

Budget for All Referendum to Reach 1 Million Voters Nov. 6

A successful campaign generates its own energy. The drive to get the **Budget for All** referendum on the ballot caught fire because scores of activists throughout the state want to do something. We've heard over and over again from progressive activists who are tired of the Right rolling over us, and equally tired of endless meetings and preaching to the choir. They want to get out there, talk to their neighbors, and bring a progressive agenda into the political process. And that is what Peace Action and its allies are doing in Massachusetts in the 2012 elections.

Under the slogan "**Stop the Cuts – Invest in Jobs – Tax the 1% – Bring the Troops Home**," Massachusetts Peace Action is helping to lead a peace-community-labor coalition of 44 organizations to push the anti-austerity Budget for All public policy question. District by district, activists gathered over 25,000 signatures last spring and successfully qualified for the ballot in 8 State Senate districts and 24 State Representative districts. As a result, approximately a mil-

lion Massachusetts voters – about 1/3 of the state's expected 3 million voters in a presidential election year – will have the opportunity to vote on the question November 6.

Led by low income community groups, the referendum qualified in the entire city of Boston. The Massachusetts Alliance of HUD Tenants led the way in two Boston Senate districts, while the Right to the City Civic Action Alliance canvassed low-income people of color neighborhoods and the Boston 25% Coalition powered the Dorchester Senate district. In these areas the great majority supports our agenda; people see the need for jobs programs and services such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and housing, and are critical of the bloated military. Canvassers registered voters and called for political participation.

Peace groups, suburban Occupy groups, and the Green-Rainbow party tackled Boston's western suburbs, Metro-west, the North Shore, and western Massachusetts. In these relatively liberal areas, most people who hear about the B4A are willing to sign.

In the economically depressed cities of Lawrence, Fall River, Holyoke, and Chelsea, there is a hunger for participation and a search for effective means of political action.



Peace Action's Shelagh Foreman, Audley Green and Carol Coakley at the State House July 25

The B4A faces its most challenging territory in the far suburbs like Norwood, Cohasset, and Georgetown where there has been less peace and progressive activism and more right-wing influence and anti-tax ideas. Here, some object to the B4A's call to cut the military budget and end the Afghanistan war. Public education will be key to convince undecided voters to back the referendum now that it is on the ballot.

Now, the coalition is regrouping to focus on passing the B4A referendum this fall. On July 25, 20 volunteers lobbied legislators at the State House, introducing the referendum to the legislators. In the fall, we'll get the word out through op-eds, letters to the editor, social media, and yard signs. We will also hold campaign events to build support and energy. Contact the state office with your idea. More info: budget4allmass.org

- Cole Harrison

Crisis of Zionism: An afternoon with Peter Beinart

Journalist Peter Beinart disarmed an audience of almost 200 at an August 21 lecture in Lenox in memory of Peace Action New York member Doris Shaffer. The subject of his lecture was his book *The Crisis of Zionism*, which explains the maneuverings of the Obama administration to avoid the domestic political minefields of American-Israeli relations and interprets the moves of the Netanyahu government.

Beinart's message is that Israel cannot survive as a democracy if it continues its occupation. He sees two choices for Israel: 1) accept a viable two-state solution by giving up most of the settlements or 2) continue down the path of a split Israel where one part claims to be a democracy and the other part is not. The latter choice would abandon the dream of a democratic Israel and push Israel into international isolation.



Beinart also offered observations about American Jewry. A liberal, religious Zionist, he despaired that his generation and younger generations of liberal American Jews are turning their back on Israel. The secular youth, he said, have assimilated into American culture and Israel is not a priority for them. The socially conscious religious youth turn their attention towards campaigns they can relate to – and they cannot relate to official Israeli policies towards Palestine. He called for the creation of an educational experience for the next generation where they will learn again about the Jewish ideals of social justice and apply them to the difficult future.

- Sally Jones, Peace Action NY State

Intern's Corner—Sara Katz

Reflections on “Think Outside the Bomb”



As a Peace Action intern this summer I learned a lot about international relations, especially war. As my final project, I decided to put together a youth outreach event to discuss both the history and the current state of nuclear weapons and their dangers. My initial goal in organizing the “Think Outside the Bomb” presentation was to reach out to my community’s youth and to discuss with them the harsh realities of nuclear weapons.

Between 30 and 40 people (predominantly in the 19-to-22 age group), came together at the Needham Public Library on August 6th, 2012, the 67th anniversary of the United States’ nuclear attack on Hiroshima, to reflect on the documentary *Countdown to Zero*. We questioned our nation’s policies regarding nuclear weapons: Does the United States really benefit from having close to two thousand nuclear warheads? Does our president give this issue the attention it deserves?

