



STUDY GUIDE

DID BUSH LIE ABOUT IRAQ?

KEY TERMS:

neo-conservative
CIA

WMD
analysts

intelligence
lies

NOTE-TAKING COLUMN: Complete this section during the video. Include definitions and key terms.

What should happen to the false narrative that President Bush lied to go to war in Iraq?

What is the enduring myth about policy makers, in terms of their relationship with intelligence analysts during the Bush administration?

If America had wanted Iraq's oil, what would America have done to get it instead of going to war?

CUE COLUMN: Complete this section after the video.

What do many Americans mistakenly believe about the Iraq war, in terms of the Bush administration?

What factors contributed to the Bush administration getting the wrong picture about what was happening in Iraq?

DISCUSSION & REVIEW QUESTIONS:

- At the beginning of the video, Miss Miller shares with us that, “Senior White House fanatics spoon fed reporters like me cherry-picked intelligence about Iraq’s alleged Weapons of Mass Destruction so that America could invade Iraq and seize its oil. While Bush officials doubted that Saddam Hussein had WMD that he might give to terrorists to use against Americans at home and abroad, they used the non-existent threat as a pretext to lie us into war. None of this is true, but many Americans continue to believe it.” Considering that there continues to be zero evidence for such an absurd notion that America was going to invade Iraq to get its oil, why do you think that many people so easily believed such an idea? Why do you think that these same Americans are usually so quick to ‘make America the bad guy’ and to assume that the intentions of the U.S. are malevolent?
- After admitting that she, other reporters, intelligence analysts, and Bush administration officials got it wrong about the WMDs in Iraq, Miss Miller makes a significant distinction when pointing out that, “...relying on the mistakes of others... and making errors of judgment are not the same as lying.” What are some important differences between lying and errors of judgment, especially in terms of intention? Why do you think so many Bush-haters, most of whom did not have access to his heart and mind at the time and only have evidence and reason to go by, are so confident that he was lying instead of being reasonably certain that he was unintentionally misled? Why do you think that so-called ‘progressives’ tend to be close-minded and narrow thinking in general and on topics such as this one?
- Miss Miller further shares with us that, “There’s an enduring myth that policy makers pressured intelligence analysts into altering their estimates to suit the Bush administration’s push to war. Yet, several thorough, bipartisan inquiries found no evidence of such pressure. What they reveal, instead, is that bad intelligence led to bad policy decisions.” What else can a president do but rely on the intelligence he or she is given? Why do you think the myth that policy makers pressured intelligence analysts to change the data to suit some sort of Bush agenda continues to be perpetuated? Who do you think is guilty of perpetuating such myths?
- Later, Miss Miller explains that, “Even if the intelligence community overestimated Saddam’s WMD capability, it didn’t create it out of thin air. Saddam had used chemical weapons on his own people, killing thousands. He had invaded his neighbors, repeatedly. Remnants of old chemical weapon stockpiles, in fact, eventually were found.” Do you think the fact that evidence of WMDs eventually were found vindicates that Bush administration and all of the analysts providing intelligence at the time? Why or why not? Why do you think that so many critics of the Iraq war blatantly dismiss the critical difference between the condition of no WMDs existing and being used at all versus WMDs existing and being used, just in lower quantities than Saddam Hussein wanted the world to believe?
- Miss Miller ends the video by pointing out that, “President’s Bush decision to go to war was based on the information that he and his team relied on- information that was collected by the world’s top agents and analyzed by the world’s top analysts, including the intelligence agencies of France, Germany and Russia... [who] all agreed on one thing – Saddam had and was continuing to develop WMD. Our intelligence professionals, and those of major European countries, overestimated Saddam Hussein’s capabilities. Mistakes like that filter through the system – from the White House to Congress to journalists to the public... And

those mistakes impact policy. But here's the key point to remember—they were mistakes... not lies." What's the difference between whether the decision to go to war was based on faulty intelligence or an intentional agenda? How much do you think that progressive's vitriolic hatred of President Bush and their characterization of him as evil clouds their conclusions on this issue and any others related to the Bush Administration, despite the evidence?

EXTEND THE LEARNING:

CASE STUDY: The War for Oil Myth

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the article "The War For Oil Myth - America won the war in Iraq, but China got the oil," then answer the questions that follow.

