

Is the Anglo-American empire losing the “Great Energy Game”?

China's oil interests in Central Asia

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Global Research, January 08, 2007

[Online Journal](#) 8 January 2007

Region: [Russia and FSU](#)

Theme: [Oil and Energy](#)

In a second successful bid to tap Kazakhstan's oil, China's state owned CITIC Group has won approval from the Kazakhstani government to buy the Karazhambas oil field (owned by Nations Energy of Canada) located near Aqtua on the Caspian Sea.

[China slakes oil thirst: Kazakhstan to sell field for nearly \\$2 billion](#) (San Francisco Chronicle)

The first success came in 2005, when Kazakhstan's president, Nursultan Nazarbayev, approved of the sale of Petrokazakhstan to [China National Petroleum \(CNOOC\)](#) in 2005.

As revealed in the *San Francisco Chronicle* report, both China-Kazakhstan deals have come at a steep price (that China is willing to pay), and over intense and continuous opposition from Washington and western oil consortiums. China has agreed to build and finance the proposed 2,000-mile pipeline from Kazakhstan to eastern Chinese border.

While China and Russia continue to “win” in Central Asia, the West continues to lose political and economic clout everywhere.

The George W. Bush administration's destructive “war on terrorism,” begun with 9/11, has failed to accomplish its central purpose, which was to occupy Central Asia and the Middle East, control the energy flows and strategic corridors across both regions, while blocking competitive cooperative agreements and energy-related ventures by Russia and China.

The increasing Chinese stake in Kazakhstan, and the successful Russian influence over Central Asian energy flows, is a particularly bitter defeat for a Bush administration now staring back at years of disastrous and blood-soaked failure.

Access to Kazakh riches was a priority in the 1990s, exemplified by the deals (legitimate as well as illegitimate) hatched with the Nazarbayev regime, which included bribery by the likes of BP Amoco, ExxonMobil and Dick Cheney (who was both the CEO of Halliburton, and a sitting member of the Kazakh state oil advisory board).

[“The Elephant in the Living Room”](#) (From *The Wilderness*, Mike Ruppert)

[“Cheney's Energy Policy Task Force, and ExxonMobil”](#) (Peter Dale Scott)

[“Will ExxonMobil be indicted for payments in Kazakhstan?”](#) (Peter Dale Scott)

[“Big oil, the United States, and corruption in Kazakhstan”](#) (Larry Chin)

The lure of the energy riches of Kazakhstan, and [Central Asian pipelines](#), were the focus of many years of corruption and set-up leading up to 9/11, and a central goal of 9/11 itself. Beyond small victories such as the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline project out of Azerbaijan, the Bush administration has little to show for their unprecedented destruction and tens of thousands of dead.

The war has done nothing but create chaos and innumerable no-win scenarios, and spawn even more intense anti-Western opposition. Seen through the eyes of the West’s own elites, it has been very bad for business. China and Russia have been among the main beneficiaries of the Bush disaster, almost by default.

China knows, as does the Anglo-American axis, that energy is the key to its own national security, and China’s power elite is willing to resort to dramatic measures for every drop of oil and every watt of electricity. This includes paying a high price for Central Asian/Caspian riches that have turned out, so far, to be a disappointing [non-bonanza](#), devoting massive resources to building a Kazakhstan-China pipeline that was considered unfeasible, when proposed years ago, and the unprecedented damming of the Three Gorges region (one of the largest construction projects in history).

The Chinese economic juggernaut continues to roll. For years, Western elites and corporations have been content to ride along with globalization’s greatest (and perhaps final) feeding frenzy, while simultaneously supporting Washington’s Cold War containment policies against China, and the long-term infiltration of China’s economy (through the World Trade Organization). The US-China relationship is bound to become increasingly antagonistic, as the energy supply warfare intensifies, and US political losses mount.

The new Congress in Washington, led by the neoliberal Democrats, will attempt to restore America’s image with calls for multinational cooperation (collusion) and diplomacy (the UN and NATO), and retrieve the clout perceived to have been gained by 9/11 (a window in which the rest of the world, in shock, would willingly accept Western hegemony), but “squandered” with Bush-Cheney’s brutal conquest of Iraq.

But the self-destruction of the American empire is irreparable. Peak Oil and Gas has arrived in earnest, with no rational contingency plan from the top Washington, Wall Street elites, or major oil producers, and continuing denials of the problem from America’s corporate media ([as well as China](#)’s).

Worse, the Bush-Cheney administration is set to escalate the violence. The administration is fortifying its inner circle by promoting John Negroponte and Zalmay Khalilzad (and bringing in stalwarts such as Ted Olson) to even higher positions, “lawyering up” to fight investigations of its activities, treating the new Congress, and the world, with even more militant contempt, and preparing new military attacks for its final two years.

Where does the Empire go next, to get what it must have?

The Middle East is increasingly inhospitable to Western interests, a [literal hell](#) that gets worse with every passing day. Oil is not flowing out of a gutted Iraq. Afghanistan, also spinning out of US control, has not helped the US energy supply problem (however, Afghanistan’s heroin industry, which has [blossomed under US occupation](#) — the resulting

heroin [flooding the US](#) — has been a boon to the world narco-economy and Wall Street). Saudi Arabia, still the final prize, suffers from its own supply questions, simmering unrest, and problems regarding Saudi connections to the Bush regime. Securing more Latin American energy has proved to be a difficult, particularly as savvy political players, such as Hugo Chavez, successfully identify and block new attempts at incursion. Iran is still being set up for an attack.

Resource warfare is intensifying across Africa ([Somalia](#), Nigeria, [Sudan](#), [Darfur](#), etc.), evidenced by increasing US military-intelligence operations, the escalation of unrest, war and covert operations, and “al-Qaeda” presence (the telltale sign of active US covert operations).

In every target area, the Anglo-American empire enjoys no unfair advantage or overarching clout over its geopolitical rivals, and even under the rosier of scenarios, will find it impossible to control conditions on the ground.

Quagmire by quagmire, the American Empire is quickly running out of options, even bad ones.

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