



Nebraska Report

There is no Peace without Justice

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Will the Iraq Elections Lead to Peace?



Robert K. Hitchcock

by Robert K. Hitchcock,
UNL Professor of Anthropology

On January 30, 2005, millions of Iraqis made their way to polling places where they cast ballots for a large number of candidates representing some 130 different parties and groups. They did this in spite of widespread

violence in the country, some of it targeted on potential voters. The hope of many people is that the election will prove to be a turning point and that the long-term results will be democracy, peace, and stability in Iraq.

The question that was being asked quietly by a number of Iraqis, Americans, and others, was whether the success of the election would lead to the Iraqi nation coming together or, alternatively, fragmenting.

The Shi'ites, who make up some 55-60 percent of the Iraqi population, were the main winners in the election. Within the Shi'ites there are at least 250-350 different political parties, organizations, groups, and social movements competing for power. Since they did not get a two-thirds majority in the election, the Shi'ites must do some coalition building with the other parties. A concern of some secular Iraqis and the U.S. is if the religious Shi'ite bloc will attempt to forge greater links with Iran or establish an Islamist state.

A second power bloc in Iraq is the Kurdish minority who make up between 15 and 22 percent of the popula-

tion. The Kurdish Alliance, which was made up of two major Kurdish political parties, came in second in the elections, capturing some 26 percent of the vote. The Kurds have had hopes for autonomy in the north, and with their success in the election it is possible there may be efforts to seek self-determination and possibly even the formation of a Kurdish state. Turkey, with a large Kurdish population of its own, has already warned that it will not permit such a development.

Sunni Arabs were the dominant group in Iraq until the fall of Saddam Hussein, despite comprising little more than 17 percent of the country's population. Certain to suffer a loss of status in any new government based on proportional representation, the Sunni are believed by many to constitute the core of nationalist insurgency against the occupation. Their leadership strongly opposed the timing of the election and urged a boycott of the vote.

Jockeying over the selection of the new prime minister is still going on as I write. It is unlikely, however, that Ayad Allawi, the man the Bush Administration designated as the interim Iraq government prime minister and their obvious favorite to retain the post, will be successful in doing so. Both the Shi'ites' most powerful cleric, Iranian-born Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, and the largest Shi'ite political bloc, the United Iraq Alliance, have endorsed the candidacy of current interim government Vice President Ibrahim al-Jaafari. Al-Jaafari heads up Islamic Dawa, a relatively conservative Islamic organization, and his selection is certain to heighten concerns about the role of religion in the new government.

Both the Shi'ite and the Kurdish leadership appear to realize that if they reach out to the Sunni, it may be

possible to form an inclusive government and that way help deflate the insurgency in the country. Besides the Kurds in the north there are also Turkomans, who make up 3-4 percent of Iraq's population. There are also Assyrian and other Christian minorities who together constitute another 3-4 percent. How these various minority populations will be accommodated in the new Iraq is critical to the prospects for social stability in the country.

The Transitional National Assembly (TNA) will be involved in drafting the new constitution in Iraq. There are plans for a reconciliation conference to be held, possibly in March. Prior to that there will be extensive public discussion of issues ranging from reintegration and coalition-formation to peace, security, and development.

The future of Iraq will depend on a whole set of factors, not least among them the ability of the various individuals and groups to obtain consensus on such complex issues as how to go about handling security, the future of foreign troops on Iraqi soil, the role of Islamic law, petroleum contracts, reconstruction, and relations with neighboring countries.

It is critical for the future of Iraq that the political processes are as inclusive, fair, and participatory as possible. Clearly, the Shi'ite majority and independence-minded Kurds were enthusiastic about having elections, and at last gaining political power. The question now is whether the U.S. occupation and its imposed democratic solution have indeed established the conditions for bringing peace and social justice, or if our unilateral actions have unleashed forces that will further destabilize the entire region.

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Latin America Briefs

compiled by Christy Hargesheimer



Forecast for 2005...

Latin America generally continues to be relegated to 'backyard' status by the U.S. government, with the exception of a few areas that are of concern to the Bush Administration. With several center-left presidents currently governing in much of South America, at another point in history the United States might have exhibited a strong diplomatic and military response, such as the Reagan Administration's heavy involvement in Central America. Today, however, the U.S. is greatly overextended in the Middle East, and increasing attention towards Iran and North Korea deflects attention from Latin America. The leftist Latin American presidents are basically moderate pragmatists, with the exception of Venezuela's Hugo Chávez, who has foiled the Bush Administration's attempts to remove him. (Chávez, convinced that the U.S. plans to assassinate him, has recently stated that in such an event, the U.S. will be completely cut off from Venezuelan oil.) The major Latin American concerns of the U.S. continue to be Colombia and Cuba.

Colombia

Bush strongly supports conservative leader Álvaro Uribe, perceived as a strong ally in the War on Terror. "Plan Colombia," the United States' massive aid package, most of which is military, was to have been a one-time, five-year deal, ending in 2005. Bush wants to extend this aid, arguing that the drug crop has dropped in acres, although statistics show that the price and availability of cocaine remains constant in the United States. He wants a renewal of the more than \$700 million dollars sent to Colombia and the Andean region each year since 2000. With the passage of legislation in 2004 that doubled the number of U.S. troops permitted in Colombia to 800, along with 600 civilian contractors, the training and guiding of Colombia's army has become a major investment. The continued human rights violations, threats against human rights defenders and union leaders, and linkages between the army and right-wing paramilitary forces in the Arauca province, where the United States has a strong presence because of the oil pipeline, haven't seemed to deter U.S. involvement. However, despite Bush's enthusiastic endorsement of Uribe, many members of the U.S. Congress are concerned about the human rights record of the Colombian military and are closely watching the Colombian process of paramilitary demobilization.

Cuba

After the 2004 toughening of travel restrictions that limit Cuban-Americans to one family visit every three years and effectively put an end to academic exchanges, the Bush Administration in November halted the transfer of money to U.S. agricultural firms making sales to Cuba, and is reviewing a law requiring Cuba to make "payments in advance" for U.S. agricultural imports before they are shipped. This would reduce and possibly halt U.S. agricultural sales to Cuba. The election of Cuban-American Mel Martinez of Florida to the Senate will make it difficult for restrictions to be eased. However, there has been some backlash against these Bush Administration policies among the academic, business/agriculture, and Cuban-American sectors. Fidel Castro has also responded by forbidding the use of the U.S. dollar in Cuba, and he is forming stronger ties with China and Venezuela. For example, in exchange for sending doctors to Venezuelan impoverished areas, Castro is receiving oil and agricultural products.

Guatemala

In 1990, the U.S. initiated a ban on military aid to Guatemala until it can be certified that there is progress in instituting military reforms and in investigating groups and individuals believed to be behind corruption, drug trafficking, and threats and attacks against human rights groups. The Bush Administration has been quick to ease pressure on the Berger Administration, and will likely ask Congress to lift the ban on military aid in 2005. This follows a disturbing trend of the U.S. increasing military aid while at the same time cutting development assistance.

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Somebody Needs to Rein in Cheney on Iran

by Ray McGovern

Fresh from having led the charge for an unfounded and illegal war on Iraq, Vice President and Nebraska native Dick Cheney has now apparently set his sights on Iran. As former CIA analyst Ray McGovern, who delivered the keynote address at the 2004 Annual Peace Conference, details in his article below, Cheney appears to be once again mounting a propaganda campaign for military intervention in the Muslim world. Cheney's remarks, not surprisingly, provoked a new wave of anxiety in the international community, which President Bush sought to allay in his recent trip to Europe. Bush's comments at a February 22 news conference in Brussels, however, can hardly have provided much reassurance. In a classic case of Orwellian doublespeak, the president stated, "This notion that the United States is getting ready to attack Iran is simply ridiculous. And having said that, all options are on the table."

Quick! Anyone! Who can put the brakes on Vice President Dick Cheney before we have another war on our hands? Current and former intelligence analysts are reacting with wonderment and apprehension to his remarks January 20 on the nuclear program of Iran and his resuscitated spinning on why attacking Iraq was the prudent thing to do.

There he goes again, they say—trifling with the truth on Iraq and now taking off after Iran. Does he really have the temerity to reach into the same bag of tricks used to convince most Americans that Iraq was an immediate nuclear threat? Will his distinctive mix of truculence and contempt for the truth succeed in rationalizing attacks on Iran on grounds that U.S. intelligence may have underestimated the progress in Iraq's nuclear weapons program 15 years ago?



