



# Nebraska Report

*There is no Peace without Justice*

OCTOBER 2002

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*About 150 people turned out for the Anti-War Rally on the north steps of the State Capitol September 25 to send a message that "This War Is Unnecessary." UNL Anthropology Professor Bob Hitchcock was the featured speaker.*

## **Inspectors as Spies** *How the U.S. Undermined UN Weapons Inspections in Iraq*

*This article by NFP State Coordinator Tim Rinne originally appeared in the September 26 edition of the Lincoln Journal Star.*

The Bush Administration, in making its case for forcibly removing Saddam Hussein, has repeatedly accused the Iraqi leader of blocking UN weapons inspectors from entering the country in order to develop "weapons of mass destruction." Not a day goes by without somebody inside the administration charging that the world now stands imperiled by an Iraqi stockpile of chemical and biological weapons (and maybe even nuclear capability) because Saddam has systematically thwarted the UN-mandated inspection process.

The former chief of the UN weapons inspection team, however, has an alternative explanation for why Saddam has refused to allow UN inspectors back into Iraq the last four years.

They were spying.

And the U.S. government was using this intelligence to try and assassinate the Iraqi president.

Scott Ritter, the U.S. Marine Corps and Gulf War veteran who ran the UN's weapons inspections team in Iraq from 1991 to August 1998, stated in a September 8 CNN interview that the reason there haven't been inspectors

in Iraq "isn't because Iraq kicked them out, but rather they were ordered out by the United States after the United States manipulated the inspection process to create a confrontation... and then used intelligence information gathered by inspectors to target Iraqi government sites, including the security of Saddam Hussein."

Two days after the inspectors left, on December 16, 1998, the Clinton White House launched Operation Desert Fox, bombing over 100 targets in Iraq, including intelligence facilities, security installations, Saddam Hussein's palaces—sites that according to Ritter "had nothing whatsoever to do with weapons of mass destruction." The attack was nothing less than an assassination attempt on the life of the Iraqi leader. And it occurred, interestingly enough, just 24 hours before the U.S. House of Representatives was scheduled to vote on the impeachment of President Clinton over his relationship with Monica Lewinsky.

Ever since, Ritter said, Iraq has refused to allow the inspectors back in, citing national security and sovereignty concerns. Given the U.S.'s compromised reputation, he stated in a September 12 Fox News Channel interview, the Iraqi position is not that hard to understand.

*conclusion on page 3*

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## Nebraskans for Peace

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## Latin America Briefs

compiled by Sarah Disbrow



## Guatemala Reverting to War with U.S. Help

Human rights groups are alarmed that the United States is providing "light infantry" training to the Guatemalan military despite the lack of serious military reform in that country and an escalation in human rights abuses since the peace accords of 1996. On Sept. 6 activist Manuel Garcia de la Cruz was found decapitated, his ears and tongue cut out and his eyes pulled out. According to Guatemalan human rights groups, the gruesome manner of his death is reminiscent of atrocities committed by the Guatemalan military during the 1960-1996 civil war. The latest murder follows months of violence and harassment directed at rights activists and agencies. This summer agency offices were ransacked. On Sept. 9, a group of armed men attacked reporters attempting to cover a press conference called by human rights groups to discuss the Garcia de la Cruz murder.

U.S. training of the Guatemalan military is in direct violation of a U.S. ban on International Military Education and Training (IMET) and Foreign Military Training (FMT). Contact your representative and senators (Congressional switchboard 202-224-3121 or www.Senate.gov.) and tell them that the Defense Department should cease training given Guatemala's failure to implement the 1996 peace accords calling for military reforms and respect for human rights.

## Puebla-Panama Plan Threatens Central America

Indigenous leaders throughout Central America call it "one of the greatest threats since Conquest." Mexican president Vicente Fox has proposed a plan, called Puebla-Panama, to funnel \$10 billion of foreign aid and local tax dollars to industrial projects stretching from Mexico's southern state of Puebla all the way to Panama. Indigenous groups argue that the plan would accelerate foreign plunder of their natural resources and wreak havoc on their cultures.

Leaders of the region's seven countries, the construction industry, and other business interests are behind the plan, and a U.S.-dominated lending agency is spearheading the financing. The goal is to develop oil refineries, hydroelectricity, seaports, highways, rail lines, and agribusiness spanning the length of Central America.

Mexico's PRD party is forging coalitions to oppose the plan. They claim that U.S. interests in controlling a zone rich in natural resources are behind it. Many of the region's Catholic Church leaders are also opposed. Gregorio Rosa Chavez, auxiliary bishop of San Salvador, argues that globalization in Latin America has widened the gap between the rich and poor.

The plan has already accelerated U.S. military buildup in the region. Some 400 U.S. troops visited Guatemala on tourist visas for five months last year to work with army troops in a \$10 million deployment called New Horizons. The stated goal was infrastructure assistance and natural disaster training. But critics worry that the United States could cite Puebla-Panama projects as pretexts to station troops in every nation from Mexico to Panama. New Horizons deployment coincided with increased oil exploration in both the Petén and Chiapas. Some of the U.S. troops set up camp near a U.S. owned oil refinery, Texas-based Anadarko Petroleum, in La Libertad.

Environmentalists argue that the plan would destroy the Meso-American Biological Corridor, an international network of pristine areas than activists have been fighting to protect for years. It also threatens the U.N. backed Maya Biosphere Reserve, a 13,000 square-mile rainforest, Central America's largest freshwater wetland, as well as 1,000 archeological sites and half the region's animal species, including the endangered jaguar and guacamaya parrot.

—Excerpted from Linda Jones, *Last Harvest*, Americas. Org, May 2002.

## Oil Pipeline Double Standard

According to the Witness for Peace booklet *In Our Name*, a double standard is emerging in the White House on oil pipeline protection. The White House is treating oil company threats in Latin America as a national security issue, rewarding White House friends by financing contractors to carry out security for the oil companies. At the same time, the White House is dodging congressional oversight of what it claims is a national security threat. Pipeline protection should be subject to national civilian oversight if it is of national rather than private concern, the booklet argues. "Our tax dollars are slated for oil pipeline protection to be carried out by mercenaries unaccountable for their tactics."

# THE COST OF INVADING IRAQ

*The Bush Administration currently proposes to wage war on Iraq. Below are a few considerations about the cost of that action to the American people.*

## **A war on Iraq is likely to cost \$100 billion.**

Experts, including Senator Joseph Biden, Chair of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, indicate that the war may cost as much as \$80-\$100 billion. The 1990-91 Gulf War cost \$61 billion, according to the Department of Defense. That's almost \$80 billion in today's dollars. In this case, the administration policy is for a change of regime, suggesting the possibility of a longer, more involved and more costly war.

## **Rebuilding Iraq is likely to cost at least \$50 billion.**

Different experts weighed in on reconstruction efforts during the recent Senate hearings on Iraq. According to Samuel Berger, Senior Foreign Policy Advisor during the Clinton Administration, estimates for re-building the Iraqi economy range from \$50-\$150 billion. Scott R. Feil, retired colonel and expert on post-conflict reconstruction, argued that significant material and personnel resources would be required for reconstruction. Just the security forces alone would entail 75,000 personnel in the first year, amounting to \$16.5 billion. At least 5,000 troops would have to remain in place for 5-10 years, costing over \$1 billion a year. Beyond security, the U.S. would be expected to make a significant contribution for humanitarian and emergency aid, a transitional administration, civil service and other components of reconstruction. Feil estimated that these nonsecurity costs would amount to \$15-\$25 billion over the next decade.

## **United States citizens would have to pay for the vast majority of the war.**

The U.S. had much international support during the Gulf War. Allies picked up almost 90% of its cost. However, this war does not have international support. Many allies have made it clear that they are not in favor of a preemptive strike. Germany and Saudi Arabia, among the largest cash and in-kind contributors to the Gulf War, have indicated their complete opposition to an invasion. The U.S. people should expect to pay for most of the war as well as reconstruction.

**National Priorities Project estimates the cost to the state of Nebraska for a war against Iraq to be \$412,000,000, based on each state's portion of individual income taxes and assumes that the U.S. will bear the entire cost of a \$100 billion war.**

The National Priorities Project offers citizens and community groups tools and resources to shape federal budget and policy priorities which promote social and economic justice.

