

Friends, I'm privileged today to have Tim Shorrock as a guest today. He's written extensively about Korea. He grew up in Korea and Japan. His blog is "Money Doesn't Talk: It Swears." His most recent piece is *Congress and North Korea: Diplomacy is Not on the Table*.

The Trump Administration has just dispatched the SAD system to South Korea, but the majority of the people of South Korea don't want it. They want a less confrontational stance toward North Korea and China. Remember: one people, one country, one culture, one language. Tim Shorrock's books include *Spies for Hire: The Secret World of Intelligence Outsourcing*. Welcome, Tim Shorrock.

**Tim:** Thanks very much.

**Blase:** I see here that diplomacy is not on the table. Why is that?

**Tim:** Well, about a month ago the senate held a rare hearing on North Korea policy and that was definitely the message from the senate and the people it had testify. You know, we're basically in the end game with North Korea and the US must stop them from becoming a nuclear state. What's happened in the last 8 years is nuclear weapon's progress in North Korea - and they're basically saying the only choice we have may be military action. That's what Secretary of State Tillerson was talking about over the last couple of days. They're basically throwing in the towel with respect to any negotiation, but there haven't been any serious negotiations for years really. The only way to prevent a war is to have direct negotiations between the US and North Korea. That's the way to resolve this entire situation.

**Blase:** WE have a problem in even considering diplomacy. If you look at the New York Times today, Sunday, March 19, you'll find multiple options for striking North Korea, all highly risky. Well they're all military. One, a single strike to halt the missile strike. Two, a series of strikes to devastate the arsenal. And three, a war launched on American terms. I mean - did these people ever have the idea that you might talk to someone?

**Tim:** This particular writer for the New York Times, I've been following him for years - he tries to write these articles, but he doesn't understand anything about Korea or the dynamics and history of Korea. This is true of about every reporter that writes about it in the mainstream press and even in the left press. People never take into account the full history of what led up to this. They also clearly discount South Korea and South Koreans. You know, it's whatever we decide in Korea, that's what goes. The people of South Korea have no say. This article outlines the very dangerous military options, and I'm glad that the writer noted there are serious risks in every one of them. If the US launches a war on North Korea, it's not going to have a lot of South Koreans on their side. That's what they don't understand. And the problem here is trying to resolve the Korean war which never ended (it's still an armistice). There's no peace treaty, and a peace treaty should be the ultimate goal that we should support. But they clearly don't want that. The Pentagon.

**Blase:** Let's look at the history for a moment. How did the Korean War start? We go back to 1950. It was in process by June. I received a discharge in February of that year, and later on I read that we're attacking Korea in June. What started the war?

**Tim:** This is a deep question that goes way back. We could talk for hours about it. But essentially, when Korea was divided artificially after WWII - which should never have been done, but the Soviet Union and the United States decided to draw a line. The Soviet Union would accept the surrender of the Japanese forces from the north and the US would do the same in the south. Japan was the enemy, of course. Millions of people died in the war with Japan. They did not occupy Japan with a military government. They ruled through the Japanese government. In South Korea, they imposed a military government - the US did - and the US ruled directly through a strong military government. They saw any attempt at a unified Korea or nationalism as communism and therefore to be fought. So they kept collaborators with the Japanese in place, and lots of North Koreans, rich North Korean who lost their property, came down and became a kind of right wing Nazi vanguard that was used to crush popular movements all over South Korea. To go back to the division, you have to go back to the late forties at what happened in North and South Korea at the time that led up to 1950 when the North Korean army decided that the only way to liberate the whole country was to overrun the South. They got to the US enclave, and MacArthur, with Truman being him, did a massive invasion at Inchon and drove the North Korean forces up into North Korea and into China. And then they made the decision to invade North Korea, the US and Truman did, and they did that, and that brought in the Chinese and led to one of the greatest disasters in US military history when marines were surrounded in North Korea and left Korea a complete wasteland. This is what the Americans don't know. In the war, the US bombed so much of North Korea that there was nothing left to bomb. Pilots stopped flying because there was nothing left to bomb. They'd completely turned the whole entire country into cinders, and North Koreans haven't forgotten.

