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www.peaceactioncleveland.org

Cleveland Peace Action

Reflections on the CPA Alternative to Military Recruitment Program A Success!

Five years ago CPA started a peace studies course at John F. Kennedy High School. After two years we moved to Lincoln West, and we are now at Martin Luther King in Cleveland. We are fortunate to have found an expert and imaginative teacher in Ms. Elisa Bredendiek. (right)

The course has evolved from after-school classes to one that takes place during regular school hours. Elisa has created a many-faceted curriculum: one that begins with an analysis of violence within the social system (date rape, domestic violence, bullying, racism).

The discussion continues on important elements of our society which affect students' lives and which they should understand. Among these are aspects of the civil rights movement; the role of young Americans in wars and national defense; community organization; immigration challenges; the structure of American law-enforcement and prison systems. Elisa has prepared a curriculum including all these topics, enhanced by annotations, films, community actions and field trips.

Even closer to the students' own lives, are instructions on things like how to fill out an application for a summer-job and how one might find rewarding alternatives to jobs in the military.



The course has been created with the support of Cleveland Peace Action and we believe that it might be considered by other peace groups throughout the country.

Because Ms. Bredendiek has plans to move on to a more permanent teaching position, CPA is eagerly searching for a similarly motivated person to continue the program next fall. We are looking for a part-time teacher who could instruct the class at MLK either twice a week (one hour each session) or in a 2 hour weekly session for 40 weeks. The salary will be wholly provided by CPA and its supporters.

A Request:

If you are, or perhaps know, someone with experience who could take over this important job, please contact Chantal Dothey at 216 381 1051 or cdothey@gmail.com



Peace Action vs. Lockheed Martin: Jean Athey Recounts Struggles with a War Profiteer

Francis Chiappa

What happens when a local Peace Action affiliate tangles with the world's largest military contractor? Jean Athey, Coordinator of Peace Action Montgomery, was in Cleveland to tell the tale at the June 6th Summer Supper Seminar. Montgomery County is the site of Lockheed Martin's Bethesda, MD World Headquarters. This David and Goliath story was both daunting and inspiring, a vivid demonstration of the power of what we now might call the Military-Industrial-Congressional-Media Complex, as well as the larger problem of the insidious influence of money on the democratic process.

Ms. Athey and Peace Action Montgomery spawned a statewide coalition of 62 organizations, to "Fund Our Communities, Not the Pentagon." Her stellar work is nationally recognized.

The story began in 2006 and 2007 with a couple of anti-war demonstrations outside the Lockheed Martin (LM) campus. Local police got a bit rough. For their non-violent activities, three of the organizers were under surveillance and placed on the terrorist watch list, until this fact made the news. Fund Our Communities had gotten under LM's skin.



Lockheed Martin's total sales amounted to \$47.2 Billion last year. Federal tax dollars accounted directly or indirectly for nearly all of it. In 2010, LM sought an exemption from state and local hotel taxes for the Center for Learning Excellence, its 183-room hotel and conference center. They easily won the Maryland state exemption, but Montgomery County balked when citizens, led by the coalition, objected. It meant \$450,000 annually for the county budget, chump change for LM.

The following year, Montgomery County Council was poised to pass Fund Our Communities' "Resolution Urging Federal Budget Reprioritization" to bring the war dollars home. The Washington Post mocked the resolution in an editorial, as LM flexed its lobbying muscle. Two council members



changed their minds, resulting in a 4-3 vote against. Later that year, the Montgomery County Executive asked, on LM's behalf, for a \$900,000 grant – two years worth of hotel tax expense. Coalition groups presented testimony and the Council removed the grant from its budget. Again Fund Our Communities tasted victory.

However, LM was determined to win this battle. Backed by its \$15 million annual lobbying budget, they took the fight to Maryland's General Assembly, where they won the hotel tax exemption. The beneficiary of billions of public funds in profit each year, LM had the temerity to insist on a few hundred thousand more from a local government already hurting from the recession. This point has not been lost on citizens. The Fund Our Communities coalition has grown in response to LM's rapacious behavior.

Lockheed Martin's current flagship product is the F-35 fighter jet. Estimated total program cost is \$1.1 trillion for 2443 planes, by far the costliest in U.S. history. Each plane will cost \$450 million.

On the second day of her visit to Cleveland, Jean Athey presented a workshop for local activists. There was much to learn from the example of Peace Action Montgomery and the Fund Our Communities coalition. The ensuing dialogue generated fresh ideas and energy for our efforts in Northeast Ohio. How can grassroots organizing confront the massive power and wealth of the Military-Industrial-Congressional-Media Complex? We must build relationships with community groups around multiple mutual interests if we intend to "Move the Money" from the Pentagon to the people.

