

Update

January 2012

Ron Zucker, Editor

Local

January 12 Meeting

Kevin Danaher on a Green Economy

On Thursday, January 12, Peace Action of San Mateo County will begin the new year with a talk by Dr. Kevin Danaher, co-founder of Global Exchange, the celebrated San Francisco-based environmental and human rights organization. Kevin will talk about “How the Green Economy Can Save Humanity from Itself.”

Distinguished by his analytical expertise, sense of humor and blunt eloquence, Kevin is hailed in the activist community as an exceptional and dynamic speaker. The New York Times described him as the “Paul Revere of globalization’s woes.” He has been at the forefront of promoting what he calls “grassroots globalization” to empower local economies to function in a sustainable manner – and has also led opposition to governments’ “free trade” agenda.

While no longer on the staff of Global Exchange (though still a member of its Board), his new position with the San Francisco Department of the Environment has already provided him with insights about green technology as a basis for our economy and as a counterpoint to the business-as-usual thinking of the corporate world and the military. On January 12 he will share new thoughts about converting work by corporations and the military to a greener process.

Regarding the military and the environment, Kevin cites “lots of connections: the biggest polluter in the U.S. is the military, but the U.S. military has lots of green programs happening – very contradictory. Imagine if we could convert the 865 U.S. military bases abroad into eco-universities and eco-industrial parks! That would do way more for our security than drones and bombs and missiles could ever do.”

Dr. Kevin Danaher has a PhD in Sociology from UC Santa Cruz. In addition to helping launch Global Exchange in 1988, Kevin also is a founder and Executive Producer of the Green Festivals, two-day events around the country that bring together green economy companies, social justice and environmental organizations, speakers, live music and tens of thousands of attendees aiming for a transition to a green economy. Kevin is the author of 6 books, the two most recent of which are *Building the Green Economy: Success Stories from the Grassroots* (with Shannon Biggs and Jason Dove Mark),

and *Insurrection: The Citizen Challenge to Corporate Power*.

We will be asking for a donation of \$5-10 per person, sliding scale, as a fundraiser for PASMCMC...however, no one will be turned away for lack of funds. The Unitarian Universalists is wheelchair accessible; enter the hall on the Ellsworth side.

Mark your calendar for January 12, an evening of new ideas for a better future!

Ron Zucker

PASMC Holiday Fundraiser

At our annual Holiday Potluck on December 11, Peace Action of San Mateo County raised \$175 for Samaritan House during the “white elephant” auction portion of the evening.

We thank everyone who contributed items to the auction, and of course we thank everyone who bid on and purchased those items, so that we could help that part of the community benefiting from the efforts of Samaritan House. While we mostly “think globally while acting locally”, all who attended undoubtedly enjoyed the idea of “thinking locally” during this event.

MLK Day Birthday Celebrations

We have options – two at least – on the Peninsula to commemorate the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr.

The first, on Saturday, January 14 at 8 PM, is the annual Community Sing-along in Palo Alto, co-sponsored by Peninsula Peace and Justice Center and the Social Justice Ministry of the First Presbyterian Church. Bring your voice and sing the great songs of the civil rights, peace, and labor movements with lots of good people! Snacks and birthday cake will be provided during intermission. The Sing-along is in Fellowship Hall at the First Presbyterian Church, 1140 Cowper Street in Palo Alto. Admission is free; contributions will be requested.

Then on Monday, January 16, San Mateo celebrates MLK Day at the Downtown San Mateo CalTrain Station, 385 1st Avenue. The 13th annual event will begin at 8:30 AM with a pre-program, and continue with a continental breakfast at 9 AM. The 28th annual Freedom Train, which begins in San Jose, will depart San Mateo at 10 AM for San Francisco to join the San Francisco MLK Jr. Day Celebration.

Special train tickets can be purchased at the CalTrain station, and can be used to return from San Francisco after 1 PM.

National Day of Action Against Guantanamo

A rally is planned on Wednesday, January 11 to “Say No the National Defense Authorization Act and Indefinite Detention”. The time is noon to 1:30, the place is the San Francisco Federal Building, 7th Street between Market and Mission.

