



Nebraskans for Peace

Nebraska Report

There is no Peace without Justice

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The Pentagon on Climate Change

Skeptics of climate change unremittingly contend that the science is inconclusive and the debate is still unsettled. Backed by the coal and oil industry, the skeptic lobby has cast doubt on the human role in global warming and the environmental risk of burning fossil fuels.

The U.S. military, on the other hand, has followed the climate

science with a growing sense of alarm.

As far back as 2003 (during the first term of the pro-oil Bush/Cheney Administration), a specially commissioned Pentagon report warned that rapid climate change could “potentially destabilize the geo-political environment, leading to skirmishes, battles, and even war” over scarce food, water and energy supplies.

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Nebraska Report

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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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Nebraskans for Peace Annual Financial Report

	2011 RESULTS	2012 BUDGET
REVENUES		
Membership Dues	\$11,255	\$11,000
Donations	39,988	29,000
Foundation Grants	63,100	75,000
CLAB Calendar	20,000	20,000
Peace Conference Registrations	2,455	2,500
Chapter Fundraisers	2,898	2,000
Projects Income	500	500
Miscellaneous Income	22	0
TOTAL REVENUES	\$140,218	\$140,000
EXPENSES		
Personnel	\$88,226	\$90,180
Nebraska Report	9,813	9,840
Chapters Expense	2,144	2,500
Projects Expense	4,172	3,500
Peace Conference	3,745	4,000
Rent	7,509	7,600
Insurance	886	900
Accounting	1,500	6,800
Telephone	2,437	2,520
Online Information Service	1,670	2,100
Other Administrative	8,324	9,060
Miscellaneous Expense	1,131	1,000
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$139,305	\$138,500
NET REVENUES	\$8,661	\$0

Invest in a Peaceful Tomorrow

*Make a tax-deductible donation
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The Pentagon on Climate Change, continued

Authored by Peter Schwartz, a CIA consultant and former head of planning at Royal Dutch/Shell Group, and Doug Randall of the California-based Global Business Network, “An Abrupt Climate Change Scenario and the Implications for United States Security” sought to “imagine the unthinkable.” The sudden onset of climate change, the analysts argued, would be little short of catastrophic: “Disruption and conflict will be endemic features of life... Once again, warfare would define human

Completed in October 2003, the climate change study was promptly suppressed by the Defense Department until *The Observer* secured a copy four months later. In a February 2004 article, the newspaper cited the suppression as proof that the Bush/Cheney Administration, which had repeatedly denied that global warming even exists, was trying “to bury the threat of climate change.”

Several of the world’s leading figures on climate change immediately seized on

Report co-author, Doug Randall, told *The Observer* that the potential ramifications of rapid climate change would create global chaos. “This is depressing stuff,” he said. “It is a national security threat that is unique because there is no enemy to point your guns at and we have no control over the threat.” Randall worried that it was already possibly too late to prevent a disaster from happening. “We don’t know exactly where we are in the process. [Abrupt climate change] could start tomorrow and we would not know for another five years.” Under the circumstances, he said, “It seems obvious that cutting the use of fossil fuels would be worthwhile.”

The Center for Naval Analyses Study

By 2007, when the Defense Department’s “Center for Naval Analyses” released its landmark report, *National Security and the Threat of Climate Change*, the Bush/Cheney Administration had officially acknowledged the reality of global warming—although they continued to quibble about whether humans were in fact the cause. The 11-member “Military Advisory Board” (MAB) of retired three-star and four-star admirals and generals who headed up the Center’s study, on the other hand, unanimously accepted the scientific consensus on human-caused climate change, concluding that “the evidence is sufficiently compelling and the consequences sufficiently grave” to warrant the military’s urgent attention.

Advisory Board Chair General Gordon Sullivan summed up the MAB’s perspective on the climate science debate this way: “We never have 100 percent certainty. If you wait until you have 100 percent certainty, something bad is going to happen on the battlefield. That’s something we know.”

The report flatly stated that climate change poses a serious threat to America’s national security. In the 21st century, the study emphasized, energy, water and the environment are critical factors for economic and security stability, and “when

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“We will pay for this one way or another. We will pay to reduce greenhouse gas emissions today, and we’ll have to take an economic hit of some kind. Or, we will pay the price later in military terms. And that will involve human lives. There will be a human toll.”

