

On the Boston Marathon Bombing

Massachusetts Peace Action shares in the sadness, appreciation, restraint and solidarity shown by President Obama, Governor Patrick, faith and civic leaders, and neighbors in the face of the violence at Monday's Boston Marathon and during the days following.

There is sadness for those killed and injured, for the families whose lives have been scarred, and for the culture of violence, here and abroad, that leads to such senseless acts.

There is appreciation for first responders, including Boston peace activist Carlos Arredondo, whose courageous actions saved lives and modeled how all of us should respond in times of crisis.

There must be restraint, as the facts of the violence emerge — especially toward individuals and communities who are too often blamed or scapegoated in acts of political violence. We call on our leaders and the media to be especially careful in the days to come.

Finally, there is solidarity; Boston has seen the face of the violence that is a daily reality for civilians in Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia and other places wracked by the impact of militarism.

In the days and months ahead, we commit to helping our community heal, connect and create a culture of peace.



Faith Madzar at Natick prayer vigil April 17. (Metrowest Daily News)

Budget for All Victorious!

Voters gave thumbs up to the "Budget for All" non-binding question in all 91 Massachusetts cities and towns where it was on the ballot in November by an average 3 to 1 margin.

The question called on Congress to stop cutting programs people depend on, invest in job creation, tax the rich and corporations, cut the military budget and bring the troops home.

Peace Action joined with 80 other organizations to put the question on the ballot and campaign for it.

Together with community and labor groups we continue to press Congress to vote for this agenda with rallies and vigils. The Democratic State Committee voted unanimously to support the Budget for All on April 11, and a resolution is pending in the State Legislature. Below, a rally at a downtown Boston Senate office.



Ed Markey for Senate!



Massachusetts Peace Action endorses Rep. Ed Markey for Senate.

Ed Markey is a key leader in Congress on nuclear disarmament, nuclear power and climate change. He opposes the Afghanistan war and favors reducing military spending to fund social needs.

Markey has worked for nuclear disarmament alongside Peace Action for decades. His "Smarter Approach to

Nuclear Expenditures (SANE) Act," named for Peace Action's predecessor organization, would cut \$100 billion in nuclear weapons spending from the federal budget.

He has voted repeatedly against funding for the Afghan War and against the defense authorization and appropriation bills. He is a member of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, voted for its "Budget for All" progressive budget amendment in 2011, and supported the "Budget for All" non-binding question last year.

Despite his many positives, Markey's views on Iran and on Israel/Palestine are stuck in the past. He supports new sanctions on Iran and new privileges for Israel in its relationship with the U.S. We hope that he will reconsider these dangerous stands in the coming months.

Peace Action organized fundraising parties for Markey on Sunday, April 28 in seven locations across Massachusetts. When you donate to the Markey campaign, please make sure he knows the support came from the peace movement. Donate online through <https://secure.actblue.com/page/mapa> or by sending a check made out to the "Markey Committee" to the MAPA office.

Jamal Abdi Keynotes Annual Meeting

After being postponed a week by a blizzard, Mass. Peace Action's annual meeting convened at the First Baptist Church in Newton February 16, attended by 70 members and supporters.

The keynote speaker, **Jamal Abdi** of the National Iranian American Council (*right*), analyzed U.S. policy towards Iran. Abdi showed that a negotiated settlement of differences between the two countries is absolutely possible but is being impeded by political obstacles on both sides, but particularly in Washington.

Workshops addressed Killing Drones and the Law; War, Peace and Climate Change: Looking at and Acting on the Connections; Iran: Groundwork for Positive/Peaceful Outcomes; and Defunding Militarism with the Budget for All. Read the workshop notes at <http://bit.ly/ZIW0V2>.

Executive Director Cole Harrison reported that MAPA revenues were \$21,755 in 2012 and expenses were \$26,267. MAPA Education Fund revenues were \$49,082 and expenses were \$35,671. The 2013 budget calls for MAPA to raise \$21,500 and MAPA EF, \$55,000.



MASSACHUSETTS
Peace Action

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

www.masspeaceaction.org



Nancy Wrenn, Carol Coakley and Shelagh Foreman received Mass. Peace Action awards for decades of leadership. Each received an original print created on the occasion of a concert for the Lexington Freeze Campaign in 1986.

