

Lieberman Repeats Calls For Military Action In Iran

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By Stephen Singer , Associated Press Writer

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East Hartford — Sen. Joe Lieberman repeated his call Friday for the United States to use “limited military action” against Iranian camps suspected of being used to train and equip terrorists who are killing coalition troops in Iraq.

Speaking to reporters after an appearance at a rally supporting jet engine manufacturer Pratt & Whitney's competition for a military contract, Lieberman said U.S. diplomatic efforts are important, but military action also must be an option.

Military action should be limited to halting Iranian training of terrorism, not to eliminate possible nuclear sites, though force could also stem Iran's nuclear ambitions, he said.

“If we don't figure out first through diplomacy and, if necessary, through limited military action how to stop the Iranians from killing Americans and our Arab allies today it's going to be impossible for us to do what everybody in both parties and all ideologies say we have to do tomorrow, which is to stop them from getting nuclear weapons,” he said.

“Iran has effectively begun to carry out military action against American soldiers and a lot of our allies in the Arab world and if we just sit back they're going to continue to move forward,” he said. “They're going to take it as a sign of weakness.”

Lieberman first raised the issue of military strikes on Sunday. He said Friday he did so to introduce the matter into policy discussions in Washington and “to ask everybody to open their eyes to what's happening elsewhere in the Middle East.”

Lieberman, the Democratic vice presidential nominee in 2000 who was re-elected to the Senate last year as an independent, said intelligence shows that the Iranian Revolutionary Guard is responsible for training and equipping terrorists operating in Iraq and that the head of the Revolutionary Guard reports to Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

He cited the violence in Gaza between Palestinian factions and the assassination on Wednesday of anti-Syrian lawmaker Walid Eido in Beirut. Iranian support of Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon is behind much of the violence, he said.

“This is outrageous stuff going on and it's going to affect our security,” Lieberman said.

Earlier, Lieberman, Gov. M. Jodi Rell and officials of Pratt & Whitney and the Boeing Co. spoke before several hundred Pratt & Whitney employees and others at a rally to support the two companies' partnership seeking to build the U.S. Air force's new tanker aircraft fleet.

Boeing would build the KC-767, which is designed for aerial refueling of aircraft and is able to move cargo, passengers, patients and medical staff. Pratt & Whitney, a subsidiary of United Technologies Corp., would build the engine.

Regional

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By Bob Child

•Gov. M. Jodi Rell, left, and U.S. Sen. Joe Lieberman, D-Conn., both wearing special glasses, try out controls Friday in a flight simulator that duplicates air-to-air refueling controls of the proposed Boeing KC-767 Advanced Tanker Aircraft at the Pratt & Whitney Aircraft jet engine plant in East Hartford.