At this point the focus is no longer on the bogus weapons of mass destruction (WMD) rationale used to promote the attack on Iraq, intelligence analysts say. It's the claims the vice president is now making regarding Iran's nuclear capability... and, given the deliberate distortions on Iraq, whether anyone should believe him.

Appearing on inauguration day on MSNBC's *Imus in the Morning*, Cheney warned that Iran has "a fairly robust new nuclear program." And besides, it sponsors terrorism. Sound familiar?

In a not-so-subtle attempt to raise the alarm on Iran, the vice president adduced his favorite analogy—the one he used in 2002 to beat intelligence analysts into submission in conjuring up phantom weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Cheney continues to underscore his claim that before the Gulf War in 1991, U.S. intelligence had erred in assessing how close Iraq was to having a nuclear weapon:

"We found out after we got into Iraq [in 1991], in fact,

that he [Saddam Hussein] probably was less than a year away from having a nuclear weapon... the intelligence community had underestimated how robust his nuclear program was."

That "Robust" Word Again

Forget the fact that few nuclear engineers agree on that time frame. The question is what relevance Cheney's claim has for today? In view of the evolving debate on how "robust" Iran's nuclear program is, we are sure to be hearing more from the vice president on this subject in the months ahead. How much credence are we to put in what he says?

With the final report on the search for Iraqi WMD now delivered, Cheney is still trying to exculpate himself from his false claims regarding Iraq's nuclear capability, by equating Iraq's nuclear posture before 1991 with its much weaker capability in the months preceding the U.S./U.K. attack in March 2003.

Needed: Enriched Uranium

For Iraq to possess the nuclear weapons program Cheney claimed it had in March 2003, it needed—first and foremost—highly enriched uranium. But events in the 1990s had eviscerated its capacity to obtain it. After the 1991 Gulf War, all highly enriched uranium was removed from Iraq. UN inspectors destroyed Iraq's centrifuge and isotope separation programs. And from 1991 on, Iraq was subjected to an intrusive arms embargo and sanctions regime, which made it much more difficult than during the pre-Gulf War years to import material for a nuclear weapons program.

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Developments in the United Nations 'Oil For Food' Scandal

by John Krejci, President UNA/USA, Chapter 100

In a recent issue of the *Nebraska Report*, I revealed some 'little discussed facts' about the so-called United Nations "Oil for Food" program. I noted that:

- despite the abuses—now responded to by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan—the UN-managed Oil for Food program achieved its goal of alleviating hunger and malnutrition in Iraq.
- the Oil for Food program was not designed by the UN, but by the Security Council under the influence of the United States (the U.S. accordingly shares the greatest part of any blame).
- Iraq accumulated far more illicit money through trade agreements that the U.S. and other countries (Russia, France and China) knew about but ignored, because—in the case of the U.S. government, at least—it was in our "national interest." In addition the U.S. permitted allies Turkey and Jordan to violate the sanctions and import huge amounts of Iraqi oil, again to further our "national interest."

Since that time, criticisms of the UN and Kofi Annan have subsided (at least temporarily) and the Secretary General has disciplined and suspended Benon Sevan and other UN employees involved. In addition, the Volcker report has come out and confirmed what I said two months ago. "THE MAJOR SOURCE OF EXTERNAL FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO THE IRAQI REGIME RESULTED FROM SANCTIONS VIOLATIONS OUTSIDE THE OIL FOR FOOD PROGRAMME'S FRAMEWORK." These violations consisted of illicit sales of oil by the Iraqi regime to Turkey and Jordan.

Moreover, the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), the agency that governed Iraq from June 2003 to June 2004, did not account for \$8.8 billion dollars. Some of the allegations include

\$300,000 in bribes, \$800 million handed out to U.S. commanders without being accounted for, and \$1.4 billion flown from Baghdad to the Kurds in the town of Irbli. One American official describing the transfer of \$2 million to a contractor said, "It was time for payment. We told them to come in and bring a bag." U.S. senators and representatives railing against UN mismanagement is the equivalent of the cast iron pot calling the stainless steel kettle black because of a bit of blackened egg on the rim. The hubris of U.S. officials truly knows no peer.

The U.S.'s malfeasance and culpability though may even run deeper. Much of the money spread around Iraq by the U.S., it now appears, wasn't even the U.S. government's, but was generated by the Coalition's sale of oil and belonged by rights to the people of Iraq. These CPA abuses make the alleged UN irregularities look minor in comparison. During the entire period of CPA rule, there was no monitoring of the amount of oil passing through Iraqi pipelines. Consequently there is no way to tell how much of the country's wealth was extracted. That's not mismanagement; it's NO management.

Sad as these facts of U.S. abuses are, they have at least momentarily silenced those who are determined to lessen the involvement of the United States in the United Nations, some of who have sought to scuttle the UN by any means possible. I will travel to New York this month for the 60th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. Notwithstanding all the scandals, mismanagement and irregularities, I go with a modicum of optimism for the future. The UN has withstood worse days, and I have hopes that the collective wisdom and maturity of the international community will in the long run prevail over the U.S.'s aspirations for empire. Who knows? Maybe somewhere down the road, this 'Wannabe Empire' of ours will yet hear the pleadings of a world body that tried to warn us: "Don't go to war in Iraq, you can't win by military might. Diplomacy may be slower and less spectacular, but it is the best way we know."

Reining in Cheney, cont.

Thus, for Cheney to invoke what Iraq may have been capable of doing in 1991 and apply that to the very different situation in Iraq in 2002 is, at best, disingenuous. There are huge differences between the situations in 1991 and 2002. In 2002, the Iraqis lacked highly enriched uranium and the necessary infrastructure. American inspectors working for the UN team knew that—and reported it—from their hands-on experience in early 2003.

Chutzpah, Confidence, Naiveté— a Noxious Mix

Cheney's chutzpah on this key issue has been particularly striking. On March 16, 2003, just three days before the war, he zoomed far beyond the evidence in telling NBC's *Meet the Press*, "We believe he [Saddam Hussein] has, in fact, reconstituted nuclear weapons." Asked about ElBaradei's report just nine days before that Iraq had no nuclear weapons program, Cheney said, "I disagree... I think Mr. ElBaradei is frankly wrong."

"How did they ever think they could get away with it—I mean using forgery, hyperbole, half-truth, malleable house-engineers, and carefully rehearsed émigrés?" asked a government scientist. Well, remember his March 16, 2003 remarks on NBC's *Meet the Press* just before the war?

"We will be greeted as liberators... the

people of Iraq will welcome us as liberators."

The administration's reasoning, it seems clear, went like this: We'll use the forged documents on Iraq seeking uranium in Niger and the strained argument that those famous aluminum tubes were destined for centrifuge application, and that will be enough to get Congress to go along. The war will be a cakewalk. We'll depose a hated dictator and be hailed as liberators. We'll become the dominant world power in that part of the world and, with an infrastructure of permanent military bases in Iraq, we'll be able to make our influence felt on the disposition of oil in the whole region. Not incidentally, we will be in position to prevent any possible threat to Israel. At that point, then, tell me: who is going to make a ruckus over the fact that we used a little forgery, hyperbole, and half-truth along the way!

And so, our Congress was successfully conned into precipitous action to meet a nonexistent threat. We deposed Saddam and occupied the country. Everything fell into place. But the Iraqis missed their cue and failed to welcome our troops as liberators. All this brings to mind the old saying, "There is no such thing as a perfect crime."

Concern, Pressure From Abroad

At this point, British officials, who have had a front-row seat for all this, are worried that Cheney is now driving administration

policy on Iran, according to a recent article in *The Times* of London. Adding to London's concern is the fact that the Pentagon seems to be relying heavily on "alarmingly inconclusive" satellite imagery of Iranian installations.

(For those of you who missed it, please know that since 1996 analysis of satellite imagery has been performed in the Department of Defense, not by CIA analysts, as had been the case before. As you can imagine, this has made it much easier for the Pentagon to come up with the desired "supporting evidence" than was the case in the days when CIA had that portfolio and imagery analysts were encouraged to "tell it like it is.")