Marine General Anthony Zinni,
National Security and the Threat of Climate Change (2007)

life.” So great was the risk inherent in such a scenario, Schwartz and Randall wrote, that climate change needed to “be elevated beyond a scientific debate to a U.S. national security concern.”

The political fall-out generated by the report wound up being almost as big a bombshell as the findings themselves. Far from being some crackpot venture, the top-secret study was the brainchild of Andrew Marshall, a legendary Pentagon advisor who had exerted considerable influence over U.S. military thinking for three decades. According to the British Sunday newspaper, *The Observer*, the then-82-year-old Marshall headed “a secretive think-tank dedicated to weighing risks to national security, called the ‘Office of Net Assessment.’ Dubbed ‘Yoda’ by Pentagon insiders who respect his vast experience, he is credited with being behind the Department of Defense’s push on ballistic-missile defense... and was the man behind a sweeping recent review aimed at transforming the American military under Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.”

the study’s findings, arguing, *The Observer* reported, that “the Pentagon’s internal fears should prove the ‘tipping point’ in persuading Bush to accept climate change.” The chief scientist for the World Bank and previous chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Bob Watson, openly wondered:

Can Bush ignore the Pentagon? It’s going to be hard to blow off this sort of document. It’s hugely embarrassing. After all, Bush’s single-highest priority is national defense. The Pentagon is no wacko, liberal group; generally speaking, it is conservative. If climate change is a threat to national security and the economy, then he has to act.

Greenpeace’s Rob Gueterbock, asked for his reaction, was quoted as saying at the time: “You’ve got a President who says global warming is a hoax, and across the Potomac River you’ve got a Pentagon preparing for climate wars. It’s pretty scary when Bush starts to ignore his own government on this issue.”

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The Pentagon on Climate Change, conclusion

these factors are not in balance, people live in poverty, suffer high death rates, or move towards armed conflict.” Climate change, the Advisory Board members asserted, acts as a “threat multiplier for instability in some of the most volatile regions of the world.” Nor will the stable regions of the world be immune to these

Climate change will contribute to food and water scarcity, will increase the spread of disease, and may spur or exacerbate mass migration.
2010 Quadrennial Defense Review

increased tensions. “Unlike the challenges we are used to dealing with,” Navy Vice Admiral Richard Truly noted, “these will come upon us extremely slowly, but come they will, and they will be grinding and inexorable. But maybe more challenging is that they will affect every nation, and all simultaneously.”

In response to this threat, the Military Advisory Board proposed a number of recommendations, including that

- The national security consequences of climate change should be fully integrated into national security and national defense strategies.
- The U.S. should commit to a stronger national and international role to help stabilize climate changes at levels that will avoid significant disruption to global security and stability.
- The U.S. should commit to global partnerships that help less developed nations build the capacity and resiliency to better manage climate impacts.

The report also called upon the Department of Defense to

adopt energy efficiency measures and to conduct an assessment of the impact rising sea levels, extreme weather events and other potential climate change effects would have on U.S. military installations worldwide in the next 30 to 40 years.

Unlike with the Bush/Cheney White House, there was no mis-

taking the Pentagon’s views on the climate issue: climate change represents a palpable threat not only to America’s national security, but to its status as a world superpower. And contending with this threat, the report authors stressed, will not be cheap. As Marine General Anthony Zinni observed, “We will pay for this one way or another. We will pay to reduce greenhouse gas emissions today, and we’ll have to take an economic hit of some kind. Or, we will pay the price later in military terms. And that will involve human lives. There will be a human toll.”

2010 Quadrennial Defense Review

Once every four years, the Department of Defense issues a “Quadrennial Defense Review” (QDR), a strategy document that lays out the Pentagon’s vision for its missions and force structure in the face of anticipated threats. The Congressionally mandated QDR process “frames the strategic choices for the Department and establishes priorities to determine appropriate resource

investments.” In February 2010, for the first time ever, climate change was formally designated in the QDR as a ‘National Security Threat.’

