

Space Alert!



Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space
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THAAD Will Not Protect South Korea

by Julian Cho and Hyun Lee

Elderly women held up signs reading "Illegal THAAD, back to the U.S.!" as they marched, leaning on walking frames for support.

Soseong-ri, their small village in South Korea, has become the center of a fight that could lay the groundwork for future U.S.-Korean relations under Seoul's new government. Last March 5,000 people from across South Korea gathered in the village to protest the controversial deployment of the U.S.'s Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) anti-missile system.

In July 2016, the U.S. and South Korean governments announced plans to deploy the THAAD system in Seongju County, North Gyeongsang Province. But due to staunch opposition from local residents, the location was revised to a nearby golf course owned by the South Korean corporation Lotte, nestled between Soseong-ri in Seongju County and the city of Gimcheon.

[The Pentagon began deployments of the first THAAD units in April in the middle of the night. Hundreds of local residents protested but were contained by large South Korean police units. The U.S. forced the deployments before the successful May election of progressive President Moon Jae-in. Moon has since called for a halt to further deployments and ordered an Environmental Impact Statement to be completed. It is unlikely that Moon will ask the U.S. to remove the THAAD units already deployed.]

THAAD, made [in Alabama] by the U.S. weapons firm Lockheed Martin,



stands for Terminal High Altitude Area Defense. It consists of a radar, used to surveil the missile activity of so-called enemy countries and detect incoming missiles, and interceptor missiles, which—in theory—can be launched to shoot down incoming missiles in mid-air.

The THAAD deployment in South Korea is supposed to counter threats from the North, but it is not unique. The U.S. has missile defense systems installed all over the world, mainly in Eastern Europe

and Asia, and it is clear from their locations that their deployments are aimed at creating a network surrounding China and Russia.

If two adversarial countries have nuclear weapons, neither will attack the other, because it fears retaliation in the form of a nuclear counter-attack. Picture two people holding guns to each other's heads. If one shoots first, the other will shoot back, and vice versa. The result is a perpetual standoff. This is known as mutually assured destruction, and proved an effective form of deterrence between the Soviet Union and the U.S. during the Cold War.

But to return to our analogy: If one gunman renders the other unable to fire, nothing deters him from pulling the trigger of his own gun. This is the ultimate aim of missile defense—to gain first strike advantage by removing the enemy's ability to retaliate.

U.S. missile defense systems are dangerous precisely because they enable a preemptive nuclear strike. This is why some argue that such systems are, in fact, offensive. It is also why, in 1972, the U.S. and the Soviet Union signed

the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM Treaty), which limited the development of missile defense systems by both countries. But in 2002, after thirty years of relative stability guaranteed by mutually assured destruction, former U.S. President George W. Bush walked away from the ABM Treaty. [During the Obama administration the U.S. dramatically escalated its deployments of missile defense systems.]

According to JJ Suh, professor of Politics and International Affairs at International Christian University in Japan, the aim of the THAAD deployment in Seongju is not to protect South Korean citizens at all: "This system is designed to work at higher altitudes, higher than 45 kilometers. But most North Korean missiles [that would be used against South Korea] are short-range missiles that would fly below 45 kilometers."

The THAAD system, Suh said, serves U.S. strategic interests in the region: "It can be... deployed against intermediate-range missiles from North Korea targeting Okinawa... or Guam. And so, it's

(See THAAD P 4.)

Plan Local Events!
Keep Space
for
Peace Week
October 7-14, 2017

Resist the Unsustainable U.S. Empire

by Bruce K. Gagnon

As I write this (July 6) Donald Trump is speaking live in Poland before heading to the G-20 meeting in Hamburg, Germany. Trump thanked Poland for treating more than one thousand American soldiers there with kindness. The U.S. has turned Poland into a regional military hub as the Pentagon encircles Russia. Trump also thanked Poland for rejecting natural gas from Russia as Warsaw has determined that they will import fracked natural gas from the U.S.. (How much more money will it cost to ship natural gas across the Atlantic Ocean than when Poland got the gas from their neighboring Russia?)

The other big story as Trump went to the G-20 is the North Korea missile test. Everyone is of course wondering what the U.S. will do—by the time you read this the story could have calmed down or Trump could have done a shock and awe decapitation attack on North Korea. If that happens God help us all...

I did a TV interview recently on RT about the North Korea test. I began by saying that no one knows what Trump will do because it is unclear what his policies actually are—whether one is talking about North Korea, the Middle East or anywhere else. I also said that the U.S. is the biggest hypocrite on the planet because the Pentagon routinely tests Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) by launching them from Vandenberg AFB, California into the Pacific where they land at Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands. In addition the U.S. regularly is testing so-called 'missile defense' interceptors which are key elements in first-strike attack planning. Why is missile testing for Washington acceptable but not for North Korea? My mother used to often say, "What's good for the goose is good for the gander."

If the U.S. really wanted to bring peace to the Korean peninsula it would immediately agree to sign a peace treaty with North Korea—something it has refused to do since the Korean War Armistice was signed on my first birthday, July 27, 1953. The U.S. could also end its regular war games right along the North Korean border. Imagine - with the track record of U.S. attacks and regime changes in Vietnam, Panama, Yugoslavia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and Syria - North Korea must always wonder if a particular U.S. war game on their border will be the real thing?

I've been telling people that the only good thing that will come from a Trump presidency is that people (and many nations) around the world will finally stop looking to the U.S. for leadership and 'security'. The U.S. military empire (with well over 800 bases) is heading for collapse—the only remaining question is how hard the military empire will land on all of us?

The US-NATO war machine is expanding like a cancer. It has become more than obvious that NATO is now a global alliance—the military arm of corporate capital. In recent years NATO has expanded eastward right up to the Russian border creating much instability in that part of the world. GN board convener Dave Webb and I toured Sweden, Finland and Denmark last February and learned much about expanding US-NATO war games in the Nordic nations aimed at Russia. Dave returned to Finland (see report in this newsletter) again this spring to join protests against NATO war exercises and to share his remarkable PowerPoint presentation about how the 'high north'



is becoming a major military space operations zone for the U.S..

NATO has also expanded into the Asia-Pacific by signing up Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand and Singapore as alliance 'partners'. So the plan is to use the steroidal NATO to also encircle China—using the over-hyped North Korea threat to justify this provocative and expensive military enlargement.

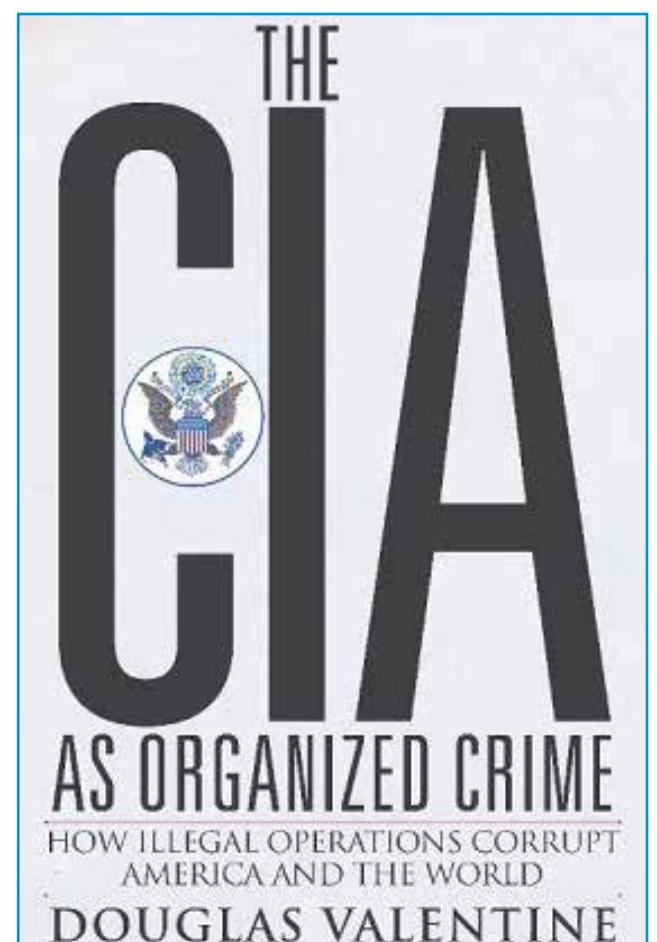
Washington understands quite well that its unipolar domination of the world (and space) is coming to an end. The growing alliance of China and Russia (along with others) is demanding that power be shared in a multi-polar world where no one nation dictates terms to vassals who surrender their resources and sovereignty to the U.S.. Washington (with its NATO appendage) understands it has a short period of time to destroy the growing power of China and Russia and thus we witness this aggressive global confrontation.

Our role as peace people is to continue to demand peace with justice as national budgets slash social spending to pay for the expanding US-NATO war machine. The world 'resistance' is over used today so forgive me for dropping it here. But I can't think of a better word to illustrate our current need to step up our non-violent resistance to the US-NATO military juggernaut.

Years ago the environmental movement frequently used the word 'bio-region' and called for local activists to find out what manifestation of environmental degradation existed in their local community and work to deal with it. In this current historical moment the peace movement (what is left of it anyway) must look at what military manifestation is in our bio-region and non-violently work to shut it down and to covert it toward sustainable and useful practices. In my own community of Bath, Maine we have been campaigning for many years to convert the Bath Iron Works shipyard (where they only make Navy destroyers) to building rail systems, offshore wind turbines, tidal power and solar systems.

We don't have much time as we see the harsh reality of global warming staring us in the face. My primary agenda is to help ensure that the future generations have a chance for survival on the planet. One thing I can do is increase my non-violent resistance to the unsustainable and dangerous U.S. war machine that has the largest carbon boot print on our Mother Earth. I hope you will do so as well.

—Bruce K. Gagnon is Coordinator of the Global Network and lives in Bath, Maine.



The Asia Pivot is Only Continued History

by Will Griffin

President Obama officially announced the 'Pivot to Asia' in November 2011 but really the U.S. has had its hands in East Asia for centuries. Now under President Trump, this "pivot" is ramping up mostly due to Trump not understanding the region's history as well as using the military as his personal fireworks show. In addition, as always, the Pentagon only sees military action as a solution to all problems. How's that worked in the past 16 years?

