



## Peter Maass: Why Americans look the other way

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Peter Maass has [a short but poignant piece](#) in the *New York Times* magazine this week. In the article, he points out how being oil-rich has often been a curse to those third world countries that are supposed to be "blessed" with having such a precious resource. He also dissects why Americans appear to be so inured to the horrendous situations that occur around the world (but not at home) in the name of this most precious of all resources:

We demand clean beaches and untouched wildernesses at home but live in an energy-intensive fashion that leads other countries to sacrifice their waters and forests. This disconnect is easily explained. You don't need to alter your lifestyle much to help protect baby seals or punish Kathie Lee for supporting sweatshops, but you might need to suffer inconveniences - like higher gas prices, energy-conservation efforts and new taxes for alternative-fuels research - if better energy policies were adopted. In the end, the only red line that Americans insist upon, in terms of unacceptable ways for gasoline to be supplied to our cars, is that it must not come from ANWR or the waters off California and Florida.

Go read the whole thing.



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