



Nebraska Report

There is no Peace without Justice

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THE 'NEW STRATCOM' GETS A 'NEW MISSION'

Coordinating the Effort to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction

by Greg Mello
Director, Los Alamos Study Group

In early January 2005, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld wrote a two-page classified memorandum asking the U.S. Strategic Command to take the lead in coordinating U.S. military efforts to combat Weapons of Mass Destruction. This mission runs the gamut from cooperative interdiction of WMD materials and equipment to coercively and rapidly entering other countries to eliminate their WMD capabilities.

The irony of delegating this new mission to StratCom—an entity which has command of some 10,350 U.S. nuclear weapons with a combined explosive yield of about 3.1 gigatons (more than 1,000 times all the explosives used in World War II)—is apparently lost on Rumsfeld and those around him. One would at least think these self-proclaimed pragmatists would understand the political necessity of progressive nuclear disarmament as a necessary ingredient to the success of eliminating other countries' WMD.

This new mission is just the latest to be added to StratCom's portfolio. In October 2002, the 10-year-old StratCom merged with the U.S. Space Command, absorbing many of its functions. A few months later in January 2003, StratCom was assigned the lead role in four new areas: global strike, information operations, strategic missile defense, and global C4ISR—that is, command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance.

StratCom is in many ways the epitome of "jointness" in a globalized U.S. military, transcending and integrating the traditional services as well as the five powerful regional commands. StratCom gives the Secretary of Defense and the President a single place to go when some kind of rapid

strike is desired—conventional, nuclear, or even in some cases special forces operations. As long-time Pentagon observer Elaine Grossman put it in an *Inside the Pentagon* article last October, "[StratCom Commander in Chief General James] Cartwright may well emerge as the 'go-to guy' when a president wants to take immediate action."

This active strike role is mirrored in Cartwright's rumored plan to create what one officer said was a smaller, more "nimble" headquarters capable of "rapid 'decision cycles'" during crises. Cartwright plans to divest StratCom of some of its staff functions like intelligence and reconnaissance and move them elsewhere. The overall "integrator" of StratCom, the mission that will bring order from the chaos created by so many new missions, is apparently going to be its "space and global strike" function.

But even that's not set in cement. It's important to understand that StratCom is a 'work in progress' subject to endless revision and re-direction, and that full development of "prompt global strike" is not technically or organizationally predestined. General Cartwright says he doesn't, right now, have much prompt global capability, and his successors may or may not ever have much more. Other events, we know, might intervene. Empires always fall. Our own is already trembling (we must now import about \$2 billion per day to cover the federal deficit). As political analyst Chalmers Johnson reminds us, things which can't continue forever don't.

In the meantime, there are grave dangers in the concentration of command power now being assembled by Secretary Rumsfeld at StratCom. The most conspicuous danger may be the increasingly shorter time needed to execute pre-

conclusion on page 3



StratCom Commander General James Cartwright

The July 2004 appointment of Marine General James "Hoss" Cartwright as StratCom Commander signals the seriousness of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's intent to broaden StratCom's role in global power projection. The Marines have no nuclear weapons and hence no connection with StratCom's original role. Cartwright's appointment is apparently designed to help lift StratCom from its narrow historic role and into active leadership in "prompt global strike" operations.

—Greg Mello

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Nebraskans for Peace

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Latin America Briefs compiled by Christy Hargesheimer



Colombia: Massacre at Peace Community

San José de Apartadó is one of many communities in Colombia self-designated as "Peace Communities" because of their unwillingness to bear arms or provide information or logistical support to either side in the long-standing conflict between guerrillas and the government. They also demand that the parties to the conflict do not enter the boundaries of their communities. In response, the security forces and senior government and state officials have accused the community of subversion. For its part, the FARC (the main guerrilla group) has interpreted the community's refusal to collaborate with it as a form of collaboration with its enemies.

This position has resulted in over 150 disappearances or murders in the past eight years in San José de Apartadó. President Álvaro Uribe himself, on March 20, accused members of this community of being part of the guerrilla group FARC and has ordered the military to enter the community within 20 days.

On February 21, 2005, eight members of this community were murdered. An eyewitness said that the perpetrators of the massacre identified themselves as members of the Colombian army. According to other witnesses, following the killings soldiers told local inhabitants that if the killings had not become public knowledge, they would have killed more civilians and that the eight victims were "dead guerrillas" ("puro guerrillero muerto"). What they failed to mention was that two of the "dead guerrillas" were children, 11 and 2 years old.

President Uribe's claim that the Peace Community has failed to collaborate with the justice system ignores the fact that the community has maintained a continuous dialogue with Colombian governments on issues relating to the community's safety and to ensure full and impartial investigations into repeated killings and "disappearances." It is shocking that a community which is the recipient of provisional protection measures from the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, and for which the Colombian Constitutional Court requested effective protection measures in March 2004, would be subjected to such a brutal and cruel attack.

In a letter on March 17 to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Amnesty International requested that "the State Department must include this case in its evaluation of Colombian compliance with U.S. human rights conditions, and must refrain from certification until a credible investigation has been completed."

Rumsfeld's Latin American Tour

In late March, U.S. Pentagon chief Donald Rumsfeld made a swing through Latin America to drum up support against populist Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez. Added to Rumsfeld's list of 'bad guys' was former Nicaraguan president Daniel Ortega, Reagan's old nemesis, who may win upcoming presidential elections. At issue in Nicaragua is the accusation that Nicaragua is hoarding several hundred Russian-made surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) that Washington wants to see destroyed. Indeed, at the start of Rumsfeld's trip, Washington announced the suspension of all U.S. military assistance to Nicaragua—about 2.3 million dollars' worth—pending the destruction of the missiles that Washington contends might be obtained by terrorists.

As Rumsfeld's trip began, Otto Reich published an article in *National Review* on Chavez and Fidel Castro, under the banner "The Axis of Evil... Western Hemisphere Version." Rumsfeld took his message first to Argentina, then to Brazil, where he assailed Venezuela's decision to buy 100,000 AK-47s from Russia. U.S. officials suggest that these weapons may be intended for left-wing guerrillas next door in Colombia or for Bolivian indigenous activists, but Chávez insists the guns will be used to replace aging army weapons.

Meanwhile, Venezuela is forming a new National Reserve to defend, and if necessary, destroy its oil wells in case of invasion from the United States. Almost a million activists will be trained in the use of armaments to defend against what Defense Council Secretariat, General Melvin López Hidalgo, says are "real threats" against Venezuela. López said that their intelligence has determined that the U.S. has already planned and rehearsed a joint invasion with armies from Spain, Great Britain and other armies. It seems unlikely, however, that Spain would be involved, particularly since they may be selling gunboats to Venezuela.

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THE 'NEW STRATCOM' GETS A 'NEW MISSION' conclusion

planned military attacks and the corresponding narrowing of involvement by other military—not to say civilian—authorities. This is the “prompt” in “prompt global strike,” and it is already hard-wired in for StratCom’s nuclear mission.

In some cases, the authority to launch “prompt” strikes will be pre-delegated, as is the case for nuclear launch now. Quoting Grossman again,

StratCom’s new component also would begin developing greater capability to effectively target “something that you needed to hit in minutes rather than hours or days,” the [anonymous] officer [familiar with StratCom’s missions] said.

In short, the space and global strike component would concentrate its efforts on “those things that you’ve got to get at very fast, that are in areas where nobody else likely can get very easily,” the officer said.

Trip wires in the process would require defense secretary or presidential approval for some of the options, the officer noted. Under certain scenarios—like a rapid North Korean advance across the demilitarized zone or a no-notice Chinese invasion of Taiwan—a limited number of options may be pre-approved for Cartwright’s strategic strike, the officer noted.

In addition to “pre-approved” war plans, a “menu” of other attack plans are being put on the shelf for rapid execution. In most cases, there will not be time to involve Congress in any sort of constitutionally-mandated deliberation

“The business of America is doing business, and we do it on a global scale,” Cartwright said. That is why the U.S. military has been forced to increasingly take a global approach to the nation’s security.

Omaha World-Herald, March 5, 2005

and vote, or to reach any other kind of democratic consensus. Security and speed also preclude international authority, for example from the U.N. Security Council, unless it too were “pre-delegated.”

