



Nebraska Report

There is no Peace without Justice

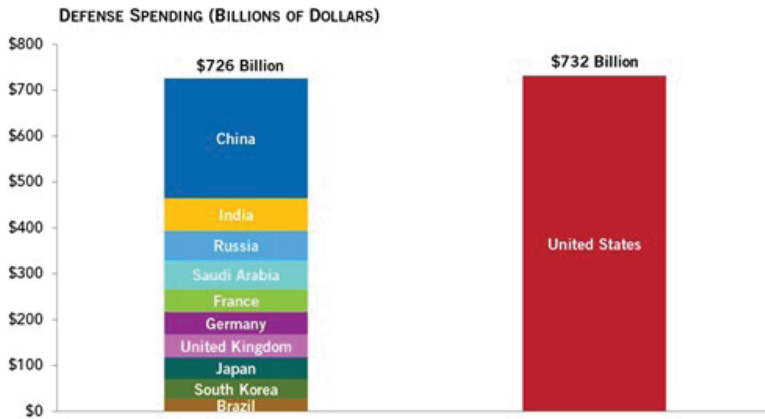
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2021 VOLUME 49, NO. 5

Bloated Pentagon Budget

The U.S. Pentagon spends more on defense than the next 10 countries combined.



The United States spends more on defense than the next 10 countries combined



These numbers don't include the budgets for the C.I.A., N.S.A., and Department of Homeland Security.

Such consistently massive military budgets have been funding wars and overseas operations that disproportionately target and harm people of color around the world. All while simultaneously eating up funding for critical programs here at home, which then takes a greater toll on communities of color. Source: Peter G. Petersen Foundation; PGPF.org

Following is a letter from NFP President Ron Todd-Meyer to Senator Fischer, expressing opposition to the proposed bloated Pentagon budget, and her response can be found on page 2.

Dear Senator Fischer,

As a Marine Corp veteran, I urge you to vote against the \$778 billion Pentagon budget. There has never been a complete audit of the Defense Department. The U.S. has spent \$6 trillion the last 20 years on ill conceived wars in the Middle East with nothing but countries devastated by war and millions of displaced and dead human beings.

Currently the Glasgow summit on climate change needs to address the rising CO2 levels in our atmosphere that creates more severe storms, wild fires and droughts. One of the largest emitters of CO2 is the United States military. The U.S. has so many pressing needs of infrastructure, healthcare and growing inequality that need to be addressed for our real national security. China is not a real threat to the U.S. To claim so is another lie to justify more war. Please vote to cut the Pentagon budget to address the needs of our own citizens. War making is always a waste!!

Respectfully,
Ron Todd-Meyer

inside:

Nebraskans for Peace Has a New State Coordinator Brittany Cooper	p. 3	Afghanistan: Violence and Concern for the Other	p. 6
Memorials	p. 4	What's HOT in Global Warming?	p. 8
		CCL Statement on House Passage of 'Build Back Better'	p. 13
		Citizens' Climate Lobby 2021 Conference Videos	p. 13
		HARD TRUTH by Sally Herrin	p. 16

Nebraskans for Peace's state office in Lincoln is located on land that formerly belonged to the Otoe Tribe.

Nebraska Report

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

Newspaper Committee:

Brittany Cooper, Editor; Ron Todd-Meyer; Paul Olson

Layout: Michelle O'Dea

Printing: Fremont Tribune

Website: Susan Alleman

Letters, articles, photographs and graphics are welcomed. Deadline is the first of the month for publication in the following month's issue. Submit to: Nebraska Report, c/o Nebraskans for Peace, P.O. Box 83466, Lincoln, NE 68501-3466.

Nebraskans for Peace

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

State Board of Directors

Maggie Ballard (Vice President), Kerry Beldin, A'Jamal Byndon, Mallory Cranwell, Frank Cordaro, Henry D'Souza, Tessa Foreman, Tom Genung, Patrick Jones, Bill Laird, Rich Maciejewski, Patrick Murray (Treasurer), Kathy Niece, Paul Olson, Byron Peterson, Luisa Palomo Hare, Del Roper, Judy Sandeen, Renee Sans Souci, Danielle Savington, Don Tilley, Ron Todd-Meyer (President), Lizzie Turner, Mark Vasina, Brian Whitecalf, Ryan Wishart, JaQuala Yarbro. Brittany Cooper (State Coordinator); Susan Alleman (Organization Administrator); Phone 402-475-4620, nfpstate@nebraskansforpeace.org; Mark Welsch (Omaha Coordinator), P.O. Box 6418, Omaha, NE 68106, Phone 402-453-0776, NFPomaha1970@gmail.com.

Nebraskans for Peace Chapter & Affiliate Contact Information

Crete Chapter Pat Wikel 402-826-4818
Lincoln Chapter Paul Olson 402-475-1318
Omaha Chapter Mark Welsch 402-453-0776
Scottsbluff Chapter Byron Peterson 308-225-1589
Southwest
Nebraska Chapter Dennis Demmel 308-352-4078
Central Nebraska
Peace Workers Del Roper 308-384-3266

Contact the NFP State Office for information on the UNL, UNO, UNK, Creighton & Nebraska Wesleyan University and Hastings & Doane College Chapters

Bloated Pentagon Budget, continued

Senator Fischer's Response

November 17, 2021

Dear Ron,

Thank you for contacting me regarding defense spending. I appreciate receiving your comments on this important issue.

As a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, I have heard our nation's highest military officers repeatedly testify on the wide array of threats to our nation's security, and I believe providing for the national defense is the most important priority of the federal government.

In general, I am concerned about the impact potential cuts would have on our active service personnel, their families, and our ability to meet the security challenges we face as a nation. We have a moral duty to our young men and women in uniform to send them into battle only if they are ready and trained - and only if we have the resources to support them. In addition, I believe foreign assistance, humanitarian aid, and international development programs enable us to effectively and affordably project American influence. Foreign assistance has helped to rebuild communities, mitigate disasters, and prevent epidemics.

At the same time, our national debt and deficit are significant long-term threats to the security of the United States. I continue to work with my colleagues in a fiscally sound manner on bipartisan solutions to the security challenges facing our nation. Now it is time to identify responsible spending cuts to sensibly target government waste and not damage critical national security programs. Congress and the president must work together to find a responsible path forward that will allow us to efficiently use our limited resources to meet our domestic and international needs.

