

MEDIA EDUCATION FOUNDATION

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Blood and Oil

Featuring Michael Klare

Transcript

INTRODUCTION

BILL O'REILLY: The far left would have you believe the Bush administration lied to get us into war, for oil...

SEAN HANNITY: You heard here on this program tonight that we went into this effort to control the oil, which is not true...

THOMAS FRIEDMAN: We did it not for oil. We did it out of trying to give these people a chance.

HELEN THOMAS: Oil. Is it about oil?

ARI FLEISCHER: This is not about that. This is about saving lives by protecting the American people.

DONALD RUMSFELD: It does not relate to oil. I mean it just plain doesn't.

[TEXT ON SCREEN] U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT MEMO, AUGUST 1945:
The oil resources [of the Middle East] constitute a stupendous source of strategic power, and one of the greatest material prizes in world history.

JOHN F. KENNEDY: In a little more than two decades, we've gone from a position of energy independence, to one in which almost half the oil we use comes from foreign countries.

TITLE SCREEN – BLOOD AND OIL

MONTAGE: Oil costs today at 47 dollars and 86 cents a barrel... crude oil hit another record-high today close to 55 dollars a barrel...just over 75 dollars...the law of supply and demand being what it is... a tight supply... our appetite for gasoline has only increased... rolling blackouts... the far Left would have you believe the Bush administration lied to get us into war.

ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE: This is the American dream of freedom on wheels.

MICHAEL KLARE: For the United States, oil was once the source of power. More than any other vital material, oil was central to the American way of life.

ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE: What it comes down to is that the oil industry has to please Mrs. Martin and millions just like her. Already today, she has used some 87 petroleum products, including the plastic bacon wrapper, the wax of a milk carton...

KLARE: Since the onset of the petroleum age in 1860, the United States has been the leading consumer of petroleum and we remain so today. We have about five percent of the world's population, we consume one fourth of the world's petroleum. About twenty million barrels per day out of total world consumption of eighty million barrels. But until you really investigate this, you don't appreciate just how deeply our economy is dependent on oil. Ninety-eight percent of our transportation energy comes from petroleum products. We couldn't move goods around our country without oil. Our entire agricultural industry is highly mechanized and dependent on petroleum - for herbicides and pesticides and fertilizers. And then, if you think of the million products that are made from petro-chemicals – all the plastics, pharmaceuticals, and cosmetics, and paints, and lubricants – all of these industries rest on an abundant supply of petroleum. That's why, when petroleum becomes scarce or the price of petroleum rises, the entire economy is affected.

NEWS ANCHOR: Investors worried about high prices and low supplies keep pushing prices up even higher...

KLARE: The extraordinary thing about our addiction to oil is this addiction was formed when we were self-sufficient in the production of petroleum. Well into the 1940s, we produced all of the oil we consumed. Even in the 1950s and the 1960s, we produced eighty or ninety percent of our oil consumption. It's only been in the past decade or so that we've become significantly dependent on imported oil. We now depend on imported oil for about two-thirds of our total demand, and it's expected to increase radically over the next 25 years but our domestic production is plummeting.

[TEXT ON SCREEN] U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY: By 2025, the U.S. will depend on foreign countries for 70% of its oil.

KLARE: And so, since we became reliant on imported oil, it has become a source of weakness for the United States.

A DECLARATION OF DEPENDENCE

PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH: America is addicted to oil, which is often imported from unstable parts of the world.

KLARE: Yes, we hear that America is addicted to oil. The President has said it.

G. W. BUSH: I know it came as a shock to some. To hear a Texan stand up there in front of the country and say “We got a real problem. America is addicted to oil.” But I meant it, cause it’s a true fact and we’ve got to do something about it now.

KLARE: But it was in 1945 that the President of the United States at that time, Franklin Roosevelt, first grasped the nature of this crisis.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT: We must be the great arsenal of democracy. For us, this is an emergency as serious as war itself.

KLARE: Franklin Roosevelt first looked ahead and saw that the United States eventually would become dependent, and he was the one who pioneered a foreign policy based on oil.

ROOSEVELT: I should like to see this nation geared up to the ability to turn out at least fifty thousand planes a year.

KLARE: Roosevelt understood that oil was a decisive factor in America’s victory in World War II.

(Explosions)

KLARE: We triumphed over the Germans and Japanese, true, by military prowess and the leadership of our generals, but also because the US had a superior industrial capacity. We were able to produce so many thousands of tanks and planes. And we had the petroleum to fuel those weapons, whereas the Germans and Japanese did not.

