

Update

Fall 2017

Ron Zucker, Editor

Local

October 8 Meeting

The Korean Peninsula – What Are the Options?

This Sunday, October 8, we will return to the situation – continually threatening to become a crisis if not a war – on the Korean Peninsula. Eric See, Director of Outreach and Organizing for the Peace Action national office, will present the various angles facing the U.S. and the world.

Those angles include two bellicose governments – North Korea and the U.S. – engaging in a war of words no more winnable than an actual war that could feature the worst possible weapons. They also include the role of other actors in the region, and how they might help raise or lower the temperature. And there is also the possibility of a diplomatic solution which affords North Korea some dignity, and likewise afford its neighbors, the U.S. and the world a measure of hope for avoiding such a war – or the anxiety of wondering what could happen next.

Eric will examine these elements; he will also dig deeper into U.S. strategy in the region. This is typified by the preponderance of U.S. troops in South Korea: 30,000 spread across 118 bases. It is also typified by the missile defense system we recently began deploying, called Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD). Far from actually protecting South Korea, Japan or even the U.S., this, like virtually any missile defense system, is chiefly meant to deter a retaliation to a first-strike attack. Thus it serves to increase tensions among countries more than alleviate them.

Eric's time as a staff member with Peace Action and its affiliates spans over 20 years. Come hear his thoughts and insights on a situation that is likely to evolve right up to October 8.

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.

Summary of July 16 Meeting

The Varied Agenda of Jewish Voice for Peace

In mid-July, PASMCM hosted a trio of speakers from the South Bay chapter of Jewish Voice for Peace. The 21-year-old San Francisco-based national organization is dedicated to defending the rights of Palestinian and other

Muslim populations – a major part of which involves calling out related policies of Israel – while endeavoring to preserve its own Jewish identity. On this evening the JVP representatives used words and slides to address the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement directed at Israel; coordination between the U.S. and Israel on training police in military tactics; and engaging the public to reduce islamophobia.

Israel-born Noam Perry began the presentation. He defined the notion of an illegal occupation by Israel, differentiating it from a legal occupation in that it seems more permanent. He took note of the present downtrodden state of Gaza, now in its 10th year of a blockade by Israel, describing it as “not a place where any sane person would choose to live”. Noam also cited the “Trump effect” which in his opinion had emboldened the Israeli government to at least think about harsher measures, such as annexing the West Bank, and further legitimizing the idea of occupation.

Noam sees the current political direction and initiatives in the region, notwithstanding their human rights implications, as an opportunity to get people interested and involved. In that spirit he spoke on behalf of the BDS movement, which began to take shape around 2004 when a number of human rights organizations felt frustrated that governments worldwide were failing to take action on the issue.

He offered definitions of each strategy, as they pertained to Israel and Palestine: *Boycott* refers to not buying products from companies involved with the suppression of Palestinian rights. Along with such economic boycotts come cultural boycotts in which artists refrain from performing in Israel, and academic boycotts that discourage cooperation with Israeli universities. *Divestment* means asking companies, or financial and academic institutions, not to invest in Israeli financial institutions or companies that are also connected to human rights violations. *Sanctions* simply refers to pressuring governments to take political or economic action to hold Israel accountable.

Noam stated that BDS demands will end when Israel 1) ends its occupation of Palestine, 2) ends what he called its apartheid system, in which Palestinians in Israel lack the same rights as Israeli Jews, and 3) recognizes a “right of return” for Palestinian refugees – basically referring to a program of compensation for Palestinians (or their descendants) who were driven from the area as the state of Israel was being established.

“The good news”, said Noam, “is that it’s working.” He noted Israeli government reaction that included making it a somewhat bigger issue than the perceived threat from Iran, and establishing a new ministry just to deal with the BDS issue. He also cited cancelled contracts with Israel from a European company whose work had resulted in the creation of environmental hazards in Palestinian territories. Also the company G4S sold its subsidiary that managed military and prison contracts and checkpoints in Israel. Efforts continue to persuade a subsidiary of Hewlett-Packard to halt its work on a database of Muslims. “What Trump is proposing”, Noam added on that subject, “Israel has been doing.” The goal, he stated, is for a “new norm” for international law and its effect on Israeli actions.

Wendy Greenfield, a co-founder of South Bay JVP, was the next speaker. She dovetailed Noam’s talk with a discussion of legislative pushback against BDS actions in 27 states in the U.S., including California, as well as in the U.S. Congress. She described proposed laws that would sanction people, companies and churches involved in BDS. Heavy JVP-generated lobbying, Wendy said, resulted in a “watering down” of California’s version to just require a reference to anti-Semitism.