Rosalie Anders, Bonnie Gorman, Jeff Klein and Burton Glass (*left to right*) were elected to serve two-year terms on the MAPA board of directors, and Carol Coakley, Matt Connolly and Guntram Mueller were re-elected. We thanked retiring member Angela Kelly for her service.

Intern's Corner
Rimsha Khan

Why I'm Against Military Aid to Israel



The United States needs to cease its military aid to Israel. In a time of budget cuts and sequester across the board it is easy to make a practical argument pertaining to fiscal responsibility. Yet it is important to note the exceptional status Israel commands in terms of military aid and how it allows injustice against the Palestinians.

Earlier this year at AIPAC's annual conference, pro-Israel activists pressured Congress to exempt Israel from cuts. According to the Israeli newspaper *Hayom*, instead of the expected 8 percent cut Israel has been reassured by the White House that it will get only a 5 percent cut.

Since World War II Israel has been the largest cumulative recipient of U.S. aid. Since 1985, it has received an average of \$3 billion in grants annually—a majority of it military aid. Unlike all other aid U.S. aid recipients, Israel receives all of its aid in the first thirty days of the fiscal year, instead of the usual quarterly installments. Also, unlike all others Israel is not required to account for its expenditures. Therefore it is given free rein to spend as it wants even if it contradicts U.S. policies such as the building of illegal settlements in the Occupied Palestinian territories.

Military aid to Israel under the current situation is illogical and unjust. Israel subjects Palestinians to a brutal occupation — from shooting at Palestinian demonstrators (at times even the Israelis that join them in solidarity) to maintaining a heavily militarized and debilitating control over the Gaza Strip and many things in between.

This is not to mention assaults on Gaza, which have taken place in the past few years in 2008 and 2012. Both military operations resulted in an overwhelming majority of dead civilians, including large populations of children. In its 2008 assault, the Israeli military is even reported to have used white phosphorous, a chemical weapon banned by the UN, in civilian areas.

Israel has an egregious human rights record in respect to the Palestinian population. Further military aid undermines peace efforts and gives further advantage to Israel on top of its already existing occupation. U.S. tax dollars should not go towards supporting this occupation. It is immoral and impractical and contributes to worsening the situation. The cost of not acting is simply too high.

Rimsha Khan is a junior at Simmons College.

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Visions: America after Hegemony

by Cole Harrison

With the Iraq war fading into memory even as the country still simmers, the U.S. peace movement faces the need to reframe its message.

We have spent the last 10 years resisting the U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan – tragedies that have not only devastated those two countries and taken tens of thousands of lives, but have left thousands of returning veterans with lifelong disabilities and taken a huge toll on our national economy.

We've exposed nuclear weapons' threat to human survival, organized against sanctions and war on Iran and the Israeli occupation of Palestine, and built alliances with labor and community groups to cut the military budget.

We've opposed lawless torture and drone killings, cyber-warfare attacks, and the U.S. "pivot," which seeks to encircle China with military bases.

These campaigns are important, but they primarily arouse internationals, longtime activists, and leftists, not the indignation of millions. To get out of the echo chamber, we need to present a vision of a democratic foreign and security policy that would tie our many campaigns together into a coherent whole, from the local to the global.

Such a platform would provide hope to the many who sense that something is wrong with corporate capitalism, with U.S. foreign policy, and with the military-industrial complex. It would set the basis for a principled alliance between the peace movement and the labor, immigrant rights, women's, economic, social, and racial justice movements that are its natural allies.

In short: the peace movement needs to make it clear not only what we are against, but what we are for.

Since the end of the Cold War, the U.S. has sought to ensure that every nation in the world stays within a security structure managed and controlled by Washington.

Nations that refuse to follow U.S. wishes find themselves demonized and pressured to conform, while states that are not centralized enough to control their territory are called "failed states" and are subjected to often counterproductive "nation building." In colloquial terms, Washington seeks to act as the world's policeman.

