



November 2013

Volume 9 Issue 3

www.peaceactioncleveland.org

Cleveland Peace Action

Are you a Peace Action member for 2013?

We need you more than ever.

A letter from Co-Presidents Francis Chiappa and Nina McLellan

If only working for peace were easy. We don't have a major news network handling publicity, like Fox News does for the Tea Party. We can't bring the government to the precipice of default just to make an ideological point, not that we'd want to. But we did manage to stop our country from ill-advisedly leaping into another war, in Syria. And in the process, there's new hope for diplomatic solutions with Iran. Not bad for a small but committed group of peace activists scattered across our nation.

Roni and Elliott Berenson, Jean Kosmac and Rev. Judy Bagley-Bonner at Rep. David Joyce's Painesville office.

But times remain difficult for groups like ours. We struggle each year to raise funds to retain our half-time Coordinator, Elizabeth Schiros. We are striving to attract new members and new funding sources. We need to involve more volunteers and new board members. It's an uphill struggle.

Americans are more concerned about and affected by the economy. Peace tends to be an after-thought, even though reducing military spending is essential if we are to strengthen the domestic economy and reduce the national debt.



- Cleveland Peace Action is taking the lead in organizing a regional coalition to **Fund Our Communities – Not War**. Peace Action Montgomery County (MD) leader Jean Athey's visit in June provided inspiration. You can read more about this effort on page 2.
- We continue our work for Middle East peace, where our mission is to "promote the urgent need for a just and peaceful resolution that assures human rights as defined by international law, economic opportunity, democracy, mutual security, and an end to military attacks and occupation."
- We are reaching out to veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars and promoting a peace curriculum in local high schools.
- We continue to educate about nuclear weapons issues. Board member and physicist Dr. Bill Fickinger was our Annual Meeting speaker. His Nuclear Q&A can be downloaded from our website.

Readers of this newsletter, we are counting on your support. Please use the enclosed envelope to mail in your membership for 2013 or make a secure online donation via PayPal on our website — www.peaceactioncleveland.org.

As always, we can only continue with your support. Let's keep peace on the national agenda for 2014 — Fund Our Communities, Not War — A Just Peace in the Middle East — Abolish Nuclear Weapons - No More Wars!

9 & 10 Nov WITNESS PALESTINE

a film series

DOCUMENTARIES - FEATURE FILMS - DISCUSSION

First Unitarian Church of Cleveland,
21600 Shaker Heights Blvd., Shaker Heights

Nov. 9 at 5 pm: **Welcome to Hebron** and
Salt of This Sea

Nov. 10 at 2 pm: **Since You Left** and **Private**

West Shore Unitarian Universalist Church,
20401 Hilliard Blvd. Rocky River

Nov. 9 at 5 pm: **Since You Left** and **Private**

Nov. 10 at 2 pm: **Welcome to Hebron** and
Salt of This Sea

Panel discussions will follow each set of films.

Tax-deductible **donations** at the door or by mail,
payable to West Shore Church at the above address.
Receipts are available.

Free and open to the public.

To reserve a **box lunch**, call (216) 408-6297.

Sponsored by

Interfaith Peace Builders, West Shore UUC Social Action Committee, Cleveland Peace Action, Women Speak Out, Cleveland Chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, Interfaith Council on Peace in the Middle East, Holy Land Partners-Cleveland, Congregation of St. Joseph Justice Team, United Church of Christ Global Ministries, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Fostoria Area Citizens for Peace, Peace and Justice Committee, East Ohio Methodist Federation for Social Action, Church of the Savior United Methodist Church, Plymouth Church UCC Peace & Justice Committee.

For more information

www.witnesspalestinecleveland.org
or call 216 408 6291

A Call to Action: Fund Our Communities - Not War!

American Friends Service Committee NEO, Environmental Health Watch, Women Speak Out For Peace and Justice, and Vets for Peace have joined Cleveland Peace Action to initiate a **Fund Our Communities** coalition of community groups in Northeast Ohio.

We must be united and well organized to resist more cuts to essential domestic services and our important social insurance programs: Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid.

We believe the burden of our national economic problems has fallen disproportionately on local communities, and poor and middle class individuals and families.

We will advocate to:

Fund our Communities

Reduce military spending and Pentagon Waste

Provide Transition Assistance for communities, industries and workers dependent on defense contracts.

Make taxation fair.