Since Trump took office, he has conducted the world's largest military training exercise in the Asia-Pacific (Foil Eagle), sent an Armada near the Korean Peninsula, deployed the anti-missile system THAAD to South Korea, and continued the decades long nuclear first-strike threat towards North Korea (DPRK). In the meantime, U.S. military bases are being constructed on Okinawa against the will of the people and the House Representatives are proposing a new military branch, a "Space Corps," which would help to facilitate U.S. military ambitions in the region.

All of these actions are part of the Pivot, now called the "Rebalance to Asia" because global peace activists have turned the term "pivot" upside down on their heads. While these actions by the U.S. seem to be pointed at the DPRK, I'd argue that the real enemy is China (at least in the Asia-Pacific) and history shows us so. The U.S. is simply using the DPRK demonization narrative as an excuse to keep military forces and regional domination over the Asia-Pacific while China's economy and military continues to grow. I'll explain some of that but first let's look at some history.

Many people don't know about China's history, more specifically what is called the "Century of Humiliation." This term refers to the period of intervention and imperialism by Western powers and Japan in China between 1839 and 1949. Major events within this century have come to shape China's nationalism as well as U.S. foreign policy in East Asia. Western imperial powers have always been interested in finding 'markets', particularly large markets because bigger markets means more profit. East and South Asia contain half the



world's population and 40% of the world's trade travel through the South China Sea. The region is a goldmine to the capitalists.

Western powers never really colonized China but instead left its government intact but only under subservience to foreign nations. China has always had a larger population than any Western nation and therefore was too difficult to colonize, but opening up the country to Western trade was still possible. Powers like Great Britain and the United States carved China up like a melon, forcefully opening up ports to have access to China's grand markets.

During the latter half of the 19th century, the British Empire would grow opium in India and force it onto the Chinese. It wasn't just British imperialists forcing its hand on China, but the U.S. was dirtying up its hands in Chinese markets as well.

Ever heard of Franklin Delano Roosevelt? FDR's grandfather was Warren Delano, the American opium king of China. That's right, king of opium. Warren Delano made his fortunes in the opium business. [Harvard, Yale, Princeton and Columbia University were built with these drug profits.] This was just a small part of the century of humiliation.

Other events include several unequal treaties, the Boxer Rebellion, the Opium Wars, the sacking of the Old Summer Palace, and many more events that would take a whole book to write about it. The short explanation is that China was rich with resources and markets so Western powers targeted it with sheer military force and corporate power leaving the region in ruins. This type of behavior continues as the Pivot to Asia ramps up under Trump.

China, as well as North Korea, is now a nuclear power. China has the second largest

economy in the world (Japan has the third largest) and its military is growing. China remembers the century of humiliation as if it was yesterday and they will never allow Western powers to manipulate them again, ever. U.S. behavior in the region is just a sign of declining power. Empires always decline; it's just a matter of when and how hard they fall.

North Korea has been developing nuclear weapons only as a deterrent to U.S. forces conducting regime change or outright attacking the country. The U.S. has already taken out Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, and is currently taking out Yemen and Syria. The only reason the U.S. hasn't taken out North Korea is because it is developing nuclear weapons. The good news is that North Korea would freeze its nuclear programs if the U.S. stops its military training exercises (Foil Eagle) and stops threatening North Korea with a first-strike. The bad news is that the U.S. probably won't agree. The realistic news is that the U.S. isn't interested in North Korea as much as it is interested in China. Again, history shows that. Without North Korea, the U.S. might have been forced out of Korea (and maybe Japan) by the grassroots resistance movements currently taking place in South Korea and Japan.

The U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM) states on its website that over 375,000 military and civilian personnel are currently in the Asia-Pacific along with thousands of aircrafts and hundreds of ships including five aircraft carrier strike groups. There are 50,000 U.S. troops in Japan with 122 bases. There are 28,500 troops in South Korea with 83 bases. There are 6,000 troops in Guam with 47 bases. Many more troops, bases, and military weapons are stationed all over the Asia-Pacific essentially surrounding China's coast all while using North Korea as an excuse. I ask you, what if China had military troops, bases, and weapons surrounding the California coastlines using Canadian President Justin Trudeau as an excuse for the strong military posture? Well, that's the situation in the Asia-Pacific.

How many overseas military bases does China have? One. How many overseas military bases does North Korea have? None. The U.S. has 800 overseas military bases around the world, 400 of them in Asia. I think the numbers explain who the real threat to peace in the region actually is.

—Will Griffin is an Iraq and Afghanistan war veteran. He is a member of Veterans For Peace and is the newest board member of the Global Network. He lives in Midway, Georgia.



Nine peace protesters were arrested during a wet snowstorm at the gate of Bath Iron Works in Maine on April 1 during a 'christening' of another new Aegis destroyer. The protesters will go to trial in the fall in Bath. They called for the conversion of the shipyard to build offshore wind turbines, commuter rails systems, tidal power, and solar power systems to help us deal with our real problem which is climate change.

U.S. Mayors Conference Slams Military Spending

The U.S. Conference of Mayors on June 26 unanimously passed three resolutions opposing the military-heavy Trump budget proposal. These resolutions urge Congress to reverse the Trump budget and move funding out of the military, wars and nuclear weapons and into human and environmental needs.

One resolution concluded:

“NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors calls on the Mayors of each of our cities to promptly hold public hearings that examine what each of city’s Departments needs to carry out the goals of the Department and the work it is assigned and what they could accomplish if funds were available that now go to the military; and

“BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that each city is urged to include in its public hearings a report on how much of its resident’s federal taxes go toward paying the military budget; and

“BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that each city government is urged to pass a resolution calling on our federal legislators and the U.S. government to move significant funds away from the military budget to human needs; and

“BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that each city is urged to send a copy of the resolution passed to its federal legislators with a request that they respond with their plans to reduce the military budget in favor of the human needs budget.”

The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the national non-partisan association of cities with populations over 30,000. Resolutions adopted at its annual meetings become the official policy of the organization.

Sy Hersch: ‘We’ve got a f*#king problem’

by Uri Avnery

In comes Seymour Hersch, a world-renowned investigative reporter, the man who exposed the American massacres in Vietnam and the American torture chambers in Iraq. He investigated the [Syrian gas] incident in depth and found that there is absolutely no evidence and almost no possibility that Bashar Assad used nerve gas in Khan Sheikhoun.

What happened next? Something incredible: all the renowned U.S. newspapers, including the New York Times and The New Yorker, refused to publish. So did the prestigious London Review of Books. In the end, he found a refuge in the German Welt am Sonntag.

For me, that is the real story. One would like to believe that the world – and especially the “Western World” – is full of honest newspapers, which investigate thoroughly and publish the truth. That is not so. Sure, they probably do not consciously lie. But they are unconscious prisoners of lies.

See the whole story at <http://space4peace.blogspot.com/2017/06/we-got-fuckin-problem.html>

—Uri Avnery founder the Gush Shalom peace movement is a former member of the Knesset and lives in Tel Aviv, Israel

THAAD (continued from front page)



more plausible that the U.S. military wants to deploy the THAAD system in South Korea to protect [U.S.] soldiers and military assets in the region, rather than South Koreans in South Korea.”

The THAAD radar would also significantly expand the U.S.’s field of vision for spying on Chinese [or Russian] missile activity. For this reason, China has been staunchly opposed to the system’s deployment in South Korea.

But the South Korean people may pay a steep price for hosting THAAD, warned missile defense expert and MIT professor Ted Postol. The system, he says, will put South Korea in the path of a potential conflict between the U.S. and China. In the event of a confrontation between these two superpowers, China’s first target for a nuclear strike could be the THAAD radar in Seongju.

Yet U.S. and South Korean taxpayers will end up paying for this system. One THAAD unit costs \$1.3 billion to produce. Then there is also the annual operation cost, which amounts to \$22 million. Neither the South Korean nor the U.S. government has said who will foot that bill.

Seongju is a small agricultural region of mostly elderly melon farmers, who had voted all their lives for the conservative party and had been staunch supporters of recently-impeached Park Geun-hye. When the government announced Seongju as the deployment site without any warning or consultation, they felt shocked and betrayed.

The people at the forefront of this fight are ordinary farmers, mostly women, who have never led rallies or protested

government policies. They demanded the deployment decision be rescinded, and pro-government media were quick to label them North Korean sympathizers and paid outside agitators.

The government’s complete disregard for citizens’ concerns was what initially prompted so many of the residents to join the protests. But they also became worried about the potentially harmful effects of the electromagnetic radiation emitted by the THAAD radar on their health and crops.

Even after the government changed the deployment site to the Lotte golf course, Seongju residents made clear that they were not just fighting to keep it out of their backyard but to oppose its deployment anywhere. They are joined by the residents of Gimcheon City, which lies next to the golf course, as well as the clergy of Won Buddhism—one of whose holy sites is nearby—and a national task force composed of peace, antiwar and other civic organizations.

Yoon Geum-soon, a resident of Seongju and the former national chairperson of the Korean Women Peasants Association, says the fight against THAAD is a fight to end the U.S.’ hold over South Korea’s foreign policy:

“For over 60 years, the so-called U.S.-ROK alliance has been based on our subordination. As long as our country does not have the autonomy to pursue its own foreign policy, the regional conflict will only worsen and we will suffer for it. We have no choice but to end this cycle.”

—Julian Cho and Hyun Lee are staff writers at ZoominKorea, an online resource on democracy and peace in Korea.



Republicans to eliminate Wasteful school Lunch for Poor kids

The Bomb is Banned by the United Nations

History was made at the United Nations on July 8 when the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was adopted by an overwhelming 122-1 vote by UN Member States determined to provide a legal basis for the elimination of the world's worst weapons of mass destruction.

The ban treaty, negotiated by more than 140 states under the auspices of the UN General Assembly, prohibits development, testing, production, manufacture, acquisition, possession, stockpiling, use, and threat of use of nuclear weapons, and provides flexible pathways for nuclear-armed and nuclear-dependent states to comply with the prohibitions once they decide to join.

Conference president Elayne Whyte, in submitting the final text for the vote, said we were here "to give life to a new treaty that... seeks to bring together the world around the dream of each and every person to see a world free of nuclear weapons."

