

What do we do about the u.s. dependence on foreign oil? essay

[Business](#), [Industries](#)



Oil is a form of fuel which is very important in each and every country. However, not many countries in the world produce their own oil and the majority relies on imports from those countries that produce it in large quantities. US happens to fall under the categories of those countries that do not produce enough oil to meet the demand of the same and therefore have to rely on import from oil producing countries. Despite the fact that United States is the third largest oil producer, most of the oil the country uses is imported. For instance, in the year 2008, United States imported about 57% of petroleum while it produced only 43%. The country also consumes oil at a very high rate for it is estimated that in the year 2007, it consumed about 23% of all the petroleum that was produced in the whole world. Although the oil dependence might decline, the country has always been depending on oil from other countries which is quite dangerous (U.

S. Energy Information Administration, 2009: para 1). In such a situation, the biggest problem is what can be done about the country's dependence on foreign oil.

Since oil is a costly product, US spend a lot on the commodity which is actually a threat to the economy. Studies of Weiss & Lefton (2010 Para 2&3) shows that the trade deficit which the United States experienced in the year 2009 was widened by the oil imports since they increased the gap between the imports and the exports. The same studies record that the country spends approximately one million US dollars daily on oil imports instead of investing that money in the country which can be very helpful in boosting the economy of the country. Importing oil is an expensive venture not only to

the United States but to other countries as well. Importing of oil increases insecurity issues because most of the countries where United States imports oil from are already in the States Department of Travel Warning List which includes countries like Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Algeria, Pakistan, and Democratic Republic of Congo among others. It is quite unfortunate that most of the countries which have large oil deposits pose insecurity problems to the country. Continuous dependence of US on oil from these countries that may be termed as enemies continues to put the security of the nation at stake. Moreover, burning of oil worsens the issue of global warming which not only affects US but other countries as well.

The issues associated and related to the United States dependence on foreign oil are serious and that is the sole reason as to why a solution needs to be sought in order to solve the problem. Finding a solution for the United States dependence on foreign oil might not be a very simple task. This is because it is quite true that the country cannot produce enough oil to meet its demand for the same. Using alternative sources may also prove quite difficult because it may lead to emergence of other problems. For instance, use of ethanol may not be very easy because the production of the same is quite costly. Ethanol which can be produced from corn can be used as an alternative source but producing it ultimately costs more than its yield. The studies of Dye (2004, para: 13-16) illustrate that relying on oil from corn can easily devastate food production of the country. This is because the corn that can be enough to produce adequate oil to fuel one automobile for a whole year can be grown on eleven acres of land, according to the same studies.

The same amount of corn can feed seven people for the same period of time. Moreover, if all automobiles in the country are to be fueled using ethanol, that would call for using 97% of the whole country's productive land to grow corn which amounts to a lot of corn (Dye, 2004: para 18-20). Every problem has a solution no matter how complicated the problem is. The problem may be the companies that can invent the solutions are already making enough profit from the oil industry. If the oil companies are already making enough money, it is unlikely that they can take the trouble for looking for other alternative sources of fuel which can be less dangerous and less expensive. In addition, other sources of alternative sources of energy that can be used may actually take a very long time before they are used while the available ones like corn are not cost effective.

Although it is quite difficult for the United States to use alternative sources of energy because the majority may take along time before they are invented, continuing to rely on foreign oil may actually be too dangerous and cost the country a lot. For instance, the security of the country is very important and the situation of importing oil continues to expose United States to more security danger. Even though there some US allies that produce oil like Canada and Mexico, they are not very reliable because for instance the oil from Canada is very dirty and oil from Mexico is expected to dry up in the next few decades. Therefore, if US will continue to import oil, it can only continue to import the oil from its possible adversaries and the dangers of the same cannot be over emphasized (Weiss & Lefton, 2010: para 9 &10).

The climate change, which is a global security threat as well, is increased by America's continued use of crude oil. Burning oil from the unstable countries contributes greatly to green house gas emissions for the same releases a lot of carbon dioxide gas in to the atmosphere. The same study indicate that climate change can lead to terrorist actions, unstable governments which can eventually displace a lot of people due to increased incidence of diseases like malaria, natural disasters, food and water shortages among others.

Such disasters may end up costing US a lot of money due to increased immigration rates in to the country. Moreover, disasters caused by the global warming such as the Hurricane Katrina and the Tsunami require the developed countries like United States to take care of the poor countries by providing aids (Weiss & Lefton, 2010: para 8-10). However, even if finding a solution for US dependence on foreign oil faces some challenges and obstacles, failure to do so is very expensive. The alternative sources of fuel may not be cost effective but still a solution is necessary. This is because as highlighted earlier, continuous dependence is not only a security and environmental threat but also very expensive. It would therefore be of great importance if the country concentrated on how it can reduce the dependency by devoting its efforts to finding and inventing alternative sources.