Local

July 26 Meeting and Elections

An Election and a Film About Elections

On Sunday, July 26, PASMC will show an election-year-timely film, and hold our yearly Board and Officer election. As has been our custom lately while we collectively shelter in place, this will take place on Zoom…you, your friends and family are invited!

We will screen the short (just less than 38 minutes) documentary film “Suppressed – the Fight to Vote”, about the 2018 Georgia gubernatorial election and the voter suppression that marked it. This is a Brave New Films production. While such issues are not our direct purview, this is an election year like no other, and we hope to motivate people (even more than some of you perhaps are) to help get out the vote. To that end, in addition to a discussion, we will have a list of organizations dedicated to doing just that.

(This is the month during which we normally have a potluck dinner. Bring your own dinner and drinks, unfortunately…nobody else gets to taste your wonderful selections; we’ll all share just our company if not our food.)

As to our Board elections, we are always looking for new candidates to be part of our decision-making body. We plan events and decide PASMC’s direction. Anyone interested should email smpa@sanmateopeaceaction.org.

The evening begins at 7 PM. For a Zoom invitation, send us an email at the just-above address. Or if you already receive our emails, wait a bit and soon there will be an invitation with relevant links and numbers.

We hope and plan to see you on the 26th!

Summary of May 11 Virtual Meeting

Nuclear Weapons and Treaty Solutions

From the time she arrived in Livermore in the mid-1970s and saw the early protests at the Lawrence Livermore Nuclear Weapons Lab (LLNL), Marylia Kelley felt an important stake in the lab’s future. That stake encompassed the destructive potential of nuclear weapons as well as the environmental and health effects of the lab’s work. She co-founded Tri-Valley CAREs to educate the surrounding community – and eventually the nation and world – about nuclear weapons. Raising concerns about nuclear weapons was a challenge, she said, to the “hegemony” of the lab and its economic effect on the region.

Marylia recalled how requests for facts under the Freedom of Information Act led to appearances at Congressional hearings and bringing litigation to defend the environment from nuclear weapons development. In 1995 she was on hand for the signing of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT).

Marylia addressed the weapons-related budget, both at LLNL and for the country. She applied the familiar advice she heard to “follow the money”, to see through the press releases from LLNL about “science in the national interest”. Recent research found that “civilian science” got 1.7% of the lab’s Fiscal Year 2021 budget, while “nuclear weapons activities” got 88.7%. This was further borne out by the 45% increase in nuclear weapons funding since Donald Trump moved into the White House.

Asking “What are (LLNL) doing with that money?”, Marylia noted sobering programs in the pipeline. One is the W80-4 warhead, which would sit atop a new air-launched stealth cruise missile traveling close to the ground and evading radar for thousands of miles, “arriving on an unsuspecting population.” The military term for the system is the “Long Range Standoff Weapon” (LRSO). “Whatever you think of ‘deterrence,’” she said, “that’s not a weapon of deterrence…it’s a first-use weapon.” She cited the rationale given for the LRSO as “giving presidents every option”, and called it “incredibly destabilizing”.

She next cited the W87-1, termed a new “ground-based nuclear deterrent” with a price tag of $140 billion. The system, she said, has so many new features and technologies that problems with its certification could lead to a resumption of underground testing. That in turn would surely compel other countries to test their weapons, which “would bring us back into…the most dangerous days of the Cold War”. Marylia added that in the previous Cold War we avoided a nuclear exchange “because we were lucky, not because we were wise, and it’s worth asking, ‘are we going to be lucky again?’”.

She discussed a planned increase in the production of plutonium pits, the explosive cores for warheads – from the present 20 per year to perhaps 80 at the Los Alamos, New Mexico plant and beginning manufacture of perhaps 100 or more pits for the first time at the Savannah River plant in Tennessee. All of those would be trans-
ported on U.S. highways and stored in a newly-expanded space in Los Alamos.

Marylia said these new weapons systems are part of the Trump administration’s Nuclear Posture Review, part of an increase of 50% in the U.S. nuclear weapons budget since Trump took office. Addressing such largesse, she said “I think it’s valid to rethink ‘what is security?’ when we don’t have enough COVID-19 equipment.” Moreover, the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) has raided the Department of Energy’s Environmental Management and Cleanup budget, leaving just $109 million for initial cleanup work at LLNL when the amount needed is more like $1.3 billion. Tri-Valley CAREs is lobbying congressional committees to restore cleanup funding to its proper level, she added.

