

HJR

8



Alaska State Legislature

SENATE

Official Business

P.O. Box V
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99811

February 6, 1991

To: Members, Senate State Affairs

From: Senator Pat Rodey
Chair, Senate State Affairs

Subj: CSHJR 8 (SA) am - Relating to the Persian Gulf conflict and Alaskans serving in the Persian Gulf.

The measure before you is the result of combining HJR-8 (Barnes), and HJR-12 (Brown).

HJR-8, outlined greater detail about the nature of events leading up the Gulf conflict, the advent of the Allied response, lends support specifically to President of U.S., Allied leaders/forces, members of Congress, United Nations, and military personnel for efforts in conflict and expresses concern for well-being of all Allied personnel and their safe return home.

HJR-12, focuses more on Alaskans serving with less discussion of events leading up to conflict. Urges President and Congress to seek peaceful resolution of conflict.

CSHJR-8 (SA) am, combines both HJR-8 and 12, urges end to conflict, safe return for all Allied personnel and request LAA to send following message to all Alaskans serving in Gulf:

The members of the Alaska Legislature want you to know that you are in our prayers. We commend your bravery and dedication. We wish you a safe and speedy return home.

As of today it is estimated that at least 150 Alaskans are serving with U.S. military forces in the Persian Gulf conflict.



OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Alaska State Legislature

House of Representatives

REPRESENTATIVE
RAMONA L. BARNES
DISTRICT 14

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January 27, 1991

SPONSOR STATEMENT

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 8

This resolution is offered as a statement of support, not only for the President of the United States and other leaders of the Allied Forces, but more importantly for the men and women of the military forces serving in the Persian Gulf. It is important to the morale of our troops that they know their fellow Americans appreciate their bravery and dedication.

According to a spokesperson from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, there are 245,000 personnel from the Allied Forces plus 475,000 American military personnel serving in the Persian Gulf as of January 25th. Accurate figures are not readily available regarding the number of Alaskans currently on duty serving in the Gulf. It appears that to date, Alaska has been most fortunate in having most of her sons and daughters left at home. There are, however, 7 Alaskan Naval reservists who have been activated for service in the Persian Gulf. I have been told that there are Army medical corps reservists from Alaska who have also been activated but I cannot substantiate that at this time.

Additionally, Alaska is home to several thousand active duty military personnel and their families who have made and continue to make significant contributions to our state. These active duty personnel are all subject to duty in the Persian Gulf. It is important to indicate to those men and women serving in operation "Desert Storm" and all military personnel that Alaska supports their efforts.

I believe that all Alaskans were praying for a peaceful resolution to the Middle East crisis. However, exhausting diplomatic efforts failed to resolve the issue. To debate whether we should have launched the attack when we did would serve no purpose at this time. The fact is that we are at war with Iraq. War is never easy and many personal sacrifices will be made. Let us, members of the Alaska Legislature, make Alaska a forerunner in publicly acknowledging support for the men and women of our military services who will be making those sacrifices.

SPONSOR STATEMENT



Official Business

Alaska State Legislature

P.O. Box V
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99811

TO: Representative Gene Kubina
Chair, House State Affairs Committee

FROM: Representative Kay Brown

DATE: January 29, 1991

RE: Persian Gulf Resolution

I would like to inform the State Affairs Committee of my support for the proposed CS for HJR 8 (State Affairs). The committee substitute combines Rep. Barnes' resolution regarding the Persian Gulf conflict with HJR 12, which I sponsored.

I am particularly interested in the Resolved clause that would send a message from legislators to Alaskans serving in the Persian Gulf. It is my understanding that the military does not maintain a master list of Alaskans serving in the Persian Gulf. However, my staff has been in contact with support groups and parents from Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau who are compiling lists of names and addresses. They have assured us that they will furnish their lists at the legislature's request. In addition, we may want to inform Alaskans via the media that messages will be sent and encourage families to provide names of Alaskans serving in the Persian Gulf to the Legislative Affairs Agency.

It appears that these messages can be sent free of charge. Alascom sends free fax messages to military personnel in the Persian Gulf. And Raini Forrester of Cooper Landing is participating in a national network of computer users that is sending free messages to our troops. My staff reports that she is willing to help relay the legislature's message.

Thank you for your consideration.

REP. BROWN STATEMENT

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Honorable representatives of this committee. I am here to testify in opposition to HJR8, introduced by Rep. Barnes, and in favor of HJR12, by Rep. Brown.