[TEXT ON SCREEN]: The United States supplied 6 out of the 7 billion barrels of oil consumed by the allied forces during WWII.

KLARE: But at the same time, Roosevelt understood that the United States would no longer be able to supply its forces with oil in the future because we were using up so much of our domestic reserves.

[TEXT ON SCREEN]: The U.S. consumed more than 1/3 of its total oil reserves during WWII.

KLARE: And this is what worried Franklin Roosevelt most in the final months of World War II. And so, he set out to find a foreign source of oil to make up for the decline in American reserves.

ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE: One of the most colorful visits to the Presidential cruiser was that of the ruler of Saudi Arabia, King Ibn Saud. The sixty-five year old monarch leaves his country for the first time to attend this meeting.

KLARE: You have to picture this extraordinary moment at the end of World War II. The fateful meeting on February 14, 1945 between the President of the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the King of Saudi Arabia, Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud. On one hand, the leader of the free world, a passionate advocate of democracy and freedom, sitting next to an absolute monarch, who was accompanied by slaves and astrologers and Bedouin bodyguards. No records were kept of this meeting. But all historians and American policy-makers agree that the basis of the discussion was that henceforth the United States would provide the Royal family with protection in return for an exclusive American right to develop Saudi Arabia's oil. And every American President since then has reaffirmed the U.S. alliance with Saudi Arabia.

LYNDON B JOHNSON: Our relations with Saudi Arabia have been long, close and cordial. As the venerable Arabic saying has it, "Our house is your house".

RONALD REAGAN: There is an Arabic saying, "The sands are blowing". And I submit to you, King Fahd, that if the sands of time give us any hint of the future, it is that in the days ahead, the friendship between the Saudi Arabian and the American people will be a strong and vital force in the world.

KLARE: So even when American presidents speak about our deep commitment to the spread of democracy worldwide and we rail against other countries – Iran or Sudan or Venezuela – for their lack of democracy, we conspicuously ignore the total lack of democracy in Saudi Arabia, year after year after year.

NEWS ANCHOR: There are questions about how good a friend Saudi Arabia has really been to the U.S.

NEWS REPORTER MONTAGE: Experts and U.S. officials give the Saudis low marks, charging that they continue to export the ideology of terror.

Human rights groups and Saudi dissidents also complain about the pace of reforms promised by King Abdullah. And say that Saudi Arabia remains amongst

the worst countries in the Middle East when it comes to religious freedom and rights of women.

Saudi women still can't drive, can't vote and can't work or get medical treatment without approval of a male relative.

KLARE: We have historically chosen to overlook the fact that the Royal family is a feudal monarchy that grants no rights whatsoever to its population and we have created a very elaborate military establishment in Saudi Arabia, providing some of the most sophisticated arms in the world, providing military training to the Kingdom, military advisors of stationing troops in the Kingdom. The modern Saudi military really is a creation of the United States. We have had military missions there for decades. And there can be no explanation for that other than the fact that the Royal family guarantees our access to Saudi Arabian oil. In fact, when the United States sent troops to Saudi Arabia in 1990 after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, then Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney told the Senate Arms Services Committee that the reason the United States was coming to the rescue of Saudi Arabia was because of the agreement between Roosevelt and Abdul Aziz.

DICK CHENEY: Our strategic interests in the Persian Gulf region, I think, are well-known but bear repeating today... We do, of course, have historic ties, especially to the Saudis, but other governments in the region, that hark back with respect to Saudi Arabia to 1945, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt met with King Abd al-Aziz on the USS Quincy towards the end of World War II and affirmed at that time that the United States had a lasting and continuing interest in the security of the Kingdom.

KLARE: And so, this special relationship with Saudi Arabia has shaped American foreign policy since Roosevelt's day. We can see this in some of the most important presidential doctrines of the past 60 years.

BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY

ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE: Alarmed at the rapid expansion of totalitarian interests in Europe and Asia, President Truman addresses a joint session of Congress on our changing foreign policy. A grave gathering hears his forthright message.

HARRY TRUMAN: The gravity of the situation, which confronts the world today, necessitates my appearance before a Joint Session of the Congress.

KLARE: With the Truman Doctrine, for example, what we understand is that the Soviet Union was posing a threat to Greece and Turkey – that’s the official explanation. And that something had to be done to stop this.

