



Nebraskans for Peace

Nebraska Report

There is no Peace without Justice

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2010

VOLUME 38, NUMBER 1

Officially Forty

On February 1, 1970, when Nebraskans for Peace first filed its articles of incorporation with the Nebraska Secretary of State, no one could have predicted that this fledgling anti-war group would one day become *the oldest statewide Peace & Justice organization in the entire country*.

An even 'redder' state then than we are today, set smack in the heart of middle America, Nebraska was the last place anyone would have expected a 'peace organization' to emerge and then endure.

And yet, here we are, officially forty February first—and still toiling to get our voice heard (and working to

influence the hearts and minds of our Husker neighbors).

NFP has changed a lot in the intervening decades...

Most of our founders are either elderly or deceased, and the typewriter and mimeograph have been replaced with the laptop and our new state-of-the-art website:

www.NebraskansforPeace.org

...But the drive to create a more peaceful and just world for all of us (including the earth and its plant and animal inhabitants) is as strong as ever.

After forty years, NFP is now a proud part of Nebraska's heritage. And with your continued help, we mean to keep building on that legacy for a good forty more.

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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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Letters, articles, photographs and graphics are welcomed. Deadline is the first of the month for publication in the following month's issue. Submit to: Nebraska Report, c/o Nebraskans for Peace, 941 'O' Street, Suite 1026, Lincoln, NE 68508.

Nebraskans for Peace

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

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NFP's 2010 Legislative Priorities

On top of the 300-plus bills that carried over from last year's legislative session, Nebraska state senators have introduced another 400 bills for 2010. With state tax receipts continuing to fall short of projections however (and another round of budget cuts looming), any of this legislation that requires new money will be pretty much dead on arrival in this short, 60-working-day session of the Unicameral. Given this economic reality, here's a brief overview of some of the bills NFP will be supporting. This list is by no means comprehensive, but it provides a sampling of the kind of legislative priorities NFP will be advocating for in the next three months.

A dozen new bills dealing with renewable energy were introduced, but two that could dramatically reshape the energy landscape in Nebraska are LB 1048, the Natural Resources Committee's 'Big Wind' bill that grew out of Sen. Ken Haar's legislation from last year, and Sen. Heath Mello's LB 1098. The Natural Resources Committee bill would help create the legal and infra-structural conditions necessary for large-scale wind development projects in the state that could ultimately make Nebraska an exporter of clean renewable energy to the rest of the nation. Sen. Mello's bill, alternatively, would authorize Nebraska municipalities to establish "sustainable energy financing districts" to loan homeowners and local businesses the funds for energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements to their properties. To make this program broadly accessible, the loans would be assessed against the property and paid back in the form of property taxes. The energy savings from the improvements, though, would largely offset the property tax increase, allowing everyone the opportunity to adopt a 'greener' lifestyle—and thereby reduce our dependence on foreign oil and domestic coal.

Two bills dealing with the alcohol-related problems at Whiteclay were also introduced. Sens. Russ Karpisek and Leroy Loudon are sponsoring legislation that would earmark state liquor taxes for detoxification services and other health needs and increased law enforcement in this 14-person border town that sells over three million cans of beer a year to the Pine Ridge Reservation. While each of these bills does require a new legislative appropriation, they divert revenue state government currently receives from the sale of alcohol in Whiteclay to these social needs.

And finally, NFP will support Sen. Brenda Council's request, in LB 1105, for an audit of the costs associated with administering the death penalty in the state. The bill requires a comparison of the expenses borne by the Attorney General, the Department of Correctional Services, law enforcement, the counties, the courts, and the advocacy offices involved in capital cases with the costs these governmental entities have accrued in non-death-penalty sentences resulting from first-degree murder convictions. If adopted, this bill would provide some factual information to a subject that for too long has been driven by blind emotion.

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STRATCOM: THE FULCRUM FOR DRONE WARFARE

by Loring Wirbel
Citizens for Peace in Space
Colorado Springs, Colorado

The speed with which Unpiloted Aerial Vehicles have transformed the face of war-fighting is almost as dazzling as the technology itself. Five years ago, these robot planes were still pretty much generally regarded as the stuff of science fiction. Today, however, unarmed reconnaissance drones (ranging in size from a dragonfly to almost the size of a two-seat Cessna) and the rarer armed drones (equipped with missiles or smart bombs) are staples of the Pentagon's war-making efforts—their numbers and uses destined only to increase.

Just who in fact is controlling these unpiloted aircraft (and under what authority) is a subject that has importance though for those of us interested in complying with international rule of law,

protecting our open system of government, and preventing the outbreak of still another war.

In the early years of the 'War on Terror,' missions involving Unpiloted Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) could be divided into those sponsored directly by regional combat commands in the Pentagon, and the more covert missions planned and executed by the CIA—both of which were supported by space and intelligence assets. The Pentagon-conducted missions tended to adhere to stricter rules of military engagement, which meant that if a drone directly targeted an individual al-Qaida suspect, chances were good that the mission was clandestine and run by the CIA.

In recent months, however, a third level of management has emerged, raising even greater questions of responsibility and accountability. According to jour-

nalist Jeremy Scahill and several other sources, the Pentagon's secretive "Joint Special Operations Command" (JSOC) manages unacknowledged armed UAV missions in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq. These missions are run directly by Blackwater/Xe and several of its subsidiaries. Yet, because the ultimate authority for the missions goes back to JSOC, Strategic Command in Omaha (particularly its 'Global Strike' component) plays a more direct role in these even more deeply covert UAV strikes, than it does in CIA missions.

Demonstrators who went to the CIA's headquarters in Langley, Virginia January 16 to protest the Agency's drone attacks provided a rare and needed public face to these UAV missions which have become so commonplace in the past several years. Yet the protests only scratch the surface. The passing of armed-UAV authority among official combat commands, quasi-official CIA bases, and deniable JSOC/Blackwater missions allows the Pentagon to play a shell game that keeps activists from understanding who does what. And the central player shuffling the shells is Strategic Command.

A Brief History of the UAV

How did UAVs come to play such a central role in warfare, and how did Strategic Command end up in a starring role? This story has roots going back to the mid-1990s, in the Bosnia and Kosovo conflicts.

