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## 2014 PRIORITIES

- Permanent nuclear deal with Iran
- Nuclear disarmament
- Budget for All
- Peace economy
- Foreign policy for All

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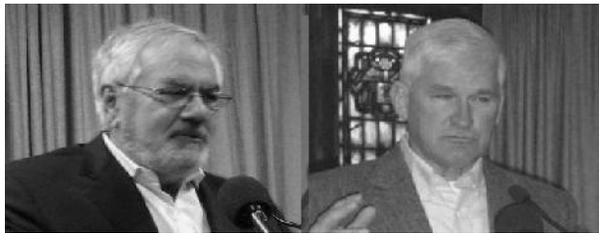
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## Bacevich, Frank Debate Foreign Policy at Annual Meeting

Milcah Ssebbowa, Lowell & Robin Harper, Cambridge

St. Ignatius Parish at Boston College was buzzing February 8 as some 140 people from across the state attended Massachusetts Peace Action's 2014 Annual Meeting.



**Keynote speakers Barney Frank and Andrew Bacevich. Read talks: <http://bit.ly/fp-talks>**

Shelagh Foreman, Program Director, presented the 2014 program update. "When the people organize we can move the government to negotiate and prevent a war," she declared. She outlined MAPA's work and plans for work on Iran, Palestine/Israel, Afghanistan, Budget for All, conversion of the military economy to a peaceful green economy, and Asia/Pacific. She said that MAPA aims to develop an alternative in which the United States would engage in a peaceful, cooperative, and sustainable world.

**Andrew Bacevich**, professor of International Relations and History at Boston University, was the first keynote speaker. As the author of the book *The New American Militarism*, Bacevich was asked to answer: Why is the United States the world's policeman and what is the alternative?"

Bacevich offered seven reasons why America polices areas of the world that we consider important:

- Aspirations to collective greatness, from the start of the Massachusetts Bay Colony
- American exceptionalism
- Extraordinary favorable geography and resources
- Shrewd, ruthless, and opportunistic leaders
- Stupid adversaries, such as Japan, Germany, and the USSR, which imploded
- Belief that our global leadership is good and necessary
- Institutions that sustain and feed on our global dominance: military-industrial and media.

Bacevich proposed an alternative: a condominium of great powers that, to achieve stability, would agree to compete without resorting to violence. Establish such a condominium, if possible, would be difficult, requiring the U.S. to surrender its hegemonic prerogatives. Old enemies would have to forget

grudges, peace groups would have to become more effective, and Americans would somehow have to overcome powerful institutions and stubborn beliefs to understand their need for a more cooperative foreign policy.

**Barney Frank** served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1981 to 2013. He was a charismatic speaker who captured the audience with his charm and political humor.

Frank began by agreeing with Bacevich that the factors driving excessive military spending and global interventions are far broader than the military industrial complex:

- Ideological and philosophical arguments saying that America is the indispensable global policeman
- Fear of powerful enemies in WWII and the Cold War
- Mocking of Democratic Presidential candidates if not seen as tough
- Excessive fear of terrorists after 9/11
- A peace movement too focused on feel-good engagement with sympathizers.

Frank ended optimistically: "I think there is now broad public agreement on the goal of ending the interventionism and of reducing the military budget, and with the right kind of political action, I am now more optimistic about this than I have ever been." He recommended that we exploit our majority among Americans,



**Photo album: [bit.ly/annual-mtg](http://bit.ly/annual-mtg)**

and use our networks of activists to pressure local and federal officials – demonstrations don't work, he said. Frank pointed out that nuclear submarines don't help control terrorists, and called for an urgent campaign to end the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan.

After the guest speakers, people were given the opportunity to choose a workshop that focused on, Israel/Palestine, War in Afghanistan/Pakistan, Peace economy, Asia/Pacific Pivot and the Trans Pacific Partnership, and Iran and the Middle East.

## Stopping a War with Iran – and Opposing All Nuclear Weapons in the Middle East

Jeff Klein, Dorchester

Peace advocates scored a big win recently when aroused public opinion and a strong stand by President Obama succeeded in blocking S. 1881 – at least for now. The so-called “Nuclear Weapons Free Iran Act” is actually a blatant attempt to disrupt the current process of negotiations by imposing new sanctions and setting conditions that would make a final agreement impossible.

The bill will likely not come to the floor for Senate passage any time soon. In the face of strong opposition, AIPAC (The American Israel Public Affairs Council), which has strongly backed the bill, announced that it was not pushing for an early vote, although it still backs the measure. That’s good news for the majority of Americans who want to see the negotiations with Iran result in a diplomatic settlement that will ease tensions and avoid a possible war.