**Blase:** I don't think many Americans understand that this was the highest number of people, of civilians, ever killed in any war. I see that one third of the people of North Korea were killed. And of course, we have General Curtis LeMay saying that "they were bombed into gravel, and then into dust." And then we have that section of Pongyong, and the destruction of every city in North Korea. And then we stand back and say, hey, you guys can't get your act together. I don't quite understand how we have to live with these ongoing lies, and the failure of ending a war that is still allegedly in process and may begin again because we don't understand diplomacy. Do you think people of the North have any interest in war?

**Tim:** I think they will defend their country if it is attacked. They believe in sovereignty. The North Korean government is a police state - but every country will defend itself if they feel that their future, their actual sovereignty and existence is at stake. What do they do if they feel their future is at stake? They build nuclear weapons as a deterrent. What did the US do during WWII when they thought Japanese and German fascism was a threat? They built nuclear weapons, and they used them. The Soviet Union built nuclear weapons. China did. This is what countries do. The US and other countries have declared them international outlaws, but the way to resolve this is to deal with the war that hasn't been resolved. To end it. To create some kind of situation where both sides can deescalate and start negotiation and actual projects to build trust.

**Blase:** Can we see that any such threat is a threat to the South Koreans and to the Japanese? Isn't that slightly obvious, that they will be the victims of our great attack on North Korea. Can anyone see that?

**Tim:** I think the Pentagon - many people in the military, especially the US army and marines - are knowledgeable about what a tremendous horrible war it would be. They know that because they remember the Korean War. The marines were trounced. They were surrounded by Chinese and North Koreans. Thousands and thousands of marines died when they had to go from the mountains down to the ocean to be evacuated. It was a huge defeat. The war was a draw - the Chinese came down and helped the North Koreans reestablish control, and the active war ended basically where it started. The destruction was tremendous, and it ended in an armistice, and that's what needs to be addressed. That can only be done through diplomacy. As I've pointed out, if you go to the DMZ that divides North from South, and the truce, the only soldiers guarding that border on the north side is North Koreans. On the south side, the United States has soldiers. That shows you what this is really all about. The United States vs North Korea.

**Blase:** This is a tremendous provocation of China because we are involved with a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense, which is known as THAD. That is seen by the Chinese as an added threat at this time. And this of course is to the great benefit of Lockheed Martin that produces this disaster. It was designed in 1987. Do you have any comments on this use of THAD?

**Tim:** Yes I do. This is a big big issue now for South Korea. As you said at the top of the show, most South Koreans are against it. The opposition leader is probably going to be elected South Korea's next president. And it should be up to the next South Korean government. Whoever takes the presidency. There have been demonstrations against it in South Korea. Now, the system is supposed to be able to knock down North Korean missiles. But they systems are unproven. There are so many ways to penetrate missile defense systems that it's a joke, they've never worked. A couple of weeks ago, there was a big story in the New York Times about how they're using cyberwar to try to stop North Korea's missiles and tests. There has been some success, but the reason they turned to cyberwar is that they realized that years and years and years of Star Wars missile defense stuff has never worked. The Chinese believe that these THAD installations have very strong radar, and that it penetrates their systems in ways that upset the balance of power between the US and China. They think it's a threat to them. So they've really raised the stakes on this, and there's been a huge drop off of Chinese tourists to South Korea, which is economic warfare more or less, and which Rex Tillerson denounced as if the US had never done anything like economic warfare. They are in fact strangling the North Korean economy. Lashing out at Chinese tourists not going to South Korea is ridiculous. The US brought this THAD completely disregarding the South Korean people and its politicians. It's an aggressive and very arrogant move, and it's angered many people in South Korea. It's increased the tension.