Complicating the Iranian nuclear issue still more is the hard-nosed attitude of Israel. Its defense minister has warned, "Under no circumstances would Israel be able to tolerate nuclear weapons in Iranian possession."

The British are well advised to worry, given the appeal that preemption holds for our vice president and president. In his August 26, 2002 speech, Cheney also became the first senior U.S. official publicly to refer approvingly to Israel's bombing of the Iraqi nuclear reactor at Osirak in 1981. (In a rare instance of U.S. willingness to criticize Israel at the UN, Washington had joined other Security Council members in unanimously condemning Israel's preemptive attack. And, as far as I know, that remains the official U.S. position.)

Cheney and Israel

Cheney, nonetheless, has done little to disguise his admiration for Israel's policy of preemption. Ten years after the attack on Osirak, then-Defense Secretary Cheney reportedly gave Israeli Maj. Gen. David Ivri, then the commander of the Israeli Air Force, a satellite photo of the Iraqi nuclear reactor destroyed by U.S.-built Israeli aircraft. On the photo Cheney penned, "Thanks for the outstanding job on the Iraqi nuclear program in 1981."

Looking again at the Cheney-Imus dialogue January 20, Cheney, after expressing deep concern over Iran's "fairly robust new nuclear program," repeated basically what Condoleezza Rice had said earlier in the week—"Iran has a stated policy that their objective is the destruction of Israel." Imus then brought up the subject of preempting Iran, asking, "Why don't we make Israel do it?"

Cheney's response should give all of us pause:



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WTO SETS WORLD POLICY BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

by John K. Hansen
President, Nebraska Farmers Union

On one hand, our country seems willing to sacrifice the lives and welfare of thousands of its soldiers and spend billions of tax dollars to supposedly bring freedom and democracy to Iraq. On the other hand, our country is the primary architect and supporter of an autocratic world policy-setting organization whose decision-making process is decidedly undemocratic, non-transparent, unrepresentative, and overpowers and undermines national sovereignty, state laws, local autonomy and self-determination.

The World Trade Organization (WTO) was created as the international global commerce agency to replace the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, called GATT, in late 1994. The WTO structure allows the captains of international business to set the far-reaching international rules of commerce to their liking behind closed doors. These trade rules can and do also set the public policy direction and legal framework for domestic policies that impact agriculture, labor, the environment, banking, and services among others.

The rationale for replacing the GATT with the WTO was that the GATT dispute resolution enforcement authority was too weak, and not binding. The "new extra-strength" WTO dispute resolution authority, and its system of comprehensive governance, does have real enforcement teeth, which it gains at the expense of national sovereignty.

The U.S. Constitution specifically charges Congress with the oversight of trade. Ignoring the opinion of the majority of U.S. citizens, on November 29, 1994 the House of Representatives voted for the WTO by a 288-146 margin. On December 1, 1994, the Senate voted for the WTO by a 76-24 margin. Senator J. James Exon cast the lone vote from the Nebraska delegation in opposition to the WTO. Senator J. Robert Kerrey, and all three House Representatives, Doug Bereuter, Peter Hoagland, and Bill Barrett voted in support of the WTO. Their votes mirrored their positions on NAFTA, which was approved in 1993. In the political battle between money and people, big money played hardball, and won.

In the past ten years, thanks primarily to WTO-sanctioned globalization, family farmers around the world are in crisis. Agribusiness conglomerates have expanded their global reach, including both market place concentration and ownership of land and natural resources. The result is massive rural out-migrations of dislocated rural residents and family farmers and peasants, as countries with natural resource-based economies have seen the values of their domestic ag production collapse.

I recommend two films for your VCR on the impact of globalization. The first is "Strong Roots, Fragile Farms," pro-

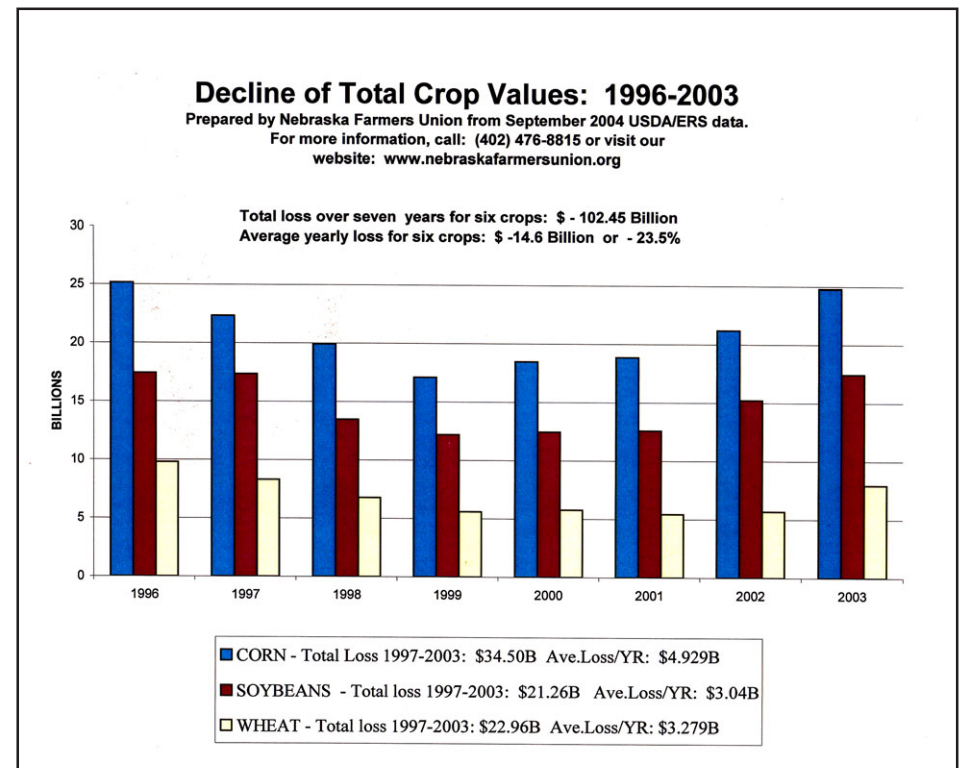
duced by the United Church of Christ for the National Council of Churches in 2002, available from most churches and Nebraska Farmers Union. The second, "The Global Banquet: Politics of Food" by Maryknoll World Productions, 1-800-227-8523 or

www.maryknollworld.org. does a nice job of breaking down the issues that are a part of modern globalization.

Instead of the WTO fixing the growing problem of noncompetitive domestic ag market concentration, it provides the opportunity for the dominant U.S. ag players that control U.S. agricultural markets to take their system of shared monopolies and conglomeration worldwide. "ADM, super-market to the world" is not just a TV advertisement slogan; it describes their company operating strategy. Cargill, the largest privately owned company in the world, now operates in 57 countries and is expanding dramatically.

The biotech companies have worked the WTO process like a borrowed mule. The WTO rules for "market access" and "sound science" have been successfully used to force biotechnology products down reluctant consumers' throats worldwide. When various nations respond to consumer calls to pass laws to restrict importation of biotech products, they have been successfully challenged in the WTO on market access grounds as long as the biotech products have met the WTO "sound science" standards. Those Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards (SPS), which are intended to harmonize domestic standards with the international standards, are determined by the Codex Alimentarius.

Who are the members of the Codex Alimentarius that sets these international standards? Not impartial, third-party academic experts free from bias, as we would hope. Instead, it is primarily comprised of industry players and insiders. The very same "conflict of interest" standards that we would use to disqualify a member of our church from bidding on a church contract is used as the standard necessary to serve on the Codex Alimentarius. The WTO process and policies reflect the international big business players that dominate it. Their global view is tied to their global companies.



The U.S.-based agribusiness processors continue to dominate and drive our national trade and farm policy, as they continue their quest to control the world's natural resources and food production with the least amount of government interference possible. The Bush Administration could not be more helpful to their agenda.

The 1996 Farm Bill was the first farm bill specifically designed to fit into the legal- and policy-setting structure that trade policy created. Nebraska Rep. Bill Barrett, primary House sponsor for the 1996 Farm Bill, claimed his approach would reduce government involvement in agriculture, free farmers to produce for the market, dramatically increase ag exports, raise farm income, and thereby reduce the need for farm program payments and taxpayer support of agriculture. He was wrong on all counts.