Climate change, according to the QDR, affects U.S. security “in two broad ways”: first, by accelerating the conditions for global instability and conflict, and second, by its physical impact on the Department of Defense’s facilities and capabilities. Climate-related changes, from increases in heavy downpours and rises in temperature and sea level to rapidly retreating glaciers, thawing permafrost and earlier snowmelt, “are already being observed in every region of the world, including the United States and its coastal waters,” the QDR states. In stark, no-holds-barred language, the review warns that “climate change will contribute to food and water scarcity, will increase the spread of disease, and may spur or exacerbate mass migration. While climate change alone does not cause conflict, it may act as an accelerant of instability and conflict, placing a burden to respond on civilian institutions and militaries around the world.” The review cautions that extreme weather events could well lead to increased demands on the Pentagon for humanitarian assistance or disaster response not only at home, but overseas.

As the world’s largest consumer of fossil fuels and, correspondingly, the greatest emitter of greenhouse gases, the Defense Department is itself a hefty part of the climate problem. But in the 2010 QDR, remarkably, the Pentagon pledges to dramatically reduce its own carbon footprint through increased energy efficiency and major investments in renewable energy.

The GOP / Military Rift over Climate

Neither the Pentagon nor U.S. intelligence agencies conduct their own independent scientific research on the earth’s climate, and over the past decade, both of these entities have conscientiously endeavored to distance themselves from the political debate over climate change. Charged as they are with defending America’s national interests, they have instead focused their attention on the security repercussions climate change is already triggering. “The American people expect the military to plan for the worst,” retired Vice Admiral Lee Gunn stated in regard to the 2010 QDR. “It’s that sort of mindset, I think, that has convinced, in my view, the vast majority of military leaders that

Climate change is already intensifying the environmental and resource problems that communities are facing... Climate impacts are observable, measurable, real, and having near and long-term consequences.

Trends and Implications of Climate Change for National and International Security

climate change is a real threat and that the military plays an important role in confronting it.”

It’s both ironic and exasperating, then, that the Republican Party—which for decades has styled itself as the party of national defense and military strength—has now become such a bastion for climate skepticism and denial. Debunking the international scientific consensus on climate change has become a veritable article of faith among Republican candidates and officeholders. That fanatical position, however, puts the GOP squarely at odds with the military establishment, which has

unequivocally accepted the scientific conclusions of the 98 percent of the world’s climatologists who actually conduct research on climate and publish in journals reviewed by their peers.

This past November, yet another Department of Defense-commissioned study on climate change was released—this one by the “Defense Science Board,” the department’s science advisers. The report, *Trends and Implications of Climate Change for National and International Security*, asserts that “Climate change is already intensifying the environmental and resource problems that communities are facing... Climate impacts are observable, measurable, real, and having near and long-term consequences,” most notably in Africa,

where social conflict has been particularly prevalent for decades. Failure to anticipate and mitigate these changes, the report states, “increases the threat of more failed states with the instabilities and potential for conflict inherent in such failures.”

Climate change, the Defense Science Board bluntly warns, is already occurring and only destined to grow as a security concern for the U.S. And the longer we (and the GOP’s skeptics and deniers) delay acting, the worse it’s going to be for all of us, everywhere.

Profiles of Prominent Global Warming Skeptics

There are just a handful of alleged authorities disputing the scientific consensus that humans are contributing to global warming. As the PBS "Frontline" documentary, "Hot Politics," reported in 2007, "many of these researchers expressing doubts about the science of global warming have financial ties to the oil, auto, electricity and coal industries. These experts appear regularly at Congressional hearings, on television, radio

and in print, and at events in order to spread their message. That message varies somewhat from skeptic to skeptic but generally sows doubt about climate change, challenging the consensus of mainstream scientists. They ask whether global warming is really occurring, whether human activity is truly to blame and whether rising temperatures are such a bad thing." The following profiles were compiled by 350.org-Nebraska.

Fred Seitz (1911-2008)

A past president of the National Academy of Sciences, winner of the "National Medal of Science" for his contributions to the modern quantum theory of the solid state of matter and one of America's most distinguished physicists of the 20th Century, Dr. Fred Seitz is the most celebrated of the climate contrarians. Dubbed by *Business Week* as "the granddaddy of global-warming skeptics," Seitz nevertheless had no academic credentials in climatology nor did any of his climate writings ever appear in peer-reviewed publications.

The final three decades of his life, in fact, were riddled with controversy. From the late 1970s to the late '80s, he served as a paid consultant for the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, receiving over \$585,000 for his services at the very time the tobacco industry was asserting the scientific link between smoking and cancer was still unproven. Seitz himself asserted in a 1994 article on 'second-hand smoke' (published by the policy institute he co-founded and chaired) that "there is no good scientific evidence that passive inhalation is truly dangerous under normal circumstances."

