



Nebraska Report

There is no Peace without Justice

SEPTEMBER 2008 • VOLUME 36, NUMBER 7

Nebraskans for Peace

2008 Annual Peace Conference

The True Cost of the 'War on Iraq'

The economy's in recession. Voters are nervous about their pocketbooks. So what better time, with an election just around the corner, to have a nationally recognized accounting scholar talking about the social and economic cost of the Iraq War and the White House's 'War on Terror'?

Michele Chwastiak, Associate Professor of the Anderson School of Management at the University of New Mexico, will deliver the keynote address at the 2008 Annual Peace Conference in Lincoln Saturday, October 18 on the topic, "The True and Actual Cost of the War on Iraq—Minus the Accounting Tricks."

For more than a decade, Chwastiak's research has specialized on the relationship between managerial accounting and defense spending. In academic articles and papers such as "Rendering Death and Destruction Visible: Counting the Costs of War" and "War, Inc.: Private, Unaccountable and Profitable," she has examined the role accounting has played in America's deliberate shift to a permanent war economy.

For examples of this type of military accounting fraud, one thinks immediately of the recurrent \$70-80 billion appropria-

tion requests to finance Bush/Cheney Administration's 'War on Terror' that are routinely excluded from the federal budget. Treating these appropriations as 'off-budget' effectively disguises the true cost of the war, the size of the deficit and its corollary impact on the economy. Accounting, Chwastiak maintains, has actually become a tool for "abetting rather than deterring unethical behavior in the U.S. defense industry... and masking the social costs of war."

Inspired no doubt by the Pentagon's 'no-bid contracts' for Dick Cheney's former employer, Halliburton, and engagement of private mercenaries in Iraq through firms like Blackwater, she is currently researching the impact of privatization on war and accountability, as well as the pandemic fraud it has created.

With Nobel Prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz and co-researcher Linda Bilmes now calculating the price tag for the Iraq War at \$3 trillion, American voters need an accurate evaluation of the total costs of war, beyond those we traditionally account for. Just in time for the November 4 General Election, Professor Chwastiak will provide an honest assess-



2008 Keynote Speaker Professor Michele Chwastiak

ment of the economic, social and political costs of war and its privatization.

This year's Annual Peace Conference is again being jointly sponsored by the University of Nebraska-Omaha School of Social Work and Nebraskans for Peace.

The event will be held at First Lutheran Church, 1551 South 70th Street in Lincoln from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Early registration forms for the Saturday, October 18 conference will be available through the mail by mid-month. Starting September 15, you can also register by contacting the NFP State Office by phone at 402-475-4620 or by email at nfpstate@nebraskansforpeace.org or register directly online at www.nebraskansforpeace.org. Advance registration cost is \$25 per person (\$10 for students and low-income), which includes lunch. Four-and-one-half CEUs will be available to Social Workers and Licensed Mental Health Practitioners.

2008 marks the beginning of the 40th anniversary celebration of the founding of Nebraskans for Peace. In addition to our usual array of anti-war, nonviolence education, human rights, economic justice and environmental workshops, there will be a special program recognizing the formation of *Rural* Nebraskans for Peace in 1968—the forerunner organization that led to the establishment of what is now "the oldest statewide Peace & Justice organization in the United States."

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Nebraskans for Peace

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___ Get involved with a local NFP Chapter.

___ Lead discussions or participate in a speakers' bureau

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___ Staff a table at NFP-endorsed events

___ Help out with office tasks at the Lincoln or Omaha offices

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Clip & Mail

U.S. Blocks PAROS Treaty at UN

by Alice Slater,
Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, New York

This article originally appeared in the Summer/Fall 2008 issue of Space Alert!, published by the Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space.

Each fall in the UN General Assembly, every country in the world votes to negotiate a treaty on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS)—except one. Our own. The United States stands alone as the only member state annually voting ‘NO’ on the PAROS resolution. (Israel abstains.)

With the other 166 nations of the earth determined to prevent war in the heavens, the U.S. is essentially in an arms race with itself. Indeed, in 2006, Russia argued during the PAROS debate that if all states were to

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observe a prohibition on space weaponization, *there would be no arms race in space*. But U.S. has opposition has only intensified. When Russia and China—which have always been strong supporters of PAROS—submitted a draft treaty banning space weapons at the UN Conference on Disarmament this past February, the U.S. dismissed the proposal out of hand, characterizing it as “a diplomatic ploy by the two nations to gain a military advantage.”

The U.S.’s revised “National Space Policy” (released in October 2006) formally opposes “the development of new legal regimes or other restrictions that seek to prohibit or limit U.S. access to or use of space.” To protect U.S. dominance in space, the policy goes on to assert that the U.S. will continue to “dissuade or deter others from impeding [its right to operate in space]... and deny, if necessary, adversaries the use of space capabilities hostile to U.S. national interests.” U.S. programs to “protect” its satellites and other spacecraft include some of the most aggressive technologies yet to

be unleashed on the international community, including:

- Micro-satellites to stalk and destroy other nation’s satellites
- Evolutionary Air and Space Global Laser Engagement (EAGLE), a series of orbiting mirrors to direct beams from ground- or air-based lasers at space targets
- The ground-based Kinetic Energy Anti-Satellite Weapon, to shoot down satellites with missiles, and the Kinetic Energy Interceptor, a missile ‘defense’ system that could double as an anti-satellite weapon

But as we witnessed with StratCom’s shoot-down of the falling satellite last February, the U.S.’s so-called missile ‘defense’ program—with which we are threatening Russia from installations in Eastern Europe, and China through our joint theater-missile ‘defense’ programs with Japan—has an *offensive* mission as well. While based on land and sea, they can be used to attack space-based assets from the earth without actually being in orbit. Many of them travel through space to reach their targets and are designed with ‘dual-use’ characteristics, enabling them to destroy space assets as well as ballistic missiles.

In introducing the Russian-Chinese draft treaty last February, Russia’s Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, noted:

It is well known that there is inseparable relationship between strategic offensive and defensive armaments... The desire to acquire an anti-missile ‘shield’ while dismantling the ‘sheath’ where the nuclear ‘sword’ is kept is extremely dangerous. And if one also places on the balance pan the ‘global lightning strike’ concept providing for striking with nuclear and conventional strategic means targets in any point of the Globe in a matter of an hour after a relevant decision has been made, the risks for strategy stability and predictability become more than obvious. [All of the threats Lavrov referenced—missile defense, space dominance, full-spectrum global strike utilizing both conventional or nuclear weapons—are of course StratCom missions.]

U.S. efforts to dominate and control the military use of space also block progress on nuclear disarmament. There are some 26,000 nuclear weapons on our planet—25,000 of them in the U.S. and Russia—with thousands of bombs poised at hair-trigger alert, ready to fire in minutes. It was the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM) that ended

an upwardly-spiraling nuclear arms race when the U.S. and Russia agreed that a missile shield is a provocation to the other side to build more nuclear-armed missiles to overcome the shield. START II, ratified by the U.S. in 1996, limited each side to 3,500 long-range missiles. Russia delayed approval until 2000 due to a series of aggressive U.S. acts—the expansion of NATO up to Russia’s border, the unauthorized bombing of Iraq, the bombing of Yugoslavia without Security Council approval.

assured Russia that with 2,500 warheads they would be able to overcome our NMD shield and deliver an “annihilating counterattack.” Once Bush took office in 2001, negotiations collapsed altogether, as the U.S. withdrew from the ABM Treaty to pursue its master plan “to dominate and control the military use of space, to protect US interests and investments”.

