

Letter sent on August 19, 2006 to Secretary Of State Condoleeza Rice. Similar letters were also sent to Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell, and Representative Jim McDermott.

Dear Secretary Rice,

Peace in the Middle East will never be achieved out of the barrel of a gun. As members of Our Lady of the Lake Church, we have to tell you how concerned we are over our government's policies in that part of the world. The situation in Iraq is out of hand. As a nation we need to return the sovereignty and wealth of Iraq to the Iraqis. As a nation we must unconditionally reject efforts by our President to lead us into war with Iran. As a nation we should be embarrassed and disquieted by the role that our government recently played in the Israel-Lebanon conflict, guaranteeing through deliberate non-intervention the needless death of hundreds of Lebanese civilians and UN observers and the wholesale destruction of Lebanese homes, hospitals and other essential infrastructure on which that society depends. We need to be asking ourselves what kind of a nation we are becoming, where military action trumps diplomacy, where force trumps justice in our words and deeds.

We are asking you as our Secretary of State to speak vociferously in opposition to the current delusion that the military option solves world problems. We ask you to speak out loudly against the people-destroying policies of our government in the Middle East. We fervently believe that peace is inextricably linked to social justice. Social justice for all peoples of the Middle East -- Muslims, Jews, and Christians alike --- is the goal our nation should embrace and work toward.

Sincerely,

[Signed by 35 members of Our Lady of the Lake Parish]