We have ended the war on American energy. And we have ended the war on beautiful, clean coal.

It's difficult to make the case that there's been a "war on American energy." Domestic oil production boomed and natural gas production increased steadily during President Barack Obama's term. Trump has celebrated the fact that a few coal mines have opened since he took office, but only a small segment of the industry associated with making steel is growing — overall the industry is still declining. Coal has fallen on hard times primarily because it is having trouble competing against cheaper natural gas and renewable energy for generating electricity. As we've reported, power generators are switching from coal to gas because they can make more money. Finally, there have been efforts to make coal burn cleaner and reduce its contribution to climate change — it's not clear if that's what the president means by "clean coal." In any case those efforts have faltered, mostly for economic and technical reasons, despite large government subsidies that also undermine the argument that there's been a "war on clean coal."

Jeff Brady
NPR National Desk Correspondent/Covers Energy

We are now very proudly an exporter of energy to the world.

The final numbers are not in yet, but it is likely 2017 is the year the U.S. became a net exporter of natural gas, according to the Energy Information Administration. That process was well underway, however, before Trump took office. The booming production is due primarily to technologies like fracking and horizontal drilling. More broadly, the country has long exported various forms of energy, including coal and gasoline. There were restrictions on crude oil exports, but they were lifted in 2015 when Obama was in the White House.

Jeff Brady
NPR National Desk Correspondent/Covers Energy

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U.S. energy production is booming. Domestic oil producers are expected to pump a record 10.4 million barrels per day this year, surpassing Saudi Arabia's output. The Trump administration has encouraged that growth by opening more land and offshore waters to drilling, including the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska. But the energy surge was already underway when Trump took office, largely driven by technological developments such as hydraulic fracturing (fracking).

"The global energy market has been turned upside down by what's happening in the United States in terms of shale gas and shale oil," said energy historian Daniel Yergin of IHS Markit. That's having positive ripple effects far beyond the oil patch. "Inexpensive natural gas has led to well north of $100 billion of new investment in U.S. manufacturing and has made the U.S. a destination for manufacturing investment, which was hardly the case a decade ago," said Yergin, author of *The Prize* and *The Quest.* Cheap natural gas is a competitive threat for coal, however. In 2016, gas eclipsed coal as the No. 1 fuel for America's electric power plants.

Scott Horsley
NPR White House Correspondent

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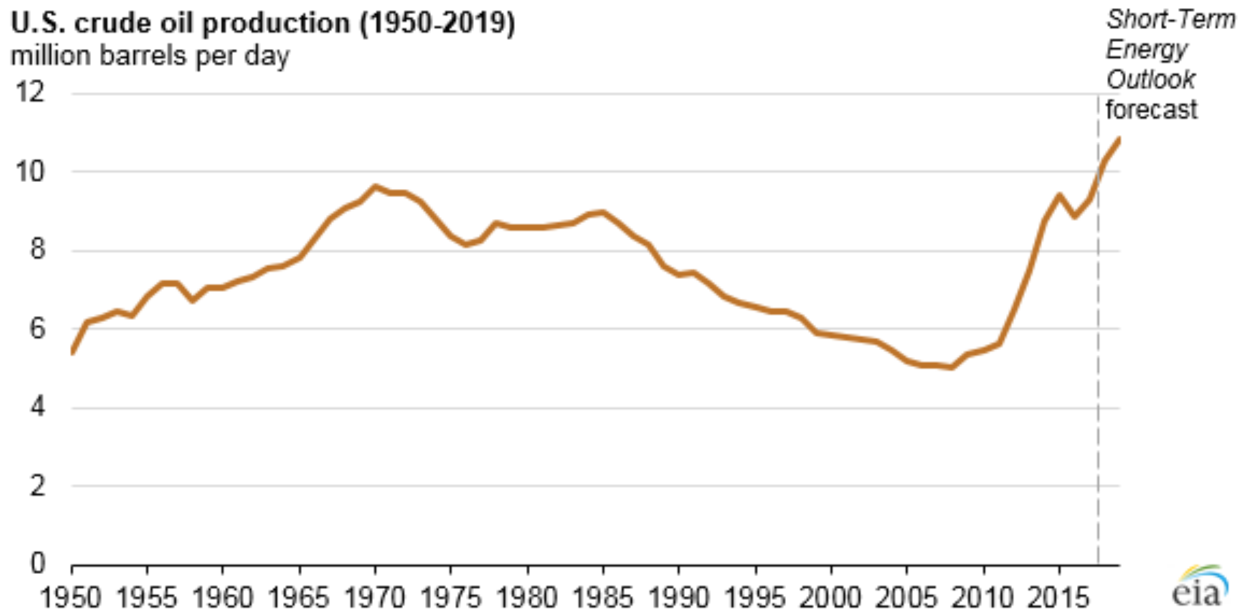
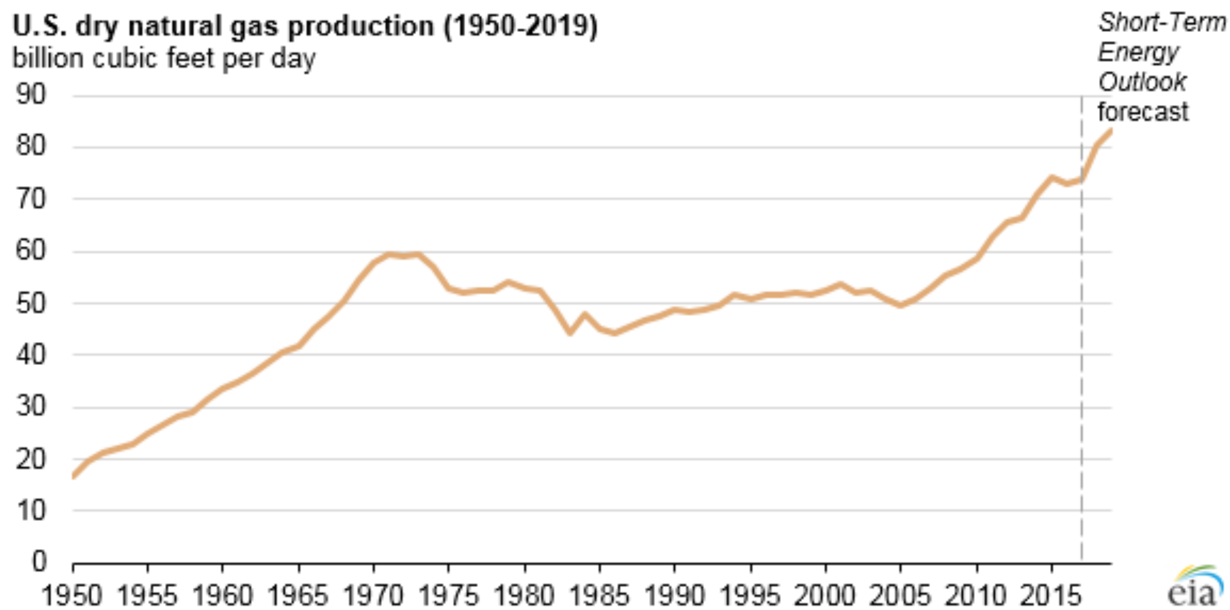
U.S. crude oil production (1950-2019)
million barrels per day



Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, *Monthly Energy Review* and *Short-Term Energy Outlook*

U.S. dry natural gas production (1950-2019)
billion cubic feet per day



Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, *Monthly Energy Review* and *Short-Term Energy Outlook*