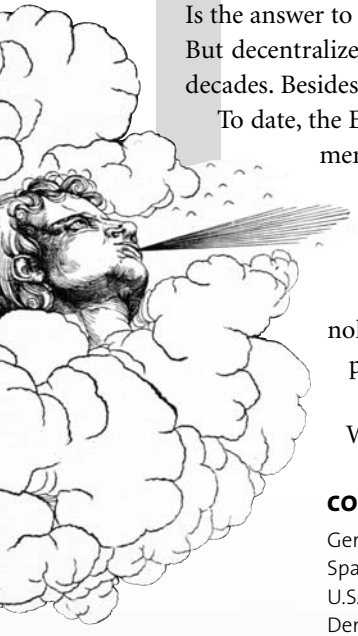

Is the answer to the world's energy problems **blowing in the wind?** Not quite. But decentralized, renewable, low-polluting wind energy could fill some of the gap in coming decades. Besides, it's fun to get a Bob Dylan line into the *Review*.

To date, the Europeans are taking wind most seriously, heavily subsidizing capacity development. Among the U.S. states, California has the most installed capacity. But to make a double-digit dent in the demand for coal- and natural gas-based power, the country would need to build tens of thousands of turbines in the windy middle of America.

Is wind power the cheapest solution around? Hard to say. But with the technology improving rapidly as global warming and nuclear waste storage dog the progress of alternatives, wind power may well become the most practical fix.

Where the turbines are…

COUNTRY	CAPACITY IN GIGAWATTS (2002)	% GROWTH SINCE 1999
Germany	12.0	170
Spain	4.8	230
U.S.	4.7	80
Denmark	2.9	70
India	1.7	60
Italy	0.8	180
Netherlands	0.7	70
United Kingdom	0.6	60
China	0.5	80
Japan	0.4	510

SOURCE: World Wind Energy Association

STATE	CAPACITY IN MEGAWATTS (2004)	POTENTIAL CAPACITY
California	2,051	6,770
Texas	1,293	136,000
Minnesota	580	75,000
Iowa	479	62,900
Wyoming	284	85,000
Oregon	260	4,870
Washington	243	3,740
Colorado	229	54,900
Oklahoma	176	82,700
Kansas	114	121,900
North Dakota	66	138,400

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Energy