By the 1990s, though, Seitz was largely shifting the focus of his efforts to climate, publishing opinion pieces dismissing the dangers of global warming and disputing that there was any scientific consensus about climate change. His 1998 endorsement of the "Oregon Institute of Science and Medicine" (OISM) petition debunking the threat posed by carbon dioxide and calling for the rejection of the Kyoto Protocol, however, created such controversy as to provoke a formal backlash from the scientific community.

The format and type of the OISM petition

was nearly identical to that of a publication in a National Academy of Sciences journal. In response, the NAS took what a April 22, 1998 *New York Times* story called "the extraordinary step of refuting the position of one [of] its former presidents," with the NAS stressing that "the petition does not reflect the conclusions of expert



reports of the Academy." Further, the *Times* story reported that of the then 15,000 signers of the petition, by the OISM's own reckoning, only "about 2,100 were physicists, geophysicists, climatologists and meteorologists, and of those the greatest number are physicists." A subsequent May 1, 1998, *AP* article disclosed that the petition at one time included the names, "Drs. 'Frank Burns,' 'Honeycutt' and 'Pierce' (Remember the trio from "M*A*S*H"?), not to mention the Spice Girl, a.k.a. Geraldine Halliwell, who was on the petition as 'Dr. Geri Halliwell' and again as simply 'Dr. Halliwell.'"

The total number of signatories on the OISM "Global Warming Petition Project" has nearly doubled since 1998, but its scientific credibility has sunk lower than ever. While the web page of the petition boasts that "31,487 American scientists have signed this petition, including 9,029 with PhDs," a 2001 analysis by *Scientific American* found few of the signatories were climatologists or even scientists, and of those who were, many misunderstood the petition's actual position.

Seitz's 1998 'open letter' accompanying

the petition warned that the "United States is very close to adopting" the Kyoto Protocol, which, he alleged, "would ration the use of energy and of technologies that depend upon coal, oil, and natural gas." Trading on his scientific celebrity, he dismissed the concern over increased carbon concentrations in the atmosphere, stating, "there is good evidence that increased atmospheric carbon dioxide is environmentally helpful." A June 5, 2000, *Business Week* story, however, was to provide an alternative—and less scientifically inspired—interpretation of Seitz's interest in opposing the climate pact. For 28 years, the story stated, "Seitz was also a paid director and shareholder of Ogden Corp., an operator of coal-burning power plants that stands to lose financially should the Kyoto Protocol become law." The magazine reported that Seitz "sold most of his 11,500 shares" of Ogden in 1999—the year immediately following the U.S. Senate's rejection of the climate agreement.

His business ties to carbon-based fuels, it turns out, extended to the oil industry as well. As *PBS's* "Frontline" documented in 2006, two years before his death at 96, "Among the several skeptical organizations with which Dr. Seitz has been affiliated, he has been Chairman Emeritus of the "George C. Marshall Institute," which received \$630,000 from ExxonMobil between 1998 and 2005, according to Exxonsecrets.org and a review of Exxon's financial documents. Seitz also served on the "Board of Academic and Scientific Advisors for the Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow," which received \$472,000 from Exxon from 1998 to 2005, according to the same sources.

Up until his death, Seitz defended his acceptance of money from the oil and tobacco

industries, stating that the money did not influence his science. While critics might be 'skeptical' of such a claim, Fred Seitz alone knew for sure. What we know for a fact *did not* influence his science, however, were the conclusions of 98 percent of the world's publishing climate scientists, whose peer-reviewed research—vetted by qualified colleagues in the specialized field of climatology—forms the international scientific consensus on the dangers of anthropogenic (human-caused) global warming.

S. Fred Singer, Ph.D.

Yet another retired physicist with ties to the Big Tobacco and Big Oil, Fred Singer has proven to be nearly as controversial a figure in climatological circles as his contrarian colleague, Fred Seitz. Singer, with a long and distinguished career inside both academia and government, is the only other scientific luminary (besides Seitz) in the ranks of the global warming skeptics. Armed with a background in both electrical engineering and atmospheric physics, he was an early proponent of rocketry and space exploration and actually developed the first satellite instruments measuring ozone and cosmic radiation. In the early 1960s, he served as one of the first administrators with the newly created "U.S. National Weather Satellite Center," and his resume includes a stint as a deputy assistant administrator with the original EPA, as well as academic appointments directing environmental studies programs at the University of Virginia and University of Miami.