TRUMAN: The very existence of the Greek state is today threatened by the terrorist activities of several thousand armed men led by communists.

KLARE: But Truman was really worried about Soviet efforts to dominate the Persian Gulf area and to control the flow of oil from the Persian Gulf. In fact, declassified documents show that the Truman administration was so concerned about a possible Soviet takeover of the Persian Gulf that they contrived plans to plug up Saudi Arabian oil fields in case the Soviets came in and took over the area, and we were forced to abandon the region. But he was fearful that the American public wasn’t ready for military intervention in the area so he decided to couch this in terms of a vast Soviet conspiracy against free peoples around the world.

TRUMAN: If we falter in our leadership, we may endanger the peace of the world. And we shall surely endanger the welfare of this nation.

KLARE: And that became known as the Truman Doctrine. But if you look closely at the diplomatic history, you’ll find that what was really on the minds of American policy makers at the time was the possibility of a threat to Saudi Arabia and the oil flow from the Middle East.

And the same geopolitical concern over Soviet domination of the Persian Gulf and its oil shaped the Eisenhower Doctrine.

EISENHOWER: The Middle East has abruptly reached a new and critical stage in its long and important history. If the nations of that area were to lose their independence, if they were dominated by alien forces hostile to freedom, that would be both a tragedy for the area and for many other free nations whose economic life would be subject to near strangulation.

KLARE: The oil flow from the Persian Gulf is so essential to American security and wellbeing that we’ll do anything necessary to protect it.

EISENHOWER: If power-hungry communists should either falsely or correctly estimate that the Middle East is inadequately defended, they might be tempted to use open measures of armed attack. If so, that would start a chain of circumstances, which would almost surely involve the United States in great military action.

KLARE: These sorts of brazen announcements that the United States would use force to protect its interests continued right through to the Vietnam War.

(Explosions)

RICHARD NIXON: We Americans are a 'do-it-yourself' people. We're an impatient people. Instead of teaching someone else to do a job, we like to do it ourselves. And this trait has been carried over into our foreign policy.

KLARE: But the Vietnam War made the American public very reluctant to send American troops into troubled Third World countries. And Nixon was forced to change course.

NIXON: When you are trying to assist another nation defend its freedom, U.S. policy should be to help them fight the war. But not to fight the war for them.

KLARE: So we ended up with the Nixon Doctrine, which called for the United States to rely on proxy forces to defend American interests in these troubled Third-world areas.

NEWS REPORTER: For the Nixons, Tehran was different. The welcome was warm, full of pomp and enthusiasm.

KLARE: In the Persian Gulf, the Nixon Doctrine was focused specifically on Iran where the United States embraced the autocratic Shah of Iran to be our surrogate or proxy. And it was the Shah who was chosen to protect U.S. interest in the Gulf area.

NIXON: And now we come again to Tehran. And we see the progress that has occurred in those 19 years, under the enlightened leadership of Your Majesty.

KLARE: And we provided billions and billions of dollars to the Shah and to Iranian forces to protect the oil. And this surrogate strategy worked fine, until the Shah of Iran was overthrown in 1979.

(Chanting)

NEWS ANCHOR: Suddenly Iran is no longer one of this country's strongest and most dependable allies in the strategic Persian Gulf area.

KLARE: The autocratic Shah was replaced by the Ayatollah Khomeini who adopted an anti-American stance. This produced tremendous panic in Washington because there were no proxies left to defend the oil.

NEWS REPORTER: Mr. President, the Persian Gulf is one of the great mineral treasures of the whole world. Most of Japan's oil and an awful lot of Europe's oil passes through there. The Shah really was the policeman of the Gulf and kept the oil flowing. Now the new civilian government says its not going to be the policeman of the Gulf anymore. What's going to happen to this terribly, terribly important part of the world if there is no policeman?

KLARE: And so it was decided that the United States would have to take up this role itself and not rely any longer on surrogates to protect American interests in the Persian Gulf region.

JIMMY CARTER: Let our position be absolutely clear. An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America. (Applause) And such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary including military force.

KLARE: This was a radical step because for the first time it said explicitly that the protection of Middle Eastern Oil was a vital national security interest of the United States. Now the problem is at the time, the United States didn't have any forces that were specifically earmarked for operations in the Persian Gulf area. And so Carter created the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force to act as an interim force.

