

# Update

May 2012

Ron Zucker, Editor

## Local

### May 21 Meeting

#### **A Call for New Priorities**

Since 2003 U.S. Labor Against the War has been a force for activism, combining the two vital themes of labor advocacy and opposition to the war. While springing up around the Iraq war, its leaders surely must see no reason for halting its efforts in the face of the continuing war in Afghanistan (and to a lesser extent Pakistan) and the threat of war on Iran. USLAW has, with many other organizations, long made the connection between excessive spending on war efforts and pleading poverty and too-high deficits for peacetime job creation.

USLAW's co-founder and national coordinator, Michael Eisenscher, took that connection one more step when in 2010 he also founded the Bay Area Campaign for New Priorities – an affiliate of the New Priorities Network. The Oakland-based Eisenscher will be the special guest of Peace Action of San Mateo County at its next meeting, on Monday, May 21. The event is at 7 PM in Beck Hall of the Unitarian Universalists of San Mateo, 300 E. Santa Inez Avenue (at Ellsworth) in San Mateo.

Eisenscher's talk, entitled "Militarism, War and the Economic Crisis – Three Reasons to Occupy", will feature a power-point presentation entitled "War and Taxes", which is basically divided into three segments. The first describes the impact of the economic crisis on workers, and growing inequality. The second shows the impact of the wars and military spending. The third presents a summary of the Budget for All issued by the Congressional Progressive Caucus, and the case for demanding new budgetary, political, social and economic priorities. The rest of the presentation provides information about the Campaign for New Priorities.

The Campaign, as its web site states, "brings together organizations and individuals from diverse constituencies, communities and movements to demand of our public officials a change of direction for the U.S. – one that prioritizes putting people back to work, restoring and fully funding essential public services, rebuilding and repairing infrastructure, funding the development of new alternative energy technologies, cleaning up and protecting the environment, developing a sustainable peace economy, reducing poverty and inequality, and generally meeting important social and other human

needs." It is this mission, or perhaps series of missions, that informs Eisenscher's ongoing work and his talk.

Michael Eisenscher is a veteran trade union activist, labor educator, organizer and writer. He first joined a union in 1962 when he helped to organize student employees of the University of Wisconsin. He took his first full time staff job in the labor movement in 1972 when he went to work for the United Electrical Workers union. In the 1990s Eisenscher demonstrated his dedication to labor when he pursued a doctorate in Public Policy, but chose a return to organizing over completing his dissertation. In 2009 he led a delegation of trade unionists and members of Iraq Veterans Against the War to Iraq for the first international labor conference ever held there. Along with his work in USLAW and the Campaign, he also teaches a political economy course in the Laney College Labor Studies Program.

We hope to see you for this vital presentation. Suggested donation is \$5-10 sliding scale, with no one turned away for lack of funds. Beck Hall is wheelchair accessible.

*Ron Zucker*

Log on to [www.uslaboragainstwar.org](http://www.uslaboragainstwar.org).

### **Report on April 17 Tax Day Event**

#### **Reaching Out to the Community**

We want to first express our thanks to all who attended. We had a modest but good event. We registered the leafletting with MoveOn, and folks from that circle added to our numbers and enthusiasm. All told, from 10 AM to 3 PM (when my knees gave out), we had around twelve volunteers participate. One highlight was when John St. Peter and Gary Parma led the MoveOn contingent in a small march to pass out flyers and carry signs to four local "too big to fail" banks, as well as the San Mateo Public Library where they engaged the folks waiting for opening time. John pointed out to the library patrons that opening hours would be expanded if our cash-poor government didn't waste money on our wars and armaments. Good going, John!

Later in the day an attractive and fashionably dressed woman took my flyer and went around the corner only to return to inform Max Bollock and myself she was part of the 1% and had just dropped off a check for fifty thousand dollars at the post office (which was her tax payment), and that she didn't have any loopholes to take advantage of. The reason she thought it important was because I was wearing a top hat (given to me by former Board member Don Havis), and a bit of "bling" around my neck compliments of Don's wife Katia Bugaeff. I

also had a sign around my neck saying “I’m Mr. 1% and I don’t pay no stinkin’ taxes man!” She just wanted to let me know that wealthy people aren’t all the same. I wished her good health and to enjoy her good fortune as she left with a bit of a smile (at least I think she did).

