



Nebraska Report

There is no Peace without Justice

SEPTEMBER 2007

VOLUME 35, NUMBER 7

StratCom's Goal of Space Domination Focus of the 2007 Annual Peace Conference

U.S. Strategic Command's mission of militarizing and dominating the heavens will be the focus of the 2007 Annual Peace Conference Saturday, October 6 in Omaha. In a back-to-back, 'double-feature' presentation, Bruce Gagnon, coordinator of the "Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space," and Emeritus Auxiliary Bishop Thomas Gumbleton of the Catholic Archdiocese of Detroit will jointly deliver the conference keynote address entitled, "StratCom's Role in the Militarization of Space: An Update and Christian Response."

Continuing a decade-long tradition, this year's event will again be co-sponsored by the University of Nebraska-Omaha School of Social Work and Nebraskans for Peace. The special focus on StratCom has also garnered the 2007 Annual Peace Conference some notable out-of-state support. As part of the "Keep Space for Peace Week" commemoration hosted by the Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space, the October 6 gathering has been officially endorsed by United for Peace and Justice



Bruce Gagnon

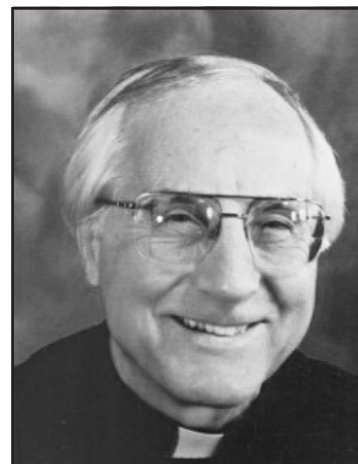
and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, as well as the Iowa Peace Network and the Omaha and Des Moines Catholic Worker Communities.

The day-long program will be held at First United Methodist Church, 70th and Cass Streets in Omaha, from 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Advance registration, which includes lunch, is \$25 and Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are available for Social Workers and Licensed Mental Health Practitioners. Registration materials will be

available early this month, or can be accessed either by contacting the NFP State Office or at the NFP website.

Between Bruce Gagnon and Bishop Gumbleton, a more qualified pair of presenters could not be found to address both the political and ethical implications of the new role StratCom has assumed in the wake of 9/11. A Vietnam-era veteran, Bruce Gagnon has spent more than 20 years organizing against the U.S. government's effort to militarize and nuclearize space. Thanks to Gagnon's particular interest in the transformation that has occurred at Strategic Command, the Global Network has chosen to hold its next annual conference in Omaha in April 2008 to spotlight the enhanced military threat StratCom now poses internationally.

Bishop Gumbleton, of course, is one of the best-known disarmament advocates in the world, who throughout his storied career has consistently warned of the dangers of nuclear weapons. In recognition of his lifelong commitment to the disarmament cause (including an arrest for civil disobedience at



Bishop Gumbleton

StratCom), Nebraskans for Peace honored him as a "Peacemaker of the Year" at the 1999 Annual Peace Conference when he was the featured speaker. At that time, however—two years before the 9/11 terrorist attacks—StratCom served solely as the headquarters for America's nuclear deterrent and its, theoretically, 'defensive' mission. Today, as the nerve center for *offensively* waging the Bush/Cheney Administration's "War on Terror" (with both conventional and nuclear weapons) and with its

stated goal of absolute space dominance, StratCom is an even greater danger to international law and world peace. As the theme of the 2008 Global Network conference bluntly asserts, StratCom today is "the most dangerous place on the face of the earth."

In addition to the morning keynote address, the conference agenda will again feature an array of "Peacemaking Workshops" treating a variety of Peace & Justice concerns. There will be presentations on ending the Iraq occupation, the aerospace arms trade, renewable energy, immigration, Palestinian statehood, domestic violence, Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Transgender civil rights, school anti-bullying efforts, Whiteclay, the death penalty and Nebraska political prisoner Ed Poindexter's bid of exoneration.

Mark you calendars today for a full day of Peace & Justice activism on Saturday, October 6 in Omaha. This year's program promises to be every bit as informative and satisfying as previous years. Both Nebraskans for Peace and the UNO School of Social Work hope to see you there.

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Permit No. 310
Lincoln, NE

Nebraska Report

The *Nebraska Report* is published nine times annually by Nebraskans for Peace. Opinions stated do not necessarily reflect the views of the directors or staff of Nebraskans for Peace.

Newspaper Committee: Tim Rinne, Editor; Mark Vasina, Christy Hargesheimer, Peter Salter, Marsha Fangmeyer, Paul Olson

Typesetting and Layout: Michelle Ashley

Printing: Fremont Tribune **Circulation:** 6,500

Letters, articles, photographs and graphics are welcomed. Deadline is the first of the month for publication in the following month's issue. Submit to: *Nebraska Report*, c/o Nebraskans for Peace, 941 'O' Street, Suite 1026, Lincoln, NE 68508.

Nebraskans for Peace

Nebraskans for Peace is a statewide grassroots advocacy organization working nonviolently for peace with justice through community-building, education and political action.

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The Drumbeat for War with Iran Continues

July 6, 2007 - Senator Joseph Lieberman extends Iran's alleged foreign interference to Afghanistan when he writes in the *Wall Street Journal* that "the Taliban now appear to be receiving Iranian help in the war against the government of President Hamid Karzai and its NATO defenders."

July 6, 2007—The London-based *Financial Times* runs an article about Chinese arms found in Iraq, but it is not included in the U.S. print edition. In the article, a senior Pentagon official, Richard Lawless [yes, that's really his name], deflected criticism away from China, saying there was no evidence of complicity. He instead directed criticism towards Iran instead, claiming that it was Iran who was supplying the Chinese weapons to insurgents in Iraq. "The question of origin was less important than who was facilitating the transfer," said Lawless.

July 11, 2007—U.S. Senators Lieberman, McCain, Kyl, Graham, and Coleman introduce an amendment to the Defense Authorization Act requiring the U.S. Military Commander in Iraq and the U.S. Ambassador to Iraq to jointly report, in detail, every 60 days:

(A) the external support or direction provided to anti-coalition forces by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran or its agents;

(B) the strategy and ambitions in Iraq of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran; and

(C) any counter-strategy or efforts by the United States Government to counter the activities of agents of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Iraq.

[Note that the amendment does not ask whether Iran is supporting anti-coalition forces, but merely to detail how it is doing so. Undoubtedly, the military and the Ambassador will come up with many allegations, circumstantial incidents, and repetitions of others' briefings and statements. The amendment passed the U.S. Senate with a vote of 97-0. Every single Democrat went along with this obvious set-up for attacking Iran.]

July 19, 2007—The governor of Texas calls for the state pension fund to divest itself of stocks and bonds issued by companies doing business in Iran. Governor Perry describes Iran as "a country that has a clear terrorist focus, has a clear mission to wipe a friendly democracy and a very close ally of the United States off of the face of the earth."

July 26, 2007—Lieutenant-General Raymond Odierno, the operational commander of U.S. forces in Iraq, announces that, "In the last three months we have seen a significant improvement in the capability of mortarmen and rocketeers to provide accurate fire into the Green Zone... this is directly related to training conducted in Iran."

August 6, 2007—President Bush asserts that Iran "has proclaimed its desire to build a nuclear weapon," in face of the fact that Iran has continually insisted its nuclear program is solely for civilian purposes.

August 10, 2007—McClatchy newspapers report that Vice President Cheney is actively arguing within the administration for direct action against Iranian facilities that are allegedly being used to train Shiite groups to attack U.S. forces in Iraq.

August 10, 2007—President Bush states during his news conference: "My message to the Iranian people is, you can do better than this current government."

August 15, 2007—A senior administration official reveals that the White House is preparing to declare Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps a foreign terrorist organization. "We are going to go after any forces that are engaged in activities that are disruptive to the stability and security of Iraq," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the subject was pending administration policy.

