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### Resource and Oil Curse Essay

Oil is both a blessing and a curse to the modern world. For the industrial countries, oil is the hallmark of technological progress as well as a source of power and control. For under-developed nations, tribal communities, and ecosystems, oil is a threat to both the socio-political system and nature itself. In Michael Ross's *The Oil Curse*, he details the socio-political effects that oil has had on unstable countries in the Middle East, like Libya, Iraq, and Azerbaijan. He explains how oil regimes and cartels often back up terrorist and gang organizations, seeping up the wealth from the oil profits while the citizens gain no benefit from their country's wealth, and often have trouble rebelling against the government. Most oil-backed countries lack transparency, Ross explains, and that lack leads to corruption across the world, since oil prices are set at a global level. Kidnappings of businessmen are very common in oil regime countries with a high poverty level, like Georgia. Angola has one of the richest oil reserves, yet is one of the poorest African countries because of the corruption within the oil industry. The wealth is being funneled to high up officials or third party organizations, rather than benefitting the people who have to be displaced because of the drilling.

For native tribes from Alaska to Ecuador, oil poses a huge threat to local wildlife and ecosystems. Oil drilling causes a number of problem including, but not limited to, carbon emissions releasing more of the Tundra's carbon, animal migration, poisoning native tribes, smoke inhalation, oil spills on streets, oil absorption into the soil, and terrain deformation. Private oil corporations do not make things any easier for the natives, many companies such as Chevron, Texaco, and BP keep information and access to their plants restricted from the public, since the oil industry is both high risk and highly competitive. Oil pipelines like the BTC and Alaskan line are treated like nuclear warheads, especially in the Middle East and under-developed countries. Companies and Governments will go to great lengths to protect and restrict access to their plants and pipelines, for fear that terrorists or the local poor will take control of their assets, or kidnap important business officials for ransom. Next to nukes, oil is the most sought after high-risk item in the world.