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Subject: America's Fuel Program

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Mon, 04 Apr 2005 11:12:59 GMT

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Remember the space program in the 60's? We went from bottle rockets to landing a man on the moon in a decade. I wonder if we put the same sort of obsessive determination into alternative fuels, if we couldn't get this thing solved in a decade too. I'd love to see heavy research in synthetic fuels and other alternative sources. At sixty bucks a barrel of oil and two and a half bucks a gallon for gasoline, I think if any candidate announces they'll support something like this, I'd vote no matter what party he's in. I know the Europeans are living with much higher fuel prices, like seven bucks a gallon gasoline, but I'm confident if we can put a man on the moon, we can develop inexpensive agri-biodiesel and alcohol fuels as well as other alternative sources. So when the time comes, I'm placing my vote in the party that makes energy priority one for the next decade. While voting, I'd also like to see a stop to all the minutia, seems that's all America's political discussion focuses on these days. Everyone is so concerned about their "rights" - Right to life (or death), right to sex partners, right to pray in public or stop someone else from same, yada, yada, yada. Seems we've forgotten that laws of physics supercede judicially mandated "rights." If you don't have fuel, it doesn't really matter what the judge or the Congress says. You're done, time to learn how to go back to being a hunter/gatherer.

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Subject: Re: America's Fuel Program

Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Mon, 04 Apr 2005 15:40:24 GMT

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So Wayne; human right's just aren't that important when it comes to cheap fuel eh?

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Subject: Re: America's Fuel Program

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Mon, 04 Apr 2005 15:59:52 GMT

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Not when you drive a car with an 8 liter engine. Seriously, I'd love to see us embark on an energy research program in this country on the scale of the space program in the 60's. I think it would be great, and I think it's time.

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Subject: Re: America's Fuel Program

Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Mon, 04 Apr 2005 16:43:53 GMT

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In the 60's we were worried about Sputnik so ergo we found all kinds of money. Now it's about profit and there is plenty to be made when the price of oil exceeds the cost of refining naturel gas reserves in the national parks. Then Haliburton and Dick Cheney's gang will be whipped into action raping the public land for personal profit and citing national emergency as the reason. There's no money in conservation. And I will still drive my V-8; if you want to play you have to pay!

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Subject: Re: America's Fuel Program  
Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Mon, 04 Apr 2005 17:06:47 GMT  
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Yeah, buddy. I'm keeping my V8's too. I don't drive them as much, but it really isn't too bad. I have a motorcycle and the climate here is good, so it balances out.

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Subject: Re: America's Fuel Program  
Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Mon, 04 Apr 2005 18:50:52 GMT  
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Thats the ticket! Move where it is 75 deg. year round, cheap housing, low insurance and no need for a car; lets see; Far Tortuga? The Lesser Antilles?

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Subject: Re: relocating  
Posted by [wunhuanglo](#) on Tue, 05 Apr 2005 00:30:47 GMT  
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My bet is that moving will be the answer for a lot of people long before alternative energy sources are developed commercially. Middle class people will return to the cities - there's a lot of unused room in every major city I've visited - abandoned apartment houses and single family dwellings - in cities like NY these abandoned units are cheek by jowl to some of the highest rent living space in the world. People will abandon commuting in favor of rehabilitating this housing stock. We have ever increasing numbers of people and not a hell of a lot of arable land that's not in use. Much prime farm land has been turned into suburban sprawl. I think this makes bio-fuels not too likely, at least in the long term - we need the land for food production. Hydrogen is a long way off - you need to put as much into hydrolysis as you can get out of a fuel cell, so all we can practically do is make nuclear power portable - we have to build a lot of big nuclear plants to disassociate water, and that means not only huge investment but solving what's been an intractable problem for the past 25 years - what do you do with the spent fuel. Money can address those

issues, but gasoline will have to be hellaciously expensive before hydrogen from nuclear plants looks good. Long term, I have to believe our future is being lived today in Japan – rural farmers who never see the city – city dwellers who only see the country by public transportation – rare and expensive private vehicle ownership – incredibly high concentrations of people in the urban centers, making commuting by public transportation feasible. Oh, yeah, one other thing – drinking to a near stupor every night while smoking 2 packs a day to deal with the stress of it all.

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Subject: Re: America's Fuel Program

Posted by [Dean Kukral](#) on Tue, 05 Apr 2005 02:34:43 GMT

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Back in the late 70's when we were having the "gas crisis" (remember when prices shot up to 79 cents a gallon?), it drove me crazy. All the polls ranked the "economy" as the number one issue and "oil" in third place. People simply did not (and still do not) appreciate the fact that cheap oil along with plentiful natural resources and lax regulatory laws are what made this country rich. One of the first things Carter did was cut back research money on atomic energy. Yikes!!! (BTW, in 1980 I voted for Anderson who wanted to tax gasoline 50 cents a gallon to pay for Social Security. If he had been elected and put that program into effect, we would be a lot better off today.) Agreeing with you on this point, I said back then and still say that we should have a program attacking nuclear fusion with at least the same effort that we put into the space program. The first country that is able to effectively harness nuclear fusion is going to dominate the world for years - if it can keep its technology a secret, which is getting pretty difficult in today's world. I don't see any other source of energy that could satisfy our needs, although coal has been touted for years. Maybe it could provide an interim solution. Anti-pollution technology would have to be developed.