Please know that I will keep your comments in mind as the Senate considers funding for the next fiscal year in the weeks and months ahead.

Thank you again for contacting me. If you have additional comments or questions, please visit my website: www.fischer.senate.gov.

Sincerely,
Deb Fischer
United States Senator



*This Holiday Season,
Give the Gift of PEACE*

NFP Gift Memberships \$25

Nebraskans for Peace Has a New State Coordinator Brittany Cooper

After 28 years, Tim Rinne, the State Coordinator of Nebraskans for Peace decided to retire. Tim used his grassroots organizing and political skills to make Nebraskans for Peace the thriving organization it is today. After a lengthy search, the Nebraskans for Peace Board has hired Brittany Cooper as the new State Coordinator.



Brittany has been a dedicated staff member of Nebraskans for Peace for over 12 years. She has

filled the role of Office Manager during her tenure at the organization. In her role at Nebraskans for Peace she has assisted in fundraising efforts, coordinating events, helping NFP navigate the COVID-19 crisis, and worked closely with the NFP Board of Directors to fulfill NFP priorities. Brittany was recently voted in as Chair of the Nebraska Sierra Club and has connections with various other grassroots, non-profit organizations across the state. Brittany's passions lie in her environmental work and actions to support civil rights.

Brittany has been married to her husband Seth for eight years. They have a four-year-old daughter Coraline. Brittany enjoys time with her family, gardening, and traveling.

On behalf of the Board of Nebraskans for Peace, Board President Ron Todd-Meyer welcomes Brittany to her new position as the State Coordinator. The Board expresses its gratitude to Tim Rinne for his years of devoted service to Nebraskans for Peace.

Nebraskans for Peace is the oldest statewide Peace & Justice organization in the United States. We are 51 years old. Building upon the long tradition of peacemaking in Nebraska, NFP has continually advocated for dialogue and peaceful resolution of conflicts, while steadfastly promoting the rights of all people throughout its decades-long history.

Political Contacts

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500
Comment Line: 202-456-1111
202-456-1414; Fax 202-456-2993
www.whitehouse.gov/contact/

Sen. Deb Fischer

454 Russell Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510
202-224-6551
202-228-1325 (FAX)
402-391-3411 (Omaha)
402-441-4600 (Lincoln)
www.fischer.senate.gov

Sen. Ben Sasse

107 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
202-224-4224
402-476-1400 (Lincoln)
www.sasse.senate.gov

Rep. Jeff Fortenberry, District 1

1517 Longworth HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-4806
402-438-1598 (Lincoln)
<http://fortenberry.house.gov>

Rep. Don Bacon, District 2

1024 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-4155
<https://bacon.house.gov/>

Rep. Adrian Smith, District 3

502 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-6435
Fax: (202) 225-0207
<https://adriansmith.house.gov/>
Capitol Hill 202-224-3121
State Capitol 402-471-2311
State Senator, District #
State Capitol; PO Box 94604
Lincoln, NE 68509-4604

Governor Pete Ricketts

P.O. Box 94848
Lincoln, NE 68509-4848
402-471-2244; Fax 402-471-6031
<https://governor.nebraska.gov/>

— In Memory —



John Phillip Krejci, Ph.D.

June 16, 1937 - August 11, 2021

John Phillip Krejci, Ph.D., loving husband, father, grandfather, former Catholic priest, college professor, and social activist, died on August 11, 2021, in Lincoln. He was 84.

Born and raised in Omaha, NE, John leaves an impressive legacy of over 60 years of social activism. He received his undergraduate degree at Conception Seminary College (Missouri), studied at The American University of Rome for his four-year master's degree in Divinity and served as a parish priest in Omaha in the 1960s. He then earned his doctorate in Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Notre Dame and became a professor and department chair at Kearney State College (now UNK) and Nebraska Wesleyan University.

John dedicated himself to civil rights, fighting for social/institutional

change. He advocated for African Americans, Native Americans (Omaha and Winnebago), prisoners, and other oppressed people. In retirement, he focused on criminal justice and prison reform. His numerous letters to the editor reflected his commitment to justice, as well as his tenacity and sharp sense of humor. John attended weekly mass and his Catholic faith shaped his entire life. He served in countless leadership, organizational and activist positions, including Nebraskans for Peace, Call to Action, the Omaha Tribal Historical Research Project and the Nebraska Chapter of the United Nations.

In June, he and his wife, Jean Krejci (Gettelfinger) a former nun, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. They met at Notre Dame. John is survived by his loving wife, three children, John Mark Krejci Ph.D. and Jeanie Krejci of Lincoln; Jennifer Krejci-Manwaring M.D., son-in-law, Teddy Manwaring; and grandchildren, Merric and Morgan Manwaring of San Antonio, TX; his sister, Mary Kay Bizal, brother-in-law, Frank Bizal, of Philadelphia, PA; and nieces and nephews; David Bizal, Steve Bizal, Mike Bizal, and Kathy Holdsmen.

Prior to his death, John valiantly endured a 15-year "dance with cancer." Despite health challenges, he approached life with a great sense of fun and adventure. John enjoyed ice skating, biking, and ice hockey into his 70s. Above all, he was an avid fisherman and continued to visit his favorite fishing spots up until the very end.



Leonard Joseph Yankton

February 12, 1976 - August 26, 2021

Leonard Joseph Yankton was born in Compton, California, on February 12, 1976. He spent his childhood on the Pine Ridge Reservation, being raised by his grandmother, Jennie Yankton, in the traditional Lakota culture and spirituality. He passed away from throat cancer in Lincoln on August 26, 2021. Leo's life was celebrated at several ceremonies at the Lincoln Indian Center. His spirit was released to the ancestors during a burial ceremony on the farm of John and Charlotte Palmquist, near Stanton, Iowa.

