

# PeaceEconomyNews



A Publication of the Peace Economy Project

Summer 2013

## We Should Not Send Military Support to Syria

by *Katerina Canyon, International Affairs Intern*

Last Thursday, President Barack Obama announced that he would provide limited military support to rebels in Syria in order to fight Bashar al-Assad's regime. The President's support was given in response to the discovery of evidence of the possibility that Assad's military used chemical weapons in small amounts in many locations throughout the region. President Obama considers this use of chemical weapons the "red line" that Assad should not have crossed.

Now that this metaphorical line has been crossed, President Obama believes he needs to deliver on his warnings. Obama claims the support that he plans to provide is minimal, and will not cause tremendous risk to American soldiers.

This is an inaccurate assessment. Military aid will only serve to further the war and casualties in Syria. The U.S. should not act to encourage a war that we can ill-afford to fight. We are just beginning to see the effects of sequestration. Just when the government works to decrease defense spending, Obama commits resources to Syrian rebels. This can only lead to a reversal of the cuts that many have worked hard to achieve, and beyond that, it would commit the U.S. to another over-funded war that over-taxes our severely depleted resources.

Immediately following Obama's announcement, Senator McCain appeared on CNN and stated that whatever plan proposed to Congress will not be enough. He stated, "We're going to... have to provide heavy weapons to the resistance. There's got to be anti-air and anti-tank missiles." According to McCain, the time for incremental increases has passed.

Considering that Senator McCain is proposing increases even before he sees the plan, Americans should prepare themselves for what will likely be significant changes to the defense budget. Russia has been providing weapons to Assad's regime for quite some time and just recently warned the West against aiding Syrian rebels. If the U.S. provides weapons, Russia's leadership will believe that it has no alternative but to extend further support to Syria. This will in turn pit this U.S. and Russia against one another in a game of one-upmanship.

On May 15 of this year, the United Nations adopted text condemning violence in Syria and called for all sides to work together for "an inclusive Syrian-led political transition to a democratic, pluralistic, political system." The U.N. further condemned Syrian authorities use of heavy weapons, and they stated that the violence in Syria is "fast becoming one of the most horrific humanitarian catastrophes of recent times."

While the rebels battle with al-Assad's fighting forces, millions of families are left in the cross-fire. Over 1.5 million refugees have left their homes in order to escape the violence that millions of others still face in Syria. This is a major humanitarian crisis that will only be worsened by U.S. involvement.

It is past time for Americans to say that we have had enough. Afghanistan and Iraq should have more than taught us that there is no minimal military solution to any military dispute around the world. If we as citizens allow this military intrusion in Syria, it will not only put the economic stability of the U.S. at risk, it will also add to the already out of control humanitarian crisis in Syria.

### Inside:

- 1 ..... *No Military to Syria*  
by Katerina Canyon
- 2 ..... *Trouble Spots—The Middle East*  
by Charlie Kindleberger
- 4 ..... *Why the U.S. Won't Sign the Arms Trade Treaty*  
by Allison Midori Reilly
- 5 ..... *PEP: The Year in Review*
- 6 ..... *My PEP Internship*  
by Katerina Canyon
- 7 ..... *2014 Budget, Sequester, Debt Ceiling*  
by Charlie Kindleberger
- 9 ..... *Too Much Money for Nuclear Weapons*  
by Charlie Kindleberger
- 9 ..... *PEP Goes to Washington*
- 11 ..... *New Direction in U.S. Foreign Policy*  
by Charlie Kindleberger
- 14 ..... *My Journey to PEP*  
by Jasmin Maurer
- 15 ..... *2012-13 Donors*

### Peace Economy News

You can receive either an email or print version of our publication by calling 314-726-6406 or emailing PEP at

[pep@peaceeconomyproject.org](mailto:pep@peaceeconomyproject.org)

We will be glad to make sure The Peace Economy News reaches you.

Visit us on the web at:

[www.peaceeconomyproject.org](http://www.peaceeconomyproject.org)

## World Trouble Spots – The Middle East in 2013

by *Charlie Kindleberger, Board Member*

There is some good news around the world. The global poverty rate has been cut in half during the past 20 years. The World Bank reports that 20 “fragile and conflict affected states” have met one or more targets under the millennium development goals (MDGs) with another six countries expected to meet targets by 2015. The World Bank measures progress towards reduction of extreme poverty, access to water, gender parity in education, maternal mortality, and finds some reason for hope.

Here at home there are also positive signs: High school graduation rates are up (highest since 2004), health care inflation is lower over the last four years, fewer Americans are dying in Afghanistan (72 during first half of 2013, lowest in five years) and the Swiss government has agreed to allow its banks to release the names of people who have evaded taxes with hidden investment accounts. Yet in much of the world the prospects for peace appear considerably worse than in past years.

Nowhere is this more true than in the **Middle East**. Here is a quick overview (halfway through 2013) of selected countries in the middle-east. Caution, things are dangerous and changing quickly.

**Syria.** The civil war over the last 27 months has resulted in an estimated 100,000 deaths, 1,700,000 refugees and intolerable living conditions for those left behind. As of June, the tide of battle seems to have turned back towards Bashar al-Assad’s regime. Secretary of State John Kerry convinced Russia to co-sponsor an international conference in Geneva; however, both the Syrian rebel leaders and Assad have not been convinced to attend.

There are so many parts in play: Russia’s declaration it would send anti-ship cruise missiles, A-300 Air Defense weapon systems and MIGs on behalf of Assad; Russia’s removal of forces from its naval base in Tartus, Hezbollah’s involvement (see Lebanon); the ideological mix of the opposition from Sunni moderates to Jabhat al-Nusra (aka the Al Nusra Front) and other jihadists; the EU’s vote to allow provision of weapons to the opposition in August; Israel’s threat to destroy the A-300 system if delivered to Syria, Iran, Iraq, the Kurds and more. Underlying it all are tensions ranging from uneasiness to hatred between Shiites and their Alawite offshoot, in addition to in between some Christians behind Assad and Sunni Muslims. Recently, England, France and the United States have said they will ship weapons to the rebels.

**Egypt.** A year after Mohammed Morsi’s inauguration, following Egypt’s first ever democratic election, the President has been forced out of office. In early July, crowds in the millions protested. Some ransacked the Islamic Brotherhood’s offices, and the Supreme Council of the Army threatened to “announce and enforce a new road map” even as they claimed they did not seek a military coup.

Morsi was challenged on many fronts. The Supreme Court dissolved the lower house of Parliament a year ago, and recently challenged the legitimacy of the upper house (the Shura Council). The upper house drafted the controversial constitution back in December and more recently had been considering legislation to force 3000 judges from office, by lowering the mandatory retirement age.

In addition to the judges, the police and the Interior Minister were said to be very dissatisfied. More generally, citizens are upset with the lack of reliable electricity, the price of wheat, the lack of tourism and above all the absence of jobs. Egypt has been the second highest non NATO recipient of US aid (recently \$1.3 billion in military aid and \$250 million in economic assistance annually) after Israel, reflecting our interests in an open Suez Canal, peace with Israel and Egypt’s powerful place in both the Arab and African world. On Wednesday, July 3, the Army removed President Morsi in what many are calling a second revolution after the overthrow of Hosni Mubarak two years ago.