In effect, Rep. Barrett told farmers "Don't worry, be happy." He assured farmers it would be okay to get rid of price supports that put a minimum price on their ag commodities in the marketplace—provisions to bring production into synch with product consumption, and farmer-owned grain reserves used to isolate grain from the market in times of low prices and bumper crops. It was okay to get rid of the traditional price-supporting public policy tools. If ag commodity prices collapsed, Congress would be there in

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An Overview of the UNO Afghanistan

by Mark Vasina, Nebraskans for Peace President
and Tajuddin Tajj Millattmal, M.D., M.P.A.

In the decades before the Center for Afghanistan Studies (CAS) was founded at the University of Nebraska-Omaha in 1972, Afghanistan had been of only marginal interest to policymakers in Washington. Although King Zahir Shah had ruled Afghanistan since 1933, the country was long considered ungovernable due to its highly fragmented tribal society. The British had abandoned their attempts to control it in 1919.

Moreover, due to its proximity to the Soviet Union and the perception that it offered little of strategic value to the West, U.S. cold warriors allowed Afghanistan to fall into the Soviet sphere of influence following World War II. In 1973, a coup led by the King's politically left-leaning cousin Daoud Khan abolished the monarchy and resulted in a government which sought closer ties to the Soviets. The Soviet Union became Afghanistan's chief trading partner and arms supplier.

Over time, however, the Soviets became increasingly concerned that Afghanistan, under Daoud, was tilting toward the West. Overtures to Daoud by the Shah of Iran were viewed suspiciously. No doubt CAS activities raised Soviet eyebrows when, in 1974, UNO Chancellor Ronald Roskens (later appointed by the first President Bush to head the U.S. Agency for International Development) negotiated an exchange program between CAS and Kabul University. Soviet concerns led to a coup in 1978 by the communist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). CAS ended its exchange program with Kabul University.

The ensuing armed resistance to the new government led the PDPA to request additional Soviet military assistance, including troops to fight Islamic fundamentalist insurgents backed by Pakistan. In December 1979, the Soviet military forcibly entered Afghanistan and installed a puppet government, alarming the Muslim world as well as many Western governments.

Six months prior to the Soviet invasion, President Jimmy Carter, at the urging of his national security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski, had already adopted a policy of covert aid to Islamic fundamentalist insurgents in Afghanistan (Brzezinski, interviewed in *Le Nouvel Observateur*, Paris, January 15-21, 1998). Support for the mujahidin, aimed at ensnaring the Soviets in Afghanistan and "bleeding" them, was expanded into the largest CIA covert operation in history under Ronald Reagan, who signed National Security Decision Directive 166, calling for American efforts to drive Soviet forces from Afghanistan "by all means available."

CAS Signs On

The U.S. support package had three components—organization and logistics, military technology, and ideological support for sustaining and encouraging the Afghan resistance. The third component was largely implemented through extensive propaganda in the global mass media,

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glorifying the Afghan "freedom fighters" in their stand against Soviet aggression and domination.

However, much effort and money was also expended creating propaganda for Afghan children. Beginning in 1984, under a \$51 million grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), CAS operated educational and training programs in refugee camps in Pakistan and rebel-controlled areas of Afghanistan. Raheem Yaseer, CAS's assistant director, told the Center for Public Integrity (published in "Windfalls of War"; see *Nebraska Report*, October 2004):

The CIA was involved in a kind of covert assistance to the resistance to fight against Soviets. We helped all of these [mujahidin resistance groups] with school supplies, developing curriculum, paying teachers, teacher training and manpower training. They were taught about love for the country, love for freedom, hating the Soviet occupier.



Teacher in Afghanistan using a UNO textbook for classroom instruction in 2002. Efforts by concerned Afghani parents and teachers forced a revision of UNO textbooks in 1992 to purge them of militant images. Nevertheless, un-revised textbooks were reprinted and remained in use throughout Afghanistan until 2003. (Photo: CBC News; for video visit www.cbc.ca/national/news/afghanschools/)

The centerpiece of CAS's contribution to the CIA covert operation in Afghanistan was the development, printing and distribution of millions of textbooks designed to create enthusiasm for Islamic militancy. The textbooks, printed in Pakistan by UNO Education Press, glorify jihad and exhort children to explicit acts of violence against Russian "oppressors." Joe Stephens and David Ottaway wrote in the *Washington Post* on March 23, 2002 ("From U.S., the ABC's of jihad"):

The primers, which were filled with talk of jihad and featured drawings of guns, bullets, soldiers and mines, have served since then as the Afghan school system's core curriculum... What seemed like a good idea in the context of the Cold War is being criticized by humani-

tarian workers as a crude tool that steeped a generation in violence.

Craig Davis, a Ph.D. candidate at Indiana University, purchased an entire series of the UNO textbooks during visits to Kabul booksellers in May 2000 and wrote about them in the *World Policy Journal*, Spring 2002 ("A' Is for Allah, 'J' Is for Jihad"):

These textbooks aimed... to indoctrinate young Afghan children in Islamic militancy. Thus this subtraction problem, from a third-grade mathematics textbook: "One group of mujahidin attack 50 Russian soldiers. In that attack 20 Russians were killed. How many Russians fled?"

A fourth-grade mathematics textbook poses the following problem: "The speed of a Kalashnikov bullet is 800 meters per second. If a Russian is at a distance of 3,200 meters from a mujahid, and that mujahid aims at the Russian's head, calculate how many seconds it will take for the bullet to strike the Russian in the forehead."

In numerous interviews CAS director Thomas Gouttierre has proudly acknowledged the nature of the work CAS undertook during the years of the Soviet-Afghan War. According to the *Omaha World-Herald* on February 13, 2005 ("UNO has company in Afghan studies"):

Gouttierre concedes that books UNO produced for the mujahideen in the 1980s contained objectionable content, reflecting the Muslim extremism of the mujahideen and their hatred of the Soviets.

In a story that aired May 6, 2002, *CBC News* correspondent Carol Off reported the following (full text and video can be found at www.cbc.ca/national/news/afghanschools/):

The U.S. Agency for International Development, AID, coordinated its work with the CIA, which ran the weapons program. "We were providing education behind the enemy lines," says Gouttierre. "We were providing military support against the enemy lines. So this was a kind of coordinated effort indeed... I was interested in being of any type of assistance that I could to help the Afghans get out of their mess and to be frank also anything that would help the United States in order to advance its interests."

Scholars, Textbook Revisions & Loss of Funding

In 1985 the Soviet Union, recognizing the high cost of the military occupation, offered to withdraw from Afghanistan with a political settlement process led by the U.N. This move, however, was resisted by Pakistan, which had been entrusted by the U.S. with distributing its military aid to the Afghans. Prof. Pervez Hoodbhoy, Quaid-e-Azam University in Islamabad, Pakistan wrote, in *The Genesis of Global Jihad in Afghanistan*:

The switch in the Soviet position provoked an immediate switch in the position of Pakistan that

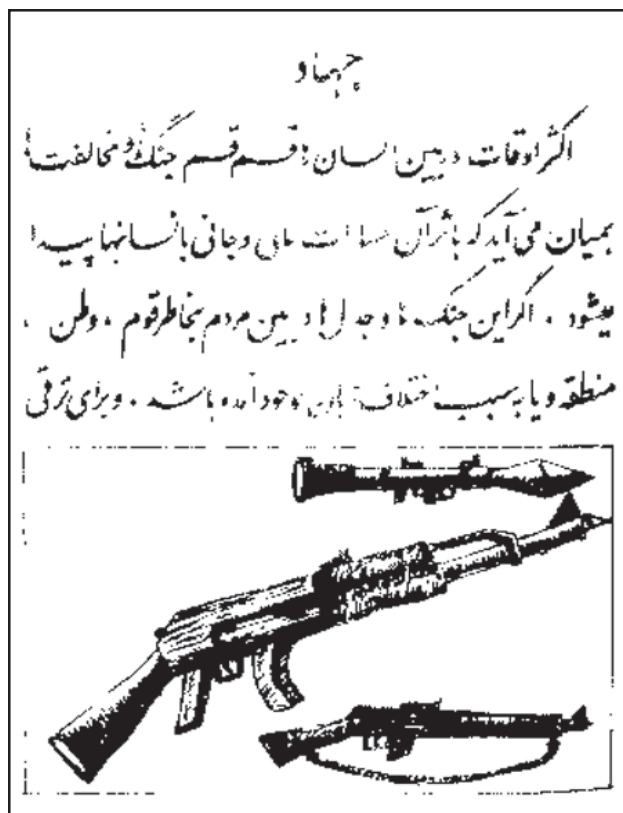
Center's Actions in Afghanistan

hitherto had only demanded a Soviet withdrawal... Pakistani military and intelligence officials were in no mood to let go of a windfall that had brought them immense power, privilege, and money... In 1987, the Afghan government of Najibullah extended the olive branch to Pakistan, declaring a unilateral ceasefire and offering a government of national unity. This [also] was rejected.

