On 9/11, President Bush was rushed to Strategic Command in Omaha for safekeeping. From that point forward the headquarters for the U.S. nuclear arsenal would never be the same. (See centerfold.)
Nebraska Report

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

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Nebraskans for Peace

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

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Financial Statement

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The major budgetary increase for 2008 is the increase in hours of the Omaha NFP staff person to three-quarters time.

Your Foundation Speaks

by Loyal Park, President, Nebraska Peace Foundation

This is the time of year when we (or most of us) have to start work on our income taxes—either paying up or maybe getting a refund. It is the time when we must decide if it is practical to take the standard deduction for charitable giving or to itemize. Since the standard deduction varies between roughly $5,000 and $10,000 depending filing status, that means if all of your deductible items do not total these amounts, then itemizing is not for you.

So if you do not itemize, then your contributions to support peace work in Nebraska should be made directly to Nebraskans for Peace—and not to the Nebraska Peace Foundation. But if you can itemize, then make your contribution payable to Nebraska Peace Foundation, and be eligible for the benefits that provides.
Economists have shown that, in the long run, a cooperative society provides a much higher level of well-being to its members than a society of thieves and oppressors…

I WANT YOU TO DO WHAT I TELL YOU

hard toward the cooperative effort if it is easier to steal what others have worked to produce? People and countries quickly find themselves in an adversarial relationship, and resources are increasingly allocated to defense and preparation for conflict rather than welfare-enhancing productive activity. When countries do not trust each other, cooperative outcomes like specialization in production, trade and the sharing of knowledge are lost.

The Game of Tit for Tat

To find the strategies that work best to maximize human well-being in the “game of economic interaction,” the economist Robert Axelrod organized a now-famous tournament for game theorists in 1984. Game theorists were invited to play each other in the Prisoner’s Dilemma game. This game involves a pair of prisoners accused of having jointly committed a serious crime. Each prisoner is isolated from the other and offered the following choice: (1) confess and implicate the other in exchange for a reduced prison sentence of one year, or (2) remain silent and admit nothing. In the latter case, the prisoner will go free, provided the other prisoner also remains silent and does not confess. However, if the second prisoner does confess and testifies against the first, the silent prisoner will be sentenced to ten years behind bars. Obviously, the optimal outcome is for each prisoner to remain silent and walk out free. However, such an outcome is only possible if the two prisoners trust each other to remain silent. If either prisoner believes the other will confess in order to guarantee themselves a one-year sentence rather than the possible ten-year sentence, the optimal strategy is to also confess and at least avoid the onerous ten-year prison term.

This prisoner’s dilemma is similar to the example described above where people face the choice of (1) working hard to add to national production without worrying about anyone stealing the fruits of labor, or (2) devoting extensive resources to protecting themselves against theft. Everyone would be better off if they could trust each other—they would not have to waste resources on national defense and preparing for war. But, in the absence of trust, the best choice is to engage in a costly expansion of the military and prepare for the worst.

Axelrod had each pair of players repeat the game over and over in 100 successive rounds. Overall, hundreds of thousands of rounds of the Prisoner’s Dilemma were played. The winner of the game was the one who accumulated the least amount of jail time over the 100 games played with each of the nearly 100 other players. The winner was an economist who played the game according to the strategy known as “tolerant tit for tat:”

a. Unless provoked, remain silent (that is, ‘cooperate’ with your fellow prisoner)

b. If the other implicates you, retaliate by doing exactly the same thing to the other player in the next round

c. Forgive and cooperate again on the subsequent round

The term tit for tat implies that a player responds by doing to the other exactly what the other did to her in a previous round. Thus, one player’s silence and refusal to confess triggers similar cooperation by the other player the following round. A violation of trust triggers a confession

...However, because individuals, groups and individual countries often find it beneficial to ‘deviate’ from rules of cooperation to, instead, steal or enslave, it is not easy to maintain a cooperative and peaceful world community.
Crossing the Color Line in Nebraska

Lela Shanks Interviews Hugh Bullock

The idea for this interview came about over lunch with Hugh and Leola Bullock and other friends. Hugh began talking about the discrimination he faced in 1953 in Lincoln as the first African American hired to work for the U.S. Postal Transportation Service. As I listened to him, I began choking up, remembering similar problems my late husband, Hughes, had faced as the first African American hired by the Denver Social Security Administration in 1956. My husband had to go to Baltimore for training, but because of legal segregation, he was not permitted to stay or eat in the downtown hotel where his fellow white trainees were housed. He stayed across town at the black YMCA. Since the Y had no cafeteria, he ate out of cans, got ptomaine poison, had to have his stomach pumped, and almost died. I decided to interview Hugh in honor of my Hughes and all the other black men and women who have endured racial discrimination in order to break down employment barriers in America.

—Lela Shanks

**Hugh:** Hugh, will you tell me what you thought about when you saw the obituary in the paper about Shirley Hutchison who was from Broken Bow, Nebraska.