For more information, contact us at:  
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## ***Inspectors as Spies***

“Why would the Iraqis immediately roll over and say ‘Come on back in,’ unless they’re given guarantees that the inspectors won’t again deviate from the task?”

Ritter though is no apologist for the Iraqi leader. In that same September 12 Fox interview, he stated, “Saddam Hussein is the most brutal dictator I can think of today and from my lips to God’s ear, I wish he was dead.” For the first six years as the leader of the inspection team, however, he said the UN inspectors were nevertheless able to perform their duties without obstruction from the Iraqi government. Utilizing the services of a Swedish diplomat, Ritter told CNN’s Paula Zahn September 13, the UN inspection team “disarmed Iraq from 1991 to 1996.”

It was only when Australian diplomat Richard Butler was named the executive chair of the UNSCOM (United Nations Special Commission) in 1997, Ritter said, that the U.S. was able to manipulate the inspection process to spy on the Iraqi leader. “Richard Butler allowed the United States to use the United Nations weapons-inspection process as a Trojan Horse to insert intelligence capabilities into Iraq, which were not approved by the United Nations and which did not facilitate the disarmament process, [but] were instead focused on the security of Saddam Hussein and military targets.”

On four occasions between March 1998 up until his resignation in August of that year, Ritter, according to the Fox interview, “wrote Butler a memorandum saying, ‘Boss, if you continue down this path you are facilitating espionage. This is not what we’re about and you can’t let this happen.’” The UNSCOM chair, Ritter said, ignored every one of his memoranda, prompting him to resign as chief inspector that August.

The following December, Ritter says, on instructions from the Clinton Administration and without the approval of the Security Council, Butler unilaterally ordered the withdrawal of the inspection team just 48 hours before Operation Desert Fox was launched. “He was at the helm of the ship when it ran aground. People need to keep... in mind that the weapons process inspection process died under Richard Butler’s leadership,” Ritter told CNN September 13. “Inspectors aren’t in Iraq today, but not because Saddam kicked them out, but because the United States ordered them out.”

With the Bush Administration now dead set on a “regime change” and threatening to unilaterally intervene in Iraq, Ritter traveled to Baghdad early last month to urge the Iraqi government to re-admit the inspectors in hopes of averting war. Hussein has since announced that the UN can resume “unconditional” inspections starting in October. The White House however has openly ridiculed the Iraqi overture, calling it little more than a ploy and just more evidence of the Iraqi dictator’s duplicity.

But duplicity can be a two-way street. The fact that Saddam Hussein is a murderer and a war criminal does not excuse us from examining our own government’s conduct in this matter, particularly when our leaders are actively advocating going to a war. And particularly when the man we now find so abhorrent and intolerable is a former military ally, who previously used these very same chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction with the full knowledge of our government. But because at the time he was an important ally, we looked the other way and never said a word.

***Contributions to the Nebraska Peace Foundation  
are tax-deductible & won't finance the  
Bush administration's upcoming War on Iraq***

# A Response to "A Justice Process Toward Peace in the Middle East"

by Yale Gotsdiner, Eva Sartori and Haim & Yaffa Gunner

The physical and emotional suffering of the Palestinian inhabitants of the West Bank described by the writer of 'The Justice Process Toward Peace in the Middle East' (*Nebraska Report*, July/August 2002) have a legitimate claim on our sympathy. But from reading the anonymous writer's account one would never know that the Israeli population is also suffering as terrorist attacks by Palestinians against Israeli civilians have multiplied during the most recent intifada. Nor does the writer acknowledge a Palestinian role in the successive wars that have punctuated Israel's history. The Palestinians have not been the entirely passive victims of historical events or the mere objects of an immense power beyond their capacity to confront. Such a characterization does not render them a service and ultimately will not advance their cause. The truth is painfully different: the Palestinians are in fact victims of the history which they and their fellow Arabs largely inflicted upon themselves. This is not to diminish the pain and humiliation which are so wrenchingly described by the writers but rather to emphasize that this pain and humiliation emerge as a direct consequence of actions both taken and avoided.

As early as 1937 the Arabs of Palestine had been offered a partition plan by the British-mandatory government of the time that left them in command of virtually the entire interior of the country, the Galilee and the south, leaving the Jews only the areas of concentrated settlement along the coastal plain and a number of interior valleys. The response was the riots of 1936-39 that were initially suppressed by a massive concentration of British troops. In 1947, in the wake of the Holocaust, the United Nations offered the Palestinians a partition plan that, as the writer's maps show, added to Israel only the southern part of the Negev. This plan was met by the simultaneous assault of Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Egypt on the fledgling Jewish state which had in fact accepted it. The flight of Arab refugees from Palestine was an event driven as

much by the logic of the invading Arab armies to clear the battlefields as a design by the Israeli army. We must also not lose sight of the fact that the An-Nakbe of the Palestinians was not the only population dislocation in the Middle East. In the wake of Israel's establishment, 750,000 Jews were driven out of all the Arab countries stretching from Morocco in the west to Iraq in the east.

The Palestinian bitterness can be traced to the fact that no Arab country was interested in anything but its own territorial aggrandizement and certainly not in the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. Trans-Jordan became Jordan with the annexation of the West Bank and old Jerusalem and Egypt occupied the Gaza strip. Some 50,000 refugees fled north to Lebanon. The contrast between the fate meted out to those refugees and the Jewish refugees from Arab countries is striking. After 50 years, the Palestinian Arabs are still in the main wards of UNWRA, refused citizenship except by Jordan and forced to live in the squalor and misery of the camps so highly publicized to capture public sympathy. In Israel refugees were welcomed—and, diverse as their culture backgrounds were, integrated into a vital democracy.

The historical perspective therefore is one in which the abject fate of the Palestinians of today rests on the foundation of a refusal of any compromise and in the main an unremitting refusal to accept the existence of the Jewish state. In 1967 threats were again made to annihilate the Jewish state, only to result in the transformation of the geopolitics of the area in Israel's favor. Indeed the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza is a direct consequence of the onslaught by Israel's neighbors. Another full-scale attack by the Arab armies of the neighboring states took place in 1973 (the 'Yom Kippur War') and the Palestinians continued to harass the civilian Israeli population with raids against border towns and settlements. The Palestinian Authority and its Arab backers continue to stoke hatred of the Israelis with savage and unrelenting attacks, lies, and distortions. The disastrous policy of the Arab nations toward Israel was most clearly articulated

at the Arab League nations' meeting at Khartoum, following Israel's smashing victory in 1967: no negotiation, no recognition, and no peace. Alas, they have had their wish.

Nonetheless, the outline of what is now widely recognized as the inevitable pattern for a settlement has emerged at the Camp David and Taba discussions of the summer and fall of 2000 proposed by Prime Minister Barak and President Bill Clinton: the major population areas and surrounding territories of the West Bank will have to be returned to Palestinian rule and the outlying settlements removed; settlements bordering Jerusalem will be incorporated into Israel and a similar portion of land will be transferred from Israel to Palestine. The Israelis will have to recognize a Palestinian presence in Jerusalem and the Temple Mount will be under Palestinian supervision. The Western Wall will remain under Israeli supervision and excavations under the Temple Mount will be forbidden. Arab refugees will receive reparations from the world community and will be able to choose to go to Palestine or remain where they are. Israel will not accept responsibility for the tragedy of the Arab refugees nor will it be prepared to accept an influx of refugees that will drastically alter its demographic balance. This proposal was rejected by Yassir Arafat with no counter proposal.

Why then the current crisis and chaos in the area? Perhaps Palestinian psychology and belief systems remain one of the most patent barriers to any true settlement. Certainly from the Israeli standpoint this mindset is reflected in the inability or refusal of the Palestine Authority to rein in those extreme elements of Hamas, Hezbollah, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and the Tanszim faction of Arafat's Fatah group, to whom the existence of Israel under any circumstance is unacceptable. To the Israelis it seems that when it is politically expedient, the Palestinian leadership permits or even encourages their activity as a goad to compel concessions by Israel. Nor has the unleashing of terror been a random event simply performed by desperate martyrs.