Despite Pres. Bush's declaration that the Gulf War is a "noble cause," Americans remain deeply divided over the propriety of this engagement. When the Senate gave Mr. Bush the power to attack Iraq without further consultation, they did so by the extremely narrow margin of 52 ayes to 47 nays, reflecting the division of their constituents. In early January, columnist Mike Royko reported that his mail was running about nine to one against launching a war, even after months of incessant pro-war propaganda from most of the major media outlets. Indeed, several members of congress, in the course of the debate on the resolution to authorize force, stated that they were voting in favor primarily to convince Saddam Hussein that the U.S. was serious, in the hope that a war would then turn out not to be necessary.

Yet only one day after the artificially concocted deadline of Jan. 15, less than a week after the Congressional debate, and a mere five months after the imposition of sanctions, Mr. Bush launched his midnight air raids, and the defensive Shield was transformed into an offensive Sword. Why this rush to war? After all, CIA Director William Webster testified to Congress in December that the sanctions had been up to that time approximately 97 percent effective. And sanctions do take time. During the twentieth century, sanctions have been imposed on recalcitrant states by other states a total of over a hundred times. The average length of time for the sanctions to have the desired effect in these cases was between one and two years. Are Iraqi civilians dying, and our soldiers risking death, because an impatient George Bush "had it" with Saddam Hussein?

There are plentiful indications of the artificiality of the Jan. 15th deadline. It was agreed to by the United Nations Security Council, an organization to which the U.S. paid only scant and contemptuous attention in the past, after a great deal of administration arm-twisting, threats and bribery, as a compromise to the earlier U.S. demand for a New Year's deadline.

Nor did Iraq refuse all offers of negotiations. Beginning early in August, within two weeks of the invasion, Iraq floated the first of a series of peace feelers to the West. This was not the attempted "linkage" that proposed that Israel, Syria and Turkey be held to the same standards of conduct as Iraq, which later received such a hostile reception as tantamount to "rewarding aggression," a motive conspicuously absent of mention when discussing the aforementioned cases.

No, this first Iraqi proposal, presented Aug. 23 but unreported by our faithful media, was an offer to withdraw from Kuwait and release all hostages in return for guaranteed access to the Gulf through cession of two small uninhabited islands, and for full control of the Rumallah oilfield, the original source of the dispute with Kuwait, which lies in any case 95 percent under Iraqi territory. Access to the Gulf has been an Iraqi ambition ever since the British mandate deliberately drew up the boundaries of the Protectorate to exclude such access.

The answer of the White House was to ridicule the offer when it was made public on Aug. 29; the media, when it bothered to report the initiative at all, followed suit. Of course, the Iraqis may indeed have been playing games, although an administration official who specializes in Middle Eastern affairs felt it was "serious" and "negotiable," according to the *New York Newsday*, but we'll never know, as no response was forthcoming. Without drawing further and possibly unwarranted conclusions, one can at least say the failure of diplomacy was mutual.

The pros and cons of different dates to start the war was even the subject of detailed accounts in *Time* and *Newsweek* during the Fall. Why the unseemly rush to war? One answer

is offered in an intriguing cover article in this week's *Nation* on the economic incentives for the war: not just the swallowing of the peace dividend, or the diversion of attention from the Savings and Loan scandal, or the testing of new weapons, or even control of the Middle Eastern spigot, though all of these no doubt have a part to play; but the continued floating of the recession-wracked, deficit-ridden U.S. economy through Saudi and Gulf petrodollars: the U.S. Army as Mercenaries for Hire. Are we indeed going to Mr. Bush's "noble war" for jobs, as Secretary of State Baker suggested last Fall? Is propping up the banks and the exchange rate of the dollar, and obtaining economic leverage over our post-Cold War rivals Japan and the European Economic Community, worth the lives of our brothers, sisters, lovers and friends?

Before I go any further, I'd like to make two things clear. The first ought to go without saying, but given the rightwing propensity to equate dissent with treason and support of the enemy--there's a t-shirt for sale in the Nugget Mall that reads "Reward the Protestors--Send them to Kuwait"--I will state it for the record. I do not, and the peace movement does not, consider the soldiers to be the villains in this war. They are victims just as the Kuwaiti citizens and the Iraqi civilians and troops. The best support we can give them is to urge ceasefire and peace; to bring them home alive, rather than in body bags, or "human remains pouches," as the Pentagon prefers to call them in its sanitized and bloodless prose.

