



Sacramento Area Peace Action Newsletter

April
2021

Working to end U.S. militarism since 1983

909 12th St, Suite 118, Sacramento, CA 95814 916-448-7157 www.sacpeace.org

Let's Put An End to U.S. "Endless Wars!"

On Friday, March 19th, the 18th anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Iraq, SacPeace and friends held a protest at the federal courthouse. The next day, there were actions calling for an end to the cycle of "endless" wars around the world.

The US attacked Afghanistan two years earlier, so we've been at war in the Middle East for over twenty years. That's longer than our Revolutionary War, the Civil War, and World Wars I and II combined!

The costs of these wars has been incredible. Estimates for the Iraq war alone go as high as 3 trillion dollars! This has increased our current level of military spending to nearly \$100 million per hour. The contrast with unmet needs at home is shocking. Homeless families living in tents or cars, children going hungry, and millions without medical care, while the money that could be helping them is spent destroying the lives of other people around the world.

How has it come to this? The military-industrial-complex Eisenhower warned us about has added other business partners, such as the corporate media. They "market" wars to the American public by passing government propaganda off as "news," telling the big lie about Iraq's "weapons of mass destruction" over and over again.

The fabrication of enemies to justify the military budget goes on, with China now in the starring role. And since Congress handed over its Constitutional power through the AUMF, the Authorization for Use of Military Force, any President, Democrat or Republican, can start a war anytime and anywhere they like.

A West Point graduate turned peace activist

has said, "real change will not come from the top," and he's right. The tasks facing us are not only political, but educational and cultural as well. The political challenge is daunting, but we are in a new political moment; people are fed up with the inability of the



government to solve problems here at home.

A new solution can yet emerge. There is no real military cure for terrorism, and unless we want to rule the world, we don't need a thousand bases, and hundreds of thousands of troops overseas. Cutting the military budget will fund desperately needed works at home, and using diplomacy instead of military force abroad can break the cycle of endless wars.

It's up to us to restore our country to what it should always have been; an example of real democracy, equality, and respect for human rights and the well-being of our planet.

For a webinar discussing this in greater detail, go to: <https://tinyurl.com/e5apnmnf>

Take Action: Contact Matsui!

As a follow-up to the March 18, 2021 Forum with Medea Benjamin, SacPeace asked people concerned about U.S. foreign policy to send the letter below to representative Doris Matsui.

Send it to Matsui's District Director, Glenda Corcoran, glenda.corcoran@mail.house.gov, and foreign policy staffer Robert Clark, robert.clark@mail.house.gov. They can also be sent through Matsui's website: <https://matsui.house.gov/contact>.

You can watch the March 18 forum at: www.facebook.com/SacramentoPeaceAction.

Please let us know if you write to Matsui! We'd love to see how active our members can be!

Dear Doris Matsui,

On March 18, Sacramento Area Peace Action co-hosted, along with a dozen other Sacramento regional peace and social justice organizations, a forum discussing opportunities for a more human rights based, less militaristic, U.S. foreign policy.

Over 40 people attended via Zoom while others participated via Facebook. Organizers made multiple attempts to invite you, or your staff, to attend. No response, or acknowledgement of receipt, was received from either the district or D.C. office.

It is critical that you hear from your constituents on these important matters and equally important that your constituents hear from you. A range of issue were discussed during the forum. Heading the list were the following, which include specific requests of you as our District 6 representative.

- 1) **The Iran Nuclear Deal.** Please join efforts and publicly state your support for the U.S. returning to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action – with no preconditions – immediately. The window of time is short to fix this destructive Trump policy.
- 2) **Cuba.** Please support normalizing relations with Cuba including ending sanctions and travel restrictions. It is time to return to the improving relationship that was emerging during the Obama presidency.
- 3) **Nuclear Weapons.** The UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons went into effect in January 2021 without the U.S. signing. Please support legislation Restricting First Use of Nuclear Weapons and efforts for agreements among nuclear-armed states to eliminate their nuclear arsenals.
- 4) **Defense spending and militarization.** Please join 50 of your colleagues in urging President Biden to request a Fiscal Year 2022 budget with a reduced Pentagon budget. Our federal budget is a statement of our national values and it should support a human right based foreign policy. National security would be better served by investing in diplomacy, humanitarian aid, global public health and sustainability initiatives.