Drones slowly moved to center stage during the years of the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts, as the Bush/Cheney Administration sought to minimize body counts by making standoff robot war the primary means by which the U.S. sought

to control events. Obama and CIA Director Leon Panetta accelerated this effort, when they saw that deniable drone strikes on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border represented a way to hopefully target leaders of the insurgency without (ideally) the collateral damage of large-scale F16 flights. In fact, since armed UAV missions escalated, the U.S. Commander in Afghanistan, General Stanley McChrystal, has tightened the rules for F16 sorties in support of ground troops, under the assumption that UAV attacks will all but eliminate piloted airborne assaults in the near future.

UAVs are used worldwide, by all major military states. They can trace a lineage back to the German V-1 'buzz bomb,' but did not become effective in war until developments in microelectronics allowed full radar, image processing and intelligence-collection chips to be placed on an aerial platform smaller than a compact car. At the same time in the 1990s, advances in 'smart bombs' allowed 'Hellfire missiles' and gravity bombs fitted with JDAM guidance mechanisms to be used on unpiloted platforms and display a certain degree of intelligent targeting after being fired from the drone. As these technologies started coming to fruition in the late 1990s, the Pentagon developed two designations for UAVs—the 'RQ' series referred to unarmed reconnaissance aircraft, while the 'MQ' series referred to armed drones.

The earliest small UAVs of the 1990s, including the TRW Hunter, TRW Pioneer, and Bombardier/Dornier QL-289, were scarcely autonomous platforms, and required significant guidance

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**MQ-1 Predator Medium-altitude,
Long-endurance, Remotely Piloted Aircraft**

The MQ-1's primary mission is interdiction and conducting armed reconnaissance against critical, perishable targets. When the MQ-1 is not actively pursuing its primary mission, it acts as the Joint Forces Air Component Commander-owned theater asset for reconnaissance, surveillance and target acquisition.

STRATCOM & DRONES, CONTINUED

from ground-based pilots. The two primary platforms during the earlier stages of the Afghanistan and Iraq campaigns were the high-altitude RQ-4 'Global Hawk,' manufactured by Northrop Grumman and used solely for reconnaissance; and the low-altitude 'Predator,' manufactured by General Atomics and used in both RQ intelligence and MQ armed missions. These systems used ground-

as an iPhone. Training, however, still requires a dedicated military staff familiar with using GPS-based navigational tools, which is why the role of StratCom continues to be important in coordinating drone-pilot education.

General Atomics' dedicated work for the CIA began with a reconnaissance-only UAV called the 'Gnat,' used by some of the first CIA teams to go into

such assaults—on November 3, 2002, a Predator launched from the nearby CIA base in Djibouti shot a Hellfire missile at a car in Yemen with six alleged al-Qaida activists, killing all six. The Bush/Cheney Administration claimed at the time that the CIA did not need to seek pre-launch verification of identities. Since the importance of Yemen and the nearby Djibouti CIA base on the African Horn have seen their significance escalate recently, it is fair to ask where the accountability for future Yemen attacks may lie.

Drone Warfare Today

Just considering unarmed spy drones, the Pentagon's use of such UAVs has escalated nearly exponentially since the start of the Iraq War. In 2003, 35,000 flight hours were logged by spy drones over Iraq and Afghanistan. By 2008, that number had increased to more than 800,000 flight hours in one year. While the first Predator was useful as a direct-assault drone, the new Predator B 'Reaper' is the first true 'hunter-killer,' which can dwell over an area in a reconnaissance mission, and then shift to attack. The 27-ft.-long Reaper with its expanded payload can carry up to 14 missiles and two 2500-lb. gravity bombs. Two years ago, the first-generation Predator started making way for Reaper, which could fly up to 250 mph while transmitting up to 10 full-motion video images. The armed version of Reaper does not have to sacrifice any surveillance capability for the addition of missiles—one system can serve both ends. By 2009, the 'Air Education and Training Command' announced that more pilots were being trained for ground-based UAV control than for actual airborne flying missions. The AETC regularly coordinates with Strategic Command, in particular Global Strike, to integrate GPS and space-based assets with ground-based control of drones.

It is important to recognize the support role in robotic assault that can be played by unarmed drones and by

ground-based electronics that help drones find their targets. The high-altitude Global Hawk, for example, is often considered a system meant only for snooping. With a 44-ft.-long platform the size of a corporate jet, it can fly at altitudes as great as 35,000 feet. But Global Hawk also is used to provide targets for later Predator attacks. Global Hawk is being deployed in other regions, such as North Korea, with this hidden aspect in mind.

STRATCOM IS FRONT AND CENTER IN MISSION PLANNING AND TARGETING OF ALL UNARMED AND ARMED UAVs.

A new follow-on drone, the RQ-170 'Sentinel' (nicknamed the 'Beast of Kandahar'), was developed at the Lockheed Martin's famed 'skunk works' research and development facility, and applies stealth technology to create the drone equivalent of a B-2—essentially a flying wing with no radar cross-section. Since Afghan Taliban forces have no significant radar assets, the primary reason for using the Sentinel seems to be to allow a drone to be flown in Pakistan without Pakistani military authorities being aware of it. Rumors persist that an armed MQ version of the Sentinel exists, and may already have been deployed.

This is where the JSOC and Blackwater come in. According to Jeremy Seahill's article in the December 21/28, 2009 issue of *The Nation* magazine, JSOC established a deniable operation in

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MQ-9 Reaper (Predator B) Unmanned Combat Air Vehicle

based pilots whose talents more closely resembled an expert video-game player than a traditional airplane pilot. The training schools established at locations such as Creech AFB in Nevada and Holloman AFB in New Mexico resembled video arcades—in fact, Air Force and even Army recruiters began scouting arcades in the early 2000s to find teenagers with fast eye-hand coordination to pilot these drones.

By the time the war expanded to Pakistan at the end of the decade, the Predator had gone through three generations: the MQ-1 Predator A, the MQ-9 Predator B or 'Reaper,' and the Predator C 'Avenger' (still in prototype stage). The targeting software for such systems is transitioning from stand-alone joystick applications on a laptop, to small touch-screen applications on platforms as small

Afghanistan post-9/11. The CIA made its first attempt at Mullah Muhammad Omar on October 7, 2001, the first day of coordinated air strikes across Afghanistan, but the delays experienced in gaining approval through the Pentagon chain of command allowed Omar to escape.