The treaty will open for signature on September 20 at the UN, and will enter into force once 50 states have ratified it.

"This is a landmark achievement that establishes the illegality of nuclear weapons once and for all," said IPPNW Co-President Tilman Ruff. "The Treaty is rooted firmly in the humanitarian principle that the consequences of nuclear weapons use are unacceptable under any circumstances and that any use of nuclear weapons would be contrary to the rules of international humanitarian law."

"The nine nuclear-armed states, which refused to participate in these negotiations, are now faced with a stark choice," said IPPNW program director John Loretz. "They can comply with the norms that have been clearly and unambiguously established by the Treaty and eliminate their nuclear weapons, as they should

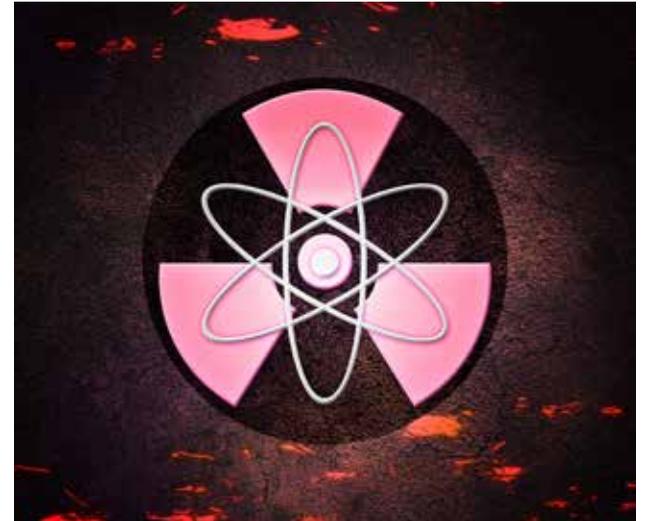
have done decades ago, or they will be stigmatized as outlaw states.

"The states that base their security on the nuclear weapons possessed by other states can either withdraw from extended nuclear deterrence arrangements and cease all military planning and preparation for the use of nuclear weapons, or face similar global condemnation."

As the founder and lead medical partner in ICAN—the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons—IPPNW was an active civil society participant in the negotiations for the Treaty, working to ensure that the final document would fully reflect the scientific evidence about the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons.

"The treaty recognizes the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that concern the security of all humanity, posing grave implications for human survival, the environment, food security, and the health of future generations, said Dr. Ruff. "It also recognizes that these consequences cannot be adequately addressed, and must be prevented."

"We are very pleased that the treaty recognizes the victims of nuclear weapons," Dr. Ruff noted. The preamble refers explicitly to the Hibakusha—the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki—and to indigenous peoples who have suffered from the effects of nuclear testing. It also acknowledges the disproportionate health impacts of nuclear weapons on women and girls.



"By establishing a clear and comprehensive set of prohibitions, a number of important positive obligations, including obligations to assist victims and help remediate affected environments, and procedures for elimination that can lead to universal membership over time, the treaty provides a powerful legal, moral, and political tool going forward," Dr. Ruff stated.

"Today, with this historic treaty, the world has changed. The shared interests of humanity underpin this achievement. A nuclear weapons ban can be a game-changer towards fulfilling the urgent global health imperative to eliminate nuclear weapons."

—International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War



Reaction to GN Conference in Huntsville



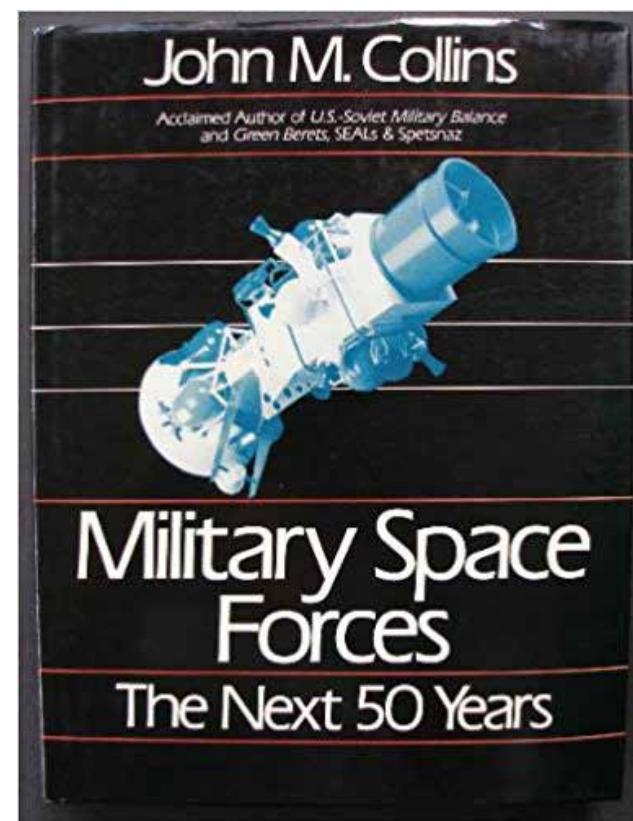
by J. Narayana Rao

The GN Conference held in Huntsville, Alabama on April 7-9, 2017 was at a high level compared to the GN Conference held in India in November 2016. While the Indian Conference in one way can be said to have been massive, the Huntsville Conference was qualitatively superb. Most of the participants in 2016 heard the issue of 'Weaponization of Space' for the first time, the participants at Huntsville were matured and intelligently equipped. Some new issues have been highlighted including: 'What can the Anti-War Movement Do?' by David Swanson, 'US Labor Against the War' by Reece Chenault, and 'Gold Rush in Space' by Lynda Williams.

The participation of Reece Chenault provoked us to consider the induction of workers and the Trade Unions as big force in every country into the movement. The Conference also witnessed the emergence of Iraq and Afghanistan wars veteran William Griffin as a future leader in the GN movement. The way in which he articulates and exhibits technical skills is commendable.

The planning and execution of organizing the conference involving several individuals and organizations is a tribute to the leadership of Bruce Gagnon and Dave Webb. This Conference increased our determination to move forward.

— J. Narayana Rao is a retired railroad worker and is on the GN's Board of Directors. He lives in Nagpur, India and despite his humble claim above the conference he organized in Visakhapatnam, India last year was fabulous.



Does America Need a Space Corp?

There's currently a push in the halls of Washington DC to establish a new branch of the military by 2019, one whose focus would be operations among the stars. Proposed legislation by House representatives would create a "Space Corps" that would serve "as a separate military service within the Department of the Air Force." It would be the first branch added to the military since 1947 when the Air Force was officially established.

"There is bipartisan acknowledgement that the strategic advantages we derive from our national security space systems are eroding," the bill's sponsors said in a joint statement. "We are convinced that the Department of Defense is unable to take the measures necessary to address these challenges effectively and decisively or even recognize the nature and scale of its problems."

Under the proposed legislation, the Space Corps would serve under the direction of the Air Force much like the Marine Corps serves under the direction of the Navy. Additionally, the Space Corps head would have a seat on the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson responded to the idea while speaking to reporters on Capitol Hill:

"The Pentagon is complicated enough. This will make it more complex, add more boxes to the organization chart, and cost more money. And if I had more money, I would put it into lethality, not bureaucracy... I don't need another chief of staff and another six deputy chiefs of staff."

Rep. Mike Rogers (R-AL) warned top Air Force officials not to undermine his proposal to create a Space Corps within the service. He characterized his blistering remarks about being "outraged" and "shocked" by their reaction as a "friendly warning," but it sounded more threatening than that. Rogers chairs the House Armed Services Committee's (HASC's) subcommittee that oversees most military space programs.

The 'Space Corp' proposal has passed the House of Representatives and now must go before the Senate where approval is expected to be much more of a challenge.



A U.S. Navy Aegis destroyer, outfitted with Tomahawk cruise missiles and 'missile defense' interceptors, recently made a port call to the newly constructed base in Gangjeong village on Jeju Island, South Korea. Activists in kayaks tried to approach the destroyer as it entered the port but were pushed away by Coast Guard cutters. Other activists stood on the shore with signs and banners protesting the port call.

Protesting Against NATO in Lapland

by Kerstin Tuomala

About 30 persons showed up at the demonstration on May 22 at the airport in Rovaniemi, Finland on the first day of the ACE 2017 U.S.-NATO war game. The main bases for the military exercises were Rovaniemi, Finland, Luleå, Sweden and Bodø, Norway. They are NATO exercises, our countries are only hosts, which in reality means servants. Because the time they fly is in the spring when the reindeers calve, it is extremely bad since the herd can get panic from the noise and many calves are at risk for this reason.

The peace group from Joensuu came by bus and they had with them 16 persons with good spirit and slogans, a good microphone, and impressive banners and we from the north had banners too. The person from most far away, besides Dave Webb (GN board chair) from England and Agneta Norberg (GN board member) and My Leffler from Sweden, came from Helsinki and the most

northern about 170 kms from Rovaniemi a place by the northwestern border, named Kolari, over which the ACE was flying.

People talked against our governments spending money on military instead of welfare and security in everyday life, and we sang peace songs and some danced accompanied/disturbed by the noise of the lifting fighter planes.

I was interviewed for the Swedish radio and was so distracted by the noise that I said what I thought (instead of thinking what I said.) The weather was windy and cold and we moved to the city center of Rovaniemi to get some coffee and tea and to have another planned demonstration there. More local people showed up and they talked very well about the same concerns of how our welfare is cut down in favor of militarism. They also thanked us for arranging this opportunity to demonstrate. In fact we had planned to be there only for half an hour, but we were longer so that everyone who wanted could speak. We demonstrated on a square where people pass on their ways, we got good publicity, the banners were impressive.

In the seminar on space issues in Lapland there was not much time for discussion because the bus from Joensuu had to leave, as they had a long journey home. Tuula Sykko interpreted for Dave Webb's representation because we wanted everyone to understand. Agneta and My from Sweden had a representation too.