All in all we handed out around four hundred tax day flyers and a good time was had by all. Thanks again!

*Mike Caggiano*

## Weekly Peace Vigils in San Mateo

Come to downtown San Mateo every Saturday from 3-4 PM, and join members of Peace Action of San Mateo County as we register our opposition to war and occupation. It takes place from 3-4 PM at 3rd Avenue and El Camino Real in San Mateo. Bring a sign or use one of ours if you like.

And on Thursdays from 4-6 PM, Declaration of Peace-San Mateo holds a similar vigil at 5th and El Camino. Join them in their “Stand for Peace”.

## PPJC Celebrates Its 30th Anniversary!

The Peninsula Peace & Justice Center is celebrating 30 years of shaking things up, and on Saturday May 19 their Board of Directors and staff invite all of us to join them in a gala picnic celebration...a friendly gathering to celebrate community-based activism.

This will be a potluck lunch (please bring food to share), with live music, speakers, and of course peace loving people!

The celebration begins at 2 PM at the University Lutheran Church (outside on the lawn), 1611 Stanford Avenue (at Bowdoin) in Palo Alto. Aside from the aforementioned dish to share, it is free and open to all.

### Membership Report

**Peace Action of San Mateo County gratefully welcomes back the following renewing members: Mark and Renee Bollock, Edna Steele**

# National

## One Year After Bin Laden's Death, Bring the Troops Home Now

*By Michael Eisenscher and Kevin Martin  
May 1, 2012 Reader Supported News*

May 2 will mark one year since the death of Osama bin Laden. The CIA estimates there are fewer than 100 al Qaeda operatives in Afghanistan. Since “getting Bin Laden” and defeating al Qaeda were the stated reasons the U.S. invaded Afghanistan in 2001, President Barack

Obama should use the anniversary to announce the end of the U.S. war in Afghanistan.

Instead, his administration has reportedly negotiated an agreement with President Hamid Karzai’s government for a U.S. presence in that country until at least 2024, ten years past the supposed date for withdrawal of U.S. combat troops. The U.S. and its NATO allies are supposed to commit to ongoing training of the Afghan military, as well as development aid. The exact terms of the agreement have yet to be revealed.

U.S. troops would also still have a limited combat role, namely Special Forces counter-insurgency operations, according to a draft proposal described by Admiral Bill McRaven, the head of U.S. special operations. A more detailed security plan will surely be discussed at the upcoming NATO Summit in Chicago.

If the agreement covers a ten year period, commits U.S. military forces for training and counter-insurgency (which means inevitable combat), obligates the U.S. to continue providing billions of taxpayer dollars annually in aid (essentially bankrolling the entire Afghan government and military), and posits support for any number of “nation-building” measures, isn’t this in fact a treaty, subject to U.S. Senate ratification, rather than an intergovernmental memorandum of agreement?

Karzai apparently feels obligated to take the agreement to his parliament for approval. Doesn’t Obama have a similar obligation – one imposed by the U.S. Constitution?

Quite apart from these legal, “process” questions, does anyone think our staying until 2024 is going to bring peace and stability to Afghanistan? We’ve already been there for eleven years – the longest war in our country’s history. What do we really have to show for it? We’ve spent almost \$523 billion. Almost 2000 Americans have been killed (378 since Bin Laden’s death) and another 15,300 wounded. 1000 NATO troops have lost their lives. And the UN reported that 2011 was the worst year for civilian deaths in Afghanistan.

Staying through 2024 will be a hard sell to the majority of Americans. According to a late April) Pew Research public opinion poll, only about a third of those polled think U.S. troops should stay in Afghanistan “until the situation there is stabilized” (whatever that means). About two-thirds of Obama supporters, and almost as many swing voters (who make up nearly a quarter of the electorate), want a swift withdrawal of U.S. troops, while Mitt Romney supporters are split just about evenly.