Leo was a true Native warrior. His life passion was to uplift the Lakota people, both locally and on Reservations, as well as to bring healing to Unci Maka (Grandmother Earth). He organized projects, like the First Friday Native Art Show, to showcase Native American artists' work. He also coordinated a fund-

— In Memory —

raiser to help save the Lincoln Indian Center from shutting down. Leo helped Lincoln recognize Indigenous Peoples' Day. He spent much of his time offering help to those in need. He organized clothing drives for Pine Ridge, delivered wood to the Standing Rock protest camp, raised funds for a van for the Elderly Meals program at Wounded Knee, raised funds for materials to repair the roof of a family member on the Pine Ridge Reservation, as well as many GoFundMe campaigns for so many people. Leo learned to make tipis from John Palmquist and hoped to start a tipi manufacturing company in Whiteclay, Nebraska. He was a social, environmental, and economic Native activist who was frequently called upon to be a public speaker. Leo served on the board of Nebraskans for Peace. A humanitarian, he often gave away what little he had to those who were more in need than he. He was a humble, delightful, endearing, courageous spirit whose example challenged and inspired many to follow the Red Road and support his efforts.

With the help of Dr. Lory Dance, Leo became an international speaker. He traveled to Sweden to discuss the camps at Standing Rock to stop the Dakota Access pipeline. While there, he learned more about indigenous peoples in Scandinavia and the struggles they shared with his own Lakota people. He then did extensive traveling throughout Europe to speak about the challenges faced by indigenous peoples on Turtle Island.

In January 2021, Leo received the Fulfilling the Dream Award from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Celebration for his efforts to

break down the stigmatization of indigenous people. In October 2021, he was honored with a posthumous Frank LaMere Peacemaker of the Year Award at the Nebraskans for Peace Annual Peace Conference.

We're better people for having known Leo Yankton.



Caryl Guisinger

June 9, 1965 - October 23, 2021

Caryl Guisinger and her husband, Roy, moved to Nebraska over 20 years ago and enriched the lives of many people. Sadly, we lost Caryl on October 23rd after her two year battle with cancer.

Some of us knew Caryl for much of the time she lived in Nebraska as we became acquainted with her shortly after 9/11 when our country sought vengeance and rushed to war.

Caryl and Roy joined the Central Nebraska Peace Workers along with

their nieces, Tabby and Hannah. The four of them made a trip to Washington D.C., to protest the war our country waged on Iraq.

Before long, Caryl joined the state board of Nebraskans for Peace and served as secretary and treasurer. She cheerfully made certain that board members followed through on their assigned tasks. Caryl took over the task of creating and expanding the "Cat Lovers Against the Bomb" calendars. Caryl was a teacher, an advocate for the rights of every person, active in the League of Women Voters, a doer and a peacemaker. Her life was an example of persistent courage as she worked tirelessly for a more just world.

Caryl faced the impact of her cancer diagnosis with the same persistent courage, making sure she accomplished the goals she had set before she was compelled to focus on herself as she dealt with what cancer was doing to her body. She kept her strong, beautiful spirit until the end. The world is a much better place for her having lived in it. Her beacon of light is a rich source of hope, much needed in our time, that will continue to shine in our hearts.

***"To live in hearts
we leave behind
is not to die."***

—Thomas Campbell

Tribute written collaboratively by members of Central Nebraska Peace Workers and Nebraskans for Peace Board.

Afghanistan

Violence and Concern for the Other

by the Anti-War Committee of
Nebraskans for Peace

Recently I saw, on TV, a U.S. service member who had served in Afghanistan—angry—upset because our Afghan allies and U.S. forces had insufficient food and equipment even though we had spent over two trillion dollars on the military-industrial complex and on private contractors to ‘win the war.’ He saw the war as a black hole through which we shoveled money to profiteers claiming patriotism. Independent research confirms his correctness.

Corruption in the Afghanistan War

The Costs of War Project at Brown University in July 2021 evaluated our presence in Afghanistan:

By 2019, the ratio of contractors to troops had grown to 1.5:1... 50 percent more contractors than troops... Military contracting can be called the ‘Camo Economy’ because it camouflages from public view the full costs of the wars both in human and economic terms—the number of contractors employed, injured, and killed is not transparent, nor is there detailed information on the dollars flowing from the Pentagon through prime contractors and many layers of sub-contractors... Critics have raised major economic and security concerns including the concentration of defense contracts among just a handful of large firms, exorbitant prices for goods and services, fraudulent contracts, and the ‘revolving door’ between the large defense contractors and government,

such as that between Halliburton and the Bush administration... The growth of private contracting has increased not only in the military, but also in the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), National Security Agency (NSA), and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), where private contract employees outnumber government employees in United States intelligence opera-

The “Project on Government Oversight” found that, between 2008-2018, around 380 high-ranking officials and officers had become government lobbyists, defense contractor consultants, or board members and executives within two years of leaving the military” [<https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/ask-not-what-the-war-cost-the-us-but-who-profited-from-the-war-49318>; cf <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/08/11/>



tions. [<https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/costs/social/corporate>]

As *TRTWorld*—a Turkish news broadcasting company—observes, the U.S. spent \$2.26 trillion on the war (300 million dollars a day for 20 years) in a largely privatized campaign where 27,000 contractors were hired and where the largest of the companies—Lockheed Martin, DynCorp, Academi (formerly Blackwater), Black & Veatch, and ExxonMobil—made far more money for each dollar invested than the average for the S&P 500 companies.

[taliban-afghanistan-defense-forces-army-militias-kabul/](https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/ask-not-what-the-war-cost-the-us-but-who-profited-from-the-war-49318)].

Some people would justify the loss of over 2 trillion dollars in taxpayer money because they feel that somehow the funds helped the Afghan people, especially women, probably true, or soldiers, probably not true. In 2019, *Observers.France 24*, a French news channel rated high for factual checking, published a piece on corruption in the Afghan military [<https://observers.france24.com/en/20200218-afghanistan-corruption-rations-soldiers-army->

eat] documenting the lack of food, salary, clothing and equipment front line soldiers endured because of corruption in the upper reaches of the Afghan army and its private contractors; Afghan soldiers are quoted as follows:

If a soldier has to fight against the Taliban every day, he needs at least enough food to feel full. It doesn't even have to be nutritious. The photo that I sent you is a ration for five people. A tiny bit of mutton, some broth and five small pieces of bread.

The food in the Afghan army has never been particularly good, but it's got worse over the last few months. If we want to eat enough food, we have to buy it ourselves. We do that from time to time, but if we buy food every day we'll end up spending all we earn and then how do we support our families?

