

crack at the world's third largest oil reserves.

The struggle for control and development of these resources is becoming increasingly public, despite the official effort to deny the predatory character of the American military occupation.



Iraq's former oil minister, Thamer Ghadhban, who still advises the government of Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki on energy issues, told a US audience Friday that Iraq planned to nearly triple oil production over the next eight years, from the present 2.2 million barrels a day to six million barrels per day.

Speaking at Stanford University, Ghadhban said, "Iraq is one of the least-explored countries among the major oil producers," citing plans to explore for oil in the western desert (Anbar province) as well as the traditional oil-producing regions in the north and south.

**Iraq has 112 billion barrels in proven oil**

reserves, but UN estimates have placed its probable but as yet unproven reserves at 214 billion barrels, perhaps the world's largest pool of untapped oil.

## ACTIONS

1. Share and discuss this leaflet with your family, friends, coworkers and your faith community.
2. Contact your elected representatives and say "Hands Off Iran" and "Leave Iraq's oil for Iraq."

Call the Congressional switchboard at 202-224-3121 and ask for them by name. If you don't know who they are, tell the operator your zip code and s/he will connect you to the appropriate persons.

Local contact:

## 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice



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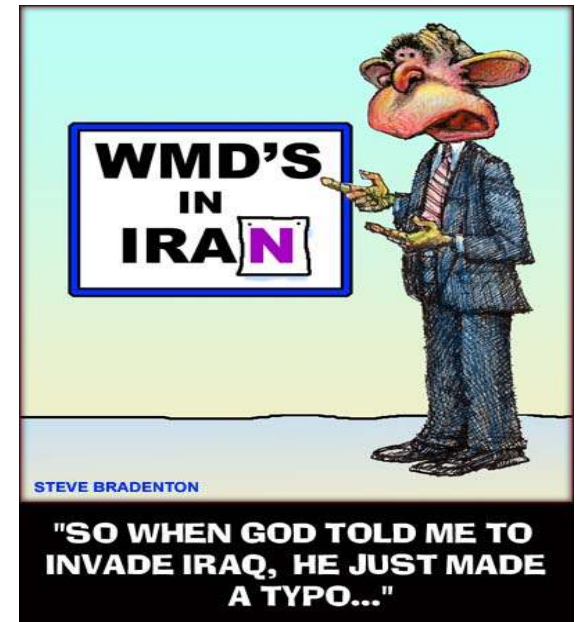
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# The war is "all about oil."

said Allen Greenspan, former Federal Reserve chairman.

## US, British and Australian forces build oil-production base in Iraq

for full article, see <http://www.wsws.wsws.org/articles/2007/nov2007/oil-n13.shtml>



The US Navy, with the assistance of British and Australian commandos, is building a permanent base to guard two oil-export platforms in Iraqi waters at the northern end of the Persian Gulf, according to a report Monday in the *Wall Street Journal*.

Troops from all three occupying countries

are now stationed at the Khawr al Amaya oil terminal, protecting it and the neighboring Al Basrah oil terminal, facilities critical for any significant expansion of tanker shipments of Iraqi oil to the world market.

The *Journal* reported, “While presidential candidates debate whether to start bringing ground troops home from Iraq, the new construction suggests that one footprint of U.S. military power in Iraq isn’t shrinking anytime soon: American officials are girding for an open-ended commitment to protect the country’s oil industry.”

The military mission goes far beyond the patrols which US warships have conducted in the Persian Gulf for the past 30 years, in the name of keeping oil shipping lanes open. The *Journal* noted, “the Navy finds itself with an additional, much more specific role: playing security guard to Iraq’s offshore oil infrastructure.”

While the Pentagon claims that the new oil-terminal base is not a permanent US facility and that it will be turned over to Iraqi forces eventually, the *Journal* explains, “Iraqi forces are a long way from being able to take over the mission.” Vice Admiral Kevin Cosgriff, commander of US naval forces in the Gulf, told the newspaper, “They are going to need help for years to come.”

**US, British and Australian military officers will control Iraq’s oil export shipping for the indefinite future.**

US sailors live on both the Khawr and Al Basrah terminals behind chain-link fences that keep out all Iraqis except the oil

workers who actually operate the facilities, and a handful of Iraqi Marines who work as guards under the direction of an Australian commodore, the overall commander of the facility.

**The *Journal* account also notes that the oil-export installation could play a role in forthcoming US moves against Iran:**



“The new outpost also offers a convenient perch from which to monitor Iran’s Revolutionary Guards Corps... The naval component of the Revolutionary Guards Corps operates from a partially submerged barge and crane visible on clear days.”

The British sailors captured earlier this year by Iranian forces were among those participating in the oil-protection mission—a fact that was suppressed in the media accounts at the time. That incident ended when the British prisoners made statements admitting they had crossed into Iranian waters and then were sent home.

**A similar episode involving American soldiers could well provide a pretext for a full-scale US military strike against Iran.**

The oil-terminal operation is only one part of a much larger program, costing an estimated \$277 million, in which US forces

are deployed to protect Iraqi oilfields. The terminal facilities are the only ones where US military personnel are actually stationed inside production or shipping installations.

Vice Admiral Cosgriff told the *Journal*, “As a contributor to an increasingly inelastic supply, [2.4 percent of current world requirements] is a significant percentage. That isn’t just an Iraq issue, that’s a global economic-stability issue.”



This comment underscores the geopolitical economic interests at the heart of the US conquest of Iraq. US policymakers, from the military leaders on the spot right up to the White House, are acutely aware that, as former Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan said last month, the war in Iraq is “all about oil.”

Nonetheless, the White House, the congressional Democrats and the American news media alike seek to downplay or suppress the role of oil, claiming that the war is being waged to fight “terrorism” and establish democracy in Iraq, when its major purpose is to rob the Iraqi people of their country’s principal natural resource, and give US and British multinationals first