

# **Antiwar Groups in the United States: A Case of the Opposition to War against Iran after the September 11<sup>th</sup>**

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## **Abstract**

Social groups and movements are considered a fundamental socio-political force in all countries that intend to get back on the public demands especially when the authorities are not able or eager to do so. Anti-war groups are among the most pivotal social groups that focus on the establishment of sustainable peace in communities so, since the second half of the twentieth century, their efforts have been regarded as the determinant factor in world politics. This paper aims to study the origins and functions of those American anti-war organizations that oppose US war policies mainly against Iran after the September 11<sup>th</sup> Attacks. Archival research and historical analysis of the role of these groups and organizations demonstrate that they came into existence in response to the ever-growing global conflicts and created social campaigns for peace without governmental interventions. Similarly, due to the increasing violence and conflict between Iran and the United States during recent decades, the groups such as A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition, Code Pink, International Action

Center (IAC), Peace Action West, United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ) expressed their opposition against war with Iran mainly after September 11<sup>th</sup> and have been progressive and helpful in some cases. Nevertheless, in spite of their long history of activism and firm institutions could never seriously disobey US government regulations and policies.

**Keywords:** Iran, United States, Anti-War movements, Peace movements, September 11<sup>th</sup> Attacks.

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## **Introduction**

War is an unpleasant experience that has been an inseparable part of human history. Its main victims have been the ordinary people of different territories and countries who didn't have the slightest interference in flaring up the fire of war. Many investigations have been conducted on how to prevent war along with achieving and maintaining peace. (Barringer, 1999). Most studies regard social groups and movements as a vital mechanism to deter the belligerents and counter their war policies.

Anti-war groups and movements express peoples' demands and reveal their hopelessness and despair of government, politicians and political process with the aim of preventing conflict and violence, establishing peace and changing political conditions dominated by competition between powers on the world stage. Hence, anti-war social and political views and movements have gradually become a fundamental part of political and social life of modern societies in terms of stopping war and making peace without consideration of the government orders. The main attraction of these movements and anti-war

groups' activities derives from their moral commitment and promises to enforce peace.

Although these groups aim to stop war, they are heterogeneous in their functions, including their approaches and methods, for instance some of them are opponents of the unions that include different groups with various affiliations. Nevertheless, most of anti-war groups include not only pro-left, anti-globalization and peaceful activists but also people who belong to religious organizations, labor unions and student groups. Additionally, racial and ethnic minorities such as Muslims and blacks could join these institutions and express their positions. It is worth mentioning that due to this diversity, such groups rarely could form a united and unified social movement with specific membership plan. Some critics contend that the anti-war activists are against capitalism because they mainly believe that capitalism is the root of all irregulars in the world and consider the United States as a symbol of capitalism and consequently abomination and turmoil in the world. To others, anti-war groups and activists are anti-Americans who dream the Communist revolution in America, and their main goal is to defeat America in the war on terrorism (IAC, 2013). Overall, although the anti-war movement has not been able to create enough pressure on decision-makers to end US involvement in the war, they serve as a major constraint on their abilities to escalate (Llewellyn et al, n.d.).

This study considers anti-war groups and movements as a main critic and opponent of a particular nation's decision in terms of igniting war fire and using military force during conflicts. Given the distinction between anti-war movements and peace movements, it is worth mentioning that anti-war groups include mainly those people and means that work hard to put an end to a particular act of war. So they play a

determinant role in changing the path and pace of international events. In this regard, this paper aims to study the origins and functions of those American anti-war organizations that oppose US war policies mainly against Iran after the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks. Introducing and explaining the most significant anti-war groups in the United States, their goals, strategies, approaches and roles in opposition to war against Iran and also their position and leverage in post 9/11 could help to examine these movements.

There is limited number of studies in this case that will be discussed in literature review. After explanation of the role of anti-war movements in theoretical framework, the archival research will be used to provide the reliable data through the accessible resources. The gathered data will be analyzed by historical research in three parts: first, an introduction to the nature of anti-war movements; second, a brief explanation of the history of anti-war groups in the U.S; and third, introduction of some American anti-war groups known as main opponents of war against Iran (A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition, Code Pink, International Action Center (IAC), Peace Action West, United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ)) and description and explanation of their missions, performances and functions.

