

Press Releases

January 30, 2007

WEBB REPEATS CONCERN ABOUT WHITE HOUSE POSITION ON MILITARY ACTION AGAINST IRAN

Senator Calls for Clear Answer on Administration's Understanding of 2002 Resolution
Authorizing Force in Iraq

Washington, D.C. – Before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing today, Senator Jim Webb reiterated his strong concern that the Bush Administration deems the 2002 congressional resolution authorizing force in Iraq applicable to Iran.

The concern was underscored by the President's bellicose comments on NPR yesterday that "If Iran escalates its military action in Iraq to the detriment of our troops and/or innocent Iraqi people, we will respond firmly."

In a letter sent to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice yesterday (below) and a series of tough questions posed to Ambassador John Negroponte today, Senator Webb asked: "Is it the position of this administration that it possesses the authority to take unilateral action against Iran, in the absence of a direct threat, without congressional approval?"

Secretary of State Rice committed at the Foreign Relations Committee hearing on January 11 to provide a written answer to Senator Webb's question. The Senator has not received a reply.

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January 29, 2007

The Honorable Condoleezza Rice

Secretary of State

Department of State

2201 C Street, NW

Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Rice:

During your appearance before a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on January 11, 2007, I asked you a question pertaining to the administration's policy regarding possible military action against Iran. I asked, "Is it the position of this administration that it possesses the authority to take unilateral action against Iran, in the absence of a direct threat, without congressional approval?"

At that time you were loath to discuss questions of presidential authority, but you committed to provide a written answer. Since I have not yet received a reply, the purpose of this letter is to reiterate my interest in your response.

This is, basically, a "yes" or "no" question regarding an urgent matter affecting our nation's foreign policy. Remarks made by members of this administration strongly suggest that the administration wrongly believes that the 2002 joint resolution authorizing use of force in Iraq can be applied in other instances, such as in the case of Iran. I, as well as the American people, would benefit by fully understanding the administration's unequivocal response.

I would appreciate your expeditious reply and look forward to discussing this issue with you in the near future.

Sincerely,

James Webb

United States Senator

[Editor's Note: This press release was copied without change
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