As globalization enthusiast Tom Friedman explained in 1999, "[S]ustainable globalization still requires a stable, geopolitical power structure, which simply cannot be maintained without the active involvement of the United States. ... The hidden hand of the market will never work without a hidden fist — McDonald's cannot flourish without McDonnell Douglas, the builder of the F-15."

Democrats and Republicans often debate *how* to ensure U.S. pre-eminence. But when it comes to any meaningful discussion of *whether* the United States has any business running the rest of the world, the silence is deafening. Congress and the mainstream media almost never discuss why the United States should maintain a global force structure, why it needs to

station an estimated 1,000 bases in over 100 countries, why it requires exorbitantly expensive weapons systems, or why it has a "vital interest" in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, or in the region surrounding China. These questions are never asked because of the ruling elite's consensus on the need for hegemony.

Do Americans agree with this consensus? As vividly demonstrated by the response to the Boston Marathon bombings, most Americans still fear terrorism – fears which have been assiduously cultivated in every possible way since 9/11.

Yet polls also consistently show that majorities of Americans support cutting the military budget instead of Social Security, Medicare, or other essential programs. While people think the military might keep them safe, they are absolutely sure that Social Security does.

In other words, support for the hegemonic foreign policy is soft. But to crack the consensus, the peace movement must offer an alternative to hegemony that offers real security to the

American people — a democratic foreign policy that does a better job than hegemony of providing human security.

The 2008 economic crash was an unmistakable reminder that the U.S.-led worldwide order is no longer stable. In the years to come, the role of U.S. military might will come into question internationally, as an increasing number of countries and movements seek to arrange matters differently. The crash raised questions in the minds of millions about the ability of the world economic system to deliver jobs, life, and prosper-

ity. Among the more than 99 percent of Americans who don't own global companies, the question is there, waiting to be asked, whether U.S. foreign policy actually serves their interests. The time is therefore ripe for the peace movement to offer a new foreign policy which serves the interests of the domestic and global 99 percent better than the hegemonic order.

Peace Action's national executive director, Kevin Martin, has called for the peace movement to propose "a new vision for our country's role in the world—to create a new foreign policy for the 99 percent." Such a foreign policy, he says, should be based on the "widely shared ideals of democracy, justice, human rights, international cooperation, and sustainability."

We now have to explain what that policy would be and how it would work, applying it to each region of the world and each type of international problem. We also have to identify the interests that would favor and those that would oppose the new policy.

As Martin writes, "It's about the entrenched power of the U.S. war machine, and about how we the peoples of this country and around the world can work together to create more peaceful, just, and sustainable policies. We can do it; in fact we have no choice but to do it."

A longer version of this article was published in Foreign Policy in Focus (<http://bit.ly/10ntR3F>).



Proliferation and Iran

by Jeff Klein

People are right to worry about nuclear weapons and the dangers of nuclear proliferation. Thousands of highly destructive nuclear warheads are already deployed around the globe by the US and its allies the United Kingdom, France, and Israel, as well as by Russia, China, Pakistan, India -- and, lately, North Korea.

But not a single one of these dangerous weapons is in Iran.

How then to account for the mounting alarm about a theoretical Iranian nuclear bomb and the routine threats of military action against that country? The answer lies in the different ways the US policy and our mainstream media treat the actions of our "friends" and our potential "adversaries." This is especially true in those regions like the Middle East, which the US regards as a strategic zone it needs to control.

In the case of Iran, US policy is also strongly colored by the perspective of Israel and its considerable influence within our political system. Israeli leaders saw a major advantage from the US destruction of Iraq, and they would like the US to finish the job by crushing Iran, Israel's remaining strategic rival in the Middle East.

Looking at the way the US is imposing ever-tightening economic sanctions against the Iranian people, and the constant reiteration that "all options" -- meaning military attack -- "are on the table," we may legitimately question whether this is a sensible approach to the issue of nuclear weapons proliferation.

Like every country in the region except Israel, Iran is a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The treaty guarantees the right of signatories to pursue peaceful uses of atomic technology under the supervision and inspection of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Iran says it is developing nuclear know-how for energy and research -- and it is the considered opinion of the IAEA inspectors and US intelligence agencies that it has no ongoing weapons program. No matter how fudged by our media, it remains true that the only nuclear weapons in the Middle East are deployed by the US and Israel.