### **Review of Literature**

War has been the most undesired experience of human beings during the history and its main victims are people who are not involved in any conflict of interest and does not have any determinat role in raging fire. In this way, numerous investigations have been done in various areas to explore how to make peace and maintain it between diverse and rival actors and interets. In other words, the human beings at the present time have become more “conscious” due to the increasing technological developments, advanced communication systems

and large-scale information networks. Consequently, the alternative political and social views, among them anti-war visions, have become more or less common as part of political and social life in modern societies with the aim of stopping war and making peace without governmental intervention.

Harold Brackman believes that one of the most widespread anti-war individuals and organizations are those social and political forces that in the absence or weakness of political society and the irresponsibility of governments and politicians come into battle and organize social campaign to prevent or stop war and bring peace (Brackman, 2001).

In this regard, Deirdre Griswold argues that the oppositionist activists, among them anti-war groups, are those who fight with the United States' policies focusing on the issues such as dream of Communist revolution in America, America's defeat in the war on terrorism and no war against Iran especially after 9/11.

Accordingly, many anti-war organizations across the United States and in several other countries come together on an especial day to protest the increase of threats against Iran (Griswold, 2012). Indeed, according to Michael Gillespie, these anti-war groups in the United States intend to concentrate on Iran's nuclear program rather than launch a war against the country (Gillespie, 2009).

The limited number of investigations shows the necessity of a research in terms of identifying anti-war groups and movements that oppose US military attack against Iran. So this research explores these anti-war groups that are struggling against a military attack on Iran and are investigating public opinion in opposition to the coercive actions. not been discussed.

## **Theoretical Framework**

Social movements first appeared in the late eighteenth century, however the term ‘social movement’ was introduced into scholarly discussions in 1850 (Tilly, 2004: 5). Hence the study of social movements has been influenced by many historical, intellectual, and organizational factors (Gusfield, 1978: 122).

In similar vein, most peace and anti-war movements appeared when they introduced themselves as the antithesis of military force and war in the context of evolving social values and institutions mainly during 60s. In fact, since the second half of 20<sup>th</sup> century, anti-war approach has been considered as a more dominant factor in the global policy and opposition to war as a way to to declare disapproval and objection to war. In this regard, the pacifist and anti-war agenda refers to nonviolent responses to conflict and insecurity and is seen as promoter of dialectical relationship between peace and war. In other words, violent and nonviolent approaches to conflict are taken as interrelated facets of societal and cultural changes of the world and the main intent of organized peace efforts is concentrated on challenging the military institutions, policies, and values by advancing alternatives to war (Oxford, 2000).

Peace and anti-war movements originate from three sets of historical phenomena that in turn are affected by various sources, principles, and goals. Two of these sets have been grounded in the modern peace advocacy which is based on ancient and medieval world and in contrast to the just war tradition, promote absolute pacifism. The third set of antimilitarism is rooted in the modern political economy (ibid).

Although many scholars distinguish between anti-war movements and peace movements., pacifist and anti-war movements are similar in nature and goals. Indeed, the anti-war activities are reflected in the form of objection and using ordinary means to pressure a government to put an end to a

particular war, conflict and violence, while pacifist activities go beyond the war preventing agenda and try to promote peace focusing on human being core values.

In this regard, Frances Romero explains an anti-war movement as a social movement which opposes a particular nation's decision to start or carry on an armed conflict, without any cause (Romero, 2009). On the other part, Theodore Koontz defines pacifism as a distinct ideological position in the history of religious, ethical, and political thought. He concentrates on the core feature of pacifism as a principled rejection of the use of physical violence in personal and political life and argues that the current usage bases on the belief that it is morally wrong to participate in killing for any reason. Therefore, from pacifist point of view, violent conflict is never acceptable and society should not be ready to fight in a conflict (Howes, 2013, p. 428). Overall, Pacifists oppose all kinds of war under any circumstances, but anti-war activists may oppose to only a particular war or wars because they not necessarily express their opposition to national defense issues. Given the significance of the anti-war approaches in terms of opposing the use of military force during conflicts, they could also be known as as pacifist approach. So the analytical part of this paper explores and introduces the most active anti-war institutions in opposing US attack against Iran, especially those concentrated on peace and conflict prevention.