— Hendrik van den Berg

Why Are We Waiting for Petraeus?

by Hendrik van den Berg
UNL Professor of Economics

This spring, the U.S. Congress agreed to fund the surge in Iraq temporarily, but as part of that authorization, the Congress set certain benchmarks that would, allegedly, facilitate the objective judgment of progress. Politicians on both sides of the aisle have led the public to believe that the report by the U.S. Commander in Iraq, General Petraeus, will be decisive in deciding whether to continue the U.S. occupation. Apparently both Democrats and Republicans are willing to overlook the fact that General David Petraeus is a blatantly political personality who used his military status to openly support the Bush Administration just before the 2004 elections, that he is an incompetent administrator who let nearly 200,000 AK-47s disappear, and that his complete failure in pacifying Mosul belies his alleged counter-insurgency expertise. Recent speeches and statements by the military and the White House provide us with a sample of what we will hear from General Petraeus. He will, no doubt, admit that there are still many problems, and he will humbly admit that we do not know for sure that the surge is working. However, he will also emphasize what seem to be signs of progress. This mere mention of some hopeful events, whether significant or not, will probably be enough to stop any concerted efforts by opponents of the war to force a substantial change in policy.

Psychology Again

Just as fundamental human psychology facilitates the building of support for a war against Iran (as I suggested in the July-August *Nebraska Report*, "Why aren't more Nebraskans for Peace?"), the administration's fight to continue the surge is aided by people's inherent bias to "stay the course." Psychologists and experimental economists have repeatedly found that humans are strongly biased towards favoring the status quo over alternative courses of action. More fundamentally, neuroscien-

tists have found that the human brain reacts much more strongly to *changes* in circumstances than it does to the absolute circumstances. That is, large changes in our situation trigger anxiety, fear, and stress, which in turn strengthen our emotional processes to the detriment of our cognitive processes. On the other hand, once we get used to the new situation, we humans tend to eventually accommodate ourselves and accept it as the normal pattern of



General David Petraeus

life. Also relevant to my argument here is the discovery that when we are faced with difficult or unfamiliar situations, we often find that our cognitive abilities fail us. Neuroscience has documented that, unlike the automatic and emotional processes of the brain (which are able to handle huge amounts of information and make many simultaneous decisions), the brain's cognitive processes quickly slow down as the amount and complexity of information it must process increases. We become unable to weigh the alternatives and we default to "stay the course."

Therefore, when Americans are faced with General Petraeus' likely description of recent progress in Iraq as a confusing mixture of successes and failures, the lack of knowledge that people have about the current state of events in Iraq and the even greater lack of understanding of the alternatives, a majority will be receptive to continuing with the occupation, the status quo for fear of even worse outcomes from a change in policy. By throwing in a few references to

our 'brave troops' and claims that withdrawal will hand victory to al-Qaida and Iran, General Petraeus and the administration will most likely be able to gain a few more months of life for the surge by simply painting a mixed picture of the situation in Iraq.

Emphasize the Real Changes Our Invasion Brought About

The human bias toward continuing with the status quo over poorly understood changes in policy suggests that it is best to avoid arguments over whether things have gotten better or worse since this spring. Even if there are some major disasters before September, the events over just a couple of months will probably be too few and small to definitively prove success or failure of the surge strategy. Rather, we must keep the emphasis where it belongs: on the long-term consequences of the U.S. invasion of Iraq. For example:

- Most of the world truly grieved with us on September 11, 2001, and we enjoyed widespread support and respect. Since our unilateral, illegal and disastrous invasion of Iraq four years ago, we enjoy little support or respect for our actions in Iraq or elsewhere.
- Before invading Iraq, our military was highly regarded. Now, with a fatigued army, depleted equipment and a stretched budget, our military can no longer serve as a positive diplomatic tool even if our administration decided to actually engage in diplomacy. In short, we now negotiate from a position of weakness and military failure.
- Before dismantling the government and civil society in Iraq, the U.S. was widely respected for its democracy. Now, our desperate political leaders have undermined our democracy to further their failed policies. Worse, in response to the unanticipated chaos that the Iraq invasion triggered in the Middle

East, the administration is actively working to undermine democracy in Palestine, Iran and Lebanon while supporting the most notoriously undemocratic allies in the region. We are now seen as hypocrites, not democrats.

- Before invading Iraq, we were admired as a country where life was highly valued. Now we are ridiculed for handing out small amounts of cash, sometimes as little as \$1,000, for killing civil-

Psychologists and experimental economists have repeatedly found that humans are strongly biased towards favoring the status quo over alternative courses of action.

ians in what we callously refer to as 'collateral damage.'

- Before defying the U.N. and attacking Iraq, we were viewed as good global citizens who helped to build international institutions like the United Nations and the World Bank and negotiated the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Now we are seen as the country that invaded Iraq without U.N. sanction, sent the architect of the Iraq war, Paul Wolfowitz, to mismanage the World Bank, rewarded India, Pakistan and North Korea for not signing—and actually violating—the terms of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and is currently threatening Iran, a country that has signed and, so far, respected the Treaty, with a pre-emptive nuclear attack.
- The invasion, occupation, replacement of destroyed equipment, medical care for disabled soldiers, compensation of Iraqi deaths and destruction, lost production and investment, etc.

will likely reach \$2.3 trillion, according to Nobel laureate economist Joseph Stiglitz, and then only if we withdraw completely before 2012 and the hostilities cease. That is nearly \$25,000 per U.S. household.

Unlike the creative mixture of April-to-September changes that General Petraeus will most likely talk about, the monumental changes since the invasion are certainly large enough to overcome any basic psychological tendency to stay the course.

The Surge Cannot Correct These Fundamental Changes

We should note that the focus on the huge decline of U.S. prestige and status in the world leads us clearly toward policies such as those Nebraskans for Peace have repeatedly proposed (See the April issue of this *Nebraska Report*). For example:

1. U.S. Out, U.N. In.
2. Seek Arab League assistance in pacifying Iraq
3. U.N. guarding of Kurdish region borders
4. Negotiate with Iran and acknowledge our past interference in Iran
5. Support the inevitable federalist solution for Iraq
6. Renounce any intention to acquire Iraq oil assets
7. Stop any support of private U.S. firms in Iraq
8. Withdraw all funding for war
9. Apologize, and commit to paying the full damages, for our destructive and deadly actions after September 11.

It is obvious that a temporary unilateral *surge* in U.S. military activity in Iraq is not compatible with these long-term fundamental policies suggested here—policies necessary to deal with the really important changes we have observed over the past four years.

So why are we waiting for General Petraeus?

U.S. Plans to Create a Space 'First Strike' Program Well Underway

by Bruce Gagnon, Coordinator, Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space

In the House of Representatives recently, Democratic Congressional members led the way in approving money for Star Wars research and development programs in the Fiscal Year 2008 Budget.

Rejecting the recommendations of a subcommittee, Representatives Ellen Tauscher (D-CA) and Rick Larsen (D-WA) restored \$150 million to Pentagon boost-phase missile defense programs, \$48 million for future missile defense systems—including space sensors, \$12 million more for sea-based sensors, and language to allow \$160 million for a highly controversial European missile defense site.

Joyfully cheering these moves to ensure continuation of space weapons research and development programs, a pro-space warfare organization called *Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance (MDAA)* reported in an email that, "This shift of priorities from last week's initial Strategic Subcommittee's markup shows a bipartisan movement accepted by a Democratic Majority to put forward systems to address future threats and to continue to invest into our countries most advanced boost phase missile defense system, the Air Borne Laser."

The MDAA is a very active proponent

of space weapons technology development and is led by Riki Ellison, a former professional football player with the San Francisco 49ers. Ellison is particularly excited about the development of sea-based Aegis destroyers mounted with theatre missile defense systems that will be deployed in the Asian-Pacific region to surround China.

The Pentagon recently announced they would soon begin to build a missile defense base on Guam—a U.S. military colony now undergoing major expansion with new runways for advanced bombers, new deployments of cruise missiles, and 8,000 new troops relocated from Japan. Activists in Guam have been undertaking major organizing efforts to get the U.S. out of their nation (the U.S. military now controls more than one third of the island).