This fall, PAROS will again be addressed at the United Nations, as it has been since 1985. While the world has the 1967 Outer

Space Treaty banning weapons of mass destruction in space, a PAROS ban on conventional space weapons is waits to be implemented. And there are no agreements covering the existing militarization of outer space that would enable the use of these space assets for use in wars on earth. Militaries can now rely on satellites for command and control, communication, monitoring, early warning, and navigation using Global Positioning Systems satellites. These space functions are used to direct bombing raids or orchestrate “prompt global strikes” on earth, defined by the United States as “the ability to control any situation or defeat any adversary action across the range of military operations.” Indeed it has been said that the First Gulf War was the first war conducted from space. “It was the first war in which space systems really played a major role in terms of the average soldier, sailor, airman and Marine,” said Lt. Gen. Roger DeKok, vice commander

of Air Force Space Command. “This was the first time that space affected the way our troops fought in the battle.”

Given the urgency of the task before us, the Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space has formed a “PAROS Working Group” (in which Nebraskans for Peace is represented). Our goal is to focus on the upcoming discussion on PAROS and to work with our allies around the world, so that we can bring international pressure to bear on the U.S. to support PAROS and to take up the urgent offer from the world community to ‘keep space for peace.’

For more information, contact Ray Acheson at ray@reachingcriticalwill.org.



Putin then asked for START III talks to reduce long-range missiles from 3,500 to 1,500 or even 1,000. This forward-looking proposal was accompanied by a stern caveat that all Russian offers would be off the table—including START II ratification—if the U.S. proceeded with plans to build a National Missile Defense (NMD) in violation of the ABM Treaty. Astoundingly, U.S. diplomatic ‘talking points’ leaked by Russia to the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* revealed that the Clinton Administration was assuring the Russians that they had nothing to fear from our proposed NMD, as long as they kept 2,500 weapons in their arsenal at launch-on-warning, hair-trigger alert. Despite Putin’s offer to cut stockpiles to 1,000 warheads, we

With MUD Set to Start Pumping October 1 from Wells Bordering a Military Superfund Site

Concerns Grow over Risk to Omaha's Water

Both the safety of the Metropolitan Utilities District's new well field and the credibility of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers were hot topics at an Omaha news conference July 30. With MUD reportedly scheduled to start pumping from its new Platte West well field the first of October, State Senator Don Preister, retired Saunders County Attorney Thomas Jaudzemis, aquatic biologist Marian Maas, and Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) member Lorus Luetkenhaus sought to alert area residents about the dangers the military Superfund cleanup site at Mead, Nebraska poses to the safety of Omaha's water supply. The following article reprinted from the August 9, 2008 Bellevue Leader newspaper does a good job of laying out the public safety issues involved, and some of the political concerns over the Corps' conduct in directing the Superfund cleanup and granting the well field permit to MUD.

*As Sen. Preister noted in his comments at the news conference, "Here's what needs to happen to protect the public: First, the Corps of Engineers—both the Omaha and Kansas City Districts—should meet immediately with the RAB in a legal public meeting and continue to meet on at least a quarterly basis. The Corps—a governmental agency which has responsibility for both cleanup of the Superfund site and for MUD's permit—must provide factual information to the public and be accountable for its decisions. Second, MUD should **not** operate the new well field until officials know for certain how far east the Mead site contamination extends **and** the Corps demonstrates to EPA's satisfaction that the contamination is **actually contained**."*

Group discusses potential water contamination

by Jon Burlison, Bellevue Leader

A group of concerned citizens believe groundwater contamination in the area of the new Metropolitan Utility District's Platte West water plant well field could threaten the drinking water supply for Sarpy and Douglas counties.

State Sen. Don Preister of Bellevue added his voice to a call for action from the agencies involved. Preister and the group, called the Restoration Advisory Board, met last Wednesday at the W. Clarke Swanson Library, 9101 West Dodge Road.

"Very soon MUD is planning to begin full-scale operation of high-powered wells in its massive new Platte West well field located in western Douglas County," Preister said. "If MUD begins full operation at this time, it will place the drinking water of the Omaha area at risk."

The group said the reason for the alarm is the presence of massive quantities of uncontained toxic chemicals that contaminate about 23 million gallons of groundwater two miles from the well field at the Mead Superfund site.

They are referring to the former Nebraska Ordinance Plant located in Saunders County near Mead. According to Environmental Protection Agency and Corps reports, the 17,000-acre location has massive soil and

groundwater contamination. They list more than a half dozen different types of noxious waste including trichloroethylene (TCE), cyclotrimethylenetrinitramine (RDX), lead, benzene and even radioactive waste. It was designated a Superfund site by the EPA in 1989.

Cancer bioassays performed by the National Cancer Institute show that exposure to TCE is carcinogenic. RDX was used in one of the first plastic explosives and is toxic as is benzene and lead.

Making matters worse is the fact that, at this time, no one knows how close the contamination is to the well site. Currently, the main contaminant being monitored is TCE, a chlorinated hydrocarbon commonly used as an industrial solvent. The EPA has identified three large plumes of TCE moving through the groundwater in a southeasterly direction.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers issued a permit to MUD in 2003 under the assumption that contamination at the Superfund site is contained. Preister said that in August 2007, the Corps of Engineers stated publicly that it was surprised to discover the site contamination was not contained as previously believed. The Corps identified three areas of concern, one of which is very near the new well field.

"We now know the threat is not actu-

ally contained and it is clear the Corps doesn't know how far east the contamination extends," he said. "In light of this, it is far too risky for MUD to operate its massive new well field at this time."

The MUD Platte West water plant well field is scheduled to open Oct. 1. It has 42 wells that will draw a reported 54 million gallons of water a day from the Platte River basin region. This suction effect causes, what Preister called, a cone of depression in the water table. He and the group fears this depression will draw the contaminated water from the nearby Superfund site and pump it into the Omaha water supply.

Preister said he was also troubled by the Corps of Engineers' response to the situation.

The Corps of the problem

"The permit issued to MUD by the Corps in 2003 acknowledges that the pumping could cause the contamination to move and get into the drinking water," Preister said. "Instead of instructing MUD to delay operations until the toxins are contained, they are allowing MUD to proceed."

That is because the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers believes there is no problem.

Rodney Schwartz, the Corps' senior project manager who handled the MUD permit, said the tainted Mead groundwater and the area nearby that the contaminants spread to are both downhill from the MUD well field. At the rate MUD is allowed to pump, Schwartz said, it would be impossible for the contaminated water to reach the plant.

But that doesn't jibe with a U.S. Geological Survey report by noted hydrologist J.O. Helgesen that states water moves generally eastward and northeastward from recharge areas toward discharge areas in eastern Nebraska and along the Missouri River in northeastern Nebraska. Still, MUD believes what the Corps has told them.

MUD-dy waters

MUD spokeswoman Mari Matulka says the utility, having been given the go-ahead by the corps, sees no reason to delay opening the plant.

"The Corps will continue to monitor what's going on," Matulka said. "They'll let us know if there are any problems. And if there are, they will be corrected."

The problem with that approach, Preister said, is that there are no monitoring wells east of the uncontained contaminant plume. This would make it impossible for the Corps to find out if the toxins have moved closer to the wells. [Editor's correction: Sen. Preister actually stated at the news confer-

ence that while there are a few monitoring wells east of the uncontained contamination plume, they are insufficient in number and not properly placed to warn the public adequately when toxins move east in the groundwater.]

"It is very troubling that the Corps continues to refuse to test all the residential wells in the vicinity of the eastern plume," said Marian Maas of Bellevue.

Maas is an aquatic biologist who did the groundbreaking work for the study of the eastern Nebraska watershed.

"The public does not have a network of monitoring wells that could serve as an effective early warning system to alert them when MUD's pumping draws the contamination farther east."

The Environmental Protection Agency has stayed out of the fray as it has adopted a "wait-and-see" approach to the issue. That isn't sitting well with the group either.

