

## Richmond Times-Dispatch

### Expert advises reduced oil use

By Greg Edwards

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Reducing reliance on petroleum-based fuels is the key to the nation's energy security, Anne Korin said.

Relying on unproven technologies and politically impossible policies will not provide energy security, said Korin, co-director of the Institute for the Analysis of Global Security, a Washington advocacy group. Searching for new domestic petroleum sources will not end U.S. reliance on hostile countries for fuels, she said at the World Affairs Council of Greater Richmond this week.

As in previous wars, America is fighting with people guided by a hostile ideology, she said. The "war on terror," she said, is a war with radical Islam. Unfortunately, most of the world's oil lies in countries where radical Islam is on the rise, Korin said.

The U.S. consumes one-fourth of the world's oil production yet has only 3 percent of global reserves. American dependency on imported oil has grown from 30 percent of consumption three decades ago to about 60 percent today.

Two-thirds of the oil we consume goes into transportation fuels. U.S. consumers pay about \$2.30 a gallon at the gasoline pump, but, by one conservative estimate, they are paying about \$7 more per gallon in taxes to help protect foreign sources of oil, Korin said.

America's oil supplies, which must be transported by pipeline or ship, make an appealing target for America's enemies, Korin said. In December, Ayman al-Zawahiri, second in command to Osama bin Laden, called on al-Qaida's followers to attack oil supplies.

With economic growth in China and India tightening oil markets, attacks by radicals on Saudi oil infrastructure could easily send the price of a barrel of oil -- now about \$68 -- to \$100, she said. "It is not a question of if, it is a question of when."

An organization with which Korin's group is affiliated, the Set America Free Coalition, focuses on the dependence on foreign oil as a national security issue and includes among its members former national security adviser Robert McFarlane and former CIA Director R. James Woolsey.

The United States, Korin said, has domestic energy sources -- coal, biomass, nuclear, wind and solar power -- it could tap to help reduce the nation's need to import oil.

The solutions need to be realistic and based on current technology, Korin said. In Brazil, for example, every car sold by 2008 must be a flexible-fuel vehicle that runs on either gasoline or alcohol, and every car in America should be a flexible-fuel vehicle, she said. The cost difference from one that runs on only gasoline is \$150.

Other steps, she said, would include increasing production of hybrid-electric vehicles, which run on liquid fuel and electricity, and of vehicles with 20-mile batteries that could be plugged into a home outlet at night.

Alternative fuels need to be available at a price that is competitive with gasoline, she said. "Detroit has to sit up and pay attention."