



# **ACTION ALERT**

## **Say No! To the Threat of War with Iran**

Recent Congressional passage of the Iraq supplemental spending bill coincides with the Administration's escalating rhetoric for an attack on Iran. And, some in Congress are now pushing a bill calling for tough sanctions against Iran.

H.C.R. 362 and S. Res. 580, if followed, would in effect set up a blockade of Iran, which is considered an act of war under international law. This would constitute a "trigger event" that inevitably could provoke action by Iran, retaliation by the U.S., and draw us into pointless war similar to the way the Gulf of Tonkin incident pushed us into the Vietnam War. The resolution is presented as an alternative to war, but in its present form it is more likely to be a prelude to war, especially since it would be adopted alongside the recent report that Congress has approved up to \$400 million to step up covert U.S. military action in Iran. Former U.S. secretaries of state Madeleine Albright, James Baker, Warren Christopher, Henry Kissinger, and Colin Powell have all called for talks with Iran.

This bill states that because Iran harbors terrorists it is therefore a threat to the United States. The U.S. government first linked Iran with state sponsorship of terrorism in 1984. "Whereas Iran is a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), has foresworn the acquisition of nuclear weapons by ratification of the NPT, and is legally bound to declare and place all its nuclear activity under constant monitoring by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA);" H.Con.Res 362 at present "demands that the President initiate an international effort... prohibiting the export to Iran of all refined petroleum products; imposing stringent inspection requirements on all persons, vehicles, ships, planes, trains, and cargo entering or departing Iran..."

The resolution's sponsors argue that this provision does not amount to a blockade or quarantine of Iran and that the only method contemplated to implement it is enforcement of export controls by states within their own borders. But Iran, and many in the international community, could interpret this provision as a blockade.

The upcoming debate of H.Con.Res 362 provides an opportunity to call upon the Administration to change its policy on Iran and shift its emphasis to direct diplomatic engagement. Such action could halt the current alarming rise in tensions and the talk of war. H. Con.Res. 362 is not only about Iran, it is also about Iraq. Selig Harrison, a journalist with extensive experience in the region, has written, "Iranian influence with all parties means that the United States cannot get its forces out [of Iraq] gracefully or stabilize Iraq thereafter without Iran's cooperation." If, as we believe, this is correct, it means that the belligerent course that H.Con.Res. 362 charts for U.S. policy toward Iran is also a course that will lead to the long-term U.S. occupation of Iraq.

An alternative bill has been introduced in the House of Representatives. H. Con. Res. 321, a bi-partisan bill, lays out a new call for diplomacy in Iraq and the Middle East. Throughout its history United Methodist Women have challenged the clarion call to war. Today we stand at a moment when the voices of peace must be heard anew. The situation is critical, and the stakes could hardly be higher. Many in Washington are voicing fear and visions of the "terrorist threat" in Iraq to lead us into a potential catastrophe in Iran. But, you can be a voice for Peace and Diplomacy.

*(over)*



### **UNITED METHODIST WOMEN'S ACTION NETWORK**

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OPPOSE H.C.R 362 and S. Res. 580, the Blockade of Iran bills, and SUPPORT H.C.R. 321, which calls for a diplomatic initiative with Iraq, Iran, Syria, and neighboring countries as a means of getting out of Iraq and resolving other disputes.

Call the Capitol switchboard at 202 224-3121 and ask for your Representative and Senators. Ask to speak to the legislative aid who handles Iraq and Iran. Urge your representative to vote against H.C.R. 362 whether he or she is already a co-sponsor or not. Urge them to co-sponsor H.C.R. 321. Thank them if they are in accord with our positions and urge them to talk to the leadership to convince colleagues to vote the same. Or send a FAX or email your representative in their District Office before Congress ends its summer break this September.

If you have already contacted your Representative or Senator, please contact the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to express the same sentiments.

U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs  
Tel: (202) 225-5021

U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations  
Tel: (202) 224-4651  
Tel: (202) 224-6797

Read *The Book of Resolutions 2004* #338. The United Methodist Church and Peace pg. 841.



September 21 is the United Nations International Day of Peace. It is a global holiday when individuals, communities, nations and governments highlight efforts to end conflict and promote peace. For ideas on promoting peace visit the UN International Day of Peace web site at [www.InternationalDayofPeace.org](http://www.InternationalDayofPeace.org)

Read *Iran in the Crosshairs: How to Prevent Washington's Next War* by Phyllis Bennis. For more information call (202) 234-9382 or visit <http://www.fpif.org/pdf/reports/0802iranprimer.pdf>

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Sources:  
Friends Committee on National Legislation  
The Council for the National Interest  
CODEPINK