Israelis bitterly point out whereas only three percent of Palestinian casualties have been women and children, over 30 percent

of Israeli casualties have been women and children: clearly it is a policy of the Palestinian murderers to seek out these populations. But the pattern of terror has been such as not only to imprison the Palestinians in gradually shrinking radius of autonomy, but to destroy the very peace party in Israel that was the main engine driving the movement toward reconciliation and compromise. The tragedy, as profound as it is for the Israelis, has even deeper and darker consequences for the Palestinians. Not only will their immediate suffering be ever more acute as Israel defends itself, but they will have to live with the existence in their midst of separate groups—each committed to terrorism as political tool.

What is the way out? In our estimation, a Palestinian peace party that already exists in the shadows must now emerge in the risky light of full public view. The Sari Nusseibehs and the Hanan Ashrawis have already dared, as have others. The public emergence of such a party will not only serve to generate voices for peace but also voices against the corruption which is now so widely acknowledged to have tainted and undermined the PA. This group will have the Herculean task of transforming a traumatized and isolated population into a one that accepts the realistic limits on which viable compromise will have to be based. This population will have to be convinced to abandon the dream of the "one state" predominantly Muslim with minorities of Jews and Christians (with its mythology of an equality between Jews, Muslims, and Christians that never existed in historic fact), to compromise on the return of the bulk of the refugees, and to accept a limited role in Jerusalem. Such a leadership can inspire the revitalization of the demoralized and constrained (by the succession of relentless suicide and other attacks) Israeli peace front and make possible the return of a moderate peace—driven government willing to accept the hard compromises that Israel must make: the removal of settlements from the West Bank, a Palestinian presence in Jerusalem, and a meaningful gesture toward the refugees of 1948.

Palestinians at last have a chance to become the effective actors in their own history. They will abandon this opportunity at great and lasting peril.

# Guilty As Charged

## Whiteclay Protesters Have Their Day in Court

by Carol McShane  
President, Nebraskans for Peace

On June 10, seven usually law-abiding citizens knowingly and purposefully disobeyed state law by opening and drinking from beer cans with heels firmly planted in the governor's rose garden. The seven—Jonathan Ferguson, Ron Marquart, the Rev. Jack McCaslin, Byron Peterson, Linda Ruchala, Sarah Wiese and I—were promptly cited for “drinking on public property,” a Class IV misdemeanor. We have been tried in Lancaster County Court, found guilty and fined \$100, plus \$23 court costs.

The rose garden event was fully staged, featuring Hurricane “Tall Boys” (a malt liquor not sold in Lincoln, but everywhere you look in Whiteclay) Lincoln Police, State Troopers, media and a sizable, supportive crowd. On cue, we opened and sipped, were issued



*Defendant Sarah Wiese leads the five Whiteclay defendants out of the Lancaster County Courthouse September 24.*

citations by courteous troopers, and went our way with a ticket and a court date.

When preparing for my August arraignment, I hurriedly reviewed what would happen. “Then, I say ‘innocent’ and we’re done, right?” “No, no, you don’t say ‘innocent;’ you say ‘not guilty.’” Significant difference. We pled “not guilty.”

At the arraignment, we mingled with those tidied-up souls who were never going to drink and drive again. Once could sense

contrition. The scene reminded me of the phrase, “firm purpose of amendment,” known to Catholics as a condition of forgiveness. We, on the other hand, were entertaining no such purpose, firm or otherwise. Luckily the law does not require such a promise, nor does it provide forgiveness. And, it was not forgiveness we sought. We sought justice.

Neither, it turns out, is easily obtained.

Between the arraignment and the trial, in consultation with our attorney Pat Knapp, we re-thought our plea. Originally pursuing a defence based on free political speech, we opted to plead “not guilty” to ensure that we’d even go to trial and get ‘our day in court.’ But now, with our trial date pending, we reconsidered. Believing that just laws ought to be enforced, should we not plead ‘guilty’? Even in the case of a demonstration of free speech, were we not guilty of drinking beer in public? Did we think our cause should excuse us from punishment? Was a free speech argument a valid reason to plead not guilty? The answer swung this way and that. In the end, we felt strongest in changing our plea to ‘guilty’ to be consistent with our belief that the enforcement of just laws should not be impeded—even by causes.

Five of us were tried on September 24. (Jon Ferguson and Fr. Jack McCaslin were out of state and had their court date waived.) So, five of us, one by one, pled guilty. It’s strange to stand before a judge and say, “Guilty, your Honor”—even if you are guilty and even if it’s only a Class IV misdemeanor. You hear your own voice settle in the courtroom and you feel vulnerable. A part of you wants to protest: “But, but I’m really a good person.” Then the sentence is spoken, muttered really, and—after a brief statement to the court—off you go, slightly dirtied into the arms of that portion of the community that supports your deed as honorable. It is that community, caring about another community in Pine Ridge that matters.

Why does a person commit civil disobedience? Here is what we told Judge Gale Pokorny. Linda Ruchala’s statement, we decided, most concisely states our position. The rest of our statements add different dimensions:

*Linda Ruchala:* I acknowledge that on June 10, I purposefully violated law by drinking alcohol on the public property in front of the Governor’s Mansion. I think of

*conclusion on page 11*

July 24, 2002

Governor Mike Johanns  
PO Box 94848  
Lincoln, NE 68509

Dear Governor Johanns,

As presidents of the two largest public health associations in Nebraska, we write to you today to support the efforts of Nebraskans for Peace to expose the serious public health conditions that exist in Whiteclay, Nebraska and the Pine Ridge Indian reservation. The Public Health Association of Nebraska (PHAN) is committed to protect and promote personal, community and environmental health throughout a variety of public health networks. The organization exercises leadership in public health policy development and advocacy, provides a forum for the discussion of emerging public health issues, and enhances the professional growth of members and other health professionals across the state. PHAN has several sections including the Nebraska Prevention Providers Association. The public health crisis that exists in Whiteclay has no easy answers, but we feel that there are several actions that can be taken as both short term and long term solutions.

*Work with the Nebraska State Patrol and Liquor Control Commission to aggressively enforce and prosecute liquor law violations that occur in Whiteclay.*

*Support the efforts of the local Border Tiyospaye workgroup that are working cooperatively across state, tribal and agency lines to find solutions to the problem. The groups’ efforts include accessing federal dollars to increase alcohol and drug treatment availability for Native Americans.*

*Continue to support the LB 692 funding to build the public health infrastructure in Nebraska. Also, continue to support the funding that is available through the Native American Public Health Act.*

*Assure substance abuse prevention and treatment dollars (Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant, Governor’s Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act, and the Governor’s State Incentive Cooperative Agreement with the federal Center for Substance Abuse Prevention) are available and utilized by the four Nebraska tribes and other agencies to meet Native American substance abuse needs.*

*Work with South Dakota Governor Janklow to address Native American public health issues such as alcohol, tobacco and other drug use, unemployment, diabetes and suicide on the Pine Ridge reservation.*

The Nebraska Public Health Association and the Nebraska Minority Public Association are committed to improving the health of all Nebraskans and appreciate your attention and response to this matter.

Sincerely,

Pat Lopez, President  
Public Health Association  
of Nebraska

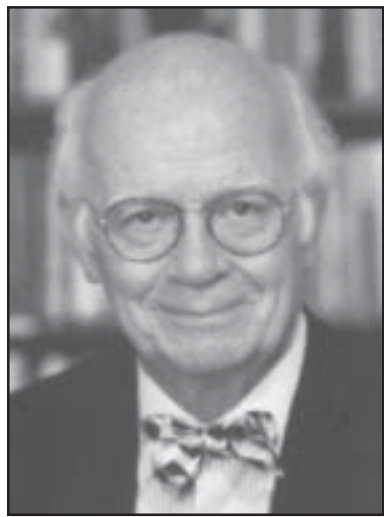
Kevin Flores, President  
Nebraska Minority Public  
Health Association

# Martin Marty on Nonviolence

by John Krejci

Native Nebraskan and prominent authority on religion in America, Dr. Martin Marty addressed the topic of religion and violence in several presentations in Lincoln September 18, 19 and 20. Since he does not come with a “canned” speech that he delivers again and again, each of his presentations was fresh and had the distinct feel of a work in progress. He is genuinely struggling with his own perspective on violence and nonviolence as it impacts children both in the United States and in the world today.

