



Peace & Planet: A Cry for Nuclear Disarmament

*Jonathan King,
Cambridge*

On April 26, 70 years after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, thousands of people gathered in New York to demand immediate action to negotiate the end of nuclear weapons. The Peace & Planet mobilization aimed to build momentum for the UN's Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference, which opened April 27.

The NPT is a bargain between the states that have nuclear weapons and those that don't, but the nuclear weapons states, led by the U.S., have not kept their side of the bargain – which commits them to negotiate in good faith the elimination of their nuclear arsenals.

From Japan to Norway, Kazakhstan to the Navajo Nation, South Korea to Harlem,



Assumption College (Worcester) students in New York

and California to Boston, people from every corner of the globe and every walk of life came to voice the common demand of humanity: **We must eliminate nuclear weapons before they eliminate us.**

The rally, march, peace festival and interfaith convocation were preceded by a conference at Cooper Union on April 24-25 attended by over 600 representatives of the world's nuclear disarmament organizations. Leaders from around the world addressed the conference, including Japanese A-bomb survivors, a group of Native Americans, and the Marshall Islanders, who were unknowing victims of the nuclear testing in the Pacific. Daniel Ellsberg made clear the increasing danger of nuclear weapons use, and Jo Comerford of MoveOn.org described cogently the enormous fiscal cost of the nuclear weapons buildup, and the draining of funds from federal programs that address human and environmental needs.

Conference delegates from Mass. Peace

Action organized workshops on themes including "Teaching High School and College Students about Nuclear Weapons", "Foreign Policy for All", "Move the Money", "Referenda, Resolutions, Petitions and Platforms," and "WMD- Free Middle East". MAPA staged a student art contest to design posters that we carried in New York, and brought at least 75 people from Massachusetts.

Over 100 "Global Wave" gatherings worldwide waved goodbye to nuclear weapons, including in Newburyport and Natick. Lowell House at Harvard University rang its enormous Russian bells for nuclear disarmament.

Mass. Peace Action aims to make nuclear disarmament a political issue that candidates for office will have to address. One strategy will be to follow-up on the **Budget for All** referendum and develop arguments and materials showing how the enormous costs of the planned nuclear weapons modernization are undermining national and local economies.

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Kucinich, Sekou Call for Renewal of the Peace Movement

"The work that you do at Peace Action, that each one of you is involved in, is so important," said former Presidential candidate Dennis Kucinich Feb. 7 at "Planting the Seeds of a Foreign Policy for All", Massachusetts Peace Action's annual meeting. "In all of your existence you've arrived at a moment where whatever you do and where we do it is more important.

Sekou pointed out.

At workshops, environmental economist Frank Ackerman outlined strategies to overcome climate change, 9/11 family member Terry Rockefeller reported on Iraqi nonviolent resistance, and MIT professor Jonathan King explained plans for the Peace & Planet nuclear abolition which was held in New York on April 26 (see p.1).

The ACLU's Carl Williams and Lizzy Jean Padgett of Deep Abiding Love addressed racial justice, the National Priorities Project's Lindsay Koshgarian dissected the 2016 Federal Budget, and the US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation's Mike Coo-

gan spoke about how to advocate for Palestinian rights in a hostile Congress.

The membership endorsed MAPA's 2015 program work plan and affirmed the Foreign Policy for All framework.

Meet Our New Board Members

The annual meeting elected 5 new members to MAPA's Board of Directors.



Subrata Ghoshroy, of Jamaica Plain, worked for 20 years as an engineer, then for the Government Accountability Office and the House Armed Services Committee, where he

was a whistle-blower on the missile defense program. Now a research associate at MIT's program in Science, Technology and Society, he speaks and publishes widely as a critic of Pentagon research spending.



Retired psychiatric nurse **Rosemary Kean** co-chairs the Social Justice Committee of the First Church in Boston and represents it to the Greater Boston

Interfaith Organization. She is an active member of Dorchester People for Peace, the Budget for All campaign, the Coalition to Fund Our Communities/Cut Military Spending 25%, and Jobs Not Jails.



Maryellen Kurkulos grew up in and presently resides in Fall River and has also lived in New York, Baltimore, and Athens, Greece. She has led

Budget for All and other anti-war and social justice organizing in the Fall River area. She has a Ph.D. in biological sciences from Columbia, has researched and taught molecular biology and genetics, and also works as a Greek interpreter.