Activists in Poland and the Czech Republic have also been very busy of late protesting the U.S. plan to put ten missile defense interceptors in Poland and a new Star Wars radar facility in the Czech Republic. The Pentagon is saying these facilities would be used to protect Europe and the U.S. from a nuclear attack by Iran—which has no nuclear weapons today. But the truth is these bases, along with others planned in Georgia and Azerbaijan, will be used to

tighten the military noose around Russia's neck as NATO and the U.S. military surround the former superpower rival.

At the conclusion of the *International Conference against the Militarization of Europe* last May in Prague, the participants released a statement that said in part, "We voice our protest against the plans of the

Disguised as "missile defense," the Pentagon's Star Wars program is all about offense and global control and domination.

Bush Administration to install a 'national missile defense system' for the U.S. on the territory of the Czech Republic and Poland. Most people in the Czech Republic and Poland, as well as in the rest of Europe, reject plans to host this system. We reject the official reasons given for the NMD project as mere pretexts.

"The realisation of the U.S. plan will not lead to enhanced security. On the contrary—

it will lead to new dangers and insecurities.

"Although it is described as 'defensive,' in reality it will allow the United States to attack other countries without fear of retaliation. It will also put 'host' countries on the front line in future U.S. wars."

Disguised as "missile defense," the Pentagon's Star Wars program is all about offense and global control and domination. The planned deployments in Europe are just one more piece in the military space architecture that would give the U.S. "full spectrum dominance." Last October the Bush/Cheney Administration released its new "National Space Policy" that essentially gave the Pentagon a green light to move ahead with deployments of space war-fighting technologies.

The Air Force Space Command's *Strategic Master Plan: FY06 and Beyond* says, "Air Force Space Command will deploy a new generation of responsive space access, prompt global strike, and space superiority capabilities... Our vision calls for prompt global strike space systems with the capability to directly apply force from or through space against terrestrial targets."

Russia and China understand that they are now viewed as the 'enemy.' A recent poll

conclusion on page 11

Keep Space for Peace Week 2007

The Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space annually designates the first part of October as "Keep Space for Peace Week" to spotlight the growing danger of space militarization. This year's week-long outreach effort, though, has particular significance for Nebraskans for Peace, as it overlaps both with the "Strategic Space and Defense Conference" (the Military-Industrial Complex's annual arms bazaar in Omaha) and our own 2007 Annual Peace Conference. To make the most of this opportunity, our local planning committee decided to go all out and organize a full week (and then some) of activities focused on the offensive threat StratCom has now become.

And our enthusiasm appears to have paid off. In addition to the active support of regional organizations such as the Des Moines and Omaha Catholic Worker Communities, the Iowa Peace Network, the Nebraska Greens and of course Nebraskans for Peace, our local "Keep Space for Peace Week" program has attracted the endorsements of the national United for Peace and Justice and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Whatever organization you hail from, we hope you'll be able to attend at least one of these important events. More details about each of the activities are available on the NFP website at nebraskansforpeace.org or by contacting the NFP State Office by phone at 402-475-4620 or by email at nfpstate@nebraskansforpeace.org.

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Monday, September 24 – 7:00 p.m. Nationally-known investigative journalist and author Norman Solomon of the Institute for Public Accuracy will speak on the transformation of StratCom and its enhanced military threat at a public address at the University of Nebraska-Omaha.

Friday, October 5 – 3:30 p.m. Bishop Thomas Gumbleton and Bruce Gagnon, coordinator of the "Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space," will jointly deliver a presentation entitled "StratCom's Role in the Militarization of Space: An Update and Catholic Response" on the Creighton University campus.

Saturday, October 6 – 10:00 a.m. Gumbleton and Gagnon reprise their presentation, "StratCom's Role in the Militarization of Space: An Update and Christian Response" at the 2007 Annual Peace Conference at First United Methodist Church in Omaha.

Tuesday, October 9 – 5:00 p.m. Public protest at the 'opening ceremony and reception' for the "Strategic Space and Defense 2007 Conference" at the Qwest Center in Omaha beginning at 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday, October 10 – 7:30 a.m. Public protest with skits and floats outside the Qwest Center at the start of the "Strategic Space and Defense 2007 Conference" opening session.

Thursday, October 11 (time to be determined) Public protest at the Northrup Grumman facility in Bellevue, Nebraska. A leading aerospace contractor and Pentagon client, Northrup Grumman is one of the top three corporate sponsors of this year's Strategic Space and Defense conference.

An Interview with Virginia

Mother of Ed Poindexter, Incarcerated for 37 Years

Virginia was born in 1924 and will turn 83 in October. A native of West Virginia, she moved to Omaha, where she married Edward Poindexter.

Her oldest child, Ed Poindexter, will be 63 in November. He has been incarcerated since August of 1970 for the murder of Omaha Police Officer Larry Minard—a murder he has always maintained he didn't commit.

Ed's dedicated attorney Robert F. Bartle and his legal team believe in Ed's innocence and have managed to get his case back to court after all these years.

An 'evidentiary hearing' on his case took place this past May 2007, and a decision regarding a retrial to ultimately gain his release is expected sometime this fall.

The following interview with Virginia was conducted by Nan Graf, a member of Nebraskans for Justice, the advocacy organization working for the release of both Ed and fellow prisoner Mondo we Langa.

Nan: Tell me about your life.

Virginia: I was born into a family of ten daughters—I'm the only surviving daughter. We lived in the coal-mining area of West Virginia. My father died in a coal-mining accident along with many others when I was only two, so it was hard for us to survive after that, but we managed.

One of my sisters moved to Omaha in 1939, and I came to visit her here. That's when I met my husband Edward, the great love of my life. We got married in 1942 and had our first child—Ed Poindexter—in 1944. After Ed, we had our son David and then our daughter Renee.

My husband Edward died when Ed was only eight. His death was hard on me, but I learned from my mother that you have to get on with your life.

Nan: Your son Ed wrote an article about you that was published in a Canadian magazine. In it, he praised you as his hero; he stated that you were the role model for his ongoing courage and strength. How have you managed to stay strong during your son's 37 years of incarceration?

Virginia: First of all, my strength comes from the Lord: "In all thy ways, acknowledge Him, and He will direct thy path." I keep on keeping on because of my inner spirit. Daily prayer helps. Also, I begin each day by reading the Bible, and I go to church every Sunday. I try to keep a positive attitude.

Ed's article pleased me. I'm proud of him that he has stayed strong for 37 years in prison. No matter what happens, he stays strong.

Nan: In addition to the spiritual life that sustains you, what have been your sources of support?

Virginia: Work, church people and family. I worked for many years in the cafeteria of a school near my home. Until I had to have hip surgery a couple of years ago, I walked to work every day. I always enjoyed being with the children and my co-workers. People were good to me where I worked.

My minister and my church friends are people I look forward to seeing every Sunday; they're a good source of support. I also appreciate that my two grandchildren—Tania (age 14) and Davaughn (age 16)—stay overnight with me Saturday nights and to go to church with me on Sunday. After that, we eat dinner, then they go home.

I love my family! I'm grateful for

my three children and their families. They will do anything for me. I'm grateful for the generosity of my two sons. David left his home in Atlanta, Georgia for two months to come home and care for me after my hip surgery; he did everything for me—cooked for me, took me to the doctor and helped me upstairs or downstairs.

My son Ed sent me \$2500 to pay for needed dental work. Considering the low pay of prisoners for an eight-hour workday, I didn't think of asking Ed for money; he just surprised me by sending it. Also, after his recent evidentiary hearing in May 2007, Ed mailed me a check for \$200. Think of all the days, weeks, months and years it took him to earn the money for those two checks.

I'm grateful to my daughter Renee and her daughters, Ericka and Kieanna; all three live in Omaha and touch base with me frequently. Even though my sons live out of town, I feel surrounded by love here. Family love means everything to me.