The second point that needs to be stressed is that I, too, deplore the invasion and annexation of Kuwait by Iraq. But unlike our statesmen, I also deplore the invasion and annexation of the northern third of Cyprus by our ally Turkey, supported to the tune of \$500 million a year by our country; the invasion and annexation of East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, and the invasion and occupation of southern Lebanon, the Gaza strip, and the West Bank by our close ally Israel, the single largest recipient of U.S. foreign aid; the invasion and annexation of the Sahel, or Sahara Arab Democratic Republic, by the torture state of Morocco (as Amnesty International called it), now a vaunted ally against the new Hitler of the Middle East; the invasion and occupation of eastern Lebanon by Syria, now a "reformed" terror state thanks to its role as a co-belligerent against its ancient enemy Iraq, on whom it has territorial designs of its own; the invasion and annexation of East Timor, and the genocidal butchery of one third of its population, by the regime we helped bring to power in Indonesia at the cost of up to one and a half million lives; and last but not least, our own invasion of Grenada, terror bombing of Tripoli, and takeover of Panama during the era of "America--standing tall." For that matter, I deplore the previous Iraqi invasion of other people's territory, which was directed against Iran in 1980, and which the Reagan/Bush administration tacitly supported.

The point I am making is that while Iraqi atrocities against Kuwaiti civilians and other nefarious activities cannot be excused, they are hardly of a fundamentally different character from those that we routinely condone and dismiss when carried out by our friends and allies, and indeed, by dictators who are maintained in power solely by our tax moneys, our training, and our troops. As the *New Yorker* put it last Oct. 15, if we try Hussein for crimes against humanity, by the same standards, many of the regimes we supported in Central America in the Eighties, not to mention those in our government who directed the policies of support, would also be in the dock.

Iraq itself, pre-invasion, is not absent from this list of "our" state terrorists. Aside from our pronounced "tilt" in Iraq's direction during the war with Iran, by 1990 the U.S. had become Iraq's largest trading partner. Congressman Henry Gonzales of Texas has charged that \$3 billion in letters of credit were extended to Iraq by one Atlanta-based

bank alone, and that the deal included armaments as well as, quite possibly, chemical weapons. This money helped finance the invasion of Kuwait, as Gonzales pointed out. In 1989, Iraq received \$1 billion in loan assurances, second in this regard only to Mexico.

This was the culmination of a long and mutually profitable relationship; ever since 1982 Iraq has been one of the largest importers of U.S. rice and wheat (a total of \$5.5 billion worth), financing a good deal of that through federally guaranteed loans. By 1987, 40 percent of Iraq's food was imported from the U.S. Over the years, the federally guaranteed loans freed up moneys for armaments for the war with Iran; during the Eighties, Iraq purchased \$46.8 billion worth of arms, more by far than any other Third World country.

Even when Iraq diverted helicopters purchased from the U.S. to military purposes in blatant violation of explicit promises, the administration hardly blinked. In 1988, when Congress wanted to restrict trade with Iraq due to egregious human rights violations, the Reagan administration lobbied successfully to defeat the restrictions. And when the human rights office of the State Department compiled a critical report against Iraq last Spring, the Bush administration, fresh from having lifted a formal ban on loans to Iraq, pressured the office to tone down the report in the interest of increased U.S. influence and better relations.

In fact, the Iraqi invasion itself followed closely after U.S. Ambassador April Glaspie indicated clearly at a meeting with Saddam that the U.S. had no intrinsic objection to whatever means Iraq used to settle its disputes with Kuwait. This reassurance came in response to Saddam's virtual announcement of his plans, saying that Kuwait was threatening Iraq's lifeblood, and that no country had a right to threaten another with economic extinction. Two days before the invasion, a State Department official testified before Congress that the U.S. was not committed to defend Kuwait in the event of an invasion, although by that time, according to the chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, the CIA not only knew of the invasion plan, but even correctly guessed the day. The State Department then forbade the Agency to warn the Kuwaiti government or people, and forced the cancellation of a Voice of America broadcast on the Iraqi threat.

Meanwhile, on July 27, Gen. Norman Schwartzkopf successfully carried out a command exercise for 350 of his staff officers based on the premise of one Middle Eastern country invading another and threatening U.S. interests. We need to ask, did George Bush invite the invasion of Kuwait, whether in fulfillment of short-term political objectives, geopolitical strategems, or the long-coveted permanent U.S. bases in the Middle East? Or, as one Middle East diplomat was quoted, if Saddam didn't exist, would Bush have had to invent him?