It thus appears that StratCom, with or without firing a shot, is helping make the anti-democratic and anti-legal potential in high-speed air and space war an established fact. What’s the point of being able to communicate at the speed of light or launch a missile which can reach its target in 10 or 30 minutes if Secretary Rumsfeld and General Cartwright have to wait for the slow wheels of democracy and diplomacy to turn? And what if they do not turn in the ‘right’ way? The limits to this concentration of decisionmaking—if there are any—aren’t at all clear.

The second danger is closely related: the classic one of relying more and more on an officer (or “officer-corporate”) corps at the expense of other forms of national cohesion, internal political strength, and foreign relations. Is everything and everybody destined to wind up as nails because General Cartwright has a closet full of hammers?

Perhaps. According to the U.S. Commission on National Security in the 21st Century, “since the end of the Cold War [and up to 1999], the United States has embarked upon nearly four dozen military interventions... as opposed to only 16 during the entire period of the Cold War.” *This increase was noted more than a year before the Bush Administration came to power.*

At StratCom, it is now a permanent state of war—not peace—that is the shaping and normative vision, with the warriors actively seeking advantages to their own institutions in new realms all the time, even in imagined new U.S. civil wars. As Grossman writes:

Cartwright also is attempting to get the strategic community to think creatively, asking what other “battle mediums” beyond space- or cyber-warfare officials might imagine... He invites his colleagues to ponder how a “major domestic calamity”—like a “massive WMD [weapons of mass destruction] event, declaration of martial law, [or] secession of one or more states”—might “affect the DOD and StratCom.”

The third most conspicuous danger may be the increasing level of outright fantasy now found in mainstream U.S. military thought. While not all missions are impossible, the goal of “full spectrum dominance”—the overall objective of U.S. military capability today—is a recipe for failure and defeat. Andrew Bacevich writes, in his important work *American Empire: The Realities and Consequences of U.S. Diplomacy*:

...Having assessed the security implications of globalization—a process ostensibly making the world more complicated and more dangerous than ever before—the United States after the Cold War committed itself to establishing a level of military mastery without historical precedent. In magnitude and scope, the dominance to which the Pentagon aspired dwarfed that which American soldiers had imagined was in their grasp a half-century before when in sole possession of the atomic bomb. It far exceeded that achieved by imperial Rome or by France in the era of Bonaparte. The ambitions of the German general staff in its heyday, including the Schlieffen Plan in 1914 or Operation Barbarossa in 1941—appeared puny by comparison. Swift, unerring, implacable, and invincible, U.S. forces aimed to achieve something approaching omnipotence: “Full Spectrum Dominance.”

In remarks reported in the *Omaha World-Herald* March 5, 2005, Cartwright himself linked this more aggressive military doctrine explicitly to America’s economic interests:

With the increasing globalization of the world’s economy, events around

the globe can have a real impact on Americans’ daily lives, Cartwright said. “The business of America is doing business, and we do it on a global scale,” he said. That is why the U.S. military has been forced to increasingly take a global approach to the nation’s security.

The problem here, however, is not just defeat—which is inevitable sooner or later—but what men like Rumsfeld, Bush, and Cartwright might do to try to avert or delay it.

Of course it’s happening now. A process of self-defeat is now underway for the American empire, as we lavish our resources and societal attention upon fabulously expensive weapon systems that will not bring security and which squander our physical and moral resources on militarized policies that accomplish, at the very best, nothing good. A recent report from the General Accounting Office found that 70-some-odd major

weapon systems under development will have an ultimate combined cost in the neighborhood of \$2 trillion. At a military burden currently running at least \$5,100 per American household, this is not unsustainable financially and therefore also will not be sustainable politically. How can we bring an end to this collective binge of violence before it consumes us? How far down do we have to go before we start rebuilding our society and ideals?

People in organizations like Nebraskans for Peace have been working on that rebuilding process all along. The darkness of the times and the concurrent crises we now face are creating a new “teachable moment.” The best political news I know is that the dawn is much more attractive than the dark.

Greg Mello who was the keynote speaker at the February 2004 Annual Peace Conference in Grand Island wrote this article expressly for the Nebraska Report.



USSTRATCOM Headquarters at Offutt Air Force Base

Ask the Hard Questions about Iraq.



graphic by Justin Kemmerling

Nebraskans Commemorate Anniversary of Iraq Invasion

by Don Tilley
Prairie Peace Park

The 150 Nebraskans who gathered at the State Capitol March 19 on the second anniversary of the Iraq invasion were there to ask some hard questions. Blowing eastward to Washington on the prairie winds, these were heartfelt questions about the Bush Administration's policy that demand answers. Questions that will not stop nor go away. Questions that cut through the spin and sham, the flawed intelligence and deliberate deception, to expose an administration willfully at odds with the world community. Searching questions so revealing that, if answered truthfully, ought to make the American people rise up and demand a regime change of their own.

These were questions that, at times, went beyond words, that cut right to the heart, to the very lives of our children. Matt Henderson's mother, for example, had a question that day—Matt Henderson, who was killed in action in Iraq May 26, 2004. Becoming the first parent of a slain soldier to publicly speak out against this war here in the state, Becky Henderson talked about her fun-loving son who liked to laugh, before asking the audience, in a voice filled with grief and quiet outrage, "Why?" Angry about the false pretences under which the invasion of Iraq was launched, angry that the administration regards the 1500 who have already died as little more than "just the cost of war," she asked that we bring our soldiers home before any more of our children die. Her daughter Kellie shared her hurt and loss with a sense of bewilderment, but claimed that she has a right to say what she feels since she lost her wonderful brother to

this war.

We listened too as Carol Guisinger read, with quiet determination, the names of the 18 soldiers from Nebraska who have died in Iraq, telling in turn a little about each one. Nor did she fail to mention as the thousands of other American soldiers who have been maimed in body or spirit. Serving as a backdrop to her words was "The Wall of Remembrance" that she and her husband, Roy, constructed. It holds the faces of the first 900 American soldiers who have died since this war began. As I listened to her speak, the soldiers seem to stare out at us from their full-color photos. And behind and above this wall, I could imagine another wall one hundred times the size, picturing the 100,000 Iraqis who have been killed so far. What penetrating questions would this chorus of American soldiers and Iraqi people now ask of our country's leaders, I wondered? Would our leaders have the decency to cringe from such questions? Or just chalk it up as a "cost of war"?

Two days earlier, Rev. Jay Vetter, pastor of Christ United Methodist Church in Lincoln, had written a very personal letter to his son-in-law who'd just been called up for duty in Iraq. Jay read us the letter, his voice trembling in the morning chill. We felt so helpless, listening to him offer the assurance of love and care, while voicing anger at this war and occupation that should never, by right, occurred. To his son-in-law, who felt he had a duty to go, Jay poured out his feelings, but without judgment, serving as an example about how to deal with people caught in the middle. But Jay too had a question: "Why isn't our government acting with morality, righteousness, and empathy in Iraq?"

Holly Burns, executive director of the

Hispanic Center in Lincoln, had her own story to tell about how this war is affecting her. A cousin is one of the more than 1500 already killed. And an uncle of hers, who served in Viet Nam, just died from complications associated with exposure to Agent Orange. Her family, she explained, has always had close ties to the military. She herself was an Army brat. But her mother, she said, was always dragging her to peace rallies when she was growing up. And one of the saddest things she remembers is that shortly before he died, her uncle told her, "I heard you, but I

How much more is this war going to cost?

didn't understand [about the war]." Between her own family experiences and an administration that seems hell-bent at keeping us at war, a righteous anger is driving her on. And she too has a question for our political leaders, "Where were you when you were needed to stop the war?"

The final speaker, United Nation Association Chapter 100 President John Krejci, chided our national leaders for not providing strong support for the United Nations, for not honoring the opinions of other nations and for not involving them in decisions impacting the international community. He praised UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and contrasted him with the Bush Administration's appointment of John Bolton as ambassador to the UN. Annan, Krejci said, has earned the respect of the nations of the world. Bolton, on the other hand, has built a public reputation working to undermine the

United Nations. This kind of arrogance and hypocrisy, Krejci said, is guaranteed to keep our country isolated internationally for at least another four years.

And that, one can't help but conclude, is exactly how Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, Rice, Wolfowitz and Bolton want it. Unencumbered by either international opinion or international law, they'll be free to practice their unilateralist doctrine of preemption around the globe without restraint.

