



November 2018  
Volume 14 Issue 2

[www.peaceactioncleveland.org](http://www.peaceactioncleveland.org)

# Cleveland Peace Action

## PEACE ACTION NEEDS ***YOUR*** SUPPORT FOR 2019

Big changes are coming to Cleveland Peace Action. For some time, we've been struggling to raise sufficient funds to retain our dedicated and loyal staffer, Elizzabeth Schiros. We've reached a most painful decision that we must make the transition to an all-volunteer organization.

These are tough times for the peace movement. With Trump in the White House, we are besieged on so many fronts. Peace has not been a top priority. Along with fundraising difficulties, we've seen a decline in volunteer energies. At the same time, we're no closer to peace and justice in Palestine, Israel, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Afghanistan, North Korea, Iran, and more. Outrageous military spending trumps vital domestic programs. The risk of nuclear war increases as the U.S. withdraws from treaties. Even the INF Treaty, which President Reagan signed, is not sacrosanct.

In 2019 we will spend less time on fundraising and will need more time, from board and volunteers, to work on the issues we care about. We accept that our capacities will be reduced. But we pledge to work as efficiently as we can, maintaining Peace Action's Northeast Ohio affiliate group and continuing to advocate for peace and justice in times like these.

### THE ELECTION AND PEACE:

**SEE PAGE 2**

Staff expenses have typically been about two-thirds of our budgets. We're hoping in 2019 to raise at least \$12,000. Our routine expenses include our office at Pilgrim Church, web-site, email server, social media, phone, printing, mailing, and print newsletter. This budget would also cover program expenses and speakers. It is our intention to do more of our work through Cleveland Peace Action, a 501.c.4 organization, to allow more latitude as an advocacy group. Donations to Cleveland Peace Action are not tax-deductible.

You can donate by mailing a check payable to Cleveland Peace Action or by using a debit or credit card via our secure PayPal link: <http://peaceactioncleveland.org/join-donate/>.

To make a tax-deductible contribution, please do it by mail with your check payable to Cleveland Peace Action Education Fund. You can use the enclosed envelope.

Francis Chiappa    Communications Chair

*To help us do the work, get in touch with us at  
[clevelandpeaceaction@gmail.com](mailto:clevelandpeaceaction@gmail.com) or 216-393-7986 (NEW).*

*Peace Action is the country's largest grassroots peace and disarmament organization, with more than 100,000 members. Cleveland Peace Action is one of over 70 autonomous affiliates and chapter organizations.*

## Election Recap

Rosemary Palmer, President of Cleveland Peace Action Board

Election 2018 provides some opportunities for peace and justice. The Republicans, going, in, had control of every branch of government, but they have now lost control of the House of Representatives. This should act as a brake on President Trump's reckless interventionist actions and represent the American people's desire for peace. While the Senate will not be any more receptive to our concerns than they have been, we can focus squarely on the House. This should be the place where our influence can be felt.



National Peace Action “went all out . . . in this cycle to promote pro-peace candidates,” according to Paul Kawika Martin, PAC director and senior director for policy and political affairs. “As most results are in, it’s clear that many incoming members of the House are strongly pro-peace.” Martin added that PAC candidates “took principled stands in support of maintaining our international commitments from the Paris Climate Accord to the Iran Nuclear Agreement, and against reckless militarism like US support for the disastrous Saudi-led war in Yemen.”

One day post-Election, President Trump threw Democrats in the House a spiked olive branch, telling Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi that her representatives could propose plans for healthcare, among other things, and “we’ll negotiate,” unless they try to investigate his personal finances and administration. If they do, he warned, he’ll attack them. Expect fireworks.

In the lead-up to the vote, Trump ballyhooed the approaching “hordes,” the invaders, the Central Americans coming to attack US borders. I found many voters in Cleveland had bought the administration’s story of a Democratic desire for “open borders,” and they disapproved. That the truth had been distorted was irrelevant. The Democratic position is that US law permits potential immigrants to apply for asylum when they enter the country. At that point, they are pleading their case and should be judged based upon that. While a new immigration policy is long overdue, it’s hard to see how there could be any progress over the next two years toward that end. Among sour notes in the process, and truly a blot on our democracy, was the disenfranchisement of African-American voters in Georgia and Native Americans in North Dakota. The documents necessary to vote must allow for such things as home births and lack of a specific house address. Unless all eligible Americans can actually vote, the government itself becomes suspect.