Marylia next turned to nuclear weapons treaties, beginning with the NPT, of which 2020 is the 50th anniversary. The 5-year review set for this year was postponed due to the Coronavirus, and it could happen next January or perhaps later in 2021. She expressed mixed feelings about the postponement because Trump may be looking to damage the treaty, and a different administration could change that course.

Marylia cited the importance of Article 6 of NPT, obligating nuclear weapons states to act in good faith to eliminate their arsenals at an early date. That of course has not happened; while the U.S. points to a smaller arsenal than during the Cold War, its current number of 6,000 warheads is “not disarmament”, she said. Marylia’s story from the 1995 conference of countries that were economically threatened by the U.S. if they pushed for disarmament suggested the degree of power and influence the U.S. wields at the UN.

She then related what happened when non-nuclear weapons states became “fed up” with the NPT negotiations and a lack of results. Their work to educate themselves about nuclear weapons led to a series of UN conferences around the world that truly addressed disarmament and challenged the nuclear-armed countries. “You could see what was really going on was empowerment”, said Marylia. After the third conference, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was drawn up by 130 countries.

The treaty prohibits not just new development and funding but also possession and transporting of nuclear weapons. And it addresses reparations for victims and property as well as humanitarian consequences. Marylia was struck by the amount of mutual respect and consideration of ideas that went into the negotiations and the final document. She called it “an adjunct to the NPT”, and a document that “challenges the idea that nuclear weapons are the apex of power, of sophistication,” an declared them illegal and immoral.

When Marylia spoke to us, 36 of the 50 nations required to bind the treaty had signed on. She was hoping they would get to 50 by August 6, the 75th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima. While the pandemic could make it difficult to achieve the milestone by then, she cited local and national campaigns around the world to get countries on board.

She then discussed the New START Treaty between the U.S. and Russia – up for renewal in February 2021, but with an uncertain future under the Trump administration. The two countries, she noted, have over 90% of the world’s nuclear arsenal. Besides its limits on weapons and launchers, she said, New START also mandates reporting requirements and verification steps. “This is what builds trust…what staves off a nuclear war that happens when we’re guessing what somebody else is doing”. Unreliable information, she added, could lead to a new arms race.

Marylia concluded with a vision for LLNL, which, like other labs around the country, including nearby Lawrence Berkeley lab, could do more “civilian science” work for the DOE. She noted LLNL has an well-respected “but too small program” on climate change. While civilian programs comprise just 1.7% of its budget, Marylia hopes to see that work enlarged and made a “centerpiece” for the 21st century. She added that the DOE and Department of Defense need to develop and improve new technologies for cleanup – and for nonproliferation by exploring technical aspects of treaty verification. She envisions “a win-win-win” for the lab, the local community that suffers exposure to toxic releases, and for the U.S. and the world to have solutions to pressing scientific questions.

Ron Zucker
Log on to www.trivalleycares.org

Membership Report
Peace Action of San Mateo County thanks Daniel Gilbrech for renewing his membership.
(We were a little late getting out our renewal letters…we hope the rest of you who have come due will follow suit soon!)

In Memoriam
PASMC sadly announces the passing of longtime member (of the chapter and our then-called “Leadership Council”) Tom Banks, whose time goes back to our early days. Tom moved to Maryland a number of years ago, but he remained a loyal, dues-paying member until his recent passing. Presente.
Dr. Rasmus’ Honest Assessment

When political economist Dr. Jack Rasmus logged on to the PASMTC Zoom meeting on June 28, 2020, he did not bring good news; it’s hard to offer something you haven’t found. “Fiscal monetary policy is broken in this country”, he said. “It’s not working the way it’s supposed to work.” His overview of what he called “The Great Recession 2.0” and what could follow was a sobering and interesting look at how government entities handle the U.S. economy in times of crisis such as we see now and in the recent past.

Dr. Rasmus began with a review of “how we got here” with the “triple crisis” of the COVID-19 pandemic; an economic crisis he felt could be traced back to before the pandemic, and a political crisis involving both our current administration and the unrest generated by the killing of black citizens. These three, he said, are interacting in a way never seen before.

He cited a sub-par economy before the pandemic (notwithstanding the financial markets), with contractions in manufacturing, business investment and consumer purchasing. Loans and credit cards, not income growth, were driving the economy, and the credit default rate was on the rise. “We were already headed for a recession”, Dr. Rasmus said about prospects for 2021, “the coronavirus sped it up.” The economic effect of the pandemic began in February, intensified in March, peaked in April, and a second coronavirus surge threatens to repeat a trend that saw the service sector (80% of the economy), manufacturing and construction get shut down drastically.

