

RECONSTRUCTIONIST RABBINICAL ASSOCIATION

RESOLUTION ON U.S. FOREIGN POLICY ON IRAQ AND IRAN

Approved at RRA Annual Convention, March 13, 2007

Whereas the war in Iraq has been promoted by the Bush administration as a central component of “the war on terror,” but instead Iraq has become a haven and training ground for Islamist terrorists, and the war has contributed to the destabilization of the Middle East; and

Whereas in addition to the deaths of thousands of American service people and untold tens of thousands of Iraqi civilians, the invasion and occupation of Iraq has had the unintended consequences of greatly strengthening Iran’s influence in the region and of further emboldening the forces of extremism in the Middle East; and

Whereas the failure of U.S. policy in Iraq highlights the grave danger of resorting to military force in place of serious diplomatic engagement, and demonstrates the fallacy of the proposition that extremism can be eradicated solely through the force of arms; and

Whereas war should always be a terrible last resort, and not an expedient attempt at solving complex political problems that deserve every diplomatic initiative; and

Whereas misleading rhetoric was used to create a pretense for the U.S. invasion of Iraq when subsequent events proved that there were no “weapons of mass destruction” as was alleged by the Bush administration as its primary argument in favor of war; and

Whereas we are disturbed and concerned by direct as well as indirect suggestions that the U.S. should initiate military action against Iran based on similarly imprecise, disputed and politically-influenced intelligence and military analyses; and

Whereas we recognize that the threatening, inflammatory and extremist threats against the U.S. and against Israel made by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad must be taken seriously; and

Whereas we are also aware that countervailing forces within the Iranian political and military establishments have, at great personal risk, increasingly gone on record in opposition to those threats; and

Whereas a military strike against Iran would only result in another military, political and humanitarian crisis and would further strengthen Ahmadinejad’s regime and radical elements within Iranian society;

Therefore, be it resolved that the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association, opposes any escalation of troops to Iraq and urges the Bush administration and the Congress to create a plan for a rapid and responsible withdrawal of U.S. military forces from Iraq.

Be it further resolved that we urge the U.S. to engage with the international community, particularly those nations of the Middle East willing to work together in a political and diplomatic initiative designed to help Iraq move towards stability and away from its current state of violence and chaos.

Be it further resolved that the RRA opposes any unilateral and preemptive U.S. military intervention in Iran, and instead calls on our government—in partnership with European and moderate Arab allies—to pursue diplomatic engagement with Iran with the goal of containing its potential military threat to the region.

Be it further resolved that the RRA calls on the U.S. government to engage in diplomatic efforts to build relationships with and strengthen the forces of moderation within Iran's political leadership and its civil society.

Be it further resolved that the RRA calls on the Congress to exercise its constitutional role of oversight and to demand that any charges alleged by the Bush administration in support of any military action be investigated, debated and subject to the most rigorous examination before any additional American troops are ever again asked to place their lives at risk.

Be it further resolved that RRA members should communicate the concerns in, as well as the text of, this resolution to their elected representatives in Congress.

Be it further resolved that the RRA encourages its members to address this issue with the communities they serve; and

Be it further resolved that the leadership of the RRA is directed to advocate for this position in denominational, Jewish communal and interfaith forums.

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