Consequently, the CIA demanded new loosened rules of engagement, which led to a successful Predator assault on Mohammed Atef, who died November 15, 2001, and a broad-armed UAV assault on al-Qaida in November 2002. As new CIA bases were established in Djibouti and Qatar for the buildup prior to the Iraq invasion, the CIA gained its own dedicated arsenal of Predator drones, which were billed and inventoried in segmented fashion from those belonging to the Pentagon. However, this expansion also pointed out the lack of accountability in

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Copenhagen Post-mortem

by *Hendrik van den Berg*
UNL Professor of Economics

In December, 50,000 people converged on Copenhagen to attend, protest, lobby, observe or report on the global climate conference. The original purpose of this long-awaited summit was to complete a new international agreement to replace the Kyoto Protocol that expires in 2012. However, instead of a new agreement, the 50,000 attendees, protestors, lobbyists, and observers were left with what Friends of the Earth described as a “sham agreement” that was agreed to by just five countries on the last evening of the two-week-long gathering. European Commission President José Manuel Barroso termed the accord a “commitment to the lowest common denominator.”

The so-called “Copenhagen Accord” is indeed a sham of an agreement because it’s nothing more than a statement issued by the leaders of just five countries after a brief closed-door meeting to which the remaining 188 countries were not invited. Especially infuriating was the complete exclusion of the European Union (the only region of the world to have offered ambitious and firm measures to curb greenhouse gases) and the bulk of the world’s developing countries that stand to lose the most from global warming. So Copenhagen produced an Accord arrived at completely outside the normal participatory United Nations process. Worst of all, the Accord established no goals, targets, strategies or even a process for future negotiations. Amazingly, President Obama—one of the five leaders who put the Accord together in a couple of hours (the leaders of Brazil, China, India, and South Africa were the others)—acted as if he’d engineered a breakthrough.

I would argue instead that the Copenhagen Accord is worse than no agreement at all, because Obama’s endorsement, as the representative of the world’s biggest

economy, effectively legitimizes a new process under which no country is called on to make binding commitments, everything is completely voluntary, and nothing more than an informal “assessment” of progress is planned in five years. Also, the Accord offered no enforceable commitment for high-income countries to pay for poor countries’ adjustment to climate change—a basic principle accepted by most of the world’s countries in Copenhagen. In short, Kyoto is dead. And no serious new agreement was conceived in Copenhagen to replace it.

Obama’s voluntary, informal and ‘every nation for themselves’ approach to climate policy is exactly what the Bush/Cheney Administration proposed at the Bali climate summit two years ago. At Bali, U.S. negotiators were highly criticized for working behind the scenes to pull a critical mass of countries behind a strategy of voluntary national policies without any overall global monitoring or enforcement. In the end, the full conference solidly rejected such an approach. In Copenhagen last month, President Obama succeeded at imposing President Bush’s rejected climate strategy on the world.

What We Can Expect Now

Global warming has disappeared from the news since President Obama’s return from Copenhagen. Many of those convinced of the scientific evidence of global warming are, apparently, thinking that President Obama somehow “saved the Copenhagen summit from failure” (as one pundit ignorantly suggested). The climate skeptics, on the other hand, were elated by the obvious failure of the meetings. The real result of the Copenhagen fraud, though, is that we are back to business as usual. Here’s what we can now expect:

1. With no international goals, standards or scientific monitoring, corporations will

be even better able to use advertising and public relations to define the issues.

2. ‘Greenwashing’—the dishonest and misleading public relations ploy to make normal business activities appear to be environmentally friendly—will become even more prevalent.
3. Corporate lobbying, advertising and media manipulation will leave the public sufficiently confused to where the scientific consensus on global warming will have little influence over government policy.
4. Worse yet, corporate public relations and advertising will use the unfocused and confused public concerns about the environment to turn ‘climate policies’ into even bigger government ‘hand-outs’ to the private sector (like, for instance, for ‘clean coal’ technology).
5. Government leaders will piously frame their huge giveaways to corporations as proof of their commitment to dealing with global warming, and the more shameless politicians and controlled media pundits will even use the corporate welfare as proof that ‘voluntary programs are working’ and that the U.S. was right in rejecting a ‘European-style’ international agreement on climate policy.

6. These corporations will remind us at every turn how costly it is for them to be ‘green,’ how they need even more help because foreign competition is not encumbered by the ‘tough’ regulations U.S. politicians have imposed on U.S. firms, and how they reluctantly will need to take U.S. taxpayer money to carry out profitable business projects.

If this scenario seems overly pessimistic, “The Dirt on ‘Clean Coal’” article on page 7 offers a telling case study of this process at work.

What's HOT in Global Warming?

by Professor Bruce E. Johansen

Climate Summit Politics: The Games People Play

I was reading the *New York Times* web page in my office when a story popped in describing how “dozens of developing countries, including China and India, threatened to walk out [of the Copenhagen climate talks] in protest, saying that the world’s richer countries were not doing enough to cut their greenhouse gas emissions.” Within minutes of that post, I received an email from NASA scientist James Hansen regarding a new paper he and several colleagues (most of them from China) had just had published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, entitled “Black Soot and the Survival of Tibetan Glaciers.”

“We find evidence,” the authors wrote, “that black soot aerosols deposited on Tibetan glaciers have been a significant contributing factor to observed rapid glacier retreat. Reduced black soot emissions, in addition to reduced greenhouse gases, may be required to avoid demise of Himalayan glaciers and retain the benefits of glaciers for seasonal fresh water supplies.”

Observing that concentrations of black soot (mainly from cooking fires as well as coal-fired power) have increased rapidly since the 1990s, along with increasing industrial activity and accelerating glacier retreat around the Himalayas, Hansen and his

colleagues describe how seasonal factors intensify its effects: “[The] impact of albedo [reflectivity] change is magnified in the spring, at the start of the melt season, because it allows melt to begin earlier. Then, as melting snow tends to retain some aerosols, the surface Asian Haze, which peaks during November–March, spreads northeastward along the south side of the Himalayas. Thus, highest black soot concentration in un-melted snow occurs at the time of maximum snow extent, accelerating spring melt and lengthening the melt season.”

And here’s an important point: they conclude that black soot may be responsible for as much regional warming during the past century as carbon dioxide. In other words, in the greenhouse equation, coal-fired power counts twice, creating both soot and CO₂.

The same morning, I read another piece in the *Times*, about Bolivia, which began: “When the tap across from her mud-walled home dried up in September, Celia Cruz [of El Alto, Bolivia] stopped making soups and scaled back washing for her family of five. She began daily pilgrimages to better-off neighborhoods, hoping to find water there. Though she has lived here for a decade and her husband, a construction worker, makes a decent wage, money cannot buy

water.” As glaciers melt, parts of cities in Bolivia are already going without water.