There are many unanswered and provocative questions about the origins of the crisis, and good reasons for doubting that our media, spoon-fed by the Pentagon, according to their own complaints, are presenting us with anything like the full story. The Barnes resolution, with its blanket and advance approval for whatever the Bush administration may be planning, is not a real gesture of support for our troops, but only for our government, right or wrong. I believe that Rep. Brown's resolution, a neutral statement that praises our people in uniform and at the same time urges Pres. Bush and the Congress to seek peaceful resolution of the Gulf conflict, much better expresses the feelings of most Alaskans. Thank you.

Testimony before the House State Affairs Committee on 1/30/91
concerning HJR 8 and HJR 12

Judy Brakel
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Juneau, Alaska 99801
586-2606

For many Americans the decision to go to war was a mistake, painful and disheartening. Many do not see war as an acceptable means of settling disputes. Others see war as sometimes acceptable, but not when there are alternatives, for instance the alternative of an international embargo. And not when there is such a lack of proportion between the causes for which the war is fought and the negative consequences to people and to the environment, consequences which will transcend who wins and who loses.

We cannot predict the future of this war, but in only two weeks we have had massive bombing of Iraq and Kuwait, surely causing terrible human suffering, and an oil spill fifteen times the size of the Exxon Valdez spill. This in a region already environmentally degraded before the war began.

But we already knew that modern weapons are too powerful, and that we must find other solutions to conflicts. In this case, another solution was begun. The most comprehensive economic embargo in history was marshalled against Iraq. Concerning that, here are excerpts from Senate majority leader George Mitchell's speech to Congress on Jan. 10th: "It is significant that even the administration cannot and does not say that the policy of sanctions has failed." "There has been no clear rationale, no convincing explanation, for shifting American policy from one of sanctions to one of war."

The administration says that every attempt was made to avert the war, but there is much information to the contrary.

People have reason to oppose this war on moral grounds and on practical grounds. They also have reasons for skepticism. We have seen a series of enemies - Khomeini, Khadafi, the Sandinistas, Noriega - each for a short time personifying the threat to America and then disappearing from view. We were surprised last year to learn that our troops had attacked Panama, without consulting Congress nor yet the United Nations. In fact the United Nations condemned our attack. In a familiar scenario, not unlike that in the Middle East, we were there to punish a dictator whom we ourselves had built up with arms and aid but who had turned uncooperative.

Skeptics wonder why the Secretary of State, a week before the invasion of Kuwait and in the face of Hussein's clear warnings of his intentions, instructed our ambassador to speak as she did: "We have no opinion on the Arab-Arab conflicts, like your border dispute with Kuwait the issue is not associated with America."*

Now there is a rush to support the war. But I ask that our legislators do not presume to line up all Alaskans in "solumn support" of the President on this matter.

* Harpers Magazine, Jan. 1991, p.74

What do Alaskans think? There have been no polls, but the Fairbanks News-Miner, on Dec. 13, reported that a spokesman for Senator Murkowski's Washington office said letters were pouring in. Nearly 95% of the letters from Alaskans received by the Senator insisted that a peaceful solution be found in the Gulf. He said "people are definitely supportive of Saudi Arabia, but they want a negotiated settlement and no U.S. attack. People are registering a strong objection to force."*

I can report something of what has happened in Juneau. People who have spoken or written in opposition to the choice of war include our mayor, two of our legislative representatives, even the newspaper editor. This fall a local movement organized to oppose going to war. This movement includes people who have sons and husbands serving in the Gulf, religious leaders, Vietnam veterans and lots of others.

After the war started we had to deal with the question of how we could support our troops, as people whom we care deeply about, and at the same time oppose the war. At a public gathering on Jan. 21st many intensely thoughtful speakers addressed that question. We realized that we could never be sure our opposition to the war would not, at some point, give encouragement to the enemy, but that the wellbeing of our troops is best served by calling for a cease-fire, especially before the ground war begins. A young wife read a letter from her husband stationed in the Gulf. He seems highly skeptical of the wisdom of our President in making war. Someone read a speech given in 1812 by William Ellery Channing. An excerpt:

"The cry has been that war has been declared, and all opposition should therefore be hushed. A sentiment more unworthy of a free nation can hardly be propagated. If this doctrine be admitted, rulers have only to declare war and they are screened at once from scrutiny."

