

# Usa and middle east relationship concerning oil



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**USA AND MIDDLE EAST RELATIONSHIP CONCERNING OIL** US have the largest economy in the world and have been using oil to fuel its economy. With such a large economy it has been depending on oil. The US has been making various efforts in the world in order to secure oil resource as the wave of energy insecurity bites in the world. It has been depending on oil from the Middle East and this has been one of the things that have been affecting the relationship between the two sides. (Ariel, 2006)

There have been many instances in the history of the two sides when they have been adversely affected by this kind of dependence. For example the 1973 Arab oil embargo dealt a major blow to the US economy and at the same time had devastating effect on the economies of the Middle East. The Arab OPEC countries has been accounting for 26 percent of the US oil imports as per 2004 data which shows a major dependant on the oil from the region.

The growing dependence on the oil from the Gulf region has been linked with some factors like the rising tension between the two regions and to an extent the deteriorating relationship between the two. There have been many instances where under- deals that were made between these two regions in bid help the US secure oil from the region. There have been many other factors that have been compounding the relationship between the two like the increased incidence of terrorism and rise of China which is another center of power in the world and which has been competing with the US in energy resources. (Bard, 2008)

The US foreign policy have been described as favoring some of the countries in the region which are supportive of the American thirst for oil to drive its large economy. In this regard it has been shown that there has been

increased support of Saudi Arabia policies by the US which has been influenced by the petrodollar impact.

It is evident from many scholars that though there have been many efforts to avert the US from reliance on the Arab oil, the efforts have been futile as more oils wells in the US dries up and the economy enlarges. The increased demand for Arab oil has been seen as one for the reason why the US has been using a guerilla tactic of divide and rule. In this regard it has been trying to divide the Arab world and weaken the forces that hold Arab OPEC together so that it can get a chance to exploit the region. This has been expressed by the different foreign policies that the US has been using when dealing with different countries in the region. While it has shown massive support for countries like Saudi Arabia, it has been having a deteriorating relationship with other countries like Iraq, Iran, Palestine, and others which may apparently be realizing the power of petrodollar and using it to curtail the influence on US on their home policy. (Mamoun, 1996)

As we stand now, the US is still reliant on the Arab oil despite the deteriorating relationship between the two sides. The relationship between the two sides has been worsened by the rising anti-Americanism in the region which has been characterized by waves of terrorist attacks on US interests in the world and the September 11 attack. There have been many other factors that have been emanating from oil trade between the two sides that has led to anti Americanism in the region. For example it has been shown that most of the countries which export oil to US like Saudi Arabia have been exchanging the oil for arms and their domestic debt has been rising. This has been seen as an exploitative relationship between the two and a cause of discontent to many of the Middle East dwellers.

It is expected that despite the sore relationship between the two, the US will continue relying on Arab oil for along time. Like it has done in the past to protect Kuwait and other countries in the region, it may have to change its current course of relationship with Arab countries in order to form a cordial relationship between the two.

#### References

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