



Nebraskans for Peace

Nebraska Report

There is no Peace without Justice

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Time To Impeach

Nebraskans for Peace caught a fair amount of flak last summer in calling for the impeachment of Vice President Dick Cheney during his whirlwind visit to Lincoln. State Republican Party Chair David Kramer, for instance, dismissed our impeachment call in an *Associated Press* wire story as just “gimmickry,” commenting that our organization had “a history of distasteful and bizarre behavior.”

We knew when we raised the call, though, what we were letting ourselves in for. Here, the capital city’s famous son was making one of his rare visits to his boyhood home (on a campaign stop to raise \$150,000 for fellow Republican Jeff Fortenberry’s congressional bid), and Nebraskans for Peace was publicly accusing him of criminal misconduct. In the Vice President’s hometown, in a presidential election year, with Nebraska holding the record as the most Republican state in presidential elections of any in the country for more than half a century, we knew talking about impeachment wasn’t going to be popular. Given the seriousness of the issues involved, however, we believed somebody needed to start raising the ‘I-word.’

If Bill Clinton’s lies and prevarications about his relationship with Monica Lewinsky constituted impeachable offenses, surely (as we stated in our literature publicizing the “Impeach Cheney” rally at the State Capitol a year ago) Vice President Cheney’s “pattern of deceit regarding the war in Iraq, suspect business dealings with Halliburton and stonewalling of Congress over

the fossil fuel and nuclear industries’ influence on our national energy policy” merits equal consideration. So we raised the call and took our lumps.

Oh, but what a difference a year makes.

- The U.S. death toll has now climbed to over 1,700.
- And over 13,000 have been wounded.
- The price tag for the war in Iraq has ballooned to \$208 billion.
- UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has publicly declared the war against Iraq a violation of international law.
- In contrast to Vice President’s Cheney’s insistence that the insurgency is “in its last throes,” the top military commander in the Mideast says the insurgency is as strong as ever and believes it may be as long as two years before the troop numbers can be drawn down.
- Iraq’s Justice minister is accusing the U.S. of hampering the preparation of the prosecution’s case against Saddam Hussein to conceal the U.S.’s long-term support for the dictator and former ally.
- According to recent *CNN/USA Today/Gallup* polls, 59 percent of the American public now oppose the war in Iraq, and 56 percent say going to

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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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Time To Impeach, conclusion

war with Iraq wasn't worth it. "Of those who say the war wasn't worth it, the top reasons cited are fraudulent claims and no Weapons of Mass Destruction found; the number of people killed and wounded; and the belief that Iraq posed no threat to the United States." (*USA Today*, 6/21/05)

- Nebraska Republican Senator Chuck Hagel, who has been critical of the Bush Administration's Iraq venture from the beginning, said the end of June, "Things aren't getting better; they're getting worse... The reality is we're losing in Iraq." He went on to state that, Republican Administration or not, he would continue to speak up, "When you talk about committing a nation to war and the consequences that follow, it's beyond party loyalty."
- And then there's what the Vice President refers to as the "so-called Downing Street memo": Eight secret British government memos that chronicle the Bush Administration's willingness to massage the data and "fix" the intelligence for a preemptive, unwarranted and illegal attack on Iraq.

One year later, impeachment doesn't sound like such a hare-brained idea after all. And maybe it's not organizations like Nebraskans for Peace with "a history of distasteful and bizarre behavior," but a cynical and criminal administration in Washington.

Between the Downing Street memos, the mounting death toll and the sagging public support for the war, an authentic public debate over the administration's Iraq policy is finally starting to take place in Washington. But it's not, as far as Nebraskans for Peace is concerned, about bragging rights—about setting the record straight, getting the last word or being able to say, 'We told you so.'

No, with thousands killed and wounded on both sides, and the U.S.'s reputation around the world in shambles, what it's really about is standing at the State Capitol March 19, on the second anniversary of the invasion of Iraq, with the mother of Marine Cpl. Matt Henderson who died May 26, 2004 in a war that did not need to be fought. It's about standing in the cold with Becky Henderson that morning, and not having anything to say to this mother about the senseless loss of her son's life.

And if ever there was an offense worthy of impeachment, that should be it.

A version of this article by NFP State Coordinator Tim Rinne originally appeared in the July 5, 2005 Lincoln Journal Star, and was posted on www.smirkingchimp.com.

Nebraskans for Peace Membership Form

I want to BEGIN RENEW MEMBERSHIP

\$35 Individual \$25 Introductory (new member only)

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I want to PLEDGE \$ _____ per: month quarter year

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Who's Watching You??

Researching Your FBI File

by Tim Butz, Executive Director, ACLU Nebraska

Is the government spying on you? If you have taken part in peaceful political protest, that may be the case. New evidence has come to light showing that the FBI has aggressively collected information and has been questioning political activists in Colorado, Missouri and elsewhere.

The Watergate-era revelations of government spying by U.S. Army intelligence agents, the Central Intelligence Agency and the FBI on peaceful protesters led to reform measures. Government intelligence operations were changed in a way that was supposed to protect privacy and First Amendment rights.

The U.S. Justice Department issued guidelines to its agencies that prohibited targeting individuals and groups simply because they opposed government policy and required that some evidence of a crime be known before an investigation could be initiated.

In the wake of 9/11, however, those guidelines were changed to allow more aggressive collection of intelligence. A primary tool for this collection has been the Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTFs) created by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. There are 66 known JTTFs.

JTTFs are groups composed of federal, state and local law enforcement agents working under FBI direction on terrorism investigations. The state and local police officers are commissioned as Special Deputy U.S. Marshals, giving them the authority to enforce federal laws and access federal resources. In some instances, corporate security agents, such as those from Federal Express, are included in the JTTF.

Local police participating in the JTTF operate under federal control and are not accountable to the departments they come from. The local police are bound by federal guidelines on intelligence activities rather than by state or local requirements. This was one of the key reasons that the Portland, Oregon, city council withdrew its officers from the JTTF.

So who is collecting information? We know that in Portland, the JTTF is composed of agents from 18 different agencies. Five state and local agencies work with 13 federal agencies including the Defense Department's Criminal Investigation Service.

The San Antonio JTTF is composed of the FBI; the Central Intelligence Agency; three agencies of the Department of Treasury (Internal Revenue Service, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and the Secret Service); Department of Homeland Security; Texas Department of Public Safety and the San Antonio Police Department. The composition changes from place to place depending on who is willing to join.

There are legitimate law enforcement needs for coordination of efforts to prosecute terrorists. However, the use of JTTFs again raises questions of whether the government is willing to promote security from terrorism without violat-

ing civil liberties. From the revelations to date, it appears that civil liberties are secondary and are becoming collateral damage in the War on Terrorism.

So who is the government targeting for information collection? In Colorado, the ACLU has been able to obtain information showing that the FBI is targeting peaceful advocacy groups that work on issues such as the environment, war and military policy, social and economic justice issues in Central America and Native American rights. Among the groups subjected to FBI surveillance was Food not Bombs (which provides free food to the homeless), the American Friends Service Committee and the Denver Peace and Justice Center.



The Denver JTTF collected information on protests and protesters, including e-mail messages, license plate numbers of those attending protests and similar information. Mark Silverstein, the Legal Director of the ACLU of Colorado, summarized the FBI's intelligence collection this way: "These documents confirm that the FBI's anti-terrorism unit is targeting nonviolent activists and unjustifiably treating constitutionally protected dissent as though it were potential terrorism."

Getting your FBI file is not difficult and is something that anyone can do for themselves. There are a number of on-line sources of information that may help, but here is a concise guide to action.

First, you should know that there are various types of information stored by the FBI. If you write the FBI and ask for your "rap sheet" or identification record you will get only information from a fingerprint card. If you have ever been a federal employee, served in the military, undergone naturalization or engaged in any activity that required you to be fingerprinted, then the FBI will have an identification record on you. If you want your identification record you must get fingerprinted again and submit the fingerprints to the FBI with a certified check for \$18.00.