The next day the local press had a beautiful picture of Tuula Sykko on the front page demonstrating and inside there was a report about our protest and a picture of people shouting slogans. Afterwards the same press was pleased because we were so few, which they interpreted that the majority of the public approve of the ACE 2017 and the government's plans to purchase new fighters and warships. They also claimed that the Peace Committee of Finland during the Cold War

worked for the agenda of the Soviet Union. So we can think that they thought we were too visible because they wanted to label us in that way.

The following day we went to visit the Arctic Space Center, which was opened one month earlier. For more than 100 years it had been an Institute of different universities in Finland for weather, climate and geophysical research. Since 2009 there has been 17 million euros invested in downloading antennas, radars and other technical equipment. NASA, European Space Agency and NOA are now also sponsors and collaborators. The

We thank the Global Network for supporting these events, it was really valuable to have Dave in Rovaniemi sharing his large and proper knowledge about military space in our region.

After all that I attended some happenings in Lulea, Sweden arranged by My Leffler. The locals in Lulea had a demonstration against ACE 2017 before we arrived. A funny thing happened. There was an event of reconstructing the painting of Guernica (Picasso) and we went to rest in the cafeteria. A man sat at the same table and said that he recognized my voice and asked if I was on the radio. I agreed. He said that he had felt good about me talking so straight.

During WW II the Nazis were in Finland. The USSR soldiers captured by Finnish and Nazi armies were held in concentration camps where they had to work hard but did not get enough food. In Kemi there was one such camp, where more than 1,600 persons died, most of them from hunger and disease, only a minority by shooting. Those graveyards of war prisoners

are in many places, also a small one in the community I live. The Finnish-Russian Friendship Association tries to clean them up in the spring and relatives from Russia visit the graves at times.

—Kerstin Tuomala lives in Simo, Finland and is an active Finnish peace leader.



Arctic Space Center is also contributing to the ESA Copernicus program which [assists military surveillance].

We also went to see the small airport in the forest outside Kemijarvi used for testing drones. It is owned by the city of Kemijarvi and is situated beside the big shooting range of Rovajarvi (the biggest ground military exercise area in Europe), where there was an air defense exercise along with the ACE 2017.



Nine protesters were arrested at the Hancock Air Field drone base near Syracuse, New York on Good Friday (April 14). Activists have been regularly holding civil disobedience actions at the base that pilots the MQ-9 Reaper drone which has perpetrated war crimes over Afghanistan.

25th Annual Space Organizing Conference & Protest



A group photo of conference participants at the end of the event. The venue for our event was a converted cotton mill that today serves as an arts center for the public.



Jason Rawn from Maine sang for us in between panel discussions. We heard a lot of music throughout the conference.



Agneta Norberg (Sweden) speaking during a panel discussion. Next to her is Tulsi Das Shrestha Vice-President of the recently formed GN Chapter in Kathmandu, Nepal. Several other members of the new Nepal chapter applied to come for the conference but the U.S. denied their Visa applications.

Reports in Japan of GN Confab

by Yasuo Ogata

Recently, I wrote a series of articles (5 times) in the Daily Akahata (April 18-22) on the GN 25th Conference. Before sending them to the news desk I asked Atsushi Fujioka (GN board member) to check them. (see collage next page)

I felt necessity to introduce in Japan how dangerous arms race in space and activities of GN since its foundation and how attractive and unique participants are etc. In any case, for me wonderful occasion to be there.

I have an obligation to translate them into English. But for the time being, I have no time to do.

With thanks and solidarity.

—Yasuo Ogata is Co-chair of World Conference against A & H Bombs and former Member of Parliament, Upper House in Japan. He lives in Tokyo.



Longtime GN member Anne Richter from Florida helped with many tasks during the event. Here she introduces one of our speakers.



We began the April 7-9 events in Huntsville with a news conference. Two TV stations covered the conference as did independent filmmaker Eric Herter who produced a nice recap video report of the weekend of events.

April 7-9, 2017 in Huntsville, Alabama



Historical Note: Former Hitler rocket scientist Werner Von Braun was brought to Huntsville, Alabama soon after WW II in order to help create the U.S. space program. Along with Von Braun were about 100 of his rocket team plus many V-1 and V-2 rockets that Hitler used to terrorize European cities with near the end of the war. Inside the Huntsville space museum there is a shrine to Von Braun. He and the other German scientists and engineers were brought to the city under a secret program called 'Operation Paperclip.'



The Army's Redstone Arsenal is the directorate for the Pentagon's 'missile defense' program. The controversial THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense) system is developed in Huntsville.



On April 7 (Friday) we went to the front gate of Redstone Arsenal and held a 90-minute vigil as thousands of workers left the space facility. The local newspaper extensively covered the protest and put many photos on their web site. Huntsville is called the 'Pentagon of the South' and about one-third of the local population work for the military industrial complex.



The conference finale was a powerful performance by the Huntsville Feminist Chorus. The assembled loved their songs.

Things to Do Today

- Share Space Alert with a friend
- Like us on Facebook
- Check out Bruce Gagnon's 'Organizing Notes' Blog
- Plan Space Week Event
- Join the GN

Odds & Ends

Space Tripping

To date, only 536 people have traveled into space and the vast majority have been men from a handful of nations. Dylan Taylor, a space industry investor and Space News columnist, is eager to share the experience with 10,000 people through a nonprofit organization, Space for Humanity, which will pay for the trips. "We are going to mint new astronauts from all communities," Taylor said June 27 at the annual NewSpace conference here. "We want to influence public policy and opinion... by changing the mindset." Space for Humanity is beginning to solicit nominations through its website for people from diverse backgrounds to travel to space or near space and return to Earth to serve as ambassadors who can share their experiences.

Mining Mars

Three space veterans are advancing the notion of "exploration telepresence," or scientifically skilled humans working from Mars orbit with surface robots to hasten operations with greater reach than humans working on foot after a landing. The aerospace industry is anxious to establish mining colonies on Mars and other planetary bodies in order to do 'resource extraction' operations which many claim will offer huge financial rewards in the years ahead.

Joint U.S.-Japan Missile Test Fails

The hypocritical U.S. government test fires Minuteman nuclear-capable missiles from Vandenberg AFB in California and routinely tests so-called 'missile defense' interceptor from sea-based and land-based launchers. Just last June the second intercept test of the supersized Raytheon/Mitsubishi Standard Missile-3 (SM-3) from a Navy Aegis destroyer failed to intercept a medium-range ballistic missile after being launched. The target missile was fired from the Pacific Missile Range Facility at Kauai, Hawaii. This U.S.-Japan joint project indicates the growing partnership between Washington and Tokyo as they continue to make aggressive moves to militarize the Asia-Pacific region.

'Accept' Missile Test Failures

If the U.S. is going to stay a preeminent world power, it's going to require failure, says Gen. John Hyten, the head of U.S. Strategic Command. "We've lost the ability to go fast, test, and fail," Hyten said. "We tie the hands of our engineers and acquisition folk because we expect every test to work and if it doesn't work it's on the front page of the newspaper. We have got to get back to where we accept risk."

Speaking to the Air Force Association's Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies in June, Hyten noted that failure teaches more than success, and that learning from failures can be a much faster way of learning than repeated small (successful) tests.

Fighter Drones

A California-based military production company has announced that it will be rolling out a new set of drones to fly as robotic wingmen for human fighter pilots. Kratos Defense and Security Solutions developed the UTAP-22 Mako with funding from a Pentagon-linked Silicon Valley laboratory. The highly maneuverable Mako's altitude capacity and supersonic speed capabilities could enable it to fly alongside the F-35 or F-16 fighters, says aviation experts. After being awarded a \$12.6 million contract for the drone, Kratos says it will soon determine how autonomous it can be, in advanced testing over California's Mojave Desert. The Mako has already successfully flown alongside manned aircraft.

Canada Escalating Military Spending

On June 7, Canada's Minister of National Defence, Harjit Sajjan, announced what he referred to as a "new" defense policy—indicating that the Liberal government has bought into a more aggressive role for NATO and making the Canadian military more suited to "war fighting" in overseas theatres. Canada will increase war spending more than 70% during the next 10 years to the tune of \$32.7 billion. Canada will increase the number of fighter jets to 88 from 65. Still on the table is the issue of Canada officially joining the U.S. "ballistic missile defence" system. According to the Voice of Women for Peace, Canada last year spent \$28 billion on the Department of National Defence, which made it the seventh-highest military spender among NATO members and the 17th-highest military spender in the world. "However, the federal government spent only \$1.5 billion for the Department of Environment and Climate Change. Over the past two decades, military spending has dramatically increased but funding for environmental protection and climate action has flat-lined."

Israel's Arrow & THAAD to Test at Kodiak, Alaska

Israel plans to test the Arrow anti-ballistic missile interceptor from pristine Kodiak Island, Alaska. Adm. James Syring, director of the U.S. Missile Defense Agency (MDA) told a congressional committee that the U.S. is Israel's part-

ner in developing that country's missile defense system. "Israel has significant range constraints within the Mediterranean. And one of the better places to test is in Alaska, from Kodiak," Syring said. The work would be a component of the \$80 million contract, MDA and the Alaska Aerospace Corporation announced a year ago. Also under that umbrella contract MDA plans to launch THAAD missiles from the Kodiak Island facility sometime in the coming months. The test for THAAD—Terminal High-Altitude Air Defense program—will include a series of launches. The dates are classified, but prior to the launches there'll be public notice given as to when the launch is going to occur. The launch facility at Narrow Cape on Kodiak has been bulldozed and gravel pads have been put down in preparation for THAAD tests. The MDA said there could be up to 300 military and aerospace workers brought to Narrow Cape beforehand. Narrow Cape has been a favorite public recreation area and the local citizens fear the complete takeover of the area by the MDA.

Space Warfare Technology in New Mexico

Secretary of the Air Force Heather Wilson told a Senate committee in June that the service is requesting a 20% increase for its space programs in FY2018. She also revealed that SpaceX will launch the next X-37B mission in August, the first time one of the unmanned military space planes will launch on a vehicle other than an Atlas V rocket. She further reinforced the Air Force 'paradigm' that space no longer is a benign environment, but a warfighting domain. During an exchange with Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-NM) over whether U.S. space capabilities are sufficiently resilient and responsive, Wilson praised the Operationally Responsive Space (ORS) office and its rapid acquisition authorities. ORS is headquartered at Kirtland Air Force Base in New Mexico, which Heinrich represents in the Senate and Wilson represented in the House from 1998-2009. As the discussion continued, Heinrich also urged Wilson to

Planned Gift to GN

If you are in the process of estate planning, please consider making a gift of a tax-deductible donation in the form of a bequest, donation of stock or other instruments to the Global Network. Your planned gift would be an important contribution to our global movement to stop the militarization and nuclearization of space. Thank you for your consideration.

consider using small launch vehicles from companies like Virgin Galactic, Vulcan Aerospace and Orbital ATK to ensure more distributed, responsive and flexible access to space.