Sincerely,
(Your signature)

Let's End the War and leave Yemen to the Yemenis!

By Gary Meyer

President Joe Biden recently announced that the US would “withdraw its support for Saudi Arabia’s war in Yemen”. But what about the war of globalization, on-going for the past 6 years, by the United States, European allies, and Arabian Peninsula allies?

The Yemeni culture is ancient, and up until

Anti-drone protest in Nevada!



Anti-drone protestors used large banners in the early morning Monday/4-5-21 to nonviolently block two entrances into Creech Air Force Base, a key U.S. Drone Base. It was the first day of a weeklong protest to oppose the illegal U.S. remote targeted killing program.

At Creech, U.S. Air Force personnel, in coordination with C.I.A. officials, are regularly and secretly killing people remotely using unmanned armed drone planes, primarily the MQ-9 Reaper drones. Thousands of civilians have been killed and injured, in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Yemen, Somalia, Libya, and elsewhere, since 2001, said the activists.

“By national and international laws, assassination is illegal,” says Toby Blomé, one of the organizers, “but it has become more normalized, rationalized and justified in American culture, politics and the media, as drone warfare has rapidly expanded. It’s an utterly barbaric and cowardly form of violence that should never have been tolerated, and has made killing way too easy,” she said.

the 20th century was spread throughout the mountainous region of the southern Arabian Peninsula. Saudi Arabia, with British help, shaved the most northern areas of these mountains into the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the 1930’s.

For the past 6 years, Yemenis who had focused on an agrarian and trade economy for centuries have been invaded and divided by globalization. Huge oil reserves in the eastern, sparsely populated half of the nation, are the driving factor in this conflict. A few Yemenis are growing wealthy from foreign corporate cash, while the majority who are opposing the process are dismissed by the western media as the so-called “Houthi rebels.”

In the five years before the war, US arms transfers to Saudi Arabia amounted to \$3 billion; between 2015 and 2020, the U.S. agreed to sell over \$64.1 billion worth of weapons to Riyadh, averaging \$10.7 billion per year. Sales to other belligerents in the war, such as the United Arab Emirates (UAE), also rose exponentially.

What President Biden *should* have said, but did not: “The US will...”

End all arms sales and *Continued on p. 7*



SacPeace, DSA, and Veterans for Peace took part in a Global Day of Action against the war in Yemen.

Why spend hundreds of millions on “sitting duck” targets?

Land-Based ICBMs Are A Dangerous “Money Pit!”

This article is excerpted from a letter by Nebraskans for Peace to the US Air Force in opposition to the proposed deployment of a new generation of land-based nuclear missiles. These “sitting duck” targets have already been made obsolete by moveable - and easily hidden - air and naval forces. It’s ironic that the Trident nuclear missile in this photo, fired from underwater by an atomic submarine, was launched from the USS Nebraska.

At the very moment our planet’s ecosystem is being uncontrollably assailed by a devastating global pandemic and an escalating climate crisis, the U.S. Government (to the tune of over \$1 Trillion) is actively embarked on heightening the man-made peril of nuclear annihilation.

Given their respective biological and geophysical natures, the coronavirus and climate crises may never be fully subject to human management and control. The threat of nuclear holocaust, however, is a problem of our own making. It’s a peril we are inflicting on ourselves, and on the natural world that supports us.

Though the very existence of nuclear weapons poses an existential threat to life on earth, land-based ICBMs constitute the most vulnerable leg of the U.S. deterrent triad. As easily identifiable fixed-point targets, ICBM silos are ‘sitting ducks’, lacking the deception provided by mobile sea- and air-based systems. The built-in vulnerability of land-based missile deployment has been openly acknowledged for years.