### **I-Anti-war Movements in the United States**

Although the emergence of peace and anti-war movements is attributed to the second half of 20<sup>th</sup> century, the early anti-war sentiment in the United States developed during the antebellum period, the time span between the formation of the U.S. government and the commencement of the American Civil War. The sentiment expressed itself in the form of strict pacifist



and more moderate non-interventionist approaches towards the happenings. Violent opposition to the “Enrollment Act of Conscription” of 1863 and controversial positions against “Espionage Act” of 1917 are among the prominent examples of the presence of anti-war approaches in the US history.

Nevertheless, none of them were as expansive as opposition to Vietnam War (Oettinger, 2011; Shepard, 2002). In fact, opposition to the US invasion to Vietnam during 1960s is one of the greatest movements in the history of the US and anti-war stances. In Autumn 1969, over 500,000 people demonstrated in Washington to oppose the US invasion to this Southeast Asian country. The movement gained national prominence in 1965, peaked in 1968, and remained powerful throughout the duration of the conflict (Shepard, 2002). It is to say that this strike has been the most extensive uprising against war in the US history until now. In spite of many objections in this regard, war continued for years. The movement changed to a severe event when four students were killed in University of Kent and then became one part of the US domestic policy through war period (Barringer, 1999; Kindig, 2008). Other records of the anti-war movements in the United States during the second half of 20<sup>th</sup> century can be found events such as the Youth Rebellion of the 1960s in response to the assassination of Martin Luther King; anti-war protests at the Chicago in Democratic National Convention in 1968; movements of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War; the anti-war movement in relation to the Persian Gulf conflicts.

The anti-war stances and public reactions against war reached to the peak during the initial years of 21<sup>st</sup> century. After September 11<sup>th</sup> and US invasion to Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003, anti-war activists around the world came to protest. More than half a million people on the streets protested the America’s invasion of Iraq. Anti-war protests were the

largest protests since the Vietnam War. Pursuant to this event, more than 150 anti-war Acts were adopted by the various local unions and community, also 750 thousands of people in Washington and millions of people around the world marched on street. By keeping this, other forms of anti-war actions and strike were carried out around the world (Ells, n.d.; Zunes & Laired, 2010). In this regard, many anti-war groups and communities have appeared in the US political sphere to oppose US war policies and promote peace.

## **II-Anti-war Movements and Opposition to War Against Iran**

The organized opposition to a possible future military attack against Iran by the United States started during 2005-2006. Indeed, in early 2005, journalists, activists and academics such as Seymour Hersh, (Hersh, 2005) Scott Ritter, (Ritter, 2005) Joseph Cirincione (Cirincione, 2006) and Jorge E. Hirsch (Hirsch, 2005) published statements and expressed their concern about the possibility that US alleged threat posed by Iran's nuclear program might lead to US military action against the country in the future. Similar statements, along with the concurrent escalation of tensions between Iran and some Western governments, led to the formation of grassroots organizations, including Campaign Against Sanctions and Military Intervention in Iran in the US and the United Kingdom which focused on advocating against potential military strikes on Iran (CASMI, 2007). Moreover, many individuals, grassroots organizations and international governmental organizations stated their opposition to a potential attack on Iran, among them Mohamed ElBaradei, ex-Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (Heinrich & Strohecker, 2007); Scott Ritter, former United Nations weapons inspector in Iraq (Ritter, 2005) Mairead Corrigan-

Maguire, Betty Williams, Harold Pinter and Jody Williams, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, Code Pink, (Knowlton, 2007), the Non-Aligned Movement (2006), and the Arab League, etc.