Pushing U.S. Space Domination

In an article largely showing strong support for U.S. domination of space the *New Republic* reported that when Trump sat down for his first meeting with the Joint Chiefs on January 27, "we talked about space more than any other topic," says General David Goldfein, the Air Force Chief of Staff. That same month, Trump announced he would place particular emphasis on missile defense, and he has held extensive consultations with the Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance, a lobbying group that promotes anti-missile systems. The Trump administration also plans to revive the National Space Council, which used to help private industry develop military projects. The government is currently working with defense contractors Raytheon and Lockheed Martin, for example, to develop a new fleet of GPS and military satellites that are less vulnerable to hacking—a project that will take another decade, and much money, to complete.

No U.S. Nukes in Europe!

For the first time in a long-standing campaign to remove U.S. nuclear weapons from Germany, a delegation of U.S. peace activists participated in protests at the Büchel Air Base, July 12-18, demanding the withdrawal of the 20 remaining U.S. H-bombs still deployed there. Notable among the 11-person delegation were seven participants who have served a combined total of 36 years in U.S. jails and prisons for protest actions taken against nuclear weapons programs and the war system. The eleven U.S. activists—from Wisconsin, California, Washington-DC, Virginia, Minnesota, New Mexico, Tennessee, and Maryland—joined a coalition of 50 German peace and justice groups and organizations converging on the air base. The peace activists are particularly concerned that the U.S. is planning to produce 480 new hydrogen bombs—the so-called "B61-12"—to replace the 180 B61 bombs now deployed in five European NATO countries including the 20 at Büchel. Production is not expected to start before 2022.

Workers in French Guiana Shut Down Space Launch

Space News reported that the movement behind several weeks of social unrest in French Guiana last spring, due to decades of under-investment in the French territory in South America,

Odds & Ends

led to a general strike which 37 unions supported. Locals rejected an offer from Paris to inject a billion dollars of aid to the territory, home to 250,000 people, instead demanding \$2.5 billion immediately. The protests also led to the postponement of an Arianespace rocket launch at Europe's Guiana Space Centre in Kourou. The Kourou space centre has become a symbol of economic disparity in Guiana and a focus for anger, given that 30% of locals have no electricity or running water and around one in four is jobless. Guiana has been administered as a French region since the end of the 18th century and was also used as a place to send convicts for forced labour between 1852 and 1946.

Space Command Airman Died in Syria

The death of a 25-year-old airman assigned to Air Force Space Command in Syria is illustrative of the quiet role U.S. space forces play in ongoing wars. Staff Sgt. Austin Bieren, of Umatilla, Oregon, died March 28, reportedly of natural causes. A member of the 21st Space Wing at Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado, he had been deployed to northern Syria. The little-reported activities of Space Command and service-specific counterparts focus on satellite communications and activities, and information of tactical value to troops downrange, including satellite-based intelligence, weather and missile-warning systems.

STRATCOM: U.S. Must Prepare for War in Space

Space.com reported a top military official says the U.S. needs to make clear that it's ready and able to fight a war that extends into space. Such a "preparation without provocation" strategy would both protect American space assets and help prevent conflicts from flaring up in the final frontier, said Navy Vice Adm. Charles A. Richard, deputy commander of U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM). "Just as nuclear assets deter aggression by convincing potential adversaries there's just no benefit to the attack, we have to maintain a space posture that communicates the same strategic message," Richard said last spring during a presentation at a Center for Strategic and International Studies conference in Washington, D.C.

Drones to South Korea

The Pentagon has declared it will permanently station missile-capable drones in South Korea in the latest round of military escalation in north-eastern Asia. The U.S. military in South Korea took the unusual step of

publicly announcing the deployment of a company of Grey Eagle drones, which it said would add "significant intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capability" for American and South Korean forces. Grey Eagles, the army's enhanced version of the Predator drone, are designed to carry Hellfire missiles and, together with the deployment of THAAD anti-ballistic missile defences in South Korea, they represent a significant build-up of U.S. military.

Moon Base & Space Law

A Japanese and U.S. corporation called 'ispace' is a private lunar exploration company with a vision to extend human presence into outer space. In order for humankind to live in space, we would need a sustainable ecosystem. They claim the first step is to utilize space resources and establish an economy in space—starting from the Moon. According to recent studies, the Moon houses an abundance of precious minerals on its surface, and an estimated 6 billion tons of water ice at its poles. In particular, water can be broken down into oxygen and hydrogen to produce efficient rocket fuel. With a fuel station established in space, 'ispace' says the world will witness a revolution in the space transportation system. The UN's Moon Treaty and Outer Space Treaty state 'that no country, corporation nor individual can claim ownership of the moon or any other planetary body.' Companies like 'ispace' are moving rapidly to defy the UN treaties. Luxembourg is the first European country to set out a formal legal framework to ensure that private operators working in space can be confident about their rights to the resources they extract, i.e. valuable minerals from asteroids.

\$54 billion Not Enough

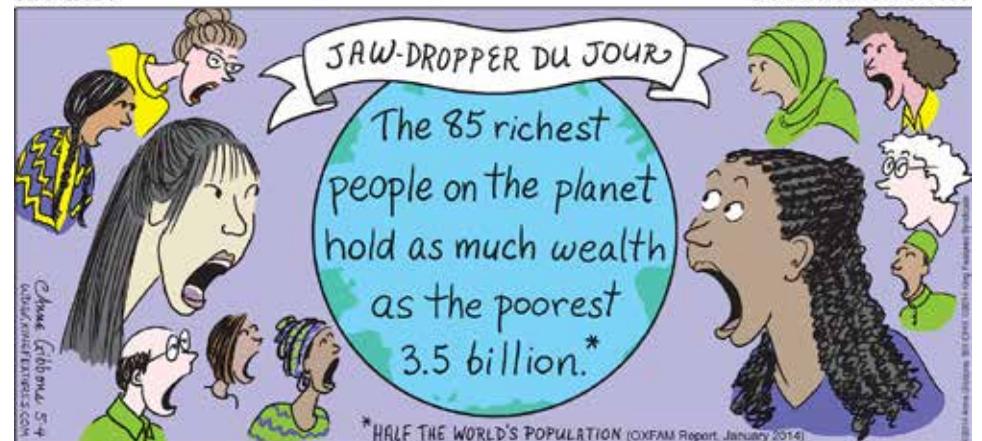
Donald Trump's "America First Budget" renewed his pledge to boost Pentagon spending by \$54 billion and congressional Republicans immediately complained that it was "not enough." Sen. John McCain (R-AZ) said that the \$54 billion "will not be sufficient to rebuild the military. Such a budget does not represent a 10% increase as previously described by the White House, but amounts to a mere three percent over" the budget plan that had been proposed by the previous administration. To pay for the military buildup, Trump has proposed major cuts in social programs and environmental protection.

Germany Joins Russia Blitz

Germany's Defense Minister Ursula von der Leyen announced in early 2017 that the nation will expand its military by 5,000 soldiers, bringing its total

SIX CHIX

BY ANNE GIBBONS



force to around 200,000, saying that growing demands for German military involvement abroad necessitates the growth. This came alongside an announcement that Germany will be deploying a substantial force of tanks and armored vehicles to Lithuania, along the Russian border, where they will be joining the NATO anti-Russia force in the region, which already has upwards of 1,000 German troops.

India Launches Nano-Sats

The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) achieved a major milestone in February 2017 with a successful record-setting launch of 104 satellites on a single rocket. The Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle blasted off from India's Satish Dhawan Space Centre with three satellites from India and 101 smaller nano satellites (also called nanosats) from five other countries: the U.S., the Netherlands, Israel, Kazakhstan and Switzerland. Eighty-eight of the 101 nano satellites that were launched into space belong to the U.S.-based Earth-observing company Planet. Measuring only 12" long by 4" wide by 4" high (30 x 10 x 10 centimeters), these tiny satellites, also called Doves, will allow the company to image the entire Earth every day.

Russia Retools Space Tracking System

Reacting to the ever expanding U.S.-NATO military encirclement of Russia, Moscow for the first time since the Soviet Union, has restored its sole anti-missile radar defense system. The radar system tracks all launches within a 6,000 km radius of Russia's borders. Recently three new radar stations began operating in Orsk, Barnaul, and Yeniseysk. Russia maintains that work on improving the warning will continue. However, even now with only the ability to see targets from two vantage points Russia is able to accurately calculate the coordinates, down to the centimeter, of any object and determine its position in space.

Trump's Drone Policy

Truthout has reported that the Trump administration's "drone policy," though early to characterize, is shaping up to be even more aggressive than the Obama administration's. There has been a significant increase in the number of drone attacks since Trump assumed office. In March 2017 parts of Yemen and Somalia—where the United States is not formally at war—were changed to "areas of active hostilities," making it easier for the U.S. to launch drone attacks. Through the Obama years and continuing with Trump, opponents of drone warfare have tended to highlight civilian casualties from drone attacks. They rightly argue that many more civilians are dying than the U.S. government publicly admits. Another frequently raised concern is the secrecy of (and dubious legal basis for) the CIA's drone operations in "non-traditional battlefields" like Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia and Libya. These are all pressing issues and will continue to serve an important role in ethical debates about drone warfare.