If we are truly concerned with the potential spread of nuclear weapons, the US should first stop threatening Iran with war and offer real incentives for a diplomatic settlement. The refusal of the US and its negotiating partners to specify a time-

table for removing the economic sanctions that are hurting the Iranian people has been an obstacle to a peaceful outcome.

It is often claimed that economic sanctions are a way to pressure a country to change its policies without resorting to military action. However, a look at the past US deployment of economic sanctions -- against Iraq, Nicaragua, Cuba, for example -- suggests that they are most often a prelude or an ancillary for armed intervention. US-imposed sanctions against Iraq in the 1990's are thought to have caused the deaths of as many as half-a-million people and culminated in the disastrous US 2003 invasion. (The lone successful exception was the isolation of Apartheid South Africa, a step demanded by the South African popular movement which the US embraced very late and reluctantly -- and where military action was never contemplated.)

Today, sanctions against Iran are causing real hardship among millions of ordinary people through rampant inflation, high food prices and a shortage of certain life-saving medicines. Meanwhile, the failure of the West to specify an end-game for sanctions has strengthened the belief of the Iranian government that the goal is regime change rather than a negotiated agreement.

Even worse, constant threats of "pre-emptive" military attack not only violate the principles of the UN and international law but are also an incentive for nations to consider acquiring nuclear weapons for self-defense.



A serious approach to arms control would begin with the obligation of NPT signatories to push for reductions and eventually the elimination of nuclear weapons everywhere, not just in targeted enemies. A good step would be to support the call for a Middle East Nuclear Weapons Free Zone -- a proposal endorsed by Iran and every other country in the region, again with the exception of Israel.

This is no abstract pie-in-the-sky goal. Already, Nuclear Weapons Free Zones have been put in place under UN supervision in Central and South America, Africa and the Southeast Asia/Western Pacific regions. However, instead of pursuing this option in the Middle East the US, in deference to its nuclear-armed ally, has been blocking efforts to move the proposal forward. We should be demanding a reversal of this policy of obstruction, along with other measures to reduce, rather than inflame, tensions in the Middle East.

Anti-Nuclear Exhibits Head to Summer Festivals

Getting the word out on nuclear weapons is one of Mass Peace Action's prime goals. Where do things stand at this moment? What can we expect to be happening? And what can we do?



*Natick Earth Day, April 20, 2013
Metrowest Daily News photo*

Mass Peace Action will have an educational outreach program this summer, with tables at a large variety of summer festivals, with brochures, petitions, our informa-

tional nuclear globe, and our eye-catching presidential cardboard cutouts. Kids love the globe, pushing it around, while their parents are in a position to be approached to be talked to about the current nuclear situation. It has proved to be very effective last summer, and so we'll be doing a similar program this summer, partaking in about a dozen festivals in the Boston area.

This is a great opportunity for volunteers to be interacting with the general population in a very positive way, talking about the need to reduce nuclear weapons in this world, and the need ultimately to negotiate to get rid of all of them entirely. And the steps we need to take to get there.

We'll be calling on people interested in being part of this program in the next few weeks. Twelve festivals, of about 6 hours each, need a lot of "coverage". We'll provide the training and the support, if you can devote a couple of hours to this cause. Please contact the office if you would like to help!

- Guntram Mueller

2013 Legislative Agenda

As Congress' 2013 session develops, Massachusetts Peace Action has prepared our legislative agenda. Please see masspeaceaction.org/congress for detailed information; we will keep it updated during the year.

On **Afghanistan**, we support Barbara Lee's H.R.200, which provides funds only for troop withdrawal, not for continued war. Reps. McGovern, Markey and Capuano have co-sponsored it.

On **Iran**, we support negotiations on all outstanding issues of concern to both countries, and oppose war and sanctions, while opposing nuclear proliferation. We support Barbara Lee's H.R.783, which enhances diplomacy with Iran and prevents military action without Congressional approval; it is cosponsored by Rep. McGovern. We oppose H.R. 850, which sanctions all trade between Iran and other countries, and which would restrain the Administration's flexibility to negotiate; it has unfortunately been cosponsored by Reps. Markey, Kennedy and Keating.

