstrators who protested the closing.

Of course, it wasn't gratuitous at all, but a calculated political move encouraged by the senior Iraqi puppet at the time, Iyad Allawi. Not only did Allawi and Bremer provoke this fight intentionally in order to destroy the most influential Baghdad cleric calling for an end to the occupation, they set up the fight to happen in Najaf instead of Baghdad, where the Mahdi militia of al Sadr enjoyed direct popular support.

This was the only political victory accruing to the Americans during the whole sorry episode. They attacked the Mahdi in Najaf near the Shrine of Imam Ali to draw them into a terrible urban battle of attrition among a civilian populace that had no direct connection to the Mahdi – hence the lack of popular support among Najaf residents near the epicenter of the fighting for the Mahdi. But this was a Pyrrhic victory for the Americans, because they lost more of their dwindling political capital in the process by their utter disregard for civilian casualties, and because outside

Najaf al Sadr – who was publicly marked by Centcom for arrest or death – became an overnight legend for his bold resistance to the unpopular Americans.

The American authorities would eventually spin the story that the local Marine commander in Najaf initiated the battle there with no clearance from on high. – a claim that borders on the preposterous.

This was at precisely the same time that the US decided upon a scorched earth assault on Fallujah after the killing of four American mercenaries there, codenamed *Operation Vigilant Resolve*.

There were two major military miscalculations that then occurred simultaneously: underestimation of the resistance in Najaf, and underestimation of the resistance in Fallujah. While the Mahdi militia took horrendous casualties against Marine firepower, they managed to bog the Marines down in the cemetery around the Shrine of Imam Ali for eight days, and with each day that passed, that cemetery became a more treacherous political minefield. In Fallujah, the resistance put up a stubborn house-to-house fight that called on the Marines to expend phenomenal quantities of materiel that required a steady stream of overland resupply. Iraqi nationalist forces outside Fallujah began a relentless series of attacks on the Marine supply convoys, which would eventually halt the Marine offensive in a humiliating stalemate.



On the sidelines of this American tactical and political debacle sat Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani, the top ranking Shia cleric in Iraq and a partisan of Iran's clerical state leadership. When Sadr's challenge to Sistani's popularity began in mid-year 2003 with Sadr's open opposition to the Anglo-American occupation (which Sistani was trying to finesse), Sistani opened up a dialogue with Abdul Aziz al Hakim, the leader of the Shia Iraqi political formation, the Supreme Council of Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), which also included an Iranian-trained militia called the Badr Brigade that had waged an unsuccessful rebellion against Saddam Hussein after the Bush I invasion in 1991. Hakim himself had lived in Iran for two decades prior to the Anglo-American invasion of 2003.

The SCIRI gained its dominant position in Iraqi post-invasion Shia politics at the expense of the Da'awa Party – another Islamic party that has a much smaller militia, that is not as committed to Iranian-style clerical control over governance, and that now has its real power base in the "city-state" of Nasiriya.

The Americans wanted to marginalize Sistani with support for the "secular" thug, Iyad Allawi. The CPA wanted no part of an Iraqi government that tilted toward their next fantasy target for regime

change – Iran. SCIRI has the political organization (and military muscle with former Badr Brigadists) to completely dominate any pan-Iraq government formed through an election, if Sistani would lend his immense clerical prestige to mobilize the general Southern Shia population, and Sistani had decided upon a political alliance with SCIRI for just that purpose. But the Americans stubbornly resisted an election, not having prepared the way for an outcome they could manage. Bremer had proposed a pseudo-election of caucuses for mid-2004, which Sistani and most other Shia leaders rejected, demanding one-person, one-vote elections.

Sistani was also watching with consternation the growing popularity of Muqtada al Sadr, whose political influence and heterodox political line made Sistani very nervous. Sistani's base was not only regionally differentiated from Sadr's. It was differentiated by class. The sophistication and power of Sistani and the SCIRI was based in large part on the control of the organs of civil society by a well-organized petit-bourgeois Shia layer, and the clerical bureaucracy, the class interests of which Sistani and the SCIRI are still obliged to safeguard. Sadr's more hands-on, geographically concentrated, and agile social base was not among bureaucrats and professionals, but among the most marginalized working class in Iraq... *and in the capital, Baghdad.*

The emerging tactical defeat of the Americans in April 2004 presented Sistani with a golden if short-lived opportunity. Sistani wanted elections, and he wanted elections that would assure the Shias of a dominant role in Iraqi politics. He also wanted genuine sovereignty to accompany that result, including the right to call for the departure of American forces. He was not aiming to become the next puppet of the US. Until now, the Americans had resisted every overture for elections that they did not absolutely control.



But now the Americans were faced with the dual tactical crises of Najaf and Fallujah, and the specter of a generalized Shia rebellion in the South that would render the occupation untenable within months.

Sistani allowed the Americans to use him as the counterpoint to Sadr – the good Shia in contrast to the “radical, anti-American, firebrand (choose your impressionist adjective)” Shia. Sistani needed the Americans to displace Allawi's power, and the Americans needed Sistani to broker a truce.

Sadr – who was still under a “dead or alive” arrest threat from the

Americans – was looking for a seat at the political table and a free hand to develop his own geographic and social base.

The rest was history.

Sistani and the SCIRI united with the Da'awa in a united front, and got their election scheduled for January. The Americans were extricated from their two-front tactical and political quagmire. Muqtada al Sadr not only did not face arrest or assassination – yet another humiliation for the US; he went on to establish his own “city-state” in Sadr City that is now effectively a no-go zone for US forces.

SCIRI-DA'AWA AND IRAN BIFURCATION

The original plan for the US armed forces, based on the advice of Ahmed Chalabi, an ex-pat and felonious advisor to the administration before the invasion, was to quickly consolidate US power in a sea of Iraqi benevolence, then go on to effect a regime change in neighboring Iran.

There is probably no more vivid an example of how badly the Bush administration has miscalculated from the very beginning of this military adventure than the fact-on-the-ground today that the occupation hangs by a thin thread of tolerance from a pro-Iranian formation; and that Iran now silently must support the US occupation, because this dependence on the pro-Iranian semi-puppet Iraqi “government” effectively prevents the Americans from attacking Iran. Any attack on Iran right now would almost certainly result in an instant and general anti-American uprising in Iraq that would precipitate a crushing American defeat.

In the run-up to the elections of January 2005, as reported in depth by Seymour Hersh (“Get out the vote – Did Washington try to manipulate Iraq's election?”, *New Yorker*, July 25, 2005), the United States was working frantically behind the scenes to ensure counterweights in the post election government large enough to prevent the United Iraqi Alliance (UIA, dominated by SCIRI and Da'awa) from gaining a decisive two-thirds majority in the government.

