

# Update

Summer 2017

Ron Zucker, Editor

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## Local

### July 16 Meeting

### **Achieving Justice Here and in Israel/Palestine**

The work of calling out islamophobia seems in parallel with the issue of Palestinian rights – with a more solid effort required due to the person residing in the White House. We have heard some talk from this administration about a peaceful solution in Israel/Palestine, but have seen no real action. Thus other measures from activist circles – one example being boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) campaigns – have emerged as a way for everyday people to respond.

Also from the White House, we've seen various *attempts* at action to keep certain populations out of our country (partially allowed by the Supreme Court), which leads to preconceived and negative notions of members of that population. That development may require a response designed to inform and become familiar with people we don't know.

Whether in the search for a true story or the search for solutions, Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) and the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) are two organizations working together to make the situation a better one in the Middle East – as well as here in the U.S. On Sunday, July 16, PASMCM will present speakers from both organizations to give a perspective based on human rights. The topic of the evening will be “Keeping up the fight: Current campaigns for achieving justice here and in Israel/Palestine”.

The evening begins at 7 PM at the Unitarian Universalists of San Mateo, 300 E. Santa Inez Avenue (at Ellsworth) in San Mateo. Admission is free, contributions welcome. The UUSM is wheelchair accessible.

We will have an interesting group of guests:

Noam Perry is an associate in the AFSC Economic Activism Program, which produces the INVESTIGATE website, a database of companies involved in human rights violations. He teaches in the Human Rights Program at San Jose State University, where he is also the faculty advisor for Students for Justice in Palestine. Noam will talk about recent developments in Israel/Palestine, particularly with regard to anti-BDS initiatives, and how the AFSC supports campaigns that want to engage in economic activism.

Wendy Greenfield is a co-founder of the South Bay chapter of JVP, dating back to 1996. She is a life-long activist who also helped organize United Farm Workers boycotts, New Jewish Agenda's Argentine Prisoners Campaign, and the struggle for bilingual education. Wendy will give an overview of the BDS movement, including JVP's national and local involvement. She will also talk about the JVP's “Deadly Exchange Campaign”, which highlights the connections between U.S. and Israeli military and police departments.

Marianna Tubman has been an active member of South Bay Jewish Voice for Peace for about 7 years, and is also a member of PASMCM. She has participated in study groups exploring white privilege and racism and has organized film screenings and a study group on Israel/Palestine at the Unitarian church she attends. Marianna will talk about JVP's curriculum and canvassing on “Challenging Islamophobia and Racism.” South Bay JVP offered the beginning curriculum on June 15th, and will be canvassing in South Bay neighborhoods this summer to engage neighbors in this educational process.

We look forward on July 16 to an interesting discussion with some dedicated activists!

### Summary of May 21 Meeting

### **U.S. and North Korea – History, Issues and Solutions**

Foreign policy analyst Conn Hallinan did not mince words in his talk about relations between the U.S. and North Korea; indeed, he used the words of U.S., North Korean and Chinese officials to describe a situation being “driven close to nuclear war”, and equating the two nations with “accelerating trains coming at each other, with neither side willing to give”. “So this should make us a little concerned,” concluded Conn in a tongue-in-cheek manner that evoked some uneasy laughter in the audience. He then revealed a history of the Korean Peninsula and the two countries' fraught relationship with one another and with the other neighboring players, and discussed solutions that would and would not work.

As have others watching the situation, Conn held out hope that the recent election of a new more liberal President in South Korea “may turn down the heat a little bit,” but that the crisis in its present state is not going away. With the idea that Americans need to understand the whole story, he suggested that the first step in diplomacy is to see the world through another's eyes – lest we

see their motivations as “unfathomable”. Historically, the U.S. and its people have regarded us as “exceptional”. In that vein, Conn compared each nation’s point of view: We see them as a “rogue state”, run by a “madman”, while they see us as a country that regularly threatens them. Each country calls out the other’s nuclear weapons and breaking of agreements.