In conclusion, I ask that if you pass a resolution purporting to speak for the people of Alaska, it will say something that can be supported by people who have sincere and heartfelt beliefs on both sides of the issue of war. I think we can all agree in our concern for the troops and in our hopes for their safe and speedy return.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

* Fairbanks News-Miner, 12/13/91, p. 1

592 Seatter Street
Juneau, Alaska 99801

January 29, 1991

Representative Gene Kubina, Chair
State Affairs Committee
Alaska House of Representatives
Juneau, Alaska

Committee Members:

*Committed Substitute for
HJR 8*

I would like to speak briefly on two resolutions before the committee, HJR 8 and HJR 12 regarding the Persian Gulf war.

I urge you to consult your consciences as you consider these resolutions, which will be made in the name of all Alaskans. I'm sure you are well aware that there are a great many Alaskans who have done everything they were able to urge our leaders to find non-military solutions, and whose consciences prevent them from participating in war.

HJR 8 assumes a consensus in support of the goals and purposes of this war which does not exist in Alaska.

There is no virtue in blindly following a presidential call to victory at all costs. This is not the time for fanning the flames of war by demonizing the forces we have chosen to do battle with and glorifying the job our young military people are being ordered to undertake. The human and environmental consequences are too grave. HJR 8 is not the message we should be sending now. I believe the best way to show support for all the men and women whose lives are at stake in this combat is to call for their return to their homes.

HJR 12 comes closer to expressing a position more people could support. I would like to see us urging our leaders to pull us back from this disastrous course, and to start working right now to halt the killing and truly protect the lives of our troops and all those in the war zone by bringing our troops home. That is a course which will set in motion the peace process which we will have to arrive at sooner or later.

There is no glory in war. We all become victims, those of us at home who acquiece to leaders who want war as well as the young people who are required to put their lives on the line.


Amy Paige

cc: Rep. Kay Brown
Rep. Max Gruenberg
Rep. Niilo Koponen

HJR-8 (Committee File)

Pat:

FYI: More on the Resolution from Hell.....

Bishop Kinney called the office Friday about 5:15 p.m. after hearing our committee moved HJR-8, the Gulf Resolution.

His main concern was the resolve clause that in essence says the legislature supports the Pres. et. al. as they use whatever means necessary to resolve the war. He worries that phrase ultimately endorses the use of nuclear weapons - which, of course, he opposes.

Specifically, the Bishop asked that the following words beginning in line 19, page 2, and ending with the first two words of line 20, page 2, be eliminated. "Legislature....urge President Bush, the Congress, and the United Nations to [USE WHATEVER MEANS ARE NECESSARY TO] bring the conflict to an end as soon as possible...."

He asked that I relay his concerns to you and that you give thought to adopt his suggestion or try to reword the resolution so that it does not contain the language that could be interpreted as an endorsement of the use of nuclear weapons.

According to the Bishop he will be contacting other legislators.

M

FISCAL NOTE

No. 1
 Bill Version: CSHJR 8(STA)
 (H) Publish Date: 2/1/91

STATE OF ALASKA
 1991 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Revision Date: _____ Department Affected: Military Veterans Affairs
 Title: Persian Gulf Conflict BRU: _____
 Component: _____

Sponsor: Rep. Barnes
 Requestor: House State Affairs Committee COMPONENT SERIAL NO.

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Expenditures/Revenues: (Thousands of Dollars)

| OPERATING | FY 92 | FY 93 | FY 94 | FY 95 | FY 96 | FY 97 |
|------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| PERSONAL SERVICES | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- |
| TRAVEL | | | | | | |
| CONTRACTUAL | | | | | | |
| SUPPLIES | | | | | | |
| EQUIPMENT | | | | | | |
| LAND & STRUCTURES | | | | | | |
| GRANTS, CLAIMS | | | | | | |
| MISCELLANEOUS | | | | | | |
| TOTAL OPERATING | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- |

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| CAPITAL | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- |
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| REVENUE | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- |
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FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

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| GENERAL FUND | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- |
| FEDERAL FUNDS | | | | | | |
| OTHER | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- |

POSITIONS: N/A

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|-----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| FULL-TIME | | | | | | |
| PART-TIME | | | | | | |
| TEMPORARY | | | | | | |

Estimate of current year impact: _____

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary.)

Prepared By: House State Affairs Committee Phone: 465-4859
 Division: _____ Date: _____
 Approved by Commissioner: Representative Gene Kubina, Chair
 Agency: House State Affairs Committee Date: 1-28-91

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