Lifelong Cambridge resident **Denise Simmons** is serving her sixth term as a Cambridge City Councilor. She has been Mayor of

Cambridge (the nation's first openly lesbian Black mayor), a school committee member, and executive director of the Cambridge Civic Unity Committee.



Ken Yarbrough is Chief Information Officer for Boston City Councilor Charles Yancey. He is a reporter, researcher, interview-

er, and producer for the print and broadcast industries and has produced programming on racism, current affairs, international relations, and drug rehabilitation. He is a singer/songwriter/guitarist and an emergency medical technician.



The existence of the world actually hangs in the balance," Kucinich continued.

Kucinich praised the "Foreign Policy for All" framework (FP4A), a values-based set of policy proposals that call for demilitarization, justice, and internationalism, which our members affirmed at the February meeting. MAPA's FP4A working group is presenting the FP4A nationally this spring at the Peace & Planet conference, Left Forum, and US Social Forum, and preparing to use it to influence the conversation as the 2016 presidential contest develops. Kucinich urged stronger efforts to rebuild the peace and justice movement to put FP4A into practice.

Rev. Osagyefo Sekou, an organizer of the Ferguson protests against police murders of young Black men, called on the peace movement to renew itself by deep engagement with the protest movement led by young, poor Blacks. "The same tear gas that is used in Ferguson is used in Palestine. The police chief of Ferguson was trained by Israel, and the militaristic police tactics now being used on protests in the U.S. were developed in Israel,"

Tax Day Forum Boosts “People’s Budget”

Paul Shannon, Somerville

On Saturday, April 11 the Budget for All Coalition brought together speakers from 21 social justice, climate, peace, environmental, community and labor rights groups for its annual Tax Day rally and forum. They included Barbara Madeloni (president of the Mass. Teachers Association), Richard Stutman (president of the Boston Teachers Union), Quinton Zondervan from the Better Future Project, Toni Bee from Black Lives Matter, Carolyn Federoff (Vice President, Mass. AFL-CIO) as well as representatives from Fight for 15, SEIU 1199, the Worcester Unemployment Action group, the Mass. Alliance of HUD Tenants, the Mass. Sierra Club, Mass. Senior Action, the American Friends Service Committee, Health Justice for Boston, Homes for Families, MoveOn.org, and Council for a Livable World.

These organizations were joined at Old South Church by Mel King, Grace Ross, State Senators Jason Lewis and Jamie Eldridge, State Rep. Jay Livingstone, Jill Stein and comedian Jimmy Kimmel to give voice to the agenda of the Budget for All Campaign: Prevent cuts to Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, housing, food and unemployment assistance; invest in good jobs in education, renewable energy and mass transit; fund these programs by ending corporate and high income tax breaks; reduce the Pentagon budget and bring the troops home.

This is the agenda that was placed on the ballot in 2012 in 91 cities and towns across the state in a massive grassroots effort carried out by 80 organizations. Everywhere up and down the state, this people’s agenda won by margins of 2 to 1, 3 to 1 or even 4 to 1.



The Tax Day event was part of an effort to build the Budget for All campaign into a crossroads in Massachusetts, where numerous social movement groups connect up with each other around a shared agenda related to the Federal Budget. All of our groups are going to be impacted by major Federal budget decisions, so we need a vehicle to oppose the austerity budgets coming out of Washington and to promote a prosperity budget instead.

This work is especially important now. With the new Republican Congress, ominous budget discussions loom in which proposals are being made to eviscerate vital programs, increase military spending, and slash environmental protection and efforts to combat climate change. As these plans take shape, the

Budget for All Campaign is seeking to reinvigorate its coalition, involving as many people as possible in holding high the banner of a common sense and moral alternative to the austerity and militaristic budgets that are now being proposed.

One strategy we will pursue in the coming year will be to develop a relationship with groups in other states who have “move the money” campaigns and with the Congressional Progressive Caucus (CPC) so that we are in a position to have a more coordinated and powerful mobilization around the CPC’s “Peoples Budget” next year.

