

# GREAT DECISIONS

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## 5. U.S. foreign policy and petroleum

### Acronyms and abbreviations

**EIA**—United States Energy Information Administration

**GDP**—Gross Domestic Product

**IEA**—International Energy Agency

**IOCs**—International Oil Companies

**OPEC**—Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries

**VLCC**—Very Large Crude Carrier

### Glossary

**Anglo-Iran Oil Company:** A British international oil company founded in 1908, and called the Anglo-Persian Oil Company until 1935. It eventually became the British Petroleum Company (BP).

**Carter Doctrine:** Foreign policy initiative of the Jimmy Carter presidential administration that returned the U.S. to a policy of containment vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. The policy stated that the U.S. would use military force against any country that threatened Washington's interests in the Persian Gulf.

**Hydraulic fracturing:** The process of producing fractures in rocks by pumping in a mixture of water, sand and chemicals, in order to trigger the flow of oil and natural gas.

**International Energy Agency (IEA):** An intergovernmental agency based in Paris, France, which advises both member and nonmember states on energy policy, with the stated goal of ensuring “reliable, affordable and clean energy.” The IEA was established in 1974 after the 1973 Oil Crisis.

**Iranian Revolution:** The 1979 popular uprising against the U.S.-backed Iranian government under the Shah. The revolution resulted in the establishment of the modern National Republic of Iran, and the ascension to power of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who led the revolution and had the support of various leftist and Islamic organizations and Iranian student movements.

**Iran-Iraq Tanker Wars:** A series of naval conflicts between Iran and Iraq during the Iran-Iraq War (1980–88). The Tanker Wars began in 1984 when Iraq attacked Iranian tanker ships carrying oil out of Iran. The U.S. was pulled into the conflict by Kuwait, and helped defend Iraqi oil ships from Iranian attack.

**Malacca Dilemma:** A term referring to China's strategic challenge of over-reliance on the Malacca Strait. Some 80% of Chinese energy moves through the strait.

**October 1973 Mideast War (Yom Kippur War; Ramadan War; 1973 Arab-Israeli-War; October War):** An armed conflict between Israel and the alliance of Egypt and Syria over the Israeli-occupied Sinai Peninsula and the Suez Canal. Despite early success, the two Arab states were eventually repelled by Israel.

**Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Companies (OPEC):** An intergovernmental organization that coordinates petroleum policies of its 13 member countries.

**Rockefeller Trust:** A reference to the Standard Oil Company that was founded by John D. Rockefeller in

1870. Before the signing of the antitrust laws in 1911, Standard Oil Company controlled close to 90% of the oil in the United States.

**Seven Sisters:** A term referring to the seven international oil companies that dominated the global oil industry from the 1920s until the 1973 Oil Crisis.

**Six-Day War (June War; Third Arab-Israeli War) (June 5–10, 1967):** An armed conflict between Israel and an alliance of Arab states consisting of Egypt, Syria and Jordan. The outcome of the war was the capture by Israel of the Golan Heights, the Gaza Strip, the Sinai Peninsula, East Jerusalem and the West Bank.