Conn traced the origins of the crisis back to 1910, when Japan militarily seized and occupied the Korean Peninsula and turned it into a colony. The day after Japan’s defeat in World War II, U.S. officials drew a line at the 38th parallel and created two parts of Korea; we installed an anti-communist leader in the south, while Kim Il Sung (leader of the Korean resistance against Japan in the 1930s and grandfather of current North Korean President Kim Jong Un) took power in the north.

In 1950, Conn related, the north responded to incursions from the south with a full-scale invasion, in a civil war between the two sides. When the north made military gains (despite the south executing 300,000 from the north with our complicity), the U.S. and the United Nations stepped in, with General MacArthur’s forces attacking the north, and China (who had warned us against such action) likewise stepping in and turning back the U.S. Thus the “Korean War” became a stalemate, for which to this day there has been no actual end.

MacArthur had urged President Truman to use nuclear weapons against China, but was spurned because the Soviet Union was China’s ally and by then also had nukes. Thus, Conn pointed out, the U.S. was first to threaten the region with nuclear weapons. He added that we were also the first to bring them into the region, setting up bombers and missiles in South Korea in 1958. “So we need to be a little more balanced,” he said, “about how we (talk) about nuclear weapons and nuclear war on the Korean Peninsula.”

Conn described U.S. participation in the 1952 Treaty of San Francisco, which officially ended World War II in the Pacific but left some territorial issues unresolved – an outcome that allowed our military to keep a presence, to this day, in the face of tensions over control of various seas and islands in Asia.

He jumped ahead to 1994, when North Korea threatened to withdraw from the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), expel international inspectors and extract plutonium at one of its nuclear reactors. Abandoning a short-lived notion of bombing the reactor because of Seoul’s proximity to it, then-President Clinton instead sent Jimmy Carter to work out a peaceful resolution. The result was the “Agreed Framework”, establishing that the U.S. does not invade North Korea; North Korea moves its nuclear fuel rods out of the country and freezes its nuclear weapons research; the U.S., South Korea and Japan

finance two light-water reactors in North Korea; diplomatic relations between the countries are normalized; and the U.S. supplies North Korea with oil.

But when the U.S. after two years failed to fund the light-water reactors or normalize relations, North Korea set up a secret agreement with Pakistan, giving Pakistan missile technology in exchange for centrifuges that could be used to extract nuclear fuel for weapons. North Korea offered Clinton a nonaggression pact in exchange for stopping those efforts. Surmising that Clinton was preoccupied with matters in the Middle East, Conn recalled that Clinton did not respond.

Shortly thereafter, George W. Bush became the President, ended all talks and put North Korea on his “Axis of Evil” list. He also disavowed the Agreed Framework, halted fuel supplies to North Korea, and imposed economic sanctions – which he and Dick Cheney futilely

“If the Clinton agreement had been implemented, it is quite likely that North Korea would not have nuclear weapons today.”

*Conn Hallinan*

hoped would lead to the government’s collapse. North Korea responded by again removing inspectors and starting its reactors. In 2003 it also withdrew from the NPT, though promising to rejoin if the U.S. came back to the Agreed Framework. In Conn’s opinion, “If the Clinton agreement had been implemented, it is quite likely that North Korea would not have nuclear weapons today.”

Bush responded to protests by South Korea and Japan that his embargo would lead to war by sending an envoy to North Korea. But when North Korea offered to give up its nuclear weapons development in exchange for a nonaggression pact, Bush called it “blackmail” and demanded they give up nuclear weapons first. This is a line, Conn lamented, that the Obama Administration later repeated, as well as more recently Donald Trump’s Secretary of State Rex Tillerson. However UN Representative Nikki Haley said that if North Korea stopped testing nukes and missiles, the Trump administration would sit down and talk. As for Trump himself, said Conn, “I have no idea...I’ll wait for the tweet.”

But Conn belittled the U.S. demand to give up nuclear weapons, asking, “Why would North Korea give up its only bargaining chip...especially to a country that practices overthrowing it at least once a year?” He added that after watching what happened to Iraq, Iran and Libya – all of who either did not yet have or gave up nuclear weapons – North Korea felt its only option was to have a “nuclear deterrent”. Conn also exposed the idea from both Obama and Trump that China could force North Korea to give up nuclear weapons. Besides the tensions that North Korea harbors as a result of Chinese con-

quests of Korea through history, Conn cited the growing U.S. military presence in (and threat to) the region – the “Asia pivot” – as a reason China might not be interested in being, in his words, the U.S.’s “errand boy”.