It’s hard to imagine public support increasing for this mission, especially considering the ongoing cost. Cities and states around the country face budget crises and are severely cutting all manner of public services. In 2012

alone, states had a combined shortfall of \$169.3 billion, which resulted in spending cuts of \$135.8 billion and tax increases of \$21.4 billion. That has translated into deep cuts in public services at the very time when tens of millions need them most. How many more lives and how much more treasure will another 12 years in Afghanistan cost us?

Congressional support for ending the war rapidly is growing, and will be manifest by upcoming votes in the House of Representatives on the Defense Authorization Bill, as well as in other forms of Congressional communication to the president. Congress is unlikely to cut off funding for the war, but the administration would do well to heed the rising bipartisan tide for ending it sooner rather than later.

The May 20-22 NATO Summit in Chicago provides a great opportunity to devise plans to withdraw all foreign troops while fulfilling non-military humanitarian assistance and support for human and minority rights, especially for women's rights in Afghanistan.

As the 15,000 delegates from alliance countries gather for the official confab at McCormick Place, tens of thousands of peace advocates will descend on Chicago to give voice to the demands of the pro-peace majority in the U.S. While there have been, and will continue to be, debates about security, 1st amendment rights, and inconvenience to Chicagoans, such atmospherics should not obscure the real issues of U.S./NATO military policy, especially as it relates to the present and future military occupation of Afghanistan.

It's not clear what the year since the killing of Bin Laden has done to improve U.S. or Afghan security. It's even less clear what staying for another dozen years will do for either country. The time to bring U.S. forces home is now, not 2014, and certainly not 2024.

Barack Obama inherited an economy in crisis and two unwinnable wars that were bleeding the nation, both figuratively and literally. The moral and political burden for that mess rests with the Bush administration. What happens in the next four years (assuming he is re-elected) will fall squarely on Obama's shoulders.

*Michael Eisenscher is National Coordinator of U.S. Labor Against the War (USLAW) a network of over 190 national, regional and local unions and other labor organizations. He will give a talk to PASMCM on Monday, April 21.*

*Kevin Martin is Executive Director of Peace Action, which is part of the Network for a NATO-Free Future organizing events in Chicago around the NATO Summit May 18-20 (see opposite).*

## **NATO Counter-Summit – May 18-19 in Chicago**

### **Vision and organizing**

When U.S. officials met in Brussels with NATO countries to prepare for the May NATO Summit in Chicago, Australia announced it would withdraw its troops from Afghanistan a year earlier than planned. Depending on the outcome of the French presidential elections, France may do the same.

When the 15,000 NATO Summit diplomats and members of their entourages arrive, peace and justice activists and organizers from the U.S. and NATO countries will be in Chicago May 18-20 to greet them with the urgency of ending the Afghanistan war now and building just and productive societies.

It is time for all the NATO and U.S. troops to leave Afghanistan. Now only 32% of U.S. people support keeping the troops there.

What is it going to take to move the majority opposition to the war into a politically empowered movement to press the Obama administration and Congress to bring the troops home now? Vision and organizing! Come to Chicago to map out an alternative vision to NATO's wars and the U.S.-driven global arms race. Join the training sessions at the Counter-Summit for Peace and Economic Justice.

Want to meet with leaders of the peace and disarmament movements from NATO countries, Afghans for Peace and Afghan war veterans and strategize about organizing the global anti-war movement? Register for the Counter-Summit for Peace and Economic Justice by logging on to [www.natofreefuture.org](http://www.natofreefuture.org).

### **28 Workshops**

- A New Economy Is Possible: Jobs and Economic Justice vs. Militarism
- Afghanistan: How Do Wars End?
- U.S./NATO Nuclear Weapons in Europe: Removal Long Overdue
- Wisconsin: Rebellion and Recall
- Resisting Militarization of Youth
- Know your rights (especially in Chicago!) and nonviolent direct action training
- Plus 21 more workshops to choose from!