Among the proponents and opponents of US military action against Iran, some experts considered the potential production of nuclear weapons by Iran as a real reason for a possible attack on Iran by the United States and Israel, while some saw it only as a pretext for attacking. For instance, Philip Giraldi, a former CIA officer, Seymour Hersh (2005), Michel Chossudovsky (2006), and George Hirsch (2005 & 2006) claimed that the United States was planning to attack Iran and would use nuclear weapons in its attacks against the country. George Hirsch declared US willingness to show its nuclear capability to non-nuclear countries as the real reason for the invasion (Hirsch, 2005) and Chomsky argued that the main reason for attacking Iran is to control the Middle East energy resources, particularly oil (Shank, 2007).

Therefore, in the context of controverial positions regarding Iran's nuclear programs and US potential attack against the country, some anti-war groups and communities incremented their efforts against US war policies and given the terrible consequences of September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks in Middle Eastern countries, extended their anti-war agenda to oppose military action against Iran. The archival research on the texts and documents regarding the US anti-war movements highlighted the groups such as A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition, Code Pink, International Action Center (IAC), Peace Action West, United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ) as main anti-war actors against US belligerent approaches towards Iran. So, the following parts explain these institutions with special attention to their activities in terms of conflict prevention.

### **III-A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition**

The A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition was formed on September 14, 2001 by gathering hundreds of prominent organizations and individuals and organizing centers in cities and towns across the United States. Its national Steering Committee represents those major US organizations that have the experience of campaigning against U.S. intervention in Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East and Asia, and those institutions that campaign for civil rights and for social and economic justice for working and poor people inside the United States. The A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition' first national demonstration against war and racism was held on September 29, 2001. This demonstration which was organized after September 11, gathered 25,000 people into the streets of Washington DC and 15,000 in San Francisco (A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition, 2022).

The prominence of A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition derives from its efforts in the earliest days after September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks that in turn introduced the Coalition as a principled entity for organizing political resistance through mass action and for creating a forum for people of conscience to speak out when so many others were silent. Indeed, the constituent organizations of the A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition Steering Committee are those anti-globalization communities and groups that after September 11<sup>th</sup> and during the difficult circumstances under the Bush Administration's endless war drive, initiated a strategy and promoted mass mobilizations to counter his war on terrorism (.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition, 2022; Weinberg, n.d.).

The Coalition mainly concentrates on forming an anti-racist, peace and social justice movement through promoting mass anti-war participation in the United States. An interesting and significant characteristic of its organizing strategy is cooperation with the Arab American and Muslim community and other traditionally ignored sectors in U.S. society that form

a multi-national anti-war movement (*ibid*). Following mottos reflect the main goals of the A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition for urging the the anti-war movement in 2005: Stop the War in Iraq; End Colonial Occupation from Iraq to Palestine to Haiti; Support the Palestinian People's Right of Return; Stop the Threats Against Venezuela, Cuba, Iran & North Korea; U.S. Out of the Philippines; U.S. Out of Puerto Rico; Bring all the troops home now; Stop the Racist, anti-Immigrant and anti-Labor Offensive at Home, Defend Civil Rights; Military Recruiters Out of Our Schools and Communities (.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition, 2022; Hinnebusch, 2007).

The A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition showed its support for Iran through filming a short video in front of White House. This short video captured the Coalition's campaign to stop the war on Iran to display its severe opposition to war against Iran. The Coalition referred to the Iran's history in 60 years ago, mentioning the U.S. and British embargo on Iranian oil in response to the nationalization of the country's petroleum resources by the Mossadegh government, the first democratically elected government in Iran's history. The video showed how the embargo weakened the Mossadegh government so that the CIA-organized coup of overthrown his government and the unpopular Shah came back to the throne by U.S. and British support. From 1953 to the revolution of 1979, the Shah served as an extremely brutal agent by killing up to 100,000 Iranians under the SAVAK tortures and turning the country's resources over to U.S. oil companies and banks. Considering these facts, the Coalition argued that it was the time to stop any war against Iran (.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition, 2022). Additionally, A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition set a day by the name of "Saturday, Feb. 4 2012, day of action: No Sanction, No War against Iran" and called everyone to join the demonstration. The day was recognized as a "No War on Iran, No Sanctions, No

Intervention, No Assassinations” day and was sponsored by some progressive organizations (*ibid*).

