

Hi, I'm going to explain some of why the attacks that crushed the World Trade Center in New York City on that ever-memorable day, September 11, 2001, are not the sole cause of today's Iraq War conflict. I'm not saying that the attacks weren't a cause, I'm just saying that the attacks weren't *the* cause. The three specific points that I'll try and relate to the current Iraq War conflict are that the terrorists who attacked us weren't from Iraq; that the US is very dependent on oil and Iraq is a huge oil supplier; and that there are some other interests of the US in attacking Iraq including the bumpy history between the US and Iraq.

As my first point is that the terrorists who so devastated us didn't come from Iraq I'll spend a short bit of time explaining where they did come from. The terrorists were part of the Al-Qaeda group. Al-Qaeda's origins can be traced all the way back to 1979 when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. Not long after this Osama bin Laden went to Afghanistan and with our government's assistance organized and established the Maktab al-Khidamat (or MAK) organization to resist the Soviets. A decade later when the Soviets withdrew MAK got transformed into a rapid reaction force in jihad against governments all across the Muslim world. During this time Osama bin Laden also got more radical. Al-Qaeda was born when MAK expanded to cover more territory and as of today it is believed that Al-Qaeda has 300 members. Al-Qaeda worked primarily out of Afghanistan, so the war in Afghanistan a bit before the war in Iraq was more justified, but this speech is about the Iraq War. In conclusion of this point I have to say that the 9/11 attacks weren't related to the Iraq War in any way, so now I'll explain part of what actually might have been the causes.

I'm sure all of you know that a key resource our country needs to survive the way that we've structured our infrastructure is oil. It's a part of the production of gasoline, etc. But where does that oil come from? In this past presidential election cycle it was hinted at drilling more in Alaska, but enough to fuel the US still wouldn't be produced. So for now the better percentage of our oil is imported from overseas, more specifically the Middle East. Oil pipelines and the resulting wave of jobs and income are a huge source of revenue for Iraq, so are a part of the country the Iraqi government likes to keep control over instead of relinquishing control of the oil to 3rd parties. Iraq holds the 2nd largest oil reserve recorded for the area, so the US and other countries would be getting at least some of their oil from Iraq. From a series of addresses the Bush administration gave the media and public it is possible to infer that the Iraq War was really about gaining control of Iraq's oil industry. That motive seems perfectly viable to me, certainly more viable than the 9/11 attacks given the origin of those as I explained in my first key point and the huge amount of oil the US consumes all the time. According to the US Energy Information Administration Iraq holds more than 112 billion barrels of oil and 110,000 cubic feet of natural gas, and as such is a huge focal point for regional and international security issues. Iraq has also been known to cease oil exports to countries as punishment, hence the interest of the US to gain control by force. The current international security issue of note being, of course, the Iraq War conflict.

My third and final point is the basic and underlying interests of the US. In this seminar we went over a small set of interests of our country's that may have helped to cause the war, I hope to expand slightly on one of those. The single interest that sticks out as a probable semi-cause of the war is the spread of democracy. Iraq ever since it gained the name Iraq was governed either by a monarchy or solid succession of

dictators ending with Saddam Hussein. Neither a monarchy or dictatorship is a democracy. Now, what our previous president and his administration failed to understand is that a democracy can come in many different and unique flavors. What the US has set up and has had generations to prove works is called a democracy, but there are other government setups that Iraq could mold to if it liked that we seem to not recognize as democracy when it's in front of us. The Iraq War conflict could be partially to enforce a US-style democracy onto a plot of land that may better adapt to, say, an Iranian-style democracy that may have a very powerful leader, not president, at the lead but still honor the underlying "rules" of a democracy as recognized by the US.

So, in overall conclusion, the only connection between the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and the Iraq War conflict is that Mr. Bush used it as an excuse to start a war that really has oil control and democracy spreading as its goal and purpose. Thanks again for your time.