## Letters Home: Erasing the Battle Lines

Veterans for Peace, Chapter 39 Northeast Ohio observed Veterans' Day as always, by reading writings and letters home about war. Peace Action's focus is usually on what should be done to end war. Thanks to VFP for this poignant and inspirational reminder about WHY we are peace activists.

General Dwight D. Eisenhower wrote: "I hate war as only a soldier who has lived it can, only as one who has seen its brutality, its futility, its stupidity." Here are just a few highlights from the November 11th program at Shaker Heights Library.

### **Captain Mary Reynolds Powell** Army Nurse Corps 2007

Our parents tell us it is wrong to kill; our churches preach it is wrong to kill; our teachers teach us it is wrong to kill; our government forbids us to kill. And then one day the leaders of our country declare war, and tell us it is OK to send our young people to kill on our behalf; it is OK to rain destruction on mothers, fathers and children in a foreign land; it is OK to do whatever it takes to win, for win we must.

**IT IS ALL SO SIMPLE** From its rationale, to its language, to its execution, the selling of war is simple. It is slogans and flags, music and gold stars, abstract principles, clean uniforms, smart bombs, and enemies who are less than human. We are good and the enemy is bad.

**BUT WAR IS NOT SO SIMPLE** It is vaporized and burned men, women and babies; people just like us. It is homes turned to rubble and weddings turned to bloodbaths. It is the cries of a hungry infant in its dead mother's arms, and a wife carried in the arms of a keening husband. It is the end of faith for old people and the destruction of hope for the young. It is a young soldier who dies calling for his mother and a surviving soldier with a "thousand yard stare" who is condemned to a life-time of hell no one understands. It is the medic who can't wash the blood off his hands. It is the theft from those who are hungry who will never be fed, those who are homeless who will never be housed, and those in need of care who will never receive it. It is the theft of a family's future generations and a society's future leaders. It is the loss of a country's soul. It is misery and pain, destruction and degradation that sow the seeds for more of the same. It is evil, and there are no winners. This, then, is the human cost of war—the cost kept hidden when our leaders tell us it is OK to kill.

**General Omar Bradley:** As far as I am concerned, war itself is immoral.

### **Major Terry Bell** 4th Infantry Division Vietnam

A North Vietnamese soldier during the battle of Dak To, was brought to my command post—sitting bound only a few feet from me. He shook with terror, urinated and defecated on himself. I looked into his small brown face and saw for the first—perhaps the only time of my entire tour—a human face like my own. I recalled his helplessness, his youth and his disciplined absolute silence. Sparing his life, as the unit commander, was the only mercy I ever gave a Vietnamese person. The experience was an unacknowledged sacred moment for me—a remarkable memory "forgotten" for nearly 40 years. How could I have forgotten?

**Eleanor Roosevelt** We have to face the fact that either all of us are going to die together or we are going to learn to live together, and if we are to live together we have to talk.

### **Jim** U.S. Navy Medic; Iraq War

In the extreme heat I felt the weight of my gear as mortars dropped. Pandemonium ensued. Separated from other medical responders as we fanned out, my focus was the man I saw through the steamy haze. He stumbled while trying to pick up something too heavy for him. His posture while lifting was desperate and unorganized. He grunted frantic and impatient sounds. Eventually he stumbled forward, dropping his precious load and, frustrated, pounded both palms into the rock-hard sand before him. I finally got there as if in slow motion as he screamed directions to a teenage boy he was attempting to carry. He raised his voice as if the boy simply chose to be intractable, but he was not ignoring the man. He was grievously wounded. I reached into my medical bag for tourniquets, but no amount would have saved his son. The boy lay awkwardly on his back as if some sharp object were trying to impale him from the ground, his eyes clear and agonized, yet somehow serene. Looking at what must have been his father, he glanced at me as I appeared. Then the eyes lost focus.