There were three counterweights available: the Kurds, the Sunni nationalists (Ba'athists), and the Allawi faction. Of these three, the worst was Allawi – according to even rock-ribbed conservative imperialists like Richard Armitage, Les Campbell of the National Democratic Institute (the Democrat component of the infamous National Endowment for Democracy, whose mission is to engineer electoral outcomes favorable to the US), and the ultra-conservative Hoover Institute fellow, Larry Diamond, then working as a senior advisor to Bremer's CPA.

The White House, however, rejected the dire warnings from all these quarters that support for Allawi would undermine the credibility of the entire process among Iraqis and could blow back on the administration as yet another scandal if the story ever got out that millions were being funneled into Allawi's “campaign” (which it was rightly feared involved massive vote-buying). Instead, the White House was listening yet again to those whose message conformed to the preconceptions of the Cheney clique, and in this case that messenger was Thomas Warrick, a senior adviser on Iraq for the State Department's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, who also had the ear of Condoleezza Rice.

Hersh's *New Yorker* article said:

The focus on Allawi, Campbell said, blinded the White

House to some of the realities on the ground. “The Administration was backing the wrong parties in Iraq,” he said. “We told them, ‘The parties you like are going to get creamed.’ They didn’t believe it.”

“What Tom Warrick was trying to do was not stupid,” a senior United Nations official who was directly involved in planning for the Iraqi election told me. “He was desperate, because Bremer and the White House had empowered the Iranians. Warrick was trying to see what could be salvaged.” He added that the answer, as far as the United States was concerned, was Allawi, who, despite his dubious past, was “the nearest thing to an Iraqi with whom the White House could salvage the nation.”

It was this sense among senior conservatives in these various agencies about the Bush administration’s continuing recklessness – not any disagreement with their objectives – that likely led to multiple contacts with Hersh for the express purpose of leaking.

At any rate, consistent with the executive go-it-alone impunity of the Bush White House, they conducted another end run. They still had not learned the lesson of their own experience – the one about which other conservatives like Scowcroft and Powell repeatedly warned them: *The ability to change outcomes is not the same as the ability to control outcomes.*

When the White House went to the Senate and House intelligence committees for approval of a secret finding authorizing a covert operation to support Allawi, they were rejected. Shortly after that, the White House simply ordered the Pentagon – with assistance from former CIA personnel – to go forward with an “off the books” covert operation to support Allawi.

The methods and the scope of the covert effort have been hard to discern. The current and former military and intelligence officials who spoke to me about the election operation were unable, or unwilling, to give precise details about who did what and where on Election Day. These sources said they heard reports of voter intimidation, ballot stuffing, bribery, and the falsification of returns, but the circumstances, and the extent of direct American involvement, could not be confirmed.

And, as Larry Diamond noted, there was also a strong possibility that Iraqis themselves would attempt voter fraud, with or without assistance from the U.S. According to the government consultant with close ties to Pentagon civilians, the C.P.A. accepted the reality of voter fraud on the part of the Kurds, whom the Americans viewed as “the only blocking group against the Shiites’ running wild.” He said, “People thought that by looking the other way as Kurds voted — man and wife, two times — you’d provide the Kurds with an incentive to remain in a federation.” (Kurdistan had gained partial autonomy before Saddam Hussein’s overthrow, and many Kurds were agitating for secession.)

The high-ranking United Nations official told me, “The American Embassy’s aim was to make sure that Allawi remained as Prime Minister, and they tried to do it through manipulation of the system.” But he also said that there was cheating on the other side. “The Shiites rigged the election in the south as much as ballots were rigged for Allawi.” He added, “You are right that it was rigged, but you did not rig it well enough.”

In contrast to all polls within days of the election, Allawi’s faction gained 14% of the vote compared to his 2-4% reflected in polling,

the Kurds won 26%, and the UIA tallied a mere 48% against a much higher polling expectations.

On Election Day, voters had been handed ballots for the national assembly and for the provincial councils. Allawi’s slate ran provincial lists in only eight provinces and received a total of 177,678 provincial votes in those areas. In the same provinces, Allawi’s national list received a total of 452,629 votes — almost three times the number of provincial votes.

Most election experts I spoke to found the deviation surprising and difficult to explain.

Indeed. Democracy is grand.

Returning to my point about the difference between changing outcomes and controlling outcomes, the election results immediately threw the quasi-elected government into a serial crisis, first with regard to cabinet appointments, and more recently with regard to the draft Constitution – both being rush jobs demanded by the Bush administration as public relations milestones to prop up flagging support for the war back in the US.



Wrangling over the cabinet was acrimonious, playing out against a background of escalating armed resistance that increasingly targeted Iraqis associated with the new “puppet” regime. It took three months to cobble together a cabinet that had the combined ability to reassure the Americans and provide a modicum of symbolic cover to various constituencies in Iraq.

In the end, the presidency went to Jalal Talibani, a Kurd, and the Prime Minister position – where the real executive power resides – to Ibrahim al Jafaari of the Da’awa Party. Significantly, the Interior Ministry – with control of future militias and police – went to Bayan Jubur of SCIRI, which accounts for the increased employment of former Badr Brigade militia against potential rivals of the SCIRI, especially Sunnis and Ba’athists.

Within the “government,” then, the Da’awa now has the most influence over future administrative structures, the SCIRI has established its dominance among future armed forces, and the Kurds are positioned to play both ends against the middle – while holding on to the most powerful actually-existing militia in the country – the 80-100,000-strong Peshmerga in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Allawi, by the way, who is replaced as the American-appointed Prime Minister by Jafaari, tried to insist on four cabinet ministries as a condition of his continued support for the UIA, and was dismissed out of hand. All that covert operations money, down the toilet.

As part of all this deal-making, the Oil Ministry was handed to the thief, and one-time administration confidante, Ahmed Chalabi.

There is no dearth of schematic and conspiratorial speculation on the US left about the US desire to “divide and conquer” Iraq, corresponding to a belief that the American government wants a civil war as the pretext for continuing the occupation.

I strongly disagree.

The administration has never expressed the least support for a divided Iraq (a worrying point for the Kurdish nationalist leadership). In fact, the insistence during the latest crisis over Constitution draft deadlines has been for “Sunni” (read: Ba’athist) *inclusion*, and explicit warnings against too-federal a federalism.

The Bush administration’s principal preoccupation ever since April 2004 has been the question of Iran. If Iraq breaks up, the US will be faced with Southern Iraq – including a huge fraction of its oil – becoming a protectorate of Iran. Meanwhile, the US has attempted to build its bases – which were always the primary goal of the invasion – in Ba’athist strongholds. This was partly the result of tactical necessity as the Anbar, Nineva, and Saladin provinces were consolidated as centers of nationalist resistance to the occupation. The US base at Mosul, along the Tigris River, has become almost a city unto itself with a 65-kilometer security perimeter and a giant airfield.