CARTER: In the past, we have not had an adequate military presence in that region. Now we have two major carrier task forces. We have access to facilities in five different areas of that region and we've made it clear, that working with our allies and others, that we are prepared to address any foreseeable eventuality, which might interrupt commerce with that crucial area of the world. This I believe has ensured that our interests will be protected in the Persian Gulf region as we've done in the Middle East and throughout the world.

KLARE: And this became the nucleus for the Central Command.

CENTCOM

REAGAN: I am not frightened by what lies ahead. And I don't believe the American people are frightened by what lies ahead.

KLARE: President Carter lost the election in 1980 and Ronald Reagan stepped in. And despite all of his criticism of Carter, Reagan took the initiatives of the Carter Doctrine and beefed them up even further.

REAGAN: Deterrence means simply this: making sure any adversary who thinks about attacking the United States or our allies, or our vital interests, concludes

that the risks to him outweigh any potential gains. Once he understands that, he won't attack.

KLARE: And among his first actions was to take the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force and make it even bigger, and it was he who converted it into the Central Command in 1983. The Central Command is a very recent addition to the roster of America's unified commands. We've long had a European Command, a Pacific Command, a Southern Command in Latin America, but there was none in the Middle East, and this is where most of the world's remaining oil is located. And so President Reagan created the Central Command to exercise control over American forces in that Middle part of the world.

REAGAN: As long as Saudi Arabia and the OPEC nations there in the East, and Saudi Arabia is the most important, provide the bulk of the energy that is needed to turn the wheels of industry in the Western world, there is no way that we can stand by and see that taken over by anyone who would shut off that oil.

KLARE: The original function of the Central Command, very clearly elaborated by the Reagan administration was primarily to protect the flow of oil from the Persian Gulf to the United States and markets around the world. That's always been its primary focus. This is the period of the Iran-Iraq war, which broke out in 1980 and intensified in 1986 and 1987 when the Iranians started attacking Kuwaiti oil tankers in the Persian Gulf. What Reagan did is say, 'Okay, let us stick American flags on the stern of Kuwaiti oil tankers, which means it's legitimate to protect them by the American Navy.' And that's exactly what happened.

NEWS REPORTER: After months of policy confusion and political debate, the U.S. Navy is poised today just outside the Persian Gulf to escort the first two Kuwaiti tankers past Iranian guns. The five warships to be used in the first leg have a mix of almost every weapon in the Navy's arsenal.

KLARE: It was a clear use of military force, explicitly to protect the flow of oil. There was no other motive for this. There was no freedom at stake, no democracy at stake, no terrorism at stake. It was simply to keep the oil lanes open.

REAGAN: We remain deeply committed to supporting the self-defense of our friends in the Gulf, and to ensuring the free flow of oil through the Strait of Hormuz.

KLARE: This has always been the primary function of the Central Command - to protect the flow of oil from the Persian Gulf to the United States and its allies.

NEWS ANCHOR: We have some drama unfolding in the Middle East to report to you tonight. Diplomats in Kuwait are now saying that Iraqi troops have now crossed the border into Kuwait.

KLARE: When Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait, the first President Bush gave the Carter Doctrine its most extreme, most substantial implementation.

GEORGE H.W. BUSH: And it is about our own national security interests and ensuring the peace and stability of the entire world.

KLARE: When President Bush met with his advisors in Camp David on August 3rd and 4th the fear was that Saddam Hussein was within striking range of Saudi Arabia's oil fields. And this created a panic situation in Washington.

H.W. BUSH: This will not stand. This will not stand, this aggression against Kuwait.

KLARE: And President Bush concluded at that moment that we had to act militarily.

H.W. BUSH: We have sent forces to defend Saudi Arabia. The integrity of Saudi Arabia, its freedom, are very, very important to the United States.

KLARE: What's so interesting here is how clear it was, in August and September 1990, that oil was the trigger for U.S. intervention in the First Persian Gulf War.

H.W. BUSH: Our jobs, our way of life, our own freedom, and the freedom of friendly countries around the world would all suffer if control of the world's great oil reserves fell into the hands of that one man, Saddam Hussein.

KLARE: But this aroused protests around the country, and polling data show that the public was firmly opposed to a war in the Middle East for oil. So over the course of the next few months, Bush changed his tack.

H.W. BUSH: Some people never get the word- the fight isn't about oil.

KLARE: And he stopped talking about oil.

H.W. BUSH: I'm deeply concerned about Saddam's efforts to acquire nuclear weapons. Saddam Hussein systematically raped, pillaged and plundered a tiny nation.