He candidly admitted that he speaks on topics which are not central to his expertise so that he will be challenged to continue to broaden his understanding and thus continue to grow. It’s quite



Dr. Martin Marty

impressive and encouraging that a 74-year-old emeritus professor, author of more than 50 books, and recipient of 67 honorary doctorates, still looks for new challenges and shares them with over 100 audiences per year.

At this point Dr. Marty does not consider himself a pacifist. But admits that he has never walked away from a discussion with a pacifist feeling he has carried the day. As a matter of fact, he pointed out that the teachings of Jesus on peace and nonviolence are clear and straightforward and quite supportive of a pacifist interpretation. He cited Jesus’ words:

“You have heard the commandment, ‘An eye for an eye,

a tooth for a tooth.’ But what I say to you is: offer no resistance to injury. When a person strikes you on the right cheek, turn and offer him the other. If anyone wishes to go to law over your shirt, hand him your coat as well...” (Matt. 6:38-40)

Pacifism has further support from the Sermon on the Mount.

“How blest are the poor in spirit, the reign of God is theirs... Blest too the peacemakers; they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those persecuted for holiness’ sake, the reign of God is theirs. Blest are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of slander against you, because of me. Be glad and rejoice, for your reward is great in heaven; they persecuted the prophets before you in the very same way. (Matt. 5: 3, 9-12)

Despite these and other clear endorsements of nonviolence (and arguably pacifism), Dr. Marty admits that most Christians minimize these passages and try to find ways to get around them. He noted that Martin Luther didn’t seem to understand the Sermon on the Mount and pretty much “skipped over it.” But he cautioned peacemakers not to be disappointed in the modest success (or failure) of their efforts, because history is not on the side of nonviolence. For emphasis, he quoted the 20<sup>th</sup> century French theologian Paul Ricoeur, “Nonviolence forgets that history is against it.”

Although not a pacifist—even given Jesus’ teaching—Marty is a staunch proponent of nonviolence and the value of “less violence.” He proposed an “unsentimental, self-critical approach” to nonviolence, one that combines a cautious patriotism with nonviolent witness against the forces of Holy War (both Islamic and U.S.-style crusades), and he warned of the danger of religious zealotry. He added that we should not forget how violent the United States has been in its policies on slavery, Native Americans, and the Spanish-American War, just to mention a few. He quoted Abraham Lincoln saying that we should also appeal to the “better angels of our nature,” and not forget some of the self-interested altruism, such as the Marshal Plan, that the U.S. has engaged in.

Professor Marty is primarily an educator and it is not surprising that he recommends education as a powerful tool to counteract violence, especially in regard to children. He noted that his next major project is a study of children, dealing particularly with the question: where do good kids come from?; the potential for good and evil in children; and how to promote good.

Effective education, he believes, does not come primarily from dogmatic education or dogmatism, but from “exemplarity”—a concept he equates to a clearing in the woods. A clearing defines the woods; it is where light falls and where cultivation can occur. In the same way, in a nurturing social environment (a clearing), parents, teachers and other nurturers can define (shed light on) nonviolence, and through stories and social influence cultivate a commitment to act non-violently.

Despite the nonviolent teaching of Jesus and other religious luminaries, religion, he noted, has for the most part been ambiguous toward violence. The statement is commonly made that all wars have

been caused by religion. Although he would deny this, Dr. Marty’s recent study of fundamentalism around the globe (Christian, Jewish, Islamic, and Hindu), gave perhaps some credence to this myth. It is true that religion has often allied itself with power and lost sight of its loftier goals. However, religion is also the most significant healer and source of compassion and good works. Ghandi saw religion as both healer and killer. The temptation to use one’s beliefs to dehumanize, convict and destroy others who do not hold to similar beliefs has been present through the ages. The Crusades, Holy Wars, the Inquisition, and colonial evangelization are but several examples. One can find examples of warrior God in both the Koran and the books of Joshua and Judges, e.g., “kill the infidel” or “cut down the Canaanites and possess their land,” as well as visions of nonviolence and admonitions to make it “safe for the children to play in the streets.”

Dr Marty admonished his audience to not only move beyond violence but to speak and preach

nonviolence, although that will always entail a risk. Speaking and preaching nonviolence always goes against the grain, as the examples of Jesus, Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Dorothy Day and others attest.

He was very critical of the present administration in a muted way, but he did have some good things to say about politics generally. Although every nation-state was born in violence and rests on power, and politics does not save souls, politics, he said—the political process of give and take, compromise, and dialogue—does minimize violence. He criticized the Bush administration for neglecting the art of politics for the promotion of war. He stated that for all its limitations, the alternative to politics is chaos.

He lamented the events of 9/11 but noted that on that day the United States descended from a “gadget-filled paradise suspended in domestic isolation to join a world of insecurity.” On that fateful day, we joined the human race. If only, he said, we can learn the right lesson from those events. We are not only the new victims, but are a major cause of the root problem.

# Gambling's Costs Overwhelm Any Benefits

by Jonathan Krutz  
Chair, *Gambling with the Good Life*

“Hello. I am a compulsive and problem gambler trying to recover. I was once a successful bank operations manager and a happily married wife and mother. Because of my gambling I have lost my job, severely strained my marriage, and neglected my children. I am also facing the chance that I will be going to prison and paying back money that I embezzled from my employer,” begins a letter which came last January to *Gambling with the Good Life*, Nebraska’s grassroots anti-gambling non-profit since 1995.

Nebraska’s bars, horsetracks, Keno parlors, and wanna-be slot machine distributors recently spent nearly a half a million dollars to get 126,753 Nebraska voters (who

across Nebraska” petition effort—which, thankfully, is currently tied up in court with significant legal problems. This article documents those reasons and encourages you to actively protect Nebraska’s constitutional prohibition against continued attempts to bring in hard-core gambling.

## Economics

Two significant economic problems will accompany gambling expansion in Nebraska. First, gambling itself does not add value to an economy. Unlike Las Vegas, which pulls dollars from California, or the Mashantucket Pequot Indian casino which pulls dollars from New York City, money gambled in Nebraska will be pulled almost exclusively from our own economy. The more gambling expands

\$7.6 million in wages and salaries, and 740 jobs, while contributing only \$33 million in taxes in the state, concluded Creighton University Economics Professor Ernest Goss in an August, 2002 study released by the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce. Within Omaha, such a casino would shift additional jobs and revenues away from many existing businesses while greatly expanding the amount gambled: add an Omaha casino to those in Council Bluffs and another \$235 million in net gambling losses will be sucked up each year—a 66 percent jump—according to figures in the Goss study. That’s money pulled mostly from current spending in Omaha-area businesses.

In the same way, rows of slot machines in every Nebraska bar and restaurant—the proposal still alive in court but recently knocked off the November ballot—would undermine retail receipts across the state. A study in 1999 examined the taxable receipts of comparable Iowa cities with and without casinos. Cities with casinos saw taxable receipts fall 4 percent. Cities without casinos saw taxable receipts grow by 17 percent.

Yes, some gambling losses get back into the local economy in the form of such things as wages and supplies. The rest disappears out of the economy to out-of-state gambling management firms and gambling equipment manufacturers, who are, naturally, anxious to get on with gambling expansion in Nebraska as soon as possible.

In short, dollars lost to gambling in Nebraska will be a drain on the Nebraska economy. Gambling is anti-economic development.

The second—and bigger—economic problem is that gambling expansion necessarily means an increase in gambling addicts. And the cost of gambling addicts is huge. With 14,143 slot machines confined to 17 locations, “the government of Wisconsin and its local communities must spend \$63,382,145 a year in additional social and criminal justice costs because of behaviors of its citizens that are associated with the presence of casinos,” according to a February, 2002 *Wisconsin Policy Research Institute Report*. That’s \$63 million in additional costs—completely separate from the dollars flowing in and out of the slot machines—for things like increased criminal, law enforcement, legal, and incarceration costs; illness and lost

work productivity; money lost to theft and bad debt; etc. The Goss report concludes that the Omaha casino suggested above would cause Omaha crime rates to jump by 7.9 percent. That’s not cheap.