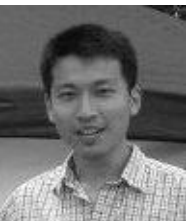
Just as I’d hoped, everyone was concerned about the future of nuclear weapons. Collectively, as a generation, we don’t take war (and with that, nuclear war) seriously. Because all of the wars our country has fought in over a century have taken place on other continents, it has been easy for us to live our day-to-day lives entirely unaffected. No military draft has taken place during our lifetime. No one close to us has been forced to fight. Basically, for most of the people my age, war has been “out of sight, out of mind.” I hoped that this event would change that mentality.

If my words alone didn’t provide the necessary push to shift the mindset of the audience, *Countdown to Zero*, directed by Lucy Walker, sure did. Call me a sadist, but I was happy to see the horrified expressions on the faces of my audience – they got it. An obvious switch went off in so many minds, and it was clear that they understood the points I was trying to make, just listening to their post-viewing reflections.

In the future, I hope that some of the event’s participants will be motivated to do something on their own, even if it isn’t directly related to nuclear weapons or peace activism (though I hope it might be). Ultimately, I want these people to find something they’re passionate about and act on it. Ideally, this event might have sparked an urge for at least one person to be active about something. I want to be proud that my peers and I were aware of the world around us, and involved in making it a better place. We are the future of this country and owe it to future generations to be active, passionate, driven individuals. I

Intern's Corner—Jerry Wang

Do We Need a \$5.8 billion Nuclear Bomb Factory?



How do you build a \$16 trillion deficit? By building nuclear weapons facilities at \$5.8 billion a pop. The \$5.8 billion Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Replacement (CMRR) nuclear weapons facility at Los Alamos, New Mexico is a key piece in the Obama’s administrations nuclear weapon modernization plan.

The CMRR is meant to allow the Los Alamos facility to increase the number of plutonium “pits” (the fissile core of a modern nuclear warhead) produced from the current 10-20 per year to 50-80 per year.

However, things are different this time. With the Budget Control Act looming, spending cuts are inevitable, and the CMRR is an obvious choice. According to Tom D’Agostino, the head of the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), the CMRR is not needed for at least 5 years, if at all. D’Agostino further elaborated that NNSA can meet its needs with the existing facility, and even without funding the CMRR, NNSA’s 2013 budget will have increased by 5% over 2012.

Developing more nuclear weapons technology will not make the United States any safer. General Keith Kerr stated that nuclear weapons programs are “ill-suited to combat 21st Century threats.” The United States no longer faces the threat of a nuclear armed superpower. We cannot fight terrorists with nuclear weapons, and even against nations with fixed addresses, the United States has more than enough nuclear weapons to discourage any potential aggression. General James Cartwright, former commander of the United States’ nuclear forces, said that the United States’ nuclear deterrence could be guaranteed with a total arsenal of 900 nuclear weapons. The United States currently has about 5,000 nuclear weapons. There is no need for more. At a time when the United States should be pursuing reductions in an unnecessary nuclear weapons program, it makes little sense to expand our capacity to make new ones.

The United States criticizes North Korea and Iran for their real or alleged nuclear weapons programs, yet it is hypocritical of us to urge these nations not to build nuclear weapons when we are spending billions of dollars on modernizing and expanding our own nuclear weapons program.

When the Obama administration decided in February 2012 that the CMRR should be delayed for at least 5 years, I was delighted. However, Congress has been hesitant to comply with the Obama administration’s request. Funds for the CMRR have been cut and then restored, and a final decision has yet to be made. Both Democrats and Republicans have said that the current deficit cannot be sustained, and postponing the CMRR is a good way to save \$5.8 billion. I hope that Congress has the good sense to see that the CMRR is an unnecessary investment in this time of budget austerity.



is a nonprofit, nonpartisan grassroots organization building the sustained political power to foster a more just and peaceful U.S. foreign policy.

Our priority issues in 2012 are cutting the military budget to fund jobs, housing, health and the environment; ending the war in Afghanistan and preventing one with Iran; and abolishing nuclear weapons.

We are an affiliate of Peace Action, the nation’s largest grassroots peace and justice organization. Our work is funded entirely by membership dues and donations from our members. Thank you for your support.