After 10 years of unlawful detention and torture, people are saying *enough!* Close Guantanamo and end this shameful situation of indefinite detention...plus the clause in the new National Defense Authorization Act allowing the military to detain anyone in the U.S., citizen or not, without trial.

Sign up to join a human chain representing the 171 Guantanamo detainees still imprisoned. Please wear orange or black; there will be orange jumpsuits but most likely not enough for everyone participating. There will also be speakers, music and street theatre. For more information contact endgitmo@gmail.com.

Co-sponsors include CODEPINK, OccupySF Action Spokes Council, Amnesty International, War Resisters League-West, warisacrime.org and Veterans for Peace.

Membership Report

Peace Action of San Mateo County welcomes back the following renewing members: **Minette Berger, Max Bollock, Lucille Goodier, Frank Montoro, Ron and Eve Visconti**

JOIN PEACE ACTION OF SAN MATEO COUNTY

_____ New Member _____ Renewing Member

Name: _____

Address: _____

e-mail: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

_____ \$30 Individual Membership

_____ \$40 Family Membership

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

_____ \$15 Student/Limited Income

_____ Other \$ _____

\$ _____ 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.

Saturday Peace Vigil

While the war in Afghanistan continues, Peace Action of San Mateo County gathers every Saturday, 3-4 PM, at 3rd Avenue and El Camino Real (in front of the Bank of America Building). Join us as we call for bringing our war dollars home and saving our economy.

National

Bring the War Dollars Home

Betsy Crites (Durham, NC) Herald-Sun guest columnist

The withdrawal from Iraq is to be celebrated like a migraine that finally subsides. It is what the majority of Americans have long asked for through pollsters and by their election of a president who promised to get us out.

It is what peace advocates have marched and lobbied for since before the invasion began. So, yes, it’s wonderful to have those troops come home.

The sacrifices of our military personnel are to be applauded; they gave their all when asked to serve. Yet, out of respect for them and future vets, we must be honest with ourselves. This was not a “good war.”

Former U.S. Ambassador to NATO Nicolas Burns, who initially supported the invasion of Iraq, writes that “any good from it was far outweighed by the sacrifices of our soldiers and the significant damage to our international credibility.”

We lost 4,484 young American men and women and an estimated 100,000 were wounded. Human rights groups estimate 114,000 Iraqis were killed and several million displaced.

The economic toll, according to Nobel Prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz, was close to \$6 trillion not counting the “opportunity costs.”

“If not for the war in Iraq,” he asks, “would oil prices have risen so rapidly? Would the federal debt be so high? Would the economic crisis have been so severe?” His answer is “probably not.”

But at least the war is over now, right? Probably not.

There remain 16,000 “contractors and embassy personnel,” and reinforcements are just across the border in Kuwait. As if to be reassuring, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton declared: “We still have a robust continuing presence throughout the region.”

Apparently the war has not ended. We’ve just ended a phase, the Iraq war...sort of.

We remain at war in Afghanistan, of course, which also tends to dampen the celebration, especially when one hears officials talk of extending that to 2024.

The war drums are now beating for Iran. And beyond the Middle East, the U.S. is expanding its military presence in the Pacific and Africa.

We are enmeshed in a state of permanent war. Theaters of war open and close, but are not won or lost. They are wars to maintain geopolitical domination and project power. We may not be used to thinking of America in this way, but these are the characteristics of an “empire.”

We all pay for this permanent war, euphemistically called “security.” The complex of “security related programs” consumes 60 percent of the federal discretionary budget. The cost since 2001 to North Carolina taxpayers of the wars alone has been \$31.7 billion. Durham City taxpayers share of the wars amount to \$794.4 million.

When Congress cuts payments to doctors serving Medicaid and Medicare patients, or raises the age of Social Security, or cuts community block grants, or refuses to fund job generating projects, or declines to invest in clean energy, but protects “security spending,” we are paying for permanent war and, it must be added, tax cuts to the wealthy.