## Do the math

Studies commissioned by the State of Iowa showed 3.7 percent more Iowans were problem gamblers in 1995 (after Indian casinos but before the Council Bluffs riverboats) than in 1989. In 1994, University of Illinois Professor John Kindt testified to Congress that, of several studies that had measured the average annual societal cost of a problem gambler, the range fell between \$13,200 and \$52,000.

Three point seven percent of Nebraska’s 1.2 million adults is over 40,000 people. Take the lowest cost estimate, \$13,200 per problem gambler, times 40,000 Nebraskans. The result gives an idea of the staggering but unpublicized cost of gambling expansion in Nebraska: \$528 million. Cut it in half if you think Council Bluffs’ 5,000 slots have already done half the damage that bringing gambling directly into Nebraska might do. The result still overwhelms any benefits that gambling expansion can claim.

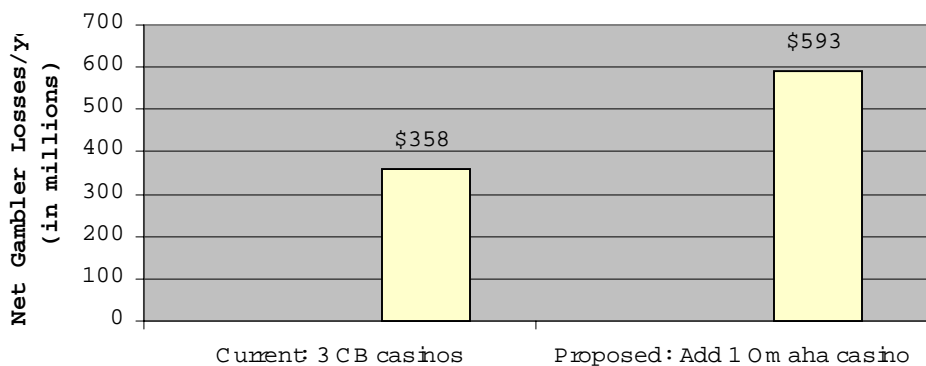
While the overall economic analysis here is simple and brief, it underscores the statement made in 1996 by 40 Nebraska economists: “We, the undersigned Nebraska economists, are opposed to the expansion of gambling in Nebraska because the additional direct and indirect costs are likely to far outweigh the additional direct and indirect benefits for the state as a whole.”

## Social Problems

As if the economic problems are not enough to raise serious concerns about gambling, the social problems of gambling are devastating. Gambling is addictive. “Twenty percent of the customers account for 80 percent of the gambling industry’s earnings,” *Time Magazine* quoted Henry Lesieur, president of the Institute for Problem Gambling in Pawtucket, Rhode Island (11/17/97). “We know that 5 percent to 6 percent of the total population are problem gamblers, and those 5 percent are spending 30 percent to 40 percent of the money.” (Once again, do that math: if an Omaha casino causes

conclusion on page 8

**Think gambling won't expand if we allow a casino in Omaha? Think again.**



A recent Omaha Chamber of Commerce study shows that one average-size casino in Omaha will cause a 66% jump in gambler losses to Omaha and Council Bluffs casinos.

apparently didn’t notice that Council Bluffs raised property and sales taxes this year) to sign a constitutional amendment for “lower taxes.” While their proposal could lead to 100,000 or more video slot machines across Nebraska (Council Bluffs has less than 5,000 slots), petition promoters said little about gambling and even less about the costs associated with the spread of gambling.

And the costs of gambling are high.

There are solid economic and social reasons to oppose gambling expansion of any kind in Nebraska. There are compelling reasons to be particularly concerned about the kind of gambling expansion proposed in the “slots

in Nebraska, the less will be spent in Nebraska’s businesses.

Omaha experiences this already. “The number of people who can get financed have really dropped sharply since gambling came to Council Bluffs,” said Omaha car dealer Stan Olsen. Omaha grocer Ron Meredith said his business suffered an immediate 15 percent drop in business. It hasn’t returned.

Putting a casino directly in Omaha would hurt as much as it helps. An Omaha casino with 1,300 slot machines and 53 table games (which is an average size for a casino in the U.S.) would annually cost the non-Omaha economy in Nebraska \$30 million in sales,

# Gambling's Costs, conclusion

gambling losses to jump by \$235 million, roughly one third of that will come from problem gamblers.) Addicts can't stop; addiction destroys their lives—and the lives of those around them.

The stories are endless: constant baby-left-in-car stories like Angela Lauber, jailed in July for leaving her three-week-old baby in a car in the sun on an 80-degree day while she gambled in Montana; numberless white-collar embezzlement stories like Martha Wittkowski, charged in February with stealing \$231,000 from Iowa Easter Seals where she was CEO; continual innocent-victim stories like William Hovan, 59, who, on three-and-a-half hours of sleep in two days of gambling, drove a tour bus off the road in New York in July, killing five people; and on and on and on.

The studies are clear. In the two years following the introduction of slot machines in Deadwood, South Dakota, child abuse reports rose 42 percent and domestic violence and assaults increased by 80 percent. A 1998 survey of 12,000 Louisiana adolescents found that one quarter had illegally played video poker. Twenty percent of compulsive gamblers

attempt suicide. A survey of Gambler's Anonymous participants revealed that 34 percent were fired or quit their jobs, 44 percent had stolen from their employers, and 26 percent were divorced or separated as a result of gambling. "The negative financial and sociological impacts on family members, friends, and others, between seven and seventeen people per compulsive gambler, are enormous and must be borne by charities, social-welfare organizations, and federal, state and local governments," according to a 1994 *Drake Law Review* article.

Nor do gambler assistance funds begin to address the problems. Participants at the 16th Annual National Conference on Problem Gambling in Dallas last June heard that most blacks do not seek treatment for gambling problems and that women with gambling problems find Gamblers Anonymous too confrontational and feel more suicidal after attending. The head of Iowa's gambler treatment program recognizes that many who need help do not seek it, and estimates that at best only a quarter of those who seek help

actually manage to kick their gambling habit, though relapses in that group are common.

Gambling's social problems do not characterize the kind of positive growth we all would like to see for Nebraska. Expanding gambling will eat away at the fundamental Good Life in Nebraska, which we have received from our parents and want to pass on to our children.

## The Petition Proposal

While any gambling expansion would come at a large cost to Nebraska, it's hard to imagine a worse expansion idea than putting a virtually unlimited number of video slots—the fastest, and therefore most addictive, form of gambling—conveniently into the 3,000 bars and restaurants of Nebraska's towns and neighborhoods.

The idea is so bad that the National Gambling Impact Study Commission, appointed in 1997 by Congress and the president for a two-year investigation of gambling in America, issued few more forceful recommendations than that states should "cease and roll back" such gambling. In 1999, as South Carolina was poised to vote overwhelmingly (polls showed 60 percent in favor, 16 percent opposed) to throw out 34,000 video slots, the state's Supreme Court declared them all illegal. In Montana, a state with 16,500 slot machines, most in bar and restaurant "mini-casinos" such as have been proposed for Nebraska, a December poll showed 52 percent of registered voters favored banning all gambling, while only 33 percent wanted to keep it. Even the Public Sector Gaming Study Commission, which "supports efforts to replace illegal gambling with gambling that is publicly controlled," conceded in a March, 2000, report that there are "some forms of gambling, such as video poker games, that may indeed pose significant problems for the communities that allow them."

Why are video slots in neighborhoods so bad?

First, neighborhood slot machines drain the neighborhood economies. No new money enters the local economy; instead, discretionary spending shifts away from local retailers to gambling. A 1998 Deloitte & Touche study commissioned by the State of South Dakota—which has 8,000 convenience gambling video slots—estimated that the state's economy would experience "a \$105.4 million spending injection into the economy" and add 640 jobs if the state had no video slots. A similar result in Nebraska's relatively larger economy indicates that slots across Nebraska would actually cost our economy \$254.8 million and 1,547 jobs.