"Neither the state nor the EPA has conducted a study of the effect of MUD's maximum pumping [reported to be at 160 million gallons per day] when the stream flow in the Platte River is low," said Thomas Jaudzemis, former Saunders County Attorney. "Neither have they conducted any independent groundwater modeling related to the Mead Superfund site toxins."

The well fields, which supply the new Platte West Water Treatment Plant at 216th and Q streets, mark a tremendous investment for MUD and serve as an economic growth engine for the metro area. The new facility will extend the length of three football fields and cover a total of 630,511 square feet. As of June 30, the contractor has completed \$234 million of construction, representing 99 percent of the total contract value.

With that in mind, it is not sensible from either a scientific perspective or a cost perspective to rely on MUD to treat the Superfund toxins at its new plant so that the water is safe to drink, Maas said.

Even if MUD could detect toxic chemicals in the massive quantities of water that would be flowing through its system, it isn't clear that any municipal water treatment system could remove the type of toxins found in the groundwater from the Mead site, she said. Sophisticated testing for a vast array of chemicals would have to be conducted 24 hours a day, seven days a week by qualified personnel, and that cost would be prohibitive.

"In addition, because safe drinking water standards have not even been developed for many of these toxins, we don't know whether treatment by MUD will actually render the water safe to drink," Maas said.

What Is Wal-Mart Afraid of?

The Employee Free Choice Act

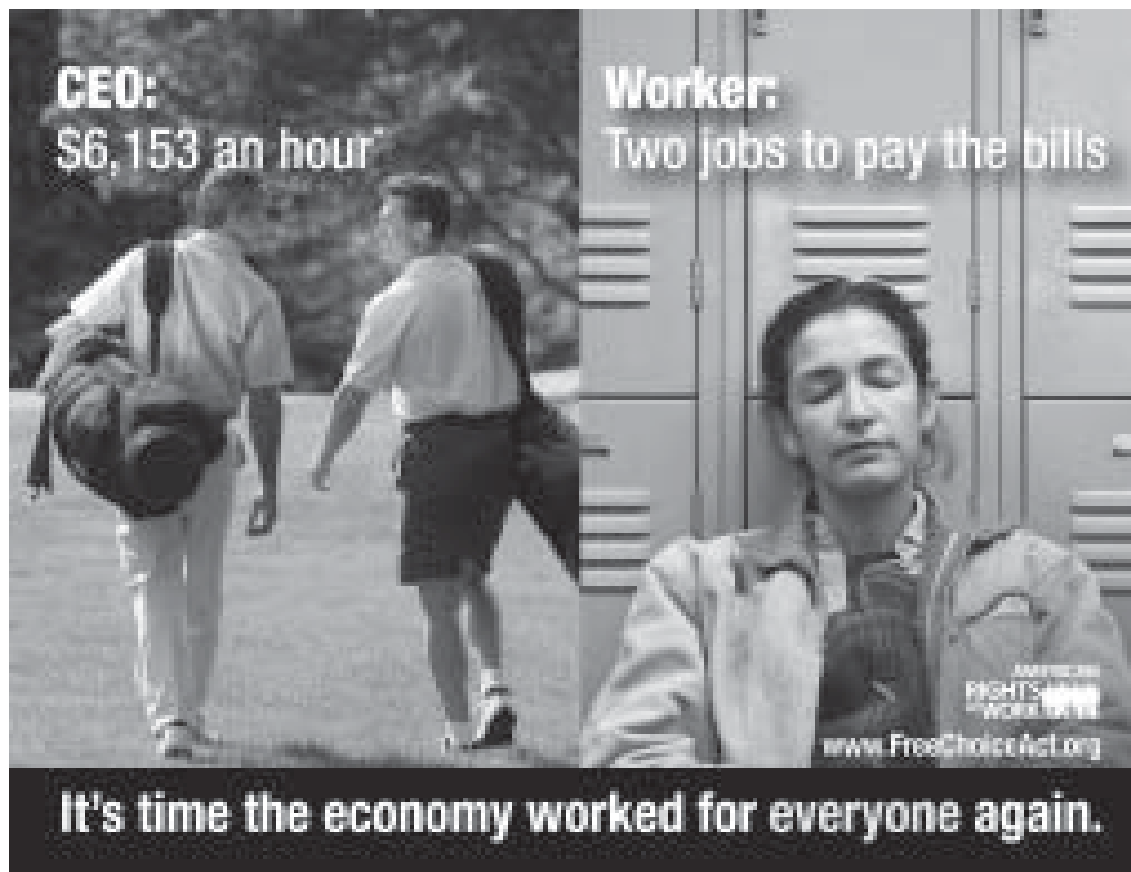
by Mary Beth Maxwell
Executive Director
American Rights at Work

It's hard these days to get outraged about the latest thing Wal-Mart does wrong. The world's largest corporation has a reputation for being the biggest and the baddest of them all. Recently, however, *The Wall-Street Journal* filed a disturbing report saying that Wal-Mart is organizing its store supervisors against Democrats and other pro-worker candidates. According to the *Journal*, Wal-Mart is warning that if Democrats win power in November, they'll likely change federal law to make it easier for workers to form unions at companies—including Wal-Mart.

One worker told the *Journal*: "The meeting leader said, 'I am not telling you how to vote, but if the Democrats win, this bill will pass and you won't have a vote on whether you want a union,'" said a Wal-Mart customer-service supervisor from Missouri. "I am not a stupid person. They were telling me how to vote," she said.

What, exactly, has Wal-Mart so afraid that it's telling its workers how to vote? The Employee Free Choice Act—federal legislation that would help level the playing field to give workers the freedom to choose to join a union, so they can earn better wages and benefits and have greater opportunity toward achieving the American Dream.

The Employee Free Choice Act will reform our obsolete federal labor law system, one that is slanted heavily in favor of employers and against workers. It will give employees a fair and direct path to form unions through majority sign-up, a process where a union is recognized when the majority of employees in a workplace sign authorization cards demonstrating their desire to belong to one. It will put the choice of how to form a union back where it belongs—back in the hands of workers. For decades, that choice has rested only with em-



The Employee Free Choice Act

- 1. Helps America's working families improve their standard of living.** Workers in unions earn 30 percent higher wages and are 59 percent more likely to have employer-provided health insurance.
- 2. Fixes a broken system that gives corporations far too much power.** When workers try and organize, they are often harassed and intimidated; 25 percent of companies unlawfully fire pro-union workers.
- 3. Restores fairness and the promise of the American Dream,** with a robust middle class, economic growth, and shared prosperity.

www.FreeChoiceAct.org

ployers like Wal-Mart.

Wal-Mart and other anti-union corporations have learned how to manipulate the existing law to undermine the union organizing process. That's why while 53 percent of workers today would like to have a union in their workplace, only 12 percent do because of the great and often illegal tactics employers use to prevent workers from standing up for themselves. Every day across the United States, employers take advantage of our toothless and weakly-enforced labor laws to harass, intimidate, and retaliate against workers

who try to exercise their legal right to form unions. A study by researchers from the University of Illinois found that during organizing campaigns, 91 percent of employers force employees to attend one-on-one anti-union meetings with their supervisors, 49 percent of employers threaten to close a worksite, and 30 percent of employers illegally fire pro-union workers. The facts speak for themselves: the current union organizing process is broken.

For years, Wal-Mart has been intimidating and harassing its workers who want to form unions. Now

they've adapted their union-busting tactics to influence our federal election system. Wal-Mart seems to be willing to break federal election law in order to stop their employees and all of America's workers from having a fair shot at the American Dream.

As inflation climbs and wages remain stagnant, it is clear that we need an economy that benefits all Americans again. Workers in unions earn 30 percent higher wages on average, and are 59 percent more likely to have employer-

covered health care. As a critical component of addressing this economic squeeze, we must reform our obsolete labor law system which too often prevents workers from joining a union if they so choose.