**Lela:** Hugh at 50

**Hugh:** I thought about the time that I was in the mail service on the train and my run was from Lincoln to Broken Bow and many of the small towns in Nebraska. And Broken Bow was one of the places I didn’t have any place to stay because my people that I worked with didn’t want to stay in the same place I did, so I had to find a place to stay and I went to the train station; and the police didn’t want me to stay in the train station so they took me to the hotel. The hotel wouldn’t keep me, but they had an older fellow that was a cook and he evidently suggested that I stay in the hotel. And I was told that he said if I didn’t stay in the hotel he would quit as their cook.

**Lela:** Now, he was an African American?

**Hugh:** African American. I’m fairly sure his name was Mr. Conrad and that’s really all I knew. He was Shirley Hutchison’s father. And the police would pick me up at the station every time I went to Broken Bow, take me to the hotel, and the hotel gave me a room and would bring food up to the room so they wouldn’t have to show me at the hotel.

**Hugh:** Hugh at 18

**Lela:** Why did you come to Nebraska in the first place?

**Hugh:** What a long story. I knew after the army I couldn’t stay in Mississippi, because I wanted to live, and I felt that Mississippi and I could not live together with the attitude that Mississippi had, so I took off. At that time, black people could not vote in Mississippi even though I was just out of the army. Trying to vote, you could have lost your life, really. So, I had some friends up in St. Paul, Minnesota that I had lived with and worked for when I lived in Mississippi, and I went there, but I was not happy in St. Paul, so I left there after I met a friend who had been stationed at the airbase in Lincoln, showed up in Lincoln came up to me, pointed his finger and said, “I don’t like you because you are you.” That’s just the way he said it. I understood he was an ex-army officer, and he told me that I had to leave Lincoln as soon as possible because he wouldn’t have me in Lincoln. And after six months he told me again that I couldn’t qualify for the postal service unless I was willing to leave Lincoln. So I left Lincoln and went to Omaha, and Omaha accepted me because they had many minority folk in Omaha. I started in Council Bluffs, and Omaha was where I went back to.

**Hugh:** What year was this?

**Hugh:** I wish I knew for sure, but I was on the train, [U.S. Postal Transportation Service], from 1953 to 1956.

**Lela:** Where did the other guys stay?

**Hugh:** They stayed with a private individual and it was some of the railroad people and some of the postal service people that I worked with. At first, I slept there two nights, and ate in one of the little cafes downtown. But after the second night, I was told by the landlord that these guys that lived there would not stay if I was allowed to live there, and the cafe was off limits, too.

**Lela:** So what did you think you were going to do? Did you talk it over with your supervisor?

**Hugh:** I didn’t dare talk it over with the supervisor, because the supervisor didn’t want any parts of me in the service. I was the only black person on that train from Lincoln, and the supervisor and most of his employees would prefer not to have me on the train with them or in the same organization with them.

**Lela:** Did you see any signs up?

**Hugh:** I didn’t see any signs. I don’t remember in any place in Nebraska. That’s one of the reasons that I got into trouble in several places and was thrown out because there wasn’t any signs. In Mississippi there were signs, but I come to Nebraska and there was no signs. But the policy was not to accept me in.

**Lela:** Can you remember some of the towns you were thrown out of?

**Hugh:** Oh, yes, the only place in Nebraska that I had a place to eat and stay as far as I know were two places: Ravenna and Alliance.

**Lela:** Can you name some of the towns you couldn’t stop in?

**Hugh:** Well, Falls City. The guys on the train told me, don’t stop at Falls City. I was supposed to stop in Falls City. But I had connections in St. Joe [Joseph], Missouri so I would just ride the train on to St. Joe and catch the train back from St. Joe. But I was working overtime to do that or whatever.

**Lela:** Did you get paid?

**Hugh:** No, you just got paid for your run. And in one of the towns, Hyannis, Nebraska, I went to bed the first night, and the second night there were two men that came in my room and woke me up and said get out of town and don’t ever come back. Hyannis Nebraska. I’m not sure who these fine gentlemen was, but it was just two white fellas.

**Lela:** And where did you go?

**Hugh:** I went to the train station and stayed until the train came the next day. And after that, when I was going to Hyannis, I would continue on to Alliance, because Alliance was the stopping point and not too far away, but that was extra for me because I didn’t get the sleep I was supposed to and had to work extra, really.

**Lela:** So were you as frightened in those times, as you were when you were in Mississippi?

**Hugh:** Not really. One reason is, in the postal service (transportation) you carried a gun, and this was to be used on the train, really to protect the mail. But you had a gun, and you had it loaded. And because I didn’t have any place to stay, most of the time since I couldn’t stay where the other guys lived, I carried the gun all the time. It wasn’t supposed to be loaded, but I carried it. As I told you, one of the reasons I had so much troubles was because the top man in Lincoln, when I first continued on page 10
During May 2007, after giving a commencement address to his high school in Denison, Iowa, James E. Hansen, Director of NASA’s Goddard Institute for Space Sciences in New York City, drove from Denison to Dunlap, where his parents are buried. “For most of the 20 miles,” he later told the Iowa Utilities Board, “there were trains parked, engine to caboose, half of the cars being filled with coal.” He had an epiphany at that point, and saw coal trains filled with extinct species: “If we cannot stop the building of more coal-fired power plants, those coal trains will be death trains—no less gruesome than if they were boxcars headed to crematoria, loaded with uncountable irreplaceable species.”