He might be a global warming skeptic, but in the words of Nebraska famous son Dick Cheney: a lot of people are “dithering” about climate. While our politicians dither and debate, carbon dioxide levels are reaching the highest they have been in 2 to 3 million years. And the atmosphere is not waiting on the games people are playing. The Copenhagen climate conference was quite a political piece, as everyone protected his (or her) own nationalistic interests. Greenhouse gases, in the meantime, have no politics. They merely retain heat in the lower atmosphere, where we live.

To quote Bill McKibbin, whatever one calls the outcome at Copenhagen, “the talks ended without any kind of fair, ambitious or legally binding global agreement.” A lot of heat was vented in Copenhagen; more than 1,200 people were arrested in two days of protests, and even more after that. In the meantime the well-oiled senator from Oklahoma, James Inhofe, who will deny global warming’s influence down to the last ice cube, visited the talks to brag that the U.S. Senate will not commit the United States to greenhouse-gas limits. He called himself “the skunk at the picnic” (his phrase, not mine).

The “skunk” was at the “pic-

nic” in Copenhagen to remind everyone that whatever greenhouse-gas reductions President Obama made are (to borrow from George W. Bush’s favorite global warming lexicon) “aspirational”: e.g. promises. In the meantime, the skunks will continue to stink up the picnic by advancing such notions as carbon dioxide levels don’t matter (equivalent to the tobacco industry’s denials that smoking causes cancer). Do not, I warn you, get your science from guys like Inhofe. Geophysics is not the senator’s strong suit.

Whenever I hear Inhofe (among others) complain that reducing greenhouse gases will ruin the economy, I remember that within the past 150 years some people have made the same argument to defend slavery, oppose Social Security, argue that women should not vote, and rail against the dangers of federal medical care for the elderly. Vested interests has a long history of distorting reasoning.

The New York Times article about Bolivia continued: “‘A lot of us think about not having kids anymore,’ said Margarita Limachi Álvarez, 46, a blue Andean cap with ear flaps pulled over her head. ‘Without water or food, how would we survive?’ A hundred miles away, in a middle-class neighborhood of El Alto, water has also become a gnawing concern. From September through November, the taps gave forth at

best eight hours a day, often with little pressure.”

As the Copenhagen conference was taking place, the journal *Science* carried a paper describing how scientists had estimated carbon dioxide levels back 20 million years, finding that the levels of today (almost 390 parts per million) resemble those of the Late Pliocene (about 2.4 to 3.3 million years ago) and the Middle Miocene (about 10 to 14 million years ago), when sea levels were 25 to 40 meters (82-130 feet) higher than today. In other words, once the thermal inertia of the oceans reaches a level reflecting today’s figures (perhaps 150 to 200 years) seas may reach that level again.

At present, roughly 1 billion people live within 25 meters of sea level. Not one of them votes in Oklahoma. One wonders whether international diplomacy (not to mention the U.S. Congress) are up to the task of confronting climate change, as greenhouse gases—the real skunk at the picnic that matters—continues to shape the geophysical facts for future generations.

Bruce E. Johansen is a professor of Communication at the University of Nebraska-Omaha and author, in 2009, of Hot Air and Hard Science: Dissecting the Global Warming Debate and the two-volume Encyclopedia of Global Warming Science and Technology.

Fact Sheet on Coal

- Coal produces over 25 percent of the world's energy and 40 percent of its carbon dioxide emissions. (Financial Times, 11/3/09)
- Each coal-fired electric power plant produces twice as many emissions as a natural gas plant. (World Coal Institute)
- There are 600 major coal-fired power plants in the U.S., and they are responsible for exactly half of all U.S. electricity. (Financial Times, 11/3/09; World Coal Institute)
- The average age of U.S. coal-fired power plants is 35 years.
- On average, the U.S. consumes more than 3 million tons of coal daily, or about 20 pounds of coal per citizen per day. (Sierra Club, "The Dirty Truth about Coal," June 2007)
- Coal-burning generates 70 percent of India's electricity and 80 percent of China's. (Economist, 5/31/07)
- For the past five years, China has opened two new coal plants per week, and each year's addition to China's coal-fired generating capacity is equal the entire British power grid. (Economist, 5/31/07)
- The U.S. produces, and consumes, about 18 percent of the world's coal; China produces, and consumes, nearly half. (World Coal Institute)
- At current rates of exploitation, proven reserves of coal will last for another 133 years. (World Coal Institute)
- Current coal-fired electric power plants convert only about 33 percent of coal's energy content into electricity. (Greenpeace, CCS Briefing)
- Power plants using carbon capture and storage (CCS) technologies are projected to use, on average, 33 percent more energy, thus bringing the percentage of coal energy transformed into electricity down to 25 percent. (Greenpeace, CCS Briefing; IPCC)
- If all carbon is captured and transported to where viable underground storage locations are thought to exist, we will need the equivalent of today's natural gas pipeline system to transport it. (MIT: The Future of Coal)
- Existing plants cannot be converted to CCS technology according to an MIT study. (MIT: The Future of Coal)
- The American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity (ACCCE) spent \$40 million in 2008 promoting clean coal. (Financial Times, 11/03/09; The Nation, 3/26/09)
- Did you know that oil lobbying group, the Western Fuels Association, operates a 'subsidiary' called the Greening Earth Society, which is working to spread doubt about scientific data on global warming. (The Nation, 3/26/09)
- Barack Obama said that if the U.S. can put a man on the moon, it can find a way to capture and store carbon. (The Nation, 3/26/09)
- In 1986, a large leakage of naturally sequestered carbon dioxide rose from Lake Nyos in Cameroon and asphyxiated 1,700 people.

The Dirt on 'Clean Coal'

by Hendrik van den Berg
UNL Professor of Economics

Both the Bush/Cheney and Obama Administrations and the Republican and Democratic leadership in Congress have openly supported the concept of 'clean coal'—or what is more precisely called carbon capture and storage (CCS). Billions of government dollars have already been allocated to funding test projects that will serve to develop new technologies that (1) remove carbon from the emissions of coal-fired power plants, plants that convert coal to synthetic oil, and other industrial plants that use coal as an energy source; and (2) store the carbon permanently underground.

These technologies will, according to the coal lobby, make our most abundant carbon fuel 'clean.' CCS technologies thus simultaneously reduce global warming and our dependence on foreign oil. The coal lobby then continues to argue that, even though these new technologies

are not yet available, spending taxpayer money on test projects and other types of CCS research justifies the construction of more familiar coal-fired power plants instead of more expensive alternative wind, solar or conservation projects because these coal-fired plants can be 'cleaned up' in a few years 'when the technology becomes available.'