Nebraskans for Peace President Mark Vasina opened the March 19 event by reading off a list of questions about the administration's policy in Iraq for which, to date, nobody has any answers. (See the complete statement on P. 5.) Questions like "How much longer will we be in Iraq? Do we know what we're really doing in this Muslim country? How do we know we're not making things worse? How much more is this war going to cost? Will this war ever end? How will we know if we've won?"

Two years ago this month, in a letter to the editor published in *Omaha World-Herald* just days after the invasion of Iraq began, I wrote, "Historians are likely to interpret this Iraq war as unnecessary, foolish, even wrong and not fought for the reasons given by U.S. government leaders to an ill-informed public living in fear that has been largely the result of calculated propaganda."

The danger before us today, on the second anniversary of the invasion of Iraq, is that the Bush/Cheney White House is actively seeking to export this deadly model to other nations in the Islamic world—to Syria, to Iran—without the American public ever having gotten answers to these troubling questions about Iraq.

NFP President Mark Vasina's Statement at the March 19 Anniversary Commemoration

Good morning. And thank you for coming out today.

My name is Mark Vasina. I'm president of Nebraskans of Peace and the host of today's event to commemorate the second anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Iraq.

But this is not a joyous occasion, nor a cause for celebration.

This anniversary is a grim reminder that exactly two years ago today—under false pretenses and in a blatant violation of international law—the Bush Administration launched an unprovoked “pre-emptive” attack on the nation of Iraq, and led our country into war.

Today, contrary to the allegations, misinformation and lies espoused at the time—from the White House (including the Vice President, our own Lincoln native son Dick Cheney) to the daily spin on *Fox News*—we now know the following truths:

- There were no Weapons of Mass Destruction in Iraq, and hadn't been for years
- The UN weapons inspection teams had successfully performed their task
- Saddam Hussein was not collaborating with Osama bin Laden and al-Qaida
- Iraq had absolutely nothing to do with 9/11

We also know that...

- Over 1500 American soldiers have died
- As many as 100,000 Iraqis have died (as reported in the prestigious medical journal *Lancet*)
- The financial cost to U.S. taxpayers has exceeded \$200 billion, while the devastation to the economy of Iraq can only be measured in terms of decades, perhaps generations
- U.S. troops were seriously unprepared and ill-equipped for military occupation of Iraq—and their safety often merited shameless inattention by administration officials, including Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld
- We were not hailed as “liberators” by the Iraqi people
- The capture of Saddam Hussein did not end the post-invasion insurgency in Iraq
- The attack on Fallujah—which leveled

a city the size of Omaha—did not end the insurgency

- The January 30 elections did not end the insurgency
- In fact, the insurgency is stronger today than it was when President Bush declared “*an end to major combat*” nearly two years ago
- Our actions have increased tensions—and raised questions about our motives—throughout the entire Islamic world
- Except for the British government of

- How do we know we're not making things worse?
- How much more is this war going to cost?
- In dollars? In lives? In broken hearts and minds?
- Will this war ever end?
- How will we know **IF** we've won?

And standing here today, on the second anniversary of this ill-conceived and poorly conducted military invention, our profound sadness is deepened by the fact that nobody can answer any of these questions.

Not a single one of our elected representatives in Washington can answer even one of these questions with any certainty whatsoever.

That, in and of itself, would be enough, you would think, to give our political leaders pause, foster some long-overdue self-reflection and discourage them from thinking about going down such a path again.

But not Vice President Dick Cheney. Or President George W. Bush.

Because the questions this administration is asking today concern not Iraq and the quagmire in which we find ourselves there ... but whether to export this model of illegal “pre-emptive” military intervention to Syria. And Iran.

Columnist Molly Ivins likes to remind everyone of the First Rule of Holes: “When you're in one, quit digging.” Unfortunately, we have an administration in Washington right now that, instead of asking, *How do we get out?* is asking, *How much deeper can we get in?*

As citizens, as Nebraskans, as people for peace, it is our responsibility—surely today on this tragic anniversary, but also every day from this day forward—to ask our elected officials these questions about the Iraq intervention.

Because as citizens, taxpayers, mothers, fathers, spouses, sweethearts, sisters, brothers, friends, sons and daughters, we're entitled to some answers.

And we want them now—up front—before the Bush Administration resorts to similar illegal, immoral and ill-advised military actions against any other nation.



Tony Blair—and token gestures by the Italian and Australian governments—virtually every other major nation in the world has refused to participate in this military intervention

- The U.S. reputation around the world has plummeted to its lowest level in over a generation.

In summary, measured against any standard you can think of, “*mission*” in Iraq is nowhere near being “*accomplished*.”

That's what we know.

As we gather today on the second anniversary of this illegal invasion, here's what we **DON'T** know:

- How much longer will be in Iraq?
- What are we really doing in this Muslim country?

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Over Three Decades Later...

U.S. Admits It Tested Nerve Gas on Troops

by Bud Narveson

On February 18, 2002, the U.S. Office of Veteran's Affairs mailed a letter to Henry P. Perry of Lincoln, Nebraska, regarding the "health effects" of tests conducted by branches of the military on men on ships in the South Pacific during the late 1960s and early '70s. Perry had served on the USS Okanogan, one of the ships involved in tests, which were known by the code-name, "Operation SHAD," for "shipboard hazard and defense." As a Department of Defense news release about "Operation Shad" from that year reads: "Veterans who believe they were involved in Deseret Test Center tests and desire medical evaluations should call the VA's Helpline at (800) 749-8387. Veterans who have DoD-related questions, who have information to contribute, or who are DoD beneficiaries and have medical concerns or questions, should call DoD's Deployment Health Support Directorate's contact center at (800) 497-6261. All Deseret Test Center fact sheets are on the DeploymentLINK Web site at http://deploymentlink.osd.mil/current_issues/shad/shad_intro.shtml."

Naturally concerned about what these "health effects" might be, Henry Perry went for medical evaluation at the Veteran's Administration facility in Omaha. His wife, Joyce, Perry had been worried for a number of years about her husband's mysterious continuing weight loss, poor metabolism and gastrointestinal symptoms. Now she began wondering whether these might not be the "health effects" deriving from those tests, some of which involved the use of the deadly nerve gases Sarin and VX, as well as other materials, including those of a biological nature.

Joyce Perry has since looked up and copied a number of DoD releases, and what she has found has done nothing

to reassure her. "Just think," she says, "they conducted these tests on military personnel such as my husband. Now, after thirty years, he is asked about his involvement. He does not recall ever being told that he was involved, or that he was ever given protective gear. What do they imagine he can remember?"

Details about the tests were described in a May 25, 2002 article in *The Guardian* by Matthew Engel, entitled "U.S. Admits It Tested Nerve Gas on Its Sailors."

"The U.S. has admitted that it deliberately sprayed nerve gas on its sailors in the 1960s as part of a series of tests, and the government has begun contacting those involved to discover what damage may have been done to their health. The tests used several of the poisons which the Americans are now most afraid may be used in a possible biological attack, including sarin, the lethal gas used in the Tokyo subway murders in 1995.

It was showered on to the deck and injected into the ventilation system of the USS George Eastman 31 years earlier, in a test with the gentle codename Flower Drum.

According to documents just released by the Pentagon, Flower Drum, together with other tests with names like Autumn Gold and Shady Grove, were part of Operation Shad (shipboard hazard and defense), which was designed to evaluate the weapons themselves, the forces' protective gear, and decontamination procedures.

The Pentagon started releasing the previously classified information about Project Shad after being pushed by a Democrat congressman from California, Mike Thompson. More than 600 ex-servicemen have now been contacted by the government, out of about 4,300 believed to have been involved.

"We are committed to helping every veteran who took

part in these tests," the secretary of veterans' affairs, Anthony Principi, said.

"If we find any medical problems or disabilities we can attribute to Project Shad, we'll ensure these veterans receive the benefits they deserve."

Project Shad lasted from 1963 to 1970. Other potential weapons involved included SEB (staphylococcal enterotoxin B), which produces classic symptoms of food poisoning, and VX, the deadly nerve agent which the Americans believed was about to be manufactured in the Sudanese factory they bombed, apparently wrongly, in 1998 and which was detected by weapons inspectors in Iraq at about the same time.

Mr. Thompson said there might have been up to 113 Shad tests, and he was alarmed by what he had learned.

"We now know that our military personnel were exposed to Sarin gas and VX nerve agent, which are both lethal, and other agents that are known carcinogens."

Monkeys were also used in the exercise so that their bodies could be examined. Details of most of the tests remain secret.