Within days, Hansen’s comments reached the eyes of Krag R. Naasz, president and chief executive officer of the National Mining Association, at the lobbying organization’s headquarters in Washington, D.C. Naasz shot off an indignant letter to Hansen, saying that the comparison of coal trains “carrying Powder River Basin coal to the box cars that carried Europeans to their deaths in crematoria” deeply distressed him. Naasz called Hansen’s remarks “repellant,” “preposterous” and “invidious,” charging that Hansen was trivializing the “systematic extermination of European Jewry.” How could one coal-fired power plant in Iowa make much difference, Naasz argued, while China “builds a plant in Iowa make much difference, Hansen took the case an extra step, saying that coal pollution was responsible for power generation was, indeed causing a degree of warming that, in coming years, will become “the predominant cause of extinction of species, many [of which are] already threatened by other human-made stresses. The burning of coal is responsible for half the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Hansen asserted. Addressing Naasz directly, Hansen asserted that if comparing coal trains to crematoria made Naasz uncomfortable, “perhaps it should.” Even so, Hansen said later, he had not meant to hurt anyone’s feelings.

Compassion for the Whole World

Knowing Jim Hansen is to acquaint oneself with a person who has a profound compassion and empathy for the human race as a whole, and all the animals that walk the Earth, as well as the physics of the atmosphere. Hansen’s compassion is infectious, as well, as more for rising asthma rates and water pollution, that mountain-top removal to mine it should end. “There is nothing scientifically invalid” in what he had said, Hansen said. Naasz called Hansen’s remarks “repellent,” “preposterous” and “invidious,” charging that Hansen was trivializing the “systematic extermination of European Jewry.” How could one coal-fired power plant in Iowa make much difference, Naasz argued, while China “builds a plant in Iowa make much difference, Hansen took the case an extra step, saying that coal pollution was responsible for power generation was, indeed causing a degree of warming that, in coming years, will become “the predominant cause of extinction of species, many [of which are] already threatened by other human-made stresses. The burning of coal is responsible for half the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Hansen asserted. Addressing Naasz directly, Hansen asserted that if comparing coal trains to crematoria made Naasz uncomfortable, “perhaps it should.” Even so, Hansen said later, he had not meant to hurt anyone’s feelings.

Compassion for the Whole World

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How They Lie

How ardently they lie about Hansen is an index of his effectiveness, as well as the increasing urgency of global warming. A decade or two more of routine emissions, Hansen warns, and the Earth is cooked. Hansen has been forecasting greenhouse weather for decades now, and his record is prescient. A man with a domed forehead, twinkling eyes, and a mild but very forthright manner, Hansen in person seems a most unlikely hate object, as he measures his words, struggling to make the complexities of geophysics understandable and germane to ordinary people.

Hansen’s daily life can be filled with the pecks-to-death by ducks of climate contrarianism, a haze of mites who befog the real issues, divorcing the hard science from nit-picking and character assassination, turning global warming into a little chamber of rhetorical horrors. Since the contrarians cannot argue geophysical reality, they use other tactics. In addition to making a very big purported something out of nearly nothing (discussed above), they attack personally. Hansen has been attacked personally so often that he can see them coming and laughs them off. The slime machine is very good at character assassination. Has Hansen received $720,000 under the table payments from liberal industrialist George Soros? (Hansen, 9/27/07). “The bottom line is,” said Hansen. “I did not receive one thin dime from George Soros. By the way, in case anybody finds out that George Soros INTENDED to send me $720,000 but could not find my address, please let me know! We are pretty hard-pressed here.”

Another slime-machine tactic: invent a contradiction in a climate scientist’s record, long in the past. Wouldn’t it be nifty, for example, to catch Jim Hansen advocating an ice age? During September of 2007, Hansen found himself inundated with reports that he had issued such a statement 36 years earlier, during 1971. This was almost as juicy among the contrarians as catching a politician in bed with a person of the same sex. Of course, it never happened. It was all political fabrication. If the carbon dioxide had a sense of irony, it might have gotten a chuckle out of all these human foibles—but it doesn’t. Carbon dioxide now has politics. It just holds heat. And the more of it we have, the more heat we will eventually get.
Since 9/11, StratCom has seen its mission shift from nuclear deterrence to offensively waging the “War on Terror.”

StratCom Commander Kevin Chilton: “In 2002 this command did not experience a sea-state change but a tsunami of change in the way it was organized and the missions that they were given to perform.” Former StratCom Commander James Cartwright: “When we got to 2002 we brought space. In 2003 we had a fire sale and picked up missile defense, ISR and global strike. In 2005 we picked up combating weapons of mass destruction. I’m hoping in 2008 we’ll get the world hunger piece.” [Laughter]. (Official StratCom website: www.stratcom.mil)

From its headquarters in Nebraska, StratCom now commands a global network of hundreds of military bases with broadened authority over federal agencies.