Thus in 1988, aware of an imminent Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, USAID officials funded the Afghan Scholarship Program, a one-year, non-degree program for Afghan professionals managed by CAS. "The purpose of the program," described on the CAS website:

...was to refresh and update the knowledge and skills of trained Afghan professionals who had been engaged in Jihad and enable them to contribute more effectively to the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Three groups of Afghan scholars, each comprised of 21 participants, completed the program.

The Afghan professionals, after returning to their homeland, would be expected to promote democratic ideals and pro-U.S. sentiments.



From a UNO textbook for third-grade language arts: "Jihad – Often many different wars and conflicts arise among people, which cause material damages and loss of human life. If these wars and disputes occur among people for the sake of community, nation, territory, or even because of verbal differences, and for the sake of progress..." (Photo and translation: Craig Davis, 2002)

In February 1989 the Soviets withdrew unilaterally from Afghanistan. Political chaos followed as warlords divided the country into militarized fiefdoms, and political parties jockeyed—often violently—for influence. The pro-Soviet government hung on in Kabul until April 1992.

According to Craig Davis, in 1991 Afghan parents and teachers and international aid organizations pressured CAS to revise its textbooks to remove the militant images, a project completed in 1992. Despite the revisions, international aid workers found use of both revised and un-revised UNO textbooks throughout Afghanistan in 2002. Un-revised textbooks were also found to have been reprinted after 1992, subsequent to their official revision, presumably without the authorization of the original publishers.

By 1994 the Taliban, supported by Pakistan, had emerged as a significant military and political force, taking Kabul by 1996 and subsequently unifying much of the country. Thousands of Afghan and Pakistani Pashtuns, most between the ages of 14 and 24, entered Afghanistan from Pakistan to join the Taliban. Displaced in their youth by the war, they had grown up in refugee camps, educated in the refugee schools with UNO textbooks.

Congress had ended government-sponsored aid to Afghanistan after Osama bin Laden was linked to the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center. USAID funding for CAS ceased in 1994.

Enter Unocal

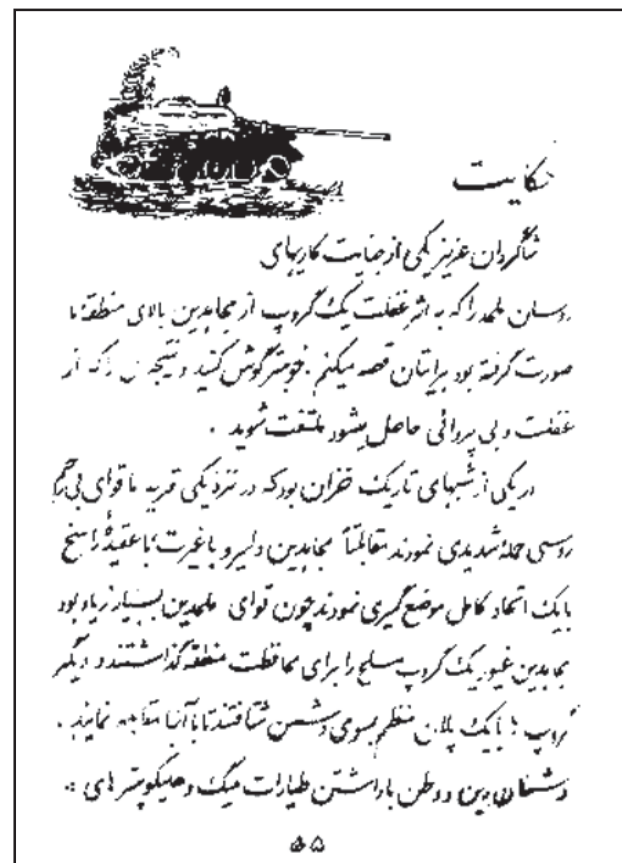
By 1997 however, CAS was back to work in Afghanistan, under contract to Unocal. The California-based global energy giant was interested in getting the Taliban to approve the building of oil and natural gas pipelines across Afghanistan by a consortium to which it belonged. Unocal paid \$900,000 to CAS to establish job-training programs in Afghanistan and to help form a business relationship with the Taliban.

"The oil company wanted to generate goodwill with the Taliban without actually negotiating with them," CAS assistant director Raheem Yaseer told the *Chicago Tribune* ("University helped U.S. reach out to Afghanistan," October 21, 2001). The U.S. ban on foreign aid to Afghanistan did not apply to private companies providing education or humanitarian relief efforts.

Following U.S. visits by Taliban officials hosted by CAS, public outrage was aimed at Unocal for placing business dealings for oil over women's rights in Afghanistan. At a Unocal stockholders meeting on June 1, 1998, the Feminist Majority, the National Organization for Women, and other women's rights organizations voiced their concerns. Four days later, Unocal announced that it would not renew its contract with CAS. In late 1998, following the U.S. embassy bombings in Africa linked to al-Qaida, Unocal withdrew from the pipeline consortium.

More Textbook Revisions & Controversy

In spring 2002, CAS was awarded a \$6.5 million USAID



From a UNO textbook for fifth-grade language arts: "Story – Dear students, I will tell you the story of crimes committed by atheist Russians who were able to materialize over our land due to the carelessness of one group of Mujahidin. You had better listen well and be aware of the results that carelessness and lack of concern can have..." (Photo and translation: Craig Davis, 2002)

grant to provide 8 million textbooks and training for 4,000 teachers in Afghanistan. According to the Center for Public Integrity:

USAID employee Chris Brown told the *Omaha World-Herald* that [CAS] was uniquely positioned to meet the textbook challenge. After USAID stopped funding [CAS] in 1994, Thomas E. Gouttierre had continued to raise money privately in order to keep the Pakistan publishing operation open. Thus, in 2002, [CAS] was already prepared and ready to start printing the textbooks.

The UNO textbooks were revised this second time to remove both militant images and militant text. Nevertheless, they continued to promote Islamic fundamentalism and discrimination against women. However, since October 2001 (barely a month after 9/11) American journalists had been reporting on CAS's original violence-and-jihad-promoting textbooks. CAS was widely criticized for its decidedly non-

continued on page 10

Kyoto **A** Ripple on an Ocean

by Mark Zimmermann
Treasurer, Nebraska Green Party

It took six years to negotiate and seven years to ratify, but on February 16 the Kyoto Protocol finally came into effect. At least 55 nations, accounting for at least 55 percent of greenhouse gases (ghg) released in the 1990 baseline year, were required for the treaty to take effect. The acquiescence of Russia last November was the final card needed to complete the hand. Together the 35 countries with actual obligations to reduce ghgs under the treaty accounted for more than 60 percent of 1990 emissions. The only industrialized countries refusing to participate are Australia, Monaco, and the United States, which alone accounts for 25 percent of the world's carbon emissions.

While it has some significance as a milestone, the victory is largely a symbolic one. It's goal of a five percent reduction under 1990 emission levels would prevent 483 million tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂) from entering the atmosphere by the end of the treaty's first phase in 2012. But China, India and the U.S. are planning to add a staggering 850 new coal plants by then which, if they are all completed would add 2.7 billion tons of CO₂ or five times more than what Kyoto is set to reduce. Even if only the plants with actual start dates are built, the amount would be double the Kyoto savings.

Driving the push for more coal plants has been the rise in natural gas prices and energy security concerns. Scientists have anticipated some of this in their climate scenarios, but the actual rise in CO₂ emissions will depend to some extent on how clean or efficient the new plants are. In an ironic rever-

sal of Bush's philosophy, U.S. efficiency will apparently depend on government handouts to the coal industry rather than market-based decisions. Because the U.S. will have no caps on CO₂ emissions, there will be no market incentive to increase efficiency; at this point it only appears likely to come from federal investments in "clean coal" technology or carbon sequestration efforts.