This base exists in a sea of hostility, surrounded by an increasingly sophisticated guerrilla resistance, adjacent to Kirkuk where the Kurds are attempting to establish their future national capital through a de-Arabization campaign. The headquarters for this base, however, is located in the Green Zone – Baghdad, and the only seaport to the entire country is in Basra Province, which would become part of a post-breakup Iranian protectorate.

A fragmented Iraq would be impossible for the US to control, and would not only result in Iranian hegemony in the South, but in a forced condominium between guerrilla-controlled Anbar Province and Syria. This would not be a tactical setback for the Americans. *It would be a death sentence for the entire post-Cold War US military redistribution strategy.*

The Bush administration is now stuck with a secessionist-minded, pro-Iranian semi-puppet government and a military occupation that has been driven into its dispersed military installations.

In an article written by Knight-Ridder correspondent, Tom Lasserter (“Soldiers find it tough to stay tough,” August 28, 2005), he gives this stark account of a Marine base in Hit:

The inability of U.S. forces to hold ground in Anbar province in western Iraq, and the cat and mouse chase that ensues, has put the Marines and soldiers there under intense physical and psychological pressure.

The sun raises temperatures to 115 degrees most days, insurgents stage ambushes then melt into the civilian population, and American troops find themselves in a house of mirrors in which they don’t speak the language and can’t tell friend from foe.

Most Marines and soldiers in Anbar live behind massive concrete barriers, bales of concertina wire and perimeters guarded by sniper towers and tanks.

Despite their overwhelming military might, they must watch every alleyway for snipers and each patch of road for mines or bombs,

which can send balls of flame through their vehicles.

Officers worry about the enemy while trying to make sure their men don’t crack.



Knight-Ridder is not exactly known as a leftist organ out to undermine the “noble cause” in Iraq.

And Iraq is not Yugoslavia.

On August 27 th, George W. Bush – between public statements to stem the tide of domestic unrest unleashed by Cindy Sheehan’s Crawford camp – telephoned none other than Abdul Aziz Al Hakim to beg for Sunni inclusion.

“Bush asked him to be more flexible with regard to Sunni demands,” said White House spokesman Trent Duffy. “This is an Iraqi process but the United States is doing everything it can to assist them in meeting their own obligations and deadlines under the Transitional Administrative Law” (law drafted by the Americans that has been violated with impunity for months).

SCIRI-DA’AWA AND “SUNNI” BIFRUCATION

Just as the Americans find themselves thrown into bed with a pro-Iranian “government,” the putative government of Iraq now finds itself on the horns of a dilemma with regard to the occupation forces. In its Faustian bid to maneuver the US occupation authority into an election to legitimate a Shia government, it has temporarily foreclosed any real relationship with the rebel provinces to the north: Sunni nationalists and Islamists, now frozen out of the political process but still engaged in an armed resistance to the American occupation.

This is an American occupation that has shown its willingness to destroy a city the size of Minneapolis (Fallujah) as a means of attempting to interdict the resistance at its popular base.

Given the terrible firepower from ground and air that can be mustered by the American forces, the nationalist and Islamist armed resistance (these are not clearly delineated categories, but more and more seem to be collaborating as an Islamist-nationalist resistance) has little choice in its own prosecution of the war – barring surrender. It must employ asymmetric military tactics, the most essential of which is to “blind” the occupation to the resistance’s size, activity, location, composition, and disposition. Without this “blinding,” guerrilla forces cannot effectively employ what are for them the two most important principles of war: Offensive and Surprise.

From U.S. Army, Field Manual 100-5, 1994 (Unclassified):

Offensive

Seize, retain, and exploit the initiative.

Offensive action is the most effective and decisive way to attain a clearly defined common objective. Offensive operations are the means by which a military force seizes and holds the initiative while maintaining freedom of action and achieving decisive results. This is fundamentally true across all levels of war. ...

Surprise

Strike the enemy at a time or place or in a manner for which he is unprepared.

Surprise can decisively shift the balance of combat power. By seeking surprise, forces can achieve success well out of proportion to the effort expended. Rapid advances in surveillance technology and mass communication make it increasingly difficult to mask or cloak large-scale marshaling or movement of personnel and equipment. The enemy need not be taken completely by surprise but only become aware too late to react effectively. Factors contributing to surprise include speed, effective intelligence, deception, application of unexpected combat power, operations security (OPSEC), and variations in tactics and methods of operation. Surprise can be in tempo, size of force, direction or location of main effort, and timing. Deception can aid the probability of achieving surprise. ...

There is not more effective means of blinding the US occupation forces than to attack Iraqi collaborators. As the Lasseter article on the Marine base in Hit pointed out, "American troops find themselves in a house of mirrors in which they don't speak the language and can't tell friend from foe."

The reality of this situation, contrary to the vague sense of unease among Americans that the US is required to be in Iraq to prevent civil war, a presumption underwritten by more than a little plain racism, is that the current civil war between "Sunni" and "Shia" has its basis in that very occupation ; and there will be no basis for rapprochement between these parties until the American occupation ends .

Most Americans who are uneasy about the war do not understand this dilemma. But Washington understands it very well, and finds itself in a cul-de-sac on its account.

This accounts for the two panicky and contradictory demands from Washington in the last weeks of August 2005 that the Iraqis complete the draft Constitution (to reassure the wavering American public) and include the Sunnis (to offset Iranian influence).

On August 28 th, the draft Constitution was agreed upon – to the utter consternation of the US government – and it not only completely disfranchised the Sunnis, it included language mandating de-Ba'athification," which paves the way, along with "federalism" for the Sunni provinces to become an oil-poor rump state.

The problem with a Sunni rump state, for the Americans, is that with it comes a Kurdish state.

KURDISH BIFURCATION

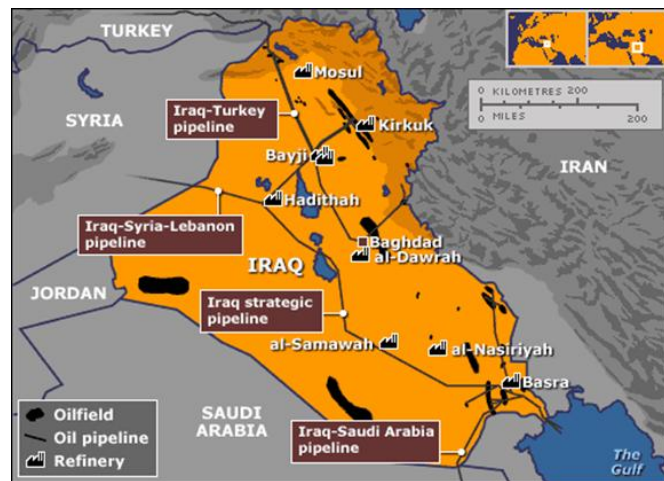
People who study politics need to study maps.