StratCom Commander Chilton: “Here in Omaha we are an operational headquarters working to enable the successful prosecution of our component commanders that are scattered throughout the country. We are called on to be the most, in my view, the most responsive combatant command in the U.S. arsenal.” (www.stratcom.mil) “The FBI and CIA are in our operations center 24/7.” Deputy Commander Jennifer Napper, StratCom’s Global Network Operations. (http://www.alternet.org/audits/67699/)

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The next war the White House gets us into will be planned, launched and executed from StratCom.

Commander Chilton: “Responsible today for... time-sensitive planning to conduct global strike operations anywhere on the planet, we will remain as ready as ever in our nuclear deterrent role and global strike mission areas.” (www.stratcom.mil). Former CIA analyst Philip Giraldi: “Under instructions from Vice President Cheney’s office, STRATCOM is drawing up a contingency plan [for] a large-scale air assault on Iran employing both conventional and tactical nuclear weapons.” American Conservative (8/01/05).

StratCom is now authorized to attack anywhere on the face of the earth within one hour.

“StratCom established an interim global strike division to turn the new preemption policy into an operational reality. In December 2002, Adm. James O. Ellis Jr., then StratCom’s head, told an Omaha business group that his command had been charged with developing the capability to strike anywhere in the world within minutes of detecting a target.” William Arkin, Washington Post (5/14/05). (http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/05/14/AR2005051400071.html)

StratCom is flouting both national and international law.

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StratCom’s fingerprints are everywhere nowadays and we don’t even realize it...

“StratCom established an interim global strike division to turn the new preemption policy into an operational reality. In December 2002, Adm. James O. Ellis Jr., then StratCom’s head, told an Omaha business group that his command had been charged with developing the capability to strike anywhere in the world within minutes of detecting a target.” William Arkin, Washington Post (5/14/05). (http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/05/14/AR2005051400071.html)
StratCom is actively seeking the total domination of space... because whoever controls space controls the Earth

StratCom has become the “Big Brother” that George Orwell warned us about. It’s Darth Vader in the service of the Empire

StratCom’s goal of space dominance will be one of the biggest military industrial projects in the history of the world

StratCom has now become the most dangerous place on the face of the Earth, but hardly anyone knows about it or can believe it

“President Bush has signed a new National Space Policy that rejects future arms-control agreements that might limit U.S. flexibility in space and asserts a right to deny access to space to anyone ‘hostile to U.S. interests,’” Washington Post (10/17/06). “The United States was alone in voting against the [U.N.] resolution on prevention of an arms race in outer space... The PAROS resolution was adopted by a vote of 166 in favor, one against.” Nuclear Threat Initiative, March 2007 (www.nti.org).

If the majority of top policymakers have longstanding ties to the companies that will benefit from the Bush Administration’s “war without end” approach to foreign policy, the development of a missile defense “shield” and a new generation of nuclear weapons, who will represent the public interest? William Hartung, World Policy Institute. “In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex.” Dwight Eisenhower (1961).

“Nebraskans for Peace StratCom Watch Committee” (www.nebraskansforpeace.org)
Parallel Protests?

StratCom & the School of the Americas

by John Krejci, NFP State Board

On December 28, three days after Christmas, I joined the annual “Feast of the Holy Innocents” protest and line crossing at the StratCom’s Kinney Gate. Since the 1980s, Frank Cordaro, the Des Moines Catholic Workers and their friends have read the Gospel story of King Herod’s killing of the children and held a banner reminding passersby that “StratCom Would Kill the World.” This year, two activists ‘crossed the line’ and were politely arrested, processed and released pending trial. Committing nonviolent civil disobedience is an annual ritual at the “Holy Innocents” protest.

Lately, I have begun reflecting on the parallels between this action at StratCom with the large, protest event that takes place every November at Fort Benning, Georgia, at the gate of the former “School of the Americas” (aka “School of Assassins”). Since 1990, when Fr. Roy Bourgeois led ten protesters on a 40-day water-only fast, there have been annual protests, line-crossings, jail terms and increasing efforts to educate the American public of the training of unrestrained, mass murderers. Committing nonviolent civil disobedience is an annual ritual at the “Holy Innocents” protest.

My friend and former Nebraska activist, Dick (Joe) Vaughan, participated in this year’s actions with about 20,000 others. The following is excerpt from his report on the event:

“The things that stood out for me in my first participation in the annual SOA Watch were the liturgy (Catholic Mass) which filled the South Wing with thousands of young and old...and most memorable, the three-hour long funeral procession—with thousands of names of those murdered in Latin American massacres with SOA connections, read off in cadence and responded to by a thunderous, “PRESENT!” by some 20,000 marchers... [I was moved walking] most of the two-mile march behind a man wearing a T-shirt with Gandhi’s “BECOME THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE IN THE WORLD.” I was most impressed though by the truth-speaking of residential candidate Dennis Kucinich, who said, ‘Closing this school would be doing God’s work... We don’t give up rights when we are at war. This is when it is most important to stand by our rights...’

“The concerns that bring growing thousands of people to the School of the Americas event are growing concerns that are shared about the United States’ lack of adherence to international law. That is how the U.S. has gotten caught up in torture and has been using the SOA to train others to become unrestrained, mass murderers.