In this regard, the ANSWER Coalition developed an instructive fact sheet that broke down the propaganda campaign against Iran carried out by Washington and the corporate media. In this fact sheet, the ANSWER Coalition had notified that “1. Iran does not possess a nuclear weapon; 2. Iran has the right, according to international law, to develop nuclear energy for civilian use; 3. Iran’s nuclear energy program is regularly monitored by the International Atomic Energy Agency; 4. Iran has never started a war; 5. The United States possesses 10,600 nuclear warheads in its stockpile, 7,982 of which are deployed and 2,700 of which are in a contingency stockpile. The total number of nuclear warheads that have been built from 1951 to present is 67,500; 6. The United States is the only country to have ever used nuclear weapons. It did so when it incinerated hundreds of thousands of Japanese people living in the cities of Nagasaki and Hiroshima. Neither city had any military significance; 7. The United States has spent \$7 trillion on nuclear weapons. The U.S. military budget for 2012 alone is about equal to Iran’s entire Gross National Product; 8. The United States broke diplomatic relations with Iran and has pursued a policy of economic sanctions against the country since the overthrow of the U.S.-backed Shah (King); 9. Iran’s oil reserves are the fourth largest in the world—it has 12.7 percent of the world’s known oil reserves. That makes Iran’s oil reserves second only to Saudi Arabia in the Middle East, greater than those of Iraq; 10. The new economic sanctions against Iran include a ban on the import, sale and trade of Iranian oil, which constitutes half of Iran’s Gross National Product. It forbids any company in the world that does any business with Iran or its Central Bank from having any trade or economic transaction with a U.S. bank or corporation; 11. The economic sanctions

are an effort to create economic suffering in Iran and to deprive the country of the goods and services to sustain life. According to international law, these economic sanctions constitute a blockade or an act of war against Iran even though Iran poses no threat to the people of the United States or Europe” (.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition, 2022; Toussaint, 2009: 121). In sum, the A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition has tried to organize and support many activities and demonstrations to express its opposition to the US military threat against Iran.

#### **IV-Code Pink**

Code Pink is a women-initiated grassroots peace and social justice movement that focuses on ending U.S. funded wars and challenging militarism globally (Code Pink, 2022). Medea Benjamin, Jodie Evans, Diane Wilson, Star Hawk and about 100 other women formed Code Pink on November 17, 2002 to stop the United States from invading Iraq (Kutz Flamenbaum, 2007). They set up for a 4-month all-day wake in front of the White House during the cold of winter (Tierney, 2006). The wake inspired people from all kinds of life, and from all over the United States, to stand for peace and anti-war movement. Many organizations joined them too, including Global Exchange, Greenpeace, WILPF, WAND, Public Citizen, NOW, Women for Women International and Neighbors for Peace and Justice (Pearce, 2003). In fact, more than 10,000 people participated, and a group of 25 women, including Alice Walker, Maxine Hong Kingston, Susan Griffin, Star hawk, Jodie Evans and Medea Benjamin, were arrested for taking the peaceful protest right up to the White House gate (Milazzo, 2005). The wake ended on March 8, International Women's Day, when the celebrated women as global peacemakers with a week of activities, meetings and a walk to surround the White House in pink (Pearce, 2003).

The selection of the name Code Pink derives from the former Bush Administration's color-coded homeland security alerts, i.e. yellow, orange, red that were used to show terrorist threats. Bush's color-coded alerts were based on fear and violence, but the Code Pink alert tried to introduce itself as an energetic call for people to wage peace (Kutz Flamenbaum, 2007). Moreover, although Code Pink is a women-initiated movement, it is not exclusively for women and the men are also included among its members. Nevertheless, its active members are mainly mothers, grandmothers, sisters, and daughters, female workers, students, teachers, healers, artists, writers, singers, poets and all outraged woman who rise up and oppose the global militarism (Tierney, 2006; Toussaint, 2009).

