

An Act Of War: The US Congress is Actively Pushing for War on Iran

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Statement on Motion to Instruct Conferees on HR 2194, Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability and Divestment Act

April 23, 2010 “United States House of Representatives” — Mr. Speaker I rise in opposition to this motion to instruct House conferees on HR 2194, the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability and Divestment Act, and I rise in strong opposition again to the underlying bill and to its Senate version as well. I object to this entire push for war on Iran, however it is disguised. Listening to the debate on the Floor on this motion and the underlying bill it feels as if we are back in 2002 all over again: the same falsehoods and distortions used to push the United States into a disastrous and unnecessary one trillion dollar war on Iraq are being trotted out again to lead us to what will likely be an even more disastrous and costly war on Iran. The parallels are astonishing.

We hear war advocates today on the Floor scare-mongering about reports that in one year Iran will have missiles that can hit the United States. Where have we heard this bombast before? Anyone remember the claims that Iraqi drones were going to fly over the United States and attack us? These “drones” ended up being pure propaganda – the UN chief weapons inspector concluded in 2004 that there was no evidence that Saddam Hussein had ever developed unpiloted drones for use on enemy targets. Of course by then the propagandists had gotten their war so the truth did not matter much.

We hear war advocates on the floor today arguing that we cannot afford to sit around and wait for Iran to detonate a nuclear weapon. Where have we heard this before? Anyone remember then-Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice’s oft-repeated quip about Iraq: that we cannot wait for the smoking gun to appear as a mushroom cloud.

We need to see all this for what it is: Propaganda to speed us to war against Iran for the benefit of special interests.

Let us remember a few important things. Iran, a signatory of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, has never been found in violation of that treaty. Iran is not capable of enriching uranium to the necessary level to manufacture nuclear weapons. According to the entire US Intelligence Community, Iran is not currently working on a nuclear weapons program. These are facts, and to point them out does not make one a supporter or fan of the Iranian regime. Those pushing war on Iran will ignore or distort these facts to serve their agenda, though, so it is important and necessary to point them out.

Some of my well-intentioned colleagues may be tempted to vote for sanctions on Iran because they view this as a way to avoid war on Iran. I will ask them whether the sanctions on Iraq satisfied those pushing for war at that time. Or whether the application of ever-stronger sanctions in fact helped war advocates make their case for war on Iraq: as each round of new sanctions failed to “work” - to change the regime - war became the only remaining regime-change option.

This legislation, whether the House or Senate version, will lead us to war on Iran. The sanctions in this bill, and the blockade of Iran necessary to fully enforce them, are in themselves acts of war according to international law. A vote for sanctions on Iran is a vote for war against Iran. I urge my colleagues in the strongest terms to turn back from this unnecessary and counterproductive march to war.

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