Dr. Michael Kilpatrick, a medical official in the office of the assistant secretary of defense for health affairs, said it was unclear whether sailors were intentionally exposed to the germ and chemical toxins without the benefit of protective masks and gear.

It was also uncertain whether any had given their permission to become human guinea pigs in medical experiments with the deadly substances.

"When you read the over-arching plans for the testing, people were to be protected," he told the *New York Times*.

"But when we get to individual reports, we do not see things like informed consent or individual protection. We don't have the records for what, if any, protection was given to people."

A Pentagon official said their records and the ships' logs did not show anyone suffering serious health problems at the time, but admitted that the records were sketchy.

VX was used in a test called Fearless Johnny, also on the George Eastman. SEB was sprayed by planes over the USS Granville S. Hall, five tugboats and parts of the Eniwetok Atoll, the U.S. Pacific naval base in the Marshall Islands. SEB is unlikely to kill healthy soldiers, but could incapacitate them for up to a fortnight. [<http://www.guardian.co.uk/international/story/0,3604,721898,00.html>]

An update on the investigations is found in a news release by the Vietnam Veterans of America from June 30, 2003 (Press release provided courtesy of the Department of Defense):

"To keep the public informed of the investigation, DoD officials involved with the Project 112 investigation have testified before congressional bodies and briefed individual lawmakers or committees 18 times. Additionally, DoD and VA officials attended a reunion of crewmembers of the USS Power, which was involved in a SHAD test. On June 30, 2003, DoD announced the final public release of the medi-

Will There Be a New Draft?

Amid rising expectations for renewed conscription, Central Nebraska Peace Workers has initiated a weekend of meetings and training in late April, all co-sponsored by NFP and several churches.

In four public meetings in Omaha, Lincoln, Kearney and Grand Island (April 21-23; see the "Calendar" on the NFP website for details: www.nebraskansforpeace.org), J.E. McNeil, Executive Director of the Committee on Conscience and War, will explore in detail the possibilities for conscription, including conscription for women and for persons with special skills (e.g. medical personnel). She will emphasize the need for all potential draftees to consider whether their objection to military service fits the Selective Service definition of conscientious objection.

McNeil will also describe stepped-up military recruitment in high schools as part of the "No Child Left Behind Act," and will offer suggestions for counter-recruitment efforts.

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On Sunday, April 24, McNeil will conduct an eight-hour training workshop for up to 30 CO Counselors, to be held at the Leadership Center in Aurora, Nebraska.

At least two factors contribute to the perception that conscription may return. Last October, Cassandra Costley, director of the Alternative Service Division of Selective Service, made an unannounced visit to the Church of the Brethren Service Center, inquiring whether they might be prepared to offer alternative service for conscientious objectors in the event that conscription resumed. In follow-up conversations, Selective Service maintained that a draft is not imminent, but they have presented detailed plans for a draft and alternative service in the event that a draft becomes law. Meanwhile, enlistments and re-enlistments for the Army, Marines and National Guard reserves have fallen well below quotas in recent months, in spite of sharply increased incentives. Registration forms for the public meetings and the CO Counselor training are available from Caryl Guisinger at 308-358-0400 or Caryl@DesignInsight.net.

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DU (Depleted Uranium) Is a WMD

by Cary Vigneri
NFP Omaha Coordinator

Depleted Uranium (DU) sounds harmless. After all, it's depleted.

In fact, it is a component of weapons that are horribly devastating. Yet its use in war and how it harms people, plants, animals and the planet are discussed in public rarely. Depleted uranium is used to harden munitions, and optimize their ability to penetrate targets. It becomes aerosolized when it explodes, that is, the metal breaks up into radioactive particles that are easily inhaled by humans and that readily contaminate the ecosystem through ground water absorption and the poison's subsequent entry into the food chain.

DU is suspected of causing increased levels of cancer in people and animals, general weakening of the immune system, and perhaps, most worrisome, genetic mutations. Dr. Chris Busby, author of *Wings of Death* wrote about the effects of depleted uranium. He has said, "of all the dangers facing humanity the most insidious and frightening is the silent and invisible damage being done to genes by induced mutation. The human race is defined by its genetic structure, and

alteration of this is the most pervasive and serious attack that can be imagined." Dr. Chris Busby, *Wings of Death*, ISBN: 1-897761-03-1

A German professor, Dr. Siegwart-Horst Gunther, first uncovered the use of depleted uranium armor-piercing shells by U.S. forces in the 1991 Gulf War. A survivor of world war and internment in a Nazi concentration camp, Dr. Gunther is a tireless campaigner in the struggle to highlight the under-reported and continuing human devastation caused by the first Gulf War. As early as November 1995, Gunther stated publicly that the breakdown of the immune system in humans and animals seemed to be the most long lasting and pernicious result of contact with expended depleted uranium weapons. "Herpes infections, Zoster infections and AIDS-like symptoms are dramatically on the increase, all of them possibly related to the breakdown of the immune system; premature births are numerous. Congenital malformations of the newborn show a high post-war percentage (26.8% according to Dept. of Pathology, College of Medicine, University of Baghdad). In the countryside, children die in great numbers and are buried without possibility of diagnosis. During the

lambing season in 1993 a high percentage (10% according to IPA Agricultural Research Center) of abnormal newborn lambs have been observed. Most of them died a few days after birth."

Professor Doug Rokke, ex-director of the Pentagon's depleted uranium project, was tasked by the U.S. Department of Defense with post-war (first Gulf War, 1991) depleted uranium clean up. His job was to lead a team in the work of establishing protocols for decontaminating equipment, personnel and sites after their exposure to DU.

Rokke, who believes his health is severely compromised as a result of DU exposure, has said of the current Iraqi war: "There is a moral point to be made here. This war was about Iraq possessing illegal weapons of mass destruction—yet we are using weapons of mass destruction ourselves. Such double standards are repellent."

Rokke is a former professor of environmental science at Jacksonville University and one-time U.S. Army colonel. Most of the men under his command who worked on the decontamination project have died. His opinion is that use of DU is a 'war crime.'

According to an August 2002 report by the UN, the laws breached by the use of DU

shells include:

- the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- the Charter of the United Nations; the Genocide Convention;
- the Convention Against Torture;
- the four Geneva Conventions of 1949;
- the Conventional Weapons Convention of 1980; and
- The Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907.

What all that means is that the laws and treaties to which the U.S. is a signatory bind us, according to our Constitution, to use no poison or poisoned weapons. We have agreed to use no weapons that do severe, long-term damage to the environment. We are also enjoined from using weapons that cannot distinguish between civilians and soldiers, or materials or devices that are similar to gas.

It is a crime in America to plan or prepare for wars that would violate other binding treaties making the mere manufacture of depleted uranium, by definition a crime. And the orders to deploy those kinds of weap-

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Frank LaMere on the "The Battle for Whiteclay" Documentary

The following remarks by Winnebago activist Frank LaMere were read at the February 4 screening of "The Battle for Whiteclay" at the State Capitol. The screening was held to publicize two legislative initiatives: one ultimately rejected by the General Affairs Committee, and one favored by the Appropriations Committee.

LB 530 began life as a designated committee bill from General Affairs with five committee member co-sponsors, but was soon killed by a vote of 6-2-1. Endorsed by the Liquor Control Commission, LB 530 would have provided more flexible authority to consider community conditions in licensing decisions, strengthening the Commission's hand in future rulings on licenses in Whiteclay.

The Appropriations Committee, in its first round review of the State Patrol budget, on March 31 approved funding—\$20,000 per year—for undercover compliance checks of the dealers in Whiteclay. If included in the budget sent to the floor in April, this measure, championed by Sen. Chris Beutler, will become the first Whiteclay initiative ever to emerge from committee. The relatively small

amount of money would fund an effective program to identify licensee violations of liquor laws and enforce compliance.

Frank LaMere will be one of a number of people participating in a panel discussion following a special public showing of "The Battle for Whiteclay" at the Mary Riepma Ross Film Theatre in Lincoln, April 21, at 7:00 p.m.

I applaud the efforts of Nebraskans for Peace and others in Lincoln who have gathered at the State Capitol this morning to begin a new offensive in the "Battle for Whiteclay." I am sorry that I cannot be there but I look forward to joining those Native people and caring Nebraskans who will gather on Monday to explore the possibilities of LB 530.