General Ziaeddin Sagheb, an army commander in Ghor Province, is quoted as making the same point. The same article contains Afghan army complaints about inadequate clothing, boots with holes, little winter clothing or fuel (in a high plateau climate), contractors bribing army commanders, soldiers not having eaten for days or being provided dog meat. Weapons provision to Afghan soldiers was similarly corrupt, and many weapons went to the Taliban even before the bribery and surrender episodes of recent weeks disguised as Taliban and Afghan army "cease fire" negotiations [<https://www.military-times.com/flashpoints/2017/07/25/us-weapons-complicate-afghan-war/>]. We did not know what we were doing save for shoveling money. Our ignorance showed. We need a congressional inquiry into the origins, and the corruption, of this war.

NFP's History with Afghanistan

Nebraskans for Peace opposed U.S. military intervention in Afghanistan in October 2001. I cannot locate the press release announcing our opposition right now, but as Carol McShane and I recall, NFP indicated that we did

not believe that Afghanistan as a nation as a whole was responsible for 9/11, only Al Qaeda. We said that, it being the case that the bombers of the World Trade Center and their co-conspirators

possible peaceful transformation we support the following demands:

1) Impeachment proceedings against U.S. President Bush and U.S. Vice



had violated international law, the best course would be for the U.S. to take its case to the United Nations and have UN authorities deputize Interpol to arrest and try the guilty. That had been done with Serbian war criminals.

For NFP's efforts we were mocked. We demonstrated at the Nebraska Capitol, and no one listened. Members left us. Some NFP families divided among themselves over whether they ought to support our dreamy-eyed lunacy. However, we were certain then that the Taliban had not planned and executed the attack on the World Trade Center, rather members of Al Qaeda and Osama Bin Laden, and we were right. Later, even the 9/11 Commission reported, "The Taliban's chief, Mullah Omar, opposed attacking the United States."

Eight years later (2009), NFP signed on to a statement opposing the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq which included the following statements:

Faced with the choice between a war, that according to some western leaders, will last for many years or a

President Cheney before the 2008 election, a demand raised in solidarity with large parts of the U.S. public and some members of U.S. Congress. Furthermore, prosecution by the International Court of Justice of G. W. Bush, R. Cheney, and other officials from various countries for waging wars of aggression contrary to international law and committing crimes against humanity.

2) International investigation of the September 11, 2001, terror attacks. They are used as the central justification for the "War on Terror", but well-documented evidence shows that the official explanation of 9/11 cannot be correct. International personalities in science, politics, and culture, including high-ranking military veterans, have called for a new investigation.

3) Immediate military withdrawal from Afghanistan and Iraq, and no attack against Iran. International prohibition of war as a means of

continued on page 10

What's HOT in Global Warming?

by Professor Bruce E. Johansen

Is Global Warming Inevitable? A Contrary View

The Coming Baby Bust, or The Imprecision of Predictability

Memo from the year 2121: Remember a century ago, just about the time when global warming (and its mushy cousin, “climate change”) became enough of a household word to scare many people that they would sizzle, drown, or starve in a fit of geophysical fury? According to the experts, by 2121, Earth was predicted to be a scorched, useless ball of ashes.



About the year 2021, a spate of studies and media reports had begun to tell our great-great grandparents that all this gloom and doom was wrong—that Earth’s population would soon be falling, along with a concurrent decline in consumption of pressure on use of resources, including fossil fuels.

A newspaper as prominent as the *New York Times* had told your ancient forebears in 2021 that many national populations already had begun to fall quickly, clinching a sustained long-term decline in Earth’s birthrate for the first time in human history.

Now there’s a news story, Stop the presses; hold the mail, Bruce Johansen (with some help from his media friends) is having a one-cent sale! Countries such as South Korea, Italy, parts of China, and others are already below replacement levels. The United States would be hugging replacement level if not for immigration. Australia and Canada are in a similar state.

What Happened to 700 million people?

China! Some villages in the North-eastern part of that country have emptied, totally. Remember 1.4 billion people? Those who say they are in the know now say that the number of people in China will be cut in half in 100 years. China’s population will be surpassed by Nigeria’s, up from about 200 million in 2020. The projections assume that a baby boom will continue in large parts

of Africa, India and Mexico, long cradles of exploding baby booms, are falling to a replacement level of 2.1.

In Germany, hundreds of thousands of abandoned homes and other properties have been bulldozed and turned into parks. This is despite Germany’s admission of at least 1 million refugees at the beginning of the 21st century. In South Korea, babies have become so rare that the government has spent more than \$178 billion over 15 years on baby bonuses and other incentives.

Baby Bonuses

So, what will become of climate change in such a scenario? At first, not much. Anyone who has read this book by now knows about Thermal Inertia, which tells us that warming will continue until after we quit dumping heat into the environment for about 50 years on land and 150 to 200 years in the oceans after the last belch of carbon dioxide enters the atmosphere. Thus, in 2121, the daily weather will be warmer than today’s, even if no one had a single baby after today. Even a century after that, rising standards of living may keep temperatures rising even after we belch our last ounce of fossil fuels. Even without babies, our utopia will be a matter of fantasy.

The Imprecision of Predictability

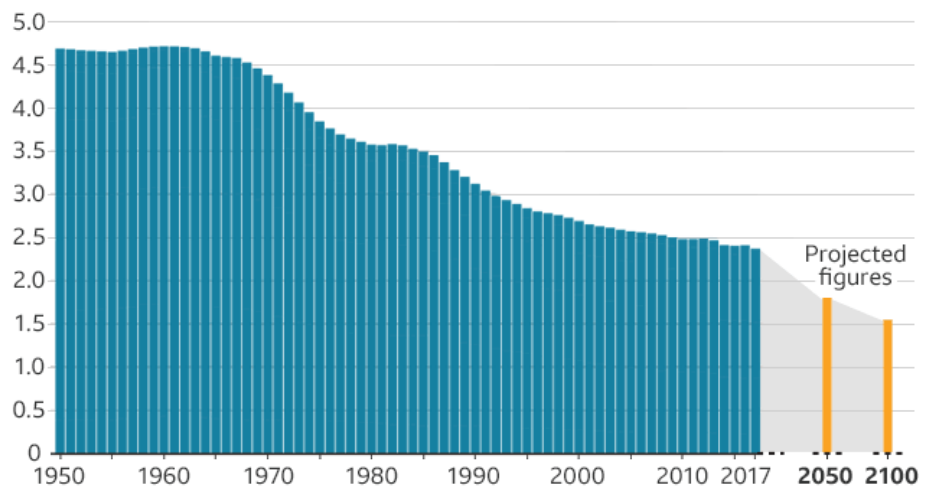
The proponents of the baby bust also have not figured in (and this is important), a propensity of human beings that we might call The Imprecision of Predictability. Or, as this fancy line is said in history, a field in which I have had some experience: “Any historian who tries to predict the future risks becoming a fool.” Or in law: “Anyone who presents his (or her) own case in court has a fool for a client.”