\$523 billion has already been spent on the Afghan war, with more to be pledged during the summit. Tens of thousands of Afghan civilians have been killed or wounded. 2,000 U.S. soldiers have been killed and another 15,300 wounded. 1000 NATO troops have lost their lives. The human costs are unconscionable. The economic costs are shredding the lives of the youngest, sickest and oldest with cuts in crucial human services.

Organizers for economic, racial justice and for immigrant rights will discuss the connection between the daily struggle for a decent life and militarism helping us break down the issue silos. Download the training curriculum and other information from the above website to do popular education on NATO and its impact on the world.

We will also march on May 20 with the Network for a NATO Free Future contingent (location to be announced), in support of Afghanistan war veterans as they turn in their medals to the NATO Generals.

## **One Soldier, One Year: \$850,000 and Rising**

*By Larry Shaughnessy,*

*Security Clearance CNN Blog, February 28*

Keeping one American service member in Afghanistan costs between \$850,000 and \$1.4 million a year, depending on who you ask. But one matter is clear, that cost is going up.

During a budget hearing today on Capitol Hill, Sen. Kent Conrad, D-North Dakota, asked Department of Defense leaders, “What is the cost per soldier, to maintain a soldier for a year in Afghanistan?” Under Secretary Robert Hale, the Pentagon comptroller, responded “Right now about \$850,000 per soldier.”

Conrad seemed shocked at the number.

“That kind of takes my breath away, when you tell me it's \$850,000,” Conrad said. A Pentagon spokesman later said a more accurate figure is \$815,000 a year.

Regardless of which number is used Sen. Conrad would be really shocked by the estimate that the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments reached about the same issue.

“The cost per troop in Afghanistan has averaged \$1.2 million per troop per year,” the center's Todd Harrison wrote in an analysis of last year's Department of Defense budget.

Why the difference? Harrison said the center arrives at its figure by taking “the amount of money spent in Afghanistan for a year and dividing it up by the number of soldiers.”

He believes Hale's estimate is lower because the Pentagon removes some costs, like construction, from the Afghanistan spending and divides that lower number by the number of troops.

But one thing is clear, the cost is rising. Hale said the Department of Defense figure was until recently \$600,000 a year. And Harrison said the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments' estimate for 2012 is up to \$1.4 million.

Harrison said there are two important factors contributing to the increase. There are fewer troops in Afghanistan than in 2011, and the latest Defense budget puts millions into war spending that in previous years were part of the department's base budget.

Hale sees another reason why it's climbing. The major component of the extra costs in Afghanistan are higher operating costs for weapons. When you're in a war you are operating a much higher tempo. “That's a good part that's probably 50% of the budget,” he testified.

One thing is clear, the soldier impacts only a small percentage of that cost. A typical army sergeant with four years service makes a base pay of less than \$30,000 a year.

## **Call for Action on Drones**

The National Campaign for Nonviolent Resistance supports the call from the Direct Action Working Group of the International Drone Summit held in Washington, DC on April 28-29. This was originally proposed by Western Gate Action Campaign and the Alliance to Resist Robotic Warfare & Society (ARROWS) for the Fall of 2012 against drones for violent and military purposes.

The call is for nationally coordinated regional actions of protest and nonviolent civil resistance against the use of drones for military and extrajudicial killing. We call on people to organize in various regions of the country – Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, Southeast, Midwest, Northwest, California and the Southwest, to pick one major drone or robotic warfare facility, military base, factory, university doing drone research, or corporate research lab with actions of protest and peaceful civil resistance.

The original call to action reminds us that this October will mark 50 years since the world was destabilized by the Cuban Missile Crisis. That was a time when empire and the military industrial corporate complex threatened humanity with nuclear annihilation. Now, drone technology destabilizes, terrorizes, kills, and is leading to a new arms race that will not bring peace but insecurity and war. September 21 is the United Nations International Day of Peace and also the annual protests against the “Arms Bazaar” in Washington, DC organized by Dorothy Day Catholic Worker. Mahatma Gandhi's birthday will be observed on October 2, the internationally observed annual “Keep Space for Peace Week” October 6 through 13, and October also marks the 11 years of open-ended war and occupation of Afghanistan where drones are used regularly in killing and maiming innocent people. This will be an auspicious time for action against the drones!

