

Terror-Free Investing

If you subscribe to my online column, the Strang Report, you read in July that the annual Christians United for Israel (CUFI) Washington-Israel Summit exceeded all expectations. It grew for the third straight year. Sen. Joe Lieberman, the keynote speaker, defied critics who urged him to cancel his appearance and stood with pastor John Hagee, who has

been the subject of a media firestorm this year. Lieberman got a standing ovation from the crowd of more than 4,000 when he quoted Genesis 45:3: "I am your brother Joseph."

You can read more details about the summit and about how Hagee is becoming a "spiritual statesman" by logging on to [www.strangreport.com](#). You can also subscribe to the Strang Report to begin receiving my weekly updates.

If you have never attended one of the CUFI summits, plan to attend July 19-23, 2009. It's a visible way to join with thousands of others to show your support for Israel.

We believe the Bible promises that God will bless those who bless Israel (see Gen. 12:3). That's why Hagee founded CUFI in February 2006 to unite the massive group of Christians who felt a bond to Israel and wanted to support it but believed their individual efforts often didn't amount to much.

Under one umbrella group, our voice is beginning to be heard. Lieberman told us: "Know that there is value to your presence here in Washington."

The day after Lieberman's address, we lobbied our congressmen and senators on two important pieces of legislation: the Iran Counter-Proliferation Act and the Iran Sanctions Enabling Act. As I write this, the first has passed the House but needs approval by the Senate and then by the House again.

We also wanted to encourage them to support U.S. military aid to Israel. The president has requested \$2.5 billion for the fiscal year 2009, but Congress must approve the allocation.

We were generally received positively on Capitol Hill, and it was good to connect with our lawmakers, see the system in operation and make our voices heard. But one of the most important things I learned was the need to do "terror-free" investing.

Sanctions against South Africa by the rest of the civilized world, along with the withdrawing of investments from companies doing business in South Africa, brought down apartheid in the 1990s. Now it's time to exert similar pressure on nations that sponsor terrorism—Iran, Syria, Sudan and North Korea.

My own state, Florida, was the first to pass legislation forbidding the state to invest government employees' pension funds in any company doing non-humanitarian business in Iran. Several other states have followed suit. But the law affects only people who work for the state. What about the rest of us?

I chaired a workshop session at the recent summit in which several speakers talked about what the average person can do. One course of action is to ensure that money diverted into your 401(k) and other accounts is being invested in one or more of the 1,700 companies that have been judged to be "terror-free."

The concept of investing only in companies that share our values—or at least don't oppose them—is just beginning to catch on. It is one way an individual can make a difference and feel he is walking in integrity. It is also a way that together we can put pressure on companies to no longer do business with government sponsors of terrorism.

Why not check your investments today by going to the Web site and then making any necessary changes to your plans? If just

the readers of Charisma did this, the total amount of money diverted away from terrorist nations would be an enormous sum, even though most of us are small investors. Banning together in this way—putting our money where our mouths are, so to speak—will make a difference.

It's important to sign up for the Strang Report, join CUFI, attend the summit and lobby Washington on behalf of Israel. But we also need to make a statement by investing only in terror-free companies. The rate of return is the same as what we would earn by investing in companies that do business with terrorist nations—but we will have the assurance that we are truly making a difference for Israel.

Stephen Strang, founder of Charisma, writes a weekly commentary online. [Subscribe to the Strang Report here.](#)