More Drones Bases

Wisconsin Coalition to Ground the Drones and End the Wars has held monthly vigils against drones at the gates of Volk Field for over five years. This Wisconsin Air National Guard Base is a critical component of the whole drone warfare program being conducted by the U.S. government in a number of countries in the Middle East and Africa. At Volk Field personnel are trained to operate the RQ-7 Shadow Drone, which has been used for reconnaissance, surveillance, and target acquisition. However, now there is the likelihood that the RQ-7 is also weaponized. Satellite imagery has recently revealed a previously unreported American drone base in Jordan. Flying from the remote desert air base in the northeastern part of the country, U.S.-built MQ-9 Reaper drones are in a position to monitor and strike targets in Iraq and Syria. Learn more at knowdrones.com

The Crash of Cassini & the Nuclearization of Space

by Karl Grossman

Despite protests around the world, the Cassini space probe—containing more deadly plutonium than had ever been used on a space device—was launched 20 years ago. And in April, on Earth Day, NASA began the process of having Cassini crash into Saturn.

The \$3.27 billion mission constituted a huge risk. Cassini with its 72.3 pounds of Plutonium-238 fuel was launched on a Titan IV rocket on October 17, 1997 despite several Titan IV rockets having earlier blown up on launch.

At a demonstration two weeks before in front of the fence surrounding the pad at Cape Canaveral, Florida from which Cassini was to be launched, Dr. Michio Kaku, professor of theoretical physics at the City University of New York, warned of widespread regional damage if this Titan IV lofting Cassini exploded on launch. Winds could carry the plutonium “into Disney World, Universal City, into the citrus industry and destroy the economy of central Florida,” he declared.

Four months before, at an earlier demonstration at the same site, Allan Kohn, a NASA career official from 1964 to 1994 who had been the emergency preparedness officer at the Kennedy Space Center, noted that “we were told by NASA that the odds against the Cassini blowing up and releasing radiation [are] 1,500 to one. These are pretty poor odds. You bet the lottery and the odds against you are one in 14 million.” As

to NASA’s claim that the plutonium system was “indestructible,” he said it is “indestructible just like the Titanic was unsinkable... It’s time to put a stop to their freedom to threaten the lives of people here on Earth.”

And, indeed, on an Earth “flyby” by Cassini, done on August 18, 1999, it wouldn’t have been a regional disaster but a global catastrophe if an accident happened.

Cassini didn’t have the propulsion power to get directly from Earth to its final destination of Saturn, so NASA figured on having it hurtle back to Earth in a “sling shot maneuver” or “flyby”—to use Earth’s gravity to increase its velocity so it could reach Saturn. The plutonium was only used to generate electricity—745 watts—to run the probe’s instruments. It had nothing to do with propulsion.

So NASA had Cassini come hurtling back at Earth at 42,300 miles per hour and skim over the Earth’s atmosphere at 727 miles high. If there were a rocket misfire or miscalculation and the probe made what NASA in its “Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Cassini Mission” called an “inadvertent reentry,” it could have fallen into Earth’s atmosphere, disintegrating, and releasing plutonium. Then, said NASA in its statement, “Approximately 7 to 8 billion world population at a time ... could receive 99 percent or more of the radiation exposure.”

The worst accident involving space nuclear power occurred in 1964 when a satellite powered by a SNAP-9A plutonium system failed to achieve orbit and fell to Earth, breaking apart and releasing its 2.1 pounds of Plutonium-238 fuel, which dispersed all over the planet. According to the late Dr. John Gofman, professor of Molecular and Cell Biology at the University of California at Berkeley, that accident contributed substantially to global lung cancer rates.

In her book, *Nuclear Madness*, Dr. Helen Caldicott, president emerita of Physicians for Social Responsibility, writes about plutonium: “Named after the god of the underworld, it is so toxic that less than one-millionth of a gram, an invisible particle, is a carcinogenic dose. One pound, if uniformly distributed, could hypothetically induce lung cancer in every person on Earth.”

Further, the Plutonium-238 used in space devices is 280 times more radioactive than the Plutonium-239 used in nuclear weapons.

Cassini finally reached Saturn and took excellent pictures and provided scientific information about Saturn, its rings, and moons including Enceladus and Titan.

NASA sent it crashing into Saturn on April 22, 2017 “to make sure Cassini is incinerated at the end of its journey to ensure that any of its earthborn microbes do not contaminate the biotic or prebiotic worlds out there,” wrote Dennis

Overbye in his front-page story in *The New York Times* on April 22. (The article didn’t mention plutonium at all.)

“When I heard that NASA would be dive-bombing Cassini into Saturn with 72 pounds of deadly plutonium-238 on-board, I thought of the Army handing out smallpox laden blankets to Indians on the reservations,” comments Bruce Gagnon, coordinator of the Global Network against

Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space, which has been in the lead in protesting NASA nuclear space missions.

Said Gagnon: “We are told that NASA is out searching for the origins of life in the universe but they seem to have forgotten the prime directive from Captain Kirk on *Star Trek* to ‘do no harm.’”

Felton Davis, an activist with the Catholic Worker movement in New York City, who participated in anti-Cassini protests through the years, said NASA “should face the environmental reality that other celestial bodies are not garbage dumps.”

After the 1964 accident involving the SNAP-9A plutonium system, NASA moved to develop solar photovoltaic panels to energize satellites, and now all are powered by solar panels—as is the International Space Station.

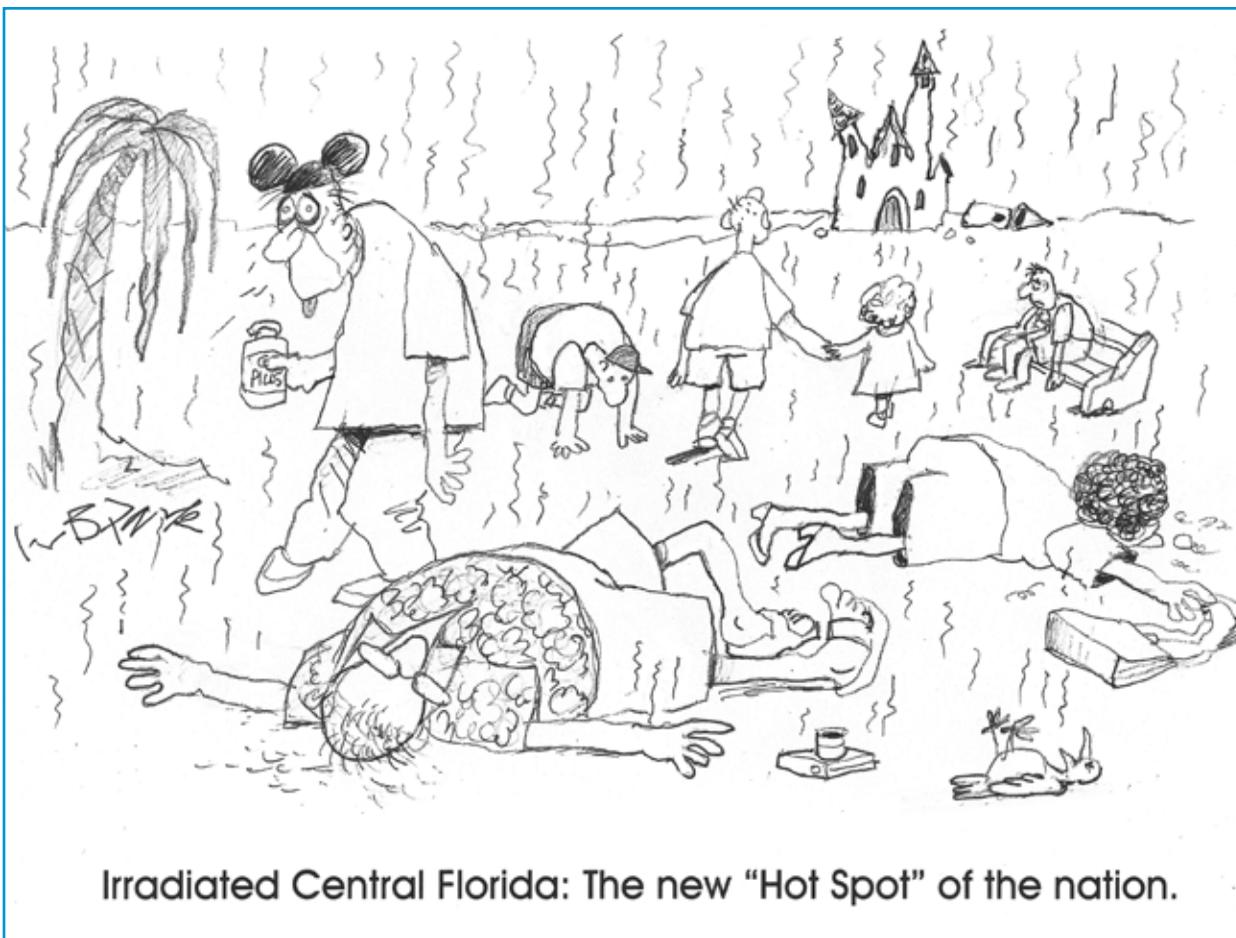
But NASA has insisted that it needs nuclear power for missions into space—claiming for years that it could not use anything but atomic energy beyond the orbit of Mars. However, that has been proven incorrect by NASA itself. On July 4th, Independence Day, 2016, NASA’s solar-energized space probe Juno arrived at Jupiter. Launched from Cape Canaveral on August 5, 2011, it flew nearly two billion miles to reach Jupiter, and although sunlight at Jupiter is just four percent of what it is on Earth, Juno’s solar panels were able to harvest energy.

Nevertheless, the U.S. Department of Energy working with NASA has started up a new production facility at its Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee to produce Plutonium-238 for space use. Other DOE labs are also to participate.

Says Gagnon of the Maine-based Global Network: “Various DOE labs are rushing back into the plutonium processing business likely to make it possible for the nuclear industry to move their deadly product off-planet in order to ensure that the mining operations envisioned on asteroids, Mars, and the Moon will be fully nuclear-powered. Not only do the DOE labs have a long history of contaminating us on Earth but imagine a series of rocket launches with toxic plutonium on board that blow up from time to time at the Kennedy Space Center. They are playing with fire and the lives of us Earthlings. The space and the nuke guys are in bed together and that is a bad combination—surely terrible news for all of us.”

“The Global Network,” said Gagnon, “remains adamantly opposed to the use of nuclear power in space.”

—Karl Grossman, professor of journalism at the State University of New York/College at Old Westbury, is the author of the book, *The Wrong Stuff: The Space’s Program’s Nuclear Threat to Our Planet*.



