

The New Jersey PEACE Maker

Publication of NJ Peace Action and NJ Peace Action Education Fund

Founded 1957—54 Years of Citizen Action

Volume 16 Issue 1, Winter 2011

NEW START TREATY RATIFIED



We enthusiastically welcome the Senate's Dec. 22 vote to ratify the New START nuclear arms pact with Russia. START, or Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, will reduce each country's deployed, strategic nuclear weapons to 1,550 warheads, a reduction of up to 30%. That is still far too many, but this real step toward a nuclear-weapons free world is cause for celebration!

Our members joined with grassroots activists in Peace Action affiliates and chapters across the country to educate the public and pressure senators to support the treaty. NJ Peace Action delivered hundreds of petitions calling for nuclear disarmament to our senators' offices in late November (pictured above, with

Diane Beeny and Nancy Taiani of NJPA with Sen. Lautenberg's aide, just as the push for a Senate vote on the treaty intensified.

Ratification came at a high political price, including a pledge from the Obama Administration to spend \$184 billion over the coming decade to "modernize" the nuclear weapons production complex and delivery systems.

As we celebrate new START ratification and a renewed commitment to disarmament, our work is not yet finished—we must oppose the U.S. nuclear arsenal upgrade. Our ongoing work for nuclear disarmament will help ensure that the new START will *truly* be a "new start" toward global abolition of all nuclear weapons in the decades to come.

Soup Lunch Brings Zinn History to Life

At our 53rd annual soup lunch on Nov. 20, we brought history to life in a program dedicated to Howard Zinn, the historian, activist and author.

Zinn, who died last year, was best known for writing about history from the viewpoint of the ordinary and the oppressed instead of the rich and powerful in his *People's History of the United States*. The writings he collected in *Voices of A People's History*. enabled us to hear them tell their stories in their own words.

At the soup lunch, a talented group of readers read from that work, bringing to passionate life the words of abolitionist Sojourner Truth, union leader Eugene Debs, human rights activist Rachel Corrie, among others.

Larry Hamm, chair of the People's Organization for Progress, delivered an emotionally charged and dramatic recitation of a Frederick Douglass speech from July 1852. *Cont'd on p. 2*

SUNDAY, MAY 1st, 12-4p.m. NJPA's 54th ANNUAL DINNER

Regency House, Pompton Plains, NJ

featuring keynote speaker
JUAN COLE,
author, *Engaging the Muslim World*

HONORING
Islamic Center of Morris County
Jerry Stillman, Peace Action Person of Year

Reservations required.
www.njpeaceaction.org 973-259-1126

New Jersey Peace Action and the New Jersey Peace Action Education Fund—founded in 1957—are committed to working through grassroots citizen action to abolish nuclear weapons, end domestic and international weapons trafficking, demilitarize the federal budget and teach non-violent conflict resolution.



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OBAMA PEACE REPORT CARD AT MID-TERM: HE DOESN'T MAKE THE GRADE

New Jersey Peace Action has monitored President Obama's progress on his peaceful campaign promises since he first took office in January 2009. Now, at mid-term, we have assessed his progress in a Mid-Term Report Card. (Go to www.njpeaceaction.org for a link to it.)

President Obama gets his best grades on nuclear disarmament for setting his Administration's tone on this issue in public statements in April 2009 and for rallying for the START Treaty ratification this past December. But he lost points for the concessions he made, including funding for nuclear weapons laboratories, to get the treaty passed. And he received a failing grade on the war in Afghanistan, now in its 10th year with no end in sight.

Our below-average grade for President Obama's progress on his peaceful campaign promises is a D-. He can bring his grades up by ending the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and bringing all our troops home; closing Guantánamo Prison as pledged in his first days in office; and moving the money from almost \$800 billion in military spending to human needs.

How would you grade President Obama on progress made on his peaceful campaign promises? We invite you to send your proposed grades and comments on President Obama's work on peace and justice issues to nj_peaceaction@yahoo.com or to post them on our Facebook Fan page "New Jersey Peace Action."