“The House vote to cut off funding for the SOA this year missed by only six votes. Let’s keep praying and working this year and see what next year brings.”

A parallel indeed exists. The challenge for us in Nebraska, it seems to me, is to increase our numbers and amplify our voices so that ‘ears’ (news media) outside of Nebraska and the U.S. will hear of the danger that StratCom brings to our world. In my personal conversations with Fr. Bourgeois, he spoke of the importance of “getting the word out”—of education and awareness. Accessible publications like the StratCom comic book and “Top Ten Points about StratCom” are beginning this effort. The April 11-13 Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space Conference and Protest in Omaha can expand awareness of the new dangers of StratCom to the international level.

Nebraskans for Peace has designated education and action regarding StratCom as a major priority in 2008 and on into the future. Our goal is to take the ‘seed-planting’ efforts of the Catholic Workers to a new level. We are seeking more allies, broader news coverage, a local core of supporters and activists and some imaginative new strategies to make the world aware of the dangers at our doorstep. Volunteers with time and/or ideas are needed in planning the April 11-13 conference. Contact the Omaha or Lincoln offices to offer your services. This is an endeavor with consequences for the preservation of life on our planet.

Comic Book Credits

The StratCom comic book on the centerfold grew out of the efforts to produce a simple, one-page sheet spotlighting the “Top Ten Points about StratCom.” Special thanks go to “Citizens for Peace in Space” activist Loring Wirbel of Colorado Springs for sharing his background and expertise on StratCom. Neither the comic book nor the “Ten Points” would have been created without the ongoing commitment of Don Tilley and Peter Salter of Lincoln and Frances Mendenhall of Omaha, and the assistance of cartoonist Mike Horner. Thanks are also due to the following StratCom Watch Committee members: Frank Cordaro, John Krejci, Elaine Wells, Mark Welsch, Jerry Ebner, Deirdre Routt and Paul Olson.

[Dagmar Hoxsie, a 76-year-old Catholic Worker from Yankton, South Dakota delivering her statement before ‘crossing the line’ at StratCom on December 28.
This was Dagmar’s third line-crossing at Offutt Air Force Base.]

Protesters at the 2008 “Feast of the Holy Innocents” demonstration pose in the snow for a photograph outside StratCom’s Kinney Gate on December 28.

FEBRUARY 2008 NEBRASKA REPORT, P.8
The ‘pre-emptive’ invasion of Iraq is a clear violation of the rules of tit for tat.

The ‘pre-emptive’ invasion of Iraq is a clear violation of the rules of tit for tat. Threats to bomb Iran are also a violation. Repeated violations of the rules by the U.S. constitutes war, and it may trigger aggression by other countries.

The Surprise of the 2004 Tournament

The Prisoner’s Dilemma tournament was repeated in 2004. In order to better reflect the real world, participants were allowed to enter more than one player (strategy) in the competition. Players could form coalitions and carry out joint strategies with other players. A team from Southampton University in the U.K. submitted a whole set of players with distinct strategies and won the competition. When the Southampton players recognized each other, they assumed ‘master and slave’ roles under which one would sacrifice itself so the other could win repeatedly. If one of the ‘slave’ players did not recognize the other player as a Southampton player, it would immediately play the role of spoiler and do a lot of damage to the other player by not cooperating. Southampton ended up with the top performer, and a large number of utter failures at the bottom of the table. Does this then show that tit for tat is not the best strategy for countries to follow?

The lesson to be drawn from the 2004 competition is that when players do not play the game as equals—that is, when there is oppression or enslavement by some players of other players—the tit for tat strategy no longer works to maximize the well being of all the players. The growth of colonial powers in the 18th and 19th centuries provides an example of this outcome. The colonial powers strived to control as many foreign colonies as possible so that they could ‘serve’ the colonist and thereby gain an advantage over other countries. The gains from international interaction were diminished for the colonized countries (except for a few leaders of colonized governments) and the other countries, but, of course, the winning colonial power gained cheap resources, a captive market for its industries and soldiers for its colonial army.

Today, we see the U.S. effectively using other governments to further its aims, to the detriment of the populations of the ‘slave’ countries and other competing countries. Tit for tat only raises all nations’ wellbeing in a competition among equals, and without the possibility of forcing other players to act against their own interests.

How to Achieve Peace

The continued denial on the part of Americans that our government has done anything wrong, in part because the rest of the world is not powerful enough to retaliate against us for our actions, is most problematic. Americans tend to see the Iranian government’s aggressive rhetoric in isolation and, therefore, as a violation of the rules of the game of tit for tat that we subconsciously play. Rather, we should see Iran’s actions as their retaliation against our 1952 overthrow of their democratically elected government, the arming of Saddam Hussein to attack Iran in the 1980s, our unwarranted isolation of Iran as an “Axis of Evil” country, and the continual threats of bombing by the Bush/Cheney Administration. The danger is that we are likely to use the tit for tat retaliation that Iran sees as perfectly justified as a justification for our ‘retaliating’ against them.