**Blase:** You mention that money doesn't talk - IT SCREAMS. I do think that the greatest threat to our security at this time is our government because of the love of death, the love of money - the root of all evil. This is not a Trump phenomenon. The message for decades has been, do what we say or we'll bomb you and your children. We don't talk. We just threaten, and then act on our threats with unrestrained violence. We have intervened in one nation after another. These were aggressive wars. They were unnecessary. They were illegal. They were immoral. And now the Trump crew is simply a peak of our military industrial complex. War is a constant in our political culture. We're supposed to get used to it. The two parties don't talk about it. They use fear as a glue to hold everything together. There's an overreaching problem here that has been going on since 1950, this is a long time. Seventy years almost. What is the hope of a review of this kind of

death dealing policy. Maybe the wonderful awakening that's going on in our country - people waking up everywhere, which has been extremely exciting - maybe this is the wake up call we've been waiting for before we destroy the planet.

**Tim:** There's a lot there. Look, the Obama Administration, to its credit, negotiated an agreement with Iran. It also opened relations finally with Cuba. The embargo has not be lifted, but they did take some major steps, in my opinion. I think the agreement with Iran, which is now under attack, was a step in the right direction. Much better than war, which was being threatened at the time. We could follow the same model in Korea, just find someone with some guts who will do it. There are people in the US who are encouraging this kind of negotiation. A lot of people are drawing the conclusion that it's the only way. It's also important to recognize that it's part of the litany of choices the Trump people say they have, one of which is a preemptive strike. They've also said one choice is recognizing them as a nuclear power and negotiating. I don't think negotiations are completely off the table. I think they're really trying to talk big and make it sound as if the US is ready to attack at any moment. I don't think there's that much support for it here in the belly of the beast.

**Blase:** We've been firing intercontinental ballistic missiles from our coast here for decades. Fortunately, without nuclear weapons inside. Is this to be excused as a "right" that we have, some divine right of kings? What is this, that we can fire these things but others can't? What's going on?

**Tim:** I guess the US would call it the divine right of empire. You know, we can do whatever we want, and it doesn't matter. The way that they bombed in WWII, the Korean War, Vietnam, was completely insane. Whoever thinks that that is some normal way of acting is crazy. We've done some terrifying things in this world. I just hope there's some sanity among people here who are in a position to have some influence. Unfortunately, I don't. I can just write about it.

**Blase:** There are ways of dealing with this. I seems to me that after the great work of Seymour Melman, who wrote the book *Pentagon Capitalism* when he realized decades ago that many of these wars come about because of corporations and individuals who just didn't care about the loss of our youth or the loss of innocent children in other lands. They couldn't care less. Their God was money, and they continued to profit on military production. Melman also wrote the book *Profit Without Production*. What if we were to say that there can be no profit in war or making weapons of war, that people would get public salaries. The profit motive has been the motive force of endless war, endless enemies. Any student taking diplomacy 101 would fail the course by saying "we don't practice diplomacy with our enemies. We don't talk to our enemies." The art of diplomacy is designed to talk to your enemies, that's the only purpose for it. Diplomacy is not needed to talking to friends, but our friends now are Saudi Arabia, so they're invited to lunch at the capitol as we assist them in creating one of the worst famines on the planet. So they're lovely democratic leadership is there having lunch with us. We do nothing but make fun of the leadership of North Korea; I think we'd have more fun with our own president if it wasn't so tragic. There's a lot of irrationality here, and it's something that I think it's time to attempt to break through. I mean, we saw here a very poor country, Cuba, offer health care and education in a poor nation. We had 300 assassination attempts against Castro. What do we call that? Maybe it would be better to create a healthcare and education programs that made it

possible for people of normal income to send their kids to school. These problems are all interrelated, and I think you can see in the New York Times that we're given three options and they're all military. That's the problem right there. They don't have to be all military. There's no need for that. It's what's literally destroying us right now. The greatest threat to our security is our government because we have a conflict between lying heads of state and agencies that are not known for their candor. You've got Trump and the agencies fighting, and anyone who is not fully robotized would never carry out an order to use a planet busting weapon. We understood that the Russian sub commander refused the order to fire a nuclear weapon in the Cuban Missile Crisis, and that's a theory of many people - we were one man's word from total destruction. It also applies to all of our military who must not respond to illegal orders from their commander in chief. It applies even more to our citizens who have no such commander in chief and see their leader as a mass murderer. We see this crisis has nothing to do with republicans and democrats; they're both silent on stopping war. They have promoted war. And we have a problem of state terrorism, which has to be reversed. So how are we going to do that?