When financially strapped state governments subsequently cut education services, libraries, environmental protection, universities and health services, we are paying the tab for war.

But our nation is not broke; it’s making bad choices. Such decisions to fund wars-without-end cost us our true security, i.e. a sustainable economy, a well-educated citizenry, and energy independence.

In President Eisenhower’s farewell address he issued a warning for us all: “Only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry can compel the proper meshing of the huge industrial and military machinery of defense with our peaceful methods and goals, so that security and liberty may prosper together.”

Fortunately, we have some alert local leaders who are clearly stating that decisions about war spending have local consequences.

The Durham City Council recently passed a resolution calling upon the President and Congress “to bring these war dollars home to meet vital human needs, promote job creation, rebuild our infrastructure, aid municipal and state governments, and develop a new economy based upon renewable, sustainable energy and reduce the federal debt.” Similar resolutions were passed this fall by the Durham County Board of Commissioners and the Durham Board of Education.

Twenty General Assembly officials likewise asked Congress to “redirect tens of billions of dollars from excess military spending and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq toward meeting urgent domestic needs.”

It will take this kind of leadership, plus many citizens challenging the assumptions of empire, if we want to reset our priorities. Bringing the troops home from Iraq gives me hope that in the coming year we may also bring at least some of the war dollars home and restore our communities.

Betsy Crites is the Director of North Carolina Peace Action.

In Explaining Iraq War, WMD Hoax Becomes a Footnote

by Peter Hart, Fairness and Accuracy in Media
www.fair.org/blog 12/15/2011

The Washington Post’s Scott Wilson has a piece looking back on the Iraq War, where he writes of the “arc of the American experience in Iraq” being “from hope to barbarity, from swaggering invasion to quiet departure.”

When it comes to the rationale for the entire war, things get a bit fuzzy. Like we pointed out recently about CBS Evening News, the main driver of the invasion – the threat of Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction – is reduced to something like a footnote:

The premise was contested from the start, a new doctrine of preemptive war tailored to an era in which stateless militants could batter the once-distant United States with the everyday tools of modern society – commercial jets as missiles, cellphones as triggers, trucks as bombs.

The neoconservatives at the Pentagon and in the West Wing argued that the invasion of Iraq was necessary. Hussein, the longtime U.S. nemesis who once tried to kill then-President Bush’s father, was openly encouraging Palestinian militancy at a time when Hamas was blowing up cafes and pizzerias in Jerusalem. A model of democracy in the Middle East – imposed by the U.S. military – would inspire change in its neighbors or frighten them into reform.

Besides, Hussein had murdered hundreds of thousands of his own people in the Anfal campaign against the Kurds, and in the aftermath of the 1991 Persian Gulf War to put down a Shiite rebellion that the United States failed to support after pledging to do so – a broken promise that helped fill the mass graves of Hilla, south of Baghdad. And he supposedly had an arsenal of some of the world’s nastiest weapons that had to be found and destroyed before they ended up with Al-Qaeda.

In this bizarre re-telling, Saddam Hussein’s support for Hamas and a plot to kill George H. W. Bush seem to matter more than the bogus stories about Iraq’s WMDs. Perhaps all you can say about this is that it makes a certain kind of sense for the U.S. government and elite media to want people to forget the falsehoods that launched the war.

The “Hancock 38” Put the Robotic Hunter/Killer Reaper Drone on Trial

By Ed Kinane, *Truthout Monday 26 December 2011*

“We still have a choice today: nonviolent co-existence or violent co-annihilation.”

Martin Luther King Jr. (“Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break the Silence,” speech at Riverside Church, New York City, 4 April 1967)

For five days in early November the “Hancock 38” stood trial in DeWitt, New York, town court for our “die-in” outside the main gate of Hancock air field last April 22.

We were charged with “disorderly conduct” while attempting to bring a citizens’ indictment to Hancock for piloting robotic MQ9 Reaper drones over Afghanistan. These drones, while sometimes used in combat, often hurl Hellfire missiles and 500 pound bombs at defenseless non-combatant targets.