On **nuclear weapons**, we support Rep. Markey's H.R.1506, the SANE Act, which would eliminate nuclear-armed bombers, delay construction of new nuclear submarines, prevent modernization of nuclear weapons and construction of new nuclear weapons production plants, and save \$100 billion which could be used to fund jobs and education. Reps. McGovern, Tierney, and Keating have joined Rep. Markey in cosponsoring this critical legislation.

On the **military budget**, we supported the Progressive Caucus' "Back to Work Budget", which would have cut Pentagon spending by \$900 billion over ten years, ended the war in Afghanistan sooner than the Administration's plan, invested in jobs, education, infrastructure, and green energy projects, closed corporate tax loopholes, raised taxes on wealthy citizens and established a carbon tax. This measure won 84 votes in the House of Representatives; we thank Reps. Markey, McGovern, Capuano, Tierney and Lynch for their support and regret that Reps. Kennedy, Keating, Tsongas and Neal voted no.

On **Israel/Palestine**, we oppose H.R. 938, the so-called U.S.-Israel Strategic Partnership Act, which would deepen the one-sided military alliance between the U.S. and Israel and undermine a balanced resolution of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. Unfortunately, Reps. Keating and Markey have co-sponsored this harmful legislation.

We also support Barbara Lee's Audit the Pentagon Act (H.R. 559) and her bill to establish a Department of Peacebuilding (H.R.808), and Rep. Raúl Grijalva's Arms Sale Responsibility Act (H.R. 479) to begin to control the international arms trade.

Please contact your Member of Congress at **(202) 224-3121!** Thank him or her for supporting pro-peace legislation, ask them to sponsor legislation we support if they have not yet signed on, and register your objection when legislators support pro-war legislation.



Thank You!

In a non-profit organization such as ours we rely heavily on the generosity of volunteers and members. Here are just a few who deserve our thanks.

Maria Battaglia of Quincy has videotaped many of our events and shows over the years and shows them on Quincy cable and BNN. Thank to Maria for helping to get the progressive message out to the public. And for those who missed Jamal Abdi at our annual meeting, stay tuned for the video that Maria is editing.

To **Laurie Taymor-Berry** for her work on Beacon Hill: besides knowing her way around the hallways of the State House, Laurie also knows the legislators. She was instrumental in getting co-sponsors on the Budget for All resolution, walking a copy around the State House and asking Reps. and Senators to sign on. The bill is now in the Veterans and Foreign Affairs Committee where we hope to have a hearing soon. Good work Laurie & thank you.

And while planning for our "Have a Heart" Valentine's Day actions, some artist friends helped design Valentine cards for constituents to mail to their legislators. Thanks to **Faith Madzar** and **Marael Sorenson** for their work on the cards and for having a heart!

John Ratliff, a recent migrant from Florida, has jumped in with both feet organizing events, doing data entry, sending e-alerts, arranging furniture and generally being helpful. Welcome John!

Concert Rescheduled!



The Schumann and Rachmaninov concert scheduled for April 19 was postponed because of police action following the Boston Marathon bombing. Please check

the website for a new date coming up soon!

Save the Dates ...

MUSIC FOR PEACE 2013-14 Concert Series



Music Director: Victor Rosenbaum, former chair, New England Conservatory piano department

Three Saturday evenings of chamber music to support educational activities to promote a more peaceful U.S. foreign policy

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NOVEMBER 23, 2013: Music of Beethoven, including the Violin Sonata in G Major, Opus 96 and the "Archduke" Trio, Opus 97 with Nicholas Kitchen, violin and Yeesun Kim, cello -- both of the Borromeo Quartet, joined by Victor Rosenbaum, piano

FEBRUARY 1, 2014: Special Winter Presentation: Schubert's Greatest Song Cycle "Die Winterreise" (Winter Journey) performed by the renowned Viennese baritone Georg Lehner and Victor Rosenbaum, piano

MAY 10, 2014: Brahms Birthday Concert: Victor Rosenbaum and Friends perform chamber works, including the brooding Clarinet Trio and the stormy Piano Trio in c minor.

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Peace Action 
11 Garden Street, Cambridge, MA 02138
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