Conn doesn’t think a peaceful solution “is all that hard”, and he offered some prescriptions, including a nonaggression pact among the U.S., Japan and the Koreans; an agreement from North Korea to freeze its long-range missile research – as well as announce any missile tests in advance; a promise to also freeze its nuclear weapons program – Conn said it would not yet give up its nukes but would sign the NPT again – and diplomatic recognition of North Korea to go along with economic aid.

He could not say for sure that such agreements would work, but that “what I know will not work is to tighten sanctions and threaten war.” After 70 years of that, as well as heavy bombing in the Korean War, they “show no signs of caving.” He added Trump has expressed a willingness to meet with Kim Jong Un, so some softening of positions and tensions are indeed possible. “No tweets, however”, he said, “just get it done.”

*Ron Zucker*

Log on to [www.connhallinan.com](http://www.connhallinan.com)

## **PASMC Board and Officers**

At our annual summer potluck dinner on June 25, Peace Action of San Mateo County elected its slate of Board members and officers for 2017-18.

Officers re-elected to their previous positions were: Mike Caggiano, President; Cheryl Kozanitas, Vice President; Mary Beavins, Secretary.

The at-large Board members are: Max Bollock, Pat Nicholson, Gary Parma, Bill Wolfe, Ron Zucker.

### **Summary of April 23 Meeting**

## **The Case for Single Payer Healthcare**

In April, PASMC turned its attention to the health insurance debate, notably a “single payer” or “Medicare for all” system vs. the Affordable Care Act, vs. the specter of a Republican Congressional attempt to repeal the ACA. (The latter was the elephant that had not yet entered the room, though the audience’s collective imagination surely had some ideas about it, which have recently been borne out.)

Our guest was Dr. Jeff Gee of Physicians for a National Health Plan; Dr. Gee began his presentation with a condensed but comprehensive version of a new documentary film, “Now is the Time”, whose title referred to the idea of a single payer health plan. The film used expert perspectives from patients and health care professionals – as well as graphics and some animation – to compare single payer with what we have now. It also illustrated the uphill climb to achieve it.

The film shows the surprising number of 28.6 million Americans currently without health insurance, compared with much smaller numbers for countries around the world who have a national plan. Regarding HR 676, the legislation introduced in Congress every year since 2003, it notes the complete lack of Congressional debate on the bill all the way to the present – even in recent years of health care debate.

There is video of activists, frustrated over thorough but unsuccessful lobbying attempts, being arrested for disrupting a 2009 Senate Finance Committee hearing that completely excluded any testimony on behalf of single payer...instead relying solely on health insurance and Chamber of Commerce executives to speak for the business-friendly elements of the plan we now have. Then-finance committee chair Sen. Max Baucus employed a longtime pharmaceutical and insurance company exec as his “chief health counsel” to help write the ACA; the film identified this as an example of the “revolving door” of business figures called on to make policy.

The film addresses the notion of class and race, implying that some people – who can afford health insurance – were “worth more” than others. It talks about “elite representation” vs. “ideal representation”, in which the top 10% at the economic scale are listened to more than the bottom 90% (or even 58% in the case of the public preferring a single payer system), greatly affecting the chance of a bill becoming law depending on who it might benefit.

Maryland pediatrician and health care activist (and one of the aforementioned arrestees) Dr. Margaret Flowers criticizes ACA for “not being affordable”. She and others in the film describe a situation in which people are squeezed into networks that fall short of covering their health needs. The relative efficiency of a single payer plan was a recurring theme. There were graphics showing how people get their money’s worth because of a lack of administrative costs – compared to a “multi-payer” system in which care and drug costs are mostly price-driven, and administrative costs are much higher. The film’s assertion that only the Veterans Administration effectively negotiates drug prices, leading to a 41% discount for veterans, calls up the question of why a similar deal is not possible for the population as a whole.