**Iran.** A country of 78 million, with a large middle class, Iran and the United States have been on-again, off-again adversaries since the CIA helped overthrow the democratically elected prime minister Mohammad Mosaddegh in 1953. In recent years the tension has intensified after Iran reportedly purchased nuclear technology from Pakistan’s AQ Khan in the late 1980s. Iran claims that its only interest is in the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Yet there seems to be consensus that it has created around 210 pounds of enriched 20 percent grade uranium that could be converted into one or more nuclear weapons with relative ease. In March, the head of Iran’s Atomic Energy Organization stated that it was purchasing another 3000 advanced uranium enrichment centrifuges.

The UN Security Council has passed numerous resolutions imposing economic sanctions in the absence of serious negotiations. The P5 plus 1 nations (US, China, Russia, France, Britain and Germany) want Iran to invite the International Atomic Energy Association to inspect their facilities, and to demonstrate that there is no nuclear weapons program or hidden enrichment site. The sanctions are said to have badly hurt the country’s economy; yet the intermittent meetings have yielded little agreement.

There are plenty of other complicating factors: Iran’s missile testing; Holocaust denial and related anti-Semitic remarks by ex-president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad; and a new set of computer virus attacks targeted at American oil, electronic and gas companies. Of course, it is widely believed that the US and Israel initiated computer based sabotage (Olympic Games) in the past with the Stuxnet computer virus that damaged Iranian centrifuges. On the positive side, President elect Hassan Rohani, winner with more than 50 percent in June elections, appears level headed, and in contrast with his predecessor, less inclined to intervene in other countries. Remaining to be seen is his ability to get along with the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah

*continued on page 3*

continued from page 2

Ali Khamenei and Iranian Guardian Council, which can declare any law to be in violation of the constitution and/or Islamic law.

**Israel.** This traditional, if frustrating ally, has been the focus this spring of intense shuttle diplomacy on the part of Secretary of State Kerry as he strives to restart negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authorities. The issues are familiar. Palestinians want their land, freedom and economic growth. They are concerned about continued Israeli settlements on the west bank and in east Jerusalem, about settler violence and about Palestinian prisoners. Israel is concerned about security, especially from Gaza, which fired 1000 rockets into Israel



Charlie Kindleberg and Jasmin Maurer

last November (many destroyed with their “Iron Dome” anti-missile system), but also from Hezbollah in Lebanon (with its rockets from Iran) and from Syria near the Golan Heights.

In late spring there have been signs of progress: The Quartet (United States, Russia, the European Union and the United Nations) have committed to raising \$4 billion to invest in the West Bank and Gaza. Former Prime Minister Tony Blair has agreed to lead this consortium; the Arab League has reaffirmed its previous peace initiative endorsing land swaps; a group of 300 influential Palestinian and Israeli executives called “Breaking the Impass” has met more than 20 times over the past year. Still, in early July after five visits in recent months by Secretary Kerry, there was no agreement between Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Mahmud Abbas to even come to the same table.

#### *Others:*

**Bahrain.** This Persian Gulf island adjacent to Saudi Arabia has an on-again, off-again history of human rights violations. The home of the US Forces Naval Central Command and the Fifth Fleet, Bahrain has experienced increasing tension between the King’s Sunni minority (30 percent) and the Shia (70 percent) majority. King Hamid Bin Isa Al-khafa instituted a constitution that grants “freedom of opinion and expression;” however, Shia protesters have discovered that it isn’t always in effect. Half of the 1.2 million people are non-nationals from places like India and Sri Lanka.

**Iraq.** The tragedy of Iraq continues, mostly removed from American headlines. There is not killing on the scale of Syria, but it is constant. Every day or two there is a car bomb here or a suicide bomber there; reportedly the number of deaths this year, mostly Sunni versus Shia, is on the order of 2000. The evening news at home tells us of the ongoing American suffering from the war, especially on the part of veterans with brain injuries, PTSD and missing limbs. However, we are rarely reminded of the 40 percent unemployment, the 25 percent in severe poverty and the hatred that consumes Iraq.

**Jordan.** This country of 6 million (including 2 million Palestinians) is surrounded by Israel, Syria, Iraq and Saudi Arabia. Despite a lack of natural resources and high unemployment, it has remained relatively calm in contrast with other countries that have experienced the “Arab Spring.” Jordan received as many as 1 million Iraqi during that recent war, many of whom have stayed. It has up to 2 million legal and illegal foreign workers, and in the last several years some 500,000 Syrians have arrived, more than one half under 18. The largest refugee camp is Zaatari (120,000 people in five square miles of tents) but two thirds of the recent arrivals are in the cities. The stress on the country is enormous.

**Lebanon.** After years of civil strife (1975 – 1990, 2006-2008), Lebanon had been relatively calm until recently. Now the Syrian war runs the risk of again tearing the country apart. Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah has committed the Hezbollah community in the south to defending Syria’s Bashar al-Assad. In late May, Hezbollah bodies were being returned from the front around Qusayr, the border town not far from their homes in the Bekaa Valley. Towards the end of May, at least 28 were killed and 250 wounded as Sunni and Alawite residents clashed in Tripoli in the northern part of the country. In early July, Valerie Amos, the UN Under-secretary for Humanitarian Affairs, reported that 500,000 Syrian refugees had arrived in Lebanon and that very little international aid had been received.

**Qatar.** This small peninsula on the Persian Gulf is, on a per capita basis, the richest country in the world. An absolute monarchy run by the Al Thani family, it has been the home to the US Central Command Forward Headquarters, and the Combined Air Operations Center. It has also been shipping arms to the Syrian rebels since 2011, and in the process has become a matter of concern to Saudi Arabia and the west. Qatar actively supports the Muslim Brotherhood and radical Islamists; some of the weapons shipped are reported to be surface to air missiles.

continued on page 4

continued from page 3

**Saudi Arabia.** The Saudis have a history of providing weapons to those fighting Soviet backed forces in Afghanistan, Angola and Nicaragua. They have argued with the Brotherhood over many topics – the Arab Peace Plan for Israel, Saddam Hussein in Iraq and the legitimacy of Hamas. Given their proximity to Iran, the US has been happy to sell them lots of armaments, around \$30 billion in F-15 aircraft and this spring, along with Israel and the United Arab Emirates, another \$10 billion worth of planes and missiles. Recently the US has persuaded the Saudis to take charge of Arab arms shipments to Syria – what kind and to whom – in the hope of keeping them out of the hands of Islamists.

**Turkey.** With Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan acting like the mayor of a city (by choosing development projects and engaging in micromanagement - which shops stay or go? what kind of lighting on a bridge?), protests have come to Turkey. Most of the protesters have been students and middle class citizens who worry that Erdogan is too Islamist and too authoritarian. They worry about the arrests of generals and journalists. Most seem to believe that Turkey needs to be resolutely secular. Turkey has been swamped with Syrian refugees, and there are now reports that it has closed its borders to more. With encouragement from the United States, it has seemingly repaired relations this spring with Israel.

**Yemen.** Familiar to Americans because of the USS Cole, the “underwear bomber,” the 90 Yemeni who are still held in Guantanamo and Anwar Al-Awlaki, one of three American citizens killed by drone, Yemen is in transition once again. Since March a national dialogue conference has attempted to define a new federal government that would allot substantial powers to the provinces. This initiative is possible because former president Ali Abdullah Saleh was forced out last year after 30 years in power. The country’s future is unclear, in part because of antipathy between the north and south (they were separate countries until unification in 1990 which then led to a civil war in 1994 won by the north). Another reality is al-Qaeda which has fought the central government since 2001 and continues to assassinate local government officials in rural areas.