The centrality of Iraq to the US is oil. You can dance around this plain fact until Hell freezes over, but if Iraq were not located in the middle of the world's largest oil patch (Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia,

UAE, and Kuwait) there would not be 140,000 US troops, 25,000 US mercenaries, and tens of thousands of US war profiteers there today.

The war in Iraq (and in Afghanistan, as well) is an energy war, first and last.

In Iraq itself, most of the oil fields are east of the Euphrates River, with the richest fields near Basra and Nasiriyah, and east of Kirkuk, in Iraqi Kurdistan. The principal oil pipelines in Iraq are the Iraq-Turkey Pipeline, the Iraq-Syria-Lebanon Pipeline, the Iraq-Saudi Arabia Pipeline, and the Iraq Strategic Pipeline.



(Map from BBC)

The refineries are located in Mosul, Bayji, Haditha, Samawah, Nasiriyah, and Basra.

The north and south are connected solely by the Iraq Strategic Pipeline which runs from Haditha in the heart of the so-called Sunni region (and the site of repeated guerrilla engagements with the US Marines) down through Ramadi (also a guerrilla stronghold) and eventually into Basra. This means that the oil harvested in Iraqi Kurdistan has two options for export: the Iraqi Strategic Pipeline or the Iraq-Turkey Pipeline. The latter runs through the Sunni guerrilla strongholds east of Mosul, including Tal Afar.

Partition of Iraq means that oil from Southern Iraq can get out through the port at Um Qasr. But the rich fields of Iraqi Kurdistan, east of Kirkuk, would be landlocked if the Iraqi Strategic Pipeline were severed. This has proven a fairly easy task for the resistance. The only way out for Kurdish oil, then, is through Turkey or Syria, with the Syrian pipeline stretching through Sunni guerrilla country.

If Kurdistan pushes for independence, there can be little doubt that it will be militarily attacked by Turkey, to whom a Kurdish state is anathema, and for whom an external enemy could well serve the Turkish ruling class in these times of neoliberal hardship. While Turkey's military is formidable in the region, there is also little doubt that the Peshmerga has gained enough strength and experience to fight them to a standstill on their own terrain – creating another war of attrition in the region that would damage any enthusiasm for investment there and further disrupt tight oil markets.

This presents a certain difficulty for the Americans on two accounts.

First, though NATO is now less important in the larger scheme of things than it was during the Cold War, it still provides the US with controlling influence over the military affairs of Western Europe – from which it fears a competitive regional capitalist bloc. Turkey is a member of NATO.

Second, if the Kurds do manage to develop an alternative export pipeline for their oil, there is only one bordering nation with which to negotiate it: Iran.

Though each day it seems less likely that the Bush administration will succeed with its occupation gamble, there is *zero* chance that anything can be salvaged for the US with the partition of Iraq.

SUMMARY

The increasing pressure on the Bush administration at home in the wake of the Cindy Sheehan catalyst and an impending mass mobilization against the war on September 24 th lends more urgency to show a result in the Iraq war – the latest one being a draft Constitution. But not only is this issue so arcane to the average American ear that it fails to provide any resonant symbolism, the real result of the forced pace of the draft is exacerbating an extremely adverse political situation for the US in Iraq and the region.

The primary forces remaining in the Iraqi “government” are semi-puppets. On the one hand, they are dependent on American military power for the time being to maintain the current balance of forces in their favor. On the other hand, they clearly have an agenda that is designed to consolidate that long-term power through a pact of some sort with Iran.

This has created a polarization between current direct participants in the Iraqi government and the minority – strategically located and well-armed – Sunnis/nationalists in the north. That is not a cultural polarization but a political one that further entrenches the Faustian alliance between the government and the US occupiers each day, though there is no inhering reason among the general populations – who have for years seen inter-ethnic and inter-denominational marriage, etc. – for any pressure to partition the country.

The so-called Iraqi government does not in fact exercise real governance over any but a fraction of Iraq, and the “city-state” phenomenon throughout the country is setting the stage for a universally *unacceptable* Balkanization of Iraq, at the same time that it is developing the probable (and yet largely unknown) future local leadership of Iraq.

At some point in the future, most of these actors will have to deal with one another politically.

The Shia interim government and the US have maneuvered themselves into the same corner with antagonistic goals if and when they ever find their way out. The Sunnis and nationalists of the north have no stake in partition, and with the withdrawal of occupying forces would be freer to negotiate a political settlement with the south. This leaves one hugely influential local leader in the most flexible position in Iraq right now – Muqtada al Sadr.

RITA: Storm May Be the Coup de Grace for the American Economy and Many of Us As Well

by
Michael C. Ruppert

September 21st, 2005 1530 PST (FTW) – **A**s I pack my bags to head to Washington for Congressional Black Caucus hearings on the September 11th attacks (to be conducted this Friday and Saturday) my inbox is being progressively flooded with emails from inside sources in the energy industry about what Hurricane Rita is now likely to accomplish – the near-complete destruction of an already teetering US economy.

Fully 30% of all US refining capacity is in the target zone. Perhaps most importantly, almost every refinery capable of producing diesel fuel is in immediate danger. This promises (especially in the wake of Katrina) a devastating and irreplaceable shortage of the diesel fuel needed to power America’s harvest of grain and food crops this month and next. Without diesel fuel to power the harvesters and combines, crops may be left to rot in the ground presenting a double whammy: food shortages (with prices that may treble or quadruple) and export defaults negatively impacting the financial markets and trade deficit.

Even before Rita strikes, fully 30% of all domestic natural gas production is shut in. The US cannot import natural gas from overseas like it can both crude and refined products. Repair work on infrastructure damaged by Katrina has been halted as crews have been evacuated. The remaining half of Gulf energy production undamaged by Katrina is directly in [Rita’s crosshairs](#). Natural gas prices are up over 110% and home heating oil futures are up almost 70% before Rita even gets here. Since Katrina, US domestic oil production is down one million barrels per day (from 5Mbpd to 4 Mbpd). We were producing 9 Mbpd less than a decade ago.

Peak Oil has made replacement of losses almost impossible even as Saudi heavy-sour is being spurned as useless around the world, even with discounts of up to \$10 and \$12 per barrel.

A [Bloomberg article](#) today contains a quotation from a Wall Street energy expert as saying, “‘Rita is developing into our worst-case scenario,’ said John Kilduff, vice president of risk management at Fimat USA in New York. ‘This is headed right into our other major refining center just after all the damage done to facilities in Louisiana. From an energy perspective it doesn’t get any worse than this.’”