In addition, the Budget for All Resolution has been filed in the State Senate as S.1906 and in the House of Representatives as H.3144. We will try once again to create an event around the public hearing for the bill, which will allow us to involve a broad range of groups in the effort to get the bill passed this year and mobilize public sentiment for a common sense budget that undergirds a society in which there is a place for everyone.

If your church social justice committee, community group, or labor union is ready to get involved with the Budget for All coalition or would like a speaker at your meeting, please contact Cole Harrison (MAPA) at 617-354-2169 or Paul Shannon (AFSC) at 617-623-5288.

MAPA Members Carry Peace Message to Congress

Updates on Mass. Peace Action’s advocacy with elected officials

Katherine Clark: Eva Moseley met Rep. Clark at her office hours at Cafe Zing in April, thanking her for skipping Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu’s speech to Congress, and suggesting non-official people for her to visit in Palestine when she visits Israel in August. The next week, Shelagh Foreman, John MacDougall, Ernesta Krackiewicz, and Faith Madzar met with Geoff Browning, Clark’s foreign policy aide. They asked Rep. Clark to sponsor the SANE Act (HR.1534),

which she promised to do while running for Congress but has not yet done.

Joseph Kennedy III: Carol Coakley attended a February meeting with Kennedy organized by several unions regarding the Trans-Pacific Partnership and Fast Track. Kennedy expressed his opposition to Fast Track.

After several meetings with constituents complaining about his one-sided support of Israel during and after last year’s Israeli assault on Gaza, Rep. Kennedy wrote a letter to constituents that expressed concern about Palestinians’ rights and future.

Ed Markey: MAPA organized a letter to Sen. Markey urging him to support the Iran nuclear deal framework and to oppose the Corker bill, which encourages Congressional interference in the negotiations. It was signed by nuclear experts, professors, philanthropists, and leaders of labor and community organizations.

Seth Moulton: Moulton was the only Mass. Rep to vote *against* reducing the Pentagon’s OCO slush fund. MAPA, the North Shore Coalition for Peace & Justice and North Shore Labor Council rallied May 8 to press Moulton for a commitment to vote No on Fast Track.

Interns' Corner



Mira Rifai
Cambridge Rindge &
Latin School

Teenagers are the future leaders of the world, and it is our obligation to fight injustice while we're still young before our turn of controlling the world comes. We need to be ready to face the real world by fighting the injustice that people have to live through every day.

This generation of teenagers is made up of many passionate people who want to work together to eliminate what holds us back from being a loving and caring world. We could be a whole different story with the recent movements and unity that young people have demonstrated. We, teenagers and adults, must stand together side by side to fight against the injustice that millions and generations after generations have quietly suffered. We need to set aside the fear of the consequences of fighting injustice -- they are not nearly as hurtful as the consequences of injustice and racism.

We have the power to use our voice to make a difference not only for us, the people of tomorrow, but generations after us to come and to show them that their voices also always count. The people united will never be defeated!

Jenny Horsburgh
Newton North High
School



I'm a sophomore at Newton North High School -- generally known as the girl who rants about politics. I belong to Divest Newton, which began as a student club at North, and then became a broader local coalition aiming to convince the city of Newton to endorse state divestment of pension funds from fossil fuel stocks.

Divestment is a hopeful movement and a powerful symbolic action--saying fossil fuel stocks are no longer safe or acceptable to invest in--but it is only one facet of a greater surge of action and change.

Other aspects of this could include a tax on the release of too much carbon into the atmosphere. We could have subsidies for the renewable energy sector--and end those for fossil fuels. We could launch campaigns to take back our energy grids. With a saner budget, we could demand back the money handed to the military and the ultra-rich, and use it to keep this planet alive. And we must remember the links and exacerbating effects climate crises have with other issues--racism, inequality, poverty. The little steps, better light bulbs or more efficient cars, can't be our end-all-and-be-all: there's a whole system out there standing in the way of a better world.

This system is insidious, but it's not hidden. It's in the ten times more money going to the military than education. It's in the trade agreements that would allow corporations to sue governments for lost profits. It's in politicians bought and sold by corporations. It's in the way our cities and communities wither while the wealth divide grows.

It's in the majority of fossil fuels that we cannot extract if we want to keep this planet in livable condition, but which the fossil fuel companies fully intend to burn. It's the deadly absurdity of the world we live in, and it is beyond clear that we've got to change it.