The term “medical loss ratio”, arises: the percentage of health care premiums used to actually provide care vs. administrative, overhead and marketing costs. Under the ACA, the mandated ratio is 80/20 (in dollar terms Dr. Gee later cited a figure of \$350 billion in administrative costs), while the current Medicare system is closer to 98/2. This implies that a single payer of system would be more similar to that of Medicare. The film asserts that it would get rid of deductibles as well as limits on care.

With Congress unwilling to budge, the film calls for more work on the state level, listing 20 states with pending single-payer legislation. Dr. Flowers cites a statistic that 3.5% of a population becoming active on an issue is the tipping point for a government to respond. Since “health care is a human right”, the film implies, this remains a logical time for such a number to take action.

Dr. Gee’s talk complemented the film presentation. He decried a system in which insurance companies “call the shots”, with no consideration for either doctors or patients. Addressing action at the state level, he discussed California’s single payer bill, SB562, which would involve no co-pays, deductibles or premiums. It would be paid for, he said, with progressive taxation for the state’s residents. The fact that SB562 later passed the State Senate but was denied a vote in the Assembly may have had at least something to do with the lobbying of those California’s “elites” who would be taxed the most. “Now is the Time” for the rest of us to react.

Ron Zucker

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

## Membership Report

Peace Action of San Mateo County warmly welcomes these new members: **Mike Abkin, Barbara Moran**

And a thank you and welcome back to the following renewing members: **Mary Beavins, Linda Durkee, Louis Facchino, Daniel Gilbrech, Ruth Kahoun, Thomas Newman and family, Pat Nicholson, Peter Rothaug, Joanne and Stephen Rovno, Connie Spearling, John St. Peter, Edna Steele, Marianna Tubman**

### JOIN PEACE ACTION OF SAN MATEO COUNTY

\_\_\_ New Member \_\_\_ Renewing Member

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e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_ \$30 Individual Membership

\_\_\_ \$40 Family Membership

\_\_\_ \$52 (“A Dollar a Week for Peace”)

\_\_\_ \$15 Student/Limited Income

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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:**

**PEACE ACTION OF SAN MATEO COUNTY**

**P.O. BOX 425, San Mateo, CA 94401-0425**

**Because of our advocacy and political action programs, membership is not tax deductible.**

## August 9 Livermore Action

On Wednesday, August 9, the 72nd anniversary of the bombing of Nagasaki, Tri-Valley CARES will hold a March for Nuclear Abolition and Global Survival at the Lawrence Livermore Nuclear Weapons Lab. The theme will be: No Nukes! No Walls! No Wars! No Warming!

At 8 AM, people will gather in front of the lab at the corner of Vasco and Patterson Pass Roads. There will be a rally, march and direct action to commemorate the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki – at the place where new U.S. nuclear weapons are still being developed today. Tri-Valley CARES and many other organizations will call on us all to “change the future!”

Peace Action of San Mateo County will gather for a car-pool at 7 AM in front of the Unitarian Universalists of San Mateo, 300 E. Santa Inez Avenue (at Ellsworth) in San Mateo. The rally begins at 8 AM, with speakers and musicians; At 9 AM we will march to the gates of Livermore Lab, where those who choose will peaceably risk arrest in the name of stopping Trump’s dangerous nuclear weapons policies and abolishing nuclear weapons.

For more information on the event, call 925-443-7148, or 510-839-5877.

## Weekly Peace Vigils

Join “your local peace group” every Saturday from 3-4 PM as we call for peace and justice, from our perch at 3rd Avenue and El Camino Real in San Mateo, in front of the Bank of America building.

And on Thursdays from 4-6 PM, our friends at Declaration of Peace-San Mateo hold their “Stand for Peace” at 5th and El Camino.

# International

## Will Congress Confront Trump Administration’s Syria War “Adhocracy”?

*By Jon Rainwater June 29 Huffington Post*

For a statement that was intended to read like a bright red line, this week’s White House statement on Syria created more confusion than clarity. The statement warned the Assad government that it will “pay a heavy price” if it carries out a chemical weapons attack – an attack the White House claimed Syria was making “potential preparations” for.