You can also be part of helping President Obama raise his grades, and bringing the world closer to peace, by joining us in advocating for peace throughout the year at our events and actions. Check out the calendar of events on page 4 and check our website, www.njpeaceaction.org, periodically for more information on upcoming actions, events, lobby visits, and tabling opportunities.

Update on NJ Peace Action's Use of New Technologies

Are you already a member of NJ Peace Action's Facebook Group? If so, then be sure to join our new Facebook Fan Page to find what's happening at NJ Peace Action. To become a fan, click <http://www.facebook.com/pages/New-Jersey-Peace-Action/124541870917828#!/pages/New-Jersey-Peace-Action/124541870917828>.

And if you are on Twitter, be sure to follow us at "NJPeaceAction." For pictures and stories about our latest events, links to our work and a calendar of events, visit our website (www.njpeaceaction.org).

Our website also includes a newly activated peace blog. We invite your comments so that we can have an ongoing dialogue on peace issues. If you would like to post to the blog, please contact nj_peaceaction@yahoo.com. We are pleased to welcome our new blogger, Ted Guggenheim. Look for regular posts from Ted on the blog and join the conversation!

Soup Luncheon, cont.

NJPA member Clint Hebard followed with a 1970 Zinn speech that provided critical reflections on America and on civil disobedience.

The readings emphasized the ideas of internationalism, activism, solidarity and a critique of society by the working poor, minorities, women and those often pushed to society's margins. The event's celebration of the teachings of peacemakers and activists past and present left the attendees revitalized and reflective.

With wars being waged at home and abroad, the so-called age of austerity bearing down upon the working and marginalized classes, and a national leadership losing its connection to its progressive base, these readings provided pertinent social and political commentary on the continuing struggle for social justice and peace. As Howard Zinn elucidated, through the voice of Hebard, we must "**start from the supposition that the world is topsy turvy.**" These words are as true today as when they were first spoken in 1970.

If you are interested in experiencing these dramatic readings yourself, many of which we are not able to mention here, a DVD of the entire event may be purchased for \$15 from NJ Peace Action.

~LEAVE A LEGACY~

Help perpetuate your commitment to peace and justice by remembering New Jersey Peace Action in your will. Bequests and life insurance to the NJPA Education Fund are tax-deductible. For more information on planned giving options, please contact us.



Legislative Action Alert



Toll-free number for Congressional switchboard: 800-517-5696 or 866-220-0044

- 1. The Costs of War: A Call for Poetry and Works of Art Depicting the Human and Financial Costs of War.** A public art exhibit, from March 6 to April 8, 2011 held at the Puffin Cultural Forum in Teaneck, will feature art and poetry by adults and children, war veterans and military family members about the human and financial costs of war. On Sunday, March 20th, the 8th anniversary of the invasion of Iraq, "Looking at the Costs of War through the Arts" will be held at the Puffin from 4 to 6 pm. The event will feature local poets, rap and spoken word artists, singers, and musicians. The Costs of War exhibit and event are co-sponsored by Military Families Speak Out, Bergen County; Veterans for Peace, Chapter 21 NJ; NJ Peace Action; The Teaneck Peace Vigil, and a host of other organizations. Contact NJ Peace Action or e-mail Thecostsofwar@gmail.com for more information about submitting your own works of art and poetry, to help to publicize the art exhibit and the March 20 program, or to be a co-sponsor.
- 2. Join Peace Action for a Spring Lobby Weekend.—March 19-22, 2011 Washington, DC.** On the 8th anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Iraq, make your voice opposing the war heard in the halls of Congress. The lobby weekend will focus primarily on the ending the war in Afghanistan and cutting the overwhelming military budget. For more information, visit our website at www.njpeaceaction.org or the Peace Action website at www.peace-action.org. If you can't go to D.C., contact our office to let us know if you want to organize a local lobby visit.
3. Interested in becoming a **Peace Site**, a place for thinking and talking about how to create a peaceful world? For more information, please contact Judith Arnold at ajarno@msn.com.

2010 was a banner year for New Jersey Peace Action.
We celebrated ratification of the new START Treaty and
our members responded by increasing their support for our work.
Let's keep the momentum going!