But she mentioned pending bills in the U.S. House and Senate (at press time with no local House or California Senate co-sponsors) that would give states the authority to impose civil and criminal penalties for “entities” engaging in BDS actions. She disputed the propriety of such bills, citing a 1982 Supreme Court decision that boycotts are legal under the 1st Amendment to the Constitution. (How this court would rule is unknown.)

Wendy cited recent poll numbers suggesting public opinion is changing about Israel’s actions: 60% of Democrats and 46% of all Americans were in support of sanctions against Israel over its Palestinian policies; also 49% of Jews under 30 years old were counted in favor of boycotting Israel over its West Bank settlements.

Wendy turned to what JVP is calling the “Deadly Exchange” program – one aspect of what is officially known as “Urban Shield”, involving relations and training between the U.S. and Israeli military and local police (including in Berkeley). Under the themes of security and fighting terrorism, she said, different agencies, including Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) are brought together on border-related matters. Wendy expressed concern about the military-grade weaponry involved, and the potential for demonization and mistreatment of minorities”, possibly adding islamophobia to the mix.

Wendy encouraged the audience to use the Freedom of Information Act to find out what other law enforcement departments are involved in Urban Shield.

Marianna Tubman rounded out the evening with a talk about how JVP is helping local communities resist islamophobia. Citing cases both overt, such as fatal stabbings in Portland, OR, and systemic, such as banning hijabs in public buildings or undue surveillance of an Arab community, she noted an upswing in violence and discrimination against Arabs (Muslim or not) and other people of color since 9/11, and again since the election of Donald Trump.

To counter the trend, the chapter tapped into the Network Against Islamophobia (NAI), a project of JVP’s national organization. Marianna described the NAI curriculum of identifying islamophobia and racism (including from liberals), and then canvassing an area to raise awareness and calling out misconceptions about Islam. In this case, volunteers distributed window signs with the message, “No matter where you are from, we’re glad you’re our neighbor”. Sunnyvale was the first target, with other areas to follow, and Marianna found the process not difficult, with many receptive folks among those who were canvassed. She pointed to the South Bay’s relatively diverse and immigrant population – including many with their own story to tell about discrimination – as a reason it went smoothly.

Marianna thus encouraged everyone present to look at the NAI curriculum, and consider getting involved in the program in some way.

Ron Zucker

Log on to www.jvp.org

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

Summary of September 28 Meeting**Iraqi Kurdistan –****Another Complicated Region**

CODEPINK organizer Nancy Mancias came to PASMIC's September meeting filled with stories of the people and politics she encountered during her spring trip to the Kurdish region of northern Iraq. But – and maybe because of her talk – asking for support for California's Sanctuary State bill, SB 54, was first on her checklist, along with a call-out to support refugees from all over the world. Nancy compared limited efforts by the U.S. to take in refugees ("we could do better") to the more robust actions of Canada and Greece – despite the latter country's economic devastation of the past several years, as well as the right-wing pushback to which any host country (certainly including activists in the U.S.) can relate.

Nancy also compared the experience of migrants from Middle Eastern and Mediterranean countries – many under the age of 18 – with those trying to get through the Sonoran desert from Mexico to the U.S. This invoked a contrast between human traffickers bent on exploitation with humanitarian workers trying to supply food and water to refugees. It added up, in her opinion, to a "vicious cycle" that could be avoided by leaning toward a peace economy rather than one based on war.

Nancy then went into her trip to Iraqi Kurdistan, a yearly excursion sponsored by the Christian Peacemaker Team. While the Kurdish region is volatile (because of security considerations, Nancy said, the members of the group don't know their daily itinerary until the beginning of each day), their technology is relatively advanced, with modern cars, wifi internet access and solar panels...though power outages are common.

Iraqi Kurds were regarded by some there as having benefited somewhat from the U.S. invasion of Iraq with stories and museum exhibits of death and torture by Saddam's government. Others questioned that assumption, and Nancy offered that the war created "the perfect storm" for the rise of the Islamic State (IS) – partly out of poor governance and neglect of post-invasion Iraq as a whole. The oil was taken over by multinational companies, laws and security apparatus was dismantled, and people started to arm themselves. "It was the wild west", she said.