Our own government and news media work hard to obscure history and discourage the American public from viewing Iran and global strategy from the more appropriate long-term ‘repeated game’ perspective. This constitutes a clear indication that our government has no intention of encouraging a globally beneficial strategy of tolerant tit for tat. We seem to have adopted an imperial strategy, in which ‘slave players’ support us. This is morally wrong, given human evolution and the tendency for people to behave in accordance with the tolerant tit for tat strategy. Our imperial strategy can be successful for a period of time, as the 2004 tournament showed, but in the long run it escalates conflict. Sooner or later, China, Russia, India, Pakistan, Iran and all other countries disadvantaged by our strategy will retaliate. It is human nature to do so. And we will pay the price.
and he gave me the name of Reverend Trago McWilliams. And I left St. Paul without knowing Rev. Trago or anybody else except what this fellow had told me. I came down to Lincoln and met Rev. Trago, and he sent me to Ms. Stella Hammond’s house who rented rooms to single people. And that's where I lived until really, I got married and bought a little house.

**Lela:** Where were you born?

**Hugh:** I was born in Springfield, Mississippi on July 23, 1924.

**Lela:** When were you in the military?

**Hugh:** Went in 1943 and got out in 1946.

**Lela:** And were you in the big invasion?

**Hugh:** I was after the invasion, but I was there close. We were in Belfast, Northern Ireland when the invasion started. We went to South Hampton, England and went over from South Hampton and walked around the beach into France.

**Lela:** Were you associated with whites at all?

**Hugh:** A few were mostly officers. We had some non-commissioned officers who were black, but it was all a black unit except for the commanding officers who were all white. We worked with unloading ships when we got to Cherbourg, France and loaded the Red Ball Express of Patton’s army.

**Lela:** How were you treated in France and Ireland and those places by the people?

**Hugh:** The regular people mostly treated us… how should I say… fair. They called us black yanks. And they called the white soldiers white yanks, so we were just American soldiers as far as most of those folks went, and they were fair. They only thing was when we run into the same officers who were all white. We worked with putting officers who were all white. We worked with unloading ships when we got to Cherbourg, France and loaded the Red Ball Express of Patton’s army.

**Lela:** How were you treated in Omaha?

**Hugh:** Ye s.

**Lela:** And was it the manager that was so terrible to you who took you off probation?

**Hugh:** No, Omaha. I was in Omaha. As I said, my supervisor told me I was not going to make it in Lincoln. So I moved to Omaha after six months and stayed until the year was over. And then when there was a job opening, I came back to Lincoln to work on the train. They could hound me, but they could not take the job away because I had made it that far. And Omaha said I was qualified to do anything.

**Lela:** How were you treated in Omaha?

**Hugh:** Much better than Lincoln. In Omaha I was treated… I’d say fair because I was almost equal, because there were many black folk in Omaha. And some supervisors. But after I came back to Lincoln, I left the train after a couple of years because I had so much trouble with the boss on the train and asked to be transferred to the Lincoln Post Office. I lost all of my seniority on the train with this supervisor as long as I could stay. And what finally happened to me and the supervisor was he asked me to work 16 hours or something. I had just gone on a run, and they asked me to turn around and go right back. Woke me up. I had just got home and was in the bed. After an hour they wanted me to go out and go on another run. And I refused to do it. And because I had refused to turn around and go out, the head supervisor, the head man that had been all the troubles to me before, came up to me and screamed and he was standing in my face. And I called it spitting in my face, but he wasn’t spitting in my face—he was just screaming. And I knew at that time that nobody needed to ask me about fighting, because I was ready to go: so I knew I had to transfer. So I transferred after that day. I never went back. I could have waited and kept my seniority because the train was going to be off after about a year anyway. They took all the mail off the train. But I could not stay and wait until that time, so I lost my seniority.

**Lela:** Do you think that affected what your retirement is today?

**Hugh:** I don’t think so, because the only way that would affect my retirement was that I would have moved up in the post office because of my train experience. But I don’t think I would have moved up in the post office anyway. I was already postman, because the only black clerk that was in the post office at my time was Fred Nevels, and Fred had to sue the post office to get to be supervisor. And he was ahead of me. He had more education than I did and all the other stuff but they still didn’t want him as a supervisor.

**Lela:** If you hadn’t been a veteran do you think you would have been hired in the first place?

**Hugh:** I don’t think so. I got five points.

**Lela:** What would you say the main differences are between your experiences in Mississippi and in Nebraska, specifically, Lincoln, if you feel there are differences?

**Hugh:** There were differences because of the employment opportunities, and in Mississippi there were signs to say where you could go and where you dare not to go. In Lincoln, Nebraska there were very few signs if any. But it was the same system that you still was not wanted or accepted. And many of the opportunities in employment… the people that worked, the other employees would make the job tough as they could to eliminate you. I went out on the train for the second time from Lincoln to Alliance. And there was nine small towns that I was supposed to put a sack of mail off in a certain place in each town. And I missed five of those towns because I didn’t know how to get the mail to those towns. And each little town that I missed, they give you five demerits for each one of those towns that you missed. And if you got 50 demerits, they elimi-
Color Line, conclusion

...nated you from the post office. It didn’t make any difference, your position was over if you had 50 demerits if they wanted to. So the men I worked with were trying to eliminate me by not helping me with the mail for those towns.

