

# MILITARIZING OUR ENERGY POLICY: OIL, PRESIDENTIAL DOCTRINES, AND WAR

**Pre 1945** – U.S. significantly depletes its domestic oil reserves by providing 85% of all oil needed by Allied forces during WWII. U.S. commits to an “aggressive foreign oil policy aimed at assuring access to petroleum overseas.”

**1947 – Truman Doctrine.** U.S. offers assistance to any nation threatened by Soviet domination. U.S. concerned by Soviet interest and influence in Middle East and possible threats to Saudi oil fields.

**1969 – Nixon Doctrine.** In light of Vietnam War resistance to direct military involvement, U.S. instead furnishes economic and military assistance to allies who in turn protect U.S. interests in the Persian Gulf. U.S. allies with Iranian Shah.

**1983** – CENTCOM military operations established to protect Persian Gulf oil flow to U.S. and allies.

**1990** – Iraq invades Kuwait. Bush announces use of military force to protect U.S. oil interests and the fate of neighboring Saudi Arabia. U.S. commits to removing forces from Saudi Arabia when requested or when conflict has resolved.

**May 2001** – Cheney’s National Energy Policy lists Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Algeria, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates as countries the U.S. can support in increasing oil imports from the Persian Gulf. The omission of Iran and Iraq from this list is noteworthy. In September 2001, Rumsfeld’s Defense Report highlights the Middle East as crucial to U.S. energy needs.

**October 2008** – The National Priorities Project reveals the cost of defending the U.S. oil supply for one year: approx. \$100 billion. For more information, see [http://www.nationalpriorities.org/Energy\\_Security](http://www.nationalpriorities.org/Energy_Security).

**1940**  
WWII  
1939-1945

**1950**  
Korean War  
1950-1953

**1960**  
Vietnam War  
1959-1975

**1970**

**1980**  
USSR in  
Afghanistan  
1979-1989;  
Iran-Iraq War  
1980-1988

**1990**  
Gulf War  
1990-1991

**2000**  
US-Afghanistan  
2001-  
US-Iraq  
2003-

**1945** – FDR forges tacit alliance with Saudi King Abdul Aziz: U.S. will protect their independence in exchange for U.S. dominance of Saudi oil fields. Saudi Arabia purported to have among the world’s largest oil reserves.

**1957 – Eisenhower Doctrine.** U.S. combat forces authorized to defend Middle East against Soviet aggression. U.S. builds up Saudi military and royal paramilitary forces.

**1979** – U.S. ally, Shah of Iran, is overthrown. Incoming Khomeini regime unfriendly to U.S. interests.

**1980 – Carter Doctrine.** With no regional allies strong enough to protect U.S. oil interest in the Persian Gulf and with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Carter declares access to Gulf oil a “vital” national interest. The U.S. is prepared to protect this interest with “any means necessary, including military force.”

**1991** – U.S. fails to pull all forces from Saudi Arabia despite earlier promise. Outraged by continued U.S. occupation of Islamic holy lands, Osama bin Laden declares U.S. an enemy and subsequently attacks military bases and embassies.

**September 11, 2001** – Terrorist attacks on World Trade Center and Pentagon.

**2008** – AFRICOM military operations established. African oil becoming increasingly important for U.S. energy needs.

