Who was our guest speaker and why did he come to Cleveland?

The Republican National Convention will take place in Cleveland, starting on July 18th. The city will be flooded by delegates, world-wide media, curious tourists, and lots of Americans with opinions on the outcome of the event. As we learned from our guest, Kris Hermes, there are many issues which will be addressed by demonstrators on all sides, including local groups such as Cleveland Peace Action. It is for this reason that we joined with other organizations in inviting Mr. Hermes to Cleveland to share his extensive experience related to past demonstrations, how they were pursued by local citizens, and how they were addressed by local authorities.

Hermes, author of “Crashing the Party: Lessons & Legacies from the RNC 2000”, is a Bay Area-based activist who has worked for nearly thirty years on social justice issues. He has been an active, award-winning legal worker, member of the National Lawyers Guild, and part of numerous law collectives and legal support efforts over the years. That explains his visit this election year to Cleveland. At our annual meeting, and at a meeting with representatives of a variety of political action groups held a few days later, Mr. Hermes discussed such issues as legal resistance, political and repressive policing models, contemporary political repression and collective resistance.

It is not surprising that the local authorities, along with the FBI and CIA, are making plans for the Cleveland RNC: deciding where demonstrators will be allowed to gather, what levels of enthusiasm are beyond acceptable limits, what crowd-control equipment should be purchased, and even more disturbing, what individuals and groups should be monitored as plans are made for demonstrations. At past events, many demonstrators have been detained, arrested, and even locked up for significant times, without the ability to reach out for legal assistance.

Mr. Hermes explained issues such as getting permits in advance, how organizers must avoid being targeted. How a “Jail Support Team” should track arrests throughout jail-stays, so no individual is forgotten and left to indefinite detention or unpayable bails. He stressed the importance of how the media describe the efforts of the activists and the reactions of the law enforcers.

Cleveland Peace Action thanks Kris Hermes for his work, and requests that the federal, state, and city authorities overseeing the RNC should respect the rights of well-behaved demonstrators at this historic event. The world’s eyes are upon Cleveland. Let’s show how democracy works!

Bill Fickinger
On March 16th, we gathered at Pilgrim Church for our annual meeting. About fifty members enjoyed a great potluck supper; voted to approve the election of the five members of the Executive Committee; elected the nine other members of the Board (listed on page 3); celebrated the selection of our longtime activist member, Janet Loehr, as this year’s volunteer honoree; thanked Doug Kerr for his many years of work on the Middle East Committee; and were fascinated and deeply impressed by the presentation of our invited speaker, Kris Hermes. (see first page)
I want to be a Peace Action Member/Supporter!

Make checks payable to "Cleveland Peace Action"

or, to be tax-deductible, to "Cleveland Peace Action Education Fund"

and mail to: TREASURER, Cleveland Peace Action, Suite 109
2592 West 14th Street, Cleveland, OH 44113

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Recommended donation levels: Patron $100+  Family $50  Individual $40  Student $20  Limited Income $10

One easy number: Congressional Switchboard at 202-224-3121 (9-5 EST)

Senator Sherrod Brown  202-224-2315; 713 Hart Senate Office Bldg., Washington D.C. 20510
216-522-7272; 1301 E. Ninth St., Suite 1710, Cleveland 44114

Senator Rob Portman  202-224-3353; 338 Russell Senate Office Bldg., Washington D.C. 20510
216-522-7095; 1240 E. Ninth St., Rm. 3061, Cleveland 44114

216-522-4900; 4834 Richmond Rd., Suite 150, Warrensville, OH 44128

330-334-0040; One Park Center Drive, Ste. 302, Wadsworth, OH 44281

219-259-7500 One Maritime Plaza, sixth floor, Toledo, OH 43604

440-352-3539; 1 Victoria Place Ste. 320, Painesville, OH 44077
330-425-9291; 10075 Ravenna Rd., Twinsburg, OH 44087

Cleveland Peace Action and Cleveland Peace Action Education Fund

Co-Presidents Francis Chiappa and Nina McLellan  Vice-President Rosemary Palmer
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Other Board Members
Sharon Bennett, Don Bryant, Carla Carter Lovejoy, Chantal Dothey, Jeff Kassouf,
Shirien Muntaser, Toni Rozsahegyi, Lynne Rustad, Randy Schutt
Reports from our Committees, etc.

**Move the Money - Fund Our Communities Action Group**

Nina McLellan and Lynne Rustad, co-chairs

Our 15 member team works to increase public pressure for reduced military spending by at least 25% and in support of the People’s Budget. We are also exploring how to gain more attention to and funding for our neglected neighborhoods vs downtown projects and development. Twenty Organizations have joined the Fund Our Communities Coalition and lend their name and support in this work.

Here’s what we do:

- Distribute an effective new MTM flyer.
- Promote and present our power point presentation -- most recently at an April 12 Peace@thePub.
- Organize public support for the Congressional Progressive Caucus’ People’s Budget: Prosperity Not Austerity, including asking selected city councils to pass our draft resolution.
- Take our “How do you want your tax dollars spent” poll to area college campuses.
- Organize tax day actions.

