

The important middle east oil politics essay



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Write a brief history of the role of petroleum in the modern Middle East. How has the world's demand for oil shaped the development of the region? How will future demands for this limited resource create a new international political and economic order according to Michael Klare?

Historically, the Middle East was the strategically important region in terms of the world politics and economy. The Middle East hold the position of the bridge between East and West but steadily the Middle East had started to personify East for westerners. At the same time, the domination of western countries in the world economy and politics oppressed the development of the Middle East. By the early 20th century, the Middle East had started to lose its significance in international relations becoming the subject to the struggle between superpowers, who, though started to lose interest to the Middle East because of its economic backwardness. However, oil has made the region strategically important for the world's superpowers in the 20th century, whereas the significance of the Middle East today had increased even more because oil is the major fossil fuel along with natural gas and the Middle East is one of the major suppliers of oil in the international market.

In actuality, oil is strategically important but oil is scarce resource. The shortage of oil in the world market can lead to disastrous effects and consistent changes in the world politics and economy, to the extent that the shortage of oil is likely to put a considerable part of the world's population to the edge next to starving. In this regard, many specialists stress that, in the last year, wheat (think flour) has risen by 130%, rice by 74%, soya by 87%, and corn by 31%, while there are now only eight to 12 weeks of cereal stocks left globally (Klare, 2008). At this point, it is important to place emphasis on <https://assignbuster.com/the-important-middle-east-oil-politics-essay/>

the fact that the major reason for such a skyrocketing rise in the price for major products resulted from the lack of oil and high oil prices in the world market. Specialists argue that too many acres turned over to corn (and sugar cane) for the creation of bio-fuels; a historic drought in Australia and other climate-change-induced extremes of weather – a result of the burning of fossil fuels – that have affected crop yields; and many new middle-class consumers, in China and elsewhere, coming on line, with a growing desire for meat, the production of which is heavily petroleum based (Klare, 2008).

In such a context, the role of the Middle East can hardly be underestimated because the region has become the major supply of the oil in the world market that made other countries depending on the supply of oil from the Middle East. As a result, the Middle East has become the subject for the rivalry between the leading nation, especially the US as the leading world power today, which attempts to take control over the Middle East because the control over the Middle East provides ample opportunities for the control over the supply of oil in the world market.

At this point, it is worth mentioning the fact that Klare warns against the emergence of the new world order that will be characterized by fierce international competition for dwindling stocks of oil, natural gas, coal, and uranium, as well as by a tidal shift in power and wealth from energy-deficit states like China, Japan, and the United States to energy-surplus states like Russia, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela. In the process, the lives of everyone will be affected in one way or another – with poor and middle-class consumers in the energy-deficit states experiencing the harshest effects (Klare, 2008). In this regard, the Middle East becomes more and more

vulnerable to the impact of the West, which attempts to establish control over the region, especially the US. In this regard, the military campaigns, including the War in Iraq, should be viewed as the attempt of the US to take control over the Middle East to control the supply of oil in international markets. At this point, it is important to place emphasis on the fact that the US is dependent on the supply of the oil from the Middle East too. Therefore, the US attempts to establish political and economic control over the Middle East, eliminating “ undemocratic” governments and establishing pro-American ones. In such a way, the Middle East faces the enormous pressure from the part of the US and other countries, which attempt to establish their control over the region for the sake of oil.

In the future, this trend will grow stronger. Therefore, the Middle East is likely to face the growing pressure from the part of other countries. At this point, it is important to place emphasis on the fact that the US is not the only power that is likely to struggle for the control over the Middle East. In this regard, new powers, especially China, are likely to interfere in the struggle for the Middle East to establish their control over the region and, therefore, the oil supply. The emergence of new powers increases the demand on oil.

Therefore, the struggle for the oil and the Middle East will grow stronger and the Middle East had to resist to this impact to preserve its independence and use the richness of its natural resources.

Question 2

Discuss the issues surrounding the resolution of the refugee problem, final borders, and the status of Jerusalem which remained unresolved following

the 1948, 1967, and 1973 wars. How have these three issues continued to prevent the resolution of the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians?

The problem of refugees in the Middle East provoked by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has persisted since the first military conflict in 1948. The population of Palestine has suffered military attacks, which forced many Palestinians to abandon their homes and flee to other regions and countries. In such a situation, neighboring Arab states, such as Syria, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and others, became the target destination for many Palestinians to escape from the war and from what they called the Israeli occupation of Palestine. In such a situation, the status of Jerusalem influenced consistently the flow of refugees from Palestine and their position. To put it more precisely, Jerusalem was one of the major causes of the war between Israel and Palestine and other Arab states. In fact, Jerusalem is a sacred city for both Palestinians and Israeli.

In such a situation, Palestinians and Israeli attempt to establish their control over Jerusalem. In the course of three wars, in 1948, 1967, and 1973, Jerusalem was the subject to the struggle between Israel and Arab states. The main point of this struggle was the establishment of the total control of Israel over Jerusalem, whereas Arabs and Palestinians attempted to preserve their control over the city, which they considered to be theirs historically.

However, the three wars had not solved the problem of the status of Jerusalem and many Palestinians as well as Jews have to flee from Jerusalem and nearby areas to escape being targets in the course of military campaigns, clandestine struggle of Palestinians and other military conflict

which put under a threat their life, health and property. At this point, it is worth mentioning the fact that the unclear and uncertain status of Jerusalem was and still is a good reason for launching military campaigns and conducting the military struggle in the region. The unrest in the region, in its turn, increases the threat to the local population, forcing living in the area to flee from their homes in search of a better and secure life.

In addition, many refugees left their homes in Jerusalem and they counted for the fast return as wars ended. However, the time passed, new wars occurred, but refugees did not get their homes back. Moreover, the local authorities did not provide them with any alternative dwelling, where they could reside and lead a normal life as they led before the wars. In such a situation, refugees become dependent on the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the clear and certain definition of the status of Jerusalem. At this point, it is important to place emphasis on the fact that the three wars in 1948, 1967, and 1973 failed to define the status of Jerusalem and solve the problem of refugees. In stark contrast, the three wars rather aggravated the problem of refugees than solved it. As a result, refugees had lost all the hope to return to their homes, while many refugees had settled in Arab countries but they had never giving up thinking of their return home to Palestine. Moreover, new generations of Palestinians grew in settlements of refugees and from the beginning of their life they learned that Israel was their main enemy, which expelled their parents from their homes.

In such a situation, since the mid-1970s the problem of refugees had started to aggravate because the refugees could not return to their homes but they grew angry with Israel and they were ready to revenge on Israel. As a result,

many terrorist movements emerged, whereas refugees and their children supplied human resources for terrorist organizations. In addition, countries, where refugees settled, did not expect that refugees remained on their territory for such a long time. As a result, they faced a bunch of socioeconomic problems, such as the provision of refugees with health care services, education, the emergence of crime rates, and terrorism. Obviously, the problem of refugees became international but the solution of this problem was and still is unclear because the three wars in 1948, 1967, and 1973 as well as the following wars did not bring considerable changes. In this regard even recent agreements between Israelis and Palestinians failed to bring considerable improvements in the position of refugees and the problem persists till present days.

On the other hand, the refugees, who fled from the country in 1948, 1967, and 1973 still insists on their return to their homes that makes the definition of status of Jerusalem impossible because new generations of people have grown in Jerusalem in the course of four decades. As a result, the problem persists.