I understand that Alex Moscu and Mark Vasina will show their piece from the Whiteclay documentary now being completed and I urge all lawmakers and agency heads in State government to watch it objectively with a resolve of trying to understand the controversy. I thank Alex and Mark and I pray that their completed offering will show Nebraska in

a good light identifying countless Nebraskans who do care! They have my good wishes!

The great legal scholar Felix Cohen once said that Native people are like the miner's canary and that what besets Native people will be a bane to all of us in the near and distant future. When we read of young people on college campuses drinking themselves to death or freezing while under the influence of illegal drugs who can deny his sad prophecy?

There are those who see Whiteclay and its carnage and young people's untimely and tragic deaths from alcohol and drug abuse as simple matters of personal choice. I don't. Every Nebraskan who turns a blind eye to the lawlessness and illegalities surrounding the sale of alcohol at Whiteclay or who ignore those who raise red flags are sentencing their own children and communities to a similar fate. The permissiveness and tolerance shown by conservative Nebraska for the situation at Whiteclay speaks volumes to our hypocrisy and to our dwindling family values. When Native people at Pine Ridge have to tell Nebraskans that our children like their children are dying and that our people like their people

suffer because of our inaction it is time we listen. Who knows more about the devastation of community and the disintegration of families brought on by alcohol than the people of the dry Pine Ridge reservation? Where alcohol is sold by Nebraska to people with no legal place to drink it! It is only a matter of time until the tinderbox at Whiteclay explodes or the tolerance and heartache of alcohol abuse fostered by sellers with no moral purpose reaches into every Nebraska home. We as Nebraskans must act!

The Battle for Whiteclay continues and those who seek a better way will not accept band-aid approaches or politically expedient misdirection from any political party. We have come too far!

We have battled for seven years and we approach the next seven more determined, more frustrated but without anger. We trust the fairness of Nebraskans and look forward to the day when we stand together having done something good for the State, our neighbors and for the generations to come, be they red or white.

Shut down Whiteclay! Take heart and do it now!

Regents Defend UNO Afghan Center



Regent Howard Hawks

March 7, 2005

Dear Mr. Vasina:

I am responding on behalf of the University of Nebraska Board of Regents to your letter of January 21, 2005.

The University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) Center for Afghanistan Studies has been awarded three major contracts by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID): one for the period 1974-78; a second for 1986-94; and the third for 2002-2004. Each of these contracts supported an education project. The first, prior to Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, focused on faculty and student exchanges and the development of Kabul University. The second and third projects focused on the production of educational materials and the training of Afghans. It is important to note, in light of the allegations contained in your letter, that these projects involved training for both female and male teachers and basic skills training for both female and male refugees.

More than 50 UNO and University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) faculty and staff members worked as consultants on these book-publishing projects, the contracts for which were formally awarded to the UNO Center for Afghanistan Studies. Over 30 million textbooks for Afghan schoolchildren and adults were produced in the two primary languages of Afghanistan: Dari and Pashto. This total includes textbooks in every subject taught at each grade level and in adult lit-

eracy classes.

The following are responses to the five numbered items listed beginning on page one of your letter:

1. The contract with UNO obtained with the UNOCAL company was for an education project focused on basic skills training for Afghan females and males. The contract was reviewed by the Board of Regents and approved. It was not a CIA project (none of the UNO contracts or projects has been performed under contract with the CIA or as a project of the CIA).

UNOCAL was exploring the possibility of building two pipelines from Turkmenistan to Pakistan through Afghanistan. The company determined it would need trained Afghan personnel and requested that the Center for Afghanistan Studies at UNO train Afghan women and men in basic skills. This project lasted for 12 months in 1997-98, and was funded by UNOCAL. It was hoped that subsequent educational projects might develop from this one.

The project called for UNO to train Afghan males in basic trade-skills such as plumbing, welding, small engine repair, etc. and Afghan females in English and office skills. The project was conducted by UNO even though UNOCAL did not hold a contract for the pipelines. The company provided the funds to educate and train Afghans even though it was not certain it would obtain the rights to build pipelines in Afghanistan. The project was dropped due to the deteriorating political situation in the country.

According to Regent policy, the University of Nebraska Board of Regents approves all contracts of \$200,000 or more. For this reason, the UNOCAL contract was presented to the Board where it won unanimous approval. At the time of approval, Regents asked for and received reassurance that the contract would be executed under the auspices of the 1996 United Nations Gender Equity Policies.

2. All the books for Afghans were produced under contract

awarded by USAID under rules and instructions promulgated by that agency. If you have questions about those rules, I suggest you contact the USAID office at (202) 712-4810.

The UNO Education Press is not a business unit of the University of Nebraska like the University of Nebraska Press. Instead, it is an Afghan nongovernmental organization which UNO incubated under a 2002 USAID contract to produce 15 million textbooks needed to reopen schools in Afghanistan. Each of these books has a USAID and UNO logo in English on the back cover. These books are not, however, University of Nebraska books. They are Afghan Ministry of Education books. They were developed over a fifty-year period with funding assistance from USAID through contract awarded to the University of Wyoming, Columbia University, and UNO. None of the books was published in Nebraska; all were published either in Afghanistan or Pakistan.

It is important to note that the American universities involved had no responsibility for or control over the content of the books or the design of the curriculum in which they were used. The United States Congress, through the State Department, mandated that the content of the Afghan textbooks be determined solely by Afghans. Just as school boards in America have control over the content of curriculum, so too did the Afghan Ministry of Education have control over its curriculum and textbooks. The presumption that UNO through its actions could dictate Afghan policy is flawed. Again, for more information related to USAID policies in Afghanistan, please contact that agency.

All Afghan projects were presented to the University of Nebraska Board of Regents for consideration and approval. Tom Goutierre, Dean of International Studies and Programs at UNO, personally made the presentations and answered questions posed by the Regents. The USAID contracts were unanimously approved by the Regents each time.

3. Congress, the U.S. State De-

partment, and USAID mandated that Afghans have the final say on content in their books. The content deemed objectionable by Nebraskans for Peace was developed by Afghans for literacy courses for illiterate Afghan Mujaahideen who were fighting Soviet forces. None of these textbooks was produced after 1989, and none of them was intended for use by schoolchildren. However, as you note, textbooks defaced by the ruling Talibs were redistributed within Afghanistan in the years following.

All of the books published in cooperation with the UNO Center since 1989, including the 15.1 million published during 2002, have been revised by the Afghan Ministry of Education and approved by international organizations such as USAID and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Save the Children, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and similar agencies. Many of these same organizations use these books today in their assistance programs for Afghans. The current textbooks are Karzai administration Ministry of Education books.

More than 50 University of Nebraska faculty and staff (most from UNO; some from UNL) participated actively in providing pedagogical and professional review throughout the development of the books, the development of competency-based teaching manuals, and teacher training, including the training of female teachers under threat from Islamist groups in Pakistan.

4. The UNO Center for Afghanistan Studies is firmly committed to the education and training of Afghan women. UNO conducted training for Afghan women in refugee camps and underground in Peshawar, Pakistan due to very threatening conditions. One of the UNO team leaders was shot because of his involvement in such teaching.

Over the past three years, four groups of female Afghan teachers have come to Nebraska for training. UNO has conducted in-service teacher training for more than 4,500 Afghan teachers in Afghanistan since March 2002. Some 3,600

of these teachers are female.

As explained above, content for educational materials was developed according to USAID guidelines through the Afghanistan Ministry of Education. I encourage you to see clarification from that agency regarding its policies.

5. As mentioned above, the U.S. government agency, USAID, contracted with UNO for these projects, and each of these is a matter of public record. Some supplemental financial support was provided by the United Nations during the war between Afghanistan and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). This assistance focused solely on publishing anti-drug and land-mine awareness messages on the back covers of textbooks. No funding was provided by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) or any other intelligence agency for books during the war or for books published in the postwar period.

It is our understanding that Nebraskans for Peace representatives have agreed to discuss their concerns with Mr. Goutierre and other faculty at the UNO Center for Afghanistan Studies. We are pleased that our offer for such discussions has been accepted by your organization. It is unfortunate, however, that contact was not established with UNO prior to the publication of your letter so that these discrepancies could be brought to light.

In its letter, Nebraskans for Peace lists many of its perceived concerns with the administration of UNO's Center for Afghanistan Studies. I wonder, however, if it also perceives that Afghans would have been better off if UNO and Mr. Goutierre has not participated in USAID's efforts.

