



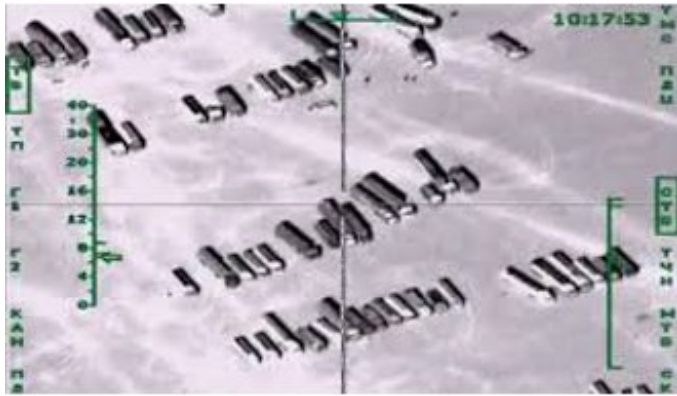
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The Most Important Question About ISIS That Nobody Is Asking

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November 20, 2015



The US coalition has not sought to destroy ISIS. It has aided ISIS. That millions of barrels of oil each month can be smuggled out of the ISIS controlled areas is an obvious indication of this fact. – Shorty Dawkins, Associate Editor

[This article comes from zerohedge.com](#)

The question of how the Islamic State funds its sprawling caliphate has been discussed in the past: we first broke down the primary driver of ISIS revenue well over a year ago, [in September 2014](#), when we explained that “ISIS uses oil wealth to help finance its terror operations.”



Daily Signal’s Kelsey Harkness explained the breakdown as follows:

According to the Iraq Energy Institute, an independent, nonprofit policy organization focused on Iraq’s energy sector, the army of radical Islamists controls production of 30,000 barrels of oil a day in Iraq and 50,000 barrels in Syria. By selling the oil on the black market at a discounted price of \$40 per barrel (compared to about \$93 per barrel in the free market), ISIS

takes in \$3.2 million a day.

The oil revenue, which amounts to nearly \$100 million each month, allows ISIS to fund its military and terrorist attacks — and to attract more recruits from around the world, including America.

Most importantly, we added that to be successful in counterterrorism efforts, “the U.S. and its allies must “push the Islamic State out of the oil fields it has captured and disrupt its ability to smuggle the oil to foreign markets.”

None of this was surprising to anyone, but what was quite surprising is that it took the allied forces over a year to take the oil revenue threat seriously and begin targeting the Islamic State’s oil infrastructure in earnest.

Today, in an article titled “[Why US Efforts to Cut Off Islamic State’s Funds Have Failed](#)” Bloomberg tries to explain just how it is that despite a more than a year long campaign, ISIS funding remains as strong as ever, and notes that “the latest round of airstrikes are directly related to the administration’s new math. “You have to go after the oil, and you have to do it in a serious way, and we’ve just begun to do that now,” citing Benjamin Bahney, an international policy analyst at the Rand Corp., a U.S. Department of Defense-funded think tank.

To be sure, there are other sources of revenue: Bloomberg correctly notes that “even if the U.S. finally weakens the group’s oil income, Bahney and other analysts in the U.S., the Middle East, and Europe contend, Islamic State has resources beyond crude—from selling sex slaves to ransoming hostages to plundering stolen farmland—that can likely keep it fighting for years.”

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