Most coverage of the Syria statement focused on its awkward rollout. One U.S. Central Command source said they had “no idea” what prompted the statement. The New York Times reported that “several military officials were caught off guard by the statement,” and sources at the State Department and the Pentagon seemed to be equally in the dark. This opacity flies in the

face of the normal interagency process that usually precedes big White House announcements of any kind let alone the drawing of red lines.

Richard Haass, the president of the Council on Foreign Relations, has dubbed Trump's foreign policy "ad hococracy", recently calling the administration "a decentralized, improvisational administration." That's putting it charitably. One day Trump is delegating military policy decisions to battlefield commanders, the next day he's blindsiding Central Command. This type of improvisation is plain reckless when thousands of lives hang in the balance.

The grim and glittering chaos that is the Trump White House is as hypnotizing as a car crash. That chaos sustains an ongoing and important narrative that the media understandably homes in on. So this week's Syria coverage has focused on that aspect of U.S. policymaking. But as terrifying as Trump's military ad hococracy is, the larger story is the dangerous direction it's driving U.S. Syria policy in.

Lost in most coverage of the White House Syria threat is that the use of U.S. military force against Assad's forces or their allies violates both U.S. and international law. President Obama argued that under U.S. law, operations against ISIS in Syria were justified because of the 2001 war authorization that allows for the targeting of al Qaeda and groups associated with it. That's a very questionable claim given the longstanding rivalry between ISIS and al Qaeda. But not even the most aggressive interpretation can claim that the 2001 authorization covers the use of force against the Syrian government or its allies.

There are also strategic questions worth unpacking. For example: what exactly do we expect to gain by exacting "a heavy price" against Assad's forces should they launch a chemical weapons attack?

The administration's explanation for the first U.S. strike against Assad was that it was meant to deter further chemical weapons attacks. So assuming Assad's forces were responsible for the chemical attack in April, an allegation the administration has yet to offer proof of, and assuming the administration assessment was correct and Assad was or is preparing another chemical weapons attack, the first U.S. strike was by the administration's own rubric a complete failure. There's little reason to think another strike would have more success.

Congress and the U.S. public must also debate this key question: How does the administration plan to avoid a full-scale war with the Syrian government and the inevitable quagmire it would create? With each new escalation against Assad and his allies, the U.S. becomes more and more entangled. Following the U.S. strikes in April justified as a deterrent, U.S. forces conducted a series of

attacks against pro-Assad forces and recently downed a Syrian jet, claiming self-defense of U.S. coalition partners battling ISIS. Now with the administration's new threat, the rationale for continuing to strike Syrian forces has shifted yet again to include making them "pay a heavy price."

At what point are we committing to stay in Syria not only until we "crush and destroy ISIS" as Trump has promised to do, but also until we topple Assad, prop up a new government, and ensure this new government can maintain peace and stability on its own, like we did in Iraq, Libya and Afghanistan? Average Syrians and Americans will be the ones paying a heavy price if we allow recent history to repeat itself.

Of course, as disastrous as a U.S.-Assad grudge match would be, it would pale in comparison to war with Russia. In response to the string of U.S. escalations since April, Russia suspended its participation in an agreement to avoid mid-air incidents between Russian and U.S. coalition aircraft, stopped using a hotline between U.S. and Russian forces set up to de-escalate tense situations, and said it will track U.S. coalition planes west of the Euphrates River as targets.

These policy shifts, both U.S. and Russian, have created an incredibly volatile situation where accidental and intentional confrontations between U.S. and Russian forces are much more likely than they were a few months ago. The risks of a U.S.-Russia conflict can hardly be overstated as both countries maintain and work to expand their vast nuclear weapons arsenals.

Despite all the risks, Congress, the branch of government tasked with deciding whether or not the U.S. goes to war, still hasn't held a formal debate let alone a vote on whether or not to authorize the use of force against ISIS or the Assad government. Thanks to the stalwart leadership of Representative Barbara Lee (D-CA), that may be about to change.

In the House Appropriations Committee (June 29), an amendment to the defense appropriations bill offered by Rep. Lee that would sunset the 2001 war authorization passed in a voice vote with strong bipartisan support. While the repeal still has several hurdles to clear before becoming law, it tees up a debate on the House floor on whether or not maintaining a 16-year-old authorization for war with no geographic or time limits is really in our nation's best interest. If reason prevails, Congress' blank check for endless war may finally bounce.