The indictment, specifying the laws broken and the war crimes committed at Hancock by its Reaper drones, never got delivered. It was confiscated as our delegation silently and somberly, wrapped in “bloody” shrouds, approached the gate.

In response, many of us dropped to the pavement as if dead. Our “corpses” symbolized the uncountable number of Afghan civilians displaced, maimed or killed by the Reaper drone.

In court, we argued that our arrest violated our First Amendment right to free expression, to freedom of assembly and to petition our government for redress of grievances.

So significant are the issues raised by our trial that former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, now in his late eighties, traveled from New York City to DeWitt to testify on our behalf. Mr. Clark explained that the unmanned Reaper drone, electronically piloted by computer technicians at Hancock, violates the Nuremberg Principles and other international law.

Several of the Hancock 38 also testified. Our strategy: stick with the Constitution and put the Reaper itself on trial. On December 1, Judge David Gideon found us all guilty. Somewhat arbitrarily, he singled out four of us to be immediately jailed for several days. All of us received a \$250 fine, \$125 in mandatory court fees, 20 or 25 hours of community service and a year’s conditional discharge.

Seeing no connection between such sentences and justice, many of us in our sentencing statements declared that we would refuse to pay fines or do community service (our April 22 action was community service). Those of us who have not complied with the sentence by February 29 are mandated to return to court on that date. Stay tuned.

The Hancock 38 – most of whom went pro se, i.e. defended ourselves – testified to numerous reasons we oppose the Reaper drone:

Many of us identify with the Judeo-Christian tradition and its ethical and moral imperatives. The Reaper is a robotic killer – it kills the innocent; it kills the unarmed. It violates the Commandment, “Thou Shalt Not Kill.” The Reaper, as Ramsey Clark testified, violates international law, which according to Article 6 of the Constitution is the highest law of our land – trumping both local and federal law. We felt the necessity to expose the war crimes being committed in our midst.

The Reaper violates U.S. laws forbidding extrajudicial execution, that is, assassination without due process: without proper investigation, without legal representation, without the right to trial and appeal.

The commander in chief and the generals surely know their killings are unconstitutional. Their imperial defiance undermines the rule of law, making this already bloody planet less safe for us all.

Although pundits and propagandists avoid defining it, “terrorism” is *violence, or the threat of violence, directed at civilians for political purposes*. Given all the civilians the Reaper displaces, maims or kills, its attacks are the very essence of terrorism. Such calculated, premeditated killing exposes the vast hypocrisy of the so-called “war on terrorism.”

When it strikes, the Reaper generates enormous resentment toward the U.S. The Reaper, while tactically smart, is strategically stupid. It undermines any “hearts and minds” approach to anti-insurgency. It keeps the pot boiling. Drone strikes may be Al Qaeda’s most powerful recruiting pitch. Contrary to a common claim, the drone doesn’t “save lives,” it perpetuates the killing. Blowback from drone terrorism makes us all less safe.

Drones have become the Pentagon’s darling. It sees that the drone distances, not only military personnel, but also citizens, from wars fought with our tax money. One commentator (Michael Ignatieff) asks, “If war becomes unreal to the citizens of modern democracies, will they care enough to restrain and control the violence exercised in their name?”

Already, with little domestic outcry, the Pentagon uses the drone to violate the air space and sovereignty of various nations upon which the U.S. Congress has yet to declare war. Recently the Pentagon has begun using the drone to assassinate U.S. citizens abroad ... again, with little outcry.

Drone technology is evolving and proliferating at an even faster pace than nuclear weaponry. Over 40 nations are now importing or developing the drone. The day is surely coming when one of these nations will decide the world would be better off without U.S. drone bases and their chains of command. As with 9/11, the “collateral

damage” may be devastating.

Domestically, drones are used to surveil U.S. border regions (which encompass large swaths of the U.S. population). Police and intelligence agencies are now finalizing to use drones to further surveil U.S. citizens. Do we really want the armed forces and the government to have such powerful tools – tools that can be turned against any of us?

The Pentagon’s romance with deadly robotic aircraft calls to mind Martin Luther King’s 1967 statement that the U.S. government is itself “the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today.” Not long after this speech, King – already under close government surveillance – was assassinated.