- What is the 'War for Oil' myth? Where does America continue to get most of its oil? Where did most of the Iraqi oil go when the UN Security Council lifted sanctions against Iraq in 2010? Which country is in charge of the supply and production of Iraqi oil, and has been since the end of the war? Which countries got most of the contracts to develop Iraq's oil fields since 2008? Which country awarded those licenses?
- What is 'Bush Derangement Syndrome?' What does the term 'Big Oil' represent to progressives? Instead of oil, what does the author of the article posit America DID get in return for going to war in Iraq? Considering the overwhelming evidence that America did not go to war for oil, why do you think that so many on the left still believe this to be the case?
- What is the difference in cost between simply having purchased the oil outright versus going to war for it, especially in terms of dollar amounts and in human lives? Considering how much worse going to war for the oil would have been for America, why do you think that anyone would think that the Bush Administration and a majority Democrat congress at the time would have purposefully chosen the much worse option? If America went to war in Iraq for oil, why did it support the oil embargo against Iraq?



QUIZ

DID BUSH LIE ABOUT IRAQ?

1. Intelligence agencies of the United States, France, Germany and Russia all agreed on what one thing?
 - a. Saddam was going to step down as the leader of Iraq.
 - b. There is no such thing as evil.
 - c. Saddam did not have WMD.
 - d. Saddam had and was continuing to develop WMD.
 - e. Saddam had but wasn't developing WMD.

2. What is the false narrative regarding President Bush and the Iraq War?
 - a. Bush created a war to get re-elected.
 - b. Bush only wanted to invade Iraq for its olive fields.
 - c. Bush made mistakes that led to bad policy decisions.
 - d. Bush lied the United States into war.

3. The decision to go to war in Iraq received broad support in Congress from both Republicans and Democrats.
 - a. True
 - b. False

4. Over the previous 15 years, how many of the congressional committees routinely briefed on Iraq's WMD assessments expressed concern about bias or error?
 - a. None
 - b. Two
 - c. Three
 - d. Five

5. What made the members of the intelligence community very wary of ever again underestimating a terrorist threat?
 - a. The Boston Marathon Bombings
 - b. 9/11
 - c. World War II
 - d. US Embassy Bombings



QUIZ - ANSWER KEY

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The War For Oil Myth

America won the war in Iraq, but China got the oil.

March 21, 2013

[Arnold Ahlert](#)



Now that the tenth anniversary of Operation Iraqi Freedom has arrived, the American left has taken another opportunity to revive the trope that going to war in that nation "was all about oil." *The Guardian's* Glenn Greenwald is one such revivalist. In a [column](#) on Monday he's magnanimous enough to concede that saying the war in Iraq was fought strictly for oil is an "oversimplification." Yet just as quickly, he can't contain himself. "But the fact that oil is a major factor in every Western military action in the Middle East is so self-evident that it's astonishing that it's even considered debatable, let alone some fringe and edgy idea," he contends. The war for oil mantra may be self-evident to Greenwald and his fellow travelers, but the facts say otherwise.

If oil were a major factor for prosecuting war in Iraq, it stands to reason the United States would be getting substantial amounts of it. It may come as a shock to Greenwald as well as a number of other Americans, but with regard to importing oil, the overwhelming percentage of our imported oil does not come from the Middle East. Canada and Latin America [provide](#) the United States with 34.7 percent of our imported oil. Africa provides another 10.3 percent. The *entire* Persian Gulf, led by Saudi Arabia at 8.1 percent, provides us with a total of 12.9 percent of our imported oil.

As recently as December 2012, Iraq [provided](#) the United States with approximately 14.3 million barrels of oil out of a total of about 298 million barrels imported, or 4.8 percent of our

total imports. And as this [chart](#) indicates, we were importing the highest amount of oil from Iraq *before* we went to war to oust Saddam Hussein.

Furthermore, the United States fully supported the United Nations' [oil embargo](#) against Iraq, imposed when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in 1990, despite the reality that we were far more dependent on imported oil then than we are now. We continued to support it even when it was revealed that the eventual softening of those sanctions, known as the oil for food program, [revealed](#) that Russia, France and a number of other nations were collaborating with Saddam Hussein to violate sanctions in return for billions of dollars of ill-gotten gains. Of the 52 countries named in a report compiled by former Federal Reserve chairman Paul Volcker detailing the scandal, only 28 even wanted the evidence, and the United States led the way in prosecuting those implicated.

In 2010, the UN Security Council [lifted](#) most of the remaining sanctions. The Security Council said it "recognizes that the situation now existing in Iraq is significantly different from that which existed at the time of the adoption of resolution 661" in 1990. In other words, they recognized that Butcher of Baghdad and his brutal dictatorship had been tossed on the ash heap of history, and a relatively stable government had taken its place. The Council also voted to return control of Iraq's oil and natural gas revenue to the government by June 30 of that year. "Iraq is on the cusp of something remarkable--a stable, self-reliant nation," said Vice President Joe Biden, who chaired the meeting.