In 2002, 15 million textbooks made reopening schools for boys and girls in Afghanistan possible. Without the availability of these books, it is likely that education in Afghanistan would have floundered for several more years.

Sincerely,
Howard Hawks
Board of Regents, District No. 2

NFP Responds to the Regents

April 6, 2005

Howard Hawks
Chair, Board of Regents
University of Nebraska

Dear Regent Hawks:

Thank you for your reply to our letter of January 21, 2005. In that letter, Nebraskans for Peace requested that the NU Board of Regents consider a number of specific policy items for inclusion in a university-wide code of ethics. Those items are related to past activities of the UNO Center for Afghanistan Studies (CAS).

However, your reply dated March 7 is silent regarding our request for policy considerations. Instead we are told that: (1) existing policies regarding NU contract approvals were followed, and (2) NFP has its facts wrong about the operations of CAS. Furthermore, the letter ended with the strong suggestion that CAS and the University of Nebraska acted in the best interests of all Afghans when it entered into the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and UNOCAL contracts at the heart of the controversy.

Nevertheless, after reviewing your letter and meeting with CAS Director Tom Gouttierre and Assistant Director Raheem Yaseer on March 15, we remain convinced that critical facts are indeed as we have represented them. We continue to see the need for an ethics policy to address key concerns.

It would be a mistake, however, to construe our interest in such a policy as an attack on all past and current work of CAS. Rather, our effort is aimed at defining ethical boundaries to be applied prospectively, not historically, to the university and all its departments and affiliates.

In response to the challenge in your letter regarding matters of fact concerning CAS, Nebraskans for Peace will also continue to pursue the truth about CAS's textbook publishing and UNOCAL contracts as they relate to the development of an appropriate ethics policy. (We have recently learned that Dr. Sam Walker, Professor of Criminal Justice at UNO, is voicing additional concerns—independently of NFP—about the academic performance and integrity of CAS. [*Readers interested in Dr. Walker's comments may contact him at samwalker@unomaha.edu for a copy of his recent article about CAS.*])

UNOCAL

Judging by the response in your letter, no university policies apparently exist regarding basic human rights or ethical investment screens with respect to companies with which NU collaborates. We trust that the silence of the Regents on this issue does not indicate a steadfast unwillingness to consider such policies.

Your letter dismisses ethical questions raised by journalists as well as human rights and women's advocacy organizations regarding CAS's work under a 1997 contract with UNOCAL by characterizing the UNOCAL project as "an education project focused on basic skills training for Afghan females and males." At issue here, front and center, is gender discrimination in a training program established

and operated by a university department. The fact of this discrimination in the UNOCAL project is acknowledged in your letter. UNO, you report, was contracted "to train Afghan males in basic trade-skills... and Afghan females in English and office skills."

Also relevant is the actual purpose of the UNOCAL program. Steve Coll, author of the 2005 Pulitzer Prize-winning non-fiction book, *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and bin Laden, From the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001*, carefully details the history of UNOCAL's efforts to lure the Taliban, at that time in control of Afghanistan, into an oil and natural gas pipeline agreement. He suggests that the UNO training project was not conceived with a humanitarian purpose, but rather to help lobby the Taliban leadership to support the pipeline deal [see Coll, p. 364]. UNO's involvement was, in effect, a sub-

"Your reply to our letter skirts virtually all of our inquiries regarding policies. We respectfully request a policy response to our policy questions."

terfuge. Its true purpose was—and continues to be—hidden from the American people (if not from the Taliban).

You note that the Regents, when considering the UNOCAL contract, "asked for and received reassurance [from Tom Gouttierre] that the contract would be executed under the auspices of the 1996 United Nations Gender Equity Policies." This action by the Regents represents an important nod in the direction of a sound ethics policy. However, it would be instructive to find out whether the Regents were ever provided evidence that the UNOCAL contract was in fact carried out under such auspices. We encourage the Regents to adopt a policy requiring that international contracts adhere to these and other United Nations ethics policies, and that NU faculty and officials responsible for the contracts provide periodic documentation of compliance.

UNO Education Press

The identity and historic role of the UNO Education Press (and affiliates and predecessor entities) remain entirely unclear. In your letter you state: "The UNO Education Press is not a business unit of the University of Nebraska like the University of Nebraska Press. Instead, it is an Afghan nongovernmental organization which UNO incubated under a 2002 USAID contract..." You suggest that UNO exerted no influence on this or any other entity involved with the textbooks, stating that UNO "had no responsibility for or control over the content of the books or the design of

the curriculum in which they were used."

Elsewhere in your letter you state: "More than 50 University of Nebraska faculty and staff... participated actively in providing pedagogical and professional review throughout the development of the books, the development of competency-based teaching manuals, and teacher training..." You also acknowledge the (undeniable) use of the UNO trade name and logo on the back covers of textbooks published in 2002. Nevertheless, you suggest that due to lack of UNO control over their content these publications should not be held to ethical standards commensurate with an American institution of higher learning.

Regardless of the legal relationship of the University of Nebraska to the UNO Education Press, we believe that UNO's association with the textbook project and this entity "which UNO incubated" raises issues of ethical standards in process and product. (We are aware, for example, of UNICEF's efforts to develop appropriate textbooks for Afghan schools in 2002.) Failure to meet suitable ethical standards regarding gender-based and religion-oriented content, for example, should have been a critical consideration for UNO staff prior to their involvement in this project, just as it had been for UNICEF staff.

The subsequent distribution of the UNO textbooks by UNICEF and other international aid organizations working in Afghanistan most likely reflected resignation on the part of aid workers, not endorsement. In fact, CAS's failure to win a 2003 USAID contract to develop a new generation of Afghan textbooks suggests an apparent international recognition of the need to replace the UNO textbooks—and their publishers.

Your reply regarding the UNO Education Press begs questions along two other lines of inquiry.

First, what is the history of the UNO Education Press and affiliates both prior and subsequent to 2002? One individual we contacted visited the Press' facilities well before 2002. The UNO website itself suggests that the UNO Education Press existed before 2002, and identifies a related Pakistan-based entity (the UNO *Printing Press*) with a continuing administrative link to UNO. The following description is found on a UNO/CAS webpage:

In 2001, important Afghan educational institutions, the former IRC and the ACBAR Printing Press, as well as the Health and Education Resource Center (HERC), merged with UNO Education Press to function as the Instructional Materials Development Center (IMDC) in Kabul Afghanistan and Peshawar, Pakistan.

As a part of this merger, the UNO Printing Press serves as an independent body under the name and administration of UNO.

What is the function of the UNO Printing Press and the nature of its relationship to UNO? While the UNO Education Press currently may not be a "business unit of the University of Nebraska" as you state, can the same be said for the UNO Printing Press? That it serves "under the name

conclusion on next page

NFP Responds, conclusion

and administration of UNO” suggests a relationship to NU above and beyond a neutral characterization as “an Afghan nongovernmental organization.” We recognize that the legal foundations regarding corporations and mergers in Pakistan and Afghanistan are most likely different from those governing the same practices in the U.S. Nevertheless, we expect, for example, that NU officials can identify a principal at UNO appropriately authorized for administration of the UNO Printing Press, and that both this person and the affiliated entity are bound by university policies.

Second, what university policies govern the use and licensing of university trademarks, trade names and logos? We expect that their authorization for use on Afghan textbooks and inclusion in corporate names, particularly by nonaffiliated entities (such as the UNO Education Press), was carefully supervised in accordance with university policies.

Very clearly, the use of these highly valued and routinely staunchly defended articles of intellectual property in conjunction with the Afghan textbook projects places NU’s credibility and reputation behind the textbooks themselves. Viewed in such a light, the protestation that UNO staff was not responsible for textbook content fails to acknowledge the important public relations function served by UNO’s very visible participation in these projects. Loss of esteem for CAS by Afghanistan scholars in the U.S. and aid workers around the world is an obvious, though unintended, result. Appropriate policy carefully practiced should guard against this occurrence.

CAS Responsibility for Textbook Content

The prominence in your letter placed on justification of the 2002 textbooks obscures the greater ethics issues surrounding the textbooks developed by CAS in the 1980s. In the earlier textbooks, students were exhorted to jihad against foreign oppressors

through militant images and rhetoric in literacy textbooks and through story problems featuring bullets and dead Russian soldiers in mathematics textbooks.