Ed Kinane is one of the “Hancock 38”. Last summer he spent 30 days in Kabul, Afghanistan with Voices for Creative Nonviolence.

Commentary

On the Occupiers

Although many progressive folks in the “Occupy Movement” may not be aptly described as accusing the Democrats as simply tweedledum to the Republican tweedledee, I’m sure that many probably do see it that way. Looking at the past decade, I personally feel that if we had a President Gore in 2000, we may well not have gone into Iraq or named Samuel Alito and John Roberts to the Supreme Court. Would we have been stuck with the terrible “Citizens United” decision which opens yet wider the floodgates of unlimited corporate cash dominating our elections? These are just a few of the things we need to ponder.

The one thing that most youthful folks and all too many oldsters such as myself fail to see is the enormous amount of “gray” there is in our lives. Black and white is all children tend to see. We need to do better. As we grow older we learn the meaning of “half a loaf” and so many other sayings that refer to our never getting all that we feel we need. The main point as I see it is to never become cynical. That’s even more destructive. It’s my personal feeling that we do have to keep on with our struggles if we are to live with ourselves. So bravo to the possibly naive but well meaning “Occupiers”.

Mike Caggiano

International

Ankara Declaration on IPPNW Middle East Core Group Meeting Strategies for Peace and Health in a Nuclear Free Middle East

International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) representatives from Israel, Iran, Egypt, United States, UK, France, Germany, Netherlands,

Hungary and Turkey met in Ankara, Turkey, on December 8-10 2011 to address the issues of peace, health and weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

The Middle East (ME) region is experiencing a turbulent period. There are political instability, ethnic and religious conflicts, economic difficulties and external military interventions causing detrimental effects on the health and well-being of the citizens of the Middle East. We as health professionals have responsibilities to respond to these unacceptable conditions which have caused large scale suffering and loss of human life, and we are concerned that the existing conflicts could escalate into the use of weapons of mass destruction.

We call for:

1. Sincere commitment of governments for peaceful resolution of conflicts without use of military force; and using diplomacy and the rule of international law.
2. We demand that all signatories to the Non-Proliferation Treaty ratify and observe their responsibilities immediately.
3. Noting the published reports that there are nuclear weapons in Israel and tactical NATO nuclear weapons in Turkey, and there concerns that Iran is developing nuclear weapons; and there are possible chemical and biological weapons in the ME countries, governments should immediately start negotiations to establish a Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone-Middle East including nuclear, chemical and biological weapons; and take measures to strengthen the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention and Biological Weapons Convention. We demand that all governments immediately start negotiations for to establish a Nuclear Weapons Convention. We call for the development of regional International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons activities.
4. We oppose the plans for deploying Missile Defense Systems including those recently positioned in Turkey. They must be removed at once as the system escalates the danger of nuclear proliferation.
5. We demand the strict observation of the landmines convention.
6. Cease the supply of small arms, conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction (or the components of such) in the region.
7. The construction of nuclear power plants is a threat to the health of people and the environment of the ME as well as a stimulus to nuclear weapons proliferation. The ME is a primary earthquake region. Considering the bitter lessons of the Fukushima catastrophe and past accidents such as Chernobyl, we call for an immediate abandoning of nuclear plant construction programs. The establishment of the renewable energy alternatives to nuclear power should be promoted.

8. There are immense public health problems in the communities of the ME, and primary health care programs have suffered from financial restriction and ongoing conflicts. We demand the immediate reallocation of military funding to health budgets.

9. All efforts should be exerted by all governments and institutions to immediately end Israeli-Palestine/Jewish-Arab conflict through peace negotiations and initiatives including the Arab Peace Initiative.

26 Signatories

Action Alert

A New Year and the Same Demand: Out of Afghanistan

Through the efforts of people like us as well as the citizens of Iraq, our country's illegal, immoral, preemptive war on and subsequent occupation of Iraq is basically over. While for-profit contractors and their paid cannon-fodder remain, our troops are finally leaving Iraq and we can breathe a sigh of relief – for some of them who will return home, though others will surely wind up in Afghanistan. Now it is time to sharpen our focus on that war, the end of which is difficult to see.