However, it is too early to declare victory in defeating Congressional and Israel-Lobby attempts to scuttle Iran negotiations. The proposed Senate bill had gathered 59 co-sponsors – including 16 Democrats – and would no doubt have passed easily if it had come up for a vote. Mass Senator Elizabeth Warren spoke up only very tepidly against the bill and Sen. Markey announced his support for diplomacy but remained silent on his vote if S. 1881 came to the floor.

There is also some recent good news in the House of Representatives. 104 members signed a bipartisan letter to President Obama supporting the

interim agreement with Iran and opposing any actions that would threaten the on-going negotiations. Signatories to the “Give Diplomacy a Chance” letter included Reps. Capuano, Keating, Lynch, McGovern, Tierney and Tsongas, but not Reps. Clark, Kennedy and Neal.

**Negotiating a final Iran agreement**, securing the support of Congress, and removing the sanctions already in place will be politically very challenging. The peace movement will have to work hard to promote the kind of atmosphere that will allow a meaningful YES to a diplomatic outcome and to move U.S.-Iran relations away from the hostile impasse that has been the norm since 1979.

And if we are serious about opposing nuclear weapons proliferation, we should broaden our efforts beyond the narrow question of negotiations with Iran. It is important to note that all the countries in the Middle East – with the sole exception of Israel – are signatories to the NPT and since the 1970’s have supported the establishment of a Nuclear Weapons Free (later WMD-Free) Zone in the region.

**A WMD Free Middle East** is not so utopian as might be imagined. There are already Nuclear Weapons Free Zones established by treaty under UN auspices in South America and the Caribbean, Southeast Asia and Australia, the continents of Africa and Antarctica and a large expanse of Central Asia. A NPT conference to promote a similar agreement in the Middle East – which had the support of all the nations of the region, including Iran – was scheduled to be held in Helsinki during 2012, but was effectively blocked by the U.S. in order to deflect pressure on Israel, the only nuclear weapons power in the region.

Last December MAPA sent me as a representative to an International Conference for a Middle East Free of Weapons of Mass Destruction in Haifa. The theme of the meeting was: “If Israel won’t go to Helsinki, we will bring Helsinki here.”

**Banning Nuclear Weapons:** The peace movement has a lot of work to do in opposing the actual nuclear weapons in the Middle East, rather than just allowing the focus on potential weapons in Iran. It is essential to bear in mind that the NPT not only prohibits the acquisition of nuclear weapons, but also obligates the nuclear weapons powers to take concrete actions toward abolishing such weapons completely.



## Shared Security: New Vision for U.S. Foreign Policy

Heather Korostoff Murray, Lincoln

At the Annual Meeting, a question was posed to Andrew Bacevich and Barney Frank: We have considered the two extremes of global dominance vs. isolationism. What other options are there?

We seem to jump from one end of that continuum to the other. Perhaps the answer is not behind a door along that narrow corridor, but outside of it. The working paper “**Shared Security**” (SharedSecurity.org) was developed by the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) and the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), to spark thinking and action around directing U.S. foreign policy towards a new vision – achieving sustainable world peace by supporting human dignity and global cooperation, on a path to peaceful conflict resolution and coexistence.

The concept of “shared security” here means ensuring that the fundamental human needs of every world citizen are

met, along with the assurance of self-determination and social justice, within the context of dramatic environmental change. The paper envisions the U.S. as providing leadership in addressing not only the needs of our own people, but in defining ourselves as merely a subset of the global community, as we indeed are. The document’s vision has a firm basis in the reality of today’s world, but projects a much different outcome than today’s reality.

**Shared Security** succinctly reassesses the dynamics of today’s world, and builds from there by leveraging communication, information, budget reallocation and of course, diplomacy.

Current U.S. foreign policy is cemented in a top-down flow that begins with the nation-state, and trickles down. Our engagement with the global community is an almost separate, isolated process. A foreign policy based on shared security would suggest that we reverse the flow of power, starting instead from the

individual, and flowing up towards the nation-state and ultimately, the world community. It suggests that we consider not only our own citizens as the source, but all world citizens alongside us.

Andrew Bacevich noted that current policy is “motivated by selfishness, self-preservation.” Instead of fighting for short-term and provincial gain, we can enlist the human instinct for cooperation, and create a global movement for the greater good.

How can we better understand how our survival, success and prosperity depend on lifting us all as opposed to lifting only our few? To make change we need to make it relevant to all people’s ability to feed themselves and their families, provide shelter and protection from harm, and empower them with their right to self-determination. It can be done with vision and action.

As Barney Frank said at the Annual Meeting, we need “global citizenship,” as opposed to global domination.