The birth of the Kyoto treaty also comes amidst even more ominous scientific revelations and additional confirmations of humanity's role in global warming. Just two weeks before the Kyoto start date, a major scientific climate conference was held in Great Britain, the largest since the release of the United Nations IPCC report in 2001. For the first time scientists described a trigger point beyond which dangerous climate damage—crop failures, water shortages, sea level rises, species extinctions—will be inevitable. They defined it as a rise of 2 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial average. They indicated that such a rise will be irreversible after carbon in the atmosphere reaches 400 ppm (parts per million). It is currently 379 ppm and rising by 2 ppm per year, giving us about a ten-year window. Most of the reports presented are available to the public. Some are very technical, some are very scary, they are all at www.stabilisation2005.com

About that same time, the Hadley Center, Britain's leading climate research facility, released a study (published in the journal *Nature*, 1/27/05) which used 95,000 home computers in 150 countries running a climate modeling program in their spare time. According to the lead researcher, David Stainforth from Oxford, the results

indicated that the atmosphere is more sensitive to carbon than previously thought. A doubling of pre-industrial CO₂ to about 550 ppm would likely lead to 2-11 degree Celsius rise in global temperatures by the end of the century, double the IPCC estimate of just five years ago.

By contrast, the Kyoto treaty is expected to exert a downward pressure of only 0.1 C. Thus, its importance is mostly as a recognition of the problem and the beginnings of a commitment to mitigate it.

But even on this humble of a beginning, the Bush Administra-

tion has not just dug in its heels to avoid helping. It has actually gone as far as trying to prevent the world from organizing for the vital next steps after Kyoto when the real work will have to begin.

The actual reductions of ghgs under Kyoto begin in 2008 and run to 2012, by which time its successor is hopefully negotiated and in place. This first phase of the treaty initially exempts developing nations, because it is the already-developed nations who have created and profited from the buildup of carbon in the atmosphere. It was recognized that they had a moral and financial obligation to take the

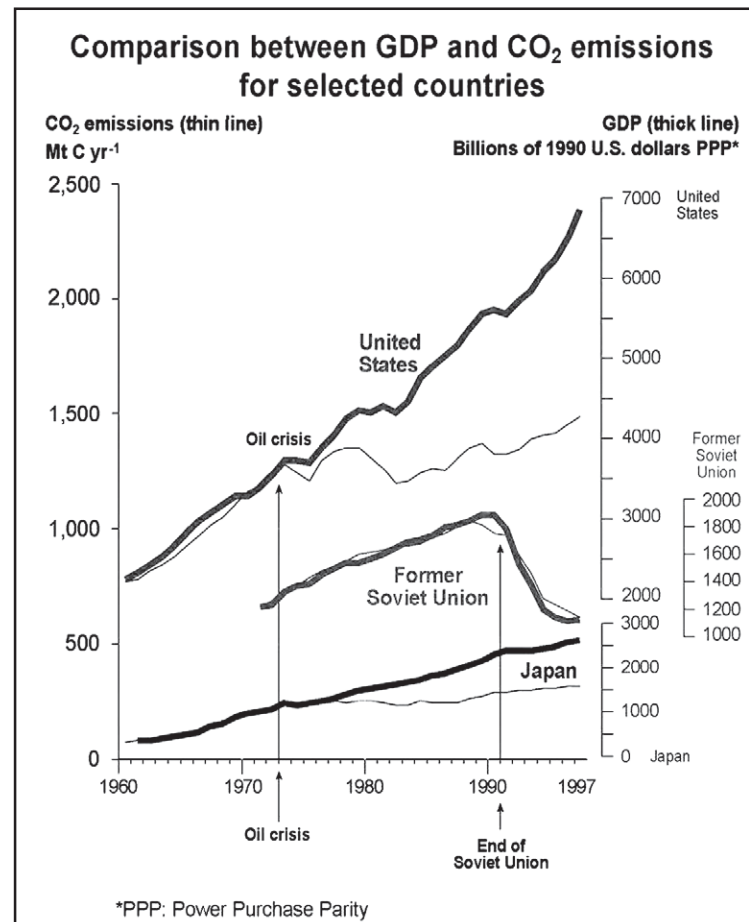
first step in restoring part of what they used.

The first meeting to start work on a post-2012 document took place last November in Buenos Aires, under the auspices of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Although the U.S. is not part of Kyoto, it did sign on with the UNFCCC which produced the Kyoto treaty, and which President Clinton originally signed. The Senate, led in part by Nebraska Sen. Chuck Hagel, later refused to ratify U.S. participation.

In reaction to world outrage after withdrawing the U.S. completely from Kyoto in 2001, President Bush directly stated he would not interfere with other countries' efforts in that regard. Yet in Buenos Aires, the U.S. completely disregarded that public promise by blocking a series of proposed meetings leading up to a major negotiation next November.

Negotiators worked for 36 hours past the conference deadline, as the facilities were being dismantled, to salvage U.S. agreement for one informal meeting in May. And even at that meeting, they had to agree that "no reports, written or oral" could be published and no specific action plan discussed. Coverage of the Buenos Aires meeting was rare to nonexistent in the U.S. but it was reported in the British media (see www.guardian.co.uk) and of course the proceedings are at the UNFCC site (<http://unfccc.int>).

With Bush rejecting the world's plan to slow global warming, the next logical question to ask is what is he willing to do about it here in America? Well, he's willing to cut programs for renewable energy and efficiency by millions of dollars in this year's proposed federal budget. He's willing to strongly



This graph illustrates why greenhouse gas "intensity" plans are ineffective. U.S. growth in GDP has simply risen faster than CO₂ emissions, allowing a 13% rise in our emissions since 1990. How badly would our economy have to sink to create meaningful CO₂ reductions under this plan?

GLBT RIGHTS IN NEBRASKA

by Michael Gordon, Executive Director
Citizens for Equal Protection

As a class of citizens, gay and lesbian, bisexual and transgendered Nebraskans have the fewest legal protections of anyone in our state. Based simply on our sexual orientation and expression, we can be fired from our jobs, kicked out of our living quarters, publicly bullied. And, of course, because of the adoption of Initiative 416, we are constitutionally barred from marrying.

The few rights that we have been able to secure—and they are minimal—have resulted largely from the efforts of Citizens For Equal Protection, the non-profit organization created specifically to advocate for equity for the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender families of Nebraska. A brief survey will indicate exactly how far we have yet to go:

- **Hospital Visitation:** Former State Senator Deb Suttle of Omaha sponsored a bill that would allow a patient to name who they choose to visit them in the hospital.
- **Funeral Rights:** State Sen. Dennis Byars sponsored a bill that would make it possible to name the person who you choose to take responsibility for your remains. Powers of Attorney and other legal documents do not cover this issue. You can check out our website, www.cfep-ne.org and download the document that you and your partner can complete and have notarized. CFEP activist D. Moritz has personally tested this law, having had some difficulties carrying out her own partner's wishes upon her death. After much hassle, D.

was able to prevail on the day she was planning her partner's funeral.

- **Hate Crimes:** Sexual Orientation is included as a protected class in the current Hate Crimes laws in Nebraska.

Essentially then, in terms of our existing rights as citizens, we can see justice served if our partners are victims of a hate crime. They can in turn designate us as people who can visit them in the hospital. And then rest assured that we will have the right to provide for a proper burial for them. A start, perhaps, for injury and funeral needs, but not much of a life.

For the 2005 Unicameral session, however, CFEP has assembled the most comprehensive set of legislation ever assembled on GLBT rights, bills covering housing and employment discrimination, as well as school bullying based on sexual prejudice.

- **LB 50**, introduced by Sen. Dave Landis, would add **sexual orientation** as a protected class to Nebraska's fair housing laws.
- **LB 759**, introduced by Sen. Ernie Chambers, would add **sexual orientation** as a protected class to Nebraska's Fair Employment Practices Act.
- **LB 627**, a school anti-bullying bill introduced by Sen. Gwen Howard of Omaha, includes **sexual orientation** and **gender expression and identity** in the list of

protected classes. The bill covers school grounds and bus stops, school activities and sports events, and any transportation provided by the school. Sen. Howard, who was just elected to the Legislature to represent District 9, has been an adoption specialist and Social Worker for Health and Human Services for over 30 years. She brings a record of service to children, the foster care system of Nebraska and other health and human service issues and is a great addition to the Unicameral.