The path toward economic opportunity shouldn't be so hard, so long, or so unfair. That's why this reform is so critical. Not only has the labor community come together to make this a top legislative priority, but since the bill is seen as a critical step toward helping workers improve their economic standing, political momentum is building throughout the progressive community. Allies like the NAACP and the National Organization for Women support the legislation because it will give workers a fair, simple and direct method for organizing unions, one that shields employees from unjust retaliation and barriers.

Since being introduced in Congress, a multi-million dollar campaign has been waged against the Employee Free Choice Act to misinform the public and elected officials of the bill's merits. Despite what Wal-Mart, anti-union front groups and other special interest opposition say, we need to reform our federal labor laws now.

The Employee Free Choice Act has widespread public support and will give workers a stronger voice in matters that affect their livelihoods and, ultimately, all of our future. It is now more important than ever that we have both a pro-worker majority in Congress and a president who will overcome special interest opposition and make the Employee Free Choice Act a reality.

Please thank Senator Ben Nelson for looking out for Nebraska workers and supporting the Employee Free Choice Act. Call his office at 402-391-3411, or sign on to pledge your support for the bill at www.FreeChoiceAct.org.

Notes from the Green Economics Conference in Oxford, U.K.

by Hendrik Van den Berg
Professor of Economics, UNL

Last winter, when I began revising my textbook on *Economic Growth and Development*, I had to decide between simply updating the material from the first edition or completely rewriting the book to give readers a fully holistic, green perspective of economic growth. It was a choice, essentially, between the status quo and revolution.

Given the gravity of the environmental, economic and political problems facing our country, I was strongly leaning toward an editorial revolution. But being an economist, I was also keenly aware of the risks that accompany revolutions. The solution to uncertainty being more information, I traveled to Oxford, England in July to attend the “Annual Conference of the Green Economics Institute.”

For three days, I listened to presentations, participated in discussions, and presented my ideas on how humanity can achieve sustainable or ‘green’ economic growth. I heard zoologists explain how species depletion is already so far along that it would take tens of thousands of years to regain the diversity of plants and animals that we had on earth just 200 years ago. A physicist and member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (the organization that shared the Nobel Peace Prize with Al Gore) presented even more convincing evidence linking human activity to global warming. A climatologist was close to tears as he explained in great detail why the persistence of climate change meant that time is running out for dealing with global warming. Another scientist and member of the team that prepared the widely read “Stern Report” pointed out that mitigating global warming requires that we reduce carbon emissions by 50 to 70 percent by 2050, when there will be about 9 billion people on earth. The message from the



Hank and his wife Barbara stopping for a rest during their hike in the Scottish Highlands. To our knowledge, this is the first time anyone wearing a Nebraskans for Peace T-shirt has been photographed atop these storied peaks of yore.

broad-ranging papers presented over the three days was clear and consistent: Our current lifestyles are simply not sustainable.

But can we act soon enough to avoid self-destruction? A realistic answer to this question was provided in another talk by a French sociologist who was also an elected Green Party member of the Paris City Council. She drew on the work of the noted French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu in describing the difficulties she faced as a female politician from a minority party. Indirectly, she provided insight into why it is so difficult to deal effectively with our environmental problems.

Bourdieu is well known for his research on how *culture*—our system of beliefs and perceptions—legitimizes and solidifies our social, political, and economic structures.

Because culture perpetuates the explicit and implicit power relations built into our social hierarchies, it is a source of overwhelming oppression. Bourdieu calls culture’s oppression *symbolic violence*, because it comes in the form of a frown or an approving smile by our parents, the nods or derision of our friends, and a lifetime of lectures, sermons, advertisements, rituals and art.

It is very difficult to change culture because, not only do those who culture gives a special place in society support it, those who are oppressed by the culturally defined power structure also help to perpetuate that same culture. For example, we may know that ignoring global warming is not in our long-run interest, but because making fun of that ‘treehugger’ Al Gore still solicits approving smiles and taking the bus does not, we don’t bring up the Stern Report with any-

one except a few trusted friends and we keep driving our cars. Because human beings are psychologically hard-wired to seek the approval of their fellow beings and,

It is very difficult to change culture because, not only do those who culture gives a special place in society support it, those who are oppressed by the culturally defined power structure also help to perpetuate that same culture.

at the same time, are fearful of exclusion and deprivation, we are susceptible to the symbolic violence that nudges us to act contrary to our own interests.

It takes overwhelming evidence before most people recog-

nize the true consequences of their culturally prescribed actions. In the case of global warming, however, the consequences of today’s actions will not become apparent to most people for many years to come. And when the overwhelming consequences do appear, it will be too late to do anything about it. In terms of working for social change, this is clearly an unfair match-up: scientific predictions of possible future disasters do not stand a chance against today’s consumer culture. Abstract notions about pending threats tend to get drowned out by the power of the concrete present.

Nebraskans for Peace understands very well how difficult it is to go up against a dominant culture. Advocating for peace in the American culture of war and violence is often discouraging. (Witness the widespread support—even pride—Nebraskans exhibit over StratCom.) Global warming though—with its ‘lag effect’ in terms of seeing the consequences of our actions—presents us with an even more difficult challenge.

Our organization’s active focus on the environment as a source of danger, conflict and violence is keeping with our principles and exactly what we need to be doing. Given the urgency of the global

warming threat, American society really needs a revolution in its thinking on the environment.

The critical question is: how much will our cultural assumptions and biases stand in the way of our working toward a solution?

What's HOT in Global Warming?

by Professor Bruce E. Johansen

Hansen Battles Climatic Self-deception Worldwide

During June and July, 2008, Jim Hansen of NASA's Goddard Institute traveled to Europe and Japan and found a "sobering degree of self-deception in countries that are among the best-educated on climate change." Hansen believes that even the most advanced governments have not realized the urgency of the situation and have placed their bets on market-driven solutions such as carbon-emissions ("cap-and-trade") solutions. In the meantime, even Germany, Great Britain and Japan—all countries that he visited—are still building coal-fired power plants without adequate technology to remove polluting carbon dioxide from their effluent.

In Germany, during June, Hansen spoke with Minister of the Environment, Sigmar Gabriel. After the meeting, in a diplomatic way, Hansen said that Gabriel and other German officials (who have been avid advocates of curtailing emissions in a general sense) just didn't get the point. "I am grateful for Minister Gabriel's generosity with his time, and I have no doubt about his sincerity in dealing with climate change," Hansen said. "However, we did not come to a common understanding about... the stark policy implication of the data, [that] I assert, [creates an] urgency for a moratorium on coal-fired power plants... In effect we agreed to disagree, as we were both trying to be cordial."

In Great Britain, Hansen was dealt a similar hand by officials who maintained that emissions trading would bring greenhouse gas emissions back into a safe range. In Japan, the prime minister's representatives declined to accept his letter of introduction until they realized that it was all over the Tokyo

newspapers. They, too, professed faith in cap-and-trade. Replied Hansen: "Emissions trading is such an unutterably bogus concept that we should toss it on the slagheap right off the bat. It is a shell game that allows corporations to buy the right to pollute."

Heading to an Ice-Free World

Hansen's letter, which also has been presented to several state governors in the United States, argues that "If CO2 emissions from coal were phased out over the period 2010-2030, and if use of unconventional fossil fuels (tar shale, tar sands) remained negligible, atmospheric CO2 would peak at 400-425 parts per million. In that case, improved forestry and agricultural practices, especially reforestation, could get atmospheric CO2 back beneath 350 ppm within a century or less. During the overshoot phase we might hope that ocean and ice sheet inertia may keep climate impacts tolerable, avoiding the most disastrous effects."

"However," continues Hansen, "If coal use continues or expands (as it is now) CO2 will be headed to the 500-600 ppm range... we will hand our children a planet that has entered a long chaotic transient period with climate changes out of their control, as the planet heads inexorably toward an ice-free state."