However, that vulnerability has been inverted by nuclear planners into a hideous

“strategic advantage,” by reasoning that an enemy would need to “waste” precious warheads from their limited arsenals to destroy these before their weapons could be launched in retaliation. Our land-based ICBMs would be used as targets, and our entire region of the country would become an uninhabitable radioactive wasteland.

But the ‘fallout’ would reach far beyond the U.S. heartland. Even a modest nuclear exchange would endanger the security and resiliency of the global ecosystem. As University of Nebraska researchers have shown, even a limited nuclear strike could precipitate a worldwide “nuclear autumn,” throwing up such a cloud of dust, smoke and debris that the sun would be dimmed, leading to global crop failure and the collapse of our food system.

Instead of spending \$100-200 billion on an imprudent and precarious modernization of the land-based leg of the nuclear triad, endangering the planet’s ecosystem (and our global food production and distribution system), and compromising our national security by flouting the United Nations just-enacted Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, the U.S. should be earnestly pursuing negotiations with the other nuclear states to abolish these weapons of mass destruction.

In the interest of national, economic and environmental security, the Department of Defense should decommission, rather than “modernize,” the land-based ICBM leg of the nuclear triad.



On The Global Frontiers of The U.S. Empire

This article was inspired by a webinar on U.S. overseas bases which was streamed live on Mar 9, 2021. Leah Bolger, President of the Board, World BEYOND War, and a retired U.S. Navy officer, spoke of the social, environmental, and economic impacts on other nations. Watch it at: <https://tinyurl.com/USoverseasbases>

The closing of U.S. bases and the removal of U.S. military personnel are critical to the elimination of war. At least 90% of foreign military bases in the world are U.S. bases.

The United States

has more than 150,000 military troops deployed abroad on more than 800 bases (some estimate more than 1000!) in 160 countries, and on all 7 continents.

These bases are the central feature of U.S. foreign policy, which is one of coercion and threat of military aggression. The US uses these bases to pre-position troops and weaponry in case they are “needed” at a moment’s notice, as a symbol of U.S. imperialism and domination, and as a constant implicit threat. On top of all that, countries with U.S. bases are targets for attack by anti-US forces.

There are two main problems with foreign military bases:

1. All these bases are part of preparations for war, and as such undermine international peace and security. They proliferate weapons,

and increase violence.

2. Bases cause local environmental and social problems. Communities near bases often experience high levels of rapes by foreign soldiers, violent crimes, loss of land, and pollution and health hazards.

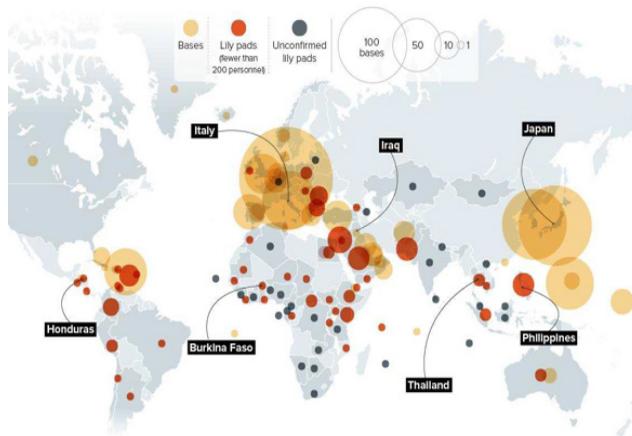
In many countries, agreements that permit the bases stipulate that foreign soldiers who commit crimes can not be held accountable; they are granted immunity.

Overseas military bases have negative effects on the host nations, and can violate the host nation’s sovereignty. There is no consensus or international framework to deal with the problems caused by such bases.

The closing of U.S. foreign military bases would have a significant effect on global perceptions, and represent a massive shift in foreign relations.

With each base closure, the U.S. presence would become less of a threat. Relations with host countries would improve as the base real estate and facilities are rightfully returned to local government.

