

Bush Oil Policy in Iraq War

Conservative Magazine Blasts Bush Administration

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Theme: [Oil and Energy](#), [US NATO War](#)
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Just in case you think all conservatives are cheering on President Bush for persisting in his war against Iraq, I call to your attention the March 10th cover story of *"The American Conservative"* magazine, titled, "Oil For War." Accompanying the drawing of a fuel hose pumping gasoline *into* the desert sands, which is what the Pentagon is doing at a fabulous clip, there are two telling subheads: "Fuel Imported Into Iraq—3 million gallons/day" and "Cost to the U.S.—\$929 million/week."

That's right. The article by author Robert Bryce, a.k.a managing editor of *"Energy Tribune"* magazine, leaves little doubt that he views the Bush regime's oil policy as bankrupt. Just look at his conclusion: "As the U.S. military pursues its occupation of Iraq—with the fuel costs approaching \$1 billion per week—it's obvious that the U.S. needs to rethink the assumption that secure energy sources depend on militarism."

Bryce observes sagely, "The emerging theme of the 21st-century energy business is the increasing power of markets. The U.S. can either adapt or continue hurtling down the road to bankruptcy." (Sounds like a pro-business, anti-military posture to me. Maybe conservatives and liberals do share common ground.)

Going back to a few months before the invasion, Bryce noted Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld declared the looming war had "nothing to do with oil, literally nothing to do with oil." This assertion (okay, so it's a lie, not an assertion) was undercut, Bryce pointed out, as "The first objectives of the invading forces included the capture of key Iraqi oil terminals and oilfields." Sadly, Marine Lt. Therral Childers, the first American combat casualty, was killed fighting to gain control of, yup, the Rumaylah oil field.

And when U.S. troops reached Baghdad on April 8, Bryce wrote, "the National Library of Iraq, the National Archives, and the National Museum of Antiquities were all looted and in some cases burned" while "the oil ministry building was barely damaged" as a detachment of G.I.'s plus assault vehicles stood guard to preserve this vital edifice and its records.

The American Conservative scrolls forward to an October, 2006, press conference at which Bush declared the U.S. could not "tolerate a new terrorist state in the heart of the Middle East with large oil reserves that could be used to fund its radical ambitions or used to inflict economic damage on the West." (Not a war for oil?)

Today, Bryce writes, the average G.I. in Iraq consumes 20.5 gallons of fuel per day, so that in order to secure the third-richest oil country on the planet (9.5% of the world total), the Pentagon is chugalugging over 3 million gallons per day in Iraq, "and nearly every drop of that fuel is imported." About 5,500 tanker trucks are involved in this lovely, oil-burning up exercise so that "the U.S. is spending \$923 million per week on fuel-related logistics in order to keep 157,000 G.I.s in Iraq." Lovely, that is, for the "defense" contractors.

Little, if any, of Iraq's own oil is being used by the U.S. military. Instead, it's being trucked in from an oil complex south of Kuwait City and from Turkey, which, in turn, gets some of its oil from as far away as Greece. Those who have followed this oil importation scandal closely

will recall that Halliburton, Vice President Dick Cheney's former place of employment, got a controversial, multi-billion no-bid contract to truck in the oil. Cheney, of course, boosted the Iraq invasion from the get-go. As Paul Buchheit, founder of Global Initiative Chicago, writes in *"American Wars: Illusions and Realities"*(Clarity), Halliburton "is the most notorious war profiteer, with over half the Pentagon contracts for war services. Halliburton's revenue in 2006 was \$22.5 billion, three times its revenue from 2004."

Recall it was Cheney's goodbuddy, war architect Paul Wolfowitz, who told a Congressional panel in March, 2003, Iraq's oil revenues would fetch up to \$100 billion over the next several years and predicted "we are dealing with a country that can really finance its own reconstruction and relatively soon." As historian James Carroll noted in *"House of War"*(Houghton Mifflin)Wolfowitz as far back as 1992 wrote a "Defense Planning Guidance" document that "imagined war against, yes, Iraq. And the justification for such a war was blatantly identified: the protection of U.S. access to 'the region's oil.'"

American motorists are painfully aware the price of a gallon of gas since Bush took office has doubled and that the oil majors are reaping record profits, in Exxon's case the largest profits of any corporation in history. What many do not know, as Greg Palast pointed out in *"Armed Madhouse"*(Plume), is the oil firms hold title to vast underground deposits that are super gushers as prices rise at the pump. The value of Exxon's reserves, Palast says, have increased by \$666-billion since the war began, and other oil outfits have enjoyed like windfalls. During World War II, a conflict that began when America was attacked and not the other way around, defense contractors were thrilled to get an eight percent profit. Today, Big Oil is reaping record billions while motorists and home owners struggle to find a way to pay for groceries and heating fuel. And, of course, every time President Bush threatens Iran, he further destabilizes the oil market, pushing prices up higher, *"The New Yorker"* magazine has reported.

Getting back to *The American Conservative* article, Bryce writes, "In today's multi-polar world, economic interests, not military force, predominate." He quotes G.I. Wilson, a recently retired Marine Corps colonel back from Iraq and terrorism authority as stating: "It used to be that the side with the most guns would win." Today, the side "with the most guns goes bankrupt."

Hey, isn't that *us*? Quick, somebody, warn that man in the White House!

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