He was gone and I swore I saw a spirit dance happily toward a better place. As he faded into death, I couldn't think of anything but a vision of the boy's mother. I looked into the sky and said through tears, "I'm sorry" as I imagined her grief. I likely was the last person on earth that her son would have picked to be here in this instant. . . . this father knelt, pleading with his son to return to him. Hope was short lived, and reality enveloped him like a surrounding curtain. All false pretenses now stripped away, he let out a purely unadulterated cry of agony until he ran out of breath, took a deep cleansing breath, and let out another scream that seemed to exorcise him, relieve him of every emotion of his pained life, a complete evisceration of emotion only a parent understands for their children.

I felt like a voyeur looking at something too personal to witness first hand but I didn't look away. Instead, I moved close enough to the father to gently rest my left hand on his right shoulder as he wept and he placed his left hand over mine without knowing who was there beyond a sympathetic figure.

Yesterday and perhaps tomorrow, maybe I would have killed him before he would successfully behead me. But on this day, we were just fathers. He pleaded to his God to take his life rather than his son's. Just as I would.

## Middle East Commentary

Don Bryant and Mark Weber Co-chairs Middle East Peace Committee

There are several ongoing humanitarian crises in the Middle East. Two of these are being caused by Israel's on-going acts of war and violence against the indigenous people of Palestine. The other derives from a Sunni-Shia conflict

**I.** The passage several months ago by the Israeli parliament of the so-called "**Nationality Bill**" illustrates that the intention of the government in Jerusalem is to delegitimize the legal standing and democratic rights of Palestinian Arabs, both those in Israel proper and those who live without any rights in the territories under Israeli military occupation. The bill arrogantly asserts that the right of self-determination belongs exclusively to the Jewish people of Israel. The law recognizes no rights of Palestinian Arabs. The law downgrades the status of Arabic as an official language of Israel. This action by the ruling Likud government should surprise no one. For example, the Jewish Home Party (a member of the Likud coalition) has called for further and more draconian restrictions on the rights of the Arab population of Palestine. These include the grouping of the Palestinian people into small, tightly controlled "states" in which the Palestinians would live devoid of any political rights. The people of occupied Palestine live under military occupation and under military law. Their children attend poorly-funded schools. They are treated in inferior hospitals. Their young people

are sent to detention without trial....and they are intimidated and attacked by armed Jewish settlers.



**II.** The humanitarian crisis in **Yemen** has been going on for almost three years. Using U.S. weapons and tactical support, soldiers, bombers and missiles, both Saudi Arabia and the UAE have escalated the war caused in part by the overthrow of the president by Iranian-backed Houthi movement which is strong in northern Yemen. The Houthi movement is a Shiite religious/political movement that has long been at war with Yemen's Sunni government. Enter Saudi Arabia which supports the Sunni government, as does the United States which gives military aid to the Saudis. The Saudis use planes and other technologies purchased from the U.S. to bomb much of tiny Yemen. More than 250,000 people in Yemen have been killed. The carnage is likely to continue unabated as the Saudis have the full backing of the United States.

**III.** The crisis in **Gaza** continues, making this tiny strip of land with almost 2 million inhabitants the largest open-air prison in the world. With power available only a few hours per day, with a chronic shortage of water and medical supplies, and with an unemployment rate of 50%. These shortages are the result of the on-going Israeli blockade of Gaza. There is no indication that this humanitarian crisis will be addressed anytime soon. Insulating the Israelis from any challenge to their inhumane policies is the fact that the Trump Administration is morally tone deaf and the fact that the Israel Lobby in the United States has poured money into the coffers of politicians on both sides of the aisle.





## Some Info Related to Don and Mark's Middle East Report

The report on the previous page from our Middle East Peace Committee describes the current status of the decades long challenges facing the Israeli and Palestinian peoples. It may be useful to provide some background information:

Currently there are about 9 million inhabitants in Israel, and about 5 million in the West Bank and Gaza. The only rational goal is the "Two State Solution", allowing Palestine and Israel to live in peace. About 70% of the UN member states already recognize Palestine as an independent state.

Presently, Israel controls essentially all traffic in and out of Gaza. Over the past few decades, Israel has established dozens of "settlements" within the West Bank by redrawing the original agreed-upon "borders". (See tiny black triangles on map.)