**Summary.** We at the Peace Economy Project are, like so many others, horrified by the killings in Syria and the resulting refugee explosion. At the same time we are extremely apprehensive at the prospect of events turning out of control. We worry that President Obama has been pressured to provide arms to the rebels who could turn out to be more difficult than Assad. In reality there is little militarily that the United States can do without “boots on the ground.” Now is the time for diplomacy and humanitarian aid, not fueling more turmoil and war.

## 3 Unfounded Reasons Why the U.S Won't Sign the Arms Trade Treaty

by Allison Midori Reilly, Amnesty International, St. Louis

Earlier this month, Iceland became the first country to ratify the Arms Trade Treaty. If 49 more countries ratify this treaty, then the international arms trade regulations outlined in it will be entered into force. The United States, although initially supportive and instrumental in bringing this treaty

to fruition, will not be one of 49 countries to ratify. In fact, it will be a shock if we even sign this treaty at all.

Even though the Arms Trade Treaty is specifically about international arms trade, and has nothing to do with the Second Amendment or how U.S. citizens use or purchase guns in this country (unless, of course, they plan to commit human rights abuses or purchase guns directly from China), many Americans still oppose it. The main reasons behind this opposition are unfounded fears and untruths. Here are three of these unfounded reasons that, unfortunately, will prevent the U.S. from signing on.

**The Arms Trade Treaty will create a national firearms registry, or will require American gun owners to register their guns with the United Nations**

Even though the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and the President have the power to control the import of firearms and defense items, this has nothing to do with any sort of national registry. All the treaty does is require each country to adopt measures to prevent weapons from getting into the black market by keeping records of weapons entering or leaving the country. A registry wouldn't do anything because the weapons are already in the country, and wouldn't mean anything to the overall international arms trade. Besides, the requirements outlined in the treaty are the same as current U.S. law. There wouldn't be any change to the law or domestic registration if the treaty were ratified.

**The Arms Trade Treaty Doesn't Mean Anything if Countries Like Russia and China Don't Sign It**

This argument is ridiculous because it's similar to arguing that a law against murder shouldn't exist because axe murderers will still murder. Yes, murder still exists in today's world, but that doesn't mean the law isn't doing anything. Just because some countries may not sign doesn't mean that having the treaty in place isn't going to have an impact or make any substantial difference. Yet, this is an argument that has been used to oppose previous international treaties, most notably the Kyoto Protocol and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

**The Arms Trade Treaty will Prevent the U.S. from Aiding Israel**

Weapons should not end up in the hands of human rights abusers, even if these abusers are our political allies or are receiving aid from the United States. If Israel is committing human rights abuses, then they should not be receiving weapons from us or anyone else. That's the point of this treaty. If we still want to provide aid to Israel, then we can do so in a way that doesn't mean giving or selling weapons. However, no politician wants to be seen as anti-Israel, so this argument will be enough to drive representatives away from supporting the Arms Trade Treaty.

continued on page 5



continued from page 4

Opposition to the Arms Trade Treaty is like opposing the construction of a school because kids could fight in the halls or it would attract unqualified teachers. Sure, those things could happen, but that doesn't mean you don't build the school. You address these other issues as they arise, or you implement additional measure to prevent these things from happening. Opposing the construction of the school in this example means overlooking the bigger picture of education, just like opposing the treaty overlooks the bigger picture of human rights violations and the current contribution of the arms trade to those violations.

## PEP Year in Review: 2012-2013

2012 has been a year of transition for the Peace Economy Project. At the end of the summer of last year, we lost Tila Neguse to the hustle and bustle of Capitol Hill where she now serves as a peace lobbyist for the Friends Committee on National Legislation. Sylvester Brown, Jr. stepped up to take charge in the interim, leading PEP into 2013 and ensuring that programming continued. In February of this year, the board hired Jasmin Maurer on as the new executive director.

### Drones Issue

Despite the transition, PEP has stayed on course to bring about a number of informative programs. It all started last spring, when we joined the Instead of War Coalition to welcome Medea Benjamin, co-founder of CODE Pink, to St. Louis to discuss the effects of drone warfare. Pulling from her book, *Drone Warfare: Killing by Remote Control*, Benjamin was able to share how the US drone program decreases national security and is a costly weapons system that frequently malfunctions and causes high levels of PTSD for soldiers and civilian employees who operate them.

The issue of drones resurfaced again when we joined a coalition of concerned St. Louis social justice organizations in visiting Claire McCaskill's office to explain why we felt the program was harmful. We then joined an even larger coalition and marched on the National Day of Action Against Drones, April 13 of this year, passing out informative leaflets on the costs and dangers of drones to baseball game watchers.

### Congressional Visit

During her last days with PEP, Tila Neguse traveled to DC with intern Jasmin Maurer and PEP's Congressional Appeal calling for sequester cuts to the military budget to go through, which would amount to \$1 trillion over 10 years. While in DC, they were able to meet face to face with Rep. Lacy Clay, and with legislative aids from both local representatives and members of the Super Committee who were charged with finding a solution to the sequester cuts.

### Fall Program

Further promoting the need to cut the Pentagon and not social programs through sequester, PEP's fall program brought back Tila  
*continued on page 6*



PEP's Congressional Lobby intern, Ricky Shah

## Don't Worry - Be Happy

The Declaration of Independence said it this way: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." It turns out that happiness is easier to obtain in some places than in others. Members of the Peace Economy Project have long recognized that there are many ways to measure the health of a community or a nation. Most of us would concur that a country's gross national product (GNP) tells only a very small part of the story.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) recently issued its new "Better Life Index Report." The report rates 36 developed countries in terms of 30 different indices, which in turn collapse into 11 broad categories: housing, income, jobs, education, community, the environment, civic engagement, health, safety, work-life balance and life satisfaction. This report is on the web which is useful, because a user can sort all the countries for any criteria. For example, if the "life satisfaction" criteria alone is used Switzerland comes out on top (with a score of 7.8), followed by Norway, Iceland, Sweden and Denmark. Interestingly Mexico ranks the 10th happiest despite terrible scores on safety (murders and assaults) and disposable income.

On the "life satisfaction" criteria, the US ties for 14th place. If one assigns equal weight for all 11 categories, Australia does best, followed by Sweden and Canada. The Better Life Index leaves out a variety of measures (e.g. presence of democracy, freedom of speech, corruption, etc.) but it is a start at thinking about a complex issue.

continued from page 6

and her new co-worker, Jim Cason, from the Friends Committee on National Legislation. It also brought together a coalition of St. Louis activists who shared a common vision, that we need to protect our most vulnerable neighbors. Tila and Jim shared their work as lobbyists promoting cuts to the Pentagon budget and the power that people have to put pressure on their Congressional reps.

As the deadline for sequester kept being postponed, PEP fought hard to educate the devastating effects through letters to the editor and a visit to Senator Blunt's office with Missouri ProVote. Although sequester eventually came to pass when no alternative was reached, we continue to stand behind the need to invest in people, not outrageous military spending.

### Women for Peace

In February, PEP sponsored a poetry reading put together by PEP Intern Katerina Canyon and Spitfire Lively that served as a Valentine to women affected by war and violence. The event drew together talented spoken word poets from around St. Louis who gave moving testimony to the true costs of violence against women. A second event was held in June, which also included traditional Colombian dance and short stories by local artists. Another event is to be planned for early fall.