Furthermore, Hansen is telling all heads of government: "The danger of carbon caps and percent-reduction goals is that they allow self-deception, a pretense that the climate problem is being solved. Unless they are accompanied by phase-out of coal emissions, they have practically no im-

act on climate change." The European Union has required that new coal plants be "carbon-capture ready," but the technology is not yet available. Such a requirement without the technology, says Hansen, is "sobering self-deception."

Coal-fired plants can be made unnecessary, said Hansen, by investment in an electricity grid that

leaks less power (as much as half our power is lost in transmission), along with increasing use of wind and solar power in a crssh program resembling the "Manhattan Project" during World War II.

"Emissions trading is such an unutterably bogus concept that we should toss it on the slagheap right off the bat. It is a shell game that allows corporations to buy the right to pollute."

—James Hansen

leaks less power (as much as half our power is lost in transmission), along with increasing use of wind and solar power in a crssh program resembling the "Manhattan Project" during World War II.

Climatic Trash Talkers

Meanwhile, back in the United States, Jim Hansen deals with the trash talkers. He gave a speech to the National Press Club June 23, 2008, which—following copious press attention—brought him hundreds of critical-to-nasty e-mails. While a few such messages a day is not uncommon for him, Hansen sensed something organized here.

Most of the e-mailers rehearsed a familiar contrarian mantra, spiced with a generous helping of personal attacks on Hansen

himself. Most insisted that the sun is the primary cause of climate change, with a large number convinced that a new ice age is right around the geophysical corner. Many of the messages asserted that the Earth is entering an ice age, with the temperature in 2008 already having lost all of the warming of the past several decades. Hansen's calculations indi-

cate that the main cause of our brief recent cooling is a La Nina episode in the Pacific Ocean.

By mid-2008, however, the La Nina was ending, tropical temperatures have returned nearly to average, after which a new El Nino episode may propel them to or past recent high levels during the next few years. "The low temperatures in the first half of 2008 lead us to estimate that the mean 2008 global temperature will be perhaps in the range about 10th to 15th warmest year in our record," Hansen said.

The contrarians are not having of this, as they 'swift-boat' Hansen mercilessly. One e-mail to him virtually shouted: "THE SUN IS GOING OUT!" The sun does have a role, but the contrarians

overplay it. The sun is inactive at the present, at a minimum of the normal roughly 11-year solar cycle. Thus, if the sun remains "out" (i.e., stuck for a long period in the current solar minimum), it can offset only about seven years of CO2 increase, Hansen said.

One lengthy email to Hansen was signed "John Doe, Texas." It read, in part: "What kind of kindergarten fairy land are you living in, Jimmy?... I've been doing my level best for the last 2 years to tell people what a fraud you and your ilk are... I've also been telling people that you were basically bribed to lie... and that you don't even have a degree in climatology... so your biggest enemy is ME, buddy boy... not the oil companies... I am completely impartial and have no economic stake in the argument one way or the other... which gives me a lot more credibility than [sic] you... So you just keep sounding off like some closet Hitler and spewing your lies... I will continue to trash your professional reputation and your pretended manhood... I always keep my word when dealing with incipient [sic] nazis like you... I will destroy you, Jimmy... do not doubt it... the science and the facts are on my side."

No one said that defending the Earth against some members of the human race would be easy.

SOURCE: Hansen, James E. "Trip Report." August 5, 2008. www.columbia.edu/~jeh1/mailings/20080804_TripReport.pdf

Bruce E. Johansen is the Frederick W. Kayser Professor of Communication at the University of Nebraska-Omaha and author of The Global Warming Combat Manual (Greenwood Press, 2008).

Student Peacemakers Report from Colombia & Palestine

Two Lincoln women participated in short-term Christian Peacemaker Team (www.cpt.org) delegations this summer.

Amanda Balzer is a graduate student at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln where she studies political science.

Hannah Breckbill is a mathematics major at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota. Both are members of First Mennonite Church, Lincoln.

Report from Colombia by Amanda Balzer

Beautiful country. Hospitable people. Tragic circumstances. These six words comprise my ‘short answer’ when asked, “How was your trip to Colombia?”

International journeys of any kind are difficult to summarize, encapsulate or sound bite. But a 14-day, Christian Peacemaker Team delegation to the violence-riddled, political paradox that is Colombia? Where do I begin?

Those who follow the situation there know that illegal armed groups and the Colombian military have been engaged in violence for decades. We know that 3 million Colombians have been internally displaced by this violence—a displacement rate second in the world only to Sudan. We know that the United States government provides hundreds of millions of dollars to fund *Plan Colombia*. We know that 80 percent of the world’s union leader assassinations occur on Colombian soil. We know that more than half of all Colombians earn less than \$2 per day.

I comprehended these facts before the July 16-29 delegation, but the facts formed faces, developed names and revealed families as I listened to the stories on our journey. The delegation began in Bogotá as

we met with an educator, union leader and human rights lawyer who provided a helpful background, general information and personal accounts attesting the truth of the above facts. Despite

darkness of these tragic circumstances, each individual bore a light of hope—a light toward a better future, an end to the violence and the beginning of restoration.



Amanda Balzer visits with children of small-scale miners in the San Lucas Mountains of Colombia

assassination attempts, forced displacement and constant threats, these individuals relentlessly work for justice.

One leader said, “If we don’t fight these systems that feed the violence, we will never have peace in this country. We’re fighting for the end of hunger, that children have access to health care, that the campesinos have their land, and corporations pay a just salary. Hopefully, we can live in peace, respect our neighbor, and live together in harmony.”

Then we traveled north to Barrancabermeja, the home base for the full-time Christian Peacemaker Team. We dialogued with leaders of CPT’s partner organizations, which are focused on community building, economic development, human rights abuse reporting and other justice-related efforts. We heard more stories of displacement, violence and poverty. In the

Our journey peaked with a visit to a small mining community in the San Lucas Mountains where we listened to the plight of small-scale miners, struggling to maintain their livelihood and, at times, even their lives. The current mining code, written by an attorney for a multi-national corporation, essentially excludes small-scale operations from competing with large companies. Miners who have organized to oppose these efforts have been threatened, detained and killed. Though they have experienced much tragedy and strife, the miners and their families exhibited a spirit of joy and hospitality as they welcomed us to “the most beautiful place on earth.”

To wrap up our trip and give voice to the stories we heard, the delegation met with Colombian and U.S. government officials and conducted a direct action in Bogotá to show support for small-scale miners.

Again and again, I was struck by the courage, persever-

ance and sense of hope demonstrated by the Colombian people, just as I realized the grave responsibility I possess as an American citizen. By educating others about the Colombian situation and pressuring our government to alter its foreign policy, we have an opportunity to save and improve lives. Specifically, we need to understand how the pending Free Trade agreement with Colombia will affect its people and economy, and if the United States should shift or altogether discontinue *Plan Colombia* funds.

To learn more about the mining situation, check out *The Profits of Extermination: How U.S. Corporate Power is Destroying Colombia* by Francisco Ramirez Cuellar. For more information on Colombia visit www.usofficeoncolombia.com.

Report from Palestine by Hannah Breckbill

When I signed on to the Christian Peacemaker Teams

Palestine delegation, I knew that Israel/Palestine is one of the most longstanding and complicated conflict situations in the world. Somehow this appealed to me—to work at solving the biggest problem I could conceive of. I wanted to understand this conflict from the ground up and to understand the emotions rather than just the facts. But most importantly I wanted to get away from my privileged bubble, where I am free to ignore the hurt and injustice that I indirectly contribute to every day.