If you'd like to get more involved in Move the Money, contact Elizabeth Schiros, Clevelandpeaceaction@gmail.com - 216-231-4245.

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD WHERE IT COUNTS

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

Rep. Marcia Fudge Dist. 11 202-225-7032; 2344 Rayburn House Office Building,
Washington, D.C. 20515 216-522-4900; 4834 Richmond Rd., Suite 150, Warrensville, OH 44128

Rep. Jim Renacci Dist. 16 202-225-3876 130 Cannon House Office Bldg. Washington D.C. 20515
330 334-0040 One Park Center Drive, Ste. 302, Wadsworth, OH 44281

Rep. Marcy Kaptur Dist. 9 202-225-4146; 2186 Rayburn House Office Bldg., Washington D.C. 20515
219 259-7500 One Maritime Plaza, sixth floor, Toledo, OH 43604

Rep. David Joyce Dist. 14 202-225-5731; 1535 Longworth House Office Bldg., Washington, D.C. 20515
440-352-3539 1 Victoria Place Ste. 320, Painesville, OH 44077
330-425-9291 10075 Ravenna Rd., Twinsburg, OH 44087

Plain Dealer: The Editor, The Plain Dealer, 1801 Superior Rd., Cleveland OH 44114 letters@plaind.com

To send **easy pre-written email messages** on key issues and legislation, go to www.peace-action.org,
or to Friends Committee on National Legislation, www.capwiz.com/fconl/home



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I want to be a Peace Action Member/Supporter!

Peace Action is a true national grassroots movement.

A donation in any amount qualifies you as a Member/Supporter of Cleveland Peace Action *and* National Peace Action for the calendar year.

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



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www.peaceactioncleveland.org