### Charlie King Concert

Like clockwork, the annual Charlie King and Karen Brandow concert took place in March of this year. Charlie and Karen once again joined us at Nerinx Hall where they sang some old favorites to our loyal crowd. The simultaneous auction in addition to ticket sales from this concert serve as PEP's large fundraiser for the year, and was



able to bring in over \$2,000 to help us do our work to promote a peace economy.

### Solidarity Work

At PEP, we understand that cutting military spending alone doesn't ensure a peace economy. We've stood in solidarity with a number of organizations this past year. Some of these included: Women's International League of Peace and Freedom's Tax Day Demonstration, Instead of War's rally to close Guantanamo Bay, the St. Louis Organizing Committee's rally for fair wages for fast food workers, and the work of Missouri Immigrant Refugee Advocates, the Interfaith Committee on Latin America and their coalition to push for comprehensive immigration reform. We will continue to join community efforts to help build a better St. Louis community.

## A World of New Insights: My Internship with PEP

*by Katerina Canyon, International Affairs Intern*

I started my internship with the Peace Economy Project in the summer of 2012 as the social media intern. When I started, both President Barack Obama and Mitt Romney were warming up their campaigns and establishing their defense platforms. My first challenge as social media intern was to sort through the rhetoric and find hard facts and statistics.

At the time I started, there were groups of conservatives postulating that defense cuts would weaken the budget and cause irreparable job loss. In my research I discovered that this assertion was inaccurate. I realized how large the U.S. defense budget actually was. It was sitting at approximately \$660 billion. The U.S. has the largest defense budget in the world. I found that there was no reasonable excuse for the budget the size we have. The Iraq war was winding down and Afghanistan military actions were winding down, so why keep the defense levels so high?

Tila Neguese, the executive director of Peace Economy Project, was very supportive of my research, and she suggested that we focus on sequestration and defense spending. When sequestration became top news, defense contractors were claiming that U.S. defense cuts would be devastating for the economy, and they threatened to lay off many of their workers.

What defense contractors neglected to share at the time was that foreign military sales were at an all-time high. We made sure to post this information on our Twitter and Facebook feeds. The public needs both sides of the story, and I believe many people saw this because polls showed that the majority of Americans were in favor defense cuts.

In addition to revealing these issues, we investigated ways that military spending could be safely cut without causing a significant detriment

continued on page 7

*continued from page 6*

to the economy. Tila and now executive director Jasmin Maurer went to Washington D.C. to meet with Congress in order to discuss these reasonable measures. It was a very exciting time. I wished I could have joined them, but I stayed back in St. Louis to report their progress.

My activities at PEP involved more than fighting against the propaganda of those rallying defense spending. We also promoted activities that supported the concept of a peace economy. My internship allowed me to investigate several theories on peace-based economy. Before this, I am ashamed to say, I never gave a tremendous thought about a peace

economy. I knew I wanted peace in the world, but the support of that in my mind was always some sort of undesirable military action.

While working in this internship, I discovered the reasonableness of a peace economy. This would be a world of boundless potential if we took the money we spent on the military and directed it toward education or other projects that have a beneficial impact on society.

Learning this changed my life goals, such that my work and education are now focused on working toward a peace-based economy. I thank my internship with Peace Economy Project for the direction that my life has taken.

## Here we go again – The 2014 National Budget, the Sequester, and the Debt Ceiling

*by Charlie Kindleberger, Board Member*

It's that time again. The 2014 federal fiscal year starts on October 1. In generally the same time period Congress will need to vote to increase the debt ceiling lest the country default on its bond payments. Haven't we just been here? Yes. Two years ago after interminable debate, the Budget Control Act (August 2011) was passed, and failing efforts by the Congressional Super Committee, sequester was implemented (March 2013) calling for roughly \$85 billion in cuts by the end of September 2013 divided between Defense and Discretionary Domestic categories.

So with a little over three months left, where do we stand? Let's look at the individual pieces – the sequester, the Congressional budget, authorization and appropriation process, and the debt ceiling debate.

**Sequester.** Conservative columnists argue that the immediate \$85 billion in sequester cuts this fiscal year is a tiny fraction (2.3 percent) of the nation's \$3.6 trillion dollar annual budget. They suggest that \$1.2 trillion over 10 years will hardly cause a blip in terms of savings, that total federal spending over 10 years will be \$44.8 trillion instead of \$46 trillion.

Most PEP members believe that the defense sequester is a positive step - that it is forcing the nation to curtail its imperial inclinations. However, there are two real concerns with the overall sequester. The first has to do with the economic implications. The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office estimates that the direct impact of the sequester over 10 years would be the loss of 750,000 jobs, equivalent to a reduction of 1.5 percent of our gross domestic product. If you consider the indirect job losses (retail, services and other establishments hurt by layoffs), the total estimated job loss rises to 2.1 million.

The second concern relates to the loss of government assistance. Anecdotal evidence is growing rapidly with examples of citizens who

have lost access to Head Start, WIC, Section 8 vouchers, unemployment wages, job career centers, meals on wheels and many related services. For an overview of cuts by state, review the Coalition for Human Needs web site ([www.chn.org](http://www.chn.org)) and the Half in Ten campaign ([www.halfinten.org](http://www.halfinten.org)).

**Congressional Budget Process.** For the first time in years, the Senate and House have passed budgets; however, they are wide apart, and there appears to be little interest in trying to reach a consensus budget. The President's budget arrived late (early April) proposing a \$1.4 trillion savings over 10 years. Many of the elements were controversial: \$583 billion tax increases for the wealthy, \$401 billion in health care savings, mostly from Medicare provider cuts, \$80 billion in Social Security savings by embracing an alternative way to calculate inflation, etc. The DOD's portion envisioned reductions to the Army (down four percent), offset in part with an increase for the Air Force (up three percent), but as described below, many of the proposals have not been well received by the Congress.

As of mid-June, the Senate was moving slowly on its Defense deliberations. However, the House of Representatives (June 14, 2013) passed the 2014 National Defense Authorization Act. Also the House Appropriations Committee approved the 2014 Defense Appropriations Bill.

**Appropriations.** The House Committee bill assumes that the overall sequester cuts continues, but not abide by the requirement for a 50-50 split between the defense and domestic sides. The Committee would allow \$15 billion more for the military and about \$20 billion less than called for in the current deficit reduction law on the domestic side.

**Authorization.** The recently passed House National Defense

*continued on page 8*



Authorization Bill (H.R. 1960) runs counter to the Administration (and most Peace Economy Project members) on a large number of issues:

- *Guantanamo*. The House would prohibit moving detainees from Guantanamo, especially to the USA.
- *New START Treaty Implementation*. The House would curtail the President's powers to carry out the treaty.
- *Missile Defense*. The House would require a new "East Coast" Missile Defense installation, something the Pentagon doesn't want.
- *Overseas Contingency Operations (OCD)*. The House provides \$5 billion more than the DOD and President have requested.
- *TRICARE Fees and Co-Payments*. The House would keep the DOD and President from updating the share that military retirees contribute, a change that would save more than \$9 billion through FY 2018.
- *Military Pay*. The House would authorize a 1.8 percent pay raise in contrast to the Administration's request for a one percent raise.
- *Size of the Army*. The House would establish a minimum active duty Army strength of 520,000, whereas the Administration wants to cut approximately 80,000 soldiers and Marines.
- *BRAC*. The House prohibits any funds to be spent on another Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) initiative; the Administration wants to begin the process with the goal of closing bases and reducing the need for 50,000 civilian employees in 2016.
- *Weapon Systems*. The House prohibits the inactivation of certain cruisers, the cancellation of an Avionics Modernization Program and requires the development of a new air launched cruise missile for both conventional and nuclear missions. The Administration doesn't believe that those decisions make sense.
- *Alternative Fuels*. The House wants to exempt the DOD from abiding by the 2007 Energy Independence and Security Act. The Pentagon has pushed hard for the use of alternative fuels.
- *Nuclear Issues*. The House prohibits the use of any FY2004 funds for "Threat Reduction Engagement" activities until the President certifies that no country that has

signed the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty has undertaken new nuclear weapons test activities.