As part of the generation that will inherit the wreckage of this earth, I can say that all my life I've grown up in fear of the future. I see the climate becoming chaotic and volatile, and all around me people either wring their hands or close their eyes, and act like everything is going on as normal. Kids my age tell me "I hate politics," and I tell them, so do I, but you can't live in apathy just because the world looks prettier from there. Nothing will change if you avoid it or don't care. Instead, trillions will keep being spent to fortify a structure that has no place in it for most of us, no place for the sustainable ways of living we might otherwise build. Maybe we can't change everything in time, but if we don't try, to quote the punk rock band Bad Religion, "the arid torpor of inaction will be our demise."

Massachusetts Students Organize for Peace

Alina Michelewicz, Newburyport



This May marks one year that Massachusetts Peace Action has had a campus organizer. Although there have been ups and downs as MAPA embarks into the world of student organizing,

overall the year has been a success. As the Campus Organizer, I have enjoyed working at MAPA to try to increase student and youth involvement in the peace and justice movement.

This past year I have done outreach to over 45 campuses in Massachusetts and held over a dozen one-to-ones with students and faculty in the greater Boston area to better get to know what makes peace activists on college campuses tick these days. Outreach and education to students are ongoing processes, and are very important to cultivate the leaders of tomorrow's peace movement. We have begun to grow a student email list and have a daily presence on social media in order to educate and engage young people about current issues.

In the fall we held an event on the Gaza

war at Suffolk University, and three campus talks about Iraq and Syria. With AFSC, we reached over 500 high school students with talks about nuclear weapons by Japanese hibakusha (A-bomb survivors), and we brought over a dozen students from Assumption College and Harvard to the Peace & Planet rally in NYC.

The summer will be a time to plan and double down on outreach in anticipation of the new school year. I look forward to continuing efforts to engage young activists in the peace movement through our work with high school and college students.

U.S. Interventionism vs. Peace: An Update from the Front Lines

Samuel Rogers, Wellesley

Iran

After over a year of diplomatic talks and several deadline extensions, the U.S. (as part of the P5+1) and Iran announced a framework agreement at the beginning of April which, if finalized, would assuage fears for at least the next decade that Iran could build a nuclear weapon, while simultaneously lifting economic sanctions against the Middle Eastern nation. While this agreement represents an unprecedented example of U.S. diplomacy with Iran, the deal won't be finalized until negotiators work out more specific details of the agreement by the new deadline of June 30th. Hawks in Congress continue to maneuver to find a way to undermine or kill the deal, but they have so far not been able to rally a veto-proof majority of 67 senators to do so.

Syria/ Iraq

The expansion of ISIS/ Islamic State/ Daesh in Iraq and Syria slowed after Iraqi militias, aided by the national army, Iran, and the US, retook Tikrit in April and after US bombing raids in Iraq and Syria. Back-and-forth fighting and fluctuating occupation of territories has continued on both sides of ISIS' front line in Iraq and Syria. The Sunni jihadist group has continued to maintain its overwhelming recruitment rate and financing. The UN estimates that 220,000 Syrians have died and 9 million have fled their homes, 4 million of them to other countries; civilians continue to be caught in the crossfire as the US continues to attempt to solve a political problem by military means. The US continues to impede a UN-brokered diplomatic settlement of the Syrian civil war because of its

insistence that President Assad must go. ISIS has been increasingly expanding its activity beyond Iraq and Syria, most recently with the massacre of Ethiopian Christians in Libya and allegedly plotted, but thwarted, attacks in Australia.

Yemen

Saudi Arabia and Gulf allies intervened in Yemen's civil war in March with U.S. military support, bombing the Houthi rebels and forces loyal to former President

Western Ukraine to train Ukrainian National Guard forces, further inflaming the lingering Cold War political atmosphere in the region. In March, MAPA opposed a resolution to provide military assistance to Ukraine; Reps. McGovern, Tsongas, Clark, and Capuano voted no, but the resolution passed.