Substantially more information is contained in your FBI file. There may be files on you at both the FBI headquarters

and at the local field offices. These will require separate requests.

The government is allowed to collect a fee for processing your request, although you can request that the fee be waived. There is a form that can be used for making requests available at the FBI's website, <http://foia.fbi.gov>. Click on the bar labeled "FOIA Request Form" which is found on the right side of the page. You can file your request electronically from this site.

Electronic filing is preferred because all mail going to FBI Headquarters is subjected to security screening that delays it as much as two weeks.

If you make your request by letter, provide the same information as requested on the form. In addition to your name and address, you might want to send your phone, fax or e-mail information so that the FBI can contact you if they have questions about your request. The phone, fax and e-mail information is not required to process your request. If your name has changed for any reason, you should provide any names that you want to have checked to determine if the FBI has a record on you.

You should clearly identify that you are making a request for records under the Freedom of Information Act and identify the records that you want. For example, you might ask for "copies of all documents contained in any file that the FBI has maintained on me." In addition, you might request "any documents relating to me that are contained in any file maintained on Nebraskans for Peace."

The Freedom of Information Act contains a security exemption that allows the FBI to redact information that could identify a confidential source of information or an informant. Be prepared for the FBI to use this exemption liberally.

You must tell the FBI the maximum amount you are willing to pay for them to search and copy your records. In addition, you can ask the FBI to waive its fees. In making such a request, it is important that you let them know whether or not you are seeking the records for commercial use or private use and state a case for the waiver.

Request made to FBI Headquarters should be sent to:

Chief, FOIA/PA Section
Federal Bureau of Investigation
J. Edgar Hoover Building
10th and Pennsylvania Ave.
Washington, DC 20530-0015

Request for field office files must be sent to the specific office. The office in Omaha is located at 10755 Burt Street, Omaha, NE 68114. The FBI is required to respond to your request within ten days, but that means only that they have to acknowledge your request. The actual time required to process your complaint could exceed six months.

Finally, Some Movement on Whiteclay

The last time Whiteclay got as much media and political attention as it's now getting, two Indian men had been brutally murdered, the National Guard was being called out and Native American marchers were getting arrested. Unlike the situation in 1999, however, when our state political leaders couldn't seem to get this issue out of the public eye fast enough, a number of Nebraska lawmakers have been actively promoting public policy solutions to the situation at Whiteclay. And, beginning in May, we saw more progress in the course of a month than we'd seen in the last six years combined.

Building public momentum for action on Whiteclay, it's turned out, has taken far longer than we'd ever dreamed and, even now, we're still nowhere near resolving the complex of alcohol-related issues this tiny border town embodies. That we're at last seeing some movement is as much a testimony to tenacity to an ornery refusal to let this matter drop as it is principled politics. Had Nebraskans for Peace and Nebraska Winnebago Tribe member Frank LaMere not been slogging away all this time, Nebraska's "dirty little secret" about the illegal alcohol trade centered in Whiteclay would have been able to retreat back into obscurity.

If after all this time, though, there was still some confusion in political circles about this whole Whiteclay thing and what exactly's going on there, that ended May 15 with the publication of the *Lincoln Journal Star's* 16-page, full-color special report on the social and cultural devastation wreaked by alcohol on the Pine Ridge Reservation. The product of a year and a half of investigative research, the "At the Crossroads" tabloid placed this northwest Nebraska hamlet indelibly on the Nebraska map and pushed Whiteclay smack into the political limelight. It also, coincidentally enough, ushered in a blitz of media coverage about several



Three hundred people marched into Whiteclay June 11 to protest alcohol sales in this Nebraska border town.

other Whiteclay-related developments that had been in the works for months, but were just now coming to a head.

Just days afterwards, the Legislature approved the new state budget, which includes \$20,000 specifically for alcohol dealer compliance checks in Whiteclay for each of the next two years. Modest as it is, this appropriation marks the first time that any Whiteclay legislative initiative has been adopted in four straight years of trying. Up to this point, a Whiteclay bill had never even gotten out of committee.

No sooner had the money for the special compliance checks been approved, however, than rumors started surfacing that the Oglala Sioux Tribal Council was going to turn down the proposed cross-deputization agreement with the State of Nebraska because of inadequate funding. Negotiated over the past year and a half, the agreement authorized the Pine Ridge Tribal Police to provide law enforcement in Whiteclay. In an attempt to salvage the agreement, Nebraska Attorney General Jon Bruning and Rep. Tom Osborne rushed to Pine Ridge May 31 to meet face to face with the council members.

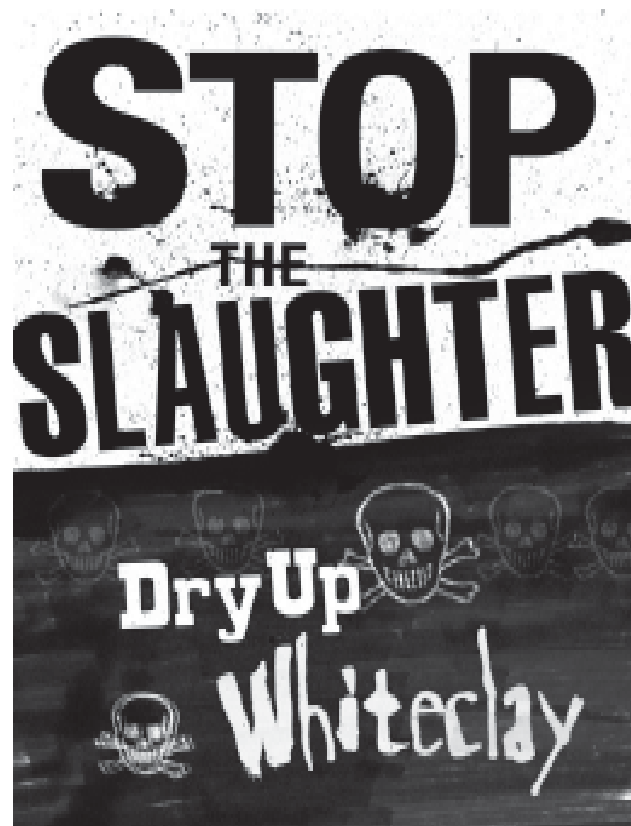
Rep. Osborne readily acknowledged at the council meeting that the \$100,000 in federal funds he'd secured to address Whiteclay law enforcement needs was far less than needed to perform the work. But, he explained, for him to be able to go back and get more federal funding, it was imperative that the tribe accept this initial allocation. The Tribal Council wound up voting 13-2 to tentatively adopt the agreement, and Osborne promised to work to deliver more funding next year. Publicly voicing his personal dislike of alcohol sales to Indians in Whiteclay, Osborne said, "Nebraska is my home, and when I think of Whiteclay, I find it to be an embarrassment to the entire state... I feel so badly about what is happening in Whiteclay and I want to help do something about it."

Attorney General Bruning admitted that the cross-deputization agreement was "not a panacea," but he said,

"It's a step in the right direction... and a unique opportunity. Tribal officers will have jurisdiction over non-Indians and will be able to issue citations to business people who sell alcohol to someone who is already intoxicated or who is underage, basically those breaking the law. And then I am able to take that citation and shut that off-sale establishment down." Asked point blank by a council member why the State of Nebraska couldn't just shut down the liquor stores now, Bruning responded, "We'd be happy to prosecute those liquor store owners. That's one of the things your officers can help us with." But first, he said, a case must be built against the dealers, who he described as "vultures" that are "preying on people's sadness."

Then, just as the Legislature was wrapping up the 2005 Session, 15 senators signed a letter addressed to the Oglala Sioux Tribe stating that Nebraska needs to do more on the public policy side to address the devastating effect of alcohol sales in Whiteclay. The letter, initiated by Sen. Don Preister of Omaha, acknowledges "the State of Nebraska's contribution to the misery caused in Whiteclay by its licensing of alcohol sales within 200 feet of a reservation which allows neither the sale nor the consumption of alcoholic beverages upon its lands." Although no specific policy initiatives were advanced in the letter, that 15 senators from around the state would put their name on such a document indicates that there's a growing awareness of the need for legislative action. "As policymakers, we recognize the need for greater efforts by Nebraska to stop the loss of lives and devastation occurring among our neighbors at Pine Ridge linked to alcohol sales in Whiteclay."