One other mitigating factor that rarely gets a murmur in population projections is the comfort paradigm. Birthrates may be falling in places with large populations and hot summers (India comes to mind), but energy consumption continues to rise. How many demographers check air-conditioner sales? What about the number of cars per thousand people? Material prosperity is a strong driver of energy consumption per person.

Who, a century ago, would have predicted that the Earth’s population would rise from about 1.5 billion to about 8.5 billion? Who would have foreseen nuclear weapons, or hand-held computers that open a universe of information in several languages and also act as telephones? Or a time when these same wondrous machines could be used to build political and business empires based upon hate and lies by people who confuse information with verbal sewage? Social media’s mean streak has made it a bastard child of our age, a breeding ground of both useful information and absolute lies that has ruined public discourse on a number of important issues, one of which is the veracity of climate

Women are having fewer children

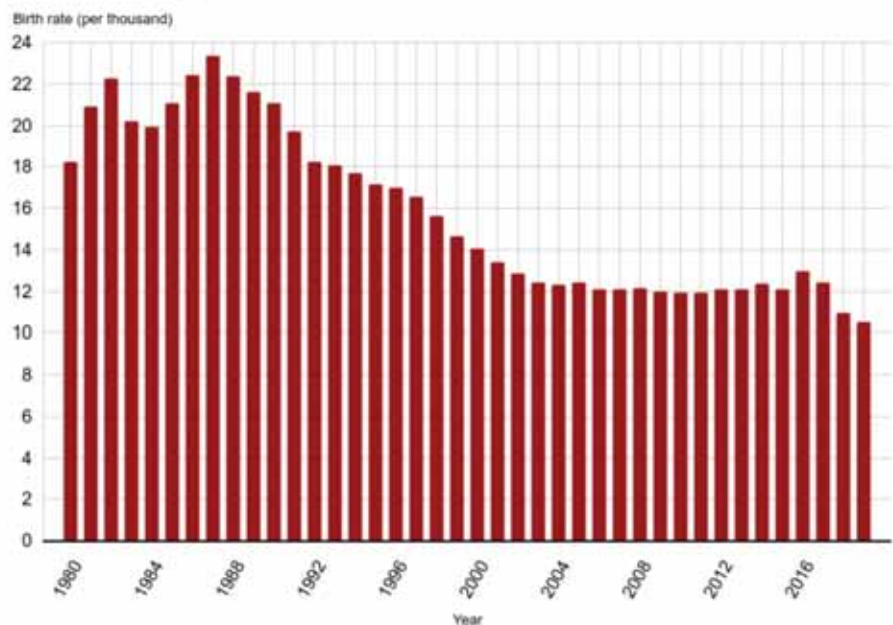
Global fertility rate (livebirths per woman)



Source: Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington



China's falling birth rate



Source: China Statistical Yearbook



change and the reality of such threats as viral disease. Note to Lewis Carroll: Just how do almost 9 billion human beings get out of this rabbit hole?

Bruce E. Johansen, Frederick W. Kayser Professor at the University of Nebraska–Omaha, is author of Climate Change: An Encyclopedia of Science, Society, and Solutions (2017).

Afghanistan, continued

conflict resolution. Military intervention and export of weapons should be criminalized.

Now, twelve years later, we certainly should not crow. Perhaps we should weep. We should pass the dead with a gesture of regret—voices that will never sing and feet that will never walk again. We should honor those soldiers who fought with honor. But we should not sentimentalize the brutality of our war. The Harvard Cost of War project tells us that the numbers of dead in the Afghanistan war are as follows: American service members killed through April: 2,448; U.S. contractors: 3,846; Afghan national military and police: 66,000; other allied service members, including from other NATO member states: 1,144; Afghan civilians: 47,245; Taliban and other opposition fighters: 51,191; aid workers: 444; journalists: 72. Over 170,000 sacred lives were burned out on Mother Earth. Even our efforts to aid the human rights situation of women and girls now seem jeopardized (For Chomsky on the Russian role in improving the situation of women in Afghanistan [<https://truthout.org/articles/noam-chomsky-the-us-led-war-on-terror-has-devastated-much-of-the-world/>]).

The Nebraska Connection to Afghan Violence

Nebraska contributed to this disaster though not all that it did in Afghanistan was mistaken. Through the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) after the Russians had invaded Afghanistan, we contributed to Afghan violence from the 80s on—from the time that University of Nebraska Systems President Ronald Roskens, while chancellor at UNO, secured an AID contract for exchanges with the University of Kabul and later oversaw campus initiatives for AID contracts

that landed a \$30 million project to “educate” children in Afghanistan and Afghani refugees over the Pakistan border. Eventually this federal government money created the University of Nebraska Education Press in Peshawar, Pakistan that printed the violence-promoting texts loved first by the mujahideen resistance to the Russians, then by the Taliban resistance to us. As *Al Jazeera* reported in December 2014,

Millions of U.S. taxpayer dollars helped fan religious conflict in Afghanistan in the 1980s, according to a major new study, and even money spent since 9/11 may have stoked tensions... The conventional wisdom that building schools in a conflict zone helps promote peace and stability is called into question by New York University Professor Dana Burde, whose findings make sobering reading for donors as reconstruction of Afghanistan enters a crucial period... “Aid education may not always have the influence that we think,” she said. (*Al Jazeera* America story by Rob Crilly, “Amid debate about Western-funded education programs, Taliban still use anti-Russian texts funded by U.S.,” December 7, 2014)

As Burde describes matters in her study [Schools for Conflict or Peace in Afghanistan],

Promoting violence—in the form of jihad against the Soviet invaders and their local proxies—was the goal of the U.S.-funded education effort in the 1980s and early ’90s. Textbooks such as “The Alphabet of Jihad Literacy,” funded by the U.S. and published by the University of Nebraska at Omaha, came out at a time when the CIA was channeling hundreds of millions of dollars to mujahideen fighters to resist the Soviet occupation... USAID funded textbooks

for distribution at refugee camps in Pakistan, with content written by mujahideen groups with the support of Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence agency and the CIA.