The Chairman of Valero Energy agrees with the Bloomberg assessment calling Rita a [potentially national disaster](#). His opinion is important because Valero operates more refineries in the US than any other company.

CNN is now predicting \$5 per gallon gasoline and this will not likely go away with market manipulations. We had not yet experienced the permanent spikes resulting from Katrina, and the emergency reserves of the United States’ Strategic Petroleum Reserve

and the International Energy Agency have already been tapped once and not refilled.

The South Texas Project nuclear plant – one of the largest in the country – is being completely shut down in preparation for Rita's landfall. It is only 12 miles from the Texas coast and almost dead center in the hurricane's projected path. Texas has its own power grid but catastrophic electricity shortages could easily ripple throughout the country in a short time. Electricity lost from that facility will only be added to what is lost from other facilities powered by now critically short supplies of natural gas.

For those of you who expect FEMA to behave any differently in Texas than it did in New Orleans you are in for a crude awakening. FEMA will do what it must now do to preserve even a functioning part of America's governing and economic infrastructure. Saving lives will be one of the least important functions in its mandate. While I had serious doubts about America's ability to recover from Katrina, I am certain that – barring divine intervention – the United States is finished; not only as a superpower, but possibly even as a single, unified nation with the arrival of Hurricane Rita.

The Demise of Business as Usual

An Apollo Project For Energy Can Succeed, But Not In A Market Economy

By
Thomas L. Wayburn,
PhD in Chemical Engineering

It is impossible to replace fossil fuels with non-nuclear renewable energy within a market economy. Capitalism can be saved for a few years but only with a large investment in nuclear power, which must overcome market forces that continue to favor fossil-fuel technology even in the immediate aftermath of Peak Oil. Eventually, capitalism, which depends upon unlimited growth, must fail in a finite world. A natural economy is the best hope for a sustainable future in which humans might live in harmony with Nature and with each other.

Introduction

[The Apollo Alliance Ten-Point Plan](#) proposes to provide energy independence for the United States and robust economic growth into the foreseeable future by promoting renewable energy, improving energy efficiency, and repatriating imports. A new generation of energy efficient technology is to be introduced in an Apollo-like national program. However, nothing is to be done to stabilize population and the market system is to be retained.

But in a market system, economic growth is measured by growth in sales. Old technology is to be replaced by new tech-

nology. To maximize profits, the efforts to market new technology will increase until improvements in energy efficiency are overwhelmed by the energy required to provide them. Even if population were stable, economic growth would increase energy use due to purchases of new (energy-saving) technology for our workplaces, homes, and cars. Prosperity cannot be maintained in a society based upon buying and selling without continuous growth in energy consumption, which, in a finite world, is impossible.

This article provides a brief and bracing summary of a lengthy technical paper, "[On the Conservation-within-Capitalism Scenario](#)." The paper explains in detail the spreadsheet calculations for five increasingly progressive scenarios for the remainder of the Twenty-First Century: the *Reference Case* assumes a steady growth in per capita energy consumption due primarily to activities advocated by the Apollo Alliance. The results for the Reference Case are followed by results for the *One-Percent Growth Scenario*, the *No-Growth Scenario*, the *No-Growth and No-Sales Scenario*, and, finally, the case of the *Natural Economy* advocated by this author in [numerous essays](#) and a book, [On the Preservation of Species](#). The technical paper is precisely what one needs in order to determine whether the results reported here are correct.

In this study, I have satisfied energy deficits with nuclear energy because nuclear power installations (NPIs) require less of the surface area of the Earth than does any other energy technology – assuming that fissionable material can be created faster than it is consumed. What cannot be created is additional surface area of Earth on which to place them.

Commentary on the Apollo Alliance Ten-Point Plan

Although much of the mission of the first seven points of the Apollo Alliance Ten-Point Plan (copied verbatim from [the AA website](#)) is laudable, there is not a single point that does not represent some misconception as to the nature of the problem. We are not against conserving energy, nor would we wish to prevent working people from improving their lot; but, since money and energy are inextricably linked, it is impossible to increase the flow of money without increasing the flow of energy even if the activities toward which the flow of money is directed are aimed at reducing the quantity of energy associated with each unit of such activity. To understand how cash flow affects energy consumption, see "[Cash Flow in a Mark II Economy](#)." Unfortunately, conservation is limited by technological developments and the political will of the nation, whereas economic activity is limited only by catastrophe. The drawbacks of points 8, 9, and 10 are even more obvious.

Point 1. Promote Advanced Technology and Hybrid Cars:

Begin today to provide incentives for converting domestic assembly lines to manufacture highly efficient cars, transitioning the fleet to American made advanced technology vehicles, increasing consumer choice and strengthening the US auto industry.

Comment 1. The automobile culture, more than anything else in American life, is indicative of our inordinate use of energy. That which strengthens the auto industry — despite reduction in the energetic cost per unit of transport — will lead to more activity, not less. The same can be said for increasing consumer choice. Many people think that economic activity is

necessarily a good thing. It is the purpose of this study to examine that preference.

Point 2. Invest in More Efficient Factories: Make innovative use of the tax code and economic development systems to promote more efficient and profitable manufacturing while saving energy through environmental retrofits, improved boiler operations, and industrial cogeneration of electricity, retaining jobs by investing in plants and workers.

Comment 2. Conservation within capitalism is impossible without investment of some sort, but financial investment means economic activity, which, in turn, means additional flow of energy.

Point 3. Encourage High Performance Building: Increase investment in construction of “green buildings” and energy efficient homes and offices through innovative financing and incentives, improved building operations, and updated codes and standards, helping working families, businesses, and government realize substantial cost savings.

Comment 3. Commercial building implies economic growth, which is harmful no matter how great the mitigation of that harm by the incorporation of energy efficient technologies. Residential building implies population growth. Indeed, the AA makes no mention of any attempt to reduce population growth. It is true that increased affluence, which clearly is one of the goals of the Ten-Point Program, is likely to be accompanied by a reduction in the Total Fertility Rate. It is also true that increased affluence attracts immigrants and fuels growth.

Point 4. Increase Use of Energy Efficient Appliances: Drive a new generation of highly efficient manufactured goods into widespread use, without driving jobs overseas, by linking higher energy standards to consumer and manufacturing incentives that increase demand for new durable goods and increase investment in US factories.

Comment 4. Certainly, a great quantity of energy would be saved if the appliances in our homes and offices, including computers, used less electricity. On the other hand, a policy that purports to “increase demand for new durable goods” cannot be all good. Consumerism has led us to Peak Oil. The fact that, at best, investment cuts both ways has been mentioned.

Point 5. Modernize Electrical Infrastructure: Deploy the best available technology like scrubbers to existing plants, protecting jobs and the environment; research new technology to capture and sequester carbon and improve transmission for distributed renewable generation.