## Singling Out Israel

David Zackon, Wakefield

Why only Israel? With all the conflict raging around the world, so many victims and victimizers “out there,” why is it inevitably Israel that receives the lion’s share of attention?

Some have put this question to Massachusetts Peace Action, following the formation last year of its Working Group on Palestine/Israel. But perhaps it is better addressed to the 351 congressional cosponsors of H.R. 938 – the “United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2013 (USISPA),” a bill that “singles out” Israel as no other does.

H.R. 938 was one of two House measures that topped the lobbying agenda of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) last year. On March 5, 2013, AIPAC delegates went to Capitol Hill to lobby their respective representatives on behalf of USISPA. On March 6, H.R. 938 had 39 cosponsors, Massachusetts Reps. (now Senator) Ed Markey and Bill Keating among them. Reps. Joe Kennedy III and Richard Neal signed on three months later, and in January 2014, the House Foreign Affairs Committee approved the measure unanimously.

U.S. presidents may hail our “special relationship” with Britain, and our “incredible bond” with France, but neither is codified into law, the way a “Major Strategic Partner” may be – once H.R. 938 is reconciled with companion legislation in the Senate. At that point, Israel will be the “Major Strategic Partner” of the United States.

USISPA changes the schedule for Presidential certification that U.S. military aid gives Israel a “Qualitative Military Edge” from every four years to every two. It calls for “assistance...for the enhancement of” more advanced weaponry, including interceptor missile systems. The Administration’s 2014 budget allotted \$96 million for this purpose; Congress *tripled* the amount to \$284 million in December. But even this sum is small change, funded under the U.S. Missile Defense Agency’s “Israeli Cooperative Program,” which is a separate stream from Foreign Military Financing (FMF). FMF expenditures for Israel will be \$3.1 billion this year – part of a \$30 billion, 10-year package (to be followed by \$40 billion in FY 2019-28). Having received \$234 billion in direct aid since 1948, plus \$19 billion in financial guarantees, Israel ranks as the largest

cumulative recipient of U.S. foreign aid since World War II.

At least 40 U.S. charities collected more than \$200 million in tax-deductible gifts for settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem during 2000-2010. The Jewish National Fund – which owns about 13% of all land in Israel – is a tax-exempt U.S. charity collecting \$60 million annually, even though, according to the U.S. State Department, it “does not allow land it owns to be leased or sold to non-Jews.” Thus money that might otherwise flow to the U.S. Treasury subsidizes an occupation illegal under international law and land transactions that would be illegal if conducted in the United States.

Other vital “aid” can’t be measured in money: the protection of 45 Security Council vetoes, U.S. de-funding of UNESCO because it admitted Palestine as a member, and congressional threats to defund other UN agencies that extend membership to Palestine.

Given these many ways our government “singles out” Israel, is it surprising that U.S. peace activists are taking an increasingly critical view of how our Major Strategic Partner makes use of American largesse?

## In Whose Interest the Trans Pacific Partnership?

John Ratliff, Cambridge

By now many of us have heard about the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP), a proposed trade and economic integration agreement among Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the United States, and Vietnam. Massachusetts Peace Action opposes “Fast Track” legislation (officially called the Bi-Partisan Trade Promotion Act: H.R.1 330, S. 1900).

Many in the media are pronouncing this legislation and treaty as unlikely to gain traction. But history tells us that we can not afford to let our guard down and must ramp up our efforts to stop Fast Track, because the 99% in this country and in all of the other 11 TPP countries have so much to lose.

### What’s at risk if Fast Track and the TPP Should Pass?

- **Tens of Thousands of Jobs may be lost:** TPP has been called NAFTA on steroids. Twenty years ago NAFTA was sold to us as a sure-fire way to create thousands of export based jobs. Instead, official records document a loss approaching one million jobs in the U.S.
- **Increased Poverty for the U.S. 99%:** While official Gross National Product (GNP) and corporate balance sheets may grow, any increased wealth flows relentlessly to the 1% at the top of the scale. Inequality which stifles economic growth, increases.

- **Desperation among the poor in the third world:** While some extremely low-wage manufacturing jobs have been created, millions who live as small family farmers face being forced from their land by multinational industrial agriculture corporations. They will join the desperately poor migrant work force seeking survival in cities and fueling immigration crises in wealthier countries.
- **Hard Won Protective Regulations:** The huge shift in power to investors and corporations will allow corporations to challenge food-safety, environmental, financial, consumer, labor, and many other protections in special courts established to by-pass the constitutional court system.
- **The right to negotiate national drug schedules and pricing may be lost:** In addition to undermining development of cheaper generic drugs by strengthening monopoly rights of big pharma, the TPP may undermine the ability of national governments to establish pricing in negotiated mass purchases, such as Medicare and the VA have done.
- **Democracy is threatened:** The ability of democratic governments, local, city, and

state, to set policy will be weakened by the secretly-negotiated TPP, the content of which was developed in part by corporate representatives.