Though the textbooks were first published in the 1980s for use to arouse anger against the Soviets, they continued to be used by the Taliban to combat us until recently, perhaps to this day:

[Burde] managed to find several old copies of the Pashto-language books and a 2011 edition on sale in the Pakistani city of Peshawar as recently as last year [2013]. The Taliban, she said, continues to recommend these books for children... The majority of the [alphabet] book’s 41 lessons glorify violence in the name of religion. “My uncle has a gun,” reads the entry for the letter T, using the Pashto word for “gun,” “topak.” “He does jihad with the gun...”

[A]larmingly for U.S. and international forces still in the country, the textbooks describe all nonbelievers [in Islam] as the enemy.

The textbooks, with their endless hymn to violence, were published by UNO with money that came from U.S. taxpayers *from all religions*. Burde in 2014 said that the “anti-infidel message in the U.S.-funded textbook of yore is easily repurposed for those seeking to indoctrinate young Afghans today to support the fight against NATO forces.” Burde “discovered in the course of her research that the Taliban today (2014) insists the books are used in schools in areas under its control.” The textbooks remained in use in Taliban territory in 2017 (*Small Wars Journal*, 4/24/2018). Traditionally, Afghan culture had its element of war and violence, but the period from the 30s to the 70s, before the Soviet takeover and then ours, was relatively stable for Afghanistan. The Russians—with their invasion—and then we, through our texts and our

invasion, heightened that element, especially in Taliban-controlled sectors.

The University of Nebraska has never said, “I am sorry” for the textbooks or their consequences.

We do find some decency among Nebraskans. For example, Nebraskan U.S. Former Secretary of Defense Hagel (2013-2015) said at the time of the recent withdrawal:

We have never understood the culture, we never understood the religion. We never understood the tribalism, all the dynamics that make up a culture...[U]nfortunate, and damned sad. [<https://www.voanews.com/us-afghanistan-troop-withdrawal/forever-war-afghanistan-comes-abrupt-tragic-end>]

We could take Secretary Hagel seriously by putting his lesson to work to avoid another debacle.

can be bought again, and they were. As I have mentioned, the cease fire negotiations, after we announced our leaving, were bribery sessions in which Afghan government officials surrendered their weapons to the Taliban for gratuities. So were many of the Afghan army maneuvers before that.

As Hagel observes, we gave the Afghan people little belief that we understood and respected their cultures. Some Afghans knew that the United States had banned most Islamic immigration during the Trump administration, only eventually allowing what the courts required. In a recent poll, 52 percent of U.S. citizens said that they did not respect Islamic societies. Afghani leaders knew that Western colonialism, from the time of Lawrence of Arabia, had extracted from the Muslim Middle East and Central Asia both domination by the West and resource removal from

the country. We attempted to hijack it into true nationhood; that is obviously impossible since a true nation must be built by its citizens, people who believe in it and its future. Jason Dempsey, an adjunct senior fellow at the Center for a New American Security who also served as an adviser to the Afghan military, asserted on August 16, in a broadcast with Don Gonyea from National Public Radio:

DEMPSEY: Well, for one, all of this ties into the fundamental challenge, which is we built an Afghan National Army for a nation that simply doesn't exist. And so two elements kind of contributed to the speed with which everything collapsed this week. The main one—setting aside some questions of Afghan military competence—the main question is, who are they fighting for? And I think it became very clear very quickly that there was not going to be a coherent, unified response out of Kabul. And so if you're an Afghan out in the hinterlands and you've got little faith in your army to begin with, and it looks like the politicians are going to fold pretty quick, then it doesn't take long, you know, to kind of speak with your feet. So that's the unfortunate side of that part.

On Wednesday, January 15, 2020, John Sopko, Special Inspector General For Afghanistan Reconstruction, testified to the House Foreign Affairs Committee and spoke to Representative Bera on “U.S. LESSONS LEARNED IN AFGHANISTAN,” specifically how we did not understand the culture we thought we were helping:

Mr. Bera. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, \$132 billion on reconstruction, we have spent more on Afghanistan than we spent on the whole Marshall Plan rebuilding.

Mr. Sopko. That is correct, sir.

Mr. Bera. After World War II, so it

conclusion on page 12



The Collapse

After the American pullout from Afghanistan, the quick defeat of the Afghanistan central government army seemed surprising to our political leaders. It should not have been. Most analysts say that we never had a 300,000-person actual army in Afghanistan and that most of the army that existed was not reliable. We paid for that army and its support system, believing that anyone can be bought. However, people who can be bought

their countries that came without just payment [https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/resource-regionalism-in-the-mena_english_web.pdf]. They also knew that their Afghanistan sat on trillions of dollars of minerals that the West wanted—copper, gold, oil, natural gas, uranium, bauxite, coal, iron ore, rare earths, lithium, chromium, lead, zinc, gemstones, talc, sulfur, marble and other substances

Not only did we expect to mine

Afghanistan, conclusion

is pretty amazing. And when I think about that I think some of it is when we approached Europe, we had similar cultures, similar, an understanding of Europe, similar forms of government, et cetera, so that probably contributed to some of that success. And it does seem evident from your answers and from what I have looked at, we do not have that same understanding of the values, culture, et cetera, in Afghanistan and that probably foundationally, is one of the things that has led us to be not so efficient.

The whole 2020 hearing on Afghan reconstruction is an account of how we have misunderstood the partial nationhood, cultures, and values of the Afghani people.