Nan: Not long ago, the media emphasized that two of Omaha Police Officer Larry Minard's five children continue to suffer because of the murder of their father in 1970. If you could speak to the Minard family, what would you tell them?

Virginia: I would tell them I am sorry for their suffering. It is hard to lose a husband or a father. I know, because my own father died when I was only two. My mother had to support a large family of daughters after that—by herself, and it wasn't easy. I never really knew my father but wished I had; however, I learned to move on.

Later, my husband Edward died when my three children were very young, and I was a young mother doing my best to take care of them. I also took my ten-year-old niece, JoAnn, into my home and raised her after her mother died at age 32. Like the Minard family, the Poindexters know grief.

I would tell the Minard family that my family too has suffered since the death of Officer Minard, but we go on with our lives. We visit my son Ed in prison, and we write letters. For 37 years, Ed has not been able to attend family dinners or celebrations. We miss seeing him,

and he misses seeing us. In spite of the limitations of prison, my son has tried to make a constructive life for himself, and we—his family—have tried to be constructive too.

A point I'd like to emphasize to the Minard family is that it's wrong for the State to imprison Ed Poindexter and David Rice [Mondo we Langa] for a crime they didn't commit. They are innocent, and it's not right to punish the innocent for a crime committed by someone else. The real murderer or murderers may still be out there somewhere and need to be brought to justice.

If Ed Poindexter gets retrial and release, it will benefit Mondo we Langa (formerly David Rice), who was convicted and sentenced to life in prison along with Ed in their short trial together back in April, 1971. Mondo's attorney, Timothy Ashford, will then proceed through the court system to free Mondo, whose mother and family have also suffered through their son's and brother's incarceration for 37 years. Mondo's mother, Vera Rice, will be featured in a forthcoming issue of the *Nebraska Report*.

Welcome Waskar!



Dr. Waskar Ari

After a two-year-long struggle with the Department of Homeland Security, Bolivian historian Waskar Ari finally gained a visa in July to teach history at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Ari was hired in 2005, shortly after he earned his doctorate from Georgetown University, but Homeland Security held up the application without explanation. The history department at Nebraska led a vigorous effort to win the visa, even filing a lawsuit against the federal government on his behalf last March. His cause was also profoundly aided by the efforts of the UNL NFP Chapter, who along with their faculty advisor, Patrick Jones from the Department of History, led a spirited organizing campaign on Dr. Ari's behalf. It was a ridiculous struggle to have to have waged, but at least it ultimately turned out happy. Welcome to Nebraska, Waskar. We're honored to have you here at last.

What's HOT in Global Warming?

by Professor Bruce E. Johansen

We are familiar with the usual, wasteful, nasty, ugly, lethal things war does—all good reasons for opposing its use as international policy. There is another reason though, a big one, that has not been much discussed. Modern machine-enabled war waged at long distances (such as the ongoing United States invasion of Iraq) is hugely carbon dioxide-intensive. Its carbon footprint is huge—and no one seems to be asking exactly how large.

I have wondered how much carbon dioxide is being injected into the atmosphere by Bush and Cheney's war—for beginners, to transport 160,000 U.S. troops and 130,000 contractors from this country to Iraq, often by air, with their equipment and provisions. As just one item of a great many, I read of the 1.4 million bottles of water per day that our troops need to stay hydrated during Baghdad's 115-degree summer days and wonder how much jet fuel is burned to get it there? How many decades of riding a bike to work would it take for me to offset just one garden-variety bomb—not to mention the two-ton 'bunker busters' used in this war? What proportion of the billions of dollars being spent on this war, I'm wondering, are ending up in the atmosphere as greenhouse gases?

In a warming world, we can no longer afford war—especially this

war. Any war is a sign that human relations have failed. This one, in particular, is a betrayal of our environment. In the fog of war, the future of our habitat barely registers a second or third thought, and maybe not even that in the Middle East, where oil barons build artificial ski slopes in Dubai. (I took a pot-shot at Dubai's ersatz ski resort in the 'letters column' of the May, 2007 *National Geographic* as a "poster child for global warm-

ing," after the magazine had called it "a miracle in the desert.")

We can add up the monetary cost of this war. It's now approaching \$500 billion. We also can estimate the human costs: the number of Iraqis killed and driven from their homes, and the many thousands of U.S. troops killed and seriously wounded, many of whom have been attended to in airborne emergency rooms on their way home, or to Europe. Is anyone calculating the cost of the war to the future of the planet Earth as a whole? I do not have the tools at hand to calculate the carbon footprint of the Iraq war, so I went looking in my copious files, and across the Internet, to see whether the question has been asked and any cal-

culations ventured. I have come up, so far, with nearly nothing. When I went looking I found plenty of right-wing bloggers whining about how much carbon dioxide Al Gore pumps into the air every time he jets off to show "An Inconvenient Truth." Funny how the same questions are never asked of Exxon's executives, on their corporate jets. Do any of them care how much carbon George W. Bush and Dick Cheney

civilian contractors to the theater of war, and home again—in the case of a war pursued thousands of miles from home, often by air transport, quite a bit. Add the cost of running their armed personnel carriers, lodgings and so forth, as well as the greenhouse gasses added by the conduct of combat itself. Add the carbon and other greenhouse gases added to the

We do know this:

Don Fitz, writing in *Z-Net* ("What's Possible in the Military Sector? April 30, 2007; [<http://www.zmag.org/content/showarticle.cfm?ItemID=12705>]), states: "According to the February 2007 *Energy Bulletin*, the Pentagon is the single largest consumer of oil in the world. Only 35 countries consume more oil. Yet, the official figure of 320,000 barrels of oil per day used only includes vehicle transport and facility maintenance." Does this figure include the jet fuel used to get troops, contractors, war material and provisions to and from the Iraq war zone?

Fitz continues: "That figure does not include energy for manufacture of vehicles, energy for building and dismantling military facilities, energy for construction of roads, and energy consumed while rebuilding whatever the military blows up. Nor does it factor in energy required by the military's partners, NASA and the nuclear industry. Additionally, whenever war or construction razes trees, it eliminates their ability to remove CO2 from the atmosphere" (Fitz, 2007).

The carbon footprint of the Iraq war—and modern combat in general—has yet to be tallied. But when we go to war nowadays, we now know we're not just battling against some enemy combatant. We're waging war on the Earth.

The Carbon Footprint of the Iraq War

belch on Air Force One and Two? Could these bloggers be more interested in character assassination than doing anything about global warming? It's not so funny that none of the rubber-mouth right-wing bloggers give even a second thought to the carbon footprint of war. That is to be expected, perhaps. But that neither left-wing bloggers, nor even scientists seem to be asking this question is not. So how would one figure the carbon footprint of the Iraq war?

- First, add in all the energy used to produce the weapons, transport, and other provisions that are consumed in the war.
- Add the emissions produced getting soldiers, supplies and

atmosphere by fires initiated by bombings and other explosions. In Iraq, pay special attention to intentional sabotage of oil pipelines and suicide bombings, as well as improvised explosive devices.

- Add the carbon cost of tending the wounded. In this war, Iraq's emergency room spans nearly half the world, from airborne surgery to the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany and hospitals in the United States.
- Add anything I am leaving out. I've probably forgotten something.

Farewell to Three Dear Friends of NFP

This past summer, NFP lost three of its oldest and most loyal friends with the deaths of Fred Schroeder, Arlo "Dutch" Hoppe and Roy Bailey. Fred and Arlo were two of the original farmer founders of "Rural Nebraskans for Peace," which in 1970 was transformed into the Nebraskans for Peace of today. The Rev. Roy Bailey, a United Methodist pastor and conscientious objector during WWII, was a member of NFP for so many years, he may have just as well have been a founder. Given who they were and what they spent their lives committed to, the influence of the three of them on NFP far exceeded their numbers. And with their departures, we have lost far more than just three members.

There's a Uranium Mine in Nebraska?

