

# Oil and War: The basics



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## 1. The United States has an oil dependence problem.

- The U.S. consumes 26% of the world's oil, but possesses only 2% of the world's oil reserves.<sup>1</sup>
- The U.S. imports 9.8 million barrels a day, more than half of its 19.5 million barrel a day consumption.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. That oil dependence problem is going to keep getting worse.

- Instead of laying out a strategy for renewables and fuel efficiency, Vice President Cheney's national energy plan, drafted in secret with big oil companies, outlines a plan for the U.S. to depend on imports for 17 million barrels a day, or two-thirds of daily oil consumption, by 2020.<sup>3</sup>

## 3. Iraq has oil. Lots of oil. Some leaders think the U.S. should control that oil.

- Iraq's known reserves hold 112.5 billion barrels, 11% of the world's oil. Experts predict Iraq's reserves may be twice that.<sup>4</sup>
- The Cheney energy plan recommends "that the President make energy security a priority of our trade and foreign policy."<sup>5</sup>
- General Anthony Zinni has said that the U.S. "must have free access to the region's resources."<sup>6</sup>



## 4. "Regime change" could mean big bucks for U.S. oil and oil-service companies.

- U.S. oil companies have been banned from Iraqi oil fields for more than a decade while French, Russian, and Chinese oil companies continue to drill profitably.<sup>7</sup> They would like nothing more than to control Iraq's rich oil fields.
- The *Wall Street Journal* reports that "Executives of U.S. oil companies are conferring with officials from the White House, the Department of Defense and the State Department to figure out how best to jump-start Iraq's oil industry following a war."<sup>8</sup>
- Nelson Mandela has said that the drive to war in Iraq "is clearly a decision that is motivated by George W. Bush's desire to please the arms and oil industries of the United States."<sup>9</sup>

## 5. War can't solve oil dependence problems. Fuel efficiency and renewables can.

- Dependence on oil is bad for national security. It means that we must use our military forces to secure oil in farflung places abroad instead of protecting Americans at home. It means that we must interfere heavily in other nations, breeding dangerous anti-Americanism. It means drilling in Alaska and using a pipeline that could be vulnerable to terrorists.
- Increasing our fuel efficiency to 55 miles per gallon using hybrid and other technologies could save five million barrels a day, almost twice the oil the U.S. imports from the Persian Gulf, according to the Union of Concerned Scientists.<sup>10</sup>
- Kicking our dependence on oil would make us a more peaceful and safer nation. It would also make us a more environmentally sustainable nation.

**Ask yourself this: if Iraq's main export were broccoli, would we be going to war?**

**Is war for oil really worth it? Visit <http://www.targetoil.com> for more information**



Notes: 1. Union of Concerned Scientists, "Dangerous Addiction: The risks of dependence on foreign oil"; 2. U.S. Energy Information Administration, "Energy Data Rankings"; 3. U.S. Department of Energy, "National Energy Policy"; 4. U.S. Energy Information Administration, "World Crude Oil and Natural Gas Reserves"; 5. U.S. Department of Energy, "National Energy Policy"; 6. Congressional testimony, April 13, 1999; 7. "Oiling the Wheels of War," by Michael T. Klare, *The Nation*, October 7, 2002; 8. "US Oil Wants to Work in Iraq," by Thaddeus Herrick, *Wall Street Journal*, January 16, 2003; 9. "Nelson Mandela: The United States of America is a Threat to World Peace," *Newsweek*, September 10, 2002; Union of Concerned Scientists, "Dangerous Addiction: The risks of dependence on foreign oil"