Irradiated Central Florida: The new “Hot Spot” of the nation.

Cassini Crash Protest at NASA Planned

by Felton Davis

The most distressing news on the astronomical scene is that the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has decided to conclude the mission of the Cassini space probe by allowing it to crash and burn up in the atmosphere of the planet Saturn.

Twenty years ago, I was part of a group that did a sit-in at the Washington, DC offices of NASA, part of the worldwide campaign against the launch of the Cassini space probe, with its batteries constructed out of 72 pounds of plutonium. There were also demonstrations at the launch site in Florida, and at NASA's New York City office adjacent to Columbia University. Those who were arrested and went to trial for the DC sit-in were convicted by Superior Court Judge Hess, and sent to the DC Jail for one week. The launch took place in October of 1997, and Cassini has returned photos from the vicinity of the ringed planet ever since.

NASA spokespeople admit openly that the probe will crash and burn in the heat of Saturn's atmosphere, after a series of descending orbits through the planet's massive ring system. Consider the casual language that the *New York Times* writer uses to describe this act of shocking disregard for the integrity of celestial bodies:

"In April, Cassini will shift its orbit again to slice between the planet and the rings, sneaking as close as 1,012 miles from the clouds of Saturn in 22 more orbits. Finally, on Sept. 15, at 8:07 a.m., Earth time in New York, the spacecraft will crash into the clouds of Saturn and burn up. Science will never be the same. Nor will Saturn, now forever polluted by a few stray atoms from the blue planet. Thereafter, there will always be a little piece of Earth on Saturn." (From "How Cassini Will Begin Its Date With Death on Saturn," by Dennis Overbye, *NY Times*, Nov. 25, 2016)

The Cassini spacecraft is not running out of gas by accident, but by design. And it's not scheduled to crash by accident either, but by design. From the beginning, there was never a plan to bring it back and dispose of the plutonium batteries safely. Could it have been allowed to spiral down through the solar system and into the Sun, so that at least the plutonium would be vaporized instead of permanently polluting Saturn? And what was so important about the photos that justified the extreme risks of launching all that plutonium in the first place? These are questions that everyone should be asking.

NASA says this so-called "blaze of glory" is a done deal. But if extraterrestrial explorers announced a plan to crash one of their space probes into our atmosphere, all the governments of the Earth would unite in opposition, to prevent that from taking place. There is no right, no justification whatsoever, for us to treat any part of another planet's atmosphere or surface as a garbage dump for our radioactive materials.

The schedule of demonstrations in Washington DC for the week of Hiroshima and Nagasaki is not yet finalized, but I hope to vigil at NASA headquarters during those days, August 6th through 9th. Anyone from the DC area who wants to join me can reach me at DavisFleton3@yahoo.com.

Please think about this and send a note to NASA and demand an alternative: <https://www.nasa.gov/content/submit-a-question-for-nasa>

—Felton Davis lives in New York City.

Removed from U.S. Embassy in Seoul



by Sung-Hee Choi

No THAAD! (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense 'Missile Defense.'

On July 1 Lindis Percy (Harrogate, England), a UK peace activist, kept a one person protest in front of the U.S. embassy in Seoul, Korea, despite police interruption. Thank you, Lindis, your persistent effort and solidarity is an inspiration and encouragement for us.

Lindis is a co-founder of Campaign Accountability of American Bases (CAAB) and former co-representative of the CAAB. She has been arrested around 500 times for her anti-base struggles. Lindis is a health care worker and was at the Greenham Common Women's peace encampment in England during the early 1980's where Ronald Reagan deployed U.S. cruise missiles during the Cold War.

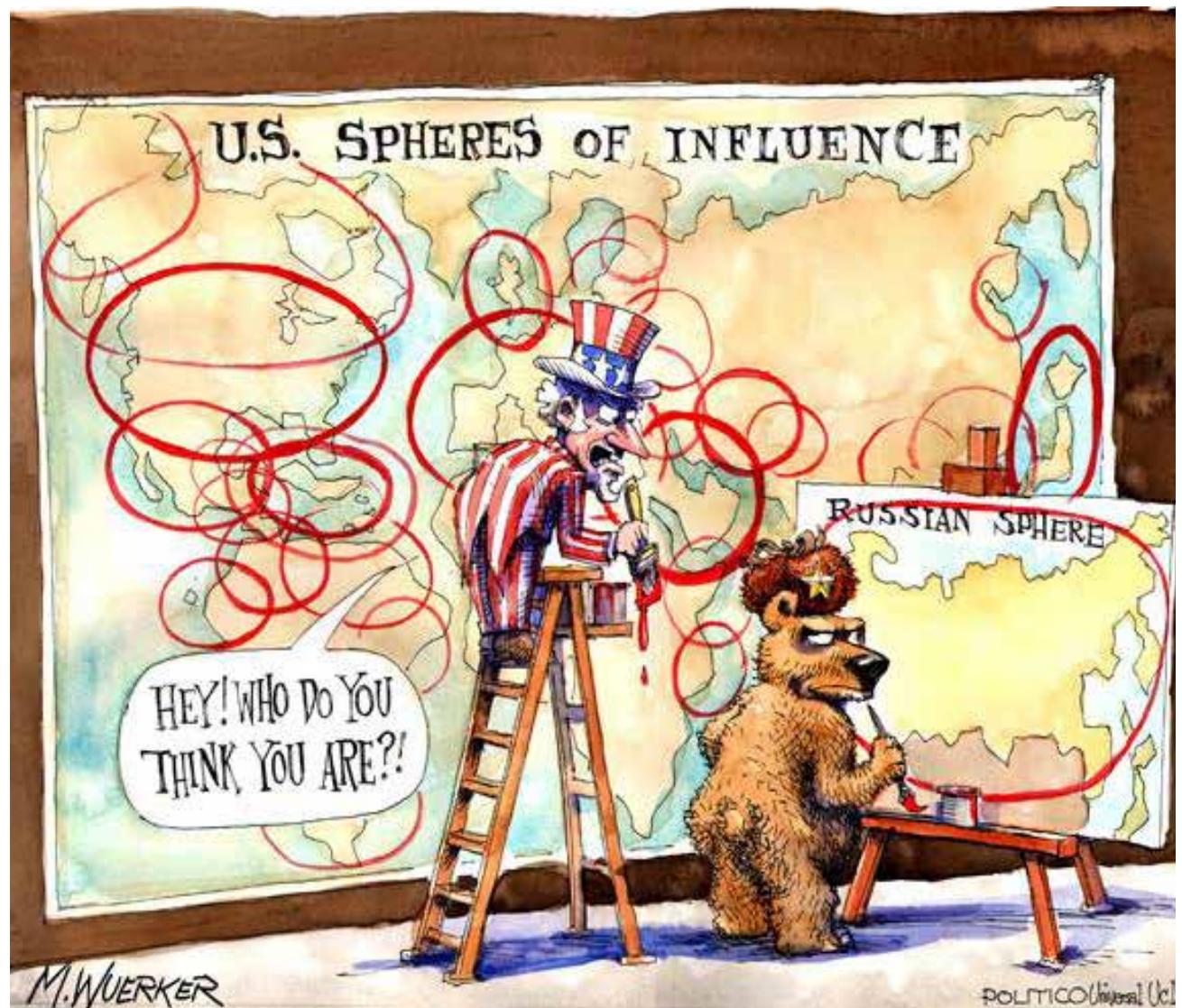
The People's Democratic Party hit its 347th day

of one person protests in front of the U.S. embassy as of June 29. The issues are: Immediately remove THAAD, Stop war exercise against North Korea! Conclude a Peace Agreement between North Korea and United States! Remove all the U.S. bases [from the alliance countries]!

Lindis was invited by the People's Democratic Party to visit the various anti-base struggles in Korea from June 27 to July 9. She had previously welcomed representatives of the People's Democratic Party to their struggle site against the U.S. NSA base at Menwith Hill, North Yorkshire, England several months ago.

Lindis visited Jeju Island from July 5-7 and Seongju (THAAD deployment site) on July 8.

—Sung-Hee Choi is on the GN's Board of Advisors and lives on Jeju Island, South Korea. Photo by People's Democratic Party



Star Wars: Quantum Leap from Fiction to Reality

by Manlio Dinucci

In the collective imagination, space weapons are those you find in science fiction movies such as the *Star Wars* series. What I find difficult to fathom is, why, even though almost no one in the media talks about it, they have transitioned to reality.

The race to weapons, including nuclear weapons, has for some time now been extended from Earth to Space. Leading the pack is the United States, which aims increasingly at gaining military control over space. As soon as Heather Wilson (new Secretary of the U.S. Air Force), took up her position, she made an announcement on 16 June that the headquarters will be reorganized to empower space operations, integrating them even further into those of the Air Force. The declared intention: "to organize and train forces to be able to prevail whenever a future conflict may be extended to space".

The responsibility for military space systems lies with the Strategic Command (StratCom), which at the same time is responsible for nuclear-weapons and cyber-arms that are fundamental for the American style of war in every theatre across the whole globe. So writes General John Hyten, the commander of StratCom, last February. He emphasizes: "our nuclear forces are secure and ready at any moment" and adds that "if deterrence were to fail, we would be ready to use nuclear weapons".

For Pentagon strategies, maintaining superiority in space equates to the following:

- having the capability to attack an enemy that is militarily strong;



- paralyzing this enemy's defences;
- even striking the enemy with nuclear weapons; and,
- if the enemy happens to be equipped with such weapons, neutralizing its response.

To this end, nuclear weapons, space systems and cyber arms are integrated by the Pentagon into "the full spectrum for the global capabilities for attack", on earth and in space. On 7 May, after orbiting Earth for 718 days, the Air Force's robotic shuttle (X-37B) landed at Cape Canaveral.

This shuttle can maneuver in space and re-enter to base independently. The X-37B, on its fourth "top secret" mission in space, probably serves (according to the opinion of most experts) to test out weapons for destroying enemy satellites and thus "to overcome" the enemy when it is under attack. At the same time, laser weapons are being developed, which have already been tested by the ship USS Ponce in the Persian Gulf. On 16 March, Lockheed Martin communicated that it has developed a powerful laser, which within a few months will be installed on a special auto-vehicle belonging to the

U.S. Army for a series of tests. Yet again in March, General Brad Webb declared that within a year, an AC-130 airplane will be armed with a laser for attacking land targets.