Demands for a faster end to the fighting in Afghanistan are increasing. 63% of Americans now oppose the war there, and such a shift in public sentiment surely contributed to Senate voice-vote approval of an unprecedented amendment to the 2012 Defense Authorization Bill, calling for the President to present a new withdrawal plan to Congress within 90 days. But the House of Representatives did not duplicate the feat, and there is plenty of pushing to do to bring about a quicker departure – before 2014 as many policymakers are aiming for, and definitely before 2024, as set out in a U.S.-Afghan Strategic Partnership Agreement that will allow some troops, special forces units, and air power to remain. This seems more like a sentence than a troop commitment.

With over half a trillion dollars spent by the U.S. (over a trillion by NATO) on military operations in Afghanistan and the hit to our economy and infrastructure at home the past few years, it seems fair to question the effects of this war on our nation's security. That is just one way to keep asking why the U.S. continues to fight the war.

Action: Contact Rep. Jackie Speier or Anna Eshoo, or whomever represents you, and tell them it is *still* time to start withdrawing our troops from Afghanistan, and that should be a priority in 2012. Contact Sen. Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer with the same message. Suggest that not just our country's treasury and economy would improve, but the well-being of our troops would as well.

Jeju – Island of World Peace

The South Korean Government is constructing a naval base on Jeju Island, which is located on the southern part of the Korean Peninsula, less than 300 miles from the Chinese mainland. Officially named the “Island of World Peace” by the late President Roh Moo Hyun, Jeju was the site of a 1948 massacre in which more than 30,000 civilians were estimated to have been slaughtered during a democratic uprising. The designation served as an apology for the massacre.

The island's strategic location in the Korea Strait greatly increases its potential to become a military target in the event of an armed conflict if a base were to be built. The resulting threat to civilians on the island would be clear as well as unconscionable, thus there has been active opposition to the base since plans for it were announced in 2006. 94% of Jeju residents have voted against it and used every possible democratic means to block its construction...but plans for the base have continued.

The base would be built in Gangjeong, a pristine fishing village. Jeju Island covers a lava plateau with a shield volcano at an elevation of 1,950 meters above sea level; its biological diversity, unique topography and the culture make the island a tourist attraction. Construction is in the early stages but accelerating daily with the continued dredging of the Jeju's seabed and its coral communities. “It will be home to both United States and South Korean warships,” according to the website, www.savejejuisland.org, “...including 20 large destroyers, two aircraft carriers, two nuclear submarines, the Aegis ballistic missile defense system and 6,000 soldiers.”

Aside from preventing military expansion and protecting the people and their environment, the story of Jeju Island has also touched issues of human rights and free speech. Villagers have been arrested during nonviolent protests, and police and construction workers have assaulted protesters – include elderly members of the community. Peace and environmental activists, including the mayor of Gangjeong, have been arrested and imprisoned for their active opposition to this potentially dangerous military base. The history and beauty of the island, and the vulnerability of its people in this context, suggest the need for support from folks around the world, who might echo their motto: “Touch not one stone, not one flower.”

Action: Call the South Korean Embassy in Washington and let them know how you feel about building a naval base on Jeju Island against its peoples' wishes. Also email Jeju's Governor Woo Keun Min (see below) to call for a referendum that would decide whether to build a base there. Suggest that the island's location makes its people vulnerable to a military attack – surely a fate they don't deserve. As time allows, ask Rep. Speier or Eshoo,

as well as Boxer and Feinstein, to also oppose the military base on Jeju Island.

Keystone XL Pipeline as Political Football

While this is not a typical Peace Action issue on its face, its level of urgency and the geo-political connections inherent in U.S. energy policy have placed it on our radar screen:

The hard-won victory to stop the Canada-based Keystone XL oil pipeline from bisecting the U.S. heartland is in jeopardy. The Democrats in Congress caved in to Republican demands to attach it to a payroll tax cut (itself a questionable proposition considering its potential affect on Social Security funding) – specifically in the form of a rider mandating President Obama make a decision on the pipeline in 60 days rather than waiting a year as he had previously decided. Like Jason in “Friday the 13th” with his hockey mask, this movie monster of an issue, previously thought all but dispensed with, has been brought back for imminent consideration.