Lela: You were to drop the mail off at a certain point in the towns?
Hugh: Yes, at some place, for all of those little towns. And nobody would tell me or help me.

Lela: Wasn’t there anybody you could go to? Did you feel helpless or how did you feel?
Hugh: Oh yes, you felt helpless, believe me, because that’s when you were carrying your lunch and not sleeping because you didn’t have any place to eat or stay on some of those routes so you had to carry a lunch and lose some sleep.

Lela: And would they let you sleep on the train?
Hugh: Yeah, they let me sleep on the train or in the train station many times, in many places.

Lela: Could you lie down on the train?
Hugh: Oh, yeah. The train crew found when I was thrown out at Hyannis that I didn’t have any place to stay, so when they got to Hyannis they would fix two car seats so I could lie down and sleep for that hour that I needed to get to Alliance. The only reason I made the whole thing... the only way I survived is that I had several people that was different from the other group. And that’s how I made it. But those that were different wouldn’t report the other guys.

I almost had a nervous breakdown—after I was on the train here the second time. It was hard work on the train. And then the stress, and like I said many times, I didn’t have any place to stay and all of the other things. So I had bells ringing in my ears. And I got sick, so I went to this old doctor in the Lincoln Terminal Building on 10th and ‘O’ Street and never seen him before in my life. And he talked to me and examined me a little, and finally he said, “Son”—never seen him before in my life—he said, “Son, you can’t make it; you’d better find another job.” But I couldn’t find another job. I didn’t have no place to go. And I went back on the train, and after a few days’ rest and continued.

At that time I had filed for several other jobs in Lincoln. One was Ben Simon’s department store, and I had been a part-time salesman for Stonefield Corporation in Chicago. And I put that on my record when I made my application for Ben Simon’s as a shoe salesman; and I went up to the supervisor over the shoe department, and he told me after quite a conversation that he could hire me, but I probably couldn’t make it because the white men would not want me to put my hands on the white ladies’ legs.

Then I went to Western Electric, filled out an application and signed up. They wanted 300 inexperienced wiremen and since they didn’t know who I was, they called me in for an interview, and the personnel person sat down and talked to me for better than an hour, and I felt that it was time for him to make some decision. So I asked him about making a decision, and he looked at my hands and said your fingers are too large to be a wireman. And I had just left St. Paul, Minnesota and got out of Northwestern Institute of Technology, and I had a radio restricted operations license. And I told him at that time, I said, “I can check the wiring, I don’t have to wire.” And he said, “I could send you up and put you to work, but the guys up on the job don’t have to work with you and, you couldn’t make it.”

Lela: They were always passing the buck.
Hugh: And they had one black person that was both an elevator operator and a janitor and so they had their one. So they didn’t discriminate, since they had one guy.

So I stayed in the post office... and because I had all the experience on the train, they had me training new post office people. The train people had much more experience than the post office folk. I trained all the new ones at that time, and one particular new one that I trained was this postmaster that just retired. Doug Emery. And I still got shorted. They still was after me until I left. I worked a total of 34 years for the U.S. Postal Service.

Lela: Did you ever get a promotion?
Hugh: No, not hardly. I could have had a promotion, but the one promotion I could have had was at the state house, and then I would have been ahead of all the other guys, and they wouldn’t work with you, and I knew it, so I turned it down. But I could have had that promotion. It would have been just a little promotion.

Lela: You would have received a little more?
Hugh: Yeah, and I would have added to retirement, too by the way. And in the post office, even these guys I trained would ask me, “Why do you need as much money as we do?” That’s just some of the questions they would ask. They asked me, “If Russia would come over and take over, how would you feel?” And I said, “I wouldn’t feel any different, because Russians would treat me just like you guys treat me, so I’d be treated the same.” They asked me if I would like to change colors, and I would tell them that I was perfectly satisfied with who I am. In fact I like who I am, except I don’t like how they treated me. That would be my answer I would tell them.

And I always seem to have an answer every time they asked me some of those stupid ones. I’m not a quick thinker, but all of those things I guess I thought about them before they come up. When they asked me, instead of getting mad, that’s what I would tell them. When they asked me about the money I told them, I said, “I want to send my daughter to college just like you guys, and I want a new car, and I want my wife to be in a house just like Mrs. Eisenhower, just like anybody else.”
Speaking Our Peace
by Paul Olson, UNL Professor Emeritus

Straw-in-the-wind 1: My Pakistan editorial had barely hit the mailbox when gunmen killed Benazir Bhutto. She, as part of a Bush/Cheney Administration strategy to put a democratic face on Musharraf’s dictatorship, went to Pakistan to prepare for partially democratic elections and died for it. Whether radical Islamists, the army or Pakistani security indifference killed her, I do not know. I do know that she exuded courage and intellectual power. I did not like her footsy with the Bush White House, but I admired her beauty, grace and intellect. A nuclear-armed Pakistan is a more dangerous place without her. Our isolation in the Islamic world is the more complete now because we talked to her and we do not talk with our opponents there.