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Subject: Re: America's Fuel Program

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Tue, 05 Apr 2005 08:48:20 GMT

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I agree with you. Nuclear energy is an awesome technology, if you think about it. It's the fuel of the stars, of the universe. Put research into the matters of safety and waste disposal and I think that's the way to go for energy for homes and businesses. Seems like I remember hearing that some types of reactors produce byproducts with relatively short half lives. Instead of having canisters that won't become safe for a zillion years, they are radioactive for a dozen or two years, something like that. So that's attractive. Or maybe launch the stuff into the sun or something like that for disposal. Nuclear power brings up a fear factor, but I also know that it's a good technology. Just like anything else, life is dangerous. I think it's worth re-examining. Submarines use nuclear power and people are living in close quarters with the reactor. So that's something. Chernobyl was a piece of junk, but the Ukrainians need the power enough that they band-aid it together. Pretty nuts, but the point is that energy is necessary for modern life and when you get down to nut

cutting, you're prepared to make certain choices. People react much differently when faced with survival than they do when looking for luxury. So I'm thinking we're getting close to nut cutting. All my life, we've been talking about the sky is falling where energy is concerned. But then it didn't and we all sort of lulled ourselves back into complacency. I'm thinking that there's no need for doom and gloom scares, but maybe just the economic situation might get us on the ball. I'd just like to see an all-out fuel program on the table, with zeal like we saw in the days of the Apollo missions.

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Subject: Re: relocating

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Tue, 05 Apr 2005 08:57:54 GMT

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You're right about suburbia and commuting to work. That's one thing that you don't find as much in other countries. That sort of goes in the category of energy conservation. So does the idea of making homes and businesses with energy conservation in mind. Stuff like venting the heat from the refrigerator outside instead of into the living area where it must be re-cooled by the air conditioner. I may run computers and tube amps that throw off a lot of heat, but I don't have to run my heater nearly as much in the winter.

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Subject: Re: relocating

Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Tue, 05 Apr 2005 12:26:15 GMT

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Haven't seen any mention of the huge SUV totems wandering the streets burning up all that precious fuel we want to conserve. There seems to be a pervading myth about the space program and the supposed massive effort made back then to coordinate across all lines of government to accomplish dominance of the skies. If you look at the history, there was much resistance to spending programs in congress and in fact the total outlay is much smaller than would be expected. We just remember as kids watching the launches with awe and assume this was a concerted effort by concerned and scientifically aware citizenry approving any spending that NASA asked for. Not true. And now you have schools trying to teach creationism and universities filled with cockeyed marxists and bored students. If there is a serious effort to create new energy sources it won't be done in this country; there is too much money involved in perpetuating the status quo. And now the money has run out while we prop up foreign countries where we need their oil. What is the percentage in spending on research? Suburbs? The highest growth rates are in regions where there is no water; Vegas, Phoenix, Florida. It is not an oil shortage that will get us, it is water.

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Subject: Re: America's Fuel Program  
Posted by [Dean Kukral](#) on Tue, 05 Apr 2005 12:45:38 GMT  
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I am talking about nuclear fusion, not nuclear fission, although I would not rule that out as a short-term help. I **\*\*think\*\*** that nuclear fusion could be made clean, but don't know enough about the physics of that to be certain. One of the potential problems with these gigantic plants is that they cost billions of dollars, so if someone screws up in the design or construction there is a strong desire to cover it up and to bribe the inspector. With billions at stake, a million-dollar bribe seems quite reasonable and very difficult to turn down. Perhaps I am just being silly.

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Subject: Re: relocating  
Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Tue, 05 Apr 2005 16:53:31 GMT  
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I have no doubt there was a lot of debate, and that there was tremendous resistance to spending money on space exploration in the 1960's. But in spite of that, we still landed a man on the moon in less than a decade. And that with engineers using slide rules and primitive computers, no less.

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Subject: Re: relocating  
Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Tue, 05 Apr 2005 17:52:54 GMT  
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Thats a fact but remmember they burned up.. how many rockets in the process? As well as the fact that rocketry was born in the early 50's; therefor, I would offer there was a twenty year period of trial and error. There doesn't seem to be a debate really; we needed to protect the skies from the Russians and driven by the threat of Sputnik and their obvious success we disregarded failure and pushed through until things worked and learned by trial and error how to get up there. As soon as Armstrong landed that was the cut-off point for space funding. Soon as the powers that be realised there was no financial benefit to space exploration they cut the budget to the bone and therein lies my point. The price of oil will rise until it becomes financially prudent to excersize any and all methods to retrieve it from the ground; shale oil, natural gas; you probably know more about this than I do. There will be no government mandated conservation except as token measures designed to placate the environmentalists. I have no personal stake in this; whatever the price becomes I will have to pay it; and if I resort to alternative methods of energy production on my property; they will find a way to tax it. Let me ask you; how do you envision a national approach to finding better energy production methods be implemented? Should the government create a public energy policy with laws and ordinances dictating how and what to do or what we will be allowed to do? They tried energy subsidies in the 70's and they were abused by the very people in charge now. Vouchers for conservation? I'm curious. This is a serious subject worthy of reasoned debate. Since any programs must be taxpayer funded; who should pay?