KLARE: And oil simply disappeared from the discourse.

H.W. BUSH: And that's what we're dealing with. We're dealing with Hitler revisited. A totalitarianism and a brutality that is naked and unprecedented.

KLARE: And increasingly elaborate reasons were given for going to war.

H.W. BUSH: They had kids in incubators and they were thrown out of their incubators so that Kuwait could be systematically dismantled.

KLARE: And only then did Congress vote in support of that first war, Operation Desert Storm.

FUELING TERROR

NEWS REPORTER: Any new developments, Mr. President?

H.W. BUSH: No, I had a long talk with King Fahd just now.

KLARE: While all this rhetoric was being played out on the surface, behind the scenes, the logistics of the war were being planned. Bush made the decision to send American troops to Saudi Arabia to defend the Kingdom. But King Fahd was deeply worried about the presence of so many American troops on Saudi soil. This after all is the Islamic holy land, and there is a great deal of discomfort with the presence of so many infidels as they're called, non-believers, in the Islamic holy land. So Bush sent his Secretary of Defense, Dick Cheney, to Saudi Arabia to persuade Fahd to allow the American troops in because that was the only practical means of driving the Iraqis out of Kuwait, and Bush understood that. Cheney brought with him satellite photos, which have never been made public, allegedly showing that Iraqi forces were on the border of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia poised for attack in order to persuade Fahd that he was in danger and that American troops had to be sent immediately. But Fahd had another offer of support from an unusual source: The volunteers who went from Saudi Arabia to Afghanistan in the 1980s to fight the Soviet Union with American support. Their leader was a man named Osama bin Laden, a Saudi citizen with close ties to the Royal family, who had been working with the CIA in Afghanistan to drive out the Soviet Union. And he was trying to persuade the Royal family to allow his forces to defend the Kingdom against Saddam Hussein, and not rely on the Americans. It took Cheney a great deal of persuading to get Fahd to agree to allow the American troops in.

CHENEY: I made to the King, at the direction of the President, and of meeting with him in Jeddah on August 6th included specifically that we were prepared to deploy a significant force to the Kingdom, sufficient force to deter further aggression. Secondly, that we would stay as long as we were needed. And third,

that we would leave when we were no longer needed or when we are asked to leave. And those I think were important considerations in the King's mind.

KLARE: And it was this last condition that American troops leave as soon as the fighting in Kuwait was over that convinced King Fahd to accept the American offer and to reject the offer from Osama bin Laden. But when President Bush announced the victory in Kuwait, at the end of February 1991, the decision had been made already not to invade Iraq but to contain it from outside.

H.W. BUSH: None of us want to move forces into Baghdad or into... Frankly, we don't want to have any more fighting.

KLARE: But the Americans would have to remain in Saudi Arabia to enforce the containment strategy, and so Fahd was faced with the permanent presence of American troops. And it was this repudiation of the U.S. promise that turned Osama bin Laden from an ally of the United States into a sworn enemy of this country.

NEWS MONTAGE: The bodies of five Americans killed in a bomb attack in Saudi Arabia... Car bombs exploded today outside a United States training facility in Riyadh... A truck bomb exploded at the gates to a U.S. Air Force facility in Saudi Arabia this evening. There are deaths and there are scores of casualties... Early this morning, two U.S. embassies in East Africa were the target of bombs. One ripped through the embassy in Dar-es-Salaam, the capital of Tanzania at about 3:40AM Eastern Time. Almost simultaneously, 450 miles to the north, a blast tore through the U.S. embassy in Nairobi... The USS Cole was attacked in Yemen. Al-Qaeda militants rammed an explosives-laden boat into the ship killing 17 sailors...

GEORGE W. BUSH: Today we have had a national tragedy. Two airplanes have crashed into the World Trade Center in an apparent terrorist attack on our country.

KLARE: Obviously, 9/11 had many causes and many roots. But I think if you try to understand what exactly led us to that terrible tragedy, you can't avoid the conclusion that oil had a big role to play.

GEORGE W. BUSH: As Commander-in-Chief of the United States military, and as a person working to secure this country, I take the words of the enemy very seriously. And so should the American people.

KLARE: President Bush and his advisors like Karl Rove, tell us repeatedly that we should take seriously the words of Osama bin Laden.

