



International Korner

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*“War annihilates everything Social Work tries to accomplish”
Alice Salomon (called the Jane Adams of Germany)*

Peace not War

It brings me great sadness to hear that the possibility of a war against Iraq is growing stronger each day. Humanitarian consequences of a war are catastrophic and very well known to social workers. Our social work values are totally against the turmoil, struggles, and the hatred that wars can cause to people all over the world. Everyone in the planet is affected by the fear, threat, and the aftermath of a war. At a global level, developing nations throughout the world lose crucial foreign aid from developed countries, whose goals are suddenly shifted from health and education to armament, defense, and control. In face of the unknown, what used to be important priorities of a nation are rapidly altered or forgotten. What seemed to be very important causes to fight against, such as world hunger and the epidemic spread of the HIV virus around the world, are abruptly changed, modified, or perhaps manipulated because of the climate caused by the threat of a war. States and municipalities are also affected. Look what is happening to our own “Connecticut”--a budget crisis, and companies' lay offs are in the rise.

So, what can Social Workers do?

Well, the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) whose goals are to strive for social justice, human rights and social development through the development of social work, is committed to work towards a non-violent resolution to this dispute. Through international cooperation between social workers and professional organizations, IFSW President, Imelda Dodds, and Tom Johannesen (Secretary General) “continue to call for a peaceful settlement to international conflicts, they encourage their members and friends to continue to encourage their leaders to respect the basic role of the United Nations and to urge a non violent resolution of the current conflict” (www.ifsw.org). Therefore, let’s join together for peace and to pray that our world leaders will respect international agreements/treaties and therefore stop the various political and economic conflicts already caused by this possible war against Iraq...because “social workers should be the first ones to facilitate and maintain peace-creating international relations”. (Wieler, 1989 quoted in Healy, 2001, p. 27)



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Humanitarian reasons not to have a war against Iraq

- Disruption of years of international harmony.
- Civilians are the first ones to die, especially women and children.
- The use of destructive weapons could erase populations.
- Increase in ethnocentric sentiment among all people.
- International community and treaties would be broken and therefore set precedents for other nations to start a war without prior agreement.
- Massive displacement- increased numbers of immigrants and refugees worldwide.
- The high cost of war, money that should be invested in humanitarian causes instead.