Impressive as these credentials are, however, Singer's scientific expertise never extended to the field of climatology. In fact,

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Profiles of Prominent Global Warming Skeptics, continued

beginning in the mid-'80s, his professional stature even in his chosen disciplines went into eclipse, as he took to publishing his doubts about the links between second-hand smoke and lung cancer and between UV rays and skin cancer in non-academic outlets. During a 1995 congressional hearing, U.S. Rep. Lynn Rivers (D-Michigan) publicly questioned Singer's professional credibility, noting that while he touted himself as an accomplished scientist, he had been unable to publish in the peer-reviewed literature, other than one technical comment, for at least 15 years—a charge Singer did not refute. Finally, as was the case with Fred Seitz, Singer's financial ties to the tobacco and oil industries have compromised his claims of scientific independence and objectivity.

In 1990, with funding from Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church, he established the "Science and Environmental Policy Project" (SEPP) to lobby against preventive measures intended to curb global warming. It wasn't long before fossil fuel interests began funneling money his way. Singer denied receiving funding from the oil industry in a 2006 interview with PBS's *Frontline* for its "Hot Politics" documentary, though he acknowledged being a paid consultant for several oil companies (including ARCO, ExxonMobil, Shell Oil, Sun Oil and Unocal). According to a review of Exxon's own financial documents and Exxonsecrets.org, however, Singer's SEPP has received multiple grants from ExxonMobil, as have many of the other libertarian and free market organizations with which Singer works, such as "Frontiers of Freedom," the "Cato Institute" and the "National Center for Policy Analysis." In a March 2001 *Nation* article, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Ross Gelbspan reported that, "The most widely quoted skeptic, S. Fred Singer, denied receiving oil industry money in a February 1, 2001 letter to the *Washington Post*. But in 1998 ExxonMobil gave \$10,000 to Singer's institute, the Science and Environmental Policy Project, and \$65,000 to the Atlas Economic Research Foundation, which shared building space with SEPP."

By the mid-'90s, Singer and SEPP had already demonstrated their public relations value to the fossil fuel industry. With the Clinton/Gore Administration actively engaged in

negotiations on an agreement to limit carbon emissions, Singer drafted and circulated the so-called "Leipzig Declaration on Global Climate Change." The declaration alleged that the sci-



entific premises upon which the Kyoto Protocol rested were "based solely on unproven scientific theories, imperfect computer models—and the unsupported assumption that catastrophic

global warming follows from an increase in greenhouse gases, requiring immediate action." It went on to state: "[C]ontrary to the conventional wisdom—there does not exist today a general scientific consensus about the importance of greenhouse warming from rising levels of carbon dioxide. In fact, most climate specialists now agree that actual observations from both weather satellites and balloon-borne radiosondes show no current warming whatsoever..."

Released the month before negotiations on the Kyoto Protocol were finalized, the declaration (like Fred Seitz's Oregon Petition) generated media and political buzz far beyond its modest means. Although the declaration begins, "As independent scientists concerned with atmospheric and climate problems, we... ", questions about the scientific background of the roughly 100 signatories (and the degree to which they could be deemed to be independent) surfaced immediately. Singer and his supporters generally portrayed (and still portray) the signers as climate scientists, although the current signers also include 25 television weather reporters. A *Danish Broadcasting Company* journalist attempted to contact the declaration's original 33 European signers and found that four of them could not be located, 12 denied ever having signed, and some had not even heard of the Leipzig Declaration. Included among the confirmed signers were a medical doctor, a nuclear scientist and an entomologist. Under public pressure, Singer

subsequently deleted some—but not all—of the discredited signatures. Once those whose credentials were inflated, irrelevant, false or unverifiable were removed, however, only 20 of the names on the list could be said to have had any scientific connection with the study of climate change (and some of those names were known to have obtained grants from the fossil fuel industry, including the German coal industry and the government of Kuwait). And of those 20, only one individual appeared to be actually doing climate research.