Dr. Rasmus made a distinction between a “recovery” and a “rebound”, in which the economy inevitably levels off and maybe “bumps up” just a little. But how long that lasts determines its strength, and he foresees a weak rebound – not “V-shaped” in which the economy recovers, but “W-shaped” in which a stagnant economy has a relapse and a “great recession”. One other scenario is “U-shaped”, or a great depression, in which the fall is extended.

Addressing the employment situation, Dr. Rasmus felt the estimate of 15-20 million jobless could be doubled, with a more accurate number reflecting not just full-time workers but also part-time and “gig” workers – plus workers who dropped out of the labor force.

He talked about recent and pending attempts at an economic stimulus, beginning with the CARES Act that gave both people and corporations extra cash – the latter through loans. The money, said Dr. Rasmus, has not been fully spent in the economy but rather saved and “hoarded” because no one is sure of our financial outlook. He put the amount not spent by businesses at about $1 trillion. Thus the stimulus has not been effective, because it has largely not entered the economy. He said that of the $660 billion Congress passed over two versions of the Paycheck Protection Program, 4½ million small businesses received funding, but with such businesses totaling “many more…than 4½ million”, a lot of other businesses got nothing and had to close. (Since the talk, PPP has been extended to August 8, giving businesses who didn’t get anything more time to apply.)

Meanwhile, Dr. Rasmus added, larger businesses had already begun hoarding money in January when they saw the economic situation coming, and have not taken the funds meant for them. Instead they borrowed with corporate bonds at the Federal Reserve’s low interest rates and laid off employees – rather than meet the terms of the stimulus loans. This was more money that didn’t go into the economy. They have accumulated but not invested money through tax cuts of the Bush, Obama and now Trump administrations. Dr. Rasmus suggested a “quid pro quo” in the CARES Act in which the Democrats had to agree to more tax cuts in exchange for the stimulus and unemployment checks. Now that money will run out by July 31, and “the economy is sinking”, he said.

And so the House of Representatives passed the HEROES Act, calling for more supplemental income and unemployment checks along with hazard and overtime pay. But Senate Republicans have so far rejected it, insisting on more tax cuts “to subsidize the business investors and the corporations”, said Dr. Rasmus. That would include replacing stimulus checks with a “wage subsidy” for businesses to pay their employees.

He said more about the Federal Reserve, which is engaged in a “preemptive bailout” of several trillion dollars to banks and other businesses such as fracking companies. This is money also not reaching the economy but rather meant to further subsidize investors in what he called a “bond boom”. The Fed, he said, set up special financial markets which lend to money markets and bond markets in order to buy junk corporate bonds (at a higher price) “from troubled companies” trying to stay afloat. Dr. Rasmus called this practice part of a monetary policy, not a fiscal policy, and a trait of neoliberalism that emphasizes corporate profits over stabilizing the economy overall and helping everyday workers. But business is not investing because it is unsure of the future. “Expectations are as low as they’ve ever been,” he said.

Dr. Rasmus recommended that the stimulus should reach 20% of government spending rather than what he feels is an insufficient 5% to 6% of its current level (similar to 2009). He also called for the money to consist of mostly direct spending rather than tax cuts, and compared such a plan to the year-by-year recovery from the Great De-
pression of the 1930s. He feels that at the end of July the economy will have a relapse, rent and mortgage relief will end, and consumption will be deeply curtailed. He called a properly-funded HEROES Act a “linchpin” in order to achieve an effective stimulus.

Without that, he said, the alternative may be austerity – in which cuts to social programs are proposed to pay for tax cuts and a weak recovery (or rebound). The current crash, Dr. Rasmus emphasized, is four times worse than that of 2008-2009, and the global recession is worse, but the stimulus is just as relatively small. Thus Dr. Rasmus sees a “W-shaped” recovery – and a big risk for 2021 of a depression if banks take on too much debt, have a crash, and stop lending. He called this a nexus of “debt, deflation and default”.

Dr. Rasmus also gave a nod to the financial effect of the instability of our elections, referring to “the food fight between the two wings of the capitalist class…globalists and Trumpists”. He concluded that we need to push to “bail out Main Street”, toward an improvement in jobs recovery – which would get us on the road to overall recovery.

Ron Zucker
Log on to www.jackrasmus.com.

You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.