- *Unrequested Funds*. The House wants to have \$168 million spent on M-1 Abrams Tanks and \$135 million on Light Utility Helicopters. The Pentagon says we don't need those weapons at the moment.

There are numerous additional concerns on the part of the Administration which has threatened a veto unless most of the sticking points get resolved in the House-Senate Conference Committee.

**Debt Ceiling.** As part of the No Budget No Pay Act of 2013 Congress suspended the debt ceiling from Feb. 4 until May 19, at which time the ceiling was lifted to \$16.600 trillion. Because of additional revenue contained in the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012, the sequester and special payments from Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, the Treasury Department predicts that the ceiling will not be reached until this fall.

By then, hopefully the issue will have been resolved as part of the FY 2014 National Budget or a continuing resolution. If not we can expect another cliff hanger in the recent tradition of this dysfunctional government.

The good news is that the annual deficit seems to be coming down. The Congressional Budget Office projects the annual deficit to be around \$642 Billion by the end of September, a huge number but only half what it was a few years back. At that number it would be around four percent of Gross National Product (GDP). One forecast is that it could shrink to 2.1 percent of GDP in 2015. That is a number that many economists think could be sustainable for a while.

We at the Peace Economy Project believe that reducing the military budget is necessary. We feel badly for the individuals (military, DOD civilians, defense industry workers) who have had, and will have their lives disrupted; but we are confident that the adjustment is good for the nation. On the other hand, we are distressed by the impact of the sequester and proposed Congressional legislation for the country, especially on those who need the safety net. The richest country in the world's history needs to do much more to create employment for its people and to slow the run-away growth in income inequality between the rich and the rest of us.

### Randy "Duke" Cunningham – Out of Prison, but not showing much contrition

The Peace Economy Project has long expressed outrage against "earmarks," the process whereby congressmen receive campaign contributions, often from defense industry corporations, in return for the promise of a specific contract. Duke was one of the most blatant offenders. In 2006, the Republican Congressman from California was convicted of accepting \$2.4 million in bribes, and sentenced to eight years and four months.

At his sentencing, he expressed regret for taking the bribes which included vowing that he sell his ill-gotten property in order to pay back his bribes and required back taxes.

In recent years, Congress has not allowed formal earmarks. Of course, a quick glance at the new House of Representatives Defense Budget suggests that defense industries and the Congress still get along just fine. During the 2012 election cycle, the House Armed Services Committee members received almost \$5 million in campaign contributions; now it is payback time. For more see: [OpenSecrets.org](http://OpenSecrets.org).



# Too Much Money for Nuclear Weapons

by *Charlie Kindleberger, Board Member*

Martyl Langsdorf died this spring. She was the artist that drew the Doomsday Clock on the cover of the Bulletin of Atomic Sciences in 1947. Unhappily the clock, which is adjusted every year by the Board of Sponsors of the Bulletin, is still at 11:55 p.m. – five minutes to midnight. In today's world the clock reflects the dangers of climate change and genetic engineering, but primarily it recognizes the nine countries thought to have about 20,000 nuclear weapons stockpiled between them. Many of these are on "hair trigger" alert; some are vulnerable to theft by or sale to terrorists.

President Obama recently spoke in Berlin about the desirability of further reducing the number of deployed warheads to 1000 in concert with Russia. Recall that the New START Treaty initiated during his first term calls for reducing the number of warheads from 2200 to 1550 and deployed delivery vehicles (ICBMs, Submarines, Bombers) from 1600 to 700 by 2018. The new changes that the President suggests would save money, reduce the chances of error or theft and help move us toward a nuclear free world.

But the President has some challenges.

**Congress.** Back in 2010 in order to gain support for ratification of the New START Treaty, the president submitted a 10 year plan to modernize nuclear warheads and our strategic delivery systems – the so called "Section 1251 Report." This plan apparently called for \$88 billion in spending on National Nuclear Security Administration (the NNSA is part of the Energy Department) weapons and \$126 billion

for strategic delivery vehicle modernization. These expenditures were to happen between 2012 and 2021.

In May, Senators James Imhofe, senior Republican on the Armed Services Committee, and Bob Corker, senior Republican on the Foreign Relations Committee, came forward, charging that the President had violated his pledge to carry out Section 1251. In actuality, the Administration's FY2014 proposed budget is seven percent higher for NNSA weapons, even as there is a recommended cut of 15 percent in NNSA nuclear and radiological security initiatives.

**Russia.** President Putin is paranoid about missile systems that are said to be deployed to stop a North Korean or Iranian launch. In his mind, these might be used against Russia. He certainly must be upset with the possibility of an east coast missile system (see House Authorization Bill), and an enlarged missile complex in Alaska.

**PEP View.** The Section 1251 commitment to spend more than \$200 billion modernizing our nuclear weapons and delivery systems was a ridiculous amount of money. Since then the Budget Control Act approved by Congress has subsequently set limits to the amount that can be spent on defense. It would seem that the 1251 commitment no longer applies. Beyond that, we see no justification for 12 new ballistic missile submarines (\$100 billion), a new generation of bombers (\$68 billion), a refurbished B61 nuclear gravity bomb (\$10 billion) and more. This colossal waste of money won't deter terrorists and is likely to re-energize an arms race with Russia and China.

## PEP Goes to Washington

Sequester cuts have people hurting all around the country, including here in Missouri. The problem is the nature of the cuts, a chopping block across the board that cuts equally from domestic programs and military expenditures. And as Congress works towards a FY2014 budget, it's become quite clear that cutting the military further isn't something politicians are willing to do to protect our most vulnerable neighbors.

This is why Congress needs to hear from us.

At the Peace Economy Project, we feel that the Pentagon should take the bulk of any federal budget cuts. During our time collecting signatures for our Congressional Appeal, we spoke to a number of community members who felt there were much better ways we could use taxpayer dollars, including improving education, fixing our bridges and expanding healthcare in our communities.

Children are being kicked out of Head Start. Housing agencies are unable to help families get into low-cost housing. And yet we allow the Pentagon to spend money for weapons contracts for the Abrams tank that the military doesn't even want. Just like the fat cats of Wall Street, military contractors are profiting on the backs of every day people like you and me.

Executive Director Jasmin Maurer and Lobby Intern Ricky Shah will be traveling to Washington DC where they will team up with Tila Neguse from the Friends Committee on National Legislation. They will be talking to our legislators with a copy of the Appeal below and your signatures in support of continuing budget cuts to the Pentagon as outlined by sequester.

Thank you to everyone who has supported not only the Appeal, but the funding for our trip to Capitol Hill. If you would still like to make a donation to offset costs, any little bit helps. Checks can be sent to the Peace Economy Project at 438 N. Skinker Blvd. St. Louis, MO 63130 or we accept on-line donations on our website, [www.peaceeconomyproject.org](http://www.peaceeconomyproject.org).