Unfortunately, there is no evidence suggesting we are close to developing financially or technically viable CCS technologies. In fact, CCS may not work at all, ever. There is not one big power plant using CCS technology operating anywhere in the world (although some small ones are being built in Europe). No U.S. utilities are currently planning to build any CCS plants, because they are likely to cost much more than conventional power plants. CCS requires extra facilities to separate carbon from other emissions, the carbon in turn must be pipelined to underground formations appropriate for its storage,

and then the carbon must be pressurized and forced into the formations. All of these steps require energy and more equipment. Estimates suggest CCS power plants will use at least 25 percent of the electric energy they produce to process the carbon, which means the basic plants will have to be one-third larger and use one-third more coal than conventional plants to produce the same amount of electricity for end users.

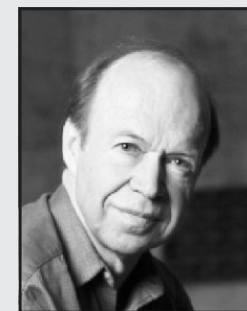
Estimates of the cost of CCS by various agencies and research groups, such as the International Energy Agency and the private consultancy McKinsey and Associates, predict CCS costs will exceed \$40 per ton of carbon captured, which is much higher than current prices of carbon in Europe's 'cap and trade' system or the level of carbon taxes being contemplated almost anywhere. CCS is, therefore, more expensive than other carbon reduction methods currently being applied. In 2008,

conclusion on page 8

COAL & CLIMATE DISASTER

"Coal emissions must be phased out as rapidly as possible or global climate disasters will be a dead certainty... 'Clean coal' is an oxymoron. The clean-coal concept, at least so far, has been an illusion, a diversion that the coal industry and its government supporters employ to allow dirty coal uses to continue... Coal use must be prohibited unless and until the emissions can be captured and safely disposed of... For the sake of our children and grandchildren, we cannot allow our government to connive with the coal industry in subterfuges that allow dirty-coal use to continue... If we want to solve the climate problem, we must phase out coal emissions. Period."

Storms of My Grandchildren: The Truth about the Coming Climate Catastrophe and Our Last Chance to Save Humanity



James Hansen
Director of the NASA
Goddard Institute for
Space Studies

The Dirt on 'Clean Coal' conclusion

COAL TRAINS & SPECIES EXTINCTION

"Most coal trains are long, about one hundred carloads each. A large power plant can burn that amount of coal in one day... The coal trains [I saw on] a visit to my hometown, Denison, Iowa made me wonder about the role of coal-fired power plants in the extermination of the species. If we continue business-as-usual fossil fuel use, a conservative estimate is that by the end of this century we will have committed to extinction at least 20 percent of Earth's species, that is, about two million species. Based on the proportion of twenty-first century carbon dioxide emissions provided by one large coal-fired plant over its lifetime, I concluded that a single power plant should be assigned responsibility for exterminating about four hundred species... That day in Iowa I realized those coal trains are death trains. The railroad cars may as well be loaded with the species themselves, carrying them to their extermination."

James Hansen, Storms of My Grandchildren

the Bush/Cheney Administration canceled the \$2 billion project underway in Illinois when costs reached \$1.8 billion and the power plant was nowhere near completion. Statoil, the Norwegian oil company currently operating a huge test project to store carbon from burning gases that are emitted during the extraction of crude oil from its North Sea oil drilling sites, says that even with the Norwegian carbon tax of \$60 per ton, the project does not make financial sense.

Some proponents argue that the costs of CCS will fall over time. However, the prospects for reducing CCS costs are not promising, because there may not be many efficiencies to be gained from the technologies of separating carbon from other emissions, operating pipelines, and injecting substances into ground. These are all technologies closely related to familiar oil industry practices. As *The Economist* stated in a March 6, 2009 article on carbon capture technology, "the scope for improvement is slender."

Will the Carbon Stay Underground?

An even greater concern, however, is whether carbon injected into the ground under great pressure will stay there. Carbon emissions are not reduced in the long run if the stored carbon eventually escapes into the air. For example, a rate of seepage equal to just one percent of stored carbon per year means that nearly two-thirds of all stored carbon would enter the atmosphere within a century.

The huge underground carbon stores also represent potential human catastrophes. CO₂ gas is deadly and a sudden release near a populated area could kill an entire community in minutes. It is difficult to envision local or state governments approving large storage projects. Each project would be held up for years, if not stopped outright.

Clean coal advocates, of course, point to the oil industry's experience with injecting carbon into underground reservoirs to

pressure more oil to the surface. Exxon-Mobil operates a large carbon injection facility in La Barge, Wyoming, and carbon is piped in through some 3,000 miles of pipelines from various power plants and natural gas processing sites in the upper Plains states. But Exxon-Mobil has not monitored its Wyoming site for carbon seepage, since it is only interested in using the carbon to force more oil out of its underground reserves.

Statoil's Sleipner Project in the North Sea, one of just four large-scale carbon dioxide storage projects in the world today, did monitor carbon movements underground, and the data is not reassuring. Sleipner is on the Utsira formation under the North Sea, which was touted back in the 1980s as large enough to store all emissions from Europe's coal power plants for centuries. The Sleipner Project has since changed that assessment. Norway's Petroleum Directorate, according to Greenpeace, has downgraded the Utsira site to "not very suitable" for carbon storage, in large part because monitors have revealed that injected carbon gasses have flowed upward towards the top of the formation more quickly than expected. While some upward movement was expected, not the more than 100 meters per year that has been recorded since the project's inception. Even at the Tordis injection site on the Utsira formation (which is just a standard oil recovery project using injection methods

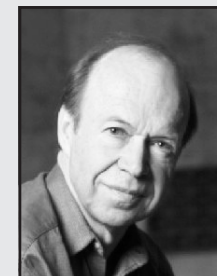
to force oil to the surface—not a CCS project)—the touted formation failed to hold the pressurized carbon injected into it.

Get Ready for the Public Relations Onslaught

Unfortunately, the facts will not determine the future of coal. President Obama has supported 'clean coal' since he was an Illinois senator, and now his undermining of the United Nations process at Copenhagen has further legitimized the free-for-all approach to environmental policy that private corporations exploit so well. The coal industry, as well as the oil and gas industry, the nuclear industry, the ethanol industry, and the main users of electricity, oil and gas will, no doubt, use their economic clout to dominate the political process and public opinion. It will take a very creative and persistent effort on the part of scientists, environmentalists and activist organizations like NFP to counter the 'clean coal' campaign that will be thrown at us.