Comment 5. All of this is good except that it represents economic growth. The AA has said nothing to discourage or disparage economic growth which, no matter how energy efficient, will result eventually in the consumption of even more high-grade energy. The Alliance does not seem to contemplate an end to the increase in the standards of living of workers, some of whom will expect prosperity to lead to more prosperity *ad infinitum*.

Point 6. Expand Renewable Energy Development: Diversify energy sources by promoting existing technologies in solar, biomass and wind while setting ambitious but achievable goals for increasing renewable generation, and promoting state and local

policy innovations that link clean energy and jobs.

Comment 6. Good. But why does the Apollo Alliance emphasize the creation of more jobs as though jobs were not part of the problem? We need people to work less – not more. See [On the Work Ethic](#).

Point 7. Improve Transportation Options: Increase mobility, job access, and transportation choice by investing in effective multimodal networks including bicycle, local bus and rail transit, regional high-speed rail and magnetic levitation rail projects.

Comment 7. Whatever can be done should be done to reduce the energy consumed to get people and goods from one place to another—when such journeys are necessary and useful. Certainly, the movements of raw materials, products, and people that benefit society collectively as well as individually should be made on energy-efficient trains rather than in gas-guzzling SUVs whenever possible. Nevertheless, the improvement of transportation options is not the same as less transportation.

Point 8. Reinvest In Smart Urban Growth: Revitalize urban centers to promote strong cities and good jobs, by rebuilding and upgrading local infrastructure including road maintenance, bridge repair, and water and waste water systems, and by expanding redevelopment of idled urban “brownfield” lands, and by improving metropolitan planning and governance.

Comment 8. According to [Prof. Albert Bartlett](#), smart growth is like buying a first-class ticket on the Titanic. The growth of our cities and the migration of their populations from the countryside in our country and, indeed, from other countries has been one of the greatest evils of the industrial revolution. This evil has not been mitigated by flight to the suburbs. The impact on our energy budget of the energetic costs of commuting and other suburban excesses has been discussed thoroughly [elsewhere](#). To re-establish a sustainable society it will be necessary—not to revitalize the cities—but to dismantle them. This will be energy intensive enough without wasting energy on highways and bridges.

Point 9. Plan for a Hydrogen Future: Invest in long term research & development of hydrogen fuel cell technology, and deploy the infrastructure to support hydrogen powered cars and distributed electricity generation using stationary fuel cells, to create jobs in the industries of the future.

Comment 9. What is meant by a “hydrogen future”? If it does not mean hydrogen from nuclear power — directly or through electricity — AA should say so. If it does, AA should admit that it does. No matter how one computes the maximum energy available from renewable energy (other than nuclear) it can never be sufficient to support a capitalist-style economy, i.e., an economy that requires economic growth to perpetuate political stability. Therefore, capitalism — with or without conservation — implies a nuclear economy. Nuclear power is discussed in the next section.

Point 10. Preserve Regulatory Protections: Encourage balanced growth and investment through regulation that ensures energy diversity and system reliability, that protects workers and the environment, that rewards consumers, and that establishes a fair framework for emerging technologies.

Comment 10. Wiser heads among capitalists know that one can increase next quarter's profits at the expense of the environment in nearly every industry, almost always. Thus, to comply with a policy that is not quite suicidal, they need someone to force their competitors to comply. The AA does not suggest abandoning the Profit Motive; nevertheless, the reforms they recommend require central planning nearly to the degree that was practiced in the Soviet Union.

The Nuclear Option

A Renewable Energy Resource

Regardless of the finiteness of uranium resources, nuclear energy must be considered renewable because of the existence of fast breeder reactors and the likelihood that their technological limitations will disappear over the coming decades. Therefore, nuclear power should be admitted to the competition with wind, solar, biomass, and other sustainable technologies. If there is some reason why nuclear energy is not sustainable, it has yet to be demonstrated. (What is unsustainable is growth itself – not nuclear energy).

The Hydrogen Economy

Suppose we agree that the hydrogen economy means hydrogen from nuclear power installations (NPIs). [K.R. Schultz et al.](#) suggest that hydrogen can be produced with a 50% efficiency by thermal splitting of water. The efficiency of thermal splitting bypasses the objections to using electricity as an intermediate step discussed by [Ulf Bossel et al.](#) However, the huge changes in our technological and industrial infrastructure associated with the use of hydrogen for fuel will involve energetically costly re-tooling that must be charged to the energy invested in nuclear energy.

Energy Returned over Energy Invested (ER/EI)

If the Energy Returned by NPIs is less than the Energy Invested, nuclear energy is infeasible. Therefore, the frequently-discussed ER/EI analysis is crucial to this discussion. Probably, the ER/EI ratio for nuclear power is less than comparable ratios for fossil fuels, which is a drawback insofar as market penetration is concerned; however, [so long as it exceeds 1.0](#) the introduction of nuclear energy is feasible.

The identification and quantification of every component, both direct and indirect, of the energy invested in nuclear power is not a simple thing to do. In particular, if any such study of Energy Invested includes the ancillary business expenses I have not seen it. But in the American economy, for example, the energy consumed by commerce is 22% of the total energy budget. This is corroborated by [employment statistics](#).

Computation of Energy Invested by multiplying the sum of capital and operating costs by the ratio of Total National Energy Budget over Gross National Product (E/GDP) tabulated by the DOE provides an approximation to the correct value that does not omit the energy consumed by commerce. (See "[Cash Flow in a Mark II Economy](#)") Using cost data from the [Shultz et al. study](#), the [University of Chicago Study](#), and [the MIT study](#), I computed an ER/EI ratio of 4.63.

However, it is not clear that all ancillary costs have been included, e.g., desalination of sea water, remediation of environmental change, etc. A pro-rata share of the costs of providing and maintaining railways to carry heavy equipment, fuel, and waste, highways to transport workers, conduits to transmit electric current, pipelines to transport hydrogen, and easements through which electrical power lines and hydrogen pipelines can be run must be charged to the plant.

Money

Capital costs of NPIs are high enough to hinder market penetration and to increase possible budget deficits alarmingly, but they are a small fraction of the projected GDP. Therefore, NPIs can be built by a society with the political will to by-pass market and fiscal constraints.

Unfortunately, nuclear facilities are operated sometimes for the personal profit of their owners, managers, and other stakeholders who might be inclined to place their personal interests ahead of other considerations such as good engineering practice *and safety*. Mere prudence dictates that we be suspicious of enterprises run for profit.

Water

If fresh water is used as cooling water, it should be returned to the environment at the original temperature with all contaminants removed and all nutrients restored. Part of the cooling water and the water split to produce hydrogen will end up as atmospheric water, only a part of which will return to Earth as fresh water, in which case the losses in our fresh water supply will have to be replaced somehow. If NPIs are used to desalinate sea water, the energy expended must be added to the Energy Invested in computing ER/EI.