The National Campaign for Nonviolent Resistance joins with the call from the Direct Action Working Group of the International Drone Summit, ARROWS and Western Gate to organize regional actions during the Fall of

2012. Gandhi, who did not believe the ends justify the means, said, “It is my firm conviction that nothing can be built on violence.”

*The National Campaign for Nonviolent Resistance*  
Malachy Kilbride – [malachykilbride@yahoo.com](mailto:malachykilbride@yahoo.com)

## International

### “Urgent Need” for WMD-free Zone in Middle East

**Many people see the idea of a WMD-free zone in the Middle East as a utopian dream but the tensions and hostilities there only make the initiative more crucial.**

*by Kate Hudson, General Secretary of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament*

*Public Service Europe April 27*

Recent tensions in the Middle East have brought into focus the urgent need for robust regional agreements which outlaw the possession and use of weapons of mass destruction. (In May) the nuclear non-proliferation treaty preparatory committee meets. It is part of the primary international legal framework for global non-proliferation and disarmament and there is an item on their agenda that the world should take note of: creating a WMD-free zone in the Middle East.

The concept of a WMD-free zone is seen by some almost as a utopian dream. Indeed, many people react with surprise when they are told that these zones do already exist over vast tracts of the globe, including South America and Africa. They are constituted not only by resolute regional diplomacy and binding legal frameworks, but by a shared commitment to ensure genuine security and stability for future generations.

The situation in the Middle East presents the most urgent case for a WMD-free zone. It has been suggested that regional political instability means that such a framework could not be developed until peace is achieved. But this is topsy-turvy logic. Not only do the tensions and hostilities in the Middle East make this initiative all the more crucial, but creating a WMD-free zone would necessarily involve developing intra-regional cooperation. Indeed, the process would include landmark face-to-face negotiations; frank discussions about security concerns; growing diplomatic confidence and opening channels of communication; ultimately, building the foundations of peace in the region.

What is more, this is achievable: steps towards a WMD-free zone in the Middle East are already underway. But without resolute international support we have no hope of reaching this vital goal. At the non-proliferation treaty review conference in 2010, 189 member countries voted for a United Nations-sponsored conference to take place

on this issue in late 2012. Convened by Finland, this gathering seeks to bring together every state in the Middle East, including, significantly, Iran and Israel.

Amid escalating tensions over Iran’s alleged nuclear ambitions, action must be taken to stem the tide of nuclear weapons proliferation in the Middle East. Already, states such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt have signaled that if Iran successfully develops nuclear weapons, they too might feel compelled to obtain their own nuclear arsenals. Prince Turki al Faisal, a member of the Saudi royal family and former intelligence chief, stated in January that unless a nuclear weapons free zone is established in the Middle East, the region could see a nuclear arms race. The implications do not bear thinking about.

However, diplomatic pressure challenging nuclear proliferation can only be credible if existing nuclear weapons states are serious about their own disarmament commitments. Instead, we are currently seeing the United States chastise Iran, while at the same time committing to spend around \$700bn on nuclear weapons over the next decade. Similarly, unlike Iran, Israel is not even a signatory to the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, and is widely acknowledged to possess nuclear weapons. That this is tolerated by the west gives an indication of the double-standards which make much of the world incredulous when it comes to preaching to non-nuclear states.

The two goals must go hand in hand – and there has never been a more crucial time to act. Genuine diplomatic attempts to create a WMD-free zone in the Middle East, ensuring that all parties come to the table, must be combined with transparent and verifiable steps towards disarmament from nuclear weapons states. At times like this, the international community must not only learn lessons from the past, but provide models for the future. Log on to [www.cnduk.org](http://www.cnduk.org).

### Frank Talk From a Vet

...Iraq veteran Brett McFann said, “When people thank me for my military service I ask if they are the CEO of a huge corporation.