There are so many issues in Palestine that I have no idea where to begin. There are the house demolitions, so humiliating for fathers who have built them with their own hands. There are the Israeli settlements, illegal under international law. There are the checkpoints, designed by their arbitrariness to enforce the Israeli military’s control over the lives of Palestinians. There is the military, destroying young Israelis’ consciences, telling them to obey their commanders and to dehumanize Palestinians. There



Hannah Breckbill (center) with CPT delegation at a roadblock near Hebron. Of this picture Hannah writes, “No cars were allowed in or out of Hebron, so we had to walk several miles with all of our stuff.

An hour before we got there, a woman had given birth at the roadblock because they wouldn’t let her out to go to the hospital. She had Israeli soldiers as midwives!”

are the refugees—three quarters of all Palestinians—who were forced out of their homes in 1948 (90 percent of which remain unoccupied by Israelis) and who long to return, as is their right under international law. There is Gaza, the largest prison in the world with the highest population density, where no one is allowed in or out, where the air and water are quickly becoming toxic. There is the attempt by Israel to turn the West Bank into another Gaza, partitioning it into smaller and smaller cantons that are harder and harder to move between. There is the wall.

But even with all these topics of conversation, as we sat in the house of a Palestinian named Issa, he began to speak of his time working in the United States. He worked as a truck driver for a cross-country route, and every time he went through Arizona, he was stopped because of the color of his skin. It was a clear parallel to his situation in Palestine, where he is also stopped daily because of his appearance. Issa showed us that if we were not already implicated in the Israel/Palestinian conflict by our tax dollars that sponsor that oppression, we are at least guilty of our society's tacit tolerance of racism. Issa clearly identified us as the powerful, the privileged. It is our responsibility to act, because we have voices more likely to be heard in powerful circles than voices like his. And as his experiences in Arizona demonstrated, it is not only the Palestinian issue that we must act on. The world is full of attitudes that need changing, and maybe the best place to start is within our own country, within our own communities, within our own selves.

I firmly oppose Israel's policies and will do everything possible to expose the damning facts. But, as Issa's story made me realize, there are problems that I can deal with much more concretely, right here, right now.

Speaking Appearances

Balzer and Breckbill are available for public appearances. Contact Rev. David Orr for more information: 402-467-1526, David@FMCLincoln.org.

Upcoming Lincoln appearances:

- Sunday, September 7, 10:45 a.m. - First Mennonite Church, 7300 Holdrege St.
- Sunday, September 7, 7:00 p.m. - First Unitarian Church, 6300 A St.
- Monday, September 8, 7:00 p.m. - University of Nebraska Union (sponsored by UNL NFP)
- Friday, September 12, 12:00 p.m. First Presbyterian Church, 840 S. 17th St. - Those interested in participating in CPT are invited. Bring a brownbag lunch.
- Saturday, September 13, 8:00 a.m. - Interobang?!, KZUM 89.3 FM

Alex Svoboda One Year Later

by Matthew Gregory

Last month marked the one-year anniversary of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) solidarity march in North Providence, Rhode Island. On August 11, 2007, 36 IWW members and supporters marched on a local chain restaurant, Jackie's Galaxie. The Providence IWW accused Jackie's of openly and knowingly supporting the Queens, New York-based HWH/Dragonland, a dry goods supplier notorious for its slave labor conditions of 100 hours per week, sub-minimum wages and no overtime benefits.

En route to Jackie's Galaxie, the demonstrators were cordoned onto the sidewalk by the North Providence Police, who then began to shove and manhandle the demonstrators.

The situation escalated when officers went after Providence IWW member and former Nebraskans for Peace member Alexandra Svoboda. Three officers assaulted her simultaneously, causing the severe dislocation of her knee, which bent her leg in the wrong direction. The gruesome photos of the police assault sent shock waves through Rhode Island and Nebraska. It didn't stop with Alex helplessly pinned to the ground, as officers pepper-sprayed other demonstrators concerned about Alex, and arrested Jason Friedmutter, also a Providence IWW member.

Alex ultimately sustained a torn popliteal artery in her knee, a detached fibula, multiple torn ligaments, tears in both menisci and nerve damage. Doctors stated that if the surgery hadn't gone as well as it did, plans for amputation would have ensued.

To add insult to injury, the City of North Providence charged Alex with three felony counts of assaulting an officer, one count of resisting arrest and one count of disorderly conduct, although the felony charges have been reduced to misdemeanors. Disturbingly, the officers who brutalized Alex are still on active duty today.

Despite the police attack, the march continued and the Providence IWW confronted owner Jackie Kho with members of the media present. Victory came a few weeks later when Jackie's Galaxie

agreed to drop HWH/Dragonland for good, and eventually four more restaurants dropped HWH as their supplier.

I caught up with Alex by phone at her home in Providence, where she lives in a house with ten other people, who have been more than accommodating to her situation. Immediately after her injury, she was moved from the third floor to the ground floor for easier access, and everyone has continued to help out ever since. She told me she was pleased with the turnout of rallies that took place Sunday August 10 and Monday the 11th in Rhode Island. They were attended by Wobblies from around the region as well as by local members of the community, and they garnered a fair amount of media coverage.

From there, I moved on to her medical condition. Alex has undergone hundreds of hours of physical therapy and rehabilitation and has successfully regained strength in her leg, leading to her first bike ride in ten months. She now rides on a regular basis four to five times a week on an adult tricycle. But it hasn't been all smooth sailing. Doctors said her recovery has been "fantastic" but it is a learning process both for the doctors and for Alex. "There is a frustrating lack of knowledge of my injuries since no one has dealt with this," she said. This has sometimes led to a week-by-week prognosis as her rehabilitation progresses. A date to surgi-

cally repair her knee has not yet been set, pending rehab and nerve regeneration.

I sensed less optimism when I broached the subject of her charges and the trial. Jason, her co-defendant, has obtained a public defender, and their cases have been moved to RI Superior Court for a more expedient trial. At the time of writing, Alex and Jason have a pre-trial conference scheduled for August 28, and the actual trial will be sometime in early 2009. This has the potential to drag out for many more months and possibly years, but Alex and her supporters are unwavering in their call for all charges to be dropped.

Towards the end of our conversation, I asked her if she had any reflections on the last year. She had this to say: "My friends, going to out to Whiteclay, Nebraska, and being a member of Nebraskans for Peace influenced the person I am today and are responsible for the battles I wage. I've been in contact with a man in Florida who heard about my case and it's inspired him to come back fighting stronger, and to stand up for the injustices of the world. I am happy to pass along the inspiration that I received." And her final thoughts: "When the incident in Rhode Island happened, there was a tremendous outpouring of support from Nebraska, which didn't surprise me in the least. Nebraskans take care of their own."

Help Alex by Writing Rhode Island's Attorney General

Patrick Lynch
Office of the Attorney General, RI
150 S. Main St.
Providence, RI 02903
401-274-4400

The City of North Providence should right the wrongs and injustices done to Alexandra Svoboda and Jason Friedmutter. All charges against Alexandra Svoboda and Jason Friedmutter should be dropped in full.

*Sincerely,
Your Name, Address and Phone/Email*

[Alex and her codefendant are going to need financial help to win their cases. For more information, and to make a donation, contact Matt Gregory at the NFP State Office, 402-475-4620 or nfpstate@nebraskansforpeace.org.]