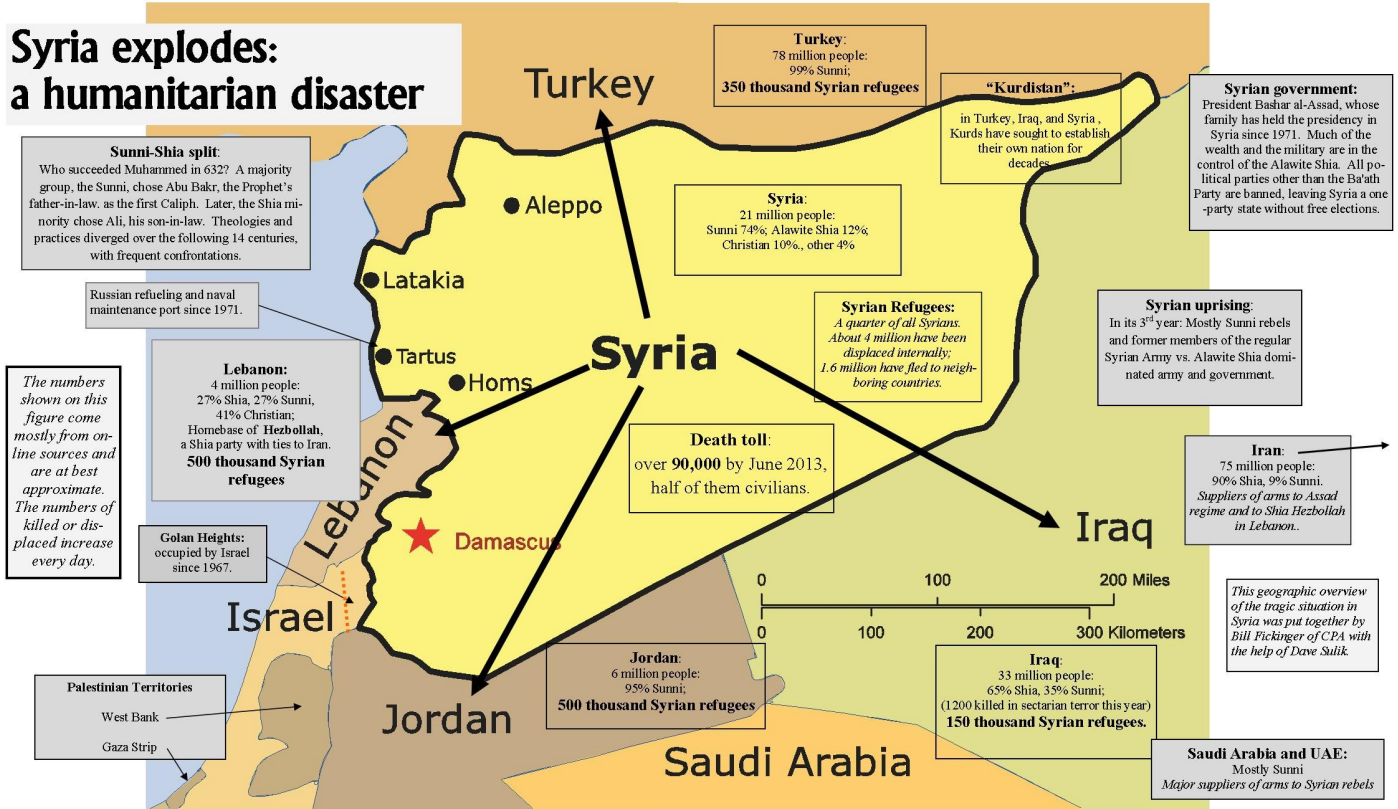


Zoom in to read details.

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CLEVELAND PEACE ACTION

Syria explodes: a humanitarian disaster





Syria: 2 Views - showing how difficult the situation is.

The Revolution of Karamah*

The people of the Arab and Muslim world have been humiliated and conquered from within and from without for at least a century. The people of Syria are no exception. They have been oppressed by dictatorship for nearly 50 years. Hafiz Al-Assad, the father of the current president Bashar Al-Assad, came to power in a coup d'etat in 1970 and handed the "kingdom" to his son Bashar in 2000. The Assad family and their relatives and cronies have run the country like a private business, using the country as an ATM machine and sucking the blood of the Syrian people. The Assad regime has ruled the country with an iron fist for decades. The government has disallowed all forms of freedom and has used all types of oppression and cruelty to keep the people from rising up.

Miraculously, 27 months ago the Syrians people, encouraged by people's revolutions in other Arab countries, came out in the streets peacefully demanding their rights for freedom and dignity. Peaceful demonstrators were immediately countered by a government willing to use brutal force against its own people.

The Syrian people have had no choice but to take up arms to defend themselves against a brutal and despotic regime. They have proven that despite the heavy price being paid to gain their freedom, they are willing to continue their struggle to establish an inclusive democratic country where all Syrians, regardless of their ethnic or religious backgrounds, will be equal before the rule of law. Unfortunately, the conflict in Syria has morphed into a set of proxy wars. It has become East vs. West, Arabs vs. Iranians, and Sunnis vs. Shias... meanwhile the world is watching, debating, and arguing over what to do.

by CPA Board Member Isam Zaiem

Most Americans have no interest in getting involved. There is a prevailing attitude of "been-there-done-that." Some may see it as "This is not our fight, let them kill each other." Some countries including our government are providing humanitarian aid while advocating a diplomatic solution with a killer regime which insists on staying in power as the best available solution. As we contemplate the future of Syria, hundreds die every day; many innocent civilians including children are being maimed, orphaned, tortured, and killed. And the destruction continues.

Many looked the other way when Hitler rose to power and began his wars of conquest and his plans to send millions to their death. We waited four years to interfere in the former Yugoslavia to save the Bosnian Muslims from being slaughtered by the Serbs; we did not even bother to do anything when the Hutus were slaughtering nearly a million Tutsis in the heart of Africa during the Rwandan genocide. Are we going to repeat the same mistake again in Syria?

War is hell. It brings only destruction. However, in this case, the killing of innocent people must be stopped. There will be no need for American boots on the ground. The US simply needs to stop insisting on the embargo of heavy weapons to the freedom fighters, and it can send a few dozen tomahawk missiles into the nerve centers of Assad's army to stop this evil regime from killing its own people.

The Holy Quran reminds us that "He who saves one life, it is as if he has saved the whole of humanity...." It is within our nation's ability as a superpower to stop this massacre that is happening before our eyes. All the Syrian people want is what we take for granted: Karamah! Otherwise, all that is needed for evil to win is for the rest of the world to just keep on watching!

*Arabic for Dignity

National Peace Action Position

as summarized by CPA Co-president Nina McLellan

National Peace Action advises a non-military approach to Syria. Discussion with members of our local board and Middle East Peace committee members revealed disagreements on military aid to the rebels but consensus on humanitarian aid. We are all concerned about how the internal conflict has widened to involve other countries and factions supporting opposing sides.