It is precisely that self-reliant nation--not an oil-rich client state of America--that Iraq is becoming.

If America went to war in Iraq mostly for oil, it would stand to reason that we would maintain a stranglehold on both their supply and production. Ten years after the war began, China has [emerged](#) as one of the main beneficiaries of a relatively stable Iraqi government and a country that, after two decades, is poised to become the world's [third largest](#) oil exporter. Trade between Iraq and China has doubled almost 34 times, soaring from \$517 million in 2002, to \$17.5 billion by the end of last year. If current trends continue, it will replace the U.S. as Iraq's largest trading partner.

Furthermore, the first postwar oil license awarded by the Iraqi government in 2008 was to the state-run China National Petroleum Corp. (CNPC), in the form of a \$3.5 billion development contract for Iraqi oil field Al-Ahdab. In December 2009, in the second round of bids to develop Iraq's vast untapped oil reserves (following a June auction allowing foreign companies the chance to increase production at existing fields), China and Russia [emerged](#) with the lion's share of the contracts. At the time, Iraqi Oil Minister Hussain al-Shahristani envisioned a bright future. "Our principal objective is to increase our oil production from 2.4 million barrels per day to more than four million in the next five years," he said.

The country is well on its way. Last December, Iraq reached a milestone, [breaking](#) the 3 million barrel threshold for the first time since 1990, reaching 3.4 million barrels a day. Moreover, unlike Western oil reserves that require sophisticated technology or deep-sea drilling to acquire, Iraq is awash in untapped reserves that can still be reached using conventional, and far cheaper methods of extraction. As a result, the International Energy

Agency (IEA) projects that Iraq will double its current production to 6.1 million barrels a day by 2020, and 8.3 million by 2030, surpassing Russia as the world's second largest oil exporter, with the capability of supplying 45 percent of the increase in global demands for oil by 2035.

And once again, emphasizing the reality of where Iraqi oil will be headed, the IEA projects that *most* of the nation's oil will be exported to China and other Asian markets.

So why does the war for oil meme remain so popular with the Left? The Bush Derangement Syndrome, which also includes an almost pathological hatred for former Vice President Dick Cheney, remains alive and well. So does the Left's irrational antipathy for "Big Oil," a term that represents the archetypical symbol of corporate greed and evil. Throw in the fact that both Bush and Cheney were oilmen, and the trifecta hate-inducing symbolism is almost too much to resist.

Yet for the sake of argument, let's assume every accusation made by the Left regarding a war for oil is true. At the same time, let's introduce one inarguable reality into the mix: right now, fossil fuels such as oil remain the only viable source of energy that will allow Americans to maintain their current standard of living. Maybe someday we'll have the technology to radically alter that reality, but not now.

Let's also introduce another unarguably reality into the mix: the American Left, and its alliance with radical environmentalism, has made it almost impossible for this nation to become energy-independent. In other words, if we did go to war for oil in Iraq, the American Left is as complicit as anyone in engendering that reality--unless there has been some mass movement on their part to completely abandon petroleum-dependent technology, such as cars, computers, or (heaven forbid) iPhones, that has remained under the national radar.

Leftists, despite all their noble intentions, still want to enjoy the highest standard of living in the world, even as they bite the hand of those who endeavor to provide it -- and even as they fight tooth and nail to keep this nation at least partially the mercy of people who hate us.

As for the war in Iraq in general, people can disagree about whether removing Saddam Hussein was the right thing to do. And they can certainly question the necessity of nation-building, "winning hearts and minds," and all the other politically correct nonsense. But it is simply revisionist history to suggest that anti-oil Democratic politicians, many of whom are quoted [here](#), weren't every bit as concerned with the danger the Saddam Hussein regime posed as Republicans were. Authorizing the use of force was a [bipartisan](#) effort based on a shared interpretation of the same security intelligence. To assert that Democrats were hoping for a Big Oil payday is simply absurd.

As for oil, if getting it was one of the primary reasons we liberated Iraq, subsequent developments have demonstrated that effort was a colossal failure. What we *did* get is something too many Americans conveniently forget: in the twelve years we've aggressively pursued terror, nothing remotely approaching a repeat of 9/11 has happened here. That so many Americans have forgotten the genuine context that precipitated war in both Afghanistan *and* Iraq is staggering.