- **The threat of war may be increased:** Excluding and encircling China, the TPP is the economic wing of the military/political Asia-Pacific Pivot. Historically, the U.S. has often intervened militarily in the region of the TPP, and may resort to such action to preserve its investors’ protections under the agreement.

Who then stands to benefit from the TPP? Too much of the back and forth in the press is about which country will benefit from the TPP and which will lose. In

reality some in each country will win and some lose. The 579 billionaires in the TPP countries, their families, and their corporate allies, will no doubt benefit enormously. Aspiring billionaires among the elite in each country may hope the TPP will allow them to climb into the exalted circles. It is up to us in the 99% here and in other countries to defeat this dangerous gambit of the TPP and to envision and bring about another globalism – one based on justice and equality.



## Peace and Justice Calendar

Spring 2014

Details: [masspeaceaction.org/events](http://masspeaceaction.org/events)

Sun, Mar 16 1:00 pm	St. Patrick's Peace Parade for Peace, Equality, Jobs, Stewardship, Justice D Street & West Broadway, South Boston (Broadway T) – Veterans for Peace
Mon, Mar 17 6:00 pm	Mass Peace Action board meeting. (open to members, notify office in advance) First Church in Cambridge, 11 Garden St. 6pm light supper, 7pm meeting
Sun, Mar 23 2:00 pm	Moving MAPA's Palestine/ Israel Work Forward. (all interested members invited) The Democracy Center, 45 Mt. Auburn St, Cambridge
Thu, Mar 27 7:00 pm	Manufactured Crisis: The Untold Story of the Iran Nuclear Scare: Gareth Porter Cambridge Friends,,5 Longfellow Park. <i>Mar 25: Northampton, Mar 26: Walpole</i>
Thu, Apr 3 6:00 pm	The Politics of Water: From Israel and Palestine to Chelsea and Beyond Chelsea Collaborative, 318 Broadway, Chelsea
Sat, Apr 12 2:00 pm (tent)	Jobs, Cutbacks, Taxes, War: Hearing and Forum Barney Frank, Mel King, Jim McGovern, others, sponsored by Budget for All
Sat, Apr 19 9:30 am	Pivoting for Peace in Asia/Pacific: Challenging U.S. Militarism & Corporate Dominance Cambridge Friends Meeting, 5 Longfellow Park – AFSC, Mass P.A., UJP
Sat, Apr 26 12:00 pm	Jobs Not Jails! Rally on Boston Common (Park St T)
Sat, May 10 7:30 pm	Music for Peace: Brahms Birthday Celebration (benefits Mass Peace Action Ed. Fund) Harvard-Epworth Methodist Church, 1555 Mass. Ave, Cambridge (Harvard T)

**Mass. Peace Action board:** Rosalie Anders, James Babson, Kinga Boratyn, Steven Brion-Meisels (chair), Carol Coakley, Shelagh Foreman, Bonnie Gorman, Burton Glass, So Yeon Jeong, Jeff Klein, John Maher, Eva Moseley, Guntram Mueller (vice chair), Prasannan Parthasarathi, John Ratliff, Pat Salomon, Dan Solomon. **Ed Fund board:** Christie Dennis (chair), Eva Moseley, Gary Goldstein, Rosalie Anders, Shelagh Foreman. **Staff:** Cole Harrison, executive director; Carol Coakley, office coordinator; Kaitlin Dellecker, membership coordinator. **Interns:** Robert Brown, Gary Lowell, Ethan Markham, Milcah Ssebbowa.

## Join us!

Massachusetts Peace Action is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization working to develop the sustained political power to foster a more just and peaceful U.S. foreign policy.

We are an affiliate of Peace Action, the nation's largest grassroots peace and disarmament membership organization, with more than 100,000 members and 30 chapters across the country.

Our work is funded entirely by donations from our members. Thank you for your support. Member Levels:

- \$65.00 Family membership
- \$40.00 Individual membership
- \$10.00 Limited income membership

Make tax-deductible donations in any amount to the Massachusetts Peace Action Education Fund.

## What We Do

- Mobilize our members to become active advocates for peace and justice issues with their elected officials and within their communities.
- Organize events to educate the public on issues of peace and disarmament.
- Make peace a priority in all elections at all levels by educating voters and candidates on just and peaceful foreign policy options.



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