Because the United States is far and away the most powerful and aggressive military in the world, the closing of our own foreign bases would represent an easing of tensions for everyone. If the U.S. made such a gesture, it might induce other countries to reconsider their own foreign and military policies.



Here’s a link to an interactive map of US bases around the world: <https://tinyurl.com/4dnd8ws4>



Let's Save The Iran Deal! No War With Iran!

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), known commonly as the Iran nuclear deal, is designed to keep Iran from developing nuclear weapons. It was signed under Obama, then repudiated by Trump. Biden campaigned on a promise to return to the deal if elected, but so far has not done so.

He's under heavy pressure from conservatives who claim that the deal was "flawed" from the beginning, due to its limited time frame. Israel, which is fearful of Iran getting nukes of its own (despite the fact that they are reported to have around 200 of their own!), is also an outspoken foe of the deal.

At the same time, Biden is being pressured by U.N. Security Council members and European allies to come back into the deal. Growing tensions with China due to the U.S. "Pivot to Asia," have the U.S. looking to move some of its military forces out of the Middle East. Peace Action and many other groups have made it a priority to push Biden to return to the Iran deal. We must counteract the intense pressure that conservatives in Congress are putting on Biden. We need to make our voices heard in support of a return to the JCPOA!

Let's tell our representatives in Congress to get moving!

- In the Senate, co-sponsor S.Con.Res.33 introduced by Sen. Tom Udall (D-NM), as the next step to H.Con.Res.83 introduced by Rep. Elissa Slotkin (D-MI), to end the use of U.S. forces to engage in hostilities in or against Iran.

- Co-sponsor S.J.Res.68 introduced by Sen. Tim Kaine (D-VA) to direct the removal of U.S. forces from hostilities against the Islamic Republic of Iran that have not been authorized by Congress.

- Cosponsor S.J.Res.13 introduced by Sen. Tim Kaine (D-VA) or H.R.2456 introduced by Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA) to repeal the 2002 AUMF against Iraq.

- Co-sponsor the No War Against Iran Act, S.3159 introduced by Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) or H.R.5543 introduced by Rep. Ro Khanna (D-CA) to prohibit the use of funds for unauthorized military force against Iran, and for other purposes.

Let's remind them that it is only they, the Congress, and **not** the President, can declare a war! We must demand that they speak out publicly against going to war with Iran!

What Do Venezuela and Iran Have In Common?

SacPeace's interest in Venezuela goes back many years. One of the panelists on the recent webinar that inspired this article, Dan Kovalik, professor of International Human Rights at the University of Pittsburgh School of Law, spoke to us here in Sacramento 1 1/2 years ago, on the US attempts to overthrow the Chavez government in Venezuela, which are ongoing. (You can see this talk at : <https://youtu.be/1AISWMYGEsQ>). The similarities to the current attack on Iran are striking!

In spite of being from opposite sides of the world, Venezuela and Iran are seen by the U.S. as adversaries. Both are demonized and attacked with “hybrid” warfare that stops just short of a conventional military assault or invasion; sanctions, cyber attacks, economic blockades, the freezing of overseas assets, and “special ops” paramilitary incursions.

Both have been targets of U.S. “regime change” efforts, despite having democratically elected governments. The Iranian government was overthrown in 1953, and Venezuela was saved from a similar fate in 2002 by a popular uprising that stopped a U.S. backed coup.

Aside from that “negative” similarity, they have many *positive* things in common. One is that they’re both oil producers, members of OPEC. Another is that both are *not* run by wealthy elites, and have made strenuous efforts to help the poor. Both countries diverted the country’s oil income from a wealthy few to development projects that served all. In Iran, the clerics who took over after the fall of the Shah were from villages in the countryside, not career politicians or foreign puppets. Yet they’ve raised Iran to #1 in growth according to the Human Development Index.

Both have made serious efforts to support their local agriculture, buying food from small farms, and subsidizing food for the poor.

Though culturally different in many ways, they’re similar in ideology and social policies.

Of course, both are very different from the US, but there is one very special difference: while racism is a persistent problem in the US, it is rare in both Iran and Venezuela.