Jane Goodall

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National

Senate Failed to End the Afghanistan War, Again

July 1

In response to the Senate vote against debating to end the Afghanistan war, Paul Kawika Martin, Senior Director for Policy and Political Affairs at Peace Action, who spent time in Afghanistan, released the following statement:

“American voters agree we must end endless wars. After nearly 19 years, over 147,000 casualties and total costs of over a trillion dollars, it’s long past time to bring troops home and invest in political, diplomatic and development tools. Yet, the Senate voted against debating to end the wars. Senator Rand Paul (R-KY) and Tom Udall (D-NV) courageously forced the Senate to vote on their amendment to remove troops within a year from Afghanistan. The pandemic clearly shows that expensive endless wars that cost $6 trillion from taxpayers make Americans less safe as they take funds from critical needs like health care.”

Senator Kamala Harris voted against tabling, Sen. Dianne Feinstein voted in favor.

Over 100 U.S. Organizations Urge Biden to Support Equality for Palestinians

(On June 22) more than 100 organizations representing millions of Americans sent a letter calling on presumptive Democratic nominee Joe Biden and President Trump to adopt a just and principled foreign policy towards the state of Israel and the Palestinian people, one that prioritizes freedom, dignity, and equality for all people. Signatories of the letters include American Muslims for Palestine, CODEPINK; Council on American-Islamic Affairs (CAIR); If Not Now; Jewish Voice for Peace; Kairos USA; Presbyterian Church USA, Israel Palestine Mission Network (IPMN), and Peace Action.

The letter, organized by CODEPINK, states: “Current U.S. positions supporting, indeed enabling, Israeli government violations are out of touch with voters. U.S. foreign policy on Israel/Palestine should be rooted in the same values and principles that are supposed to guide U.S. policy throughout the rest of the world – respecting human rights and international law, promoting the peaceful resolution of conflicts, supporting diplomacy over military intervention, and utilizing multilateralism and multilateral institutions for dispute resolution.”

The letter comes on the heels of a recent Biden campaign statement conflating American Jewry with support for Israel and bragging about having increased military assistance to Israel at the end of Obama’s term. The
statement also promised to continue, in violation of the First Amendment, attacks on individuals and organizations that boycott Israel for political reasons and referred to Palestinian “choices” to commit violence.

Within days of the release of the statement from the Biden campaign, so much backlash had accumulated that the degrading language of Palestinian “choices” was removed. This backlash reflects the growing American support for Palestinian rights, which provides an opportunity to influence policy regarding Palestinians and the state of Israel as America heads into the November 2020 election.

“Rather than reflecting the growth of support for Palestinian human rights within the Democratic party, Biden seems to be trying to show that he can be almost as hawkish and one-sided as Trump when it comes to the issue of Israel and Palestinian rights,” said CODEPINK co-director Ariel Gold. “Despite paying mild lip service to the dangers of Israel annexing parts of the West Bank, Biden’s positions are to the right of where the Obama administration was. Palestinians have been campaigning for over 70 years for their basic rights and freedoms. It is far past time for the U.S. to stop carrying water for the Israeli government and instead support justice and equality for all people.”

The shift in American opinion towards Israel and the Palestinian struggle was best captured in two key moments in the past year. One was at the March 2019 policy conference of the pro-Israel lobby AIPAC, when eight out of ten Democratic candidates refused to attend. The second was at the October 2019 J Street conference, when the audience burst into applause after then-candidate Bernie Sanders suggested leveraging the $3.8 billion the U.S. gives to Israel to push Israel towards respecting Palestinian human rights.

When Bernie Sanders suspended his campaign, Joe Biden indicated that he would integrate some of the politics of the progressive wing of the Democratic party in order to reflect the movement the Sanders campaign had built. Unfortunately, as far as Palestinian rights are concerned, Biden has done nothing of the sort.

"Public and media discourse, and crucially, voters’ opinions on Israeli violations and Palestinian rights, have dramatically shifted in recent years but too many past and present officials are out of touch, and unaware of those changes,” said Phyllis Bennis of the Institute for Policy Studies and board member of Jewish Voice for Peace. “Large percentages of key voting blocs want major changes in U.S. policy to match those changing public opinions – and any candidates hoping to win support from young, Black, Democratic, progressive, and increasingly Jewish voters, will ignore those changes at their peril.”

The birth of a new phase of the civil rights movement in the United States should also be an impetus for rethinking the role of the United States in supporting repressive policies abroad. “As Americans, we cannot talk about ending the institutional and systemic racism in this country while we enable a system of apartheid in the occupied Palestinian territories,” said Dr. Osama Abuirshaid, National Executive Director of American Muslims for Palestine. “We cannot demand an end to police brutality in our streets without demanding that our government stop financing Israeli brutality with our tax dollars.”