If **you** are involved with an organization which works for community good, please invite them to join the **Fund Our Communities** coalition at:

<http://www.peaceactioncleveland.org/fund-our-communities>

Individuals can join too!

"The People Speak"

It's not often that peace and justice activists and supporters get a chance to vote publicly on something near and dear to our hearts. This month, Cleveland Heights citizens had just such a chance. After more than 3000 signatures were presented to Cleveland Heights City Council, a ballot measure calling for an amendment to the U.S. Constitution declaring that only human beings, not corporations, are legal persons with constitutional rights and that money is NOT the equivalent of speech was placed on the ballot. Additionally, this measure would create an annual city-sponsored public hearing where residents could testify on the political influence of corporate entities on their lives and community.

This newsletter was sent to the printer before election day, so we don't know the result of the vote. The "Move to Amend" issue will continue to be an important goal of Peace Action.

For more information, contact David Berenson, CPA Board member (216) 548-0254 or DavidB@Berenson.net,

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

Cleveland Peace Action and Cleveland Peace Action Education Fund

Co-Presidents — Francis Chiappa and Nina McLellan

Vice-President — Randy Schutt

Secretary and Newsletter — Bill Fickinger

Treasurer — Dena Magoulas

Coordinator — Elizabeth Schiros

www.peaceactioncleveland.org



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



Name: _____

☐ new member ☐ renewing member

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

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,
10916 Magnolia Drive, Cleveland, Ohio 44106**

or

Donate via credit card using PayPal
at our secure website:

www.peaceactioncleveland.org

Defen\$e Contractors Capture Congress, Trap Taxpayers

Nina McLellan, Francis Chiappa, Randy Schutt

Massive military spending clearly benefits defense contractors. **But does it benefit American taxpayers?**

Consider: Congress awards billions in foreign military aid each year. But the money stays here, going from the Treasury Department straight to **US defense contractors**. Egypt receives over \$1 billion every year for weapons like M-1 Abrams tanks and F-16 fighter jets. Egypt doesn't need more tanks, so hundreds sit in storage while General Dynamics produces more.

Top foreign aid beneficiaries, Egypt and Israel, also get "**cash-flow financing**." They use this special perk to order American equipment on credit far into the future. Since the Egyptian coup, Congress is alarmed, realizing the arms spigot can't be immediately turned off. Senator Patrick J. Leahy (D-Vt.) lamented that cash-flow financing is like being stuck on "autopilot." This dangerous system commits our tax dollars for years to come, even when security requirements change.



It's not only Egypt that has excess arms. CNN reports that two thousand **Abrams tanks** sit deteriorating in the Arizona desert because our own military has no use for them. But Congress won't say no to General Dynamics so these tanks continue to be produced and stored. This is just another exasperating example of how taxpayer dollars are wasted on problem-ridden, exorbitantly expensive, and unnecessary weaponry.

Lockheed Martin's **F-35 fighter plane** is the most

expensive weapon system in history and the largest expenditure in the Pentagon's budget. Originally planned as a single aircraft able to reduce waste, maintenance costs, and Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps redundancy, the program now includes three diverse models with conflicting needs and continuing unsolved problems. **F-35 delays and**



cost overruns will likely balloon total program cost to \$1.1 trillion, about 70 percent more than the original cost estimates. Lockheed Martin obstructs congressional oversight with incessant lobbying and extensive political donations. The company gave more than \$2.8 million to political candidates in 425 of the 535 House and Senate races in 2012 and its subcontractors gave additional donations.

The "**military-industrial complex**", of which President Eisenhower warned, has never been wealthier or more politically powerful. Our heavy-weight defense contractors have reduced Congress to subservience through lavish campaign contributions and ubiquitous lobbying. When compliant elected officials (and their staff members) retire, they can expect **lucrative employment as lobbyists** for the same contractors they previously funded. The ties between military contractors and Congress constitute an obvious conflict of interest.

At the end of World War II, industry nimbly returned to domestic production. Today America functions as a **permanent wartime economy**. To justify the Pentagon's outsized budget, Americans

from page 4

are told we are in almost constant danger and that any defense cuts will hurt our capacity to respond. In truth, the U.S. today is the **most powerful military force in history** with “full-spectrum” domination of land, sea, air, space, and communications. All this, with essentially no significant military adversaries, certainly nothing comparable to the imminent danger we faced from fascist Germany and Imperial Japan. **America and our allies now account for about 70 percent of total world military outlays.** All current and potential foes together spend only 15 percent. America’s quasi-religious belief in military might plus fear-mongering leaders, blind us to the high costs of military spending and the destructive results of our dysfunctional, militarized foreign policy.