## Save our Nation—Reduce Military Spending

Dear <<We will enter your congresspersons' names here>>>,

We are concerned citizens who believe that the United States must further reduce the amount that it devotes to the Pentagon. Like citizens in other communities across America we recognize that the end of shooting wars in Afghanistan and Iraq will not remove all US obligations in what remains a very dangerous world. Working closely with other nations in the international community, the US should do its part to address those dangers.

However, it is clear to us that:

- The chances for a major ground war in the near future are very small. Large countries like China need us as customers. Smaller rogue nations like North Korea or Iran are surrounded by equally or more powerful countries. They know that very aggressive behavior on their part could threaten their own regimes.
- The United States was a world super-power in the late 1990s when its military budget was almost half its current level. A trillion dollar cut to our Pentagon over the next ten years would

still leave us far stronger than any country in the world, and would reduce the pressure on other countries to try to compete with us.

- The United States has been running an unsustainable annual federal budget deficit resulting in tremendous growth in the national debt.
- The United States faces a huge increase in elderly people in the coming years, most of whom will depend upon Social Security and Medicare for their basic needs.
- The United States is not currently meeting its infrastructure, research, educational, and poverty reduction needs. Additional resources allocated to these and related domestic programs will be central to our future.

In sum, we believe that the United States can only address its fiscal deficit, its growing elderly population, its safety net requirements, and its domestic investment obligations by substantially reducing our military budget. The Pentagon cuts have begun. They can and must continue responsibly. As the Peace Economy Project has stated in the past, we don't need a new

*continued on page 11*



continued from page 10

fleet of 10 air craft carriers, expected to cost \$120 billion dollars. We don't need the F-35 next generation fighter plane that will cost \$325 billion dollars. The same is true for replacement nuclear weapons, ballistic missiles, a new bomber, and many other high tech weapon and communications systems. We don't need 737 military bases around the world, and we don't need large deployments of US forces in Germany, Japan, England, and 65 other countries.

We urge you to give Secretary of Defense Hagel and President Obama support as they carry out the Defense Sequester. The Sequester reductions are necessary, but the Administration must be given the latitude to make the cuts in a way that protects our nation, allows international cooperation, and minimizes the financial pain to soldiers and Department of Defense civilians alike.

## Read it and Weep

The Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR) was founded in October 2004 to monitor the rebuilding of Iraq with primarily US dollars. There have been quarterly reports since, the most recent and the final in March of this year. With that report, Inspector General Stuart Brown concludes that at least \$8 billion was wasted or stolen, about 15 percent of the \$60 billion devoted to Iraq reconstruction.

The final report indicates that some 220 audits have identified \$1.6 billion in potential savings, and \$645 million in actual savings. SIGIR claims to have obtained 104 indictments, 82 convictions and \$191 million in court-ordered fines and penalties. Examples of the cheating are outrageous - a contractor charging \$900 for a \$7 control switch, \$3000 for a \$94 circuit breaker and so on. The report contains plenty of lessons, among the biggest: "the need to provide a robust in-country team of auditors, inspectors and investigators from the operation's outset." The organization anticipates going out of business in September. Oh well, it was just \$8 billion dollars.

## Bags of cash for President Karzai

At the end of April, the New York Times reported that the CIA had been providing cash to Afghanistan since the war began in 2001. Initially it said that money went directly to individual war lords. Then after Iran started giving money directly to President Karzai in the Palace, the CIA changed its ways. Now the cash goes directly to Karzai who presumably passes some on to his favorite war lords, keeping plenty for himself and his inner circle. Given his recurring displeasure with the United States, it wouldn't seem that we are getting all that much for our money.

## New Directions in US Foreign Policy

by *Charlie Kindleberger, Board Member*

It has been eight months since President Obama's re-election, followed by the beginning of his second term. Here is a quick review of many events and decisions have transpired.

- Pivot to the Pacific
- The March 2013 beginning of the Sequester
- Selection of the President's foreign policy team
- The President's May 24 speech on terrorism
- American deaths in Benghazi
- Efforts to investigate reporters in order to stem leaks
- Eric Snowden's unveiling of the NSA's monitoring of phone calls and e-mails

a.) **The Pivot.** A year ago, the government started talking about spending less time worrying about the Middle East and more on Asia, presumably China. How much of this had to do with the presidential campaign and Mitt Romney's advocacy for spending \$2 trillion more for arms, we can't know. There are plenty of reasons for wondering

about the wisdom of this switch. First, there is not much evidence that it has happened – a few more ships in Singapore, talk of 2500 Marines in Australia. Second, the US can't afford any kind of a major build-up. Third, we don't want to get in a shoving match with what will soon be the strongest country in the world, and a country we need when it comes to North Korea. Fourth, as a blogger put it pretty directly: "We would surely bridle were China to interfere in our Caribbean Sea. What business does the US have in the South China Sea? None! Only the business of a meddling, imperial power, seeking domination all over the globe at the expense not only of powers in other regions but of the people of the US whose domestic well-being is undermined by the costs of our empire, our militarism." That last statement may be too strong, but certainly this nation needs to emphasize diplomacy not sabre rattling when it comes to China.

b.) **The Sequester.** At the beginning of March, the Sequester went into effect – a cut of \$42.5 billion each from defense expenditures and "discretionary" domestic expenditures. For the Pentagon this was on

continued on page 12

continued from page 11

top of significant caps called for in the Budget Control Act of 2011. In early June there was still confusion as to how the additional savings would be achieved. Approximately 700,000 DOD civilian employees were anticipated to be furloughed for 11 days starting in July (exceptions include civilian workers in Naval Shipyards and civilians in War Zone). There is reduced money for training, maintenance, weapons acquisition and talk of a new BRAC round in 2015.

The future is more confusing than ever. The Obama proposed budget for 2014 was submitted some \$52 billion above spending caps. The House and Senate budgets are very far apart with little evidence of an effort to reach a consensus budget. As called for by Secretary Hagel back in March, a “Strategic Choices and Management Review” (SCMR) has been conducted. It reportedly examines how cuts might be made over the next decade at three alternative levels – \$100, \$300, and \$500 billion. This examination of 38 different categories of defense spending is expected to influence the 2015 budget and the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review. Needless to say, these issues will get worked out within the context of the Debt Ceiling debate that will confront the nation this fall.

c.) **President’s Foreign Policy Team.** In recent weeks most of the final appointments have been made. Here are the big names in the President’s second term.