KARL ROVE: I recommend the book to you. If you've got 17 bucks, I recommend you go to the bookstore, go to Barnes and Nobles or Borders. And pick up a book called 'Messages to the World.' It's the collected writings of Osama bin Laden. He's a pretty smart guy and sophisticated. He wants to dominate the world, and the way to do it is one simple three-letter word: oil. And he talks about using oil as a weapon to damage Western economies and to dominate the world politically and economically.

KLARE: If you read Osama bin Laden's words, his fatwas, you cannot escape seeing oil as lying at the root of Osama bin Laden's war against the United States. And so in our alliance with the Royal family, which is rooted in our addiction to Saudi Arabian oil, we have in fact provided the fuel for Middle Eastern terrorism.

MAXIMUM EXTRACTION

KLARE: And this is my greatest complaint with the Bush administration. President Bush and Vice President Cheney had a remarkable opportunity in 2001. They could have chosen that moment. It was the perfect moment to say, 'We are at a turning point, we're in a new century. This is the time to plan ahead for the end of oil abundance.'

GEORGE W. BUSH: The future is achievable, if we make the right choices now. But if we fail to act, this great country could face a darker future. A future that is unfortunately being previewed in rising prices at the gas pump and rolling blackouts in the great state of California.

KLARE: Because 9/11 was such a earth-shattering event, we tend to forget what Bush focused on in those early months of his administration.

GEORGE W. BUSH: What people need to hear, loud and clear, is that we're running out of energy in America. One thing is for certain: there are no short-term fixes. The reality is that the nation has got a real problem when it comes to energy.

KLARE: He came into office at a time when there was another energy crisis.

NEWS ANCHOR: California is at ground zero of the energy crunch, suffering through rolling blackouts and soaring electricity rates.

COMMENTATOR: Whoa, I thought that was only supposed to happen in California.

NEWS ANCHOR: Big League baseball was stopped.

COMMENTATOR: We had a kind of a rolling blackout here.

NEWS ANCHOR: Power Company pulled the plug again on some businesses there. And in Iowa and Illinois.

KLARE: There were blackouts and long gas lines in many parts of the United States and high prices.

SPENCER ABRAHAM: America faces a major energy supply crisis over the next two decades. The failure to beat this challenge will threaten our nations economic prosperity, will compromise our national security, and literally alter the way we live our lives.

KLARE: And so, immediately, in one of his first acts, President Bush created the National Energy Policy Development Group, the NEPDG.

NEWS ANCHOR: President Bush made a big new push today for his energy agenda with Vice President Cheney as his point man.

KLARE: They began work almost immediately after taking office, issuing their final report, the National Energy Policy on May 17, 2001.

GEORGE W. BUSH: I am really pleased with the work that the Vice President and his folks did. This is a very optimistic look at America.

KLARE: This is the major energy blueprint that continues to govern American energy policy today. So you would think that the administration would want to let the American public know who met with them when they framed it and what went on in those meetings.

NEWS ANCHOR: Vice President Dick Cheney and Congressional investigators may be on track for a head-on collision in court. Tomorrow is the deadline for deciding whether to take legal action to try to force Cheney to grant access to records of Cheney's Energy Task Force.

KLARE: Dick Cheney has refused to make public the minutes of those meetings. All we know is who he met with: the top executives of America's leading energy companies, led by Chevron, ExxonMobil, and what was then the Enron Corporation before it went bankrupt. We also know that he refused to meet with any environmentalists.

GEORGE W. BUSH: We're going to make decisions based upon sound science. Not some environmental fad.

KLARE: Now, among the recommendations of the report, as is well known, is that the United States should allow drilling in Alaska at the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, or ANWR. And this has produced a great deal of controversy in this country.

SPENCER ABRAHAM: Our plan confronts our increasing dependency on foreign sources of energy by calling for, and yes, it's true, I admit it, calling for increased domestic production of energy.

KLARE: If you listen to the administration's rhetoric, you get the impression that there's enough oil in Alaska to supply all of America's needs.

NEWS REPORTER: ANWR could yield more than a million barrels a day. Nearly as much as we import from Saudi Arabia and Venezuela.

SEN. TOM DELAY: If President Clinton had signed drilling in ANWR back in the '90s, we would be enjoying a million barrels a day more today.

FRED BARNES: If it costs a lot to fill up the tanks, and they don't like that, well, demand that the supply increase. Demand that oil be drilled offshore, in ANWR and so on. And they aren't. Otherwise, shut up.