The loss of Afghanistan did not begin with Joe Biden, Donald Trump, Barack Obama, or George W. Bush. It was always lost because it was never ours. We never had Afghanistan except as a place where military contractors and war lords could make money. Our never having had Afghanistan is crucial. People will not believe that one is fighting for or supporting them or working for their interests if they do not know and trust one, and if one does not, at some level, know and trust them. We need to demand that U.S. pay reparations for the damage it caused and the lives it destroyed. We need to make certain that an “over the horizon” war does not continue in the wake of the military occupation.

This is not trivial. The same failure to grasp and respect other cultures, the same assumption that actions that serve only our temporary economic or military purposes (e.g., the violence-proposing textbooks) can be undertaken without our paying an eventual price runs through our history. That failure was basic to our endless war on and systematic effort to destroy Native

...we need write our congresspeople to call for U.S. withdrawal from most of the 750 military bases in 80 countries that we use to protect what we call “our interests”... that we use to create dependency, corruption, and weakness in other countries.

American cultures through conquest, boarding schools, and textbooks. It undergirded our failure in Vietnam, especially our support of Catholic elites and our indifference to the cultures of Buddhist and tribal peoples. It undergirded our failure in China in the 1940s, our indifference to the incompetence and unpopularity of the Chinese Nationalist government. Through the slave trade, we destroyed the cultural roots of 12.5 million people; we prevented autonomous cultural formation through the subsequent “slavery by another name” Jim Crow policy for African Americans. We tried to keep Africa from autonomy through the manipulative condescension of our African policy after World War II. The CIA’s complicity in the unseating and murder of Patrice Lumumba was only the beginning.

Some readers of this section will say to themselves, “I am tired of our bellyaching that America is always wrong; we are the most generous people on the face of the earth.” I am certain that our perspective is annoying. However, we are the most gener-

ous people on earth only in a limited sense. We are generous at the level of individual charity. We give from personal wealth made possible by historic wrong. Though we proclaim that we do good to our enemies and forgive those who spitefully use us, our aid is given in service to our own gain, except perhaps in the case of Marshall Plan where we helped European cultures that we understood thoroughly.

We need to step back, learn the arts of nonviolent persuasion, cultural understanding, and respect. We need to learn to spend more money on those arts than on the art of killing, now more than half of our discretionary federal budget. We need humility and a concern for the common good in our military-industrial complex, political leaders, and culture. We need humility ourselves. [For more on Afghanistan’s kleptocracy, see <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/america-s-afghanistan-disaster-and-the-consequences-of-kleptocracy/ar-AAANAJrM?ocid=msedgdhp&pc=U531>]. Without humility and non-violence, we cannot lead as a nation. [For additional important information, see Afghanistan section on Democracy Now—<https://www.democracynow.org/topics/afghanistan>.]

Finally, as Nebraskans for Peace, we need to act; we need write our congresspeople to call for U.S. withdrawal from most of the 750 military bases in 80 countries that we use to protect what we call “our interests”—our systemic greed—interests that we use to create dependency, corruption, and weakness in other countries. We need to speak to our friends and neighbors about military waste and spending. Afghanistan may be the first loss in our far-flung military-industrial empire, but it assuredly is not the last. We can begin the process of attending to the needs of people around the world by speaking truth to misguided power at home.

CCL Statement on House Passage of 'Build Back Better'

by Steve Valk, Communications Coordinator for Citizen's Climate Lobby

Citizens' Climate Lobby appreciates that Congress continues to work hard on a budget reconciliation bill that includes historic levels of climate investment. President Biden has pledged to cut U.S. greenhouse gas emissions 50 percent by 2030, and the House passage of the Build Back Better Act is an important step toward that goal. Still, we are concerned that the investments listed in this legislation will not reduce emissions enough to actually keep that promise.

We are encouraged that Senators are seriously considering putting a price on corporate carbon emissions. This policy would deliver crucial additional emissions cuts without increasing the legislation's price tag. In fact, a carbon price would generate huge amounts of revenue—a substantial portion of which could go in the pockets of low- and middle-income Americans.

Recent reporting confirms that there



Thirteen Nebraskans visit Washington, D.C., representing Citizen's Climate Lobby.

is strong support among Senate Democrats for this policy. It's also popular with Americans nationwide—73 percent support taxing corporations based on their

carbon emissions. It's time to implement this essential tool, which will help meet our climate goals and help the budget reconciliation bill cross the finish line.

Citizens' Climate Lobby 2021 Conference Videos Relive the #CCL2021 Magic!

Citizens' Climate Lobby's November 2021 Conference may be over, but you can watch the recordings or see the related slideshow presentations by visiting cclusa.org/presentations.



If you know any conservatives (and who doesn't in Nebraska?) this presentation may help you the most—"Talking to Conservatives—What's Working." You can learn about effective conservative outreach from Ian Harrison, Chair of the CCL Conservative Caucus who provides examples of outreach that can be replicated across the country. You can watch this session here: <https://tinyurl.com/CCLHarrison>.

There are excellent speakers and presentations, including Dr. Katharine Hayhoe,

one of the best climate scientists in the world, Dr. Danny Richter, Citizens' Climate Lobby, Vice President of Government Affairs and many others.

You can see all of the recordings from the conference here:

<https://tinyurl.com/CCLplaylist>.

Please help stop climate change by contacting your Federal Senator today. It is super easy by going here: cclusa.org/senate.

HARD TRUTH continued

“Ernie Chambers, all too often more or less singlehanded, prevents a lot of ignorant white people from harming themselves and others...” (I’m still proud.) The following week the paper fired me for “business reasons.”

As soon as Tim heard, he called and offered me a column in NFP’s state paper, to be called “From the Bottom”. (Cf. Jim Hightower’s dictum, “Politics isn’t about left versus right; it’s about top vs. bottom.”) Since then, Tim has provided a platform for my own life’s work for more than two decades in the *Nebraska Report*, at times reprinted in state and regional weeklies and small towns along the East Coast through the nineteen nineties, and the national *Progressive Populist*.

More than enough about me—my point is, as I found my place in civic life, my topoi (my topics) and a voice with which to speak truth to power, at every turn, Tim was there—catalyst, connection, inspiration, editor and publisher. It’s been my great privilege to ride the river with Tim. Among the folks who read this tribute (you know who you are), many would say the same.