The Code Pink as a worldwide network of women and men committed to work for peace, anti-war and social justice, confronts the militarist and aggressors, whether in the halls and hearing rooms of Congress or the national conventions of both the Republicans and Democrats or George Bush's fundraisers or the publicity tours of Karl Rove or Condi Rice, Donald Rumsfeld and others, or Nancy Pelosi's house (Milazzo, 2005). So the movement has been so fundamental in terms of informing the US public about the danger of war with Iran. For instance, one of the actions taken by Code Pink was to overwhelm Gary Ackerman's home, American Democrat Congress by boat. She had a houseboat on the river and indeed the movement tried to show its opposition to Resolution 362 by this action. Consequently, Ackerman brought to Congress demanding Iran's naval. This action was also broadcast by Fox News television network (Kutz Flamenbaum, 2007). Another action of the organization was proposing to issue a resolution on Aemericas's mayors conference about preventing war with Iran and taking a peaceful resolution regarding the Iran-U.S.



dispute. Approximately 45 cities of America supported the resolution (ibid).

In sum, Code Pink has been an important organization in terms of informing American people about any provocations against Iran and it has not given up any efforts in the context. As a whole, the most important part of anti-war organizations and anti-war groups like Code Pink is seeking peace and fight any law or resolution that will be presented at the Congress against Iran.

### **V-International Action Center (IAC)**

International Acton Center (IAC) was founded in 1992 by Ramsey Clark based on the perception that both the left and right are closely tied to the Workers World Party. Its first mission called to hold coordinated protests across the country focusing on “No war, no sanctions, no intervention, no assassinations against Iran”. One informal group took part in the call only two weeks before the protests, however invited anti-war forces around the world to join in order to make this emergency protest a global day of action. Now IAC includes a broad spectrum of the U.S. anti-imperialist and anti-war organizations (International Action Center (IAC), 2022).

In the case of Iran’s nuclear program, in 2005 almos all members of the International Acton Center (IAC) agreed on the need to stop U.S. imperialism and Israel from start of a military attack against Iran (Noakes, Klocke & Gillham, 2005). There was also a consensus in the IAC that the President Obama’s sanctions signed into law on 31 December 2012 were themselves an act of war aimed at the Iranian people. So the political activists on the call warned about the danger of a wider war in or around Iran (Catalinotto, 2012).

Although the member organizations of IAC had various assessments of the Iranian government, they all considered any

act of intervention by U.S. imperialism in the Southwest Asia as a threat to the entire region and to peace. Moreover, some of the people on the call who are originally from Iran and who were in touch with their Iranian families and friends conveyed the Iranian people's anger at the terror of scientists. For example, agreement to make "no assassinations" was one of their demands to show solidarity with the Iranian population as well as to criticize the U.S. and its allies for criminal activities against Iran and its people (ibid).

## **VI-Peace Action West**

Peace Action West founded about 50 years ago is one of the largest Anti-war and Peace National Network in the United States. This Institution includes organizations from 30 states that consider war and violence as an inappropriate way in any tension and disagreement and call for a living far from threat and nuclear weapons. The institution mainly focuses on signature gathering campaigns, Internet operations, citizen lobbies, and more relation with congress members in order to put more pressure on the US government and Congress. Consequently, plays a significant role in designing an strategy to ratify Anti-war laws in the US Congress (Griffin, 2009).

Peace Action West is considered as the prominent member of Union for Peace and Justice and Triumph Coalition without War. So the most important mission of Peace Action West is to prevent using nuclear weapons. Indeed, Peace Action West is the group behind the treaty that ended atmospheric nuclear testing, it stopped President Bush's new nuclear weapons, and it led the charge for peaceful alternatives in Afghanistan. Its success, in contrast to the other organization, came from engaging average citizens. Thus, changing US military policies, preventing the probability of attacking to Iran, solving the Iran and Afghanistan problems makes it an important actor in anti-

war movement in Iraq and Afghanistan and Iran (Peace Action West, 2022).