KLARE: But the report makes clear that there's not nearly enough oil in the United States to satisfy our ever-growing needs, and therefore it's very clear from reading through it that we have to rely increasingly on the Middle East and other foreign areas to satisfy rising U.S. requirements.

[TEXT ON SCREEN]: The best estimates are that ANWR is capable of producing 876,000 barrels of oil a day. Even at this peak rate, drilling in ANWR would decrease our reliance on foreign oil by just three percent.

KLARE: And so what this debate did was to distract attention from other aspects of the energy plan, which called for increased dependence on imported oil. Essentially the report calls on the Persian Gulf producers to double their output over the next 25 years and calls on the U.S. government to take the necessary steps to make sure that this will occur. And at the very same time that the Cheney Commission drew this conclusion, the Department of Defense was conducting a review of American military policy headed by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. That study, going on simultaneously, concluded that the United States had to beef up its capacity for what's called 'power projection', an ability to project military power into the rest of the world, and they focus on

exactly the same areas of the world that the Cheney Report talks about. So there was a meshing of the energy requirements of the Cheney plan and the defense thinking of Donald Rumsfeld. And this leads to what I call the 'strategy of maximum extraction.' The strategy of maximum extraction requires that there be governments in place in the Persian Gulf countries that will ensure that their countries are pumping oil to supply American needs over the next 25 years.

GEORGE W. BUSH: Well, Saudi Arabia made it clear, and has made it clear publicly, that they will not use oil as a weapon.

KLARE: Now, you have such regimes in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. Two countries did not have such regimes – Iraq up until 2003, and Iran today. From Washington's point of view, these are spoiler countries.

CONDOLEEZZA RICE: There are places that have oil that are using oil as a weapon, or using oil as a carrot for certain policies and that is troubling.

KLARE: They're standing in the way of the strategy of maximum extraction. And so for the strategy to succeed, ultimately you're going to be thinking about replacing those governments with governments that are more inclined to meet Washington's objectives.

ARI FLEISCHER: Regime change is welcome in whatever form that it takes.

REPORTER: So the answer is 'Yes'?

FLEISCHER: Thank you. Regime change is welcome in whatever form that it takes.

KLARE: Saddam Hussein was standing in the way of the strategy of maximum extraction. And as we have seen, that has always set off alarm bells in Washington.

CHENEY: Should all his ambitions be realized, the implications would be enormous for the Middle East, for the United States, and for the peace of the world.

KLARE: This is what I think Dick Cheney was saying in his speech of August 26, 2002, before the Veterans of Foreign War, a speech which highlights the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction.

CHENEY: Armed with an arsenal of these weapons of terror and seated atop 10 percent of the world's oil reserves, Saddam Hussein could then be expected to

seek domination of the entire Middle East, take control of a great portion of the world's energy supplies, directly threaten America's friends throughout the region.

KLARE: In fact, Dick Cheney used almost exactly the same language in September 1990 before the Senate Armed Services Committee.

CHENEY: Iraq controlled 10 percent of the world's reserves prior to the invasion of Kuwait and once Saddam Hussein took Kuwait he doubled that to approximately 20 percent of the world's known oil reserves. He was clearly in a position to be able to dictate the future of worldwide energy policy and that gave him a stranglehold on our economy and on that of most of the other nations of the world as well.

KLARE: And so when I say that the war in Iraq was about oil, I say this in geopolitical terms, in line with the Carter Doctrine, the Eisenhower Doctrine and the Truman Doctrine going back to FDR. What matters to the United States and to all of these presidential doctrines is control over the flow of Persian Gulf oil.

JAMES BAKER: Look, I've been a member of four administrations. In every one of those administrations, we had as a written national security policy, that we would go to war to protect the energy reserves of the Persian Gulf, if necessary.

JOURNALIST: The administration went to war saying it was all about weapons of mass destruction.

ALAN GREENSPAN: I believe that they believe that. I'm not saying that they believed it was about oil. I'm saying it is about oil and that I believe it was necessary to get Saddam out of there.

KLARE: And yet this administration, like others before it, has consistently denied that oil is the reason for going to war.

HELEN THOMAS: Oil. Is it about oil?

ARI FLEISCHER: Helen, as I've told you many times. If this had anything to do with oil, the position of the United States would be to lift the sanctions so that oil could flow. This is not about that, this is about....

PAUL WOLFOWITZ: The issue is not about Iraqi oil. If the United States had wanted access to Iraqi oil, we could have dropped our whole policy 12 years ago and lifted the sanctions...