Crow Butte near Crawford



by Charmaine White Face

Charmaine White Face, Oglala Tetuwan (the Lakota speakers) of the Oceti Sakowin (the Great Sioux Nation), is the Coordinator for "Defenders of the Black Hills," a non-profit environmental organization (www.defend-blackhills.org). A writer and former college instructor, she is the recipient of the "International Nuclear Free Future Award for Resistance" and will receive the award next month in Salzburg, Austria. She may be reached at bhdefenders@msn.com.

One of the things most people in Nebraska do not think about when a wildfire breaks out is whether any uranium processing plants might be in danger of catching fire. That dire possibility, however, was probably on the minds of the workers at the Crow Butte Uranium Mine with the recent Soldier Creek Complex fires in northwestern Nebraska near Crawford.

What would have happened if the fire had reached the mine? Would it have been abandoned with all that radioactive material present? What would this mean for the general public? What would this mean for the people and environment downwind of the Crow Butte mine? Would the smoke have carried radioactive particles? Would there have been explosions? These are questions that not only Nebraskans need to ask, but also those people living anywhere near the Crow Butte mine

in South Dakota and Wyoming.

Since the Crow Butte Uranium Solution Mine in Dawes County, Nebraska, has been around since 1985, the local community of Crawford has almost forgotten the kind of material they work with at the mine—except when someone phones to say they are coming to visit. That's when some local will ask their visitors to bring their own drinking water. The residents are concerned that the local water is polluted with nuclear radiation from all the leaks and other violations that have occurred at the Crow Butte mine.

Uranium solution mining, also known as 'in situ leach' or 'in situ recovery mining,' utilizes a process in which wells are drilled into a groundwater aquifer. In one of the wells, called the 'injection well,' the mining operators inject a uranium-dissolving solution—known as a 'lixiviant' in the terminology—into an aquifer that contains uranium. (Nebraska, South Dakota and Wyoming all contain naturally occurring uranium.) After the solution is injected and the uranium—along with many other elements—is dissolved, the solution containing the uranium is 'pressure-pulled' toward another well called the 'recovery well,' where it is pumped to the surface. At the surface, the solution is in turn piped to the processing plant. The uranium is separated and the now-radioactive waste solution is placed in a waste pond, until such time as it can be pumped back into the aquifer.

If a sudden rain downpour happens, or leaks occur in the pond, the radioactive waste water will spill from the pond onto the surrounding ground and water-runoff area. The radiation from the waste materials then spreads on the topsoil and gets into watershed areas. If the leaks occur in the pipes underground, or the dissolving solution has spread outside the aquifer underground, out of sight, then more radioactive pollution occurs in other aquifers or groundwater sources.

'Monitor wells' are drilled at



According to the World Information Service on Energy-Uranium Project, Crow Butte ISL Uranium Mine has had 23 License Violations from August 12, 1997 to Sept. 26, 2006.

various locations around the injection and recovery wells to detect when uranium solutions are spreading beyond where they were supposed to be. The phenomenon is called an 'excursion,' like going on a trip outside your area. However, when it's deep underground in an aquifer and geologic formations, there is no way to stop the spreading, or excursion.

According to the World Information Service on Energy-Uranium Project, Crow Butte ISL Uranium Mine has had 23 License Violations from August 12, 1997 to Sept. 26, 2006. As a result of those 23 violations, 18 monitor wells have been drilled on the sites of known excursions. This raises the question of how much radioactive water seeped outside the supposedly confined aquifer in the past nine years? What areas and aquifers were contaminated with that radiation?

The most common environmental problems that have occurred at the Crow Butte In Situ Leach Uranium Mine, according to the South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources, were spills of injection and production fluid, broken pipes, leaks in pond liners and excursions. Another problem is the ra-

don gas.

Highly radioactive radon gas occurs during the continuous process of uranium decay. Because it is a heavy gas, it tends to collect in low areas and buildings. It is also a hazardous air pollutant and must comply with the "Clean Air Act" national emission standards. Although by law the Crow Butte facility must have provisions for controlling this air pollutant, is it being monitored in the areas surrounding Crawford by other independent organizations, such as an environmental organization or a citizens group? As a gas, it would also move with air currents and cause pollution to other areas downwind of Crawford, which would mean most of the rest of the state of Nebraska could also be receiving this radioactive pollutant. Are the people of Nebraska aware that this hazardous air pollutant, which you cannot smell, might be carried by the wind into their areas? The nuclear radiation from radon gas causes lung cancer. Are lung cancer rates high in Nebraska? What about in the counties downwind from the Crow Butte mine?

The Crow Butte mining operation is owned by a Canadian com-

pany, "Cameco Corporation," whose main office is in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. According to information given by Cameco, the Crow Butte mine produces nearly 800,000 pounds of uranium per year. With their holdings in Wyoming, Cameco claims to be the largest producer in the United States.

Cameco Corporation also professes to be the world's largest uranium producer, providing 20 percent of the world's total uranium production. They state that their uranium is used in nuclear energy plants around the world. Shares in Cameco Corporation are traded on the Toronto and New York stock exchanges, averaging around \$36 per share in the U.S. The company reported record net earnings in the second quarter of 2007, which according to Cameco's president and CEO, reflected "the company's core strength in the uranium business."

Based on its stock performance, Cameco Corporation is obviously a good investment for stockholders. Based on its environmental safety record, however, it's less clear that it's good for the residents of Nebraska and South Dakota—particularly if they have to start hauling their own water.

The Military Pollution of Nebraska's groundwater, part II

by Paul A. Olson

The last issue of the Nebraska Report contained an extensive analysis of the destruction of soil and water in the area of the former World War II ordnance plant at Mead, near future water supplies for Omaha. It also examined the Army Corps of Engineers' failure to respond to serious complaints, backed by scientific testing, from the residents of the area contaminated. This continuation of the essay looks at similar problems at World War II plant sites near Grand Island, Hastings and Sidney and concludes with some recommendations as to what Nebraska citizens, the courts, and state and local government ought to do about this.

The Grand Island Cornhusker Army Ammunition Plant

This plant was started in 1942 to make munitions during WWII, but also produced them during the Korean and Vietnamese conflicts. Though it stopped production in 1973, its poisons still linger. The government's own environmental assessment of the contamination is as follows:

A number of investigations and studies to address environmental impacts of activities at [the Cornhusker plant] were conducted during the 1980s... The explosives (primarily RDX) groundwater plume (OU1) is approximately 6 miles long and one-half mile wide. The main plume originates in the ordnance production facilities at the [plant] and trends east-northeast to a point about 4 miles beyond the eastern boundary of the [plant]. The plume has contaminated domestic wells in northwestern Grand Island. Groundwater is the primary drinking water source in Grand Island and the surrounding areas. Between [the plant] and the Grand Island city limits, a distance of approximately 2 miles, the explosive-contaminant plume underlies stockyards and irrigated row crops. The sources of groundwater contamination were from unlined cesspools and leaching pits used to dispose of explosives-contaminated wastewater from ordnance production activities.

Placed on the Environmental Protection Agency's "Superfund List" in 1987, the Grand Island area site has been the subject of clean-up work continually since 1991. One of the primary poisons produced at Grand Island was the explosive RDX, which is found in the buildings and the groundwater plumes. The U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry says that the dangers of RDX are that it can enter the air when disposed of by burning, that it can enter the water from disposal of wastewater from Army ammu-

nition plants, and that it can enter water or soil from spills or leaks from improper disposal. It dissolves slowly in water and evaporates slowly from it. It can easily move into groundwater from the soil. RDX can cause seizures or cancer.