COAL DEPENDENCE & CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

"I have argued that it is time to 'draw a line in the sand' and demand 'no new coal plants.' I believe we must exert maximum effort to use the democratic process... We cannot give up. That's why I am now studying Gandhi's concepts of civil resistance... As in other struggles for justice against powerful forces, it may be necessary to take to the streets to draw attention to injustice... Civil resistance may be our best hope... [A] legal case, in which I am one of the defendants, concerns arrests made at Coal River Mountain, in West Virginia, on June 23, 2009. About thirty of us were arrested, ostensibly for 'obstructing, impeding flow of traffic.' A guilty verdict conceivably could result in a one-year prison sentence... The most useful outcome from our West Virginia trial would be to bring public attention to the... impacts of climate change on young people."



James Hansen

Storms of My Grandchildren
(2009)

Yes, We Have a Right to Healthcare

by Hendrik van den Berg
UNL Professor of Economics

Since the beginning of the 2008 presidential race, healthcare has been the focus of election campaigns, lobbying efforts and political debate across the country. All this attention to what is perhaps our most pressing economic and social problem, though, has not brought us much closer to a solution.

For a hundred years, political leaders have tried to provide healthcare for all Americans. Teddy Roosevelt tried at the start of the twentieth century, but failed to convince Congress and the voters to support healthcare legislation. Franklin Roosevelt was able to get Social Security, unemployment benefits, a minimum wage, deposit insurance, extensive bank regulation and other social legislation through Congress with his large Democratic majority, but he could not pass universal healthcare. President Truman tried again after World War II, but failed. Lyndon Johnson was able to get Medicare through Congress—which provided universal healthcare coverage for everyone over 65—but he did not push for true universal coverage for everyone. Bill Clinton pushed

for universal healthcare at the start of his first term in 1993, but quickly retreated in defeat. The Obama Administration has tackled the issue yet again, but (despite Democratic majorities in both houses) has only produced a weak bill that, while expanding healthcare to more people, falls far short of universal quality healthcare for all.

So, the United States will remain the only developed country without universal healthcare. Now that even China, a much poorer country than ours, is moving towards a system of universal healthcare, we should ask what it is about the U.S. that makes it politically impossible to establish a national system that provides healthcare to everyone.

Why We Do Not Demand Public Healthcare

It is certainly not the success of our current expensive system that blunts political support for healthcare reform. The facts clearly show that the American healthcare system delivers poor results. In an earlier article in *Nebraska Report*, I referenced studies that show we could save over 40,000 lives annually if we insured everyone, and that we

could save over 100,000 lives annually if the U.S. healthcare system achieved the lower French mortality rates for all diseases. And yet, Americans are paying more for this shoddy system of ours than what any other country pays for its healthcare.

It doesn't take much investigation to discover that our 37th place ranking among the world's national health systems is the result of a healthcare system that does not seek to provide coverage to all Americans. The private insurance companies, drug companies, hospitals and clinics that comprise our healthcare system benefit from the high per capita payments they collect from those who can afford to pay (and they prefer to not provide health services to those who cannot afford their prices).

Let's face it: it is our private for-profit healthcare industry that's effectively running the 'death panels' Sarah Palin was ranting about—but they are run stealthily in the form of rationing, through high prices, high insurance costs, arbitrary insurance company procedures, employer-provided plans with huge deductions and co-payments, and a confusing mixture of politically

motivated government subsidies. The healthcare bill that has been taking shape in Congress does not change this situation at all. It only adds some more subsidies for some more people to purchase high-priced insurance, and simply forces some others to buy expensive private health insurance.

we personally deal with.

This lack of understanding is driven to large degree by our implicit acceptance of healthcare as a commodity, like a toaster or an automobile. Not a few American economists, pundits and politicians have noted that government-provided healthcare would be

We have accepted a second Bill of Rights under which a new basis of security and prosperity can be established for all—regardless of station, race, or creed. Among these are: the right to adequate medical care and the opportunity to achieve and enjoy good health.

— President Franklin Delanor Roosevelt, 1944

How can the private healthcare and health insurance industries get away with forcing Americans to pay so much for healthcare while continuing to let many people suffer and die outside the system? In part, it's because many Americans probably do not understand that they are grossly over-paying for healthcare (at least compared to other developed countries). Nor do Americans understand that the rationing of healthcare services by our for-profit system is infinitely more oppressive than the inevitable choices that are made in public healthcare systems in other developed countries. Our system forces us to argue, beg, and plead with employers, insurance companies and hospital billing offices, while elsewhere the rules are much clearer and medical decisions are made by the doctors and clinics

equivalent taxing everyone so that the government can give everyone a free car. Americans have also been conditioned over the past 50 years to believe, as Ronald Reagan said, that "Government isn't the solution to our problems, it is the problem." And recall that it was a Democrat, Bill Clinton, who later proclaimed that "the era of big government is over," effectively banishing government intervention from the political toolkit.

Healthcare as a Basic Right

But Americans did not always view healthcare as a commodity or deny government's responsibility for providing healthcare. In 1941, at the urging of his wife Eleanor, President Roosevelt outlined his famous "four freedoms": namely the freedom of expression, the

conclusion on page 10

Your Foundation Speaks

by Loyal Park, Nebraska Peace Foundation President

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Healthcare, conclusion

freedom of religion, the freedom from want, and the freedom from fear. But, in his 1944 'State of the Union' address to Congress, he provided more detail:

...This Republic had its beginning, and grew to its present strength, under the protection of certain inalienable political rights—among them the right of free speech, free press, free worship, trial by jury, freedom from unreasonable searches and seizures. They were our rights to life and liberty.

As our nation has grown in size and stature, however—as our industrial economy expanded—these political rights proved inadequate to assure us equality in the pursuit of happiness. We have come to a clear realization of the fact that true individual freedom cannot exist without economic security and independence. Necessitous men are not free men. People who are hungry and out of a job are the stuff of which dictatorships are made. In our day these economic truths have become accepted as self-evident. We have accepted, so to speak, a second Bill of Rights under which a new basis of security and prosperity can be established for all—regardless of station, race, or creed.