DONALD RUMSFELD: There is a lot of speculation in the world, and I suppose it's understandable, suggesting that the interest of the United States and the coalition countries that are concerned about Iraq, relates to oil. It does not relate to oil. I mean it just plain doesn't.

KLARE: Our whole foreign policy and military policy establishment has been governed for 50 years by our commitment to defend the Middle Eastern oil states like Saudi Arabia and Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates. So much of our foreign policy has been tied up in this, and we have a vast military establishment that is totally committed to the protection of these regimes.

SOLDIER: We were told to secure the southern Ramalia oil fields up to the canal.

SOLDIER: We just pulled out here yesterday, just to come out and help protect the oil line.

REPORTER: In a tank?

SOLDIER: In a tank.

KLARE: Our military policy and our energy policy have become intertwined. They have become one and the same. And this, I think, is immoral and unpatriotic.

A HIGHER PURPOSE

KLARE: The American people truly believe that the use of military force can only be for a higher purpose.

NEWS ANCHOR: Polling shows four different polls just over the last two or three days, two-thirds of Americans support the idea of moving into Iraq militarily. Why? Keeping weapons of mass destruction out of the hands of terrorism and humanitarily removing Iraqis from the dictatorial rule of Saddam Hussein. Those top two are the ones Americans say are most legitimate reasons for going to war.

KLARE: I think that Americans have demonstrated again and again that it is unconscionable to sacrifice the lives of American soldiers for oil.

NEWS ANCHOR: Oil? Protecting oil supplies, discouraging attacks in the U.S., keeping the price of oil low in America – these are reasons that Americans say would not be legitimate.

KLARE: In our country, war is a very serious business. We're a democracy, and we take war very seriously. We believe that war is something that should be a matter of extreme duress; if the country comes under attack or in extreme cases of genocide or egregious human rights. High principle is at stake, not economic interests. We will never be free from the dangers of endless wars in the Middle East until we disassemble this large military apparatus that has been created for the protection of Middle Eastern oil. In fact, the trend over the past 10 or 15 years has been in the opposite direction. We are spreading the Carter doctrine from the Persian Gulf area to the Caspian Sea, and now to Africa. And this is clearly reflected in the creation of the African Command.

[TEXT ON SCREEN]: On February 6, 2007 the Bush Administration announced plans to create a new military command in Africa.

TONY SNOW: Africa Command will enhance our efforts to bring peace and security to the people of Africa and to promote our common goals of development, health, education, democracy, and economic growth in Africa.

KLARE: This is the first new regional military command to be created since the Central Command was created in 1980.

ROBERT GATES: This Command will enable us to have a more effective and integrated approach than the current arrangement of dividing Africa between Central Command and European Command, an outdated arrangement left over from the Cold War.

KLARE: And in my view, this is directly related to the growing importance of African oil to the United States.

[TEXT ON SCREEN] CHENEY ENERGY COMMISSION: "Africa is expected to be one of the fastest-growing sources of oil and gas for the American market."

KLARE: And I fear in the future this could lead to the same kind of dangers that we face now in the Persian Gulf in Africa. And what makes this so much more dangerous is that we're not the only great power that is militarizing our foreign energy policy. China is following along the same path as we are.

NEWS REPORTER: China's economy is growing so fast it builds a city the size of Philadelphia every month. Oil is the rocket fuel for all of this growth, and China made it clear today that it will outspend the competition to secure it.

KLARE: Like us, they are supplying arms and military equipment and training to regimes that they rely on for oil.

NEWS REPORTER: China's increasing wealth is also buying high tech missiles and jet fighters capable of going one on one with the best America can deploy. This new China, some warn, is a whole new threat.

KLARE: Russia has also become a player in all of this. In its effort to become a superpower all over again, Russia seeks to dominate the flow of oil from the Caspian Sea area and Central Asia, the flow of oil and natural gas. And so it is competing with the United States for control and dominance in these areas. That's the kind of dangerous situation that we see developing in the global pursuit of scarce energy supplies. And the likelihood is that we will call on more American troops to risk their lives in these wars. And if we continue to rely on military force to solve our resource needs, we're in for a very bloody and dangerous and painful century indeed.

[TEXT ON SCREEN]: According to the National Defense Council Foundation, a conservative think tank, the United States spent 137 billion dollars on oil-related defense measures in 2007. Roughly 70 times the amount the U.S. spent developing alternative sources of energy during the same period.

[END]