**Tim:** That's too big a question for me. I don't know how we're going to do it. I can't answer it. There are some possibilities, and there are people who are going to push negotiations with North Korea. I think war is unthinkable.

**Blase:** It really puts us into a terrible situation. I think, Tim, it would help so much if people would study the history of our relationship.

**Tim:** Yes, people need to understand the history of the United States.

**Blase:** I so appreciate you're being with us today. He's an independent journalist who has written extensively about Korea. Thank you so much for being with us today, Tim Shorrock.

So friends, 54 billion more dollars are slated to be stolen from the public. We suggest a bill for single payer healthcare, and hope Bernie Sanders initiates that bill. We want to get 2 million homeless people off our streets and into decent housing. But there's no money for new housing, just new jets for Saudi Arabia and Israel. Aren't we happy to see our tax money go for cluster bombs to kill Yemeni children? We kill their children with our bombs. We kill our own children by denying them access to decent healthcare. This is a death focus. It's called necrophilia by Eric Fromm. We're proud of our federal courts for its negation of the president's counterproductive, mean spirited, family destroying policy toward refugees. The refugees were created by our foreign policy of aggression and killing. Many came here because they were being bombed. ISIS is an outgrowth of our violence. And its fueling immigration from Central America, a place we destroyed with our warfare and support for violent state repression.

What is now a tax holiday for billionaires was once a tax haven for governors - up to and including President Eisenhower. People paid up to 90 percent of their income in taxes. There was no revolution by the oligarchs. They lost one or two of their six mansions. There was no uprising. They are a paper tiger, and we'll see the same today if we the people constrain their greed, their love of violence, their enjoyment of running a terrorist state. What mindless pedagogue ever told you that killing children in another land was not first degree murder? That's what it is, friends. One third of the people who have died in Afghanistan are children. Yes,

nuclear war is now in the pocket of Donald Trump. That's a clear and present danger to the people of the planet and the people of the United States. There's no security in such behavior.

Suppose we took a look at the year 3017. Students will look back to the most barbaric period in history, starting with two nuclear bombs in 1945 and continuing with a perpetual war system designed to make a profit by killing the best of our youth and the innocents abroad. Our most probable destruction is by another one of the hundreds of nuclear accidents which by miracle have not killed us all yet. The experts tell us that by disobeying an order a Russian commander refused to fire a nuclear missile during the Cuban crisis. Such illegal orders must be disobeyed by our military and of course our civilian population which does not have a commander in chief. Yes to civil disobedience, to boycotts and divestments, to non-cooperation and demonstrations. I fantasize in my imagination about what students might study in 3017. An increasing corruption by military industrial government, which climaxed in the the arrest and conviction of Donald Trump on eight felonies. This dramatic event was promised by a permanent acceptance of international law and peace through an international polity.

It's unfortunate, but we have to see now in 3017, 37 percent of the planet is now uninhabitable, but we have hopes of correcting 5 percent of that by 4017.

An era of state terrorism will come to an end through the peacemakers of our time, one of whom is Medea Benjamin who has been on this program various times. She's with us today by virtue of her recent letter, where she writes:

Why is Donald Trump lunching with a Saudi war criminal while Yemenis are starving? While President Trump sat down for a sumptuous meal at the White House on Tuesday, March 14 with Saudi Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, millions of Yemenis are going hungry thanks to Trump's lunch guest.