**Connecting with Hiroshima and Nagasaki**

As the 75th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki approaches, a coalition of organizations have come together to raise awareness of nuclear weapons and their dire humanitarian impacts, show support for the survivors, coordinate media outreach and amplify the voices for disarmament all around the country. The coalition has created a new website, [www.hiroshimanagasaki75.org](http://www.hiroshimanagasaki75.org), to raise awareness of the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and this anniversary in particular. The site is not owned by any particular organization and is solely dedicated to coordinating and lifting up activities around the anniversaries. It features a calendar and “clickable” map to inform the public and coalition members of local events around the United States commemorating the anniversary.

**“The Time for Conversion is Now”**

“The time for manufacturing of weapons of war has passed as a viable industry for our nation, despite the way some of our political leadership clings to economies of the past. The global pandemic emphasizes for us all the interconnectivity of our global society and the folly, wastefulness, and moral failure of war in all forms. We must transform facilities like Bath Iron Works and Marriedo into hubs of manufacturing for solutions to the climate crisis, including public transportation, resources for the creation of renewable energy, and disaster-response vessels.

“Building clean energy systems would generate up to 50% more jobs than making arms systems according to research by leading economists. The two biggest security threats to the United States are currently the climate crisis and COVID-19. The Pentagon’s contractors have long contributed to the climate crisis, and the time for conversion is now.”

Lisa Savage, Independent Green candidate for the Senate in Maine
**Better Examples**

Care to put a price on incompetence and stupidity? How about two trillion-plus dollars in desperately-needed government expenditures and over a hundred thousand lives lost – all for no good reason.

Sound harsh? Well, the same information on the pandemic was available to just about every nation since January. Taiwan, with a population of around 24 million, has recorded several hundred cases and deaths in just double digits. All accomplished without the lockdowns, or prolonged school and business closures. To compare on a per-capita basis simply multiply their numbers by 12. Their economy is ready and raring to go, very much unlike ours.

How can we account for such vastly different outcomes? Taiwan has high-quality universal health care and obviously more intelligent leaders. Add to this the fact that seven of the top eleven nations that have handled the crisis far, far better than all the others are headed by women: Taiwan, Iceland, Germany, Finland, New Zealand, Norway and Denmark. Thoughts anyone?

Mike Caggiano

**Need for Dissent**

*We must dissent from the fear, the hatred, and the mistrust. We must dissent from a nation that buried its head in the sand waiting in vain for the needs of its poor, its elderly, and its sick to disappear and just blow away. We must dissent from a government that has left its young without jobs, education, or hope. We must dissent from the poverty of vision and timeless absence of moral leadership. We must dissent, because America can do better, because America has no choice but to do better.*

Thurgood Marshall, former U.S. Supreme Court Justice

**Action Alert**

**Trim the Pentagon**

During the week of July 6, the House Armed Services Committee began marking up the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021. The Senate Armed Services Committee will work on its own version closer to the middle of July. Both committees are dealing with a proposed military budget of upwards of $740 billion, which if passed would be more than the next 10 countries combined. It would take away from funding we could better use to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, invest in communities of color, and improve our education system – to begin a good-sized list of priorities that would actually add to our country’s security.

On the Senate side, Sens. Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Warren and Ed Markey have introduced an amendment to the NDAA calling for a 10% cut in the Pentagon budget. Rep. Barbara Lee and Mark Pocan introduced a corresponding amendment to the House version. Rep. Lee has also introduced H Res 1003, which calls for cutting $350 billion from military spending. Both measures carry the same messages: We spend far too much on our military and not nearly enough on programs that people can use.

About H. Res 1003, Rep. Lee said (among other things): “We cannot continue to prioritize funding for a department known for its waste, fraud, abuse, and failure to pass an audit – especially when the money to ‘protect national security’ is failing to protect our most vulnerable citizens. Our foreign policy has been militarized to the point that we must repeatedly resort to military solutions for non-military problems.”

A Senate Dear Colleague letter on behalf of the 10% amendment includes this passage: “Now is not the time to be spending more on national defense than we did at the height of the Cold War or the wars in Korea and Vietnam. Now is the time to provide jobs, education, healthcare, and housing in American communities that have been ravaged by a global pandemic, extreme poverty, deindustrialization and mass incarceration.”