*Jon Rainwater is the Executive Director of Peace Action*  
*Log on the Peace Action's blog:*

[www.groundswell.peace-action.org](http://www.groundswell.peace-action.org)

***Ignorance, allied with power, is the most ferocious enemy justice can have.***

**James Baldwin**

## Nuclear ban treaty should be concluded next week

*Basel Peace Office, June 30*

Basel Peace Office, and other members of the Abolition 2000 global network to eliminate nuclear weapons, have been active at the United Nations in New York in the negotiations for a nuclear weapons ban. There are still a number of issues to resolve, including whether to include prohibitions on threat of use, transit and financing of nuclear weapons. However, we are hopeful that the treaty will be concluded and adopted on (or) by July 7.

## Trump's Ship of Fools

It looks like we've finally embarked on our own "ship of fools". President Trump has harkened us back to the era of the medieval Christian church when it held Galileo hostage to the preferred view that the sun revolves about the earth and not the other way round, as observed by Galileo's scientific observations. Here we have a reversal of roles with the overwhelming population of the planet believing in the science of the day, and the American Republican Party and its head, Donald Trump, still arguing against it all.

As a person of the modern era, I join other climate realists such as those in the Citizens Climate Lobby ([www.citizensclimatelobby.org](http://www.citizensclimatelobby.org)) and all recognized climate scientists, and ask that those modernists and realists of his own party abandon his foolishness...that they press ahead for the future of their own children, join the rest of the world's population and accept the science. After all, he just might believe that the sun revolves around him as well.

*Mike Caggiano*



## Action Alert

### Military Budget – Misplaced Priorities

The upcoming National Defense Authorization Act will, as it does every year, map out U.S. military spending for Fiscal Year 2018. This year it goes further on spending levels than ever before...plus it is a calamity in terms of its foreign policy implications.

The chair of the House Armed Services Committee plans to shred Donald Trump's \$54 billion proposed defense funding increase with a total figure of \$705 billion. A wide variety of budget cuts to domestic programs are being considered in order to pay for this increase, including to the Department of Education, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Health and Human Services and other programs benefiting people in this country.

There are also details in the NDAA which adversely affect our national security: It restricts funding or undermines the goals for vital arms control treaties that make us safer. The INF Treaty negotiated in the mid-1980s, the New START Treaty of the Obama era, and the Open Skies Treaty from the Bush I years (allowing aerial inspection of other countries' military), would all be adversely affected. There is also a severe funding cap for dismantling retired nuclear weapons, whose existence leaves them open to sabotage or theft.

Meanwhile, the NDAA will soon include an amendment that provides another \$40 billion for a missile defense program perennially shown to be overly expensive and inadequate – as well as destabilizing in its true goal as an offensive weapon meant to stop enemy retaliatory missiles after a first strike.

With so much to dislike about these spending priorities, it behooves activists to weigh in on the NDAA. Rep. Jackie Speier's position on the House Armed Services Committee gives us a slightly more direct line to the proceedings; indeed, such committee members represent people everywhere and could hear from all of us. And if the act reaches both the House and Senate floor with some of the above measures, we will have more to do. **Action:** Contact Rep. Speier and tell her to speak out in the HASC against the proposed overly inflated military budget in the NDAA. Suggest that expensive missile defense systems (among other weapons programs) should not be a priority; add that we need to protect our arms control treaties which are being undermined in this measure. Likewise contact Rep. Anna Eshoo if she is your Congressperson, as well as Senators Dianne Feinstein and Kamala Harris, with a similar message about too much spending on the military and not enough on what we need day-to-day.

### An End to Endless War?

"Congress may finally be getting fed up with war on autopilot." Thus began a recent article in Politico describing the somewhat surprising adoption last month, by a voice vote by the House Appropriations Committee, of East Bay Rep. Barbara Lee's amendment to repeal the Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF). Having cast the lone vote against that authorization shortly after 9/11, Lee had made a crusade out of revers-

ing it and giving the power to declare war back to Congress as constitutionally mandated.