Straw-in-the-wind 2: In contrast to Bush, Barack Obama advocates talking with opponents. His Iowa victory elevates the only major Democratic candidate who from the beginning opposed our Middle East war (the only major Republican anti-war candidate, Ron Paul, got 10 percent—not bad for a man described as a crazy). Barak’s Iowa election may be the beginning of a prairie fire of youth voting that will change things. Not accidentally, when Barak spoke of the process of change in America on his victory night, he centered his message on the nonviolent. Martin Luther King-led, 1965 Selma marches.

Where the Wind Must Blow: If we are to change our violence-drunk culture, we ourselves will have to change culturally. If the straws mean anything, they mean that unilateralist and domintive efforts do not work. America’s people partially recognize this. They intuitively know they are caught between one culture, half-dead at the top, and another unable to be born. Hence Barak’s ‘change’ theme. When change does begin to occur, we must not reprise the ‘70s hope that change will come with a few ‘bliss-outs’ and demonstrations. Massive forces push us toward a dominance in our lives—in the military, in the media, in much evangelical and some mainstream religion, in the economy, in sport, in contestive education.

On New Year’s Night in Lincoln, at the candlelight vigil hosted by the Nebraska Coalition for Peace, I was asked to speak about the sources of hope for peace in the coming year. Hope was in the air. The cars going by honked encouragement to our peace message, and the crowd sparkled in the near-zero weather. Though that I felt the words froze in my mouth, I tried to speak honestly—of costly rather than cheap hope.

Hope is costly. During the Roman Empire, the gates of the temple of the god Janus (from whom we get the month of January) were open when Rome was at war, closed for peace. As in Rome, our gates remain almost always open.

I was born in 1932. During my life, the first stirrings of World War II came in the Spanish Civil War in 1936 and the Japanese attack on China in 1937. After that came World War II (1939-45), the Greek Civil War (1946-49), the Korean War (1950-53), U.S. covert actions in Iran and Guatemala (1953-54), Eisenhower’s involvement in Vietnam (mid-’50s-60), the Bay of Pigs (1961), the Vietnamese, Cambodian and Laotian Wars (early ’60s-75), Grenada (1983), Panama (1989), Gulf War I (1990-1991), the ’90s Balkan wars, and Iraq War II (2003-2008). We have conducted extensive secret wars: the 1973 coup against Allende in Chile, the ’70s Latin American Operation Condor, the ’70s-’80s Latin American Contra Wars, the 1981 El Salvador strikes, ‘87-’88 Iran, the ’79-’89 Mujahideen Afghani War, the 2006 Demadola Pakistan airstrike. At least 50 of my 75 years have seen wars’ gates open—most of them for wars without the sanction of international law or fulfillment of ‘Just War’ theory criteria. Anyone who cares about peace and respect for life might well cry.

The Global Peace Index, developed by the conservative Economist magazine and endorsed by the Dalai Lama, Jimmy Carter, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and a host of other peace leaders in the world, used 24 indicators that had statistics attached to them—including ease of access to “weapons of minor destruction” (guns, small explosives), military expenditure, local corruption, and the level of respect for human rights as well as international aid involvement—to determine the peacefulness of 121 countries in the world. The Scandinavian countries, New Zealand and Japan stood at the top in “peaceability.” The United States stood 96th, surrounded by such notables in peacemaking as Iran and Iraq. Many Latin American, Asian, and African countries rank well above our despite our presumption of ‘superior’ culture.

Peaceful countries had better than average levels of income, schooling and the level of regional integration, shared high levels of transparency of government and low corruption, and were generally small, stable countries. We have many of the ‘desirable’ characteristics—or think we do. But we came in 96th. Why?

Is it because our national government is so corrupt? So opaque? So duplicitous in its claim of, for example, NAFTA regional integration? Is it because we so tolerate youth bullying and violence? And are awash with guns? Because we so often teach a moral disengagement that allows the child and the adult to see violence as justified, and the victim deserving of it—whether it be in bullying, in domestic abuse, in the army, in the gang?

Is it because our central faith is not in Christianity or Buddhism or most of the other prophetic faiths that we claim, whose originators proclaimed nonviolence as the way to peace? Is it because we have not seriously believed in talk or negotiation but domintive violence? Is our primary faith in StratCom and nukes?

If the latter be the case, then we must change at our very core. The price of our journey’s hope will be serious economic and temporal sacrifice. It will be demonstrations, marches, letters to our representatives. It will be to be peace rather than to talk it. We will be required to learn the arts of negotiation, mediation, generosity, satyagraha, and Eugene Sharp’s civilian defense.

We cannot create peace elsewhere in the world while we remain one of its most violent nations internally and externally. We cannot teach ourselves and our nation peace until we know what the mechanisms for creating a peaceful society are: conscience, self-discipline, calling each other and our government to account, strengthening the mechanisms of moral engagement.

When I finished my two-minute speech, cold winds were still blowing and my car battery seemed dead. Still there were stars out there and people holding candles.