Though circulated and signed before the session ended, the letter was not publicly delivered until the June 11 "March to Whiteclay" when, as the following day's *Omaha World-Herald* headline reported it, "Hundreds voice concern over



graphic by Justin Kemerling

The State of Nebraska's Obligation To Help Solve the Problems at Whiteclay

This article by national Native spokesperson and Nebraska Winnebago Tribe member, Frank LaMere, appeared in the May 29, 2005 Lincoln Journal Star.

As a Native American and a Nebraskan long associated with efforts to focus public attention on the situation at Whiteclay, I applaud the *Lincoln Journal Star* for its recent set of articles and editorials addressing the issues there. The articles tell an important part of the overall story associated with Whiteclay that needs and deserves telling. But, I must stress they only tell part.

In the articles' emphasis on the personal human tragedy taking place there, the public policy dimension of the Whiteclay problem is accordingly downplayed and clearly diminished. It would be easy for a reader to interpret that those disaffected by alcohol at Pine Ridge must simply exercise personal responsibility or that they must get up tomorrow and build an economy.

That would be an incomplete picture. In fact, it would be a "whitewash" of the state of Nebraska's role at Whiteclay that would certainly compound the tragedy.

Thanks to the Journal Star's coverage, the pervasiveness and devastation of alcohol addiction among Native people at Pine Ridge is now better understood. But the culpability of the state of Nebraska in feeding, fostering and profiting from that addiction is something about which far too many of our state officials are still in denial. Like addicts and alcoholics themselves, they have steadfastly refused to face the problem or take responsibility for their actions, preferring instead to blame others (alcoholics at Pine Ridge) for what's wrong.

Our state government, however, may be the ones with the dirty hands. In 2004 alone, the Nebraska state treasury raked in \$344,959 in sales and excise taxes just from Whiteclay beer sales. Despite repeated requests from the Oglala Sioux tribal leadership to end alcohol sales in this 14-person unincorporated village just 200 feet from the dry Pine Ridge reservation, the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission has persisted in licensing liquor dealerships there.

In open disdain of the tribe's decades' old policy of alcohol prohibition and efforts to promote sobriety among its members, Nebraska has sanctioned this \$3.8 million annual enterprise just two miles from the largest town on the reservation. In spite of an estimated 70 percent to 80 percent alcoholism rate on the reservation and irrespective of the fact that one out of every four Lakota children by estimate is born with fetal alcohol syndrome, the Legislature has yet to advance a single bill out of committee that would curtail or end alcohol sales in Whiteclay. And despite the fact that each and every day of the week more than 12,500 cans of beer are sold to a Pine Ridge clientele that has virtually no legal place to drink it, the state of Nebraska has never seen fit to provide full-time law enforcement in Whiteclay to ensure that the laws of this state are enforced.

What state government has done in the face of the human devastation and lawlessness it is knowingly or

obliviously abetting is to "take the money and run." When all is safely deposited they can then wring their hands and shake their heads with the rest of us as we lament the plight of the poor Indian.

Not one dime of the hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of taxes collected from Whiteclay alcohol sales has ever been returned to Pine Ridge to assist in alcohol or law enforcement. For more than a century, ever since alcohol sales resumed in Whiteclay in 1904, all that our state officials have ever done is pocket the cash and draw a sanctimonious hard line.

I am an advocate for those who wish to sober up and for those who wish to help their families become sober. In my life and work I try to be model of sobriety as I know personally the devastation that alcohol can bring to families and children. I may be privileged to touch one life so I try to have courage. But what we as Nebraskans have to have is the courage to confront and to acknowledge the fact that the vast majority of children and youths at Pine Ridge, thousands of them, have been decimated socially, economically and physically even before they are old enough to legally drink. And we have done nothing to change it.

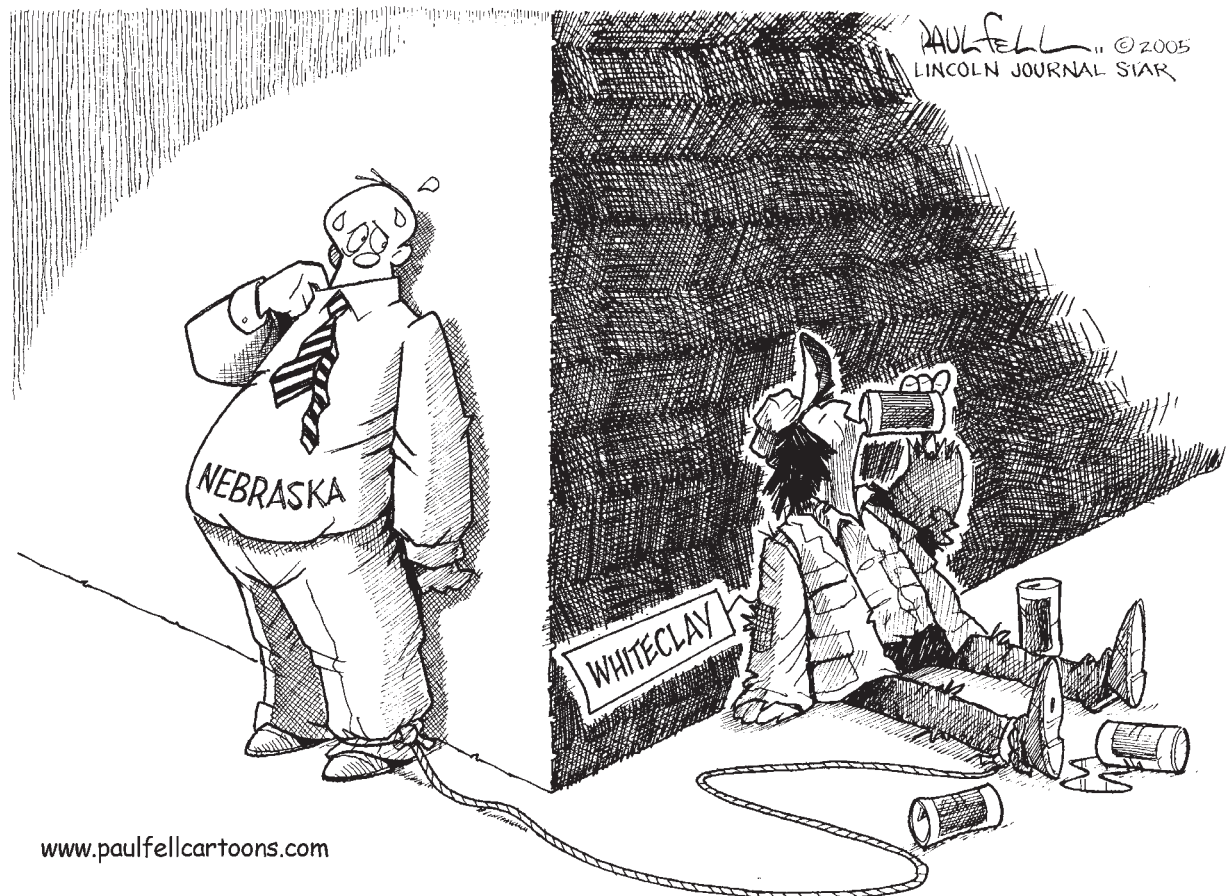
Alcoholism has decimated their lives before they even have the legal option of exercising personal responsibility. And for the state of Nebraska in the face of such reality to fall back on tired and simple notions about how "it's

legal to sell alcohol in Nebraska" or to high-handedly wag an admonishing finger at those Indians who just need to "sober up" is more than unfair. It's offensive. We, as Nebraskans, could touch many lives if we only had the nerve.