In 2014 IS went to work imposing its will on the region, taking over the city of Mosul and either killing or severely oppressing the Yazidis, a unique religious sect in the region. Nancy took note that the Yazidis got help and sympathy from the United Nations, while the Kurds did not. She nonetheless recognized the Yazidis as a legitimate people in northern Iraq that was worthy of protection.

Nancy cited the political turmoil that prevails in Iraqi Kurdistan. The Kurdish Regional Government (KRG), embroiled in an economic crisis, is marked by oppression of citizens who lack freedom of speech or the right to assemble and dissent. She called the human rights situation "dire". This takes a toll on, among others, schoolteachers, who try to organize but are also threatened and either underpaid or not paid. Teens, both refugees and residents, in school or not, have only known a time of war, and of course desire to be normal kids. "They want to shop", said Nancy, by way of example.

Nancy recalled meetings with a person from the LGBTQ community in northern Iraq – a member of the Irbil government who, along with others in that population, must live that lifestyle "in secret". Due to the lack of education and the preponderance of conservative religious doctrine, being gay, Nancy said, is considered a crime. Under what she called the "Iraqi punishment law", gay people can be killed or labeled as prostitutes. The fact that there are no public records of oppression of this community "...just breaks my heart", she added. Similarly, women's rights are a big issue, with domestic violence a common problem and genital mutilation still somewhat accepted. Nancy recalled meeting with people from a NGO working on the issue, including running women's shelters.

The various populations and their religious factions, including Muslims, Chaldean Christians and Yazidis, are often in conflict. The city of Mosul, then held by IS and now being secured, is coveted by all for its natural resources such as water from its river, and of course its oil. A goal of the KRG is to create an "oil economy" for the region. "Everybody wants Mosul" said Nancy, which presents a complicated scenario.

For good news, she talked about a Quaker woman named Ann Ward who conducted nonviolence training and created the "Alternatives to Violence" project. This included local "peace teams" with communication systems designed to respond to and lower tensions in the area. The effort is linked to a national reconciliation project.

A somewhat similar program previously involved a group of Chaldean Christians, who were refugees from Syria invited to the area in 2014 to promote dialogue between Muslims and Christians. But when IS began to attack the area, the program needed to be halted. Now the group has built housing to host displaced people who had fled those attacks. They continue to try to improve the infrastructure for the refugees.

As Nancy had previously implied, the oil and gas industry has imposed its will on the region. The KRG created an "oil and gas law" that provides for public benefit rather than just for oil and gas companies, as well as pro-

protecting the environment. But “the reality is different”, she said, as those provisions are ignored and human rights are passed over for production. There is smuggling to neighboring countries, and land has been taken for drilling. Nancy also related the case of Dana Gas, a United Arab Emirates company that contaminated drinking water during its drilling process. There have been some protests and even successful legal action to take back land and villages, but retaliation against organizers is often a result.

Nancy described the Kurdish political pot, consisting of the KRG, the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) and the Peshmerga, which is another military arm. The PKK, pushing for an independent Kurdistan but long declared a terrorist organization by the U.S. (which openly supports the Peshmerga) even as it has helped fight IS, is a lightning rod for conflict and bombings of the region by the Turkish military. This in turn has resulted in more displaced people; Nancy took part in a delegation to ask the U.S. Consulate in Irbil to oppose the bombing.

Nancy’s talk was virtually simultaneous with the Kurdistan referendum on independence, which was nonbinding but politically volatile. (Turkey and Iran were at the time conducting military maneuvers in the area). She did not feel capable of offering any insights as to what might happen as a result of the vote, which was overwhelmingly in favor after non-Kurdish groups boycotted and other governments, including the U.S., opposed it. The U.S. position, she said, was that the area was not stable enough for Kurdistan to take the steps needed for independence.

Clearly, Nancy is all about peace and human rights in the region. She plans to make the same trip next year with the Christian Peacemaker Team, and encouraged the audience to think about coming along. For information, log on to www.cpt.org.

Ron Zucker

Also log on to www.codepink.org

Membership Report

Peace Action of San Mateo County welcomes back these renewing members:

David Amendola, Jerry Brozell, Carol Cross, Linda Durkee, Vany Laurenti, Jonelle Preisser

And we sadly note the passing of longtime member Mary Wilhelm. She will long be remembered by many for her strong sense of concern and her easy, frequent smile through it all.

Mary Wilhelm – *Presente*

Peace and Social Justice Harvest Fair

Come enjoy crafts, gifts and activism at the Peace and Social Justice Harvest Fair –

Sunday, November 12, 11 AM-2 PM, at Fellowship Hall, First Presbyterian Church, 1140 Cowper Street in Palo Alto.