An August 13, 2007 *Newsweek* cover story on climate change deniers further detailed how far Singer had strayed from his roots as a principled scientist:

In April 1998 a dozen people from the denial machine—including the [George C.] Marshall Institute, Fred Singer's group and Exxon—met at the American Petroleum Institute's Washington headquarters. They proposed a \$5 million campaign, according to a leaked eight-page memo, to convince the public that the science of global warming is riddled with controversy and uncertainty. The plan was to train up to 20 "respected climate scientists" on media—and public—outreach with the aim of "raising questions about and undercutting the 'prevailing scientific wisdom'" and, in particular, "the Kyoto treaty's scientific underpinnings" so that elected officials "will seek to prevent progress toward implementation." The plan, once exposed in the press, "was never implemented as policy," says Marshall's William O'Keefe, who was then at API.

In naming Fred Singer to his list of the top 17 "Climate Killers... who are derailing efforts to curb global warming," *Rolling Stone Magazine* journalist Tim Dickinson, in the January 2010 issue, scripted the epitaph to the professional reputation of this once remarkable American scientist:

A former mouthpiece for the tobacco industry, the 85-year-old Singer is the granddaddy of fake 'science' designed to debunk global warming. The retired physicist—who also tried to downplay the danger of the hole in the ozone layer—is still wheeled out as an authority by big polluters determined to kill climate legislation. For years, Singer steadfastly denied that the world is heating up: Citing satellite data that has since been discredited, he even made the unhinged claim that "the climate has been cooling just slightly." Last year,

Singer served as a lead author of "Climate Change Reconsidered"—an 880-page report by the right-wing Heartland Institute that was laughably presented as a counterweight to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the world's scientific authority on global warming. Singer concludes that the unchecked growth of climate-cooking pollution is "unequivocally good news." Why? Because "rising CO2 levels increase plant growth and make plants more resistant to drought and pests." Small wonder that Heartland's climate work has long been funded by the likes of Exxon and reactionary energy barons like Charles Koch and Richard Mellon Scaife [of Gulf Oil].

Richard S. Lindzen, Ph.D.

"Of all the skeptics," the *Washington Post* wrote in 2006, "MIT's Richard Lindzen probably has the most credibility among mainstream scientists, who acknowledge that he's doing serious research on the subject." A professor of meteorology and member of the National Academy of Sciences, Lindzen has published over 200 peer-reviewed articles on climatology on



topics relating to monsoons, how heat and water move around the world, the ice ages and the effects of seasonal changes on the atmosphere. He worked on (and was vocally criti-

cal of) the "Second Assessment of Climate Change" released by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in 1995—the same year he also signed Fred Singer's "Leipzig Declaration." Lindzen has frequently testified before Congress about his climate skepticism, and in a string of op-eds—particularly in the *Wall Street Journal*—has belittled the scientific case for global warming.

Although he has repeatedly claimed that his funding comes exclusively from government sources, journalist Ross Gelbspan revealed in a 1995 *Harper's Magazine* article that Lindzen

What's HOT in Global Warming?

by Professor Bruce E. Johansen

A Most Unusual Nebraska January

Like anyone else, I can draw some joy out of a sunny, mild day in the middle of January. We take enough punishment in Nebraska to deserve a few of them. But nearly a month of them, back to back (from mid-December, 2011 to at least mid-January, 2012)? Dare I rain—or snow, sleet and hail—on this parade?

I am reminded that a few winters ago—was it 2009?—we had a blizzard, the mother of all white Christmases? Norman Rockwell it wasn't. The Arctic Oscillation was holding sway that year, punching cold air from the Canadian Arctic and infusing it with El Nino-bred storms off the Pacific, drawing warmth and moisture from the Gulf of Mexico. Last year we had another taste of the same.

And this year? The Arctic Oscillation has left us alone, thus far, and we could be living in California without earthquakes.

Do I risk the wrath of my warmth-loving neighbors to ask whether this teaches us anything about climate? Anything more enduring than the truism that we live in a place where the weather is so variable that 'average' is little more than the mean of the extremes?

Loving Global Warming

On January 5, 2012, Omaha

basked in 66-degree warmth, as several places in the area set all-time January highs—63 in Aberdeen, anyone? Seventy degrees F. in Rapid City? Break out the sun block. The local paper barely batted an editorial eyelash (it printed a weather photo a day late), but Robert Nelson, a local

More than a thousand record highs were reached in the United States during the first week of 2012. How mild was January? On January 9