On 3 April, scientists at Macquarie University announced that through their lab work, they have created a super laser (similar to "Black Death" in *Star Wars*), for future space applications. In this field, the United States is streets ahead but, as happens with every other system of weapons, other countries, notably Russia and China, are developing similar military technology. In 2008, Moscow and Peking proposed an international agreement to prevent arms being deployed in

space; but first the Bush administration and after that the Obama administration refused to enter into negotiations on this matter. [Israel has routinely joined the U.S. in blocking such a new UN treaty to ban all weapons in space.]

Thus, while negotiations have been taking place in the United Nations on a legal ban on nuclear weapons (negotiations in which none of the nuclear powers nor any member of NATO, including Italy, are participating) the race to militarize space is gaining momentum, with the U.S. being the pace-setter. This race is a step toward nuclear war.

—Reprinted from *Voltaire Network* based in Rome, Italy

No 'Missile Defense' in Korea No THAAD in Seongju



The U.S. has recently deployed a THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense) 'missile defense' (MD) system in Seongju, South Korea, despite massive on-going protests.

It is claimed that THAAD is there to intercept missiles from North Korea, but many experts believe China and Russia are the targets, given the enormous range of its radar which intensifies unnecessary military tension in the region.

The U.S. has also deployed other MD systems throughout the Asia-Pacific region, Europe and the Middle East to encircle Russia and China. MD is a key element in Pentagon first-strike attack planning. Stop the dangerous encirclement of Russia and China with MD!

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Diego Garcia Awaits International Court Decision

In June there was a resounding win for a UN General Assembly Resolution calling for an Advisory Opinion from the UN's International Court of Justice (ICJ) at The Hague. The topic was the British state's excision of Chagos (including Diego Garcia) from Mauritius in 1965 and the brutal, forcible removal of all Mauritian Chagossians from 1965-73.

The vote was 94 in favour, 15 against. A fine victory! Now a legal opinion at the ICJ lies ahead. But things like this will be decided in the final analysis by politics

The feeling of victory at the UN vote was made more exhilarant by the pure abjectness of the arguments put forward by the UK and the USA against the Resolution. The absence of any semblance of logic or even pretence of rationality tolls the bell for colonial reign. But, at the same time, it is not pure exhilaration that one felt, but also a profound disgust at such low moral ground being taken in the name of the fine citizens of Britain and America.

A legal battle will ensue. And in the meantime, it is up to us to keep up the political pressure. Most of you have followed the story so far, many giving ongoing moral support to LALIT, as we have kept the flame alive here, in this struggle against colonialism and for the re-unification of Mauritian land and people. The struggle is against militarism, too.

Diego Garcia today is a prime deployment site for the Pentagon's Space Surveillance Network, one of 25 such locations with ground-based radars and optical sensors worldwide that are used to give the U.S. 'full spectrum dominance'. Diego Garcia also serves as a key installation in the Air Force's Satellite Control Network and as a Pentagon forward deployed attack base.

And there are the Chagossian people, Mauritians living on Chagos outer islands, who were forcibly removed, after the excision of Chagos, from 1965 – 1973. They deserve the right to return. The issue is also about resources of that vast archipelago. About the environment, where Britain has set up its Marine Protected Area alongside a nuclear military base, where nuclear



According to an article in *The Guardian*, "The UK has suffered a humiliating defeat at the United Nations general assembly in a vote over decolonisation and its residual hold over disputed territory in the Indian Ocean."

submarines are serviced, now that Italian struggles got the servicing ship removed. And the struggle has been about women in the forefront – from petitions to street demonstrations, from Congresses to battles with Riot Police – for 50 years.

The knowledge that Diego Garcia was used by the CIA for renditions and torture after 9/11 may have swayed the opinion of countries that otherwise had supported the UK..

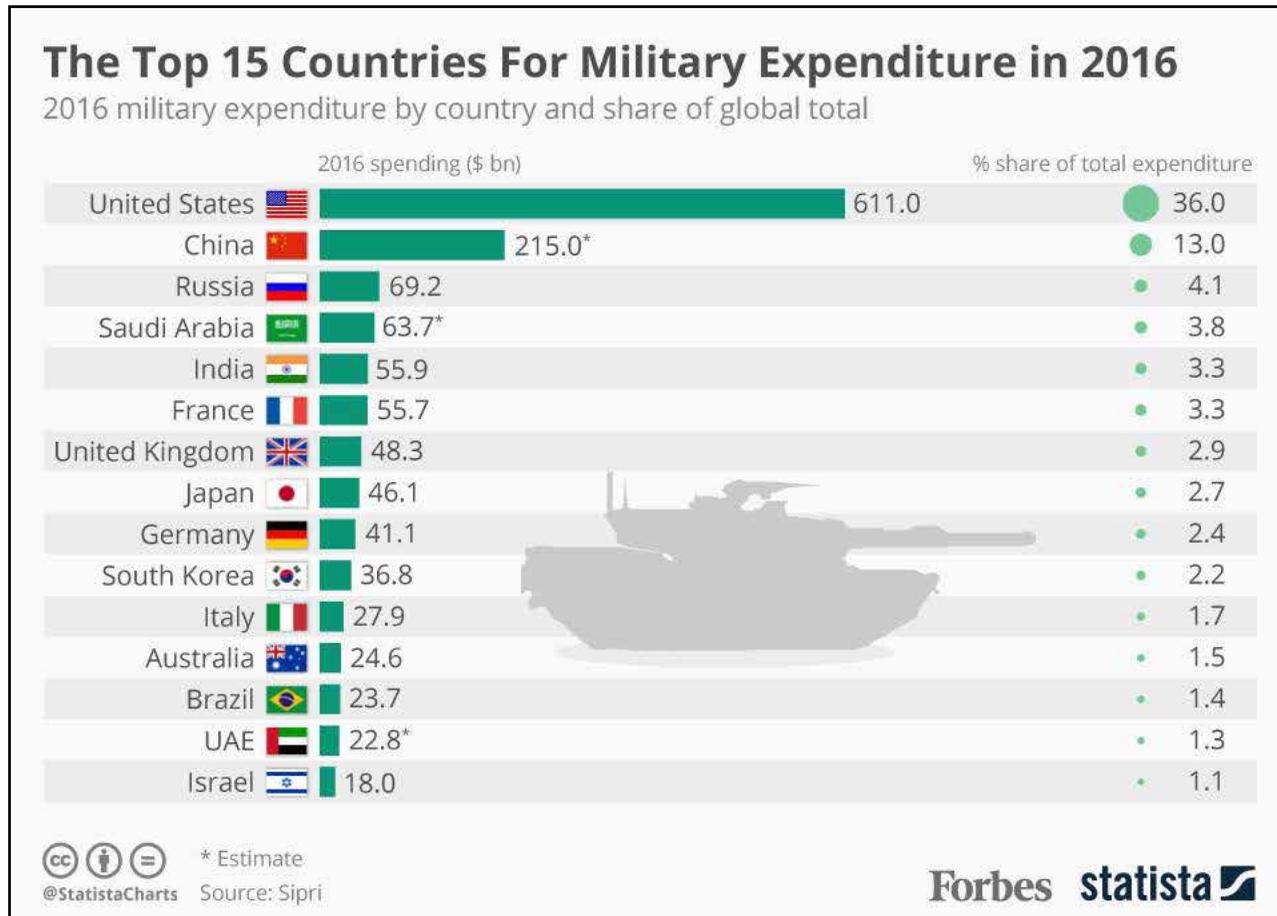
"This was a brilliant result for Mauritius and the Chagossians. Apart from the sovereignty issue, now

referred to the ICJ, the resolution was a means of bringing to the attention of the UN general assembly the travesty of the UK's treatment of the Chagossian people since 1965 when the [general assembly] last considered the Chagos Islands," David Snoxell said. David Snoxell, a former British diplomat, is the coordinator of a group on the Chagos Islands.

So LALIT's long struggle in close association with Chagossians from the 1970s until today, continues. We must get the Diego Garcia base shut down!

—LALIT can be reached at <http://www.lalitmauritius.org/>

To learn about the history of the Global Network, to keep up to date with space issues, to watch videos created by GN volunteers, to connect with others and much more go to: space4peace.org



GN's 26th Annual Space Conference in England

The Global Network will likely hold our 26th annual space organizing conference during June 2018 in Oxford, England. Oxford is near the expanding U.S. 'Joint Intelligence Analysis Centre' at USAF Croughton on the border of Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire.

In our last *Space Alert* (#34) we carried an article by Paul Mobbs from Croughtonwatch who reported on the dramatic expansion of the U.S. Croughton base. Mobbs wrote: "Croughton forms an essential way-station in communications between the U.S., the Middle East and North Africa. The satellite ground station at Croughton receives communications from U.S. military and intelligence operations in those areas, and then relays that information back to the U.S. for further processing and decision-making.

"Like giant puffballs, the radomes at Croughton are the 'visible' part of a much larger communications 'organism' which spans the globe. Though the satellite, or 'SATCOM', ground-station grabs our attention, far more information is being exchanged via an extensive network of underground fiber-optic cables. These cables are part of a dedicated military network, and also utilize existing commercial data networks too. Croughton's connections span the UK, Europe, the Middle East, and reach across the Atlantic to the continental U.S.A."

The events will include a conference in Oxford as well as a trip to USAF Croughton for a public protest. Arrangements are now being made by our hosts in England and we will keep you posted as things

develop. If you have any interest in attending these events please let us know so we can keep you personally informed of all plans.

The GN was created in 1992 to link together groups and individuals around the planet that are working to expose and organize opposition to U.S. plans to

'control and dominate' the Earth and space. When we meet each year we share with one another the various elements of the U.S. Space Command's global network of space facilities and bases that give it the power to see everything, hear everything and to attack any place on the Earth.



Space Alert! is the educational publication of the Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space. GN's Coordinator, Bruce Gagnon is editor of this publication. Layout design by Nancy E. Randolph. Please send email or street address corrections to the address below.

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