-Promote fair trade and reduce your carbon footprint!

-Celebrate the wonderful work being done by local organizations!

-Enjoy free food and beverages!

-Have fun!

Sponsored by First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto to the Peninsula Peace and Justice Center

For a list of participating organizations, go to www.peaceandjustice.org.

Weekly Peace Vigils

Come join with PASMOC every Saturday from 3-4 PM as we gather to tell San Mateo about our peace and justice priorities. We gather at 3rd Avenue and El Camino Real, in front of the Bank of America building. On Saturday, October 7, our theme (and the date) will be the 16th anniversary of beginning the bombing of Afghanistan. On November 11 we will be part of a National Day of Action calling for peace, not war, with North Korea.

And every Thursday from 4-6 PM, you can join Declaration of Peace-San Mateo in their “Stand for Peace”. So many reasons!

National

Big News in Abu Ghraib Survivors’ Quest for Justice

On Friday (September 22), a federal court in Alexandria, VA, ruled that our clients in *Al Shimari v. CACI*, 3 Iraqi men – Salah Al Ejaili, Asa’d Al-Zuba’ee, and Suhail Al Shimari – who were held at the infamous Abu Ghraib prison, were subjected to treatment that could constitute torture or cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment, and that the case to hold the private military contractor CACI Premier Technology accountable for this treatment can proceed. The hearing marked the first time in the course of our 9-year case that CCR presented in detail the torture and serious mistreatment their clients suffered at Abu Ghraib in 2003 and 2004.

CCR legal director Baher Azmy, who argued the case...said, “The court has sent an important message that there can be accountability for torture, a vital step

for our clients who have yet to see justice. This is a crucial ruling in a political climate where Trump has called for bringing back widely denounced torture techniques like waterboarding.”


“Fourteen years later, Salah, Asa’d, and Suhail are still suffering from the severe mistreatment they experienced, and the torture of Iraqi civilians at Abu Ghraib remains one of the darkest chapters in recent U.S. history,” said CCR senior staff attorney Katherine Gallagher. “Yet there remains an accountability gap: military officers were court martialed for their misconduct, but the private contractors walked away with large payments, and they continue to be awarded millions of dollars in government contracts. This case hopefully will narrow that accountability gap.”

Salah, Asa’d, and Suhail were subjected to dehumanizing acts of torture, and continue to suffer today from the cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment they received. A U.S. Army general referred to their treatment as “sadistic, blatant, and wanton criminal abuses.” Salah himself wrote about his experience: “My body was like a machine, responding to all external orders. The only part I owned was my brain, which could not be stopped by the black plastic bag they used to cover my head. The most important question to which I could find no answer at the time is: what is all this for?”

Since 2004, CCR has worked with a team of private attorneys on behalf of hundreds of Iraqi plaintiffs on a series of civil lawsuits against private military contractors. We will continue to (supply updates) as we move forward with Al Shimari.

Center for Constitutional Rights

www.ccrjustice.org



U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren
48 mins · 🌐

I'm heartsick for the victims of last night's massacre in Las Vegas and their loved ones. And I'm heartsick for the people of Las Vegas and people all across this country who woke up to this news and are worried because they don't know whether their family, friends, and neighbors are ok.

Thoughts and prayers are NOT enough. Not when more mothers and fathers are going to have to bury children this week. Not when more sons and daughters are going to grow up without parents. This has happened too many times. We need to have the conversation about how to stop gun violence in America. We need to have it right now.

👍 Like 💬 Comment

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

-James Baldwin

Anything Like This For Teachers? Needing Troops, Army Offers Up To \$90K Bonuses To Re-Enlist

Struggling to expand its ranks, the Army will triple the amount of bonuses it's paying this year to more than \$380 million, including new incentives to woo reluctant soldiers to re-enlist, officials told The Associated Press.

Some soldiers could get \$90,000 up front by committing to another four or more years, as the Army seeks to reverse some of the downsizing that occurred under the Obama administration after years of growth spurred by the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.

Military.com

International Civil Society Leaders Call for Renewed Action to Bring Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Into Force at UN Conference

Note Absence of U.S. Voice on Test Ban in Wake of North Korean Nuclear Test

Arms Control Association, September 20

At the tenth Conference on Facilitating Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) – also known informally as the Article XIV conference – held at the United Nations in New York, a diverse group of nongovernmental nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament leaders, as well as former government officials and diplomats are calling for renewed action to finally bring the 1996 CTBT into force.