Over and over again, I hear that ending alcohol sales in Whiteclay will not reduce the high alcoholism rates at Pine Ridge, provide treatment to those who need it, or address the lack of economic opportunity and social despair that lead so many to drink. Neither I nor the caring and committed Nebraskans I have been working with on this issue since 1997 have ever said it would.

The alcohol abuse problems on the Pine Ridge Reservation are indeed varied and complex. But that in no way excuses the state of Nebraska's heartless, exploitative and shameful practice of selling alcohol in Whiteclay over the reaffirmed wishes of the Oglala Sioux Tribal Council. I applaud your series and I hope it is seen by residents and legislators as a call to action. For some it will be and for others it will simply be used as a reason to continue to "beg the question" of Whiteclay. For those who choose the latter I would ask if they would sit on their hands if their communities were being devastated by alcohol and lawlessness. I think not.

What we are doing to Pine Ridge is morally wrong. Nebraskans are better than this. Whiteclay liquor sales must stop.



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OUR DIRTY LITTLE SECRET

CHINA

DANGER OR OPPORTUNITY

John and Jean Krejci traveled to China this May with a United Nations Association study tour. In addition to experiencing Chinese culture and visiting tourist attractions such as the Great Wall, the Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square in Beijing, the Terra Cotta warriors in Xian, the economic powerhouse of Shanghai, they met with Chinese officials, UN development personnel, were hosted by UNA China representatives, and visited some more remote areas in Western China inhabited by ethnic Tibetans. This article gives some of their impressions.

The Peking duck, one of the 115 million served by the 143-year-old restaurant in Beijing, was an exotic dining experience. However, what was more fascinating was my dinner conversation with a young Chinese employee of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship. He lives in the outskirts of Beijing, in a two-bedroom apartment in one of the many newly built high-rise buildings. He shares his home with his wife, who teaches full time, his only child, and his parents. Both parents were retired. Men retire at 60, women at 55, apparently to make employment available for the new generation of workers. This family admitted that they could



Kite flying on Tiananmen Square in Beijing, the site of the 1989 democratic protests against the government.

not manage their lives if it were not for his parents providing child care and taking care of the apartment.

Neither he nor his wife can commute to work on bicycles any longer due to the distance from work. Our local guide proudly informed us that there are now 2.4 million cars in Beijing. However, this young family does not own one. Both rely on public transportation, which entails a lengthy commute. Their child will begin attending pre-school next

year and the tuition will consume half of his wife's salary. So much for government-subsidized public education! In some rural areas (74 percent of China is rural and poor) as many as 40 percent of children received no education whatsoever. This young family is typical of the emerging urban professional class. They have hopes but are still struggling.

Development

If one were to characterize China in one phrase, it would be 'rapid growth.' The economic growth rate has exceeded ten percent annually. This is unprecedented in modern economies. One needs but to look around in Shanghai or Beijing and observe the new construction. Shanghai has 100 high rise buildings under construction at any one time. At present there are 1700 tall buildings in Shanghai. Building cranes are silhouetted in the skyline of every city.

Our tour guides failed to inform us of the millions of people who lost their homes in the central cities and were moved to the edges of town to make way for corporate headquarters. Nor were we told that the empty lots and piles of bricks were the remains of 400-year-old homes that were razed in the name of progress. Beijing has also paid a high price in the preparations for the 2008 Olympics. The operative phrase is 'joint venture.' The government contracts with private developers for these projects. Unfortunately, there is corruption all along the line. Property is bought for under market value, public officials resell it for enormous profits to developers, but instead of using the money for public benefit, they pocket it for their own uses.

Rural Migration

Except for some beautiful rice paddies, we saw precious little of rural China. However, it is well known that rural governments are strapped for money, even to provide essential services. This has created the huge problem of what China is going to do with the 400 million peasants who are not sharing in the new wealth of the nation. Presently, they are migrating to the cities in search of employment. Shanghai alone has three million "floaters," people who have come into the city looking for work. It seems that every restaurant, hotel, tourist shop and department store was overloaded with employees with make-work jobs. In addition there was a plethora of street vendors, hawkers and hustlers of every kind. I have traveled extensively, but had never been accosted by more aggressive sellers. On the Great Wall, I was literally bumped, blocked, cajoled, and harassed for over two blocks, just to get me to buy postcards. I was polite but I didn't.

Did You Know?

- Three hundred million rural Chinese will move to cities in the next fifteen years. China must build urban infrastructure equivalent to Houston's every month in order to absorb them.
- 220 billion text messages were sent over mobile phones in China last year.
- General Motors expects the Chinese automobile market to be bigger than the U.S. market by 2025. Some 74 million Chinese families can now afford to buy cars.
- China has more speakers of English as a second language than America has native English speakers.
- China has more than 300 biotech firms that operate unhindered by animal rights lobbies, religious groups, or ethical standards boards.
- On average, American companies make a 42 percent return on their China operations.
- There are 220 million "surplus workers" in China's central and western regions. The number of people working in the United States is about 140 million.
- Apparel workers in the United States make \$9.56 an hour. In El Salvador, apparel workers make \$1.65. In China they make between 68 and 88 cents.
- One in ten American jobs is at risk of being "offshored."
- There are 186 MBA programs in China.
- China's sex industry alone needs 1 billion condoms a year.
- China has 320 million people under the age of fourteen, more than the entire population of the United States.
- More people use the Internet in China than in the United States.

Source: China, Inc. by Ted Fishman



Modern street scene in metropolitan China

Public Relations & UN Briefings

Our group was treated to the public relations presentations that cities make to prospective investors. Nanning, a small city near the Vietnam border, had a separate building with a large-scale model of the province, showing the numerous projects, dams, industrial parks, and other planned developments. Charts on the wall showed the levels of economic growth for the last several years. It appeared to be in the 30 to 50 percent range outstanding. Shanghai has a multi-million dollar building with a 200-foot model of the city, along with multi-media displays touting their plans and dreams for the future. All shouted, "Invest here and make lots of money."

A positive note was struck by Khalid Malik, the UN Coordinator of the Millennium Development Goals. He confirmed the rapid economic growth and the substantial lessening of poverty, the progress in education and the status of women. While touting the successes in fighting AIDS, the successes with malaria and TB were less dramatic. And he was candid in concluding that environmental sustainability and pollution were still huge problems. China has seven of the ten most polluted cities in the world.

A Major Downside

In addition to the dangers of environmental degradation, the increasing strains on non-renewable energy sources, and the inevitable growth in competition on world markets, China's rapid growth poses a formidable danger to the traditional way of life. Our tour guides pointed to the glory of Chinese history and culture. They lauded their royal dynasties and the monumental palaces, pagodas, paintings and other treasures they created. But they seem not to comprehend the danger that rapid growth and industrialization pose for these glories of China. I was most keenly aware of this when we visited the "Valley of the Nine Villages" (Juizhaugiu), which was recently opened to massive development for tourism. It is the

home of pandas and the Tibetan herders of the mountain yak. It boasts the natural wonders of mountain streams, blue lakes, waterfalls and enchanting scenery. I asked myself what will the new roads cut into pristine mountains, the airport 11,000 feet above sea level, the millions of tourists and the influx of money do to the traditional way of life of the Tibetan people, their Buddhist religion, their sense of self worth? Traditional people elsewhere have not fared well.

Concluding Thoughts

And can a rapidly expanding economy, increased individualism, material affluence and runaway consumerism coexist with a harsh, repressive government? Will there be another Tiananmen Square and will it succeed next time? Human rights violations are rampant. Will the Chinese people continue to tolerate these injustices? Peasant mass protests are already common, although under-reported. Will the concessions made by the government be enough to pacify them?

And finally, should we fear China? As peace activists, I hope we don't imitate the neo-cons like Robert Kaplan. He wrote the *May Atlantic Monthly* that we should begin preparing for an inevitable military confrontation with China. Chinese culture is not expansionistic. Most of the Chinese people I met were interested solely in a better life and having a share in the fruits of their development. If there's any reason to be anxious about China, it's as an economic competitor. It already owns more than \$450 billion dollars of U.S. Treasury notes. The government is negotiating to buy a small U.S. oil company. It's the largest shipbuilding country in the world. They sell us more than we sell them, thanks in part to Wal-Mart! Everything China does is on a colossal scale. Their 1.3 billion people represent one fifth of the world's population. And they are not going away. As Americans, we need to come to terms with this, refuse to be ruled by our fears, and seek cooperation for the mutual benefit of both our nations.