Second, as discussed earlier, gambling addicts are expensive. Neighborhood slots will appeal to a different market segment than those willing to travel out of state to gamble. Slot machines in Nebraska's bars and restaurants won't compete with the buffets and entertainment provided by the Council Bluffs casinos; instead, they will create a whole new group of neighborhood gambling addicts who will feed into Council Bluffs for bigger thrills once their local slots get them hooked, just as the spread of casinos across the country has fed rather than hurt the casinos of Nevada. The idea that slot machines in Nebraska's neighborhoods would keep Nebraskans out of Council Bluffs casinos is as unlikely as the idea that city parks keep Nebraskans out of Adventureland or Worlds of Fun.

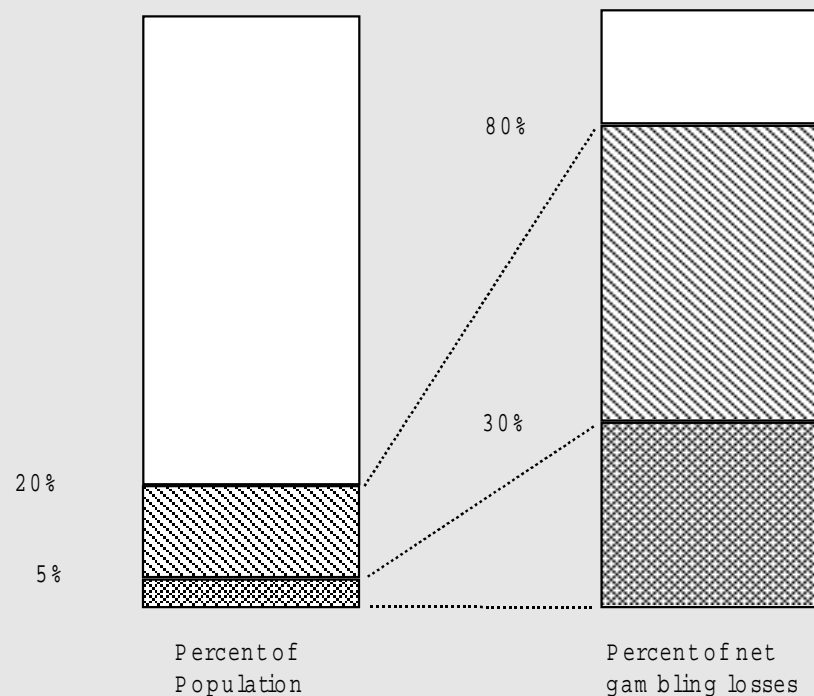
## Not in our Constitution

Not only is the concept of slots across Nebraska a poor one, but the implementation of it in the language of the petition borders on audacious. The proposed amendment would be the Constitution's sixth-longest article, adding nearly 10 percent to its length and enshrining video slots along with the basic freedoms and civil rights of Nebraskans. Designed to be "local option," the proposal would pit community against community in a race to get slots in first and promote them hardest. Written by gambling promoters, it gives operators 50 percent of the proceeds (vs., for instance, 35 percent in Oregon), it draws the initial oversight body exclusively from those promoting the slots, it constitutionally prohibits legislative adjustment over time, and it takes so many deductions from the "50 percent community share" of the proceeds that if you put a quarter into a slot, less than a penny will likely go for tax relief.

There are solid economic and social reasons to be deeply concerned about any kind of gambling expansion in Nebraska. Those reasons and more apply in particular to the proposal to put video slots into the bars and restaurants of Nebraska's towns and neighborhoods.

Please join the coalition of hundreds of prominent Nebraskans who have already signed the GWGL "Statement of Solidarity against Gambling Expansion." You'll find the statement, the coalition names, and more information at [www.gamblingwiththegoodlife.com](http://www.gamblingwiththegoodlife.com). Please raise these issues in your civic groups, your churches, and your neighborhoods. Please provide your voice of reason when arguments are made that tout the income side of the gambling financial sheet while pretending that the overwhelming expense side doesn't exist.

## Where Gambling Dollars Come From



**Gambling operations attract a small, addiction-prone sub-population— and drain them dry.**

(Figures from Henry Lesieur, former University of Illinois professor, president of the Institute for Problem Gambling in Pawtucket, RI, *Time Magazine*, 11/17/97.)

# THE HIDDEN PROPERTY TAX COST OF LB 775

by Mark Vasina

The Legislature's failure to examine the state's expensive corporate tax break programs while making deep cuts to education and social services is attracting notice. LB 775—the most expensive of these programs providing state income tax credits and state and local sales tax refunds—cost the state treasury \$129 million in 2001 alone, a sum higher than the \$127 million state revenue shortfall for FY2001. Lost local revenues are also substantial. In 2001, LB 775 refunds of city sales taxes reduced city sales tax receipts by \$18 million, or 9 percent of city sales tax receipts statewide.

Lost tax revenues are “recovered” by increasing taxes on others or by cutting spending programs. Additional taxes paid by

## LB 775 Property Tax Subsidy Rates (2001)

COUNTY	LB 775 Subsidy (Additional Taxes Paid)
Washington	15.21%
Platte	5.31%
Dakota	3.96%
Adams	3.81%
Saline	3.51%
Colfax	2.37%
Douglas	0.93%
Hall	0.51%
Lancaster	0.08%

other taxpayers are a subsidy paid to businesses participating in LB 775.

Largely hidden from public scrutiny are property tax exemptions provided for certain forms of personal property acquired for some of the larger LB 775 projects. Property taxes avoided are not counted against LB 775 credits earned by businesses, and are therefore not reported by the Department of Revenue. Under this provision of the law, businesses avoided \$13 million in property taxes in 2001 and \$120 million since 1987. These amounts represent 8 percent of the total program cost

of LB 775—\$160.5 million in 2001 and \$1.42 billion since program inception.

Local governments take a large hit for this lost property tax revenue, while property taxpayers absorb substantial shifts of the tax burden in districts where qualifying projects are located. If LB 775 businesses paid taxes on their exempt personal property, value bases would be higher and tax rates lower. And other property taxpayers would pay fewer taxes.

Property tax subsidies are disproportionately imposed on geographically select groups of taxpayers. In 2001, only 10 counties accounted for 92 percent of property taxes avoided. Douglas County's portion is 35 percent, but most of the rest is in counties with ethanol and grain processing facilities or meatpacking and meat-processing plants.

Tax burden shifts for most local government services falls on local taxpayers. However, the portion of the subsidy associated with property taxes for school system operating budgets (roughly 60percent of the total property tax subsidy) is shifted away from local property taxpayers to taxpayers at the state level, through state aid payments for education. Since the state aid formula provides aid on a sliding basis relative to a school system's value base, state aid replaces most school system property taxes avoided by LB 775 businesses. It is important to note that this portion of state aid is subsidizing LB 775 businesses, not local taxpayers in general.

Property taxpayer subsidies of LB 775 businesses are highest in Washington County—where personal property valuation exempted under LB 775 (in other words, the LB 775 personal property subsidy rate) was 15.2percent percent of the county value base last year—followed by Platte (5.3percent), Dakota (4.0percent), Adams (3.8percent),

Saline (3.5percent) and Colfax (2.4percent). The subsidy rate in Douglas County last year was almost 1percent.

The greatest impact is on taxpayers residing near qualifying projects in non-metropolitan counties. Colfax County taxpayers subsidize a meatpacking plant owned by Cargill

fate of school bond initiatives can be disastrous, since school bond debt does not receive state aid.