In the case of Iran's nuclear program, Peace Action West focused on important issues in US relations with Iran notifying that war with Iran would be catastrophic and costly. Their members contended that Iran was not pursuing a nuclear weapon, however a military attack would offer Iran a strong motivation to accelerate their nuclear weapon program to deter further attacks (ibid). Moreover, It is to consider that Peace Action West argued that US sanctions against Iran could be considered useful if they would be used as a leverage to negotiate a nuclear deal. However, broad sanctions were considered ineffective in negotiating the deal and resolving US-Iran tensions (Thielmann, 2009).

Overall, Peace Action West believes that diplomacy is the best option for dealing with concerns about Iran's nuclear program. The insitution focuses on practical diplomacy with a clear understanding of the political situation to advance US interests without military means. This tool is considered effective not only in the case of Iran, but also in US tensions with many other countries.

## **VII-United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ)**

United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ) was fouded in October 2002 and from 2002 to 2006 organized 790 strikes around the world. It includes over 1300 national and local groups in the United States of America (United for Peace and Justice, 2022). This organization came to grow because of its intention to protest against the unethical and intensive invasion of US against Iraq and possibility of war against other countries like Iran. Moreover the coalition formed on the basis of the unpopularity of US policies and imperialist approach (Ritter, 2005).

There are a variety of institutions and groups around the world, which are in relation to UFPJ network. For instance, the institution organized a demonstration with 500000 people across the United Nation Organization office on 15 February 2003 to oppose to war. UFPJ wanted the exit of America Forces from other countries, stop of the usage of nuclear weapons, decrease military budgets, eliminate or cut the economical and military support of America to Israel during the Palestine occupation, response to immigrants and poverties and colored people (Bennis, 2006; Guapta, 2006). It is to say that some critics nominate this group communist and call its leader, Leslie Cagan as an advocator of Fidel Castro.

In the case of Iran's nuclear program, when the Bush administration appeared to be actively planning a military strike against Iran, UFPJ institution intended to take action to stop war with Iran. So UFPJ set its mission on a call for no attack on Iran urging other organizations to explain their opposition to military attack or war in Iran and wanting them to pressure their congress members using their power to prevent a war on Iran. In addition, UFPJ asked its speakers on Iran to go to the schools, house of worship, Labor Union and peace or community groups spreading postcards on the theme of "Do Not Attack Iran" and sent them also to the members of Congress distributing "Hands off Iran" t-shirts (Smith & Ruder, n.d). In sum, UFPJ has mostly tried to show the importance of preventing of war, violence and conflicts through propaganda, following the peace establishment agenda in the society.

## **Conclusion**

One of the most significant and pragmatic goals of anti-war groups and movements is stop the war, but these groups, in addition to their distinction with the pacifist groups, are themselves different in their justifications, goals details,

methods and alternatives. Given this diversity, it is very hard to imagine that such groups form a united and unified social movement. This deficiency becomes so fundamental in vital issues such as US-Iran tensions and in result, as argued in the theoretical framework, these groups could hardly change decision-making processes regarding national defense issues. Moreover, in spite of the diversity in terms of organizers and sponsors in all anti-war groups, their activities and demands begin from criticizing violent and coercive policies.

The investigation showed that anti-war movement in the US has a long history becoming more important during the second half of 20<sup>th</sup> century and reaching to the peak after the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks and subsequent US invasions to Iraq and Afghanistan. In this line, after the growing presence of political debates regarding Iran's nuclear programs in the world political circles which was incrementing the possibility US invasion to Iran, some anti-war groups initiated to take action for preventing war with Iran. A.N.S.W.E.R. Coalition, Code Pink, International Action Center (IAC), Peace Action West, United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ) intended to play an informative role in the midst of various controversies and media projections through arranging demonstrations, aligning public thoughts and warning about the disruptive consequences of violation of the rights of non-militaries in overseas. They tried to replace the violent and war seeking orientations with more pacifist approaches focusing on the significance of negotiation and dialogue. In sum, although they expressed their opposition against war with Iran and have been progressive and helpful in some cases. Nevertheless, in spite of their long history of activism and firm institutions could never seriously disobey US government regulations and policies.

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