In coordination with CPA’s advocacy team, we lobby our congress members to:

- Vote for the People’s Budget
- Cut funding for nuclear weapons modernization - co-sponsor the Smarter Approach to Nuclear Expenditures (SANE) Act a bill that would save taxpayers approximately $100 billion over ten years by scaling down, delaying, or canceling a variety of obsolete nuclear weapons programs.
- Reduce/eliminate the Overseas Contingency Fund (OCO) war funding slush fund
- Cut funding for the F-35

**If you want to help, contact Nina:**

mclellan.nina@gmail.com

**CPA Prepares for the RNC**

CPA board members Sharon Bennett, Don Bryant, Chantal Dothey, Nina McLellan and Toni Roszahegyi are active participants in activist planning for the Republican National Convention to take place in Cleveland July 18-23. There will be huge attention to what is taking place and a great opportunity to promote our peace and justice messages.

These are in the planning stage:

1. A March for Economic Justice - End Poverty Now to take place on Monday, the first day of the convention. Larry Bresler, Organize Ohio organizes the planning. A march permit has been submitted to the City. The ACLU and Ohio Lawyer’s Guild are partnering with us.
2. The People’s Peace and Justice Convention the weekend before the RNC starts.
3. Real Neighborhoods of Cleveland tours: Cleveland Non-violence Network and AFSC are the convention and tour conveners.

In addition to bringing in Kris Hermes, (see page 1) we’ve helped develop a sign-on letter of concerns and organized a March 21st press conference calling for transparency, citizen input and Cleveland City Council passage of our de-militarization resolution. Toni Roszahegyi has also submitted a request for information about what crowd control equipment is being purchased.

CPA joined several other groups for a televised press conference on the steps of Cleveland City Hall. The topic concerned preparations for security at the Republican National Convention, and the appropriate treatment of demonstrators. The photo shows Jacqueline Greene, esq. from National Lawyers Guild speaking to the reporters.

Toni Roszahegyi, Chair of CPA, Police De-militarization Action Group, was a speaker and, with Don Bryant and, Nina McLellan. CPA was a key organizer of the press conference, which was supported by over 20 organizations. Speakers included representatives of the ACLU, Ohio Chapter National Lawyers Guild, NAACP, Black on Black Crime, and Cleveland Action. Toni has submitted, in our name, a de-militarization resolution which we urge Cleveland City Council to pass, and equipment records request to the Mayor’s office.
Some Comments on the FY17 Federal Budget

President Obama released his last budget in February. Unfortunately, he continues to fund the insane "modernization" of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems that will cost us, the taxpayers, a staggering ONE TRILLION dollars over thirty years.

That's $100 million wasted every day for thirty years on weapons we are supposed to be getting rid of. That's enough to send nine million young Americans to a university for four years.

There's more money requested for the "emergency" war fund with money directed to increased military actions in Libya, war equipment for eastern European NATO countries and for anti-ISIS action.

Over the next few months these issues will come up in the Presidential debates and in Congressional actions on the budget. Republicans will likely cut human needs programs while increasing Pentagon spending on nuclear weapons.

We must support the Congressional Progressive Caucus' People's Budget

Prosperity Not Austerity; Invest in America!

News from National Peace Action

As of April first, Peace Action and Peace Action West are a single non-profit entity following a vote of national membership. Affiliates like ours participate in bi-weekly conference calls to keep abreast of what is happening on our priority issue areas and to coordinate our work. National’s annual organizer meeting will be held May 23 and 24 with a lobby day on the 25th. We’ve already had a chance to review draft national campaign plans for Nuclear Weapons abolition, Iran, Move-the-Money, and Syria/Iraq/ISIS. Peace Action has convened working groups on these issues with other national organizations.
An Unforgettable Film

Last December, CPA sponsored the World Premier showing of a mind-blowing film: Ghost Town: the Hebron Story at the new Cleveland Cinematheque at the Cleveland Institute of Art. The event was hosted by John Cameron Ewing, director of the Cinematheque. The film was introduced by its creator, Ellie Bernstein, and the audience of 145 was able to participate in a spirited Q&A discussion with her, and several special guests, including:

* Kathy Manley- Muslim Solidarity Committee-Project Salam
* Rev. Alan D. Kinney, Schenectady Chair of the Boycott Committee
* Jane Toby-Member of MECR-Mideast Crisis Response, Women in Black
* Dominick Casolaro, former Albany Common Council
* Mia Morosoff, member, Jewish Voice for Peace

After many trips to Israel and the West Bank, filmmaker Ellie Bernstein wanted to tell the story of Hebron, Palestine to show the result of the over 40-year Israeli military occupation on a historically important city for Muslims, Jews and Christians. The film reveals real relationships between the Settlers, Palestinians and Israeli Army.

Coming in May:

The Amazing Story of the First Peace Ship—the Golden Rule

Peace@thePub   Tuesday May 10th at 7 PM

Dr. AJ (Skip) Oliver tells the story of how Veterans for Peace found and rebuilt the Golden Rule, the feisty little sailing ketch that in 1958 ignited the movement to stop atmospheric nuclear testing.

Skip was the first mate on the 2015 voyage off the California Coast. Fun, prizes and a pub quiz along with good food and local beer.
Market Garden Brewery 1947 W. 25th St

Have you checked out our newly improved website?

peaceactioncleveland.org

On the main page you will find links to current news and opinion pieces; use the ABOUT US button to read past issues of our newsletter; check for volunteering opportunities; under CALENDAR look for up-coming events: talks, suppers, demonstrations, tabling, etc.
Thanks to all of you who supported us in 2015.
We can’t do it without you.

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