The Legislature can eliminate or reduce LB 775 property tax subsidies or shift more of the local burden to taxpayers at the state level. Legislative options include (1) removing the

## LB 775 Program Cost - Breakout by State & Local Costs

	2001		1988-2001	
State Income Tax Credits	\$43,246,720	27%	\$449,968,317	32%
State Sales Tax Refunds	86,095,486	54%	714,981,100	50%
<b>Program Cost - State</b>	<b>\$129,342,206</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>\$1,164,949,417</b>	<b>82%</b>
City Sales Tax Refunds	18,187,979	11%	137,401,320	10%
Property Tax Avoided	12,966,488	8%	120,028,970	8%
<b>Program Cost - Local</b>	<b>\$31,154,467</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>\$257,430,290</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>Total Program Cost</b>	<b>\$160,496,673</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$1,422,379,707</b>	<b>100%</b>

subsidiary Excel. The owner of a \$50,000 home in Schuyler (Colfax County's largest city) paid a total property tax subsidy to Excel of over \$100 since 1992, the year the project first qualified for property tax exemption. The owner of a 160-acre tract of farmland with an assessable value of \$1,600 per acre and located within Excel's school system (19-0123) paid a total subsidy of over \$500. Total property taxes shifted from Excel to other taxpayers in Colfax County since 1992 are \$800,000, while the additional amount shifted to taxpayers statewide (through state aid to education) is \$1 million.

The tax burden of higher local infrastructure costs associated with LB 775 projects is shifted to other local taxpayers. Communities with meat-processing plants face especially daunting challenges, most importantly the explosion in school enrollments. In spite of state aid, LB 775 tax subsidies result in more severe spending constraints for school districts at a time when budget needs are greater. The impact on the

provision for property tax exemptions; (2) disallowing exemptions in particularly egregious situations, such as for school bonds; or (3) requiring State General Fund reimbursement of local taxing authorities for all lost revenues, in the manner of state aid for education. The state aid formula must also be preserved, since any adjustment to the formula which reduces state aid will shift the school system portion of the property tax subsidy back to local taxpayers.

Corporation tax incentive programs must be intrinsically fair to the taxpayers of the state and the local communities affected. Costs associated with perceived statewide benefits should not be borne by local taxpayers. Clearly, local benefits of such programs should exceed local costs. LB 775's property tax exemptions substantially deny communities a major local benefit (property tax base enrichment), while imposing a new harm (tax burden shift to other local taxpayers). Is this truly a result that informed taxpayers want?

# Two Obituaries

We often speak of the need for the influence of “grassroots” thinking as we search for new directions in our social, political and economic life. Such an influence was Weston H.B. Webb who died at his home in Grand Island on June 5, 2002. Wes was born August 18, 1917 during the throes of World War I. He was born and raised and educated in the Oakland, California area, finishing his education at the University of California, Berkeley. His early career, including a short period in the Navy, was spent in California. In 1949, however, he married June Mott, a Quaker and relocated to Nebraska to farm, where he maintained a close connection with agriculture and the land until his retirement in 1979.

An avid reader and a keen student of history, Wes was naturally attuned to the social and political events of the day. He was one of the early movers in the founding and development of Nebraskans for Peace and, under the auspices of a “Press Pass” issued by the local small town newspaper, *The Polk Progress*, attended the Paris Peace Talks in 1971 to provide articulate and knowledgeable “on the ground” reports to Nebraskans on the negotiations to end the Vietnam War.

That life-long desire to learn—and then to share that knowledge in the hope of creating change—also took him to the Soviet Union (twice) and to Nicaragua with the Witness for Peace Program during the Contra Wars of the ‘80s. Throughout his years in Nebraska, he and June sustained a close affinity with the Quakers in their home church at Central City Friends Meeting. Artist and farmer, family man and man of peace, Weston Webb was an uncommon person in many ways, sharing the everyday events of life with all of us in his community. And, in many ways, his community reached around our world. — Neil Mesner

Gerald Henderson, who served on the NFP State Board of Directors continuously for the better part of the last decade, died this past September 15 from complications of a stroke suffered just days before. Born to one of the few black families in Stromsburg, Nebraska in 1928, Jerry went on to become Lincoln’s first director of the Human Rights Commission and a leading figure in the civil rights movement in the state.

As the only African-American student in his graduating class at Grand Island High School and a “lump of coal in a sea of snow” during his college days at Nebraska Wesleyan University in the ‘50s, he often said he’d experienced the effects of discrimination firsthand. He was an early advocate of the Civil Rights movement, but it was his participation in the 1963 March on Washington, he later said, that served as the “highlight and revelation that justice in America could be a reality.”

That commitment to justice led him to Selma, Alabama, where he worked on organizing voter registration. From there he went on to study law at both the University of Nebraska and the Antioch School of Civil Rights Law. Ultimately, though, his desire to work hands-on for social change led him to join the staffs of Lincoln’s Malone Community Center and the Lincoln Action Program. Then, in 1968, he was selected as the director of the Human Rights Commission, a post he held until his retirement in 1994. As the commission’s first director, he will perhaps be best remembered for his efforts to stop housing segregation in Nebraska’s Capital.

Retirement, however, did not slow his community involvement. In addition to Nebraskans for Peace, he remained active with the NAACP, ACLU-Nebraska, Citizens Against Racism and Discrimination, the United Nations Association, Newman United Methodist Church and of course the Malone Center. His talents and his good will shall be sorely missed by those of us who survive him.

## ... and a departure

Kevin Tuininga, a Canadian import from rural Alberta, was fresh out of college when he found our advertisement for an NFP Omaha Coordinator in the *Omaha World-Herald* want-ads two years ago. He interviewed for the job and collectively swept us off our feet. Nebraskans for Peace had never had a Canadian before. But based on this experience, we’ll want more. Combining a marvelous knack for the social graces with a good head for organizing, Kevin spent the next two years working on a whole host of social and economic justice issues in Omaha... On death penalty abolition with Omaha Chapter President Marylyn Felion... On Gay and Lesbian human rights legislation with Virginia Walsh... On Fair Trade issues and support for meatpacking workers with our friends in Organized Labor... And, of course, on opposing the “War on Terrorism” and the War in Afghanistan. Besides organizing anti-war public protests and educational efforts, he coordinated the 2002 Annual Peace Conference with peace educator Colman McCarthy, which drew over 300 people and our largest crowd in 20 years. Oh, we were happy. We’d had Omaha Coordinators this good, but never one better.

Alas, it was not to last. This past June, Kevin announced that he was tendering his resignation to return to school. He missed the academic environment, he told us, and yearned to pursue a post-graduate degree. So nearly two years to the day after he’d started for NFP, he ended his tenure with us. Teaching someday at the college level, he says, has its appeal, and smart and good as he is, he’d be grand at it. So with a moist eye, we wish him the best, and shall content ourselves with having been able to know him as long as we did. It’s a big country, Canada, and maybe somewhere in the wilds of Saskatchewan or the suburbs of Toronto, we’ll be lucky enough to meet another just like him.

## Guilty, conclusion

myself as a law-abiding person, and also one who takes responsibility for her actions. Therefore, I would like to explain to the court that I took this illegal action with a great deal of forethought. My act of drinking beer on the governor’s front lawn was an act of political speech designed to underscore the lack of enforcement of liquor law violations that occur daily in Whiteclay, Nebraska, a town of 14 people in which four off-sale dealers sell over 11,000 cans of beer a day, when there is no legal place for the beer to be consumed.

For years, Nebraskans for Peace and the leaders of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation have appealed to the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission, the Nebraska State Patrol, the Sheridan County Sheriff’s Department, the governor and even the Nebraska Unicameral to enforce the liquor laws in Whiteclay. There has been no effective action or improvement of the situation there.

In the course of my research on this issue, I have visited Whiteclay and have seen firsthand scores of empty beer cans in the public streets and displays of public drunkenness. Still, there are few citations issued and no consequences for the establishments that knowingly and repeatedly violate liquor laws.

It is right that I should be held responsible for my violation of state liquor law. However, convicting me and fining me today for this violation also constitutes a double standard within our system of justice, an unequal application of the law. I ask, through my action, that the liquor laws be enforced whether they are violated in Lincoln or Whiteclay. I am still waiting for the State of Nebraska to uphold the law uniformly and without prejudice in Whiteclay.

*Ron Marquart:* I regret I had to resort to civil disobedience to get the attention of our State officials to point out the inequitable enforcement of the law resulting in a tragic situation at Whiteclay.”