The statement from more than 40 civil society leaders, delivered by Kathy Crandall Robinson from Women's Action for New Directions, notes that “(i)nternational support for the CTBT has been reaffirmed over the years through multiple UN General Assembly resolutions and UN Security Council resolutions, including 2016's Resolution 2310 and the new Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, but our work is not yet done.”

“In order to realize the full potential of the CTBT and to close the door on further nuclear testing, we need to secure the entry into force of the treaty,” the civil society statement urges, “(s)upporters of the CTBT need to undertake new and sustained diplomatic and outreach efforts to help underscore the political and security value of the treaty for each of the eight remaining CTBT ‘hold-out’ states and the international community.”

Unfortunately, the United States, one of the key states that must ratify before it can enter into force, attended but failed to speak at the conference.

“In the wake of North Korea's sixth and most powerful nuclear test, it is essential that Washington join with its

allies and the international community in reiterating the United States' support for a permanent, verifiable end to all nuclear weapons testing," said Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association, which organized the civil society statement.

The United States, which was the first country to sign the treaty 21 years ago, is one of the eight "hold-out" states that must still ratify the treaty to trigger its formal entry into force. The other hold-outs include: China, North Korea, Egypt, India, Israel, India, and Pakistan. The CTBT has been signed by 183 states and ratified by 166.

The civil society leaders also called upon the UN General Assembly and UN Security Council members to more fully utilize the CTBTO by calling upon the Executive Secretary to report to these bodies and "supply information or provide other assistance relating to the treaty, including technical reports on the DPRK nuclear tests, the status of global nuclear test monitoring, and activities related to efforts to facilitate entry into force of the CTBT."

www.armscontrol.org

50 Nations Sign Treaty Prohibiting Nuclear Weapons

On September 20, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons opened for signature at the United Nations. By the end of the day, 50 states had signed the treaty and three – Guyana, the Holy See, and Thailand – had ratified. The treaty will enter into force once fifty ratifications have been deposited with the UN Secretary-General, with many experts predicting this will occur within the next year.

Sumo

Sumo for two?

Maybe having two overweight and less than adequate "world leaders" square off after a bout or two of trash talking and bombast would do us all good. Then again, isn't that pretty much what we're being treated to now? Two blustering blowhards beating their plump chests and challenging the other to "cross that line!"

It's sad and pathetic at the same time. Here we are facing global warming, unsustainable fishing and land use as well as ever increasing population growth, and we have to endure this level of stupidity? Add to all that the real possibility of other surrounding nations feeling a need to have their own "nuclear deterrent", and yet we are still mired in grade school bullying. Yeah, let's let them do the Sumo thing. Will the real adults stand up please?

Mike Caggiano

Action Alert

Korean Peninsula – Lowering the Temperature

The declarations and approaches of Donald Trump and Kim Jong-Un are an true lesson in how *not* to avoid a war, and with the respective nuclear arsenals to which both "leaders" refer, the implications of such a war are disastrous – for each country and for the planet, if other nuclear powers decide to get involved. Clearly a better avenue can and must be pursued... what Senator Ben Cardin called a "diplomatic surge", and what has historically been proven possible. Jimmy Carter negotiated a stop to North Korean nuclear weapons development in the 1990s, and while the structure of that agreement broke down, it forestalled a potential nuclear nightmare at the time. And more sanctions are not diplomacy, but rather just serve to provoke North Korea and further inflame everyone's rhetoric.

During his recent visit to China, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson implied that diplomatic approaches were again being made to North Korea. This potentially positive news was countered by Trump's suggestion that such a meeting was "a waste of time" and that Tillerson should abandon the idea. Between Trump's threat at the United Nations to "totally destroy" North Korea (its very uttering likely a violation of international law) and his incendiary tweets, he seems ominously open to the unthinkable. Even a "conventional" war can escalate to something far worse.

We can be open to the notion that it is all (on both sides) just talk, but even words can affect a nuclear alert system. And as to talking, there are far better things to say than what we are hearing. Members of Congress need to take a stand for diplomacy, and do everything possible to remove any sign of legitimacy to what Trump and Kim are putting forth.