Among these are:

- *The right to a useful and remunerative job in the industries or shops or farms or mines of the nation; The right to earn enough to provide adequate food and clothing and recreation;*
- *The right of every farmer to raise and sell his products at a return which will give him and his family a decent living;*

- *The right of every business-man, large and small, to trade in an atmosphere of freedom from unfair competition and domination by monopolies at home or abroad;*
- *The right of every family to a decent home;*
- *The right to adequate medical care and the opportunity to achieve and enjoy good health;*
- *The right to adequate protection from the economic fears of old age, sickness, accident, and unemployment;*
- *The right to a good education.*

All of these rights spell security. And after this war is won we must be prepared to move forward, in the implementation of these rights, to new goals of human happiness and well-being. America's own rightful place in the world depends in large part upon how fully these and similar rights have been carried into practice for our citizens.

Conservative politicians immediately attacked Roosevelt for suggesting people had a right to housing, healthcare and employment, but the speech was well received at the time. Roosevelt's list of rights came to be known as the "Second Bill of Rights" or the "Economic Bill of Rights." His statement "Necessitous men are not free men" clearly recognized that Constitutional freedoms—such as the freedom speech, religion or the right to vote—have little practical meaning if people are hungry, homeless or in poor health. People must be able to satisfy their basic wants before they can exercise free choices about what they say, where they work and how they live their lives.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

After her husband's death, Eleanor Roosevelt remained an active supporter of human rights, and she was instrumental in getting the United Nations to approve the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" in 1948. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights contains 30 articles. The early articles cover standard human rights, such as the right to life, liberty and security of person, and a ban on slavery or servitude, torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Also dealt with are political and legal rights, such as equal stature before the law and prohibitions of discrimination. The latter part of the Declaration, however, explicitly states Roosevelt's economic rights, including:

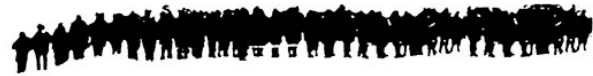
Article 25:

- (1) *Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.*
- (2) *Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.*

The Universal Declaration was adopted by the General Assembly on December 10, 1948 by a vote of 48 in favor, 0 against, with 8 abstentions. Abstaining countries were the Soviet Bloc

*"Chronicles a painful odyssey that should give pause to the caring, the oblivious, and those who don't give a damn." Frank LaMere
Winnepago Tribe of Nebraska
Chair, Native Caucus, Democratic National Committee*

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states of Byelorussia, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Ukraine, U.S.S.R. and Yugoslavia, plus the apartheid state of South Africa and the fundamental Islamic kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The United States voted in favor of the document, and it remains in effect today.

Americans Have Forgotten the Economic Bill of Rights

The Cold War soon distorted Americans' worldview, and during the McCarthy era in the early 1950s, the fear of socialism caused the Economic Bill of Rights to be quickly pushed to the background of American politics. Today, few young people have ever heard of Roosevelt's proposal or the U.N. Declaration our government signed.

The claim that government healthcare is a form socialism is still able to mute public discussion of economic rights, and there have been surprisingly few protests against the special interest lobbying that has destroyed any chance for real healthcare reform. Nor have many people openly criticized the backroom political deals between the Obama Administration and the health and insurance industries. It is almost as if Americans see such blatant

corporate dominance as a natural part of government policymaking. So we will not get real universal healthcare, and people will continue dying needlessly.

Should we not at least remind those who obstruct efforts to finally bring F.D.R.'s vision to life that no one is free, able to truly enjoy life, or actively pursue happiness when they are in poor health? Nor are people free if they are tied to a lousy job for fear of losing health insurance; their life's savings are threatened by illness or disability of a family member; stagnant real wages of working families are reduced each year by rapidly rising healthcare costs; families lack the means to acquire routine healthcare; and our for-profit healthcare system has every incentive to limit their services to those who can pay the most. Necessitous men, women and children are not free.

Sadly, the erasure from our collective national memory of Roosevelt's Economic Bill of Rights—and our ongoing failure to put in place an equitable universal healthcare system—means that we are not the free society we claim to be. And, if anything, as a nation, we are getting further from the claim with each passing day.



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STRATCOM & DRONES CONCLUSION

Karachi, Pakistan, staffed exclusively by members of two Blackwater/Xe subsidiaries, 'Blackwater Select' and 'Total Intelligence Solutions Inc.' The teams at this office are involved in both extraordinary renditions of individuals and UAV bombing missions in the frontier areas of the Pakistan/Afghanistan border. This report coincides with back-to-back articles in *The New York Times* in August 2009 claiming that Blackwater was responsible for both an earlier 'hit squad' team organized out of then-Vice President Dick Cheney's office, and a later armed UAV effort to augment the CIA's own. In essence, the expansion of drone assaults by CIA and JSOC have made ground-based assassination squads largely unnecessary.

The CIA itself launches UAVs out of Shamsi and Jalalabad in Pakistan, but its operations have come under growing criticism in Pakistan, particularly since Obama and Panetta agreed to expand the program last January. Since that time, JSOC and Blackwater have taken over some managerial functions, and launch some drones independently from the CIA bases at Shamsi and Jalalabad, while using dedicated JSOC sites in or near Waziristan and other border provinces. And Strategic Command remains front and center in all three operations.

StratCom, Front and Center

Thanks to an Internet portal from Lockheed Martin delivered to StratCom in the spring of 2009, the 'Integrated Strategic Planning and Analysis Network Collaborative Information Environment' (ISPAN-CIE), the Global Strike and Air Force Space Commands (as well as the component commands) have a central role in planning the missions and the targeting of all unarmed and armed UAVs—these include JSOC UAVs, and some indirect oversight, if not control, of CIA UAVs. Access to these tools gives the StratCom authorities the illusion of still having a human in the command loop,

which StratCom Commander General Kevin Chilton says has been reduced to microseconds. But many critics—even within the military—worry that the existence of three levels of armed UAV rules of engagement alongside the ability of hunter-killer drones to decide at will when to strike a particular target may allow many UAVs to make the decision to attack without any human intervention.

The issue of armed drones will come to a head during 2010, as President Obama adds another 35,000 troops to Afghanistan, and an armed version of the Sentinel UAV comes to Pakistan (perhaps adding stealth capability to a platform that has little human oversight).

Peace activists concerned about drones need to focus as much attention on StratCom as they do on the CIA. Make no mistake about it—with multiple drone models out there and multiple layers of secrecy, finding solid information about the casualties caused by drones (and who is responsible for those casualties) will become progressively harder. But our only alternative is a runaway war, run by StratCom robots.