When budget cuts loom, defense contractors and congressional allies also scare us with the specter of job loss. This is a serious concern especially when local economies are affected. Both Ohio Senators voted for continued funding for the Ohio-made Abrams tank. But respected studies show **military spending produces fewer jobs per dollar** than other government spending. Rather than continue wasting money, Congress should assist companies, communities, and workers to transition from arms production to meeting important domestic needs. **Investment in infrastructure, education, healthcare, and safe, clean, renewable energy will make our society stronger and safer.**

With Congress reconsidering its draconian “sequester” across-the-board spending cuts it's time for a national discussion of the high costs of military spending and of what constitutes real security.

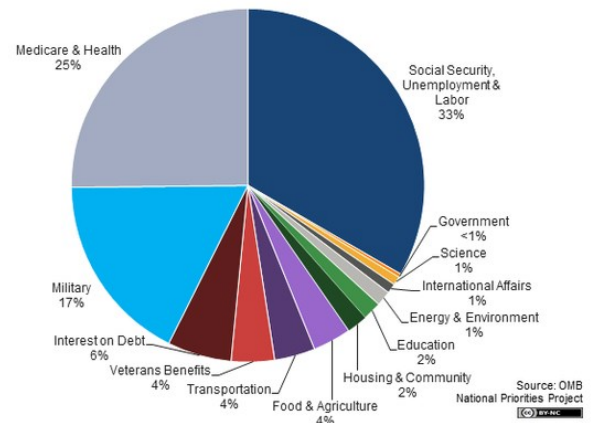
We call on Senators Brown and Portman, and our members of Congress, to keep the already legislated reductions in military spending but restore funding for our communities.

Some Related Numbers for your Perusal

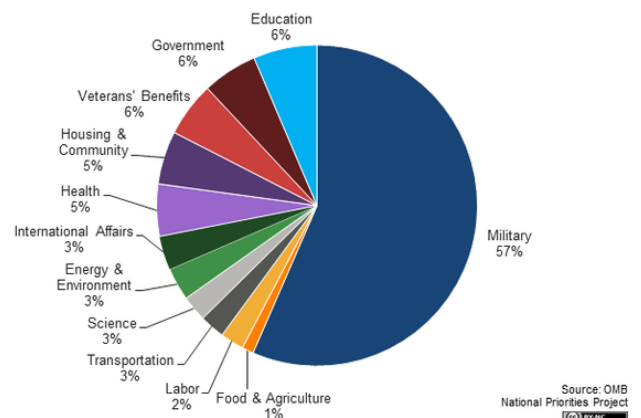
Courtesy of:



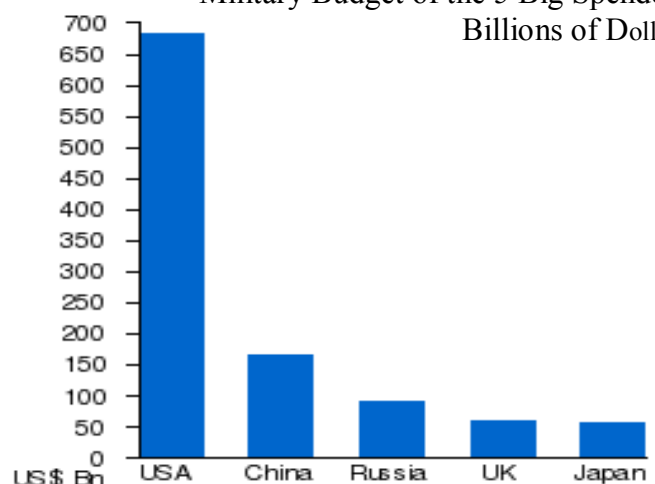
**President's Proposed Total Spending
(Fiscal Year 2014)**



**President's Proposed Discretionary Spending
(Fiscal Year 2014)**



**Military Budget of the 5 Big Spenders
Billions of Dollars**



Talking about Geneva Talks

Joe. It looks like the new president of Iran, Hassan Rouhani, might cool things down in the debate over Iran's nuclear program. He actually phoned Obama to discuss the issue. Then, in mid-October, the Iranian foreign minister met in Geneva with top-level reps from US, Russia, China, Germany, Britain and France. They agreed that they must find a way to guarantee that Iran's uranium enrichment program is only for energy production and not for weapons.