Two-Thirds On Defense

This sobering analysis of the defense budget's actual share of the tax dollar first appeared on TomPaine.com, June 19, 2005. Written by Jurgen Brauer, a professor of economics at Augusta State University in Augusta, Georgia, and Nicholas Anglewicz, an MBA student there, it provides an important—if painful—corrective to the usual numbers bandied about by the White House and Congress.

Many Americans believe that 19 cents on defense for every 81 cents on non-defense is a reasonable way to spend a tax dollar. But by another calculation, the tax dollar splits 68 cents for defense and 32 cents on everything else. It is a common misconception that U.S. defense expenditure is equivalent to the Department of Defense outlays. Instead of \$436.4 billion of defense expenditure, as Congressional budgeteers count, government statisticians in the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) counted \$548.0 billion for calendar year 2004—a whopping \$112 billion difference. And by our own calculations, U.S. defense expenditure is much higher than even the BEA's numbers suggest, namely \$765.6 billion in calendar year 2004—about \$330 billion or 75 percent more than the Department of Defense outlays.

To account for the difference, one needs to recognize that, for example, nuclear weapons-related outlays are budgeted under the Department of Energy line item, not that of the Department of Defense. Likewise, Veterans Affairs has its own department and budget. It is a defense-related category, reflecting obligations incurred to American servicemen and women on account of past U.S. military activity. Picking through the budget, the BEA, housed in the Department of Commerce, reclassifies each line item into "defense" and "non-defense" categories. For calendar year 2004, national defense outlays thus amounted to the aforementioned \$548.0 billion.

The BEA also recognizes that the total fiscal year 2004 federal outlays of \$2,292.2 billion consist to a very large degree of Social Security, Medicaid and other trust fund payments. These trust funds happen to be run via federal government accounts, but as they merely transfer funds among citizens, they do not constitute expenditures for federal government functions per se, such as agriculture, education, transportation or diplomacy. Thus, subtracting transfer payments out of the federal budget, the BEA calculates that in addition to the \$548.0 billion for defense, the federal government spent only another \$262.1 billion on all other federal government functions, for a total of \$810.2 billion. Hence, BEA arrives at the ratio of 68 cents for defense as against only 32 cents on everything else.

While the BEA's reasoning is economically correct, even the BEA leaves out an important item: the allocation of federal interest payment on the government's debt. Most years, the U.S. federal government runs a budget deficit. That deficit needs to be financed by borrowing. The resulting interest expense should therefore be allocated to defense and non-defense spending in proportion to their respective share in causing the annual deficits. If for example overall non-interest outlays are \$90, split between \$60 for defense and \$30 for everything else, and revenue was only \$81, then the \$9 deficit should be attributed as \$6 on account of defense, and the remaining \$3 on account of non-defense federal government outlays. The interest on the resulting debt should be allocated in like fashion.

It turns out that the BEA's computation of total federal government outlays of \$810.2 billion for calendar year 2004 excludes, incredibly, some \$321.7 billion of net interest payments that (fiscal) year. Thus, if 68 cents on the federal dollar are attributable to defense, then 68 cents on the interest-dollar is attributable to defense as well. For calendar year 2004, this would add \$217.6 billion to the defense outlays, for a total of \$765.6 billion. In like fashion, non-defense federal outlays then run to \$366.2 billion. (The details are more complex but, if anything, understate the military's share in interest due; for example, the defense spending driven budget deficits of the Reagan years occurred during a high interest rate time period.)

On a per-capita basis, the average American in 2004 then did not pay \$1,488 for defense but \$2,605. In a word, the military ran on \$217.08 per citizen per month, while the remainder of the federal government ran on \$103.83 per citizen per month.

You might shrug your shoulders and say, "Well, it's worth it." True, in a democracy, it's up to voters to make that determination. Just keep in mind that when the press reports 19 cents for defense versus 81 cents for everything else, the split really is 68 cents versus 32 cents. Defense is not one-fifth of federal spending but two-thirds of it. Considering the ongoing carnage in Iraq, perhaps it is time to reconsider that expense.

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The Perils of Enlistment

Retired Social Worker and NFP State Board member Byron Peterson from the Nebraska Panhandle spent hours scouring the writings of philosophers, artists and activists to compile the following commentaries on military service. With the Iraq War having already claimed 15,000 killed or wounded—and the casualty toll set to go higher—the immediacy of this message has never been greater.

Unfortunately the lessons learned about the horrors of war and its apparent futility seem to be quickly forgotten. Jane Addams, chief architect of the field of Social Work and Count Leo Tolstoy, author of numerous works including *War and Peace*, shared in the observation that, within a mere 20-year period—a single generation—nations have been known to again throw themselves at one another in warfare until, they so mutually exhaust and deplete themselves, they have to cease their warring, with little or nothing accomplished to resolve the initial conflicts.

With this in mind, and the timeless ring of the proposition “What if they gave a war and nobody came?” I offer the following perspectives for all youth and their families who are contemplating participation in and support for the military as a service to themselves, our country and our world.

First up, I would recommend a review of what others many of whom are well known and generally considered wise have had to say about support for and participation in war. A look of the web site, “Inspiration Peak: Thoughts on War and Peace,” would be a good place to start. Likewise, sermons on the subject could be drawn upon from the web. Dr. Martin Luther King’s April 4, 1967 “Beyond Viet Nam: A Time to Break the Silence” speech could aptly stir one’s thoughts and emotions in this regard. The thoughts of Henry David Thoreau as presented in his essay “Civil Disobedience,” along with Tolstoy’s work “My Religion,” would also seem particularly pertinent selections to study. Another look at the movies “Born on the 4th of July,” “All Quiet on the Western Front,” “Johnny Got His Gun,” or a reading of the novels on which the movies were based, might also serve one well in this respect.

But for now, let us turn to some of the specific thoughts of a few key writers on the subject:

Leo Tolstoy

“No one general or soldier would, without discipline, oath, or war, kill a hundred Turks or Germans, and lay waste to their villages; he would not even have the courage to wound a single person. All this is done only thanks to that complicated political and social machine, whose problem it is so to scatter the responsibility of the atrocities which are perpetrated so that no man may feel the unnaturalness of these acts. Some write laws; others apply them; others again muster men, educating them in the habit of discipline, that is, of senseless and irresponsible obedience; others again these same mustered men commit every kind of violence, even killing other people without knowing why and for what purpose.”

“The taxes levied on the people for armaments and war absorb the greater part of the products of that labor which the army is called upon to protect. Taking away the whole male population from the ordinary occupations of their life destroys the very possibility of labor. The menace of war, ever ready to break out from one moment to the next, renders vain and profitless all improvements of social life...”

Dwight D. Eisenhower

“Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies in the final sense a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed.”

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

“This way of settling differences is not just. This business of burning human beings with napalm, of filling our nation’s homes with orphans and widows, of injecting poisonous drugs of hate into the veins of peoples normally humane, of sending men home from dark and bloody battlefields physically handicapped and psychologically deranged, cannot be reconciled with wisdom, justice and love. A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death.”