Prince Salman is only 31 years old, but as the king's favorite son, he was put in charge of the nation's two most critical sectors: the economy and the military. As a brash defense minister, the young prince made the disastrous decision to interfere in an internal conflict in neighboring Yemen. Starting in March 2015, Prince Salman started a bombing campaign against the Yemeni Houthis, a group the Saudi rulers consider aligned with Iran. The bombing has gone on, relentlessly, for the past two years. UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad al Hussein said that possible war crimes had been documented with "alarming frequency" since the Saudis became engaged.

In addition to thousands of Yemeni civilians being killed directly by Saudi bombs, the bombing has also been responsible for the massive destruction of civilian infrastructure, from water facilities to sewage treatment plants to hospitals. Particularly devastating has been the bombing of the port of Hodeidah, where most of the humanitarian aid has been entering the country. Two-thirds of the population now requires food assistance and a Yemeni child dying every 10 minutes from hunger and the lack of medical facilities. UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has called Yemen the "largest food insecurity emergency in the world."

The Saudis are threatening to make matters significantly worse by launching a major military campaign in the area of Hudaidah that will make the port totally inaccessible.

It's not just the Saudis and Houthis who are responsible for Yemen's destruction. As Senator Chris Murphy has said, the United States also has blood on its hands. President Obama sold massive amounts of weapons to the Saudis, and helped the Yemen intervention with logistical support, including refueling Saudi planes in the air. Towards the end of his tenure, President Obama began having second thoughts due to the mounting civilian death toll, including a strike on a Yemeni funeral in October 2016 that killed more than 100 people. That's why in December 2016, the Obama administration halted a planned sale of \$390 million in precision-guided munitions from Raytheon.

President Trump is considering moving forward with this sale. Human rights groups worry that the sale could allow the Saudis to modify thousands of air-to-ground munitions that could be used in strikes against civilians. In a letter to Trump released the same day as the luncheon, Amnesty International urged Trump not to sign off on the sale. "There is substantial risk that Saudi Arabia...could use new U.S. arms to further devastate civilian lives in Yemen," Amnesty wrote. "This could implicate your administration in war crimes or violations of international humanitarian law. Amnesty International researchers have already found both unexploded U.S. bombs and identifiable fragments of exploded U.S. bombs among the ruins of Yemeni homes and other civilian objects."

So we kill Yemeni children, and at home deny American children medical care - thereby killing American children.

Trump's Secretary of State Rex Tillerson has reportedly approved the resumption of the sale, but it needs White House approval before it moves forward. "If approved, this deal would essentially have President Trump throwing gasoline on a house fire and locking the door on his way out," [said](#) Amnesty's US Executive Director Margaret Huang. "President Trump must not approve this arms deal."

The Trump administration has signaled a desire to step up the fight against the Houthis in Yemen as part of its plan to get tough on Iran. It cited Iran's support for the Houthi rebels when putting Iran "on notice" in February. The Saudi leaders are enthusiastic about Trump's hawkish position on Iran. They also appreciate his support of the oil industry (proven by naming the CEO of Exxon as Secretary of State) and his lack of interest in human rights. And they are delighted that unlike Yemen, Saudi Arabia was not included in Trump's Muslim travel ban, despite the fact that more Saudis have killed Americans on US soil than any other foreign nationals (remember: 15 of the 19 September 11 hijackers were from Saudi Arabia).

It seems that the admiration is mutual. As Trump and Prince Salman sat for a photo op after lunch, Trump smiled, pointed to the Saudi delegation, and said, "They are nice people." No, Mr. Trump, they aren't. They behead people for peaceful dissent at home. They export the extreme Wahhabist ideology that fuels terrorist groups. And they are committing war crimes in Yemen. The United States should not be selling them any weapons or helping in their reckless military adventure that has left so many Yemenis dead, displaced and starving.

Thank you Medea Benjamin, co-founder of Code Pink and Global Exchange, and the author of nine books, including recently Kingdom of the Unjust: Behind the US Saudi Connection. Friends, we have people that are peacemakers, and we're certainly so very proud of them.