In the hands of the Executive branch, the effects of the AUMF have been dubious. “The 2001 AUMF is the reason the U.S. has been involved in military campaigns in at least seven countries,” wrote Peace Action Executive Director Jon Rainwater. “It’s the reason we’ve allowed the war in Afghanistan to become America’s longest war. It’s the reason a whole generation has grown up not knowing a time without war.” Indeed, its continuation could pave the way for yet more military action in Syria.

Eventually there could be a welcome debate on the Defense Appropriations bill, of which this amendment is now a part, and it could even wind up in the Defense Authorization bill (see above). Some close to the proceedings think that during the 240-day period before it goes into effect, Congress could hammer out another AUMF more tailored to the present. But for now the best news is the chance for this repeal to become law.

**Action:** Contact Rep. Speier or Eshoo, as well as both Sens. Feinstein and Harris, and tell them to speak in favor of repealing the 2001 AUMF, and making that amendment part of both the Defense Appropriations and Authorization bills. Suggest that it is time for Congress to assume its proper role in deciding to wage war... especially with the person now in the White House to whom such decisions are now available to make.

## Stop Spying On Us

An important provision of the FISA (Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act) Amendments Act is scheduled to sunset at the end of the year. Section 702 of this law authorizes intelligence agencies such as the FBI and NSA to scan in bulk phone calls, text messages and emails traveling across the internet. While this information sweep is supposedly meant just for people outside the U.S., Americans’ communications become part of the data – without a warrant or any particular suspicion of wrongdoing.

Members of Congress from both major parties have shown interest in removing Section 702... a big reason may be that *they* are also targets of such surveillance as well as everyday people. In fact, it’s conceivable that, under this section, internet communication data from every American has been collected.

But Arkansas Sen. Tom Cotton is not so phased, and introduced a bill that would prevent the sunset of Section 702 and permanently reauthorize this provision of invasive surveillance. This would allow companies like Booz Allen (the former employer of Edward Snowden, who first told us about Section 702), Lockheed Martin and Leidos to reap government contracts for the surveillance.

On the other hand, Hawaii Representative Tulsi Gabbard introduced H.R.2588, the Preventing Unconstitutional

Collection Act, which targets Section 702. Thus the House has a chance to accomplish in a different way what the Senate is also attempting.

**Action:** Contact Sens. Feinstein and Harris, and tell them to oppose Sen. Cotton’s bill to perpetuate Section 702 as part of the FISA Amendments Act. Likewise reach out to Reps. Speier or Eshoo, and urge their support for H.R. 2588. Suggest that we don’t need or want the FBI and NSA sweeping up all of our personal online information; to do so is a violation of the 4th Amendment protecting us from unreasonable searches.

*Ron Zucker*

## Directory

**Capitol Switchboard: 202-224-3121**

### Senator Dianne Feinstein

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### Senator Kamala Harris

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### Representative Jackie Speier

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### Representative Anna Eshoo

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(650) 323-2984 (650) 323-3498

### Donald Trump

The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20500  
(202)456-1111: fax: (202)456-2461  
[www.whitehouse.gov/contact/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/)

**Find out who your Representative is: [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov)**  
**If you are not in California, identify your senators here: [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov)**

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The **Update** is published quarterly 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 or Peace Action.



**Officers**

**President: Mike Caggiano**

**Vice President: Cheryl Kozanitas**

**Secretary: Mary Beavins**

**Update Editor: Ron Zucker**

***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 our military presence in Iraq and Afghanistan continues.

Visit us on Facebook!

[www.facebook.com/pasmc](http://www.facebook.com/pasmc)

Peace Action of San Mateo County presents  
***"Keeping up the fight:  
Current campaigns for achieving justice  
here and in Israel/Palestine"***

A presentation by

**Noam Perry - American Friends Service  
Committee**

**Wendy Greenfield-Jewish Voice for  
Peace**

**Marianna Tubman-Jewish Voice for Peace**  
Sunday, July 16, 7 PM

Unitarian Universalists of San Mateo  
300 E. Santa Inez Avenue, San Mateo  
Admission free, contributions welcome  
The UUSM is wheelchair accessible