Dipping further back into history, Henry David Thoreau, speaking of both the institution of slavery and the making war with Mexico, seems to still speak quite eloquently for our times when he says in the essay “Civil Disobedience”:

“Can there not be a government in which majorities do not virtually decide right and wrong, but conscience? In which majorities decide only those questions to which the rule of expediency is applicable? Must the citizen ever for a moment, or in the least degree, resign his conscience to the legislator? Why has every man a conscience, then? I think that we should be men first, and subjects afterward. It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for the law, so much as for the right. The only obligation which I have the right to assume, is to do at any time what I think right. It is truly enough said, that a corporation has no conscience; but a corporation of conscientious men is a corporation *with* a conscience. Law never made men a whit more just: and, by means of their respect for it, even the well disposed are daily made agents of injustice. A common and natural result of an undue respect for law is, that you may see a file of soldiers, colonel, captain, corporal, privates, powder-monkeys and all, marching in admirable order over hill and dale to the wars, against their wills, aye, against their common sense and consciences, which makes it very steep marching indeed, and produces a palpitation of the heart. They have no doubt that it is a damnable business in which they are concerned; they are all peaceably inclined. Now, what are they? Men at all? or small movable forts and magazines, at the service of some unscrupulous man in power?”

Getting impressionable young people to carefully consider these ideas before deciding to enlist in the military is a task for which we all need to take responsibility. What becomes exponentially more difficult is the matter of dissuading our country, and for that matter, the world from engaging in warfare. Here, too, though, we are not the first to grapple with this problem. And I would again encourage you research and reflect on what notable others have said and done. To that end, let us return to Thoreau for a parting thought:

“Cast your whole vote, not a strip of paper merely, but your whole influence. A minority is powerless while it conforms to the majority; it is not even a minority then; but it is irresistible when it clogs by its whole weight. If the alternative is to keep all just men in prison, or give up war and slavery, the State will not hesitate which to choose. If a thousand people were not to pay their tax-bills this year, that would not be a violent and bloody measure, as it would be to pay them, and enable the State to commit violence and shed innocent blood. This is, in fact, the definition of a peaceable revolution...”

Leveling the Playing Field on Initiative 416

by Amy Miller, ACLU Nebraska Legal Director

Initiative 416 put Nebraska on the map. When the initiative was added by popular referendum to the state constitution, it became most extreme anti-gay-family law in the entire country. Initiative 416 not only defined marriage as between a man and woman, but also voided any type of same-sex relationship recognition including civil unions and domestic partnerships. While many other states have a "DOMA" (Defense of Marriage Act) which defines marriage as between a man and a woman, only Nebraska has additional language that goes on to add that the state cannot recognize a same-sex relationship at all. Our amendment has been called the only "Super DOMA."

Now, with U.S. District Court Judge Joseph Bataillon's decision issued in May, 2005, Nebraska is on the map again. This time, we're noteworthy because the court found Initiative 416 was unconstitutional and has permanently enjoined it.

Who brought the lawsuit?

The suit was filed in April, 2003, by three organizations: Citizens for Equal Protection ("CFEP"), Nebraska Advocates for Justice and Equality ("NAJE"), and ACLU Nebraska. All three organizations work for equality regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, and all use legislative lobbying to accomplish their mission. Some of the members of these organizations are named in the lawsuit, too, in order to illustrate just how the law is harming Nebraskans.

Who was sued?

The lawsuit was filed against State Attorney General Jon Bruning and Governor Mike Johanns. Governor Dave Heineman was substituted as a defendant when he took office. The Attorney General and the Governor were sued because their jobs require them to enforce and defend all state laws.

What did the plaintiffs argue?

The lawsuit charged Initiative 416 violates the U.S. Constitution. The three plaintiff organizations argued they were prevented from lobbying for new legislation that would provide equality for people in same-sex relationships. The lawsuit also charged the Initiative was a "bill of attainder"—that

is, a legislative punishment similar to the anti-Communist laws passed during the McCarthy era. The U.S. Constitution forbids bills of attainder because they are a form of punishment against one group.

Same-sex couples were blocked from lobbying for even the most basic protections for their families. For example, in 2003, Senator Nancy Thompson introduced a bill that would give same-sex couples the right to make burial arrangements for their partners. In response, Attorney General Jon Bruning issued an opinion stating the bill was unconstitutional under Initiative 416. The bill then died in committee without being passed onto the floor of the legislature for full debate.

One way to think about the legal argument is to imagine the legislative process as a horse race. Each Nebraskan can go to their elected representative and ask him or her to introduce a new bill. When the bill is introduced, the gates open up and the horses enter the track. Of course, only some horses win the race—the horses that cross the finish line are bills that pass into law. While the other horses don't win, at least they were allowed to get on the track and try their hardest. Initiative 416 kept some horses out of the race entirely by blocking any advocacy for sexual orientation equality. Groups such as CFEP, NAJE and ACLU Nebraska aren't saying all of their bills would pass into law, but they should have a right to participate in the democratic process.

How have families been hurt by Initiative 416?

The lawsuit wasn't just about the rights of the organizations to lobby. Those organizations represent the interests of their members, and some of those members face real barriers if they cannot seek new laws to protect their families. Without laws on the books, same-sex families have no automatic legal rights to care for one another and to make health care and funeral decisions for one another.

For example, Barbara DiBernard and Judy Gibson of Lincoln have been in a committed relationship for over 15 years. Judy is a therapist, and Barbara has been a UNL professor since 1978. The couple built a wheelchair-accessible house together as part of their plan to deal with Judy's degenerative illness. Initiative 416 not only denied

Judy and Barbara equal footing in their efforts to obtain domestic partnership legislation, it deprived them of the opportunity to advocate for university policies that would protect their relationship. Under Initiative 416, the university can't allow Barbara to take time off from work to take Judy to medical appointments. Nor is Judy eligible for health insurance through Barbara's employment with the university.

What has been accomplished by the victory so far?

Judge Bataillon's decision struck Initiative 416 down, and removed the legal barrier standing in the way of legislative lobbying. The decision did NOT make same-sex marriage legal in Nebraska, and it did NOT guar-

antee that same-sex equality laws will be automatically passed. It just leveled the playing field so that ACLU, CFEP and NAJE can continue their work for same-sex families.

What is the current status of the lawsuit?

The State filed an appeal to the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals. Briefs are due from both parties by fall, and oral arguments may be heard before the end of the year.

Since this was the most extreme law of its sort, the decision doesn't have much impact outside of this state, but the victory is still a chance to celebrate our official state motto: "Equality Before the Law."

For more information, go to www.aclunbraska.org or www.aclu.org.

Initiative 416 Documentary Now Available on DVD

The award-winning documentary, "416," by Omaha filmmaker Jim Fields has just been released on DVD as a 2-disc special edition set. "416" is a feature-length documentary about Nebraska's extreme and comprehensive Defense Of Marriage Amendment, Initiative 416. The documentary follows Initiative 416 from its inception to the recent court ruling declaring the constitutional amendment void (updated for this DVD release).

The movie features interviews with Michael Gordon from Citizens for Equal Protection, Amy Miller and Tim Butz from ACLU Nebraska, Matt Coles from the National ACLU, and Rev. Troy Perry, founder of Metropolitan Community Churches. Also included are interviews with two of the Nebraska couples named as plaintiffs in the lawsuit against the State of Nebraska.

Representing the conservative point of view are interviews with Dr. Jim Eckman from Grace University, Dr. Thomas Martin from The University of Nebraska at Kearney, and Bob Valentine, one of the chief organizers of the initiative, who was responsible for raising over \$750,000 in out-of-state money from the Church of Latter Day Saints. That money was used in a mass media campaign to 'convince' Nebraska voters to vote for the amendment.

Since its premiere last summer at the Omaha Community Playhouse, "416" has screened at nine film festivals, including *The Austin Gay and Lesbian Film Festival* in Austin, Texas, *Kansas City's Indyoutties Gay and Lesbian Film Festival*, *The Fargo Film Festival* in North Dakota, *The Hardacre Film Festival* in Tipton, Iowa, *The Central Standard Film Festival* in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and the *Central Nebraska Film Festival*, which was held last January in Kearney, Nebraska. The movie has also won four film festival awards, including "Best Feature" and "Best Documentary."

The special edition double-disc DVD set includes deleted scenes, additional interviews with key participants, Fritz Thorne's music video, the complete panel discussion from the Central Nebraska Film Festival and more. The double-disc DVD set retails for \$19.99 and is available through paypal/mail order form on the movie's website: www.416themovie.com and at Omaha area bookstores.