Moe. Yeah, and I read that another round of talks is scheduled for November. Rouhani was elected by the Iranian people who were sick of the old regime. They finally got rid of Ahmadinejad, the guy who kept saying he'd push Israel into the sea. That sort of talk resulted in sanctions that really hurt the Iranian people. Now we have to wait and see if the top authority, Ayatollah Khamenei, will support Rouhani.

Joe. I think he will, though he has sort of kept the pot boiling by saying that Iran has the *right* to make nuclear weapons, but that it would be immoral to do so. His critics quote only the first part of that. Meanwhile, the Iranian people desperately need the sanctions to be relaxed: their economy is in terrible shape.

Moe. So, what might make the negotiations fail? Who benefits from continuing the impasse?

Joe. Oh, they're out there. Some politicians will use any issue to maintain power. Arms manufacturers and their supporters in Congress always look for "threats". Sectarian rivalries in the Middle East don't help. For years, now, the Israeli government and the AIPAC lobby in the US have claimed that Iran already has an advanced nuclear weapons program, including the ICBM's needed to deliver them to the US.

Moe. Would inspections be enough to debunk those claims? How certain could they be? Can the Iranians fool the inspectors?

Joe. The key here is "intrusive and all-inclusive" inspections. The enrichment process and

all uranium stockpiles would have to be wide open, with inspectors on-site 24-7. The same goes for any reactors where plutonium can be produced. Monitoring any program to build weapons or delivery systems would be challenging. Such programs could involve small numbers of people and facilities, all hidden out of sight.

Moe. How about the claims that Iran is close to "bomb-grade" enrichment? I understand that the raw material is 0.7% U235, the low enriched stuff for reactors is 4%, and the bomb grade is 90%. 4 seems pretty far away from 90, no?

Joe. Well, it's not that simple. It gets easier to find the light U235 atoms as their fraction increases, so it's not a linear relationship. In fact, the 20% level for medical treatments should probably be ruled out.

Moe. So how can we compare enrichment for electric power with enrichment for weapons?

Joe. Here's one way, trying to avoid the many numbers involved. To supply a one gigawatt power plant (enough for Cleveland), you need about 150 thousand centrifuges running full time. Iran is reported to have about 20 thousand centrifuges of various efficiencies. If all of these were devoted to making bomb-grade uranium, they could in fact have enough for a nuclear bomb in a year. It would be impossible, however, to hide a program with every centrifuge reaching for HEU, if intrusive IAEA inspection is in place.

Moe. Maybe Iran could do what Israel has done for decades and make it a criminal offense for anyone to mention any aspect of its nuclear program.

Joe. Maybe. Our own government seems to obey that law, never mentioning Israeli nukes.

Bill Fickinger, Cleveland Peace Action Secretary



Volunteer Wish List

from Elizzabeth Schiros

- **Your recipes.** When we have a members' potluck, the food is always wonderful. So we're putting together a Cleveland Peace Action cookbook. We'd like to include your recipes. Send them along with the story behind them, or why it is one of your favorites.



- **Fundraising Committee Members.**

The Fundraising committee needs members and ideas. Do you have an idea you think may work for us or are you interested in helping to plan a long term fundraiser or event? Let us know.



- **Help at the WSO Bazaar** – The Women Speak Out Holiday Bazaar is right around the corner. Please spend an hour helping out at our table before, or after you shop.

Email Elizzabeth at clevelandpeaceaction@gmail.com or call 216-231-4245

Looking for a Speaker? Consider the following talks:

*Both Nina McLellan and Francis Chiappa have been presenting an informative powerpoint 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 powerpoint 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.*

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 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.*

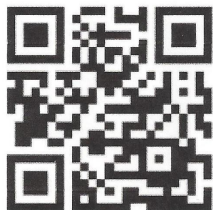
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Real Peace
ACTION!



Sometimes demonstrations, phone calls, emails and letters to Congress ACTUALLY WORK!
We organized demonstrations and delivered letters at the local offices of both senators and Reps. Fudge and Joyce. Here are the folks who joined Cleveland Peace Action in front of Senator Sherrod Brown's office in Erieview Tower where they met with Senator Brown's state director, John Ryan, for an hour's discussion. They made their point: bombing Syria would only make things worse.... and Washington listened and went back to the negotiation table.