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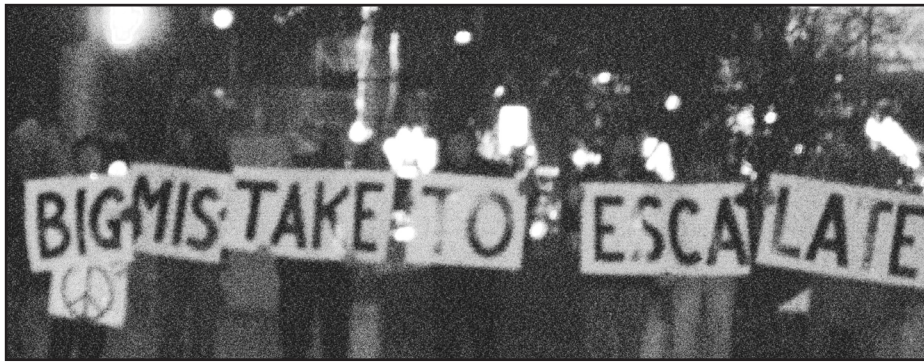
The Vision of Hope

Peace activists will want to spend some time studying the "The Vision of Hope" art exhibit on display at First-Plymouth Church in Lincoln challenging militarism in Nebraska. The increasingly domineering spirit of U.S. militarism since 9/11 (represented by Darth Vader as FEAR) is being challenged by HOPE (dressed as an Angel from God, but who may be our own conscience). Hope chides and exposes Fear (whose words are mostly taken from U.S. Strategic Command) while unfolding her life-affirming vision. A little Imp, like a member of a Greek chorus, is in each of the 34 panels.

Perhaps the strategy employed by Hope may prove a useful approach for people who want to challenge both militarism and the unique role of StratCom.

The First-Plymouth Church building (2000 'D' Street, 402-476-7565) is open every day. Enter by the west door; the free exhibit sponsored by the Peace & Justice Team of First-Plymouth is set up on the wall in the north end of the 3rd floor hallway. On request, Don Tilley (402-466-6622) will conduct tours of the exhibit.

A public meeting at First-Plymouth is scheduled for Sunday evening, March 14, to discuss various visions of security. Chris Hove, a former Navy Pilot, will discuss "Why the U.S. needs a strong military." Bill Plock will very briefly share his experience during the 1960s in the Missile Unit at the Strategic Air Command. NFP President Paul Olson will discuss "Another way to meet the security need."



It was bitterly cold and sleeting the evening of December 2 when NFP activists gathered in front of the Federal Building in Lincoln to warn President Obama that he was making a “BIG MIS TAKE TO ESCALATE” the war in Afghanistan.

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My parents didn't believe in comic books or *Big Little Books*. They were frivolous, unchristian and expensive. In the age when Superman, Batman, Captain Marvel and Mary Marvel came to life (the 1930s), I had to bum books off my friends, read them at recess and dream the rest of the day of rescuing the world from evil. One of my favorite comics was Buck Rogers, a space warrior repeatedly forced to battle the villainous Killer Kane and his paramour Ardala. Fighting with Buck to save the world were Lieutenant Wilma Deering and Prince Tallen of Saturn.

What made the comic so interesting to a young boy was not only the voluptuousness of the heroine, but the idea that human beings could lift themselves off the earth in the 25th century and fight interplanetary and intergalactic wars. The idea seemed so outrageous as to fit with the most distant of fairy tales I was reading—say, *East of the Moon and West of the Sun*—and the very madness of the idea generated an excitement all its own.

But the idea was not that crazy, and the century should have been the 21st rather than the 25th. Since 2001 (in the aftermath of 9/11), U.S. Strategic Command here in Nebraska has aggressively pursued the goal of military and com-

mercial dominance of orbital space. The command's space and cyberspace missions are integral to the...

- Piloting of drone aircraft over Afghanistan and Pakistan and delivering their deadly payloads
- Satellite- and cyber-surveillance programs eavesdropping on our private phone and email communications
- 'Missile Defense' systems being *offensively* deployed in Eastern Europe and the Asia Pacific
- Anti-satellite weapons intended to dissuade rivals who would challenge our superiority in space... and the
- Targeting and execution of the U.S.'s now *offensive*, first-strike nuclear arsenal.

All of these menacing activities fall under StratCom's direct authority. The command center for waging the Pentagon's international 'War on Terror,' StratCom today is a living manifestation of what Buck Rogers' creator had only imagined.

To try to rein in this menace to peace, NFP has been actively working the past four years with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) like the United Nations Association-USA, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and

Buck Rogers on the Plains

by Paul Olson, NFP President

the Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space. We've been urging U.S. support for a new international treaty for the 'Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space' (PAROS). Since 1985, the White House (under Democratic and Republican presidents both) has annually blocked negotiations at the U.N. on just such an agreement.

We may have complacently felt that our dominance of space was so complete, so absolute, no other nation would dare contest our authority.

But it turns out that we were wrong.

In early November, about the same time the military aerospace industry and StratCom's brass were gathering in downtown Omaha for their annual arms bazaar and schmooze fest (the so-called 'Strategic Space Symposium'), the head of the People's Liberation Army Air Force publicly declared for the first time that China intends to put weapons in space and to put more emphasis on offensive capabilities. The air force, General Xu Qiliang stated, will extend its reach "from the sky to space, from defense of Chinese territory to attack as well."

Breaking the official line which touts peaceful use of outer space, Xu stated that, "The competition between military forces is moving towards outer space... this is a

historical inevitability and a development that cannot be turned back." In a line that could have been taken right out of a StratCom commander's speech, Xu said, "only power can protect peace," noting that "having control of space and air means having control of the ground, the seas and oceans and the electromagnetic space."

The days of the U.S.'s unchallenged military supremacy in space are cyberspace are past. Short of the Obama Administration sitting down at the U.N. negotiating table to hammer out a PAROS treaty tomorrow, an arms race in space is all but preordained. That race will cost us in dollars any chance we have of dealing with world hunger, green development, world water problems, or the endemic oppression that stands in the way of peace. The futuristic world of Buck Rogers (or more accurately, his nemesis, 'Killer Kane') now stretches from Omaha to Beijing to the heavens above.

If Nebraskans for Peace ever had a personalized mission, a private bane and obligation all its own, alerting the world this new, even more dangerous StratCom is it. Who better than us, who live in its shadow, to spread the message of this planetary threat?