

## America's crude tactics for Iraq war

Level 2 | Intermediate

### 1 Pre-reading: Key Words

Fill the gaps using these words

repressive refinery fuss supplies oilfield  
infrastructure global harmful destabilise greenhouse gas

- 1• Something which includes the whole world can be described as \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2• The opposite of harmless is \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3• A \_\_\_\_\_ government rules by force and violence.
- 4• Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) is a \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5• The telephone and transport systems of a country are examples of its \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6• \_\_\_\_\_ is a lot of unnecessary worry or excitement about something.
- 7• A war in Iraq might \_\_\_\_\_ the whole of the Middle East.
- 8• An \_\_\_\_\_ is an area where there is a lot of oil.
- 9• A \_\_\_\_\_ is a place where things are removed from oil to make it pure.
- 10• \_\_\_\_\_ are amounts or quantities of something that are available to use.

### 2 Pre-reading: Read the text and find the answers.

Find:

- 1• The percentage of the world's oil reserves in Iraq.
- 2• An example of a small repressive country.
- 3• An example of a small repressive country with weapons of mass destruction.
- 4• A country where the oil refineries were closed down recently.
- 5• A place where US companies are currently looking for oil.
- 6• The percentage of the world's oil reserves in Saudi Arabia.

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Larry Elliot

According to the American government, the current military situation in the Persian Gulf has nothing to do with oil. It is true that Iraq has 11% of the world's oil reserves, but any future attack will be carried out in order to make the world a safer place and not to provide more oil for thirsty car-drivers in the USA.

So, let's be clear. This. Has. Nothing. To. Do. With. Oil. Do you understand? Of course you don't. You would have to be a very simple person to believe that the American government would be making all this fuss if Iraq didn't have something the US needs. There are a lot of other small, repressive countries - Zimbabwe, for example - where the governments are being allowed to quietly kill and torture their people. There are a lot of small, repressive countries with weapons of mass destruction - North Korea, for example - which are possibly much more dangerous for international security. But Iraq is the only small, repressive country with weapons of mass destruction that also has a lot of oil.

The world's biggest economy is beginning to understand the reality of the oil situation. The US does not produce enough oil to meet its own

needs and the recent problems in Venezuela, when the oil refineries there were closed down, showed what could happen if the US's oil imports were cut off. The discovery of oil reached its peak in the mid 1960s but the world continues to use oil faster than it is being found. Bush and his team know all this. They have worked for the oil industry, they been given money by the oil industry, and have listened carefully to what the oil industry would like. With increasing demand for oil and falling supplies of oil, Bush has three choices. First, he could listen to those oil companies who are sure there is still plenty of oil to be found if the oil companies are given the money to find it. This is why Bush has angered environmental groups in the US by allowing companies to look for oil in Alaska.

The second option is for the US to get a bigger share of existing oil supplies. One of the main aims of the American campaign against Iraq is to get control of the Iraqi oilfields. When Saddam has gone, the big oil companies will be called in to modernise the country's oil infrastructure. This might be a good thing. A modernisation that increased

the supply of oil through more efficient production would lead to lower global prices and stronger economic growth. It might also be less harmful to the environment.

On the other hand, an American occupation of Iraq might destabilise the whole Middle East. This would put pressure on the rulers of pro-Western states like Saudi Arabia. It is possible that America could occupy Iraq and gain control of 11% of the world's oil supplies and at the same time a new anti-American government in Saudi Arabia would control 25% of the world's oil.

The third choice for the US and the rest of the world is to limit demand rather than to increase the supply of oil. Most governments, including the American government, understand that greenhouse gases (those produced by burning oil) must be reduced. It would be very expensive to introduce a big change in energy policy and to reduce the amount of oil the world needs. But the problem of decreasing oil supplies will continue for a long time after the death of Saddam Hussein.

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### 3 Comprehension Check

Match the beginnings and the endings of the sentences:

According to the article:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1• The US needs more oil because ...             | a• ... to reduce the need for oil.                          |
| 2• The US is planning to attack Iraq because ... | b• ... it has weapons of mass destruction and a lot of oil. |
| 3• Bush's first choice is ...                    | c• ... it does not produce enough oil to meet its needs.    |
| 4• Bush's second choice is ...                   | d• ... to get a bigger share of existing oil supplies.      |
| 5• Bush's third choice is ...                    | e• ... to find more oil.                                    |

### 4 Vocabulary: Word Building

Complete the table

VERB	NOUN
1• to attack	_____
2• to destroy	_____
3• to modernise	_____
4• to occupy	_____
5• to reduce	_____
6• to introduce	_____
7• to produce	_____
8• to supply	_____
9• to grow	_____
10• to choose	_____

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### 5 Collocations: Prepositions

Fill the gaps using an appropriate preposition.

- 1• This has nothing to do \_\_\_\_\_ oil.
- 2• Iraq has a lot \_\_\_\_\_ oil.
- 3• Bush and his team have worked \_\_\_\_\_ the oil industry.
- 4• They have listened carefully \_\_\_\_\_ what the oil industry would like.
- 5• There is an increasing demand \_\_\_\_\_ oil.
- 6• US companies are looking \_\_\_\_\_ oil in Alaska.
- 7• The Americans want to get control \_\_\_\_\_ Iraqi oilfields.
- 8• More efficient production would lead \_\_\_\_\_ lower prices.
- 9• \_\_\_\_\_ the other hand, this might destabilise the whole Middle East.
- 10• It would also put pressure \_\_\_\_\_ the rulers of countries like Saudi Arabia.

### 6 Discussion Points

Are the Americans right to attack Iraq for its oil?  
What are the alternatives to using oil to provide fuel and energy?

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### Key

#### 1 Key Vocabulary

- 1 global
- 2 harmful
- 3 repressive
- 4 greenhouse gas
- 5 infrastructure
- 6 fuss
- 7 destabilize
- 8 oilfield
- 9 refinery
- 10 supplies

#### 2 Find the answer

- 1 11%
- 2 Zimbabwe
- 3 North Korea
- 4 Venezuela
- 5 Alaska
- 6 25%

#### 3 Comprehension Check

1c; 2b; 3e; 4d; 5a

#### 4 Word Building

- 1 attack
- 2 destruction
- 3 modernization
- 4 occupation
- 5 reduction
- 6 introduction
- 7 production
- 8 supply
- 9 growth
- 10 choice

#### 5 Prepositions

- 1 with
- 2 of
- 3 for
- 4 to
- 5 for
- 6 for
- 7 of
- 8 to
- 9 on
- 10 on