If every NPI in the year 2100 used water at the rate Plant Hatch in Georgia did in 2000, we would need more than a million billion (quadrillion) kilograms of water per year to satisfy the robust economic growth assumed in our Reference Case. Thus, power plants would use more than [one-third](#) of all of our renewable fresh [water](#).

Alternatively, the energy required for the [desalination of sea-water increases the Energy Invested](#) from a low of 1.6% to a high of 9% (resp.) of the Energy Returned. If the ER/EI were 5.0, it would be reduced by 7.4% or 31% (resp.). In addition, the costs of pre-treatment, brine disposal, and transport would have to be borne.

Land

The final limitation upon economic growth is the area of the surface of Earth. NPIs require a smaller fraction of Earth's surface per unit of power generated than any of the competing technologies, namely, wind, solar, and biomass. Even if every other obstacle to growth were removed, ultimately we would run out of space. The land needed for NPIs includes not just the plant sites and infrastructure for transportation and power transmission but also the space occupied by facilities for mining and enrichment, fabrication, maintenance, recycle, hydrogen compression and liquefaction, waste management, sea water desalination, fresh water remediation, and the ubiquitous office buildings that seem to be a necessary part of every enterprise engaged in

the pursuit of profit. Engineers and scientists will need workplaces; and, if I am not mistaken, the greater the complexity of our energy economy the greater the superstructure of command and control, which, in the case of nuclear, must be multiply redundant. Moreover, many areas on the face of the Earth are not suitable for NPIs; namely, the tops of mountains, earthquake zones, city centers, and — if we wish to observe the ethical treatment of animals — wildernesses, wet lands, prairies, etc. Finally, it must be decided whether the space occupied by outmoded and obsolete facilities can be reused for new facilities or if it must be restored to the pristine condition in which Nature bequeathed it to us.

Danger

Quite obviously, while operating as designed, nuclear power plants do not contribute directly to Global Climate Change nor air and water pollution regardless of the effect of their ancillary facilities, e.g., mining, etc. When NPIs are operated properly, the dangers are rather minimal; nevertheless, nuclear radiation is extremely hazardous. In addition to radiation hazards, they have a small but non-zero probability of seriously leaking or even exploding, which increases with number of NPIs. Admittedly, there is no physical reason why the problems associated with pollution, radiation, explosions, waste, and decommissioning cannot be solved, however they must be solved; and, to the extent that they have not yet been solved, they represent impediments to the introduction of nuclear power and the hydrogen economy, which brings us to the next topic.

Complexity

Nuclear power is the key to a much larger and more complicated economy with much greater risk of unanticipated environmental catastrophes. The economy is sufficiently complicated in 2005 that the average person must necessarily depend upon the opinions of experts to determine which public policies are in his best interests and which are not. Moreover, experts disagree. The average man or woman is held hostage to the complexity of the economy, and this situation is not conducive to democracy.

END PART ONE OF TWO

Thomas L. Wayburn earned degrees in chemical engineering and mathematics in three different decades. He has been elected to a number of honor societies and, in 1987, won the Ted Peterson award for the best paper written by a student in computers and systems technology. This was the year in which a 1956 recording of Tom with legendary jazz pianist Lennie Tristano and bassist Peter Ind was released. He has worked as a chemical engineer, a jazz drummer, and a college professor of mathematics and chemical engineering thermodynamics and design. Lately, he has been writing papers based upon mathematical studies of energy and economics and keeping up a voluminous correspondence.

A 1997 resume can be found at <http://web.wt.net/~twayburn/Resume97.html>

New Orleans Area Bioweapons and Infectious Disease Research Labs Jeopardized by Katrina

Tulane's National Primate Research Center Reports No Release of Nearly 5,000 Test Monkeys or Disease Agents – Other NOLA Defense or Research Projects Involve HIV, SIV, SARS, Herpes-B, Anthrax, Botulism, Measles, West Nile and Mousepox

No Confirmed Information on Other NOLA Level-3 Labs Involved in Bioweapons Research – At Least One Lab Reportedly Compromised

by
Michael C. Ruppert

September 13, 2005 0800 PST (FTW) – Prior to the arrival of Hurricane Katrina on August 29th, the greater New Orleans area was a significant hub of infectious disease and biological weapons research. At least five Level-3 biolabs were located either in New Orleans or in its nearby suburb of Covington. Level-4 is the only higher containment level and is used primarily for weapons research on hemorrhagic fevers and other viral agents. Although there were many causes for alarm with Katrina, the biggest initial worry for *FTW* had been the status of nearly 5,000 monkeys (kept outdoors behind barbed wire) used in infectious disease research at the Tulane University National Primate Center.

National Institutes of Health spokesperson Ann Puderbaugh told *FTW*, "The National Primate Research Center at Tulane came through the storm just fine. There were no injured or escaped animals and there was no release of any biological agents due to other causes."

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reported very little damage and no release of agents at any of its monitored facilities. CDC maintains a Select Agent Release Program and had issued warnings prior to Katrina's landfall and had subsequently posted a request for any labs compromised to immediately notify them. CDC spokesman Von Roebuck told *FTW*, as far as the Select Agent program was concerned, "We made an immediate outreach to all of these laboratories. The reports back were that there had been little or no damage. No loss of or release of any agent occurred and there is currently security in place at all of our facilities."

Other agencies were not as forthcoming, however, and there are apparently other laboratories that have fallen through the gap in terms of reporting. Whether they have sustained any damage is unknown and it is impossible to make a list because the location of all such facilities is apparently unavailable. Other laboratories might be independent military contractors working with the Department of Defense. The State of Louisiana operates a Level-3 biolab in New Orleans and major hospitals

(especially teaching hospitals) usually have such labs.

FTW contacted a number of agencies including the CDC, FEMA, The White House, Tulane University, The Pentagon and the US Army's Biological Warfare Operations Center (USAMRIID) at Fort Dietrick, Maryland, The Louisiana Governor's Office, and the Department of Health and Human Services.

FTW was unable to get a definite answer about all of the remaining laboratories or even an answer as to how many there actually were. No entity had information immediately available at their fingertips in the form of a press release. The CDC was most helpful in making referrals and giving prompt response. FEMA did not respond to two voicemail messages.

A spokesperson for Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco told FTW that to her knowledge all such programs were federally-controlled and then referred us to the state's Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). The spokesperson apparently had no knowledge of any facilities at LSU or any other state institution. The DEQ had not returned calls as of press time.

The problem is that other defense-related bioweapons or infectious disease research programs in the region might still be compromised and no one seems to have that information or be willing or able to inform the public about it.

INDEPENDENT RESEARCHERS FILL A BIG GAP

It was independent researchers who brought the potential crisis to light. In doing so they have raised a great many questions that must be added to Katrina's ever-growing list.