**Action:** Contact Sens. Dianne Feinstein and Kamala Harris and tell them to express their support for the Sanders et al amendment to the NDAA for a 10% cut in Pentagon spending. Also contact Rep. Jackie Speier (whose position on the House Armed Service Committee gives her more of a say) or Rep. Anna Eshoo, or whomever represents you, to urge them to also back the 10% cut, as well as co-sponsor Lee’s H Res 1003 for a $350 billion military spending reduction. Suggest that we need to take a long look at current military spending levels, and focus on better priorities.

**Testing Our Ability to Survive**

Elsewhere in this issue we recounted Marylia Kelley of Tri-Valley CAREs talking to us about the notion of our nuclear weapons complex resuming testing, with the rationale of finding out more about a newly-developed and complex warhead. Others have suggested the additional political rationale of asserting our nuclear capability. Whatever the motivation, it turns out there are not just anti-nuclear activists but also members of Congress who agree with Marylia’s thought that a new round of tests would encourage other nations to do the same…and the arms race likely would re-heat to dangerous levels.

There are two new bills in the Senate addressing nuclear testing: Sens. Catherine Cortez Masto and Jacky Rosen (both from Nevada where such testing has always taken place), and Sen. Christopher Coons, are behind the No
Nuclear Testing Without Approval Act, which would ensure that no president can unilaterally decide to resume testing. The bill – so new it doesn’t yet have a number – would mandate establishing a congressional approval process for any such testing – including a Joint Resolution of Approval requiring a two-thirds majority for testing to resume. In addition to being a stand-alone bill, this is also an amendment to the Senate version of the NDAA, which Sen. Feinstein helped introduce. In June Sen. Markey (S. 3886) and Rep. Rep. Dina Titus, also from Nevada (HR 7140), introduced corresponding versions of the Preserving Leadership Against Nuclear Explosives Testing (PLANET) Act, both of which prohibit funds for testing, from this or any previous years.

In 1996 The U.S. signed but did not ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty; we also led on a UN resolution to act on the principle of the treaty. The lack of real necessity to test our nuclear weapons, an aversion to the proliferation to which testing would lead, and the threat of deadly health effects on downwind Nevada residents all behoove we continue to abide by that principle.

**Action:** Contact Sen. Harris to urge her co-sponsorship of the No Nuclear Testing Without Approval Act, and her support for it as an amendment to the NDAA. Also tell her to co-sponsor the PLANET Act to cut off funding for testing. We can thank Sen. Feinstein, a co-sponsor of both of these bills, for being out in front on the testing issue. Also contact Rep. Speier or Eshoo and tell them to co-sponsor HR 7140. Suggest that we can save money plus be safer if we refrain from starting a new “cold war”.

### The Police are not the Military

The murder of George Floyd brought fully into public glare the potential for violence by our cities’ police forces, and the impunity with which some officers are capable of conducting themselves on their jobs. When we add an overemphasis and overdependence on police for keeping order and enforcing the law, we also see a system in which they are given tools that are arguably beyond their degree of necessity. That system allows for the 1033 Program – a Department of Defense tool furnishing police departments with military-style equipment, including armored vehicles, rifles, and aircraft.

Since 1997, DOD has supplied law enforcement agencies with $7.4 billion in such hardware, but research has shown that while militarizing policing has increased, it has been ineffective (and unsafe) in accomplishing a goal of crime reduction.

A bill in the House – the Stop Militarizing Law Enforcement Act – calling for the end of the 1033 Program was introduced for the second time in March of last year; Reps. Speier and Eshoo have both co-sponsored. Now Republican Sen. Rand Paul has introduced S 3931, a bipartisan counterpart in the Senate, “to prevent the militarization of Federal, State, and local law enforcement by Federal excess property transfers and grant programs”. This version has just three co-sponsors. Considering its goal to further curtail wasteful spending on weapons, it deserves many more.

**Action:** Contact Sens. Feinstein and Harris to call for their co-sponsorship of S 3931, toward putting an end to the 1033 Program. Tell them the program is liable to create more tension than it alleviates, and it needs to be replaced by something more sensible.

Ron Zucker

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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)

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.

Go to where the silence is and say something.

Amy Goodman
Peace Action of San Mateo County presents
A screening of the
Brave New Films documentary
“Suppressed – The Fight to Vote”
About the 2018 elections in Georgia
Discussion to follow
plus
the annual election of PASMC’s
Board and Officers
Sunday, July 26, 7 PM, on Zoom

For information on how to join the event,
email smpa@sanmateopeaceaction.org