Politician Contacts

The White House
Washington, DC 20500
Comment Line: 202-456-1111
202-456-1414
202-456-2993 (FAX)
president@whitehouse.gov

Sen. Chuck Hagel
248 Russell Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510
202-224-4224
202-224-5213 (FAX)
402-476-1400 (Lincoln)
402-758-8981 (Omaha)
308-632-6032 (Scottsbluff)
hagel.senate.gov

Sen. Ben Nelson
720 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510
202-224-6551
202-228-0012 (FAX)
402-391-3411 (Omaha)
402-441-4600 (Lincoln)
bennelson.senate.gov

Rep. Jeff Fortenberry, District 1
1517 Longworth House Office Bldg.
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202-225-4806
402-438-1598 (Lincoln)
house.gov/fortenberry

Rep. Lee Terry, District 2
1524 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515
202-225-4155
202-226-5452 (FAX)
402-397-9944 (Omaha)
leeterry.house.gov

Rep. Adrian Smith, District 3
503 Cannon House Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515
202-225-6435
202-225-0207 (FAX)
888-ADRIAN7 (Toll Free)
adriansmith.house.gov

Capitol Hill Switchboard
202-224-3121

State Capitol Switchboard
402-471-2311

State Senator, District #
State Capitol
PO Box 94604
Lincoln, NE 68509-4604

Governor Dave Heineman
PO Box 94848
Lincoln, NE 68509-4848
402-471-2244
402-471-6031 (FAX)
gov.state.ne.us



Pictured from left to right: Ruth Thone, Honoree Nan Graf, and Nan's daughter Katie.

Nan Graf Honored

Long-time Peace & Justice activist Nan Graf was honored as the Alternatives to the Military 2008 peacemaker of the year at the group's annual potluck this past July.

Along with her dear friends Lela Shanks and Leoloa Bullock, the retired Nebraska Wesleyan University professor has been a mainstay for decades of "Nebraskans for Justice," the advocacy group working for the exoneration Ed Poindexter and Mondo we Langa. Deemed political prisoners by Amnesty International, Poindexter and we Langa have been incarcerated for 38 years for the murder of Omaha Police Officer Larry Minard, a crime they have both stalwartly denied committing.

In accepting the award, Graf quoted Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s comment that "We must learn to live together or perish." She also read a statement from Ed Poindexter, which she said spoke of the hard-won wisdom he had gained from his decades in prison: "Patient perseverance is a result of serious commitment and growing self-confidence." Finally, she offered these words from the Dalai Lama: "With genuine compassion, we not only feel the pains and suffering of others, but we also have a feeling of determination to overcome that suffering."

Graf served on the board of Nebraskans Against the Death Penalty for 18 years, was

first recruited to get involved with Nebraskans for Peace by the organization's now-deceased legendary State Coordinator Betty Olson, has worked for countless other Peace & Justice causes, and regularly teaches yoga.

This year's celebration, which drew 60 dedicated peacemakers and justice workers, also served as a farewell to Margaret Vrana, who moved to Boulder, Colorado the end of July. She will live in Boulder with her partner, who she met at a Buddhist retreat. In September, they will travel to Bhutan and Nepal for several weeks, Margaret staying on an extra ten days in Nepal and Thailand. One person remarked that, with Margaret's profound attention to environmental issues, she leaves no carbon footprint on the earth, but she does leave deep love in the hearts of her fellow Peace & Justice activists.

Just as its name indicates, Alternatives to the Military regularly leaflets, tables, provides information to media and counseling centers, and presents class discussions proposing alternatives to military service. Its committee members include: Nye Bond and Ruth Thone, co-chairs, LaRoy Seaver, Ebb Munden, Jim McChesney, Marj Manglitz, Marge Schlitt, Nina Williamson, Dwight Ganzel, Joyce Sturdy, and new members Bob Boyce and Michael Baker.

— Ruth Thone

NEXUS Music & Arts Festival to Benefit NFP & KZUM

Lincoln's live music scene is changing. Music enthusiasts no longer need to seek refuge in Omaha or out-of-state in order to hear a wide variety of original and alternative music. These days, events that showcase innovative musical styles occur weekly across our city. Within Lincoln's burgeoning live music scene, one field stands above the rest in terms of improvement, growth, and innovation. Local musicians who incorporate electronic-based instrumentation into their live shows are not only playing more often in the area, they also continue to produce live music that is exciting for the audience to both hear and watch. Local electronica act, Somasphere, is out to prove just that with the NEXUS Electronic Music and Arts Festival at Box Awesome in Lincoln's Haymarket district September 26-27, 2008. Utilizing numerous community organizations and volunteers, NEXUS is a socially conscious event that will inspire patrons to get involved in their community. Last year, over 350 people attended the inaugural NEXUS, which hosted a food drive for the Lincoln Food Bank. This year's event is sure to be just as unique and progressive with membership drives and fundraisers for both Nebraskans for Peace and KZUM, Nebraska's only community radio station. For art enthusiasts, NEXUS will provide unparalleled opportunities to both view and create. Painting, jewelry-making, fire-poi, hand percussion, and hooping demonstrations will occur throughout the weekend. In addition, patrons can become part of the show with creative opportunities like community art projects, a break-dancing competition, and costume contests. The focus of this event is artistic expression of all forms and the crowds will gather each night to hear Lincoln's most innovative and original electronic music. Come to NEXUS to get involved, become inspired, and dance until you drop!

- Confirmed artists include: Somasphere (both nights), Dean Armband, DJ Spence, DJ Blac, Miss Knotty, Sauce, Inflect, 1di0m, Dr. Zhivago, Cynapze, Bentone, Curtis.the.Destroyer, Auditory Elements, and more TBA!!!
- Presale tickets available in September at Box Awesome (801 'O' St) and Spindle Records (122 N 14th St)
- Presale Tickets - \$6 or 2-Day Pass for \$10

For more information, contact:
Troy Lieberth, Somasphere Music
1112 S 32nd Street, Lincoln, NE 68510
Phone: 308-440-6913
Email: somasphere@gmail.com
www.myspace.com/somasphere

Give the Gift of Peace
donate to the
Nebraska Peace Foundation

	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>NOW SHOWING</td> </tr> <tr> <td>COMING SOON</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ABOUT THE ROSS</td> </tr> <tr> <td>MEMBERSHIP</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SPONSORS</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FILM RESOURCES</td> </tr> <tr> <td>CONTACT US</td> </tr> </table>	NOW SHOWING	COMING SOON	ABOUT THE ROSS	MEMBERSHIP	SPONSORS	FILM RESOURCES	CONTACT US	<p>COMING SOON</p> <p>THE METROPOLITAN OPERA HD LIVE September 2008 - May 2009 The Met's groundbreaking series of live, high-definition performance transmissions to movie theaters around the world expands in its third season. To meet increasing global demand, The Met: Live in HD will present 11 transmissions in 2008-09, up from eight. The HD productions will be seen in almost 800 venues and a number of new countries in South America and Europe are joining the network this season. Don't miss the chance to experience the Met live at your local movie theater! Check the website for more information.</p>
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<p>ADMISSION:</p> <p>\$8.00 GENERAL</p>	<p>8.29 - 9.11 THE ANIMATION SHOW YEAR FOUR</p> <p>"This year we tried to focus more on comedy," Judge wrote in an e-mail. "This tour is like the midnight shows I loved to watch [at the International Tournees of Animation] with a good mix of comedy and shorts that are visually amazing to look at on the big screen."</p>								
<p>\$6.00 ARTISTE (BEFORE 6 PM)</p>	<p>9.12 - 9.25 THE LAST MISTRESS</p> <p>THE LAST MISTRESS is a lush period piece that nonetheless has a universal, modern message, and it makes many daring statements about love, lust, and romance.</p>								
<p>\$6.00 MEMBERS OF THE FRIENDS OF THE MIDWAY, STUDENTS, SENIOR CITIZENS</p>	<p>9.12 - 9.25 FROZEN RIVER</p> <p>FROZEN RIVER is ultimately about the strength that resides in family and the way hope in a dire situation can be uncovered by courage and trust.</p>								
<p>\$5.00 ARTISTE FOR THE FRIENDS OF THE MIDWAY (BEFORE 6 PM), AND CHILDREN (ALL TIMES)</p> <p>See Office Open to All Members Before Showtimes</p>	<p>9.26 - 10.9 TELL NO ONE</p> <p>Eight years after the heinous murder of his wife, Doctor Alex Beck receives an ominous email from an unknown source. The message contains a video image of Alex's thought-to-be dead wife in real time.</p>								
<p>LOCATION:</p> <p>315 N. 13 STREET LINCOLN, NEBRASKA</p>									
<p>www.theross.org</p>									

Putting Bullies Out of Business

Focus of September 13 Conference

Nebraskans for Peace will join student organizations at Nebraska Wesleyan University for a one-day conference on bullying and parent involvement Saturday, September 13 from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm. MOSAIC (Meeting of Students Addressing Inter-Cultural Concerns) and the NWU Women's Resource Center will co-sponsor the event intended to raise awareness among parents and other Nebraskans about the immediate and long-term effects of bullying in their communities, and how they can work with schools to reduce instances of bullying.