Cuba

In December 2014, both the U.S. and Cuban governments announced plans to begin thawing diplomatic tensions that have kept the two nations at odds for over 50 years. Since that time, each side has made concessions to the other with increasing frequency. What started as a handshake has been transformed into tangible political achievements: prisoners have been freed and trade, travel, and monetary exchange restrictions have



NIAC

Saleh. The intensive, month-long campaign caused over 1,000 civilian casualties. Though claiming to protect civilians, the Saudis are still bombing with US-made cluster bombs, illegal under international law, and still intend to rout Houthi ground forces, which is sure to cause more casualties and suffering.

Ukraine

Since last year's Western-supported coup in Kiev, Eastern and Western Ukraine have been split in a violent conflict over loyalty to the EU (Government/ West) or Russia (Rebels/ East). Over 6,000 people have died since the fighting began. A second ceasefire was agreed in February, but violence still continues from both sides. Tentative agreements have been made to pull back both small and large caliber arms from the front lines, but there has yet to be any substantial action on this matter from either side. This past April, the U.S. sent roughly 300 troops to

been lifted over the past several months. President Obama recently removed Cuba from the U.S. government's "State Sponsors of Terror" list. Reopening of embassies is expected to follow, but lifting the U.S. trade embargo on Cuba will require Congressional action.

Venezuela (Jenny Horsburgh)

Socialist Venezuela has entered a new phase of confrontation with the U.S. On February 12th, President Nicolas Maduro's government foiled a coup attempt by the US-supported opposition movement (reminiscent of a similar attempt in 2002), and President Obama in March preposterously branded Venezuela an "extreme threat" to U.S. security. Maduro claims that the US is waging an economic war. Venezuela is now engaged in a fight for survival of its socialist ideals. The alternative is submission to the future the architects in Washington prefer.

Peace and Justice Calendar

Summer 2015

masspeaceaction.org/events

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|---------------------------|--|
| Sun May 24 11:00 am | The Cost of War, the Price of Peace: Kathy Kelly out of prison Community Church of Boston, 565 Boylston St |
| Mon May 25 1:00 pm | Memorial Day for Peace – Veterans for Peace Christopher Columbus Park, Boston |
| Fri May 29 7:00 pm | Listen, Yankee! Why Cuba Matters – Tom Hayden Jamaica Plain Forum, 6 Eliot St. <i>Also at Community Ch. May 31</i> |
| Tue June 2 7:00 pm | No Olympics in Boston – Dave Zirin and Kade Crockford Hope Central Church, 85 Seaverns Ave, Boston |
| Sat June 6 Noon to 5pm | Cambridge River Festival – join MAPA at our table Central Square area |
| June 13-16 | March for Our Children – Shut Pilgrim Now Plymouth, Kingston, Scituate, Braintree, State House |
| Sat July 25 | Lowell Folk Festival – join MAPA at our table |
| Thu Aug 6 | Hiroshima Day – Never Again – Events Across Massachusetts Boston – Copley Sq area - Details TBA |

Mass. Peace Action board of directors: Rosalie Anders, James Babson, Carol Coakley (vice chair), Shelagh Foreman, Subrata Ghoshroy, Bonnie Gorman, So Yeon Jeong, Rosemary Kean, Jeff Klein, Maryellen Kurkulos, John Maher, Eva Moseley, Guntram Mueller (chair), Prasannan Parthasarathi, John Ratliff, Pat Salomon, Denise Simmons, Ken Yarbrough

Education Fund board: Rosalie Anders (chair), Christie Dennis, Shelagh Foreman, Gary Goldstein, Eva Moseley

Staff: Cole Harrison, **executive director**; Carol Coakley, **office coordinator**; Alina Michelewicz, **campus organizer & asst. director**; **Interns:** Alex Clark, Jenny Horsburgh, Mira Rifai.

Newsletter Editors: Samuel Rogers and Cole Harrison

Join us!

Massachusetts Peace Action or MAPA is a nonpartisan, nonprofit membership 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 18,000 members and 30 state affiliates across the country.

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

- \$65 Family membership
- \$40 Individual membership
- \$10 Limited income or student

Make tax-deductible donations in any amount to the Massachusetts Peace Action Education Fund. Mail check to 11 Garden St, Cambridge, MA 02138 or go online to

masspeaceaction.org/donate

What We Do

- Mobilize and educate 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.
- Address specific issue areas in our working groups
- 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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