According to a [report](#) located at The Memory Blog quoting *Tulane University Magazine*, "[The primary areas of focus today at the Tulane National Primate Research Center are infectious diseases, including biodefense related work, gene therapy, reproductive biology and neuroscience. The Tulane primate center is playing a key role in the federal strategic plan for biodefense research.](#)"

Information from The Primate Research Project confirms "Tulane has over 4,500 monkeys of eleven species. Rhesus macaques form the overwhelming majority with at least 3,500 on hand.

["A drive through the facility offers a rare glimpse of caged research monkeys with only a hedge and a barbed-wire fence separating acres of pens from the road."](#)

That same document continues with an ominous precedent.

In mid October of 1998, two dozen rhesus monkeys escaped from cages in this outdoor area. Tulane officials were quick to assert that the monkeys were not infected with any disease and posed no risk to the public. But consider the Blanchard report below. At least 70% of the TRPRC's monkeys are infected with herpes-B,

a disease fatal to humans. This disease has been used as a club against macaques for some time. In Wisconsin, primate center officials used the high incidence figures (common in all captive macaque colonies subjected to regular high stress) to argue that the macaques at the county zoo were a grave risk to the public's health and could not be safely maintained on public display. More recently when rhesus monkeys escaped from an island in Florida, Kirk Boehm, a Wisconsin primate center minor official, once again publicly asserted that macaques pose a risk to the public. The NIH RPRC officials want it both ways. When the public is worried, the monkeys pose no risk; when the public is concerned for the monkeys' well-being, the monkeys are too dangerous to have around. This is the mentality and logic consuming our limited tax dollars and subjecting thousands of monkeys annually to grievous suffering.

In a move that went entirely unnoticed (or unreported on) by the major corporate-owned media, prior to Katrina's landfall, the Atlanta-based Centers for Disease Control expressed concern for the many infectious disease, biowarfare research facilities in the crosshairs of the killer storm. At the top of the CDC website's Select Agents Program homepage is the [following notice](#).

Announcement for Entities Impacted by Hurricane Katrina

Entities that are registered with the Select Agent Program who have been impacted by Hurricane Katrina may contact the CDC Select Agent Program for guidance on actions that should be taken to transfer Select Agents to another registered entity or **report the theft, loss, or release of select agents that might have occurred due to storm damage** [emphasis added]. The CDC Select Agent Program will expedite any special requests from registered entities as a result of Hurricane Katrina. Contact the Program via email at Irsat@cdc.gov, phone at 404-498-2255, fax at 404-498-2265, or call your designated CDC representative.

As a result of Katrina, at least one Level-3 lab was compromised, necessitating an emergency trip to protect the deadly agents stored there. That [received a mention](#) only in a medical journal.

An ominous quotation in that story from www.medpagetoday.com indicated the urgency and danger involved:

But while the military is going door-to-door to coax, or in some cases force, reluctant residents to evacuate the danger zone in New Orleans, Dr. Curriel is heading back to mount a

military-style assault on the laboratories he and his colleagues left behind. Dr. Curiel, 49, is a professor and chief of the section of medical oncology at Tulane.

In addition to the manpower and supplies he and his colleagues need to keep themselves safe, they're bringing as many massive tanks of liquid nitrogen that they can scrounge up.

"A lot of very valuable research material has already perished, because a lot was in freezers that were plugged into electricity, and the emergency power has failed, and everything that's in freezers powered by emergency power is gone forever," he said in a telephone interview this week. "The only things that we can save now are what's in the liquid nitrogen."

Most of the above information was compiled by [The Sunshine Project's](#) Dr. Edward Hammond and independent researcher Brian DePhillips who forwarded it to this writer on September 10 th.

Aside from Tulane there are many other facilities to be concerned about. As DePhillips put it in his message to *FTW*:

And how much of this kind of research was going on within New Orleans itself? Apparently quite a bit.

-- Louisiana State University's Medical School has a Level-3 biolab in the Clinical Sciences Research Building located at 533 Bolivar Street. According to grant applications, LSU's facility was the site of research involving anthrax and genetically-engineered mousepox. And that's just what we know about.

-- The State of Louisiana has a Level-3 biolab in New Orleans. [\[see this PDF document\]](#)

-- It seems highly likely that an institution the size of Tulane has biolabs in New Orleans itself, not just Covington.

-- Then there's the University of New Orleans, Loyola University, Xavier University of Louisiana, and others. I don't know whether they've been engaged in bioresearch or have high-level biolabs, but it'd be worth finding out.

-- And let's not forget the New Orleans Medical Complex, which contains over 40 blocks of hospitals and biomedical research facilities. According to this [website](#), it's been severely flooded.

How many such facilities were affected by Katrina? What has happened to their potentially deadly contents?

FTW finds it ironic that at the same time that the Bush administration was slashing funding for essential levee repairs and reinforcements it was handing out money for bioweapons re-

search in the region.

PRIORITIES?

Louisiana's *News Banner* [reported](#) on these developments on December 14th of last year.

In accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107, this material is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for research and educational purposes.

Primate center to build biocontainment lab

By Leslie Ackel

COVINGTON - Tulane National Primate Center is expanding thanks to a \$13.6 million grant secured from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases that will go toward the building of a new level-three biocontainment lab. Tulane University will invest \$5 million in the project.

Secured among a 500-acre tract of piney woods buffered from the hustle and bustle of the surrounding community by 250 feet of surrounding woods, the 40-year-old university center was selected to conduct research for the development of treatments and vaccines for potential bioterrorism germs.

For the past 10 years scientists at the facility have been working on finding cures for deadly infectious diseases - namely AIDS, SARS, botulism, plague, Lyme disease, smallpox, anthrax and tularemia, all inside a level-three biosafety laboratory. The new biocontainment lab, due to break ground in the spring, will allow Tulane's National Primate Center to expand its focus into biodefense-related work.

Level 3 and 4 biocontainment research facilities are scattered throughout the United States.

Since 9/11 *FTW* has written extensively on the subject of biological warfare.

A key *FTW* story on US biolabs is located [here](#). Additional *FTW* reporting on biological warfare can be found by clicking [here](#) and scrolling down to the Biowarfare heading.

FTW has been careful to note an apparent obsession with biological agents on the part of the United States and Britain since 9/11. Like, for example, the military scientist who stated that it was necessary to dig up the bodies of 1918 Spanish Flu victims to obtain the DNA for the deadliest disease ever to strike the planet (Spanish Flu), and claimed that in order to provide a defense against it, they had to first create it as an offensive weapon.

That's correct. The expert said that it was the US and British governments' intention to re-create an extinct disease and risk introducing it to the population, for the sole purpose of finding a way to kill it again.