- John Kerry, Secretary of State. Thought to be the President’s second choice after debate surrounding Susan Rice and Benghazi (see below), Kerry has moved quickly to initiate an international conference with Russia on Syria; to re-energize the Israeli – Palestinian peace talks; to defuse tensions in North Korea and other parts of Asia, and more.
- Chuck Hagel, Secretary of Defense. Hagel was a controversial choice given his Republican background, charges that he had turned his back on the Republican Party and suggestions that he might be soft on Iran. His challenge of reshaping the military to fit within a smaller budget is huge. His experience as an enlisted man in Vietnam should provide some empathy for the military as it goes through painful adjustments.
- John Brennan, Director of the CIA. This former Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism had a long career at the CIA. Controversy has followed him because of statements supporting torture and extraordinary rendition, though in 2009 he spoke out against waterboarding.
- Susan Rice, National Security Advisor. She replaces Tom Donilon who had the job for the past three years. She has years of experience in the Clinton Administration, the Brookings Institution and as Ambassador to the United Nations (2008 – 2012).
- Samantha Powers, US Ambassador to the United Nations. She has served in the National Security Council as head of the Office of Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights, focusing on topics like women’s rights, LGBT rights and religious freedom. Powers is an Irish American, a Harvard Law School graduate and a former journalist who won a Pulitzer Prize for her 2002 book, *A Problem from Hell: American and the Age of Genocide*.

d.) **Terrorism Speech.** In a much hyped speech at the National Defense University, President Obama declared that it was time for the United States to give up its obsession with the “Global War on Terrorism.” He argued that, with Al Qaida largely defeated, the nation needed to shift to “targeted efforts to dismantle specific networks of violent extremism that threaten America.” The suggestion was that the USA no longer needed a full court press against all extremists, as stressed by his predecessor. Specific recommendations included:

- Tougher standards on the use of drones so that they are used only on targets posing a “continuing, imminent threat to America.”
- Establishment by Congress of a secret court that would oversee drone strikes.
- Transfer of responsibility for drone attacks from the CIA to the Military, with the exception of Pakistan, a situation to be reviewed every six months.
- Encouraging Congress to “refine and ultimately repeal” authorization of force as passed shortly after September 11, 2001 attack.

## Too Much Space

Katherine Hammack has a tough job. She is the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Infrastructure, Energy and the Environment. She is also working for an organization that has too much space. She claims that the Army has about a billion square feet of infrastructure, of which 20 percent is “excess to our needs.” Some of the problem traces to World War II when we had an 8 million person army. Now we are at 570,000 troops, and Army Chief of Staff General Ray Odierno wants to reduce active duty brigades from 45 to 33. That would be another 80,000 people.

One problem is, of course, that politicians are afraid of base closings; they cause disruption in the lives of constituents and the economies of base communities. The House Defense Authorization Bill for 2014 prohibits any Base Realignment and Closure Process (BRAC) for next year. Meanwhile, Ms. Hammack has to try to maintain unnecessary facilities, often providing expensive heat to empty buildings.

continued on page 13



continued from page 12

- Recommitting again to closing the Guantanamo Prison and repatriating the 166 detainees that have been cleared for return home.

Was this an important declaration, or meaningless rhetoric? The answer will be evident in the months ahead as the President demonstrates, or fails to demonstrate, his leadership on these recommendations. Predictably, some on the right suggested that the speech amounted to unilateral surrender to radical Islamists. And the House of Representatives recently followed that logic, by prohibiting the closing of Guantanamo. For those who believe in a Peace Economy perspective, we say congratulations Mr. President; now show us that you mean it.

**e.) Benghazi.** Last fall, Ambassador Chris Stevens and three others were killed in an attack on the US Consulate in Benghazi, Libya. This tragedy obviously represented a serious security lapse, especially given that there were some 40 plus CIA agents relatively nearby. But it turned into a scandal, when Ambassador Susan Rice went on the Sunday TV talk shows to declare with some certainty that the killings resulted from a mob action and could not have been foreseen.

Investigations were launched primarily under the auspices of Darrel Isaa, Chair of the House Oversight Committee. He declared that this was the worst scandal in American history, worse than Watergate. He suggested it obvious that American forces could have come to the rescue, but chose not to. Neither he, nor any other republican members of the committee chose to discuss that the House of Representatives had voted to reduce almost \$500 million in security support for overseas State Department facilities the year before.

A review of the back and forth suggestions for “talking points” for Susan Rice revealed a certain amount of inter-agency rivalry as to the role of the CIA versus the State Department. The incident resulted in a lot of sound and fury, a change in Susan Rice’s future plans, and perhaps increased cynicism on the part right wing believers. But unless there is a lot more to come, this is hardly a scandal even remotely like Watergate.

**f.) Leaks.** In general we don’t like leaks. However, worse than the leaks is the behavior that some in power use to go after those that they don’t like. The behavior of Vice President Cheney, his chief of staff Scooter Libby and others in the Bush Administration who damaged Valerie Plame and husband Joseph Wilson (who had challenged intelligence used to justify the Iraq invasion) is too fresh in our minds.

There is also the aggressive search of AP reporter’s phone calls, because one of them might have received information from a leaker appears to cross the line, as does the recent subpoena of reporter James Rosen. In the first case, the Justice Department got permission to obtain telephone records for 20 separate telephone lines – office and personal - relating to Associated Press reporters.

The government’s concern was who leaked information about a CIA operation in Yemen last year that allegedly stopped a bomb from being placed on a plane bound for the US. The Justice Department apparently convinced a secrete judge that “all other reasonable attempts to obtain the information” had been made. The CEO of AP protested that the search was far too sweeping and that its impact was to create a “chilling effect” on the press.

The James Rosen case involves a Fox News reporter who learned from a State Department contract employee that the CIA had a source in North Korea with insight into their nuclear testing. On the surface it would seem that the reporter was doing what reporters are supposed to do – investigate and put together a story. However, upset by the unveiling of the North Korean source, the Justice Department got a search warrant to seize and view Rosen’s e-mails. That is going too far. One can make the case that by tradition Fox should have appraised the Administration that it was going to run the story. It is not clear if they did or not.

Edward Snowden. Most recently, a Booz Allen Hamilton contract employee working with the National Security Agency (NSA) released information about long time efforts by the NSA to collect telephone “mega-data” on millions of American’s calls – the numbers called, dates, lengths of time, etc. Similar NSA and English initiatives were revealed that involve monitoring e-mail and other internet messages. The government has charged Snowden with theft of information and espionage. As of early July 2013, Snowden was reported to be at a Moscow airport, attempting to seek refuge in a country like Venezuela, Nicaragua or Bolivia.

There is widespread disagreement as to whether Snowden is a hero for exposing the massive surveillance conducted by this country, or a traitor for releasing national secrets. This spying has apparently included countries like China (which makes it harder for us to be upset with their spying behavior). More troubling is the spying, supposedly in concert with the British and perhaps our NATO allies.

On balance, we believe Snowden has done a good thing. Years ago Congress demanded that similar systems be discontinued. Apparently they simply went underground. Who decides the kinds of surveillance required to limit terrorism should be the province of more than the Director of National Intelligence or the National Security Agency. A viable democracy demands an embrace of individual privacy and freedom of speech. We need to be convinced that the national security apparatus recognizes these fundamental principals.

# Reflections on the Past Year: My Journey to PEP

*by Jasmin Maurer, Executive Director*

I was asked to share my reflections on my time working with the Peace Economy Project so far, but I find it hard to reflect on that without acknowledging how I got here.

I moved to St. Louis around four years ago for an AmeriCorps position with an organization called PeaceJam, which promoted a non-violence social justice curriculum. I spent a great deal of time dabbling in non-violent communication and working to create systems for young people to be inspired and have the skills to become change-makers. It was a truly transforming experience for me.

At the end of my two year commitment, I had applied for and received an AmeriCorps VISTA Team Leader position in Beckley, West Virginia with the Appalachian Coal Country Watershed Team. The position would have afforded me the chance to oversee half their VISTA team who were working in rural Appalachian communities to empower the local residents to create systems to clean up the effects of acid mine drainage in their community.

For a week I battled over whether or not I would accept this position. It was surely a worthy cause,

and I was excited by the idea of supporting a team of young optimistic volunteers. Ultimately, I came to the decision not to accept the position and remained in St. Louis where I took on part time minimum wage work in retail after a fruitless job search.

I chose not to leave, though because of my involvement with Young Activists United St. Louis, which at the time was still a program of the Peace Economy Project. I saw this organization growing and finding its feet in the St. Louis community, and I knew that this was something I wanted to be a part of.