So many innocent people have been killed, and it goes on day after say. For example, from the New York Times:

More than 30 Somali migrants, including children, were killed in the Red Sea on Friday when a military helicopter opened fire on their boat, according to Yemeni and United Nations officials.

The boat's Yemeni captain was shot in the leg, but piloted the boat toward the Yemeni port city of Al Hudaydah, where rescue workers were so overwhelmed that they put the dead in coolers normally used for fish, Dawood Fadal, the head of security at the port, said by phone.

"Our hospitals did not have room for them so we had to put them in the fish fridges," he said. "Can you imagine what that looks like?"

The boat was attacked overnight by a Saudi-led military coalition, Yemeni officials said. A spokesman for the coalition did not respond to requests for comment, but Saudi officials have accused Iran of smuggling weapons by sea to Yemen's Houthi rebels, who control the territory around the port, and vowed to stop it.

We have a word now from another great peacemaker, Kathy Kelly, who lets us know that:

On April 10, 2017, members of the New York Catholic Worker community, Code Pink, the Upstate Coalition to End the Wars and Ground the Drones, Friends of Franz and Ben, and Voices for Creative Nonviolence will begin a week long fast in New York City. We will jointly hold a public presence across from the United Nations at the Isaiah Wall. As we fast from all solid foods, we urge others to join us in calling for a humane response to the deadly tragedy facing Yemeni civilians whose country, ravaged by civil war and regularly targeted with Saudi and U.S. airstrikes, is now on the brink of famine.

The U.S. backed Saudi-led coalition is also enforcing a sea blockade on rebel-held areas. Yemen imports 90% of its food; because of the blockade, food and fuel prices are rising and scarcity is at crisis levels.

UNICEF estimates that more than 460,000 children in Yemen face severe malnutrition, while 3.3 million children and pregnant or lactating women suffer acute malnutrition.

Isn't it wonderful that our hard-earned taxes go to kill and starve Yemeni children? Why we give one cent for that is beyond me. Taxation without representation is tyranny, and that's what we have in the United States.

More than 10,000 people have been killed, including 1,564 children, and millions have been displaced from their homes.

At this critical juncture, all member states of the UN must urge an end to the blockade and airstrikes, a silencing of all guns, and a negotiated settlement to the war in Yemen.

And that means we need to talk. We need diplomacy. If we talk, maybe we could stop killing. But if we stop killing, we lose the profits, and that would be unfortunate for our billionaire class. That class is known as the deep state. The deep state is simply the complexes of all the people who understand that our wars are there for money, for power that is undeserved and unwanted.

While Yemeni children are starving, US weapons makers, including General Dynamics, Raytheon, and Lockheed Martin, are profiting from weapon sales to Saudi Arabia. Partnering with us in this project are: Code Pink, Veterans for Peace NYC Chapter 34, World Beyond War, Kairos, Just Foreign Policy, Peaceworkers, Pax Christi Metro New York, Know Drones, World Can't Wait, Granny Peace Brigade, NY, Dorothy Day Catholic Worker, D.C., New York City War Resisters League and Benincasa Community, NY (list in formation) .

As U.S. citizens, we have the responsibility to ensure that the U.S.:

1. Stops all drone attacks and military “special operations” within Yemen
2. Ends all U.S. weapon sales and military aid to Saudi Arabia
3. Provides compensation to those who suffered losses caused by U.S. attacks.

We will hold the public presence at the Isaiah Wall, on First Avenue between 42nd and 43rd Streets, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. each day of the fast. We welcome people to join us during those times. The week will include a film screening and discussion, (we hope to screen the BBCNews film, Starving Yemen, at a place and time to be announced), presentations to local communities, and visits with community and faith-based leaders in New York City. Please contact us for more information.

Friend, there are people in this great awakening who are so clear that we have a clear and present danger that we're living with at this time. And it's the danger of perpetual war for profit, perpetual war which kills our young people and innocents overseas, and which we have to bring an end to before it brings an end to us. We're in a suicidal posture at this time. We have a clear and present danger in Washington DC. It is urgent that we act.