Will The Last Polar Bear Please Close the G8

U.S. Blocks International Action to Curb Global Warming

by Mark Zimmermann
Treasurer, Nebraska Green Party

"We know enough to act now" goes one of the lines in the communique on global warming issued by the leaders of the G8 in their meeting in Scotland. But missing in action were any actual targets, programs or commitments to curb the growth of greenhouse gases such as CO2 which cause global warming.

In the weeks leading up to the summit, news reports described how the Bush Administration balked at endorsing any strong wording on the subject of global warming, and that France and Germany were more inclined to leave the conference with a 7-1 split over a communique than submit to a watered-down statement. In the end, the White House gave up just enough ground on the wording to avoid a split, but apparently succeeded in their strategy to make the focus on words and promises rather than actual efforts. If all that were needed was words, that was provided a month earlier by a joint declaration of the national science academies of the G8 nations, which said that there is "significant evidence that global warming is already occurring..." and that it is "...vital for the world to take prompt action."

Also disheartening was the failure of any of the documents produced by the summit to make a link between their two main concerns global warming and Africa. Most scientists are predicting that Africa, already suffering from numerous problems, will be affected more by climate change than other continents. In fact the British paper, *The Observer*, reported on June 19 that the Bush Administration has actually reneged on "financial pledges to fund a network of regional climate centers throughout Africa which were designed to monitor the unfolding impact of global warming."

Though no concrete actions were forthcoming from the G8 summit, that didn't prevent the governments from issuing a "G8 Plan of Action" anyway. It's interesting to note the differences in how the U.S. and British governments presented this plan to their citizens. On the White House web site, it is noted that the G8 Plan will "power a cleaner future by promoting the use of nuclear power, clean coal technologies, clean diesel and methane, renewable energy, bioenergy and more efficient power grids" and that it will "finance the transition to cleaner energy through a strengthened World Bank and national policies that support markets, remove barriers to direct investment, leverage private capital and promote investment."

By contrast the British government, while

mentioning many of the same items, gave them different emphasis. Nuclear power is barely mentioned in the middle of the document, "We take note of the efforts of those G8 members who will continue to use nuclear energy, to develop more advanced technologies that would be safer, more reliable and more resistant to diversion and proliferation." (www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page7882.asp).

One other instance of words and the worth of the paper they are printed on should be noted in particular, because it does not seem to have caught the attention of the press and is a very

In the end, the White House. . . succeeded in their strategy to make the focus on words and promises rather than actual efforts.

glaring contradiction. In interviews with the British press, Bush said that he withdrew the U.S. from the Kyoto Protocol because it was a "lousy deal" and would have "destroyed" the American economy. He has been saying that ever since he entered office. Well, in June 2003 the Energy Information Administration (EIA), an agency of the Department of Energy, released an analysis of the effects of the McCain-Lieberman Climate Stewardship Act (S. 139) which was introduced and barely lost in the Senate that year. The bill would have imposed caps (albeit small ones) on greenhouse gas (ghg) emissions and set up a system to trade emission credits. The analysis was prepared in response to requests by both Sen. McCain and Sen. Inhofe (infamous for calling global warming a "hoax") and so the EIA was well aware of the sensitivity of the subject and was likely to be extremely cautious in their predictions.

Even considering that, they concluded the act (which proposed to reduce ghg emissions by 7 percent by 2025) would only slow the average annual growth rate of GDP from 3.04 percent to 3.02 percent over the life of the bill and that over the 22-year run of the bill, through 2025, the accumulated loss of GDP would be about 0.6 percent. They projected that it would cost consumers about \$47 a year per capita or \$78 per household. That would appear to be far less than the tax breaks that have been tossed out like parade candy in recent years.

In general, the report seems to indicate that

economy will go through an adjustment period if we put a price on carbon, but that it will recover quickly as efficiencies are gained and as new technologies and practices are adopted. Global warming activists should see this document as an important piece of evidence, perhaps the "Downing Street memo" of climate change policy. Because global scientific and popular opinion has forced Bush to reluctantly admit that there might actually be such a thing as global warming, his only argument for more study and less work has been an economic one. This report counters his remaining argument. It is available online at

www.eia.doe.gov/oiaf/servicerpt/ml/pdf/summary.pdf.

While inaction on global warming is pervasive at the White House, action in the Congress is proving to be a mixed blessing. The Senate recently passed its version of an energy bill, which must be reconciled with a more egregious bill passed by the House last year. The bill runs for 1250 pages and, depending on whose interpretation, contains around \$55 billion in spending, tax breaks, royalty waivers and loan guarantees, mostly for already profitable fossil fuel industries and the terminally unprofitable nuclear industry.

On the positive side, the Senate bill does not include drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. It doesn't shield MTBE polluters and manufacturers from contamination liability like the House bill, though it does pay them to go away (\$1 billion over two years, thanks to Republican Sen. Pete Domenici). It extends the production tax credits of 1.9 cents per kWh for renewable energies like wind and solar. And surprisingly the Senate passed a modest renewable portfolio standard directing the nation's utilities to produce ten percent of their energy from renewable resources by 2020. Whether it survives negotiations with the House is doubtful; it only passed 52-48. Both Nebraska Senators Hagel and Nelson voted against it.

As one might guess though, the bill is not all sunbeams and gentle breezes. Among its more deplorable provisions is repeal of PUCHA, the Public Utilities Holding Companies Act (also in the House bill). Enacted in the 1930s, PUCHA

prevents wide-scale mergers and risky investments with captive ratepayers money. Without it, we'll be much more vulnerable to scandals like Enron and the fake California energy crisis. Public Citizen has good information on PUCHA at citizen.org

Another atrocious action by the Senate was that, not only did they vote against raising mileage standards for cars and light trucks, they actually passed an amendment by Kit Bond of Missouri (64-31) which requires the Dept. of Transportation to take into account a dozen different considerations before it is allowed to raise CAFE standards. Both Sens. Hagel and Nelson voted for this stinker.

Subsidies for the nuclear industry are numerous. Both the House and Senate bills extend the Price-Anderson Act to 2025, making the taxpayers liable for the vast majority of the costs of any nuclear accident. After 50 years, the nuclear industry cannot find anyone who will insure it. It provides almost half a billion dollars for the Nuclear 2010 program to design and build new nuclear reactors in the U.S., because after almost 30 years no one in the private sector is willing to invest in it. And hidden as funding for hydrogen power is \$1.25 billion for a nuclear reactor in Idaho that also produces hydrogen. By contrast, the Europeans are using renewables to produce hydrogen.

Incentives and tax breaks abound for oil and coal, the pork-barreling becoming so bad that even President Bush was quoted as saying that with oil at \$50 a barrel producers didn't need all the incentives contained in this bill.

And global warming? A resolution by John Kerry that the Senate recognize the need for the U.S. to address global warming through "comprehensive and cost-effective national measures and through negotiation of fair and binding international commitments under the UN "Framework on Climate Change" lost 46-49 (Hagel, no; Nelson, yes). A weaker resolution without reference to other nations did pass, "that Congress should enact a comprehensive and effective national program of mandatory, market-based limits and incentives on emissions of greenhouse gases that slow, stop and reverse the growth of such emissions." Having expressed their concern, however, they again rejected the McCain-Lieberman plan containing just those elements, as an amendment to the bill by a vote of 38-60, with both Hagel and Nelson voting no. Instead, the Senate adopted Hagel's plan of voluntary compliance and loans for new technology (see *Nebraska Report* March 2005 for more on Hagel's plan). Negotiations with the House bill are expected to begin soon.



Whiteclay, conclusion

Whiteclay alcohol sales.” Over 300 people, including nearly 100 Nebraskans, marched the two miles from the town of Pine Ridge to Whiteclay on the sixth anniversary of the still unsolved murders of Ronald Hard Heart and Wilson Black Elk, Jr., who were slain there in 1999. Led by Frank LaMere and leaders from the Oglala Sioux Tribe, the marchers called upon Nebraska officials to enact responsible public policy to “Dry Up Whiteclay” and end, once and for all, the alcohol sales in this 14-person unincorporated village.