Action: Contact Rep. Jackie Speier or Anna Eshoo, or whoever district you reside in, and tell them to speak up in the House on behalf of starting talks, aimed at addressing each side's concerns and avoiding an armed conflict, with the North Korean government. Urge both Senator Kamala Harris and Dianne Feinstein to make the same kinds of statements in the Senate. Suggest that while trying diplomacy will not be easy, it would, as it has before, improve on the possible alternative of a nuclear war with an unknowable outcome.

Upholding the Deal

Under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) negotiated between Iran and the U.S. along with five other nations to regulate Iran's nuclear program, Trump is required by October 15 to certify to Congress whether, in his opinion, Iran is complying with the agreement –

and whether he believes the deal remains in the U.S. national security interest. Unfortunately, Trump's words of late indicate he will move to decertify the JCPOA.

That would open the door for Congress to introduce and perhaps pass new sanctions on Iran, a move that many in the peace community see as provocative and destabilizing. It also could isolate the U.S. by setting it apart from the other six nations who are a party to the agreement. After all of the work on the 2015 plan, Trump's words about "renegotiating" are unrealistic and a non-starter. Indeed, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and nonproliferation experts around the world have affirmed that Iran is keeping up its end of the deal – a fact best not ignored by either the White House or Congress.

North Korea becomes a factor here as well, in that they would see no motivation to sit down and negotiate on their nuclear arsenal if Iran's cooperation is rewarded by turning away from that deal and turning up sanctions.

North Korea could instead further escalate its own program. Congress needs to recognize these implications.

Action: Contact Reps. Speier or Eshoo, as well as Senators Feinstein and Harris, and urge them to become vocal about the need to keep the JCPOA functioning. (Bonus points for contacting Sens. Bob Corker, chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and John McCain, chair of the Senate Armed Services Committee.) Remind all of the success of the deal so far, as reported by the IAEA, and that a new one would be impossible. Add that – assuming Trump decertifies U.S. participation – they need to oppose new sanctions on Iran, which could escalate tensions and cause them to reconsider any nuclear ambitions they might have.

Saving Yemen

(Thanks to the Peace Action national office for much of the text for this alert)

In Yemen, the U.S. has been supporting a vicious bombing campaign carried out by a Saudi-led military coalition. The coalition's airstrikes have killed thousands of civilians by indiscriminately bombing schools, hospitals, marketplaces, and other vital infrastructure. Congress has yet to debate or vote on authorization of U.S. involvement in Yemen.

That is now set to change: South Bay Representative Ro Khanna joined with Reps. Walter Jones, Thomas Massie and Mark Pocan to introduce a bipartisan bill to invoke the War Powers Act. H Con Res. 81 would force a debate and a floor vote on ending U.S. participation in Saudi Arabia's disastrous intervention; House members would be on record for where they stand.

Besides the thousands of civilian deaths caused directly by military strikes, widespread destruction of Yemen's infrastructure – including roads and hospitals – along with an aerial and naval blockade have pushed Yemen

into a major humanitarian crisis. Yemen is now on the brink of famine, and is suffering the world's worst cholera outbreak on record, with a million malnourished children at risk from the disease. When the director of UNICEF was asked how to end Yemen's humanitarian catastrophe, he pointedly said: "Stop the war."

The U.S. was wrong from the start to offer support for the Saudi military intervention in Yemen back in March 2015. Since then, with arms sales and logistical and political support, the Saudi-led military coalition has virtually ruined Yemen. Meanwhile the U.S. arms the Saudi-led coalition, and refuels Saudi and United Arab Emirates (UAE) warplanes bombing Yemen. Thus the U.S. is literally fueling this war, and therefore bears part of the responsibility for the humanitarian catastrophe.

Action: Contact Rep. Speier or Eshoo and urge their support for H. Con Res. 81, to force a vote on our participation in the war in Yemen. Tell them that with its population on the brink of starvation, the U.S. should stop this ill-advised intervention and focus on feeding people and finding a diplomatic solution to the conflict.

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www.whitehouse.gov/contact/

**Find out who your Representative is: www.house.gov
If you are not in California, identify your senators here: www.senate.gov**

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.



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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 our military presence in Iraq and Afghanistan continues.

Visit us on Facebook!

www.facebook.com/pasmc

Peace Action of San Mateo County
Presents a talk by

Eric See

Director of Outreach and Organizing for
The Peace Action National Office

***The Korean Peninsula -
What Are the Options?***

Sunday, October 8, 7 PM

Unitarian Universalists of San Mateo
300 E. Santa Inez Avenue, San Mateo
(Wheelchair accessible)

Admission free, contributions welcome