Staying in St. Louis was hard. My job did not pay me enough to cover rent and bills every month. I sought various other part time jobs to supplement my income while continuing a steady job search which took up much of my time. I volunteered another large portion of my time to YSTL.

The connection I made to YSTL motivated me, though. Through that organization I made connections with organizers and activists in St. Louis who had a vested interest not only in the success of the organization, but also in me. They provided us with free trainings, helped us develop plans for fundraising, campaigns.

Among those people I connected with was Tila Neguse. In support of PEP, I went to hear Mike Prokosch speak, and then Medea Benjamin. I was able to see how tirelessly PEP worked to promote a more peaceful society free of excessive militarization. It reminded me of the work of a Nobel Peace Laureate greatly involved with PeaceJam, Jody Williams, who I greatly admired. It reconnected me to the outrage I felt when my brother joined the Marines during the Iraq War, but also informed me of different ways to release our country from the grasp of the military industrial complex.

That's how it came to be that last summer I asked Tila if she was still looking for any more summer interns. The next thing I knew, I was the Congressional Lobby Intern and sitting at the World Community Center at odd hours around my work schedule developing talking points and scheduling lobby visits.

As we all know, that trip to DC served a dual purpose for Tila to plan her move for her new job, lobbying full time for peace with the Friends Committee on National Legislation. We worked together most of that summer with the understanding that she was leaving. And one day when she asked me why I didn't apply for her position, it hit me. Why didn't I?

Here was my chance to work with an organization that was committed to values similar to my own. An organization committed to young people, like myself, and providing space for them to speak up. An organization that was working towards transforming our society, and the way we think about how our economy can be structured. And in all of this, I saw elements of the work I did with PeaceJam, the activism I dabbled with in college, and saw a space where I could continue to grow as an organizer.

I was fortunate to ultimately be given the chance to work with PEP and move into the role of executive director. It's been an exciting transition into this role, but also one of much learning. Part of that learning has been about the various issues related to the military industrial complex around the world. The other has been the pleasure of hearing the stories of PEP members and how they also found their way to this work, which is why I think it only fair to share my own story.

Now I am working on my second trip to DC to lobby Congress, an opportunity to put pressure on our representatives to make decisions that promote justice over profit. Beyond this summer, though, I see an exciting opportunity to continue to build our vision of a peace economy together and work on ways to enact that here in St. Louis.

## 2012-2013 Donors

Convent of Sacred Heart	Alice Floros	Margot Martin
Daughters of Charity	Reese Forbes	Eileen McGartland and John Clarke
Dominican Convent of Our Lady of the Rosary	Debra Penna-Fredericks and Mark Fredericks	Mary Ann McGivern
Province of Our Lady of Consolation	Linda Fried	Pat McHugh
Racine Dominican Sisters	Mary Funge, SH	Betty and Anne McNieve
School Sisters of Notre Dame	Dorothy Gannon and Jeanette Mott Oxford	Carol and Richard Mock
Sisters of the Incarnate Word	Rev. Robert Gettinger	Mark Moloney
Sisters of Loretto	Carol Giles-Straight	Karen Monroe
Sisters of the Most Precious Blood	Margaret Gilleo and Chuck Guenther	Kate Moriarty
Sister Servants of the Holy Spirit of Perpetual Adoration	Ron Glossop	Diana and Jim Oleskevich
The Society of Our Mother of Peace	Gloria Gordon	David Oughton
St. Mary's Institute of O'Fallon	Michael Grace	Kathy Peterson
Bill and Mary Abkemeier	Percy Green	Margaret Phillips
Martha Alderson	Dana Grey	Sharon Plankenhorn
Rick and Fran Armstrong	Doris and Hugh Harrington	Gerry Rausch and Richard Kacenski
Andy and Paula Ayers	Catherine Hartrich	Gerri Redden and Tim Dunn
Joyce and Stephen Best	Georgeann Hartzog	Ellen Rehg and Bill Miller
Mary Bickel and Terry Gates	Edward and Mary Heininger	Joseph Robnett
Sr. Lesley Block	Leona Heitsch	Maureen and Terry Scheve
Joan Botwinick	Dan and Joann Hellinger	Edgar Schmidt
Ella Brown	Carol Hill	Robert and Mary Jane Schultzius
Diann L. Burke	S. Margaret Horney	Mary Seematter
Madeline Buthod and Michael Berg	Pamela Hosler	Peter Sherman
Barb Chicherio	Patricia Hottinger, S.H.	Alan and Debby Silverberg
Neysa and James Chouteau	Thelma Jennewein	Ted and Beth Slegesky
David Christensen	Carol M Kainan	Martha K. Smith
Byron and Beatrice Clemens	David Kaskowitz	Nancy Snow and Daniel Glazier
Bill Collins	Charles and Joan Kindleberger	Al Sprehe and Maggie Costello
Judith Conoyer and Ted Bronson	Jon E. and Mary Jo King	Greg and Mary Stephen
John Cooper	Rev. Gerald Kleba	Carla Mae Streeter, OP
Jane Corbett	Kim Klein and Stephanie Roth	Paul Strege
Rachel Cramsey	Bob and Nancy Klepper	Joan Suarez
Helen K. Davis	John and Andrea Kintree	Fanice Sudvarg
Douglas and Bonita Dillard	Seena and Danny Kohl	Abbe Sudvarg, MD and Francis Baumli
Leo and Kay Drey	Janet Kuciejczk, CSJ	Carole Anne Von Eschen
Dr. Lloyd J. Dumas	Arthur H. Leiber	Robert and Agnes Wilcox
Charlie Edelen IV	Yvonne Logan	James Willock
Joan and Jim Felling	Marilyn Lorenz and David Weinkauff	Jeanne Yogel and Steve Sorkin
David Fischer	Ted Loucks	Rich Young
Sr. Mary Ann Fisher	Christina Mann and Dennis Gallie	Paulette Zimmerman SSND
	Joy E. Martin	

**Peace Economy Project**  
**438 N. Skinker Blvd.**  
**St. Louis, MO 63130**

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
St. Louis, MO  
Permit No. 1081

***PEP News:***

***Read Thoroughly.***

***Share Widely.***

***React Passionately.***

## **Justice & Peace Shares**

PEP is a proud member of Justice and Peace Shares, a collaboration of seven local groups, all committed to nonviolent social change and justice for the poor.

JPS Shares (\$25/month) save these 7 organizations valuable time and energy otherwise spent fundraising so that they can focus on their important work for peace and justice.

JPS Shareholders are eligible for membership in any or all of the JPS groups but do not receive direct appeals for further contributions from these organizations.

St. Louis Justice & Peace Shares  
438 N. Skinker Blvd.  
St. Louis, MO 63130  
(314) 725-5303  
[www.jps-stl.org](http://www.jps-stl.org)  
[info@jps-stl.org](mailto:info@jps-stl.org)

**To our readers:** If you are not currently a member but like what you have read here, please consider joining PEP. Membership supports PEP's research and work to build a peace-based economy. Clip and mail the form below. Don't forget your email address - it is the quickest way for us to reach you.

### **Yes, I want to join PEP.**

*Contributions are tax-deductible.*

- \$50 Sustaining Member  
 \$30 Member  
 \$100 Major Donor  
 \$10 Member on limited income



Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Return to: Peace Economy Project**  
**438 N. Skinker Blvd.**  
**St. Louis, MO 63130**