11 Garden Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
617-354-2169
info@masspeaceaction.org
www.masspeaceaction.org

MAPA Board of Directors Steven Brion-Meisels, Chair

- James A. Babson
- Carol Coakley
- Matthew Connolly
- Shelagh Foreman
- Angela Kelly
- John Maher
- Eva Moseley
- Guntram Mueller
- Prasannan Parthasarathi
- Pat Salomon
- Nancy Wrenn

Education Fund Board of Directors

- Ken Thomson, Chair
- Rosalie Anders
- Christie Dennis
- Shelagh Foreman
- Gary Goldstein
- Eva Moseley

Staff

- Shelagh Foreman, Program
- Cole Harrison, Communications
- Carol Coakley, Administration

Interns

- Sara Katz, Meredith
- Sharka, Alexandra Suarez,
- Michelle Surka, Jerry
- Wang, Ben Kasdan (Guest Newsletter Editor)

Realities in Palestine: An Eye Witness Report

by Pat Salomon, Julio Rodriguez, and Carol Huston

Three Peace Action members from Monterey, MA returned recently from an eye-opening journey to Israel and the occupied Palestinian Territories. We went because of the troubling news coming from Gaza about collective punishment, because of images of a 300-mile wall of separation between Israelis and Palestinians, and because of our desire to understand the nature of the occupation of Palestinian lands, in place since the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

We traveled with the Interfaith Peace Builders (IFPB, www.ifpb.org) and thirty other US delegates. We traveled mainly along the "Green Line," which is not green at all but dusty and rather desolate. The boundary between Israel and the West Bank created by the 1949 armistice agreements, the line is also used to differentiate between Israel and the territories captured during the 1967 war. While this boundary remains very real to the Palestinians, it is not the only division of land between Israelis and Palestinians. The sequence of maps at right shows that since 1967, continuous land confiscation east of the Green Line has markedly reduced the land remaining in Palestinian control. After confiscation by the military and by settlers, the remaining small and isolated parcels of land barely constitute a viable second state.

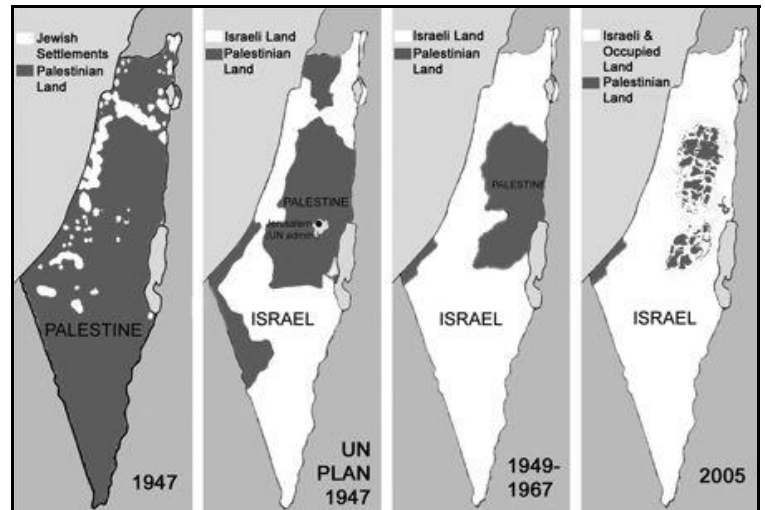
We visited UN offices and an NGO with expertise on refugee health, housing, and economic status. Six and one-half million Palestinians now live abroad, displaced by war or by systematic removal, as villages are demolished, land confiscated, families forced out of their ancient homes. 1.5 million Palestinians remain in the occupied territories. We learned about and saw crowded, impoverished refugee camps, with poor sanitation, sparse water, and weak infrastructures, more than 40 years after 1967.

We saw the new Israeli settlements strategically placed on hilltops, with trees, fountains, and swimming pools, towering above and surrounding the low lands where Palestinians have their farms, olive trees, and fields. And we saw the Wall, 26 feet high, often passing close to Palestinian homes, separating Palestinian farmers from their lands. The farmers have to walk many miles each day simply to get to their fields. As a result the lands often lie fallow.

We passed through the gates and channels that are called checkpoints. Palestinians in the West Bank must pass through these to enter what is now Israel proper or to pass between Palestinian administered areas within the West Bank. Each day adults and children must show identity cards, be questioned and searched by the military. Some people do this on a daily basis, some only for emergencies. For all, it is a degrading and sometimes dangerous restriction.

Much of life within the refugee camps and or in the traditional villages is shaped by Israel's policies on permits to make physical improvements in living conditions. In all of our travels **we never met one** Palestinian living near or be-

Palestinian Loss of Land, 1947 to Present



yond the Green Line **who has ever been granted a permit**, no matter what the request or issue was. No cisterns for water collection. No wells can be dug. No buildings can be renovated. No updates in electricity or plumbing. Essentially almost nothing can be improved or changed. The message seems clear. There is no future for Palestinians under Israeli control.

Every Palestinian family is affected by the occupation. In the name of Security, all Palestinians are suspect. They are subject to imprisonment as "administrative detention" for up to six months without charges. Nearly every Palestinian family has had members arrested. Every adult male that we spoke seriously with had spent some time in prison.

Lest you think the entire trip was negative, it is important to talk about the Palestinian families we met and their dreams for the future. They consistently speak of nonviolent solutions. They want the occupation and land confiscation to end and the return of their confiscated lands. They want to manage their own water, electricity, roads and schools. They are spurred on by support from the many Israeli citizens who are at their sides, defending Palestinian equality and human rights, and standing against expansions of the Wall.

