

Guest Editorial

United States Energy Dependency— and TERRORISM

“Cheap Middle East oil turns out not to be so cheap, after all.”

Dale W. Steffes, P.E.

The terrorist acts of September 11 in New York and Washington were a major setback for the American way of life.

The immediate response of the President and the Congress was that the culprits would be apprehended and retaliation would take place. The terrorist acts were essentially acts of war against the U.S.

BUT—the United States will not be able to respond effectively—because our way of life is dependent on energy, in particular foreign oil. We are overly dependent on foreign oil sources (58%), as are the other industrialized nations (Europe and Japan.) There is a positive connection between foreign oil purchases and terrorism.

It is common knowledge that some of the oil exporting nations use their oil revenues primarily for arms and terrorism. So in effect, the industrialized world is actually indirectly subsidizing terrorist activities with their oil purchases.

Until the United States can get its oil dependency down, we can expect terrorism to continue. **The recent Bush/Cheney energy proposals will not reduce U.S. oil dependency.** At best, they will only slow its increase.

The United States should review its international relations with all nations to stop subsidizing terrorist nations. The United States is forming an alliance with cooperating, non-terrorist countries. Any country that does not fully participate should be considered on the terrorist's side.

As President Bush said, to the nation—and the world:

*“A country is either against terrorism,
or it supports terrorism.”*

A SIMPLE, NON-VIOLENT PLAN OF ACTION

President Bush, whether he realizes it or not, is dividing the world into “technically” civilized vs. “technically” non-civilized parts.

Alliance members, those who are cooperating against terrorism, would have access to United States trade, travel, finances, education, defense intelligence, defense technology, etc. Alliance members must also be dedicated to the social, political, and economic improvement of their people. Member countries must be open to terrorist inspections by an Alliance team.

Non-Alliance members would be denied all of the above benefits—from ALL Alliance members.

The war on terrorism should be an economic, social, and political war, more so than a military war. A military war cannot be won against an invisible enemy.

NEEDED: A National Energy Stability Policy

My company, Planning and Forecasting Consultants, has been publicly advocating a National Energy Stability Policy for 15 years, since the Reagan Administration, that would limit United States energy imports to a specific percentage. The President would set that percentage.

This proposal has been offered to the last four Administrations: Reagan, Bush, Clinton, and Bush. The United States oil dependency has been rising steadily during all four of these Administrations.

All have said their Administration was for less energy dependency.

Yet dependency continued to increase along with our payments for imported oil.

And, tragically, some of the money we pay for imported oil is being used to fund the very terrorists who threaten us!

The National Energy Stability Policy was presented in full detail in the Fall 1993 issue of Strategic Planning for Energy and the Environment (Vol. 13, No. 2).

I have advocated this energy policy to four Administrations—to no avail, and at great personal cost. Maybe someone from this Administration will finally grasp the obvious and vital fact that we must—

Reduce Our Dependence on Foreign Oil!

*Dale W. Steffes, P.E.
Planning & Forecasting Consultants*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dale Steffes is president and founder of Planning & Forecasting Consultants. He has advised energy companies and energy users for 27 years about the energy industry. He can be e-mailed at dalestef@flash.net. He is available at (T) 713-467-4732 and (F) 281-497-4128 or P.O. Box 820228, Houston, TX 77282.