Again, we have little assurance that the Grand Island cleanup processes are safe. In August of 2006, the "Citizens for Safe Water Around Badger" from Wisconsin (CSWAB) protested the Badger Ammunition Depot's plan to do away with

Badger buildings by burning them. CSWAB wanted to stop the burning of Badger buildings containing dioxins, lead, PCBs and other toxins to the environment, because burning these poisons simply releases them into the environment. At that time, the Wisconsin people discovered that "[at] Nebraska's Cornhusker Army Ammunition Plant alone, more than 1,200 contaminated buildings ha[d] already been burned—spewing toxic emissions onto nearby surface water and the prairie landscape." In contrast, Vicki Staples of the U.S. Army Operations Support Command told Nebraskans that "[b]urning was selected as the safest disposal method for the load lines since it eliminated possible human exposure to explosive material. Years of ammunition production had left unknown quantities of explosive material in the pipes, wooden walls and cracks in the concrete floors." I can find no evidence that her statement has scientific verification. The fact that the Corps chose to dismantle buildings at Badger suggests that it had little evidence that burning the poisons got rid of them harmlessly. In addition, the Corps has used a pump-and-treat system to clean up the groundwater around Grand Island.

In 1995, the costs for cleaning up the Grand Island Cornhusker Army Ammunition Plant were estimated to be \$133,953,000.

Hastings Naval Ammunition Depot

The story is virtually the same: volatiles (VOCs), heavy metals, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and explosives that may or may not be poisoning Hastings city water and private wells in the area. On the EPA's Superfund List since 1986, the agency issued the following progress report in 2006:

Due to the numerous cleanup actions and

the number of contaminated areas and subsites at the Hastings Ground Water site [which also includes contamination from industrial and city properties], the status of cleanup activities varies. *The groundwater actions will be long-term* [italics mine]... EPA, NDEQ [Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality] and the potentially responsible party group are applying the Superfund process to determine acceptable actions to manage contamination associated with the Hastings Site.

The solution: We need citizen indignation.

When the report says that the groundwater actions "will be long-term," it means that it will take at least 30 years to obtain an acceptable level of decontamination.

The Sioux Army Ordnance Plant at Sidney

This was also a site poisoned by various toxins, but there appears to be little public information available on whether the toxins were cleaned up and what the local response has been. One signal may be the 2004 Nebraska Environmental Trust funding of a grant to study "the source area for Sidney's north well field," which includes an area that "may be down gradient of the former Sioux Army Depot," to determine if its "contaminants have migrated to the north of Sidney with the natural flow of ground water" through installing monitoring wells and collecting ground water samples.

Add to this the Atlas Missile silos with their pollution near York, the possible pollution attached to Nebraska World War I sites, and the contamination that may have occurred post-Vietnam at Nebraska plants creating weapons or weapons components manufactured by private corporations, and one has a pretty impressive record of destroying some of the world's best farmland and aquifer sources for irrigation.

The solution: We need citizen indignation.

The solution: We need local-federal cooperation to speed up cleanups so that they take no more than 20 years. We need to open up the monitoring process so that community input is timely and informed. We should demand accountability from the Corps and military contractors, including complete, detailed reports on all former military contaminated sites. We need to insist that the EPA exert rigorous and aggressive oversight for toxic cleanups. The EPA should require reme-

dial activities, which spend money wisely on thorough assessments of the nature and extent of contamination, and which use innovative and safe cleanup technologies.

Nebraskans need to let U.S. Senators Ben Nelson and Chuck Hagel know that we expect them to use their considerable leverage long term to force the EPA, the Corps, and military contractors to get the military pollution in Nebraska cleaned up posthaste. Ask Senators Nelson and Hagel to work to reinstate the tax on polluting industries (which expired in 1995) in the Superfund law to pay for toxic cleanups, so that everyday taxpayers are not unfairly burdened in paying to clean up these messes.

Our U.S. senators need to know that lip service regarding these environmental cleanups is simply unacceptable. Among several things that Senators Nelson and Hagel could do to spur faster and more competent cleanup of military contamination in Nebraska would be to convene fact-finding hearings, conduct rigorous investigations, and/or request inspector general investigations regarding the actions, inactions and foot-dragging by the EPA, Corps of Engineers and other responsible parties related to cleanups in Nebraska.

Although few or no new military plants or other installations are being located on "civilian lands" in the U.S. at present, we should prepare for the possibility of new efforts in the future. In the eventuality that such units may be sited here or in other farm states in the future, we should have, on the books, a law or EPA guidelines forbidding their location on quality farmland or over aquifers used for farms or urban households.

A local solution: A Nebraska legislative resolution on military pollution accompanied by a legislative study would help. The state's superfund law needs to be strengthened. Any jurisdictional ambiguities between the state and the federal government need to be resolved quickly, so that the DEQ takes clear and pro-active responsibility for Nebraska's share of the cleanup and develops measures fully protective of Nebraskans' interests.

Our ancestors—including our Native American ancestors—came here for good soil and water, perhaps more than anything else. The military that purports to defend our soil and water abroad should be ashamed to have destroyed so large a portion of these resources here at home. Peace organizations, environmental groups and farm groups should not have tolerated the destruction and should not accept it now.

Not in the past, not now, not in the future.

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The First U.S. Social Forum

Another World Is Possible, Another U.S. Is Necessary

by Jo Peterson, MSW
Assistant Professor of Social Work
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Over 10,000 activists converged in Atlanta, Georgia from June 17 to July 1 for the first "United States Social Forum." Activists representing a wide range of concerns such as peace, the environment and labor participated in a march, visited booths, heard music and attended multicultural events. They also chose from over 900 workshops relating to social and economic justice.

Established groups such as the ACLU and the AFL-CIO were well represented. Well-known presenters such as Amy Goodman and David Korten, author of *The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community*, were in attendance. Unique to this massive event was the absence of 'stars' from established movements in the forefront. Many, if not most, attendees were young, and lead organizers of the USSF (Project South and Grassroots Global Justice) intentionally reached out to grassroots movements and to people of color.

Attendees were given opportunities to lead and participate. Space was created

to learn from each other, create visions of a better world, and discuss the possibilities and strategies for joint campaigns. The overall goal is to merge many diverse but interrelated interests into a unified force for social justice that is connected to the global community.

The U.S. Social Forum was inspired and connected to previous World Social Forums. The first World Social Forum, held in Brazil in 2001, was in response to the annual meetings of the G-8 Nations. Those concerned with social justice realized that many of the social, environmental and economic problems around the world were connected to the rise of global capitalism. Since the richest countries meet every year to discuss their vision for the world, those working for social, economic and environmental justice should also be meeting.

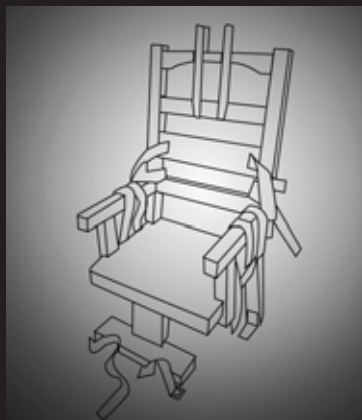
Activists around the world are organizing in opposition to the globalization process run by corporate interests that create wealth for a few and poverty for many—especially in marginalized communities. However, many in the world believe that people in the U.S. are out of touch with what is happening to their communities as a result of this process. Organizers

felt it was vitally important to host a Forum in the U.S. to connect the global movements abroad to social movements at home. The slogan adopted by the World Social Forums is "Another World is Possible." For the U.S. event, another line was added: "Another U.S. is Necessary."

Having the first USSF in the American South was also significant. Alice Lovelace, National Lead Staff Organizer for the USSF was quoted as saying, "Everything that happens in the global communities happens to us here in the South, everything from the poor education, poor healthcare, underpaid workers, bad housing and lack of water. So we, ourselves, are a microcosm of the world and the very issues we are trying to correct." Hosting the Forum in the South also built upon the achievements of the Civil Rights Movement—a successful convergence of bottom-up, grassroots movements.

A Midwest Social Forum is planned for 2008 and other regional, U.S. and World Social Forum efforts are underway. As Indian author and international political activist Arundhati Roy has said, "Another world is not only possible, she is on her way."