NJPA Priorities
 Move the \$\$\$\$
 End the Wars
 Improve NJPA infrastructure

Yes, I want my voice for peace and justice heard! I will renew my membership today.

\$35 \$52 (\$1 a week) \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1000 \$_____

Become a sustainer. This is an excellent way to help support NJ Peace Action throughout the year. Consider that \$10 a month for peace adds up to \$120 for the year, \$20 a month adds up to \$240 for the year, \$50 a quarter adds up to \$200 for the year, and \$250 a quarter adds up to \$1,000 for the year!

- Sign me up! I am enclosing \$_____ as my first month's/quarter's (*circle one*) installment!
- I will contribute an extra \$5 to support national Peace Action's important work for peace.

Name _____ E-mail _____

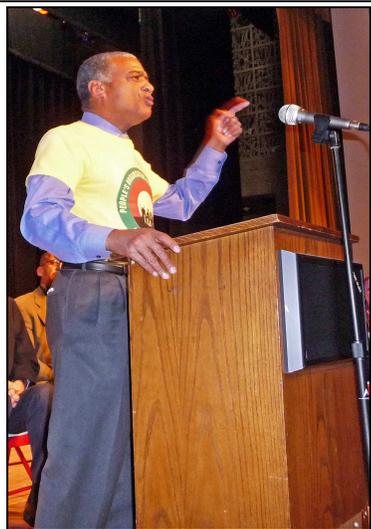
Address _____

City _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Credit Card: Visa MasterCard American Express

Credit Card No. _____ Expiration Date _____

Contribute \$100 or more and receive monthly bulletins, as well as a DVD from NJPA's 11/20/10 presentation of "Voices of a People's History"



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Quote for the Season . . .

"We are spending \$119 Billion in Afghanistan alone this year, enough to balance the budget of every state in the union or to end our unemployment problem through the creation of jobs providing needed services, rebuilding infrastructure, and inventing the future. Hypocritical and short-sighted politics is all that keeps these wars alive. We have to break this political silence and make this an election issue everywhere in 2012."

—**Bennet Zurofsky**, US/NJ Labor Against the War

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Check the calendar on our website, www.njpeaceaction.org for frequent updates on upcoming events.

- Wed., March 2 **"Prospects for Peace in Palestine"**—Talk by Rashid Khalidi, Edward Said Prof. of Arabic Studies at Columbia University. At Gandhian Forum for Peace and Justice, Ballroom C, William Paterson University. All are invited.
2 pm
- Sun., March 11 **Bernardsville Peace Vigil will commemorate 8th anniversary of U.S. Invasion of Iraq.**
10:30 to Meet at Mount Airy Rd. bridge and Route 202 south in Bernardsville. Rain, snow or shine.
11:30 am For more info, contact Nancy Lee McLure at 908-204-9572 or nlmclure@msn.com.
- Sat., March 26 **Anti-Bullying Program.** With Department of Peace Alliance's Susan Krcmar and NJPA Director Madelyn Hoffman. At Montclair Public Library on South Fullerton. Sponsored by Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF).
1 to 4 pm
- Sat., April 2 **Living Fully in Troubled Times, Honoring Our Feelings and Re-dedicating Our Energy.**
9:30 am to Led by Rev. Allen Wells at Morristown Unitarian Fellowship. Morristown. Co-sponsored by NJ
3:30 pm Peace Action. For info, contact Jo Sippie-Gora at seedofpeacemuf@optonline.net or 973-838-8576
- Sat., April 9 **United National Anti-War Committee March and Rally to Bring the Troops Home Now!**
Noon Meet in NYC at Union Square, 14th St. and Broadway. Look for updates on NJ Peace contingent.
- Fri., April 15 **Tax Day Actions.** Various locations. Look for updates on actions/events around the Move the Money Campaign—reallocating funds from the wars to our communities.
- Sun., May 1 **NJPA's 54th Annual Dinner** featuring Juan Cole, author of *Engaging the Muslim World*. See Noon- 4:00pm box on page 1 for more information.

Above Photo Caption: Larry Hamm of People's Organization for Progress as Frederick Douglass.