You assert that the offensive militant images and text (“the content deemed objectionable by Nebraskans for Peace”) appeared only in textbooks intended for adult literacy courses. Since we have not been able to view actual copies of the 1980s textbooks (the CAS staff have not yet produced copies for our inspection), we acknowledge our disadvantage relative to the Regents on this matter. However, based on the evidence available to us at the time of this writing, we are not convinced that the objectionable content was confined to textbooks prepared only for adults.

Pages from third-grade and fifth-grade literacy textbooks which contain militant images and text promoting violent jihad were published in the Spring 2002 *World Policy Journal* and reproduced in the March 2005 *Nebraska Report*. The *WPJ* article also reported that violent story problems were found, for example, in third-grade and fourth-grade mathematics textbooks. Senior CAS staff informed NFP that adult literacy courses designed by CAS were short programs, taught to mujahidin fighters during the winter months when severe weather forced the suspension of military campaigns. It appears unlikely that progressively graded textbooks were designed for exclusive use in these adult literacy courses. We are attempting to verify our suspicions with international aid workers operating in Afghanistan who have knowledge of the original UNO textbooks.

Nevertheless, whether aimed at children or adults only, the content of the original textbooks produced by CAS has been found “objectionable” to international aid workers and academics far from Nebraska. In fact, national journalists brought the story to the attention of NFP members in 2002. Is it fair to conclude from the comments in your letter that the Regents have sufficiently reviewed the content of the original UNO textbooks and found nothing that is morally ob-

jectionable? Who performed the review? What is their report?

You also stated that UNO staff were not responsible for militant content because they were directed by USAID and the U.S. government to include this material, which was sought by the mujahidin themselves. This argument only serves to emphasize the directive role played by U.S. foreign policy in carrying out what is publicly touted as a humanitarian and educational project. Moreover, it strengthens the case for a university policy to establish ethical boundaries for participation in something so functionally complex as a CIA covert operation.

CIA and USAID

You have plainly suggested in your letter’s closing remarks that Afghans are better off today because of CAS’s work under contract for USAID. Few actions, or bundles of actions, are obviously either all good or all bad in their motivations or consequences. NFP has never suggested that everything CAS has done involves unethical behavior or adverse consequences.

However, measuring the ethics of institutional behavior by a U.S. public university is not accomplished by merely determining that the behavior in question landed squarely on the side of U.S. strategic interests in a regional military geopolitical conflict. Conformity to U.S. foreign policy—whether politically consensual or not—does not guarantee appropriate university policy. The need for a careful ethical examination of institutional behavior in such instances is all the more important.

Such is the case for CAS’s original USAID contract to produce Afghan textbooks from 1986-1994. In Chapter 25 of *Charlie Wilson’s War: The Extraordinary Story of the Largest Covert Operation in History*, George Crile describes how the USAID’s Cross Border Humanitarian Aid Program, “a seemingly innocent, humanitarian aid program,” was “transformed into an indispensable second front in the CIA’s Afghan war” [see Crile, p. 362]. Headed by a USAID official known for his involvement with

عقل سليم در بدن سالم است
A SOUND MIND IS IN A SOUND BODY



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طبع: مطبعة تعليمی پوهنتون نبراسکا
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The back cover design of an Afghan textbook published in 2002 by the UNO Education Press bearing the University of Nebraska’s former official logo. Regent Hawks asserts in his letter that the UNO Education Press is not affiliated with the University of Nebraska.

CIA covert operations in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War, this program (which funded the original UNO textbook project) was designed to maintain civilian support for the mujahidin operating inside Afghanistan [Crile, pp. 363-366].

We do not wish to waste the Regents’ time with a U.S. foreign policy discussion over the methods and merits of the CIA’s prosecution of a covert operation in Afghanistan during the years of the brutal Soviet occupation of that country. Rather, we hope to begin a discussion about university ethics policy by asking whether it is consistent with the educational mission of a first tier institution of higher learning to cooperate with a CIA covert operation.

Questions such as these are especially important when our university’s contribution to the war effort in Afghanistan involved the publication of textbooks intended by design (whether by the mujahidin, the CIA, or UNO) to instill or reinforce militant jihad in young or old. The university’s involvement becomes a matter of even greater immediacy to Nebras-

kans and all Americans when we consider that these same mujahidin who studied jihad in UNO textbooks provided the sanctuary for the al-Qaida terrorist camps prior to the attacks of 9/11.

Even CIA and USAID operations in Afghanistan (and, more notoriously, in Nicaragua) were constrained by policies imposed by the U.S. Congress. (In the case of Nicaragua, executive branch contraventions of these policies resulted in national scandal.) We ask that the Regents diligently exercise their duty of oversight of university activities and establish a meaningful ethics policy.

Such a policy should, among other things identified in our letter of January 21, prohibit university involvement in militant, religious and gender-biased propaganda at home or abroad—whether targeted at children or adults. Your reply to our letter skirts virtually all of our inquiries regarding policies. We respectfully request a policy response to our policy questions.

Sincerely,
Mark Vasina
President, Nebraskans for Peace

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DU Is a WMD, conclusion

ons are criminal; as are those who are personally responsible for their participation in these crimes. All of these laws are designed to spare civilians from unwarranted suffering in armed conflicts.

DU weapons have been used in at least four recent wars. Both the British and Americans are known to have used them, and the U.S. manufactures and sells DU munitions to 16 other countries. The U.S.' criminal activity has not gone unnoticed by the international community. Largely unreported in American press, the International Criminal Tribunal for Afghanistan (ICTA) was convened in Tokyo in December, 2002 and tried G.W. Bush for crimes against humanity. The ICTA convened as a Peoples Tribunal Movement. Its steering committee was made up of members of the international peace movement, including Americans, Sarah Flounders and Ramsey Clark. After international fact-findings and public hearings, the people's court found G. W. Bush guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity:

Judge Niloufer Bhagwat, who presided over the ICTA, wrote on March 10, 2004, in the matter of the People vs George Walker Bush, President of the United States of America:

"I find the Defendant, George Walker Bush, President of the United States and Commander-in-Chief of United States Armed Forces guilty...under Article 2 of the Statute of the International Criminal Tribunal for Afghanistan and under International Criminal Law, for waging a war of aggression against Afghanistan and the Afghan people...in respect of War Crimes committed against the people of Afghanistan by the use of weapons prohibited by the laws of warfare causing death and destruction to the Afghan people; maiming men, women and children..."

The weapons to which she referred are DU munitions: *"The evidence presented before the Tribunal, which has shocked the conscience of the judges of this Tribunal, is... thoroughly researched evidence on the genocidal and omnicidal nature of Depleted Uranium weapons used in Afghanistan..."*

There were numerous other facts that corroborated the guilty verdict handed down by this court, and it was noted that the verdict was not limited to Bush alone, nor did it protect others, who were involved, from prosecution.

While the U.S. government publicly maintains that depleted uranium is not a source of danger for civilians or combatants, training manuals and other government documents belie that stance.

Some of the other long-term effects of using DU are described in a U.S. Army Chemical School-training manual:

"DU's mobility in water is due to how easily it dissolves. Soluble compounds of DU will readily dissolve and migrate with surface or ground water. Drinking or washing or other contact with contaminated water will spread the contamination... The end result of air and water contamination is that DU is deposited in the soil. Once in the soil, it stays there unless moved. This means that the area remains contaminated, and will not decontaminate itself."

The following excerpt from Judge Niloufer Bhagwat's legal opinion further illustrates now disingenuous the U.S. government is being in its statements about the safety of DU:

"A memorandum dated 30th October 1943, received by General Groves in charge of the Manhattan Project ...from three physicians working under him ...recommends that radiological materials be developed for use as a military weapon on the battlefield. It was a blueprint for depleted uranium weaponry. The memorandum describing the property of DU weapons states that, "The material ...ground into particles of microscopic size ...would be distributed in the form of dust and smoke by ground fired projectiles, land vehicles and bombs ...inhaled by personnel ...it is estimated that one millionth of a gram accumulating in a person's body would be fatal. There are no known methods of treatment for such casualty ...areas so contaminated by radioactive dusts and smokes would be dangerous as long as high concentration of metal was maintained. ...Reservoirs or wells would be contaminated ...food poisoned ...particles larger than 1 micron would be deposited in the nose, trachea and bronchi ...particles smaller than 1 micron are more likely to be deposited in alveoli where they will remain ...or be absorbed into the lymphatics or blood ...Beta and gamma emitting fission products ...may be absorbed by the blood and distributed to the whole body."