NEBRASKANS
AGAINST
the
DEATH
PENALTY



Save the Date! Oct. 5, 2007

You are invited to attend the NAPD Annual Dinner

Sister Helen Prejean, the bestselling author of "Dead Man Walking," will be the keynote speaker at the Nebraskans Against the Death Penalty Annual Dinner on October 5, 2007 at 7 p.m. at the D.C. Centre, 11830 Stonegate Circle in Omaha. Sr. Helen has devoted her life to ministering to the poor and those on death row.

In the last session of the Nebraska state legislature the senators came just ONE VOTE short of advancing a bill to end the death penalty.

Sr. Helen is coming to Nebraska to inspire people to voice their opposition to the death penalty in their communities and with their state senator in every legislative district across the state.

To make a reservation, to join the campaign against the death penalty or to get more information contact info@nadp.net or (402) 477-7787.

NFP RESPONDS TO THE 'FALL-OUT' over the Hiroshima Observance in Lincoln

The following op-ed by NFP state board member Paul Olson, entitled "Brainwashed peaceniks in good company," was published in the August 18, 2007 Lincoln Journal Star in response to criticism of the annual 'lantern float' at Holmes Lake in Lincoln commemorating the atomic bombing of Hiroshima.

Ed Roth (letter to the editor, August 14) believes the atomic bomb saved his life and laments the brainwashed peaceniks who think otherwise, the ones who observe Hiroshima Day.

Who were the brainwashed peaceniks at the Hiroshima-Nagasaki observance? Were they the Methodists, the Catholics, the Mennonites, the Lutherans, the Friends Meeting people? The Democrats? The Greens? The Republicans? Were they the mothers and fathers with children in arms? Were they the old people remembering holocaust?

And what did their brainwashed observance concern? As the organizer of the event, I speak for the brainwashed.

The 100-150 people who gathered at Holmes Lake on Aug. 5 to recall the first atomic bomb were not the only "brainwashed." Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower said on many occasions that he had advised the bomb not be used: "[I]t wasn't necessary to hit them with that awful thing." Five-star Admiral William Leahy, President Truman's chief of staff, said after the bomb was dropped that the "use of this barbarous weapon at Hiroshima and Nagasaki was of no material assistance in our war against Japan. The Japanese were already defeated and ready to surrender... [I]n being the first to use it, we... adopted an ethical standard common to the barbarians of the Dark Ages."

The well-known 'hawk' Gen. Curtis LeMay, head of SAC and one of our most hawkish generals, said in public that the war would have been over in two weeks and that the atomic bomb had nothing to do with bringing about surrender. Even General George C. Marshall said that the bomb, if it were to be dropped, should have been dropped on a naval installation and not on the civilians of Hiroshima, which had almost no military targets and contained hundreds of allied prisoners of war also killed in the raid.

In ignoring the "brainwashed" who deplore the killings of hundreds of thousands of civilians at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we ignore the preponderance of American military opinion. And many conservatives deplored the action. Former President Hoover said: "The use of the atomic bomb, with its indiscriminate killing of women and children, revolts my soul."

Did the bomb produce the Japanese

surrender? Pulitzer Prize-winner Professor Herbert Bix of SUNY and Harvard history Professor Ernest R. May both believe that the simultaneous Soviet invasion of Japanese occupied territory carried more weight with the Japanese military, and Stanford University Professor Barton Bernstein argues that it is "quite probable—indeed, far more likely than not—that Japan would have surrendered before November"—i.e., invasion time.

Several histories that have examined the Japanese archives find definitively that the Japanese feared Russia's entrance into the war far more than the bomb. They had, after all, seen Tokyo and their other military targets bombed to near nothing by ordinary bombs. They had also been suing the United States, through the Russians, for surrender if only the emperor could remain as the titular head of a new government (we accepted this when the surrender came after the bomb).

Though historians give us no clear consensus about why the bomb was dropped, several believe the bombing was a show of strength designed not so much to impress the nearly defeated Japanese—out of fuel and resources—but the Russians muscling us around in Europe. And in August of 1945, they had a good chance of linking up with the Chinese Communists if the war lasted. We feared a new Russo-Chinese axis.

Historians can argue about such matters until the cows come home. What we cannot argue with is what has happened since. Human history since was what the speakers, poets, musicians and religious leaders at Holmes Lake focused on. Humanity now possesses thousands of weapons, some 600 times as powerful as the Hiroshima bomb. We have been within a tittle of using them about a decade of times, as Sidney Lens establishes in his book *The Day Before Doomsday*. The United States, Russia, France, China, Britain, Israel, India and Pakistan now threaten nuclear doom; possibly several other countries do also. No weapon possessed is not used in extremity.

In 2003, we started a war with Iraqis to stop terrorists from using nukes. Pakistan, which stands on the brink of destabilization, has nukes. Our StratCom—now authorized under "Full Spectrum Global Strike" to attack, offensively and preemptively, any place on the face of the earth within one hour with either nuclear or conventional weapons—resides in Omaha. No international leaders work seriously on eliminating nuclear weapons, drastically reducing them or putting them under international control.

We are happy that you are alive, Ed Roth. We celebrate your continued living, but we also celebrate all life. If such festival bespeaks brainwashing, let it flourish.



Yosuke Yamahata

On August 10, 1945, the day after the bombing of Nagasaki, Yosuke Yamahata began to photograph the devastation. The city was dead. He walked through the darkened ruins and the dead corpses for hours. By late afternoon, he had completed the only extensive photographic record of the immediate aftermath of the atomic bombing of either Hiroshima or Nagasaki. The New York Times has called Yamahata's photographs "some of the most powerful images ever made." Yamahata became violently ill on August 6, 1965, the date of his 48th birthday and the 20th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima. Diagnosed with terminal cancer of the duodenum, he died on April 18, 1966.



Housewives and children were incinerated instantly or paralysed in their daily routines, their internal organs boiled and their bones charred into brittle charcoal.



The photograph above shows the stone steps of a bank where a person was incinerated by the heat rays, leaving just a shadowy imprint.

Paul Olson, conclusion

and the Europeans—have been the primary causes of the breakdowns in the Doha Round WTO trade talks designed to prevent such dumping. Do they know that there is no reverence for life in such a vote? Do they know that 798 million people in the world suffer from chronic hunger because of poverty? Do they do anything about it and can we hope that their Senate counterparts will act differently in the weeks ahead?

Why did Terry, Smith and Fortenberry vote against the Children's Health Care Bill extending health insurance to six million unserved U.S. children (Bush will probably veto it on the grounds that it is too *expensive and socialistic*). Where is the "consistent ethic of life" in that vote? Or in their votes on Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, military spending, world hunger, hunger in America and world poverty? They did not get their positions from the Pope's statements on the Iraq war, poverty, and hunger. Or from any mainline Protestant leaders'. Or from *Sojourney's* evangelicals.

We Nebraskans can toot our horns until hell freezes over about how we reverence life. But we do not do so as voters in any

meaningful way. We do not care when we send representatives like these to Washington. We do not care.

I just returned from a Norway poor in land and resources (save for its North Sea oil). It does not allow its own to go hungry. It has the highest human development index of any country in the world. At the same time, according to the CIA, it gives away \$302.51 in Official Development Assistance (ODA) to help other countries with hunger, poverty, and peacemaking. Modest in resources, it is third in the world in giving. We are eighteenth. We, U.S. citizens, give an average of \$22.91 each in ODA. Norway has enriched itself within through its external giving to others. We have impoverished ourselves with riches for our upper crust and only crusts for the least.

I am on the long journey to learn reverence, and still far from the goal. The taxes I pay wantonly strike down many single flowers by the roadside. And I am responsible. I know that my citizenship—if I am really alive and caring about life—means continued witness, advocacy and engagement. Whenever I am silent, I compound my complicity.

'First Strike' conclusion,

showed that 74 percent of the people in Russia have a "negative view of the U.S. missile defense system." On May 9, Russian President Vladimir Putin made a statement at a Victory Day parade on Red Square that left little doubt he was criticizing the United States for "disrespect for human life, claims to global exclusiveness and dictate, just as it was in the time of the Third Reich."