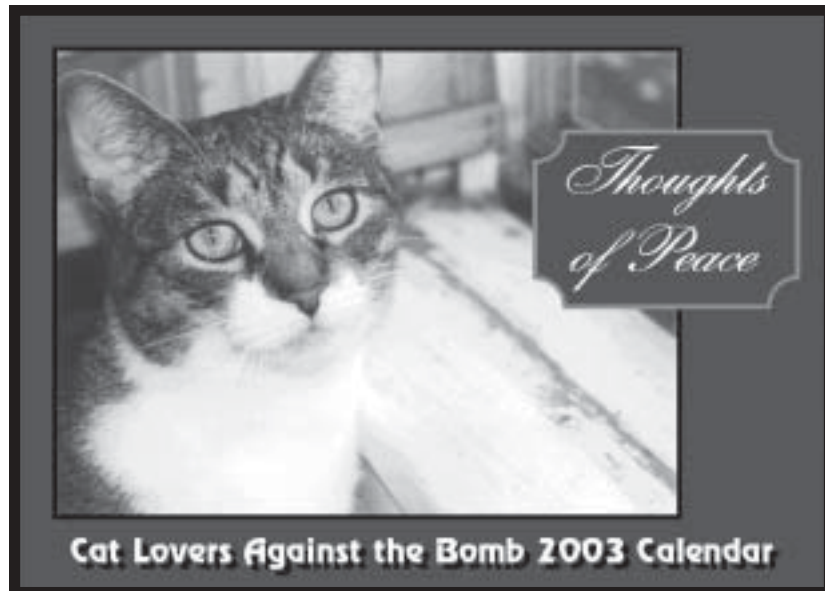
*Byron Peterson:* I drank on the Governor’s lawn to call attention to the fact that the State continues to fail in its responsibility to provide equal protection under the law to the patrons of Whiteclay.

*Sarah Wiese:* Hopefully, our acts of civil disobedience will be a catalyst for people to start learning about the problem of Whiteclay, and for those who know about the problem to become active.

*Carol McShane:* Civil disobedience has an honorable history in the evolution of law in this country. One commits civil disobedience as a last resort when other avenues have failed to bring about the enforcement of just laws. As the Rev. Desmond Tutu has said: the first action necessary to establish a healthy and prosperous community is the enforcement of just laws. Some say that the situation in Whiteclay, Nebraska is hopeless. I say that when people from another segment of the human community sacrifice in order to highlight injustice, there is hope. Our action in civil disobedience is an act of hope for people who live where just laws are not enforced.

After the trial a reporter asked, “What’s next in the Whiteclay struggle?” The Legislature’s Interim Study Hearing on October 8 Rushville is intended to gather facts concerning the situation there. November 5 tribal elections will be held on the Pine Ridge Reservation. And next January, we have every intention of introducing more legislation. We will persist. We will not give up on this population. There are over a thousand members of Nebraskans for Peace in the state. If necessary, more will commit civil disobedience. Equal protection under the law is a principle worth fighting for, again and again.

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## BULLETIN BOARD

Office Hours for the Nebraskans for Peace State Office in Lincoln, at 941 'O' Street, Suite 1026, are 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., weekdays, except holidays.

**October 24** United Nations Day

**October 26** National March on Washington, D.C. to "Stop the War on Iraq BEFORE IT STARTS." NFP is working to organize a busload from Nebraska. To participate or to provide financial support, call the NFP State Office at 402-475-4620 for details.

**November 5** Election Day

To list an event in the CALENDAR, submit in writing by the tenth of the month preceding the event. Mail to Nebraskans for Peace — Calendar, 941 "O" Street, Suite 1026, Lincoln, NE 68508. E-mail: [nfpstate@aol.com](mailto:nfpstate@aol.com). Announcements published on a space available basis.



# Dick Cheney's Drumbeat for War

Why is Dick Cheney pushing George Bush to go to war in Iraq? Granted, Cheney is not alone. Condoleeza Rice and Donald Rumsfeld are singing back up.

But it was Cheney's speech in late August at a V.F.W. in Nashville, Tennessee, which opened the administration's war on Iraq. According to the *New York Times*, Cheney "spoke so disparagingly of past United Nations weapons inspections that he left the impression the administration would not go anywhere near that route, or the United Nations, ever again."

There is mixed support in Congress for this war. There is virtually no support from U.S. allies around the world. There is no U.S. federal budget surplus to pay for such a war, nor to rebuild post-war Iraq. Nevertheless, Iraq has been sufficiently impressed by such fierce saber rattling, that it has agreed to all existing conditions for weapons inspection by the United Nations, "without condition." Russia, China and France, all with veto power on the UN Security Council, were quick to recognize Iraq's policy shift.

Still the Bush administration pursues its demands for "regime change," with Cheney as chief cheerleader for unilateral action on the part of President Bush. Do

these guys really think they can, and more important should, carry this off? Has the absolute power of being the last big dog standing gone completely to their heads and corrupted these stone Cold Warriors absolutely?

Maybe. Or maybe a good deal of this whole dust-up is just that—dust in the eyes and ears of the voters, with an eye to the coming election. Maybe the administration has issues they'd rather not debate. Maybe they are counting on the sound and fury of national and international debate over war to drown those other issues out.

Cheney energy industry cronies among Bush administration appointees appear to be in trouble in the corporate accounting scandals. (Cheney has refused to comply with a court order to release records of the task force that advised him on the administration's energy policy; a recent *Wall Street Journal* article confirms that market manipulation by energy companies—the same that likely wrote Cheney's plan—was key in causing California's energy crisis.) Recently, Secretary of the Army Thomas White has attracted attention for his role in hiding Enron's financial condition before its bust. White is reported (*NYT*, 9/17/2002) to have written in an e-mail, "Close a bigger deal. Hide the loss before the 1Q [first quarter]." Bush Budget Director Mitch Daniels has just been named in a shareholders' lawsuit against utility holding company IPALCO. The suit names Daniels

as part of a group of executives that misled investors, who lost millions of dollars when IPALCO was sold.

Cheney's own problems with Halliburton are growing. Since midsummer, federal regulators have been investigating Halliburton's accounting for cost overruns when Cheney was CEO. Recent *NYT* stories report that while Halliburton "sold a division, then declared its employees had 'resigned,' allowing it to confiscate their pensions," Cheney was given a special sweetheart package at his "retirement" at a cost to Halliburton of \$8.5 million. And recent class-action suits over asbestos contamination have exposed Halliburton to enormous financial liabilities through purchase of a company during Cheney's tenure—liabilities Cheney may have known were likely to occur, according to *National Public Radio*.

More pressing than the administration's personal embarrassments is the economy. The Dow is at a four-year low. Poverty is up in America, for the first time in eight years, middle income households lost income for the first time in a decade, and the gap between rich and poor continues to grow. According to the Census Bureau, the number of poor Americans rose last year to 32.9 million, an increase of 1.3 million, while the proportion living in poverty rose to 11.7 percent, from 11.3 percent in 2000. Meanwhile, the richest 20 percent of the U.S. population received half of all household income last year, up from 45 percent in 1985. The poorest 20

percent received 3.5 percent of total household income, down from 4 percent in 1985.

Perhaps most chilling for Bush and Cheney, increases in poverty last year were in the suburbs, in the South and among non-Hispanic whites. Newly impoverished swing voters facing repo men and eight-for-a-dollar macaroni dinners could spell Republican loss of the House of Representatives

As Cheney himself pointed out in a *CNN* interview, Iraq has 10 percent of known world oil reserves. The Bush administration believes, with good reason, that a "regime change" in Iraq would bring down the price of crude oil. Any government that replaces the current regime in Baghdad will reasonably want to release oil reserves and use the money to rebuild Iraq. That is exactly why OPEC nations, however nervously, prefer to tolerate Saddam Hussein—because his standoff with the U.S. means most Iraqi oil stays off the market and prices stay up. Still, with the U.S. economy in recession and no clear light at the end of the tunnel, lower oil prices could provide smoke and mirrors for an administration with no other economic good news to offer.

War is where the cynical and the shortsighted go for a quick fix to deep economic problems. Look what a lot of good war did for the German economies. Then there was Vietnam. Of course, it all gets paid for by working people in the end, and foreign wars always, but always, come home to roost.



**From the Bottom by Sally Herrin**

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