Tim was born in Beatrice, Nebraska and as a small child moved to Lost Cabin, Wyoming—just down the road from Hell’s Half Acre. When Tim’s father became a supervisor on the Platte River pipeline, the family settled in Gering, Nebraska, attending the local Missouri Synod Lutheran Church. In later years, when Tim’s conservative father asked Tim where he came by his liberal ideas, Tim an-

swered, “In Sunday school.”

When it was time for college, Tim enrolled at Concordia University, Seward, Nebraska, and hoped to move to Portland, Oregon to write poetry. His father despaired that Tim would never earn a living with his hands and sent him to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1976. There Dad’s fears were realized as Tim left the Republican party and embraced Marxism. Tim’s first job was shelving books at Love Library, where he met the love of his life, Kay Walter (recently retired as a senior librarian from that fine institution).

Kay and Tim married in 1982 and had a daughter Anna. Through those salad days they drove a car that started no matter how wretched cold the morning, so of course they named it Stalingrad. In 1986 Tim and Kay purchased a three-story Victorian home at the corner of T Street and

North 26th Street in the neighborhood still known then as T Town.

In the early nineteen nineties, Tim worked with Betty Olson, then state coordinator of NFP, on the nuclear FREEZE campaign and took part in an NFP mission to Chiapas, Mexico.

In October of 1993, Tim became NFP state coordinator and threw himself into the struggle for peace and justice. Tim wrote hundreds of articles for the *Nebraska Report*, raised money, managed scores of volunteers and joined forces with local and national compadres in a true global network. Tim’s campaigns were many and memorable—too many to detail, but Whiteclay comes to mind as a long fight which prevailed in the end, the end of land based missiles and nuclear arms and power both, opposition to the last twenty years of endless war waged in the Middle

Your Foundation Speaks

by **Loyal Park, Nebraska Peace Foundation President**

Donations to Nebraska Peace Foundation may be directed into two different accounts depending on the wishes of the donor. These are an unrestricted account and a restricted account. The unrestricted account goes to pay the day-to-day educational expenses of Nebraskans for Peace.

Donations into the restricted account add to the investments in the permanent endowment of Nebraska Peace Foundation. These investments bring in a yearly yield of 4 to 5% in dividends and interest. These dividends and interest then go into the unrestricted account to support Nebraskans for Peace as listed above.

Please indicate on your check whether you want your donation to go directly to the unrestricted account or to the restricted account where it will be invested in socially-responsible, fossil-free and mainly renewable energy stocks and bonds.



JOIN NFP TODAY!

Become a Member of the Oldest Statewide Peace & Justice Organization in the United States

Yes, here's my membership to Nebraskans for Peace at the special introductory rate of \$25

Check (payable to 'Nebraskans for Peace') Credit Card (Mastercard / VISA)

Card: _____ Exp. ___ / ___ CVV: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Alt. Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Legislative District # (or name of Senator): _____

How did you hear about NFP? _____

Or to become a member online, visit: nebraskansforpeace.org and click on "Donate."

Membership payments to NFP are NOT tax-deductible due to our political activity. Tax-deductible contributions can be made to the Nebraska Peace Foundation for our educational work.

Mail this form to: **Nebraskans for Peace**
P.O. Box 83466
Lincoln, NE 68501-3466

HARD TRUTH, conclusion

East, with a very strong focus on all aspects of global warming, federal Farm to School legislation to give small ag producers access to the U.S. school lunch program (arguably the largest restaurant franchise on earth), and the unforgettable Berkshire Hathaway campaign to identify the power of climate investment—for which NFP earned national press.

Personally, I know Tim to be a deeply spiritual man, inventive, unfailingly kind and like so many of the great sages, wickedly funny. Fine as these parts are, so much greater is the whole Tim entire, owning a powerful charisma and taste for guerilla theatre. Ever the radical, Tim keeps always in his heart the primacy of the poor—the voiceless, in Hebrew

anawim—and he has kept steadily to the NFP mission to address social justice and human rights, along with climate crisis frequently the theme of the annual state meetings featuring compelling speakers on everything from the death penalty to the great shame of School of the Americas to Black Lives Matter, year after year.

Tim has been honored for his work. Distinctions include the Don Quixote Award (and roast) for his decade-plus fight to bring minor league baseball to Lincoln (League of Women Voters); in 2014 a TEDX talk, Growing Food, Growing Community and a story about the Hawley Hamlet in the May Mother Earth; celebration

of Tim's 25th years as state coordinator; and in 2020, Neighborworks America gave Kay and Tim the Dorothy Richardson award.

The philosopher Montaigne said a person ought not rest on their laurels, real or imagined, and should spend their latter years among their cabbages. Shakespeare echoed, "Endurance is all." The NA award money is going towards another greenhouse for Hawley Hamlet's common gardening space. Unless I miss my guess we'll find Tim most days visiting with his neighbors, writing about cooperation and carbon mitigation, or puttering in some garden, earning his living with his hands.

Nebraskans for Peace
P.O. Box 83466
Lincoln, NE 68501-3466

Phone:402-475-4620/Fax:475-4624
nfpstate@nebraskansforpeace.org
www.nebraskansforpeace.org

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 310
Lincoln, NE

HARD TRUTH

by Sally Herrin

A Tribute to Tim Rinne

Tim Rinne, my old friend and partner in crime, has toiled all his adult life, like the Old Country peasant stock he came from, for environmental, economic and social justice, for peace and peace-making and to counter colonialism, militarization, war and nuclear arms, for cooperation, diversity and inclusion, for sane and equitable climate policy, for community gardening and food security for all.

It is no exaggeration to say that Tim's influence on my own life has been powerful, even seminal. Tim encouraged me to go to work in 1995 for the Nebraska Farmers Union at a time of historic change in farm policy—particularly de-coupling* of farm payments from production as price floors were swapped out for welfare style payments. I have worked, paid and unpaid ever since, writing and

organizing, on behalf of the family farm system of ag production.

In 1996, the *Lincoln Journal Star* hired me to write a column every other Sunday, "From the Left", alternately with "From the Right" by conservative businessman Robert Valentine (famously father of guitarist James Valentine in Maroon 5). After eighteen months, the *Lincoln Journal Star* published my column that read,