Following Putin's speech Sergei Markov, of the Moscow-based Institute for Political Research, expanded on the theme when he said, "After the Cold War ended, the United States has initiated a new arms race," fueling nuclear ambitions of many nations worldwide.

"If a nation doesn't have nuclear weapons, it risks being bombed like Yugoslavia or Iraq," he said. "And if it does have nuclear weapons like North Korea, it faces no such threat."

Russia knows that U.S. deployments of missile defense systems are not intended to knock out Iranian nukes. Instead they are part of a U.S. first strike system now under development, and coordinated at StratCom in Omaha, that is being supported by both Republican and Democratic members of Congress.

In a recent article Conn Hallinan, an analyst for *Foreign Policy in Focus*, writes "Anti-ballistic missile systems (ABM) have a dark secret: They are not supposed to stop all-out missile attacks, just mop up the few retaliatory enemy missiles that manage to

survive a first strike. First strikes—called 'counterpoint' attacks in the bloodless vocabulary of nuclear war—are a central component in U.S. nuclear doctrine."

If you are sitting in Moscow or Beijing and adding up the ABMs, the new warheads, and the growing ring of bases on your borders, you have little choice but to react. Imagine the U.S. response if the Russians and the Chinese were to deploy similar systems in Canada, Mexico and Cuba."

A new arms race is well underway, with the U.S. once again leading the pack. The aggressive first strike space domination program stands to benefit the weapons industry and global corporations who are now moving to extract diminishing supplies of oil and other precious resources around the world. The cost will be further expansion of a militarized society in the U.S., cutbacks in social spending worldwide, and more instability for the people of the world.

One key way to prevent this new arms race is to call upon Congress to convert the growing Military-Industrial Complex to peaceful and environmentally sustainable production.

Republicans and Democrats now support the expansion of the U.S. military empire. Both parties must be challenged to give up dreams of American exceptionalism and global dominance. In order to make this happen, the peace movement worldwide must challenge the growing corporate domination of our governments. There is no other way.

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NFP BULLETIN BOARD

- Sept. 15 Anti-war rally in Lincoln, in conjunction with the nationwide protest scheduled across the country, 11:00 a.m. on Centennial Mall North. Sponsored by the Nebraska Coalition for Peace.
- Wednesdays in Lincoln Anti-war vigils, Lincoln Federal Building, 15th & 'O' Streets, 5:00–6:00 p.m. Call 402-499-6672 for more information.
- Wednesdays in Omaha Anti-War and StratCom vigils at StratCom's Global Innovation Center, 6825 Pine Street on the UNO Campus, 4:30-5:30 p.m. Call 402-502-5887 for more information.

To list an event, submit in writing by the tenth of the month preceding the event to: NFP, 941 'O' Street, #1026, Lincoln, NE 68508, or email: NeReport@neb.rr.com.
NFP State Office Hours in Lincoln, 9:00 – 2:00 weekdays.



Speaking Our Peace

When I was sixteen, in 1949, I went to Aspen, Colorado—before it was a Mecca for the Lamborghini crowd—for the Goethe Bicentennial celebration. Knowing little about Goethe, and so pitifully poor that I hitchhiked part of the way, I went because Albert Schweitzer was speaking. I had read Schweitzer—on St. Paul and Jesus, on issues of war and peace, and on the “reverence for life” ethic—the idea that all life should be revered and protected. World War II was over. And I was a teenager, looking for meaning.

I read in Schweitzer:

[R]everence for life is an absolute ethic. It makes only the maintenance and promotion of life rank as good. All destruction of and injury to life, under whatever circumstances, it condemns as evil... At times we have to decide... which forms of life, and even which particular individuals, we shall save, and which we shall destroy. But the principle of reverence for life is nonetheless universal and absolute...

Whenever I injure life of any sort, I must be quite clear whether it is necessary... The farmer, who has mown down a thousand flowers in his meadow as fodder for his cows, must be careful on his way home not to strike off in wanton pastime the head of a single flower by the roadside, for he thereby commits a wrong against life without being under the pressure of necessity.

Schweitzer was the beginning of my journey toward figuring out what such rev-

erence might mean. The journey has not ended.

Perhaps I should be a happy man now. My state has three representatives who say that they are pro-life. Adrian Smith is a “Christian,” Lee Terry a Methodist, and Jeff Fortenberry a Catholic. They are not hearing from one religious authority, but they have one “life” message. When I go to churches, I hear homilies that tell me that I would have committed a mortal sin had I voted for anyone not pro-life. Local and national religious authorities call for a “consistent ethic of life”: anti-abortion, anti-capital punishment and anti-assisted suicide. Fundamentalists on the religious right call for similar goals, especially on abortion. In the case of Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, a life-ethic meant more: a condemning of the idea of nuclear deterrence. But when Nebraska votes, it means nothing about war or most forms of death—domestically or in the world.

To take the House of Representatives as an example. The “consistent ethic of life,” the “reverence for life” that our representatives, Smith, Fortenberry and Terry, profess means opposing abortion (mostly this) and perhaps assisted suicide. They appear to accept the death penalty through inaction. They do not oppose nuclear deterrence. They do not question “shock and awe” bombs or surge raids that abort mothers in Iraq. They are, to all intents and purposes, silent when mothers in Darfur have to birth babies destined for bloated bellies and flies in their eyes as they eke out their few days before dying.

An Ethic of Life An Ethic of Death

by Paul Olson, UNL Professor Emeritus

They do not testify loudly enough to be heard about children in the U.S., Africa, Asia and South America starving or dying from war, AIDS, malnutrition or multi-national corporate indifference.

If we, as peace people, value an ethic of life, we may well ask, “Do our representatives represent the same ethic?” If so, why, in the 109th Congress, did all of our representatives—including Tom Osborne—vote for funding the continued occupation of Iraq with its murder of civilians? Why have they all continued to justify the initial illegal invasion of Iraq and the ouster and execution of Saddam Hussein as aspects of the “War on Terror” (which they not)? Why did they vote against prohibiting military action against Iran? Why did they oppose cutting funds for the so-called “missile defense program” that is destabilizing the international nuclear situation and prompting a new arms race? Were they ‘life-people’ when they voted to share nuclear technology with India, a non-signatory to the nuclear non-proliferation treaty? Did life-reverence tell them to oppose increased humanitarian aid for refugees? What form of belief in an ethic of life caused them to vote against closing the ‘School of the Americas’ (now WHINSEC), where Father Roy Bourgeois and his Catholic SOA Watch group have routinely documented that Latin American military officers are trained to become human rights abusers? Are these actions that a consistent of ethic of life, or even the ‘just war’ theory, teaches?

Again, to take 110th House session:

why did Representatives Fortenberry and Smith vote for the 2007 Farm Bill that perpetuates a system in which most subsidy payments are sent to only 20 Congressional districts? (Terry voted against the bill because it added a bit of taxing to U. S. subsidiaries of foreign corporations.) Why vote for a bill sending one-third of agricultural payments to farms that have annual incomes above a quarter of a million dollars that sends billions to non-farming landowners and ups subsidy limits? The subsidy program pours millions into the pockets of non-farmers like David Letterman, Scottie Pippen and David Rockefeller?

Why did Terry, Fortenberry and Smith vote against the crucial “Fairness in Farm and Food Policy” Farm Bill amendment that, in *Sojourners* words, “shifts funds from trade distorting subsidies into other priorities, such as food stamps, conservation, and programs that help minority and socially disadvantaged farmers” and “steer[s] U.S. policies in a direction that supports family farms, healthy food and land, and fair trade?” Why did our Terry, Fortenberry, and Smith help to defeat that amendment while promoting David Letterman’s subsidies?

Our guys know that our subsidized corn, beans, rice and cotton, regularly dumped on the international markets, drive small farmers in other lands off their farms—increasing hunger, dependent urban ghettos and the likelihood of civil strife and terrorism. They know that we—

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