Despite the absence of conclusive scientific evidence, common sense and common decency dictate that releasing ionizing radiation in the form of highly-refined, breathable, and ingestible uranium oxides is a consummately horrible idea. The immorality, illegality and repugnance of using DU; its connection as the probable cause of Gulf War Syndrome; its property as a genetic mutagen; and the U.S. government's attempts to minimize the problems are all potent indicators of an urgent need to act against their use.

U.S. Admits Test, conclusion

cally relevant information on all the remaining Deseret Test Center chemical and biological operational tests from 1962-1973." [http://www.vva.org/shad/DOD_063003.htm]

And that is about where matters stand. The U.S. has admitted conducting tests of poison gas and biological materials on its military personnel. Prompted by a member of Congress, it has tried to discover whether there were adverse long-range health effects. Whether any positive effects will emerge from the investigations is an open question. Given the stories that have emerged about "Gulf War Syndrome" and depleted uranium there is no reason to expect that similar exposure of deadly agents to servicemen and women is not continuing. (See accompanying article on depleted uranium.)

As for Henry Perry, it took three years, but on February 24, 2005, he finally received a "determination" from the Veteran's Hospital about his condition. It is likely, the letter said, that his health problems are a result of advancing age and are likely not related to his military service 30 years ago. Joyce Perry says however, "I am appalled that my government tested weapons of mass destruction on its own servicemen. I am appalled that my government ever even manufactured such weapons. Such weapons should never be made or used."

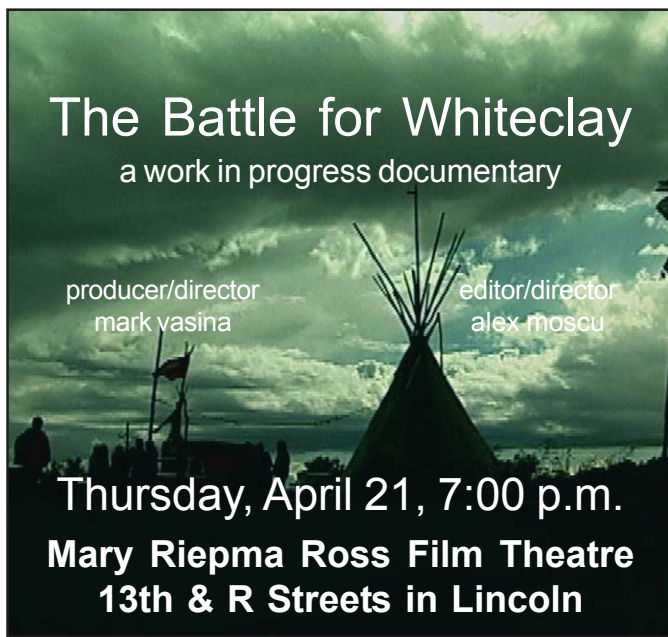
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The Battle for Whiteclay
a work in progress documentary

producer/director
mark vasina

editor/director
alex moscu

Thursday, April 21, 7:00 p.m.
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13th & R Streets in Lincoln

A special public showing of "The Battle for Whiteclay" documentary, followed by a panel discussion, will be held at the Mary Riepma Ross Film Theatre in Lincoln on Thursday, April 21 at 7:00 p.m. The event is free and the public is invited. See www.theross.org for more information.

BULLETIN BOARD

April 24 Conscientious Objector Seminar; see page 6 for more details.

April 17 Prairie Peace Park Annual Event, 2:00-5:00 p.m. (I-80 Exit 388). The theme is "Creating a Peaceful Future;" featured speaker is Cary Vigneri, NFP Omaha Coordinator. Music by Kusi Taki, celebration performance by the Whorl Wind dancers. Presentations by park founder, Don Tilley, and students from NWU, Union & Doane Colleges, & Lincoln Southeast High School. Park tours, free refreshments. Rain or shine; assemble next to the orientation house. Goodwill offering. For more information, call 402-466-6622.

To list an event, submit in writing by the tenth of the month preceding the event. Send to: NFP, 941 "O" Street, #1026, Lincoln, NE 68508 NeReport@neb.rr.com

Taking Our DNA Right to the Grave

For a few glorious years, the gold standard in scientific thought held that race did not exist. The proof appeared to be found in the patterning of human DNA, in the stunning discovery that folks who "look alike" in terms of highly observable traits like skin color and hair texture are not necessarily close relations. That is to say, there may be more genetic diversity among the native inhabitants of a single town in, say, Cameroon, than between a red-haired Ukrainian Jew, a dark-skinned Indonesian Muslim and a high-yellow Creole from Puerto Rico.

This is all due, it turns out, to the fact that only a few, relatively speaking, of the earliest human ancestors actually left Mother Africa, and these few straying families went on to populate the earth. In fact, most actual human genetic diversity is still to be found in Sub-Saharan Africa today.

Recently though, national stories have been citing geneticists who point out that this 'race-buster' interpretation has ignored clustering of genetic traits like pigment, shape of eyelid, hair pattern and so forth.

Clustering occurs over long ages when populations are isolated from one another geographically.



Clustering makes it possible to pick out the lone Irishman dancing in the line of Masai warriors every time, and it's what makes race real, as you might say, on the face of... well, of us all.

So, race is not a myth. It is, however, an illusion. Like an ordinary magician's trick, race is easily obvious and exists mostly in the eye of the beholder. Its main use historically has been to distract on-lookers from the main event. It breaks your heart, the world's catalogue of atrocities—from slavery and land grabs through rape and every other sort of torture through genocide—explained, justified, and even excused because victims were one or another race and for that reason presumed—if not actually proclaimed—to be less human.

Today, race is a part of the smoke and mirrors used to create permanent underclasses—poorer, darker, sicker, hungrier and marginalized in every way—in societies around the world. Genocidal wars have been raging in Africa for decades, but most American news media treat these stories like background noise, compared to conflicts where white skins are involved or at least have a pressing economic interest.

There is a struggle in Africa today in which every homo sapiens has an interest, but nobody much in this country is paying attention. In particular, the Bush Administration seems willing to let

AIDS "run its course" in Africa. The church-goers so anxious to keep alive a Terry Schiavo, for the most part are silent about the millions dying on the "Dark Continent."

I very much suspect that our national cold-blooded willingness to ignore this crisis is because the world is overcrowded anyway... and the folks who are dying are black. Maybe, the Serpent whispers in our hearts, AIDS is nature's way of thinning out the herd.

Thomas Malthus, the 19th-Century theorist who's Social Darwinist views have polluted our thinking to this very day, was, like his fellow countryman and capitalist apologist Adam Smith, an intellectual thug. His ideas are no excuse to let Africans die to correct for overpopulation. AIDS (except for the scary new strain which just surfaced in Europe) is survivable in much of the world, not unlike diabetes. But in many parts of Sub-Saharan Africa, where BY FAR most of the genetic diversity of our species lives, AIDS infects a quarter of the population, and most people who contract it still die.

If AIDS is allowed to wipe out this population by half, the human race will pass through what is known as a genetic keyhole, drastically reducing our chances of survival as a species. When everybody is basically a cousin, every new disease becomes a potential epidemic.

Genetically, Sub-Saharan Africans are the most important people on earth. If we let AIDS gut this population, we move closer to becoming the next endangered species. It's just like global warming. We can see our fate as connected, or we can allow ourselves to be fooled one more time by the illusion of race—that we are separate, and therefore safe.

Race (by which we really mean racism) is still the six-ton elephant in the American living room, and it is the ugly underbelly of American history. The United States was created by a white race on an economic platform of land and resources taken brutally from a red race and, in many places, with labor brutally compelled from black and yellow (technically the same as the red) races, imported as slaves and coolies.

Over time, the magic of love and the failure of abstinence-only sex education—plus immigration by economic and other refugees from Sudan, from Asia, from Mexico and Central America—are visibly caramelizing the face of my town, not to mention curling its hair. The freshening of the gene pool in this country can only be a good thing, in the long run, and it may be one of the great forces that CAN heal us as a nation.

But I'm not looking for much healing, frankly, of AIDS in Africa or of racism here at home, so long as the party of hysterical virtue is in power. I look to the day when there's a place at the table for fundamental decency once again.

From the Bottom by Sally Herrin
The real political spectrum isn't right to left... it's top to bottom.