In a May alert, PA asked supporters to urge the President to escalate the **talk**, not the **war**! The on-line petition reads: *Dear Mr. President, War is Not the Answer. We, the undersigned, urge you to continue to abstain from any U.S. or allied military attack on Syria, or any escalation, such as a "no fly" zone or direct arming of any faction in the conflict, and to rely on diplomacy and international cooperation to help resolve the terrible humanitarian crisis and civil war there.*

National staff has shared articles and recommendations from analysts who warn against sending military aid or trying to enforce a no-fly Zone. They recommend:

- ◇ Redouble humanitarian efforts for displaced refugees and those starving/homeless inside Syria. (**See our note on page 7.**)
- ◇ Negotiate an **arms embargo** to de-escalate the fighting. To stop arms shipments to all sides means negotiating with supporters of each side and reengaging the UN Security Council. A peace conference must include all parties including Iran.
- ◇ Directly use US influence with Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Qatar who are supporting rebel factions. Reengage Russian and China, and through them the Iranians, to restrain Assad. Pressure Israel not to provoke a regional war with Hezbollah or again bomb Syria.
- ◇ Support a broad UN mandate for internationally credible inspection team authorized to investigate all claims of chemical weapons use by any side.
- ◇ In the long term, work for more appropriate tools for resolving international conflict including a more effective UN (reform the Security Council), support the World Court, more robust democratic regional organizations and a permanent UN peacekeeping force under Secretary General's jurisdiction.

Meeting with Senator Portman's staff.

Ed McKinney (Professor Emeritus, CSU School of Social Work); Paul Schroeder (Professor of Political Science CWRU and businessman); Nina McLellan (CPA Co-President); Caryn Candisky (NE District Director for Senator Rob Portman); Walter Nicholes (President, Veterans For Peace local 39); and Rosemary Palmer (CPA board member).



***Our Advocacy Committee is out there...
working on the MOVE THE MONEY Campaign***

Cleveland Peace Action teams met in early June with Jane Ruvolo, Representative Marcy Kaptur's staff assistant, and with Caryn Candisky, Senator Rob Portman's NE District Director. Both legislators serve on key congressional committees.

We presented key information to support ending the sequester cuts for essential community and human needs, but keeping the Pentagon sequester. Here we stressed strategically targeted reductions: including waste and fraud, nuclear weapons system upgrades, overseas bases, private contractors, and expensive/unneeded weapons systems.

We've asked Representative Kaptur to again co-sponsor the SANE ACT, the Smarter Approach to Nuclear Expenditures. Also to take leadership in opposing funding for the B61 nuclear bomb extension program and other out-dated weapons programs.

We asked Senator Portman to support auditing the Pentagon to identify potential savings and to take leadership in designing transition assistance to affected communities and contractors. We look forward to continued communications with their Washington D.C. staffs.

Looking for a Speaker? Consider the following talks:

*Both Nina McLellan and Francis Chiappa have been presenting an informative power-point talk to various groups around the area. If your group is interested in learning about the details of the **Move-the-Money** program, contact ninamac15@sbcglobal.net.*

*Bill Fickinger has presented a power-point talk titled: **Nuclear Q & A**, a "not-too-technical" explanation of nuclear power and nuclear weapons, ending with a review of treaties meant to rid the world of nuclear dangers. Check with Bill at wjf@cwru.edu.*

Both power--point files can be downloaded from our website—so you can check to see if appropriate for your group.

A Syria-related note to Cleveland Peace Action supporters.

With our newsletters, we always take the opportunity to ask for your support. And the money you send keeps our programs going. Thanks, and please keep us on your list.

But, this time, having shown you on the preceding pages what horrific things are happening to the Syrian people, we hope that you will use the following contacts, whether by email or by letter, to add your support to the already enormous humanitarian efforts being made by these, or similar organizations.

UNHCR – www.UNrefugees.org -- 1775 K St., NY, Suite 290, Washington DC 20006-1517

OXFAM – www.oxfamamerica.org – 226 Causeway St., 5th Floor, Boston, MA 02114-2208

Doctors without Borders – www.doctorswithoutborders.org – PO Box 5030, Hagerstown, MD 21741

UNICEF – www.unicefusa.org – US Fund for Unicef, 125 Maiden Lane, New York, NY 10038

Have you checked out our website? - Please do: peaceactioncleveland.org

On the main page you will find links to current news and opinion pieces;

use the HOME button to read past issues of our newsletter;

check for volunteering opportunities;

under Calendar look for up-coming events: talks, suppers, demonstrations, tabling, etc.

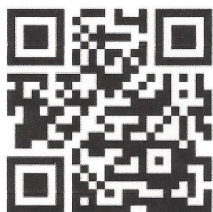
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Peace Action members and Veterans for Peace get together in University Circle to greet the folks coming to Parade the Circle: with some reminders of reality