Twice before, in 2001 and 2003, Nebraskans for Peace had organized marches into Whiteclay, always from the Nebraska side of the border. Marching the two-mile distance from Pine Ridge, though, dramatized exactly how accessible the alcohol in Whiteclay is to the largest community on the dry reservation. And it enabled Nebraskans to witness firsthand the State of Nebraska’s contempt for the Oglala Sioux Tribe’s decades-old policy of prohibition and efforts to promote sobriety, by annually licensing the sale of over 4.5 million cans of beer there.

In his remarks at the rally on the streets of Whiteclay, Frank LaMere stated that he was heartened by the actions of Rep. Osborne, Attorney General Bruning, Sen. Preister and members of the Legislature, and he thanked them for their efforts. But, he continued, “I cannot help but contrast them to the comments of Governor Heineman, who has said that he is angry with Frank LaMere for, quote/unquote, ‘politicizing’ Whiteclay. But what, I ask you, would he have us do if we aren’t suppose to use the political institutions we have available? People are dying here. Lives are being destroyed. If only Governor Heineman, who is the highest-ranking political figure in our state and has been charged by the citizens of Nebraska to represent us politically, could find his way clear to ‘politicize’ Whiteclay, then perhaps I, and those of you standing here today, would not have to.”

What Kind of World Do You Want Your Grandchildren to Inherit?

*Start creating the next generation
of Peace & Justice activists.
Give an NFP Membership to a grandchild.
Gift memberships are only \$20.*

Letters to NFP...

In the May/June 2005 *Nebraska Report*, Sally Herrin falsely accuses the Center for Rural Affairs of lying and saying that federal farm payments hurt small farms. She knows better.

We’ve never suggested that farm payments per se hurt small farmers, but rather that poorly distributed farm payments hurt small farms. Under the current program, payments flow disproportionately to mega farms. The bigger a farm grows the more money it gets from the government. That effectively subsidizes mega farms to drive family farms out of business by bidding land away from them.

The solution is not to eliminate farm programs but rather to reform them. Congress should cap subsidies to mega farms and invest the savings in cooperative development, small business development, beginning farmer programs and conservation.

Sally would have us believe that we can save family farming simply by putting more money in agriculture, distributed by farm programs and markets that favor the big and powerful. She is mistaken. High oil prices didn’t stop big oil companies from driving out the small companies and poorly distributed farm payments won’t keep mega farms from driving out family farms.

There is a better choice. Cap payments and target them to family size farms. Invest in family farm, conservation and rural development programs that serve the common good—rather than mega payments that serve the vested interests of mega farms.

Chuck Hassebrook, Center for Rural Affairs

IN MEMORIAM

**Amelia Epp, wife of former NFP President and
current State Board Treasurer Bob Epp died June 7,
after a long struggle with cancer.**

Our heartfelt sympathy to Bob, their two sons and families.

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S O S 2005

SPEAK OUT AT STRATCOM

SPEAK OUT AGAINST "GLOBAL STRIKE"

10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, Kinney Gate,
Offutt Air Force Base, Bellevue, Nebraska

Guest speakers Medea Benjamin of Global Exchange
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in Space; and Frank Cordaro of the Des Moines
Catholic Worker community.

BULLETIN BOARD

*Office Hours for the Nebraskans for Peace State Office in Lincoln, at
941 'O' Street, Suite 1026, are 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon on weekdays.*

Aug. 6 S O S 2005: Speak Out at StratCom

Sept. 18 International peace activist Arun Gandhi speaks at the Omaha Civic Auditorium, 7:00 p.m. on the topic "Lessons Learned from My Grandfather." Sponsored by Creighton University, the event is free, but donations are welcome.

Sept. 24 National Iraq War Protest in Washington, D.C. Contact the NFP Office for details.

Oct. 15 2005 Annual Peace Conference in Lincoln; featured speakers: Greg Leroy of Good Jobs First and actress Elena Dodd performing a one-woman show on Eleanor Roosevelt.

*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*

Nothing Too Great about the G8

I had no very high hope that this year's G8 summit (the annual meeting of the eight richest nations on earth: England, France, Italy, Germany, Russia, Japan, Canada and the U.S.) would produce meaningful progress on the great global issues of poverty or climate. The good thing about being pessimistic is that you don't get your hopes crushed when things go badly. You can even take a gloomy satisfaction from having been, unfortunately, right again.

An HBO movie in June, *The Girl in the Café*, dealt with an affair between strangers at the G8. The characters were mostly British subjects, the rooms mostly bare, and the landscaping mostly lichen. Still, the film was breath-taking and achingly beautiful, not least because in the end the G8 appears to *do the right thing*. It was like watching *The West Wing* or *Live 8*. It is thrilling to watch people labor to bring about social and economic justice, until you stop to think that it isn't *real*, it's only entertainment.

Both Irish singer/
statesman Bono
and British Prime
Minister Tony
Blair hailed the
summit's agree-
ment to almost
double the aid



the richest nations give the poorest nations, half going to Africa, to \$130 billion annually over five years. They also praised long-delayed U.S. admissions that the surface of the earth *is* warming and that burning of fossil fuels *is* contributing to climate change, two facts the Bush Administration has resisted for fully five years.

However, the U.S. brought no new dollars to the table—just an agreement to fulfill promises already made. President Bush succeeded in blocking a plan—that would have increased U.S. commitments substantially—for rich nations to commit a specific percent of their national incomes to aid Africa. The president also blocked any specific, numerically stated targets for reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. He pressed for and won a plan to meet with developing nations, to lay on them the burden of slowing and reversing emissions which he says will hurt the U.S. economy.

Bush also used the G8 to promote the end of agricultural subsidies in ratification of the WTO, a step which ADM, et al. and their pals the Republicans have deceived many into believing will promote higher prices to poor farmers around the world.

Like the London public after the bombings during the G8 summit, I am distressed but not surprised. Again, this

President has squandered an historic opportunity to make America great. Many have speculated that it took a redneck like President Lyndon Johnson to sign the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and a fanatical anti-Communist like President Richard Nixon to go to China. This U.S. president is the poster child for insider privilege and petroleum-based wealth, and as such he could—and should—have been the man to step up to the plate on Africa. Instead, he chose to protect tax cuts for the wealthiest people on earth.

Africa is on the very front line of the great global culture clash between Western democracy and Islamic jihad. While Russia and China may soon pass Africa in AIDS infection rates, 23 out of the 25 poorest countries on earth are in Africa. The eyes of the future are crusted with flies, and those that survive will never forget. Waiting five years to take serious steps to heal the poverty of 900 million people—most of them children—who live on less than \$2 a day is like waiting five years to help tsunami victims, as one G8 observer said.

As with global warming, the case of Africa cries out for compassion, wisdom, honesty, courage—in short, for leadership. I cannot figure out why President Bush is not trying to get ahead of the curve in

Africa. In ten short years, Africa is expected to provide about 25 percent of U.S. crude petroleum imports. What's the plan? Let Africa become a giant sucking chest wound of a vacuum of power? Let them all kill each other and otherwise die off, to leave more room for U.S. corporations to maneuver?

It is always cheaper to feed poor families than to go to war against their hungry, haunted, tragically angry sons. Ironically, a big chunk of all aid to Africa is administered through the kinds of faith-based, non-governmental organizations the President wants to bankroll here at home.

Towns like Portland, Oregon, are booming economically while meeting Kyoto emissions standards locally, largely through incentives for public transit and energy efficiency. Meanwhile, this threadbare President who cannot produce an energy bill wants to get "beyond Kyoto" and cries like some Charles Dickens villain, "It will be bad for business!"

The Great Defender of frozen embryo life just sucks it up on the 27,000 actual children who die of poverty, each and every day. The achievement of President Bush at the G8 was mostly limited to the role of spoiler, standing tall against what it's going to take to save the world.

From the Bottom by Sally Herrin

The real political spectrum isn't right to left... it's top to bottom.