“The answer is always, so far anyway, No.

“I then say, ‘Well then don’t thank me because I didn’t do a thing for average Americans.’

“I did whatever I did to benefit big business like especially the defense and oil companies and companies that rape the world for cheap resources, cheap labor and markets.”

*Excerpted from “A Plea to the U.S. Military and its Enforcers” by Ian G. Anderson, for TRUTHOUT. Go to [www.truthout.org](http://www.truthout.org).*

# Action Alert

## Defense Authorization Heads-up

The National Defense Authorization bill for Fiscal Year 2013 will come to the floor of the House of Representatives about May 16. It will feature as usual a host of amendments to pull it in various directions, including those preferred by peace and disarmament advocates. Some of our allies plan to offer measures for getting us out of Afghanistan sooner than so far planned – which this corner welcomes in light of the latest agreement between Presidents Obama and Karzai to keep U.S. troops over there possibly until 2024. That is a prospect that is fairly counter-intuitive to polls showing two-thirds of Americans favoring an end to our involvement over there. It also does not favor to the troops who will eventually (if they're lucky) come back home to their families from multiple deployments with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and limited job prospects.

We can also count on at least one amendment, from Mass. Rep. Barney Frank, to cut the Pentagon budget. Rep. Frank will make the point (among others) that we have too many cold war-era programs that are not needed, and that this is a much more practical way to approach the budget deficit than slicing up Medicare, job creation programs, education and other budget items relating to human needs.

This is one time when Congress exercises its “power of the purse”. It is also our time to let them know our priorities – and that we are paying attention to theirs.

**Action:** Contact Rep. Jackie Speier or Anna Eshoo, or whomever represents you, to ask for their support for amendments to both cut short our military actions in Afghanistan and to truly reduce the military budget. Suggest that both kinds of amendments will put our country in a position to help our economy grow as we free up more money for programs that will create jobs and help our poor and elderly – as well as some of our troops.

(It's worth noting that Speier has recently joined the House Armed Services Committee, thus can be regarded as someone to contact by other than her constituents over various military-related issues.)

## More on Defense Authorization – the Nuclear Angle

The Defense Authorization bill will also cover the nuclear weapons budget, and this is a chance to build on the idea of de-funding more wasteful programs that are ever more destructive. A significant example is the Los Alamos, NM weapons plant containing the Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Replacement (CMRR) Project, whose priority is creating designs for the “stockpile

stewardship” of weapons that we already know can destroy civilization.

Funding for the Los Alamos facility is currently “zeroed out”, but Ohio Republican Rep. Mike Turner, Chairman of the House Strategic Forces Subcommittee of the HASC, is determined to add it back in to the Authorization bill. Rep. Turner is resorting to scare tactics, warning that without the new plant, “the United States would find itself, simply put, without the capability required to remain a nuclear weapons state.” The degree of appeal this “warning” carries notwithstanding, the fact is our country is currently spending more money on the nuclear weapons complex than at the height of the Cold War, though we only have one quarter of the bombs. Over the next 10 years, the projection is for over \$700 billion.

Apparently this is just Turner being Turner; he wants more spending on other programs, and is actually cautious about implementing the 2010 New START Treaty provisions if there is not maximum spending on weapons modernization programs to which Republicans agreed when they voted for the treaty. With amendments that will determine this and other nuclear programs coming up – as well as more appropriate language providing funding for international nonproliferation programs, this is where not only Speier, with her new position on the HASC, comes in, but any member of the House and Senate concerned about the nuclear weapons budget. **Action:** Contact Rep. Speier or Eshoo, as well as Sens. Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer, and tell them to oppose the Los Alamos CMRR plant – along with any other programs in the Defense Authorization bill for building or modernizing our nuclear arsenal. Urge their support for nonproliferation programs that will help keep loose nuclear material from getting in dangerous hands, as well as discourage the pursuit of nuclear weapons. Emphasize that our Federal dollars could be much better spent on safer programs.