Studies show that bullying, including verbal and physical behaviors, may be the most prevalent type of school violence and is associated with negative neighborhood climate. Recent estimates of bullying in the United States suggest that 30 percent of students are involved in frequent bullying. However, studies conducted in the Midwest show prevalence rates much higher at 65 percent.

Last spring the Nebraska Legislature passed a bill (LB 205) sponsored by Sen. Gwen Howard of Omaha that requires all school districts to have anti-bullying policies. The bill itself does not specify actions that must be taken by districts, aside from having a policy in place. "In order to ensure that LB 205 is worth the paper it is written on, it will be critical that parents, guardians, and other community

members understand the legislation and get involved," said NFP event co-organizer Josh Cramer.

Wesleyan student and MOSAIC leader Meera Bhardwaj explained the need for the conference. "This is about fighting root causes of social problems. We know conflict will arise in schools and we need to find nonviolent ways to address these problems. Hopefully, increasing parent involvement will help school administrators and teachers work to solve these problems."

Workshops at the all-day conference will include information on parent involvement, women's rights issues, violence in minority communities, and a session on bullying in America presented by leading researchers from the University of Nebraska. Other presenters include Lincoln Public Schools educator Lynn Walasky, LPS bi-lingual liaison Oscar Rios, Jim Schiefelbein of the TeamMates Mentoring Program, and a representative from the Lincoln NAACP.

A donation of \$5 is suggested to help defray the cost of speakers and morning coffee and rolls. Lunch is on your own. To register for the conference, please call or email the NFP office, or contact event organizers Jake Hoy-Elswick (jake.hoyelswick@gmail.com) or Joshua Cramer (jrcramer@gmail.com).

Democracy Now!

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BULLETIN BOARD

- September 17** Angela Davis speaks on the we Langa & Poindexter Cases; Malone Community Center, 2032 U Street, 7-9 p.m.; Free, public welcome
- September 26-27** NEXUS Music and Arts Festival Benefit for NFP & KZUM at Box Awesome in Lincoln's Haymarket district (see page 11 for details).
- October 7-9** StratCom Protest at the "Strategic Space and Defense 2008 Conference" in Omaha.
- October 18** 2008 Annual Peace Conference in Lincoln.

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 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. weekdays.



Speaking Our Peace

Georgia on My Mind

by Paul Olson, NFP President

Moldova, adjacent to the Ukraine and near Russia, is the poorest county in Europe, the first part of the old Soviet Union to break off. In 1996, I was asked to lecture there for several weeks on sustainable agriculture, rural education and community development. The country had been cut off from fossil fuels, including gasoline for tractors and chemical fertilizers. It was not an easy ride.

The country had no tradition of community development. Stalinist top-down schemes still operated, though some freedoms appeared and some hopefulness. The people were wonderful.

Before my wife Betty and I went, we wrote our wills. Threats of civil war supported by the Russians existed. We were afraid. The partly Russian-in-population Moldova across the Dneister River still housed the old 14th Soviet army, the Transdnester Operative Group that had warred with Moldova proper in the early '90s and could again. Travel agencies warned (and still warn) tourists against the Transdnester. We thought that we might not live through the visit.

When we got there, we saw a recently independent Moldova where Russians and Soviets had thrown their weight around for a long time. For example, the 1920 Soviet Army took Odessa, the wonderful Black Sea port that Moldovans felt to be part of their province, Bessarabia, and made it Ukrainian. In the '30s and '50s, Stalin further shrunk Moldova-Bessarabia around Odessa. America did not condemn him for doing so.

Stalin did the same kind of things on

the Georgian-Russian border in the old USSR. He was Georgian and proud of it, so in 1922 he divided an Ossetia that had its own ethnic identity, language and history, and gave South Ossetia to Georgia. After the Soviet Union fell, South Ossetia—part Georgian and part Russian—tried to achieve an independence a little like Moldova's, but the new Republic of Georgia crushed their insurgency in 1991, even though Russia supported the South Ossetians. After that rebellion, South Ossetia persisted in maintaining its uniqueness. In the 1992 and 2006 elections (the latter monitored by 34 international observers), 99 percent of the voters voted for independence, officially becoming a semi-autonomous area within the Republic of Georgia in 2007. This was the situation when Georgia attacked South Ossetia on August 8.

The Georgian forces involved in the attack, according to the *BBC*, had been trained by three battalions of U.S. military instructors since 2002 and armed by arms from many countries, particularly the United States. The U.S.' decision to include Georgia in its "area of national interest" and to actively promote Georgia's membership in NATO upped the diplomatic ante.

Russia, faced with a hostile Georgia on the one hand, and by Ossetian requests for help on the other, retaliated by entering South Ossetia. Its retaliation involved the deaths of many civilians and the burning of Ossaetian villages.

Soon after hostilities broke out, the NFP board issued the following news re-

lease, which read in part:

Nebraskans for Peace condemns the outbreak of hostilities between the Georgian Republic and Russia. We hope that both sides will observe the ceasefire that President Sarkozy of France had apparently negotiated... frequently violated since its negotiation. We call on the United Nations to send in peacekeeper forces to patrol the borders in disputed areas until such time as a resolution can be negotiated...

The U.S. would not be pleased if Russia asserted—with much more plausibility than we can muster in the case of Georgia—Canada to be part of its national interest sphere, invited it into a Russian military alliance and armed it. Russia (or the old Soviet Union) lost 20 million citizens fighting with us in World War II and, historically, it has reason to be suspicious of European military coalitions close to its borders. This suspicion extends to the our placing of Star Wars missile installations in Poland and the Czech Republic, capable of assisting military action in Georgia and Central Asia—installations that are part of StratCom's international network centered in Omaha.

On the other hand, we call for Russia, which has killed many civilians in the war, to observe the ceasefire it has ratified and to heed former Soviet president and Nobel Peace Prize winner, Mikhail Gorbachev, in his call for a "subregional system of security and cooperation that would make any provocation... impossible." That would give Russia and the central Asian coun-

tries the security that NATO now provides the United States.

Georgia, Russia and the West have an interest in protecting the oil pipeline across Georgia, through which oil flows to the West. Joint UN or regional peacekeeping forces charged with protecting this pipeline would be in the interest of all parties.

We ask that the United States refrain from selling further weapons to Georgia and pull out its battalions of soldiers to avoid their being compromised in an international incident.

Since the situation is very volatile, we also call on the American presidential candidates to avoid making inflammatory remarks that will prevent a peaceful settlement of the dispute. We regret that candidate McCain has continued to use as his chief foreign policy expert a man who recently received \$300,000 from the Georgian Republic for lobbying activities in behalf of support for it in Washington. We call on both candidates to support United Nations peacekeeping efforts, perhaps along the lines of President Gorbachev's proposal.

Two nuclear superpowers now face off against each other in Eastern Europe and along the Russian border near the oil-rich Middle East from the Black Sea through the Caspian. Both superpowers now arm to play a geopolitical game. Each can threaten sanctions: the West, economic sanctions; Russia, the withdrawal of oil from Europe.

As Joan Rivers would say, "Can we talk?" We had better. The world is quickly becoming an ever more dangerous place.