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Michael T. Klare, Blood and Oil: The Dangers and Consequences of America's Growing Dependency on Imported Petroleum

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rather than indulging in oversimplified truisms regarding French and German national courage and gratitude for American participation in the world wars, the Marshall Plan, and the Cold War.

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Klare, Michael T. *Blood and Oil: The Dangers and Consequences of America's Growing Dependency on Imported Petroleum*. New York: Henry Holt, 2004. 265 pp. \$25

In *Blood and Oil*, Professor Michael Klare of Hampshire College offers an important critique of U.S. national security policy, one that should be read by American security professionals. In brief, he argues that U.S. foreign and military policy has been increasingly driven by the need to ensure reliable access to foreign oil, especially in the Middle East, and that as American foreign oil dependence continues to grow, U.S. forces will increasingly find themselves fighting to defend oil-producing regions and supply routes.

An engaging writer, Klare develops his thesis as follows. After documenting the substantial and growing U.S. dependence on foreign oil and the problems it has created, Klare describes the increasing involvement of the United States in the Middle East since World War II, particularly its close ties with Saudi Arabia, and the negative consequences of this involvement for American security. The next two chapters detail the latest phase of this unfolding story; they analyze the energy strategy adopted by the Bush administration in 2001,

pointing out how it has only reinforced U.S. dependence on foreign oil, especially from the Persian Gulf, and they describe the administration's policies toward the region. A fifth chapter discusses the prospects for diversifying foreign oil supplies, concluding that this approach offers little hope of reducing U.S. reliance on the Gulf even though it would increase the chances of American entanglement in conflicts elsewhere, while a sixth describes how U.S. oil dependence may increasingly bring this country into conflict with Russia and China. The final chapter summarizes the costs of oil dependence. It all too briefly sets forth an alternative national energy strategy of "autonomy and integrity," which emphasizes detaching our pursuit of energy from security commitments to foreign governments, reducing oil consumption, and hastening the development of alternative energy sources.

Overall, Klare performs a valuable public service by shining a spotlight on the national security consequences of U.S. foreign oil dependence, consequences that have often gone underappreciated. A central theme is how American leaders have chosen to "securitize" oil—that is, "to cast its continued availability as a matter of 'national security,' and thus something that can be safeguarded through the use of military force." The book is very well documented, with forty-five pages of notes, including references to a number of primary sources.

Some of Klare's claims may seem shrill or speculative, in part because they are so rarely voiced, but they nevertheless bear careful consideration. Perhaps most controversial will be his description of the current U.S. policy toward the Gulf. "In the months before and

after 9/11,” he argues, “the Bush administration fashioned a comprehensive strategy for American domination of the Persian Gulf and the procurement of ever-increasing quantities of petroleum.” This “strategy of maximum extraction” involved three goals—the stabilization of Saudi Arabia, the removal of Saddam Hussein and his replacement with a stable government capable of substantially boosting oil output, and the escalation of pressure on Iran in the hopes of producing a favorable leadership change there as well.

As important and overlooked as oil has been as a determinant of U.S. strategy toward the region, this characterization of the Bush administration’s policies may appear simplistic given the various other motives offered, such as non-proliferation, antiterrorism, and Israel’s security. In particular, given the title of the book, the connection between energy concerns and the invasion of Iraq would have benefited from more thorough analysis. As it is, Klare devotes just one page to an explicit discussion of the administration’s oil-related motives for ousting Saddam. As indirect evidence, he points to U.S. efforts to seize Iraq’s oil facilities at the outset of the war, but this overlooks the equally plausible goal of ensuring that postwar Iraq could finance its own reconstruction. Ultimately, Klare’s argument is largely structural in nature, but it is also a powerful one that cannot be easily dismissed. As he notes in the preface, “Since cheap oil is essential to the nation’s economic vigor, American leaders, of whatever party affiliation, have felt compelled to do whatever was necessary to ensure that enough was available to satisfy our ever-expanding

requirements.” As the competition for oil intensifies, what is deemed necessary could well be increasingly a military response.

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Cronin, Audrey Kurth, and James M. Ludes, eds.
Attacking Terrorism: Elements of a Grand Strategy.
 Washington, D.C.: Georgetown Univ. Press,
 2004. 320pp. \$26.95

This volume is a much-needed tonic. *Attacking Terrorism*—a somewhat bellicose title, since most of the articles included recognize the need for a carefully calibrated response to terrorism—is a diverse collection of focused and even-handed assessments of the military, diplomatic, economic, and legal tools available to confront the problem. Cronin, a terrorism specialist with the Congressional Research Service and an adjunct professor at Georgetown University, and Ludes, a former editor in chief of *National Security Studies Quarterly*, selected their contributors well. The diversity of expertise this volume offers affords it a broad perspective on counterterrorism strategies.

Lindsay Clutterbuck offers an exploration of a legal approach to combating terrorism (including illuminating discussions of British and European Union practices); she concludes that it is best to combine the legal and military elements of the struggle rather than approach counterterrorism solely as a war. Striking a similar note, Timothy Hoyt argues that the “use of military force may prove spectacularly unsuccessful if it is not carefully correlated