But the conditions determining the wisdom of the XL Pipeline have not changed, and it still looks like a bad idea. From out of Canada, the pipeline would be pumping oily, viscous tar sands oil, the mining of which is heavily energy-intensive and environmentally unsound. It requires large amounts of fresh water, which winds up contaminated in toxic ponds. Extracting this type of oil also would cause deforestation, thus an increase in carbon dioxide levels that would contribute to global warming. Of course the pumping itself is risky in its potential for leaks that could contaminate aquifers in the Mid-western states, and further pollute the gulf states where it would be refined.

As far as energy independence goes, the oil industry has made no attempt to hide the fact that the resulting refined oil would be sold on the international market, so the line about “getting us off foreign oil” can be put to rest – while the process of attaining clean, safe renewable energy is slowed that much more.

On the jobs front, estimates from TransCanada of creating over 100,000 jobs have been called overstated, even questioned by the consulting company that created them: In a small-print disclaimer, its report was called “forward-looking and...subject to certain risks and uncertainties.” Moreover, the job estimates also come in about 76,000 above those by the U.S. State Department, and a labor union in South Dakota has determined that jobs at least in that state would largely consist of temporary, low-paying manual work. The conditions in other states where the pipeline would go are likely to be similar.

Aside from drawing clear lines on energy policy, the connection to the payroll tax cut certainly looks like a nod to politics. Since a final decision otherwise would

have come after the 2012 general election, Obama now ostensibly must choose between appealing to those who think the Keystone XL Pipeline would create jobs and energy independence and those who fear its environmental implications and its nod to a generally misguided energy policy. The time to weigh in on the pipeline has begun again.

Action: contact the White House to tell President Obama to stand firm in opposing the Keystone XL Pipeline. Point out that it would accelerate climate change and in this and other ways endanger the health of citizens both here and in Canada. Suggest that he at least consider health and safety concerns in his decision, rather than politics and oil profits.

Directory

Capitol Switchboard: 202-224-3121

Senator Dianne Feinstein

One Post St., Ste 2450 San Francisco, CA 94104
(202) 224-3841 fax: (202) 228-3954
(415) 393-0707 fax (415)393-0710

Senator Barbara Boxer

1700 Montgomery St., Ste 240 San Francisco, CA 94111
(202) 224-3553
(415)403-0100 fax (415) 956-6701

Representative Jackie Speier

400 S. El Camino Real, Ste 410 San Mateo, CA 94402
(202) 225-3531 fax: (202) 226-4183
(650) 342-0300 (650) 375-8270

Representative Anna Eshoo

698 Emerson Street Palo Alto, CA 94301
(202) 225-8104 fax: (202) 225-8890
(650) 323-2984 (650) 323-3498

President Barack Obama

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

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton

U.S. Department of State:

(202)647-6607 fax: (202)647-2283

South Korean Ambassador to the U.S. Han Duk Soo

(202)939-5600

Jeju Island Governor Woo Keun Min

atkmj5369@jeju.go.kr

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



Officers

President: Mike Caggiano (650) 342-8244

Vice President: Cheryl Kozanitas 349-1364

Secretary: Linda Aguirre 868-3558

Treasurer: Donna Miro
donnamiro@aol.com

Update Editor: Ron Zucker 286-0332

Peace vigil every Saturday

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

Peace Action of San Mateo County

Presents a talk by

Kevin Danaher

Co-founder, Global Exchange
Executive Producer, Green Festivals

***"How the Green Economy Can
Save Humanity from Itself."***

Thursday, January 12, 7 PM

Unitarian Universalists of San Mateo

300 E. Santa Inez Ave., San Mateo

Donation \$5-10 sliding scale,

no one turned away for lack of funds

Wheelchair accessible