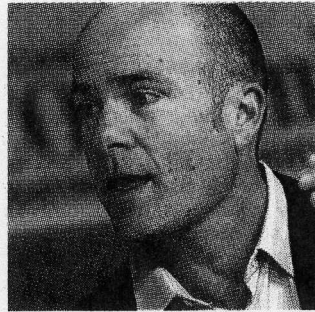
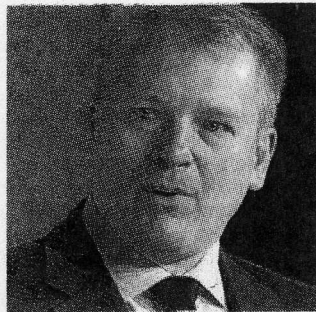
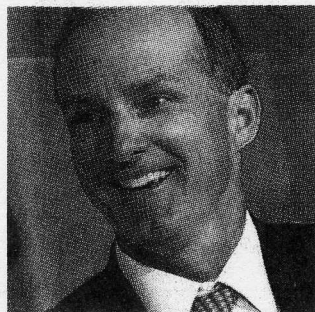


# Natural Gas Rocks The Energy World

David Crane, Tim Rosenzweig and Michael Brune on how the fuel could change...everything



Getting a handle on the new energy order: David Crane (left), Tim Rosenzweig (center) and Michael Brune

*The U.S. is sitting on vast reserves of cheap natural gas—a fact that's already having a profound effect on the nation's energy mix.*

*But how much should we rely on this fuel? What are the risks to betting too heavily on natural gas—and are there better options out there?*

*Tackling those questions were David Crane, president and chief executive of **NRG Energy Inc.**; Tim Rosenzweig, chief executive of **Goldwind Americas**; and Michael Brune, executive director of the Sierra Club. Here are edited excerpts from *The Wall Street Journal's* **ECO:nomics** conference.*

#### ◆ ON THE INCREASED DEPENDENCE ON NATURAL GAS

**MR. CRANE:** Natural gas is in the process of wiping out the coal industry, and it's wiping out the nuclear industry quicker than we thought. I would say strategically, as an American citizen, for the power industry to

become like the transportation industry and completely dependent on one fuel is a disaster.

#### ◆ ON HOW NATURAL GAS COULD BE EVEN MORE DISRUPTIVE

**MR. CRANE:** When the natural-gas industry grows up, it's going to realize that they don't need the power industry's transmission and distribution system. They have a better distribution system—the gas pipeline into your house. All the natural-gas industry needs is a gizmo in the basement of your house to convert your natural gas into electricity. I have no doubt that within the next 12 to 24 months there's going to be a technological breakthrough.

**MR. ROSENZWEIG:** If everybody is generating their own power, and you're running it into the transportation system, when you increase that much demand, what's going to happen to prices? Right now, it's really low because we've turbocharged the gas industry with the shale revo-

lution. But won't prices spike then? And then you're in a whole different world, aren't you?

#### ◆ ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF NATURAL GAS

**MR. BRUNE:** What we've learned over the past six or seven years is that the process of extracting natural gas through fracking is much more carbon-intensive than previously thought, and the process of distributing and transmitting natural gas also has significant climate implications.

So, the gap between gas and coal has narrowed considerably. In some cases, there could be no gap, or gas could actually be worse than coal.

We need to look at what investments we should make in order to create the country that we need, and whether or not it makes sense to spend hundreds of billions of dollars in a fossil-fuel infrastructure when we know that we have to decarbonize as quickly as possible.