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Subject: Re: relocating

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Tue, 05 Apr 2005 21:44:53 GMT

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All good questions. I'm usually one for free enterprise, but I could see tax dollars spent for R&D. The resulting technologies could filter out from the public sector into the private sector, similarly to the way aerospace and communications technologies sprung forth from the space program.

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Subject: Re: relocating

Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Tue, 05 Apr 2005 23:41:23 GMT

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Well Wayne; thats another huge ball of wax. Probably too much for a forum topic. I firmly believe in the maxim; follow the money. I have never seen it to fail. I don't believe that the trickle down effect would work. The space program was a one shot deal that will not happen again due to many factors of time and place. Who would own these taxpayer funded discoveries? Today in the news the state of Connecticut and two other states are suing the federal govt. for the complete abandonment of funding for the mandated No Child Left Behind Act. So do we trust them to follow through on anything that isn't revenue producing?

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Subject: Re: relocating

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Wed, 06 Apr 2005 14:12:37 GMT

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You know, you're probably right.

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Subject: Re: relocating

Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Wed, 06 Apr 2005 14:35:02 GMT

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Thanks for the vote of confidence but in these matters I don't think there is a right or wrong; just opinions built on debate and experience and a willingness to listen to the other side without prejudice;.. of course until you are convinced they're coniving to promote personal gain.

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Subject: No need for alternative fuel.  
Posted by [GarMan](#) on Tue, 12 Apr 2005 22:08:13 GMT  
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Take a look at the Toyota Echo and Golf Turbo Diesel. Two mass produced cars that provides excellent mileage, even compared to hybrids. And developed without massive R&D support from government. Image what we can do if we take a serious attempt at increasing efficiency of oil burning engines. Unfortunately, we haven't and it doesn't look like we will in the short term. Several things are working against efficiency improves in oil burning cars. It's not sexy like alternative fuel. People like to have more power under the hood than they need. People like their cars to be big and heavy.

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Subject: Re: No need for alternative fuel.  
Posted by [Dean Kukral](#) on Wed, 13 Apr 2005 00:46:24 GMT  
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More things run on fuel than cars! Like factories, stores, homes, farms, etc. And virtually every fuel source we have is polluting, except hydroelectric. If we could make an efficient solar panel, that would be great! But most of the stuff we have uses up more fuel to produce than its worth. Government subsidies keep them afloat. But, no need for alternate fuel????? Wayne is right!! We need a Space-Program level search for alternate fuels! Now is already too late.

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Subject: Re: relocating  
Posted by [Mike.e](#) on Sun, 24 Apr 2005 02:54:40 GMT  
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Hi manualblock If theres no right or wrong, what hope do we have ? A bunch of peoples opinions are better then one persons? Sharing ideas to balance yourself can only be a good thing.

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Subject: Re: relocating  
Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Wed, 27 Apr 2005 13:44:03 GMT  
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Hi Mike; There is an absolute right and wrong; it's wrong that a CEO that drives a company into bankruptcy should get 25 mill plus stock options while a police officer gets 30k annual. Thats wrong. Wayne's dream of a united effort to produce cheap fuel assumes that the people in charge have our best interest at heart. In that case there really is no hope. You are in Australia

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correct?What is the prevailing wisdom concerning the inalienable right to universal medical care for all people there? That should be a right; no?Why concentrate on something that only benefits the very rich?

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Subject: Energy policy

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Sat, 30 Apr 2005 12:37:46 GMT

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Check it out:

White House Energy Policy

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Subject: Re: Energy policy

Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Sat, 30 Apr 2005 19:36:06 GMT

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So whats new? Eliminate regulatory restrictions on coal fired plants; cut down the number of agency representatives examining production methods. Allow the inclusion of the National Forests in the available bio-mass resources co-fired with coal and allowing for energy credits that benefit the wealthy. Tip of the iceberg designed to by-pass 75 years of protective legislation. Makes me laugh when they quote pollution figures as if they favor those restriction when we forced them kicking and screaming to enact those environmental rules. I can go on and on but you get the drift. Laws that favor the oil and gas companies at the expense of the taxpayer and hostile taking of public lands for private profit. There's over a thousand pages of piracy by the wealthy there for the seriously curious to study. I have an idea; fund it all with a flat tax and any profits made privately should be taxed at the 37% rate distributed to the general fund. They still make money, (Although not obscene amounts) and we can fund a civilised health care system with the budget excess.

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