LB 50 and LB 759 have both been assigned to the Judiciary Committee. LB 627, assigned to the Education Committee, had its public hearing February 14. Over a dozen people testified in favor of this bill, including two students from Fremont who recounted that on a daily basis they are harassed and called epithets like "faggot" and "dyke." The students also reported that no administrators have ever taken any action to stop this bullying behavior.

On Inauguration day, January 20, the Gay-Straight Alliances of the Lincoln High Schools held a rally at the State Capitol to protest the unequal treatment of our state's GLBT citizens. Over 200 students turned out to hear an impressive line-up of speakers, including Sen. Howard herself, who praised these young people for taking action and encouraged them to stay active.

For those of us with gray in our hair, it was an inspiring event that signaled that at least the youth are shedding the hatred and prejudices that have so long held us back... and have so long denied us the basic human rights which, as citizens of Nebraska, should be ours by birthright.

increase spending on trying to revive the nuclear power industry. And don't forget those hydrogen cars out there in the future somewhere, though with the automakers suing California to prevent that state from requiring lower emission cars, it's difficult to see the road ahead on that idea. And apparently, since the administration's plan is to adapt to global warming rather than resist it, funding for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's ocean and coastline restoration program is scheduled to be cut by \$333 million (37 percent).

It's getting to the point where even some congressional Republicans, at least in the Senate, are questioning the White House's head-in-the-sand approach to global warming. There always have been a few—conservation and ecology were once much more bipartisan issues than they have been since the early Reagan years. The McCain-Lieberman Climate Stewardship Act, a sort of weaker

and domestic version of Kyoto, has been reintroduced. It gathered 43 yeas when it finally came to a vote in a late 2003. Of course it would be unlikely to even reach the floor in the more overtly partisan House of Representatives.

Even Chuck Hagel though, who has historically been a very vocal opponent of global warming efforts, has been attempting to at least appear more moderate on the subject. In recent remarks at the centrist Brookings Institute, he admitted that "...strong evidence suggests a global warming trend" and that, "The question we face is not whether we should take action but what kind of action we should take." (You can get a PDF of his talk at www.brookings.edu/comm/events/20050209.htm). Not really going out on a limb with those kinds of safe statements, he also used the occasion to unveil some legislation he plans to introduce in the Senate.

Giving him the benefit of the doubt that his proposals are not

just to establish some political credibility for future campaigns, they raise a number of questions. In introducing the three bills he plans to sponsor, he said, "I believe that greenhouse gas intensity, or the amount of carbon emitted relative to economic output, is the best measurement for dealing with climate change." This mirrors a proposal floated by the White House two years ago which has never been heard of since. It's essentially meaningless in reducing emissions. Because manufacturing has been moving overseas and the economy is becoming more service-oriented, this number has been going down naturally in the U.S. even as our CO2 emissions have risen 13 percent since Kyoto was negotiated. It doesn't address the issue that, without some type of mandatory cap, there is no incentive to limit emissions, because industries and markets on their own won't recognize or accept CO2 as a cost to be avoided. And he did reiterate his opposition to

any mandatory caps in follow-up questions.

The first bill would use U.S. assistance to develop support for "greenhouse gas intensity reduction technologies" overseas. On its face, that doesn't sound bad, though he didn't elaborate on what types of technology would qualify under this plan. He supports nuclear power and, though it has legions of other problems, it doesn't emit CO2, so would that qualify? And it's likely no accident that Sen. Hagel's proposals are appearing at the same time Kyoto is going into effect. Sometime in February, mandatory trading begins on the European Union Climate Exchange where the value of carbon reduction credits is expected to surge. The political and financial incentives will be for Kyoto partners to trade with the each other, not with the U.S. An attempt to try and gain some type of access to what will surely be a

huge industry is not surprising. Will other countries be glad to buy the new technology from us, or will they see us as crashing a party whose invitation we refused?

The second bill is similar, but with a domestic focus. It might be useful if it helps spur investment in renewable energy, but that's certainly not guaranteed. It's just as likely to go to the coal or nuclear industries as to wind or solar. Ask yourself who has more lobbyists. The third bill, which focuses more on federal tax incentives, as opposed to the loan guarantees and interest buy-downs of the first two, seems a little more democratic and accessible, a little less-wedded to the big high-tech fix. We may need some big technology to help avert catastrophe, but we're also going to need a lot of grassroots technology that works everywhere. And his proposal still doesn't answer the basic question of what

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UNO Afghan Center, conclusion

academic role in assisting the CIA with psychological operations in Afghanistan. The UNO textbooks were cited for their contribution to “blowback,” a CIA term describing an agent, operative or operation that has turned on its creators.

The Bush Administration defended the new “scrubbed” textbooks against criticism which focused on their promotion of Islamic religion and gender bias. From the *Washington Post*, March 23, 2003:

The White House defends the religious content, saying that Islamic principles permeate Afghan culture and that the books “are fully in compliance with U.S. law and policy.” Legal experts, however, question whether the books violate a constitutional ban on using tax dollars to promote religion... Bush announced during his weekly radio address that the 10 million U.S.-supplied books being trucked to Afghan schools would teach “respect for human dignity, instead of indoctrinating students with fanaticism and bigotry.”

The President neglected to point out that the textbooks which, in his own words, had been “indoctrinating students with fanaticism and bigotry” were funded by U.S. taxpayers, and developed and published by an American public university, under the direction of the CIA.

CAS Today

In March 2003, CAS lost its bid to develop a new generation of Afghan textbooks to the Washington, D.C.-based private, for-profit management consulting firm Creative Associates International, Inc. The three-year \$60 million contract was awarded by USAID, which provides about 90 percent of Creative’s revenues, according to the Center for Public Integrity. That same month, Creative—as the sole bidder—was also awarded a USAID contract

worth as much as \$157 million to revitalize Iraq’s primary and secondary schools.

Since 2002, the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, has funded CAS’s Afghanistan Teacher Education Project, which brings Afghan women educators to the U.S. for training. ATEP appears to be the sole CAS project to receive funding at present.

For over three decades, CAS had the distinction of being the only Afghanistan studies center in the U.S. In 2003, however, a consortium of schools and scholars formed the American Institute of Afghanistan Studies (AIAS), with a research center in Kabul and an office at Duke University in Durham, N.C. CAS was invited to join AIAS as a founding member, but Gouttierre declined. The *Omaha World-Herald* reported on February 13, 2005:

Gouttierre said he couldn’t justify paying the school’s dues [\$250 per year], given tight budgets. He said he... is too busy running programs and fielding requests for help from a variety of organizations to spend much time with a single group.

AIAS President John Richards, a Duke history professor, told the *World-Herald*, “The UNO thing has always been a puzzle to me.”

Richards wondered whether Gouttierre avoids dealings with Afghanistan scholars because he is resentful or sensitive about continuing criticism of textbooks UNO produced in the 1980s. Several AIAS leaders mentioned the textbooks in recent interviews.

David Edwards, AIAS trustee and anthropologist at Williams College in Williamstown, Massachusetts, has done research at the Arthur Paul Afghanistan Collection at UNO. He told the *World-Herald*:

I don’t think of UNO’s Afghan studies center as a scholarly organization per se. They are more an umbrella organization for getting grant money for contract work.

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Letters to NFP:

Dear Nebraskans for Peace:

For some time I have been disturbed by NFP’s attacks on the UNO Center for Afghanistan Studies and its director, Dr. Tom Gouttierre.

I understand that institutions of higher education do not regularly cooperate with the CIA, nor intend their staffs and facilities to be in service to unethical companies. (We stood, naively, in the U.S. Embassy in Nicaragua in 1984, listening to staff members tell us, “We will bring down this country with anything at our command, economic, military, or financial.” Later we were surprised to learn that we were being briefed by CIA members.) I would challenge the position that ALL private organizations affiliated in any way with the University of Nebraska could pass this ethical review.