## The Other Nuclear Problem

We turn away from the usual disarmament theme here as we point out that President Obama has spent some political capital touting green energy sources such as solar and wind power. It thus remains something of a mystery why he submitted \$36 billion in loan guarantees – backed by our tax dollars – for the nuclear power industry, under the Title XVII Loan Guarantee program.

The first thought is that nuclear plants do not emit greenhouse gases, but after reading more about the Fukushima plant disaster and the radiation it is projected to spread around the world (log on to [www.enenews.com](http://www.enenews.com)), one might consider the damage they might do under the worst of circumstances – which could come to bear at the Japan plant. And then one would hope Obama had learned something from that nuclear disaster.

This is also not fiscally smart: An analysis from the Congressional Budget Office points to a failure rate for nuclear power loan guarantees of more than 50%. Over and over this industry has failed to prove it can sustain itself financially. Solar and other truly clean energy sources have also had a rough go financially at times, but they are, well, clean, and represent a more sustainable energy future.

About the only financially sustainable aspect of the nuclear industry is the \$645 million it spent lobbying Congress between 1999 and 2009. After the nuclear accidents in Fukushima, Chernobyl and Pennsylvania, perhaps it is peoples' turn to lobby, with common sense rather than money.

**Action:** Contact Speier or Eshoo, as well as Feinstein and Boxer, and tell them to oppose the loan guarantees for nuclear energy under the Title XVII program. Suggest we need to focus on clean *and* sustainable energy sources, that pose fewer health as well as financial risks. Add that the world cannot afford another Fukushima, if it could even afford one.

**A Pat on the Back**

The March **Update** included an alert asking our local House members to oppose H Res 568, as well as for the California Senate delegation to oppose S. Res. 380. These twin resolutions express the sense of their respective bodies that not even containment, let alone a nuclear bomb, should be an option regarding Iran. The suggestion is a choice of bullying Iran rather than diplomacy, and at a time when talks between that nation and a group of five others including the U.S. are working on a solution, passage of either version would be counterproductive. At press time the House version had 291 co-sponsors, while the Senate version had 71.

The good news is neither Speier, Eshoo, Boxer not Feinstein have signed on. Whether or not the bills come to a vote, they have so far all turned their backs on the resolutions, perhaps subtracting some legitimacy from them. A bit of positive reinforcement may be in order in the face of an overwhelming majority who support these measures.

**Action:** Contact Speier or Eshoo, also Feinstein and Boxer, to thank them for not supporting either H Res 568 or S Res 380. Encourage them to stick to their principles, especially while diplomacy with Iran – a much better alternative than war – is given a strong chance.

*Ron Zucker*

The **Update** is published monthly by Peace Action of San Mateo County. We welcome all submissions and letters, and reserve the right to exclude or edit for content and other considerations. The views expressed within are not necessarily those of the members of Peace Action of San Mateo County, Peace Action West, or Peace Action.

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**JOIN PEACE ACTION OF SAN MATEO COUNTY**

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- \_\_\_ \$30 Individual Membership
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- \$ \_\_\_ Bonnie Burnham Memorial Fund (Supports Video Project in Schools)
- \$ \_\_\_ Leo Sack Memorial Fund (Addtl. Donation)
- \$ \_\_\_ Student Activist Scholarship Fund

**Please make checks payable to:**  
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**P.O. BOX 425, San Mateo, CA 94401-0425**  
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***Peace vigil every Saturday***

We will be at 3rd Ave. and El Camino Real in San Mateo at 3 PM for our weekly antiwar vigil, while the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan continue.

Peace Action of San Mateo County  
presents a talk by  
*Michael Eisenscher*  
Co-founder and National Coordinator,  
U.S. Labor Against the War  
Co-founder, Campaign for New Priorities  
*"Militarism, War and the Economic Crisis -  
Three Reasons to Occupy"*  
Includes a powerpoint presentation -  
*"War and Taxes"*  
Monday, May 21, 7 PM  
Unitarian Universalists of San Mateo  
300 E. Santa Inez Avenue, San Mateo  
Suggested donation \$5-10 sliding scale,  
no one turned away for lack of funds