What is clear in all this is the U.S. effort to dominate the entire world, from the Middle East to the Americas; from Asia to Africa. With their military girdling the planet with bases, and now trying to control even outer space, plus the economic power of the dollar which enables them to punish 39 countries, 1/4th of the world’s population with sanctions, the U.S. government is straining for “full spectrum dominance.” Perhaps the greatest commonality of Iran and Venezuela is their courageous stand against U.S. domination, which gives hope to many other nations around the world.

This article was inspired by a Council on Hemispheric Affairs webinar, which you can see at: <https://tinyurl.com/venezuela-and-iran>

Yemen *Cont. from p. 3*

maintenance agreements with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates as long as they are engaged in the war and beyond.

Acknowledge the role of the US gov’t and the military-industrial complex in the war by apologizing and paying reparations to the Yemeni people for having helped to subject them to *the world’s greatest humanitarian disaster*, caused by the Saudi-led war and our support for it.

He should also apologize to the American people, whose taxes paid for this disaster. Finally, reparations to the people of Yemen should not be paid by US taxpayers, but by the arms industry.

End all US military presence in Yemen!
For more information on Yemen and warfare waged upon Yemenis, use this link:
<https://tinyurl.com/er842dz4>

April & May Peace Events

To access any of the hyperlinks on this page, go to: www.sacpeace.com

Thursday, Apr 15, 4:30 - 6pm, Support Palestinian rights. Stop U.S. militarism and wars. Those participating are asked to stay at least 6 feet apart and wear a mask. 16th & J, Sacramento. End U.S. aid to Israel. & Boycott companies aiding Israel's abuses. FMI: 916-448-7157.

Friday, Apr 16, 10:30am, Virtual Delegation to Tent of Nations in Palestine's West Bank. Click to register.

Wednesday, Apr 21, 7:15 - 9:15pm, Sacramento branch Women's International League for Peace & Freedom. For Zoom link: 916-835-4330, wilpf@nicetechnology.com.

Thursday, Apr 22, 4:30 - 6pm, Stop U.S. militarism and wars weekly vigil. Those participating are asked to stay at least 6 feet apart and wear a mask. 16th & J Sts. Sacramento. FMI: 916-448-7157, sacpeace@dcn.org.

Wednesday, Apr 28, 10:30pm, Time for global No-First-Use policies - Asia/Pacific webinar. Click to register

Thursday, Apr 29, 8:15am. Nuclear risk-reduction and disarmament: Is it time for no-first-use policies in the USA and globally? click to register.

Thursday, Apr 29, 4:30 - 6pm, Stop U.S. militarism and wars weekly vigil. Those participating are asked to stay at least 6 feet apart and wear a mask. 16th & J Sts. Sacramento. FMI: 916-448-7157, sacpeace@dcn.org.

May 2021 Sacramento Peace Events

Sunday, May 16, 2:30 - 4:30pm, Sacramento branch Women's International League for Peace & Freedom. For Zoom link: 916-835-4330, wilpf@nicetechnology.com.

Ongoing Vigils in Valley & Foothill Communities

Davis Peace Coalition: Silent Peace Vigil, every Saturday, 11am-12noon, G Street Plaza (between 2nd and 3rd Streets) Davis, 530-758-8575, www.davispeace.org (Updated 11-2006)

Sacramento Area Peace Action: Tuesdays, 4-6pm, 16th & J Streets ; Saturdays 11:30am-1:30pm: 1st Sat. Arden at Heritage; 3rd Sat. Fulton & Marconi, Sacramento , 916-448-7157, www.sacpeace.org (Updated 11-2006)

Solano County Peace and Justice Coalition, Thursdays, 5 to 6 pm, First and Military street in Benicia, www.solanopeaceandjustice.com (Updated 11-2006)

Woodland: Monthly Peace Vigil in Woodland gathers every fourth Saturday 11am -12 noon in front of the Yolo County Court House, 725 Court St. Woodland. 530 662-0387; doehene@charter.net (Updated 11-2006)