The West Bank (the name refers to the Jordan River) is governed by Fatah, and Gaza by Hamas. A united Palestinian government would administer these two, non-contiguous entities. There are historical, political, and cultural differences between these two current "authorities" which must be addressed.

These challenges make it difficult to reach any agreement. Diplomacy, with the support of other nations and organizations, is the only path to secure futures for the 14 million human beings at risk.



Peace Action joins in this effort with other groups, such as Interfaith Peace Builders, Jewish Voice for Peace, J-Street, Friends Committee on National Legislation, and Alliance for Middle East Peace. Check out their websites.

Bill Fickinger



### Reach Out to Congress:

**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; 801 West Superior, Cleveland 44115 Suite 1400

**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 Bldg., Washington, D.C. 20515  
(216) 522-4900; 4834 Richmond Rd., Suite 150, Warrensville, OH 44128

**Rep. Anthony Gonzalez** Dist. 16 Newly elected

**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

### Cleveland Peace Action and Cleveland Peace Action Education Fund

President Rosemary Palmer • Secretary Bill Fickinger • Treasurer Dena Magoulas

**New Phone Number (216) 393-7986**

**Check our website for news and events: <http://peaceactioncleveland.org>**

### We Need Your Support!

Renew your Cleveland Peace Action membership online via our secure PayPal link:

*<http://peaceactioncleveland.org/join-donate/>*

This supports our higher priority advocacy work for 2019.

To make a tax-deductible donation, please use the envelope inside this newsletter to

send your check, payable to

Cleveland Peace Action Education Fund.

Checks to Cleveland Peace Action also accepted.

## ON NUKES

The nuclear debate continues, but with little progress. We need abolition of all nukes. What we hear from Washington concerns issues like Korea, Iran, or the recent announcement that we will withdraw from the 1987 INF Treaty.

North Korea has shown that any country with money can build nukes and delivery systems. The Iran Deal, which the US must rejoin, provides a step in the right direction. Similar “Deals” must be made with all nations: only worldwide inspections can ensure that no one is cheating. The INF Treaty is out of date, but it should be renegotiated, not discarded.



The total number of warheads was once 70 thousand, but thanks to decades long negotiations, there are now fewer than 10 thousand, 90% of which are maintained by the US and Russia. How might we continue along this track?

The current effort is the proposed UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons which begins “Each state party under takes never to develop, test, produce nuclear weapons.”

US plans to develop space based defense systems are moving in the wrong direction. Imagine a flock of missiles floating overhead, waiting for someone to push the button, maybe by some 3rd party hacker.

Bill Fickinger  
posted on Plain Dealer Website

## ON IRAN From National Peace Action

On November 5th, the US government restored oil, banking, and shipping sanctions against Iran. Paul Kawika Martin of National Peace Action released the following statement:

The re-imposition of these sanctions should be seen for what it is: the latest step in a calculated campaign by this White House to provoke war with Iran. From putting Iran ‘on notice’ at the start of 2017, to violating and withdrawing from the successful, multilateral Iran nuclear agreement despite Iran’s verifiable compliance and strong objections from our allies, to these latest actions to strangle Iran’s economy, this administration is beating a path to war. As tragic and devastating as the Iraq War was, war with Iran would be far more catastrophic to the region and to global stability.

For the administration to feign concern for the Iranian people while imposing sanctions that will devastate the financial wellbeing of the Iranian people is outrageous. As for his supposed motivation of bringing Iran back to the negotiating table, if President Trump really wanted to negotiate with Iran, he wouldn’t have brought long time advocates of regime change in Iran like John Bolton and Mike Pompeo into his inner circle. He wouldn’t have threatened Iran in all caps on Twitter with ‘consequences the likes of which few throughout history have ever suffered before.’ In case the cheerleaders for regime change don’t remember, we already helped orchestrate regime change in Iran in 1953, and the consequences of that decision haunt us to this day.

The Trump Administration should not give Saudi Arabia a pass on war crimes in Yemen and the murder of reporter to allow Saudi oil to flow, while restricting oil needed by our allies from Iran when Tehran upheld its obligations under the successful Iran agreement.



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