Instead of its attacks on the Afghanistan Center, could not Nebraskans for Peace interview Dr. Gouttierre and demonstrate fairness by including his views in its newspaper? Would NFP be interested in the history of Tom and Marylu Gouttierre, their years of working in the Peace Corps in Afghanistan, their speaking fluently the languages of that part of the world, Tom’s leadership on an international committee of three early in the days of our involvement with Afghanistan, the changes made in the Afghanistan textbooks after the first, rushed copying-publication of school books? Do we honestly think in that heavily patriarchal part of the world, women could be trained to work on the Unocal pipelines or textbooks could be encouraged which not emphasize Islamist views, even though we might disagree with some of them? Do we wait until a country gets it right, according to our standards, before we step in to offer what help we can?

In this case I think Nebraskans for Peace is making Tom Gouttierre a strawhorse for its frustration with the almost total dominance of our world by military-industrial-corporate enterprises. Who else is doing something of significance in providing Afghanistan schools books, and special education for its largely female teachers?

Having met the Gouttierres at a Rotary International Convention years ago in Nice, France, I confess to being prejudiced on their behalf. Instead of attending one more meeting, they rented a car and invited us to spend a delightful afternoon with them, driving along the French coast, Tom and Marylu interested in learning about other people and their lives.

Would Nebraskans for Peace be able to examine the ‘middle ground’ in its complaints about the UNO Center for Afghan Studies, and hear Dr. Gouttierre explain what it and he are trying to accomplish in this conflict-ridden world?

Sincerely,

Ruth Thone, long-time NFP Member and Supporter

Kyoto, conclusion

provides the business incentive once the government assistance sunsets, as Hagel intends. Or, for that matter, why the markets don’t recognize and react to the problem in the first place. Nor, tellingly, do any of these proposals address the current subsidies to fossil fuels. It’s as if those industries are the tobacco farmers of the energy business.

Environmentalists and marketeers don’t have to be enemies. Just as some marketeers are learning that cleaning the environment can be good for jobs and the economy, some environmen-

talists are learning that the market can provide an incentive to clean things up. But that only works if there is honest accounting of all costs, including the shared ones. And that’s the true value of the Kyoto Protocol—it is a first attempt at finally assigning costs to polluting our global commons with greenhouse gases. It’s also a weakness of Sen. Hagel’s proposed legislation that it doesn’t assign those costs. At least though, he is finally admitting we need to act and be engaging in dialogue. The problem is, we don’t have the luxury of time that such incremental steps will take.

WTO, CONCLUSION

their time of need with a 'safety net' in the form of decoupled, welfare-like payments to make up for any lost marketplace values.

The co-sponsors of the 1996 Farm Bill were Rep. Barrett of Nebraska and then-Rep. Pat Roberts of Kansas. Barrett ranked first and Roberts sixth in the amount of all-time ConAgra PAC donations they had received. These two farm-state representatives claimed they conceived this "bold new farm program proposal" one day in the House cafeteria on the back of a napkin. In reality, their approach was the same, decades-old, well-documented, grain-trade-devised strategy to transform traditional price support-based farm programs into more transparent welfare-type programs that would make it easier for the grain traders to eventually completely dismantle and eliminate all farm programs. The grain traders wanted carte blanche power over farmers and farm prices without governmental influence or interference.

Since, 1996 on average, U.S. farmers have been paid \$14.6 billion less per year for the national market place value of their corn, wheat, soybeans, grain sorghum, rice and cotton crops from 1997 through 2003. That amounts to \$102.45 billion of income that did not go into farmer's pockets to pay their bills, feed their families or support their rural communities. That \$102.45 billion of lost revenue did not generate rural economic activity, local, state or national taxes. The 1996 Farm Bill approach has been a bust for family farmers and rural America, and a goldmine for the ag processors.

Rural America is mired in a corporate-made economic crisis that gets deeper and meaner, yet the media focuses on the proposed Bush Administration cuts to "ag subsidies." While farm and ranch families suffer in isolation and silence, few questions are asked about why ag commodity values have collapsed 23 percent or the balance of ag trade has collapsed 65 percent since 1996, or why the U.S. trade negotiators seem so intent on giving away U.S. markets.

The Bush Administration proposes to make 9 percent of their total budget cuts out of federal farm programs that represent less than 1 percent of the total federal budget. So much for the gratitude of the White House for rural voter support in the last election!

More farmers have come to understand that it is not possible to change the direction of domestic farm policy without first changing the direction of U.S. trade policy that the farm policy fits into. Labor, environment, and social justice advocates are also finding that trade policy often trumps domestic policy.

The WTO efficiently implements the trade agendas and priorities set by international trading interests, yet does not answer to the human beings it impacts. It answers only to governments, and then, only in a limited manner. That is neither freedom nor democracy. Our current trade policy is structurally flawed, undemocratic, and a clear and present danger to the future of our planet, as it implements a modern-day version of globalization that seems reminiscent of the old colonial serf and slave system of two centuries ago.

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Omaha Peace & Justice Expo April 9

featuring
Amy Goodman of DEMOCRACY NOW!

The Omaha Peace & Justice Expo Committee is excited to announce our keynote speaker for this year's April 9 Expo—Amy Goodman!

Goodman is an award-winning journalist, author of *The Exception to the Rule* and host of "Democracy Now!" (www.democracynow.org). She will start off the whole Expo at 1:00 p.m.

Saturday with her talk—"Independent Media in a Time of War."

That's a pretty great way to start off the Expo, but don't miss what comes next. You'll have the chance to talk with representatives of the 50 participating organizations and efforts that are happening in the greater Omaha area. From Americans for Informed Democracy to the proposed U.S. Department of Peace to alternative political parties to social justice efforts from various spiritual traditions. There are a lot of people doing a lot of good work!

Around 20 workshops will be offered to learn all kinds of great stuff, everything from Universal Health Care, to how to become a



Conscientious Objector, to Restorative Justice as a model for Nebraska Corrections. And you'll even be able to see a characterization of a labor organizer, pacifist and suffragist.

All that for a suggested donation of \$5. What a deal!

Check out www.progressiveomaha.com for all of the Expo info, including a list of the

participating organizations, a schedule of workshops and how you can help spread the word. We hope to eventually create a local network that can coordinate these efforts and boost our local impact. If anyone wants to be a part of creating a local network, please contact Stuart Williams at 553-0318.

So come to the 2nd Omaha Peace & Justice Expo, Saturday April 9, 2005 from 1:00-6:00 p.m., at Omaha's Lewis & Clark Middle School, 69th & Burt Streets.

For more information, contact Steve Thyberg, Expo Organizer, at 402-593-1810, or via email at lnCompassion@yahoo.com.

Reining in Cheney. conclusion

"Well, one of the concerns people have is that Israel might do it without being asked, that if, in fact, the Israelis became convinced the Iranians had significant capability, the Israelis might well decide to act first, and let the rest of the world worry about cleaning up the diplomatic mess afterwards."

The vice president's nonchalance betrays the apparent equanimity with which he regards such a possibility. His words are bound to endear him further with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, but the tone, as well as the words, are poison to 1.3 billion Muslims.

Someone needs to tell Cheney that "diplomatic mess" trivializes the lasting damage to the U.S. that such an attack would inevitably bring. Not only can his attitude be read as a green light for Israeli preemption, but it would undoubtedly be read as proof of U.S. complicity, should the Israelis attack Iran's nuclear facilities. And the queues at al-Qaida recruiting stations, already lengthened by Abu Ghraib and Fallujah, would now stretch out longer than the lines at the polls in the minority precincts of Ohio.

Restraining Cheney?

And so we are back to the key ques-

tion: Can anyone put the brakes on the vice president? It would normally be the job of CIA analysts to point out to the president and his senior advisors the manifold problems that would accrue from an Israeli attack (or, worse still) a U.S., or joint U.S./Israeli, attack on Iranian nuclear facilities. But Seymour Hersh's recent report that the White House is weeding out the apostates from the true believers among CIA analysts, together with the current dearth of courage in senior Agency ranks, suggest that those remaining analysts who still subscribe to the old Agency ethos of speaking truth to power will continue to choose to resign and look for honest work.

This will leave the field to the kind of "slam-dunk" sycophants who conjured up "weapons of mass destruction" in Iraq and then passed their reporting off as intelligence analysis. What can we expect of them this time on Iran?

Ray McGovern served as a CIA analyst from the administration of John F. Kennedy to that of George H. W. Bush, chairing National Intelligence Estimates and presenting the President's Daily Brief. He is co-founder of Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity. This article first appeared on TomPaine.com