Palestinians repeatedly asked us to urge Americans to question the use of US tax dollars, over \$3 billion annually, for Israel's military. They ask that we tie US investments in Israel/Palestine to progress in human rights and justice for Palestinians; to a fair share of land, water, education, and opportunity.

We know that some equate any criticism of Israel with anti-Semitism. But we saw with our own eyes the unacceptable results of more than forty years of occupation. We want to share our concerns with those who can envision other ways for Israel to protect itself. If you are interested in learning more about our experience, please contact us: drpatsalomon@gmail.com.

Anti-Nuclear Exhibits Go On Tour

Mass. Peace Action brought our anti-nuclear weapons message to 8 summer festivals this year, in New Bedford, Lawrence, Framingham, Jamaica Plain and Boston.



Our "nuclear globe," showing the locations of nuclear weapons, nuclear power plants, and nuclear weapons-free zones, always draws a lot of attention. This year we also added cut-outs of three Presidents (Obama, Reagan and Kennedy), each with a quote expressing their desire to abolish nuclear weapons.

We collected over 500 petition signatures calling on President Obama to reduce strategic nuclear forces, and postcards to Senators Kerry and Brown calling on them to vote down the CMRR (see article, page 2). We also talked up the *Budget for All* referendum (page 1).



Metrowest Peace Action marched in the July 4 Parade in Natick and got a great reception from the spectators (left).

Why Join Mass. Peace Action?

Contribute, network and learn

Coupled with budget concerns, public awareness that "war is not working" has led to a growing national desire to re-orient national priorities toward peace, human rights and an equitable society "back home." MAPA is working to translate that shift into changes in U.S. foreign and domestic policy.

The best way to accomplish our goals is to grow our membership statewide. Membership provides consistent support for our educational and advocacy work – through dues and volunteer action. Membership is a great deal: for \$40 a year (\$10 for students and low income), you get national and state newsletters, information and discounted admissions to MAPA events, and opportunities to learn. As a member, you can help MAPA's committees and local groups, and participate as part of a national Peace Action network with close to 100,000 members like you.

"Organizational members" are allied groups from peace, religious, labor, social justice and environmental areas that receive Peace Action support and resources for a \$75 annual membership fee.

Join us! We need your help and participation.

Volunteer!

Are you long on time but short on cash? No problem; Mass Peace Action's volunteer corps welcomes you with open arms. No experience necessary; just enthusiasm and a willingness to help with the nuts and bolts of operating your local grassroots peace organization.

Peace Action Endorses McGovern and Tierney

Mass. Peace Action endorses Reps. Jim McGovern and John Tierney for re-election to the House of Representatives.

A constant ally of Peace Action, Jim McGovern is a tireless and effective legislative leader for a range of peace issues. He is a key leader in Congress of the effort to end the disastrous Afghanistan war and bring our troops home quickly. His amendment to the defense authorization bill, which would have required an accelerated Afghanistan withdrawal, came within 10 votes of passing the House of Representatives in May 2011; the Republican leadership has prevented similar language from coming to the floor in 2012 for fear it would pass.



Rep. Tierney introduced legislation in 2008 that led to the creation of the Commission on Wartime Contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan which examined allegations that billions of dollars had been misappropriated. He has consistently opposed funding for the Afghanistan war and voted in favor of cuts to the military budget. Rep. Tierney is a longstanding opponent of missile defense systems.



Both are members of the Congressional Progressive Caucus. Rep. McGovern is a supporter of its Budget for All, which Mass. Peace Action and our allies have put on the November ballot in districts across Massachusetts in a non-binding referendum. We urge our members to support their campaigns; donations may be given at <https://secure.actblue.com/page/mapa>.

Peace Action's goal during this election cycle is to keep issues related to peace, nuclear weapons abolition, reducing military spending, Afghanistan and Iran front and center and to provide information that will help voters make informed choices. We have produced voter guides on the Presidential and Senate races. You can find them at www.masspeaceaction.org/peace-voter.

Peace Politics 2012

Bringing the Peace Majority to the Ballot Box

A Fundraising Reception with Kevin Martin, Executive Director of Peace Action
Thursday, September 27, 6:30 pm
35 Oxford Rd, Newton Center
Wines & cheeses from nuclear weapons free nations



What Unnecessary Military Spending is Costing our Communities

Chris Hellman, National Priorities Project
Mike Prokosch, New Priorities Network
Sunday, September 30, 7pm
First Unitarian Society in Newton, 1326 Washington St
First of a series of forums on military spending

Ending the Afghanistan War and Supporting Afghan Women

David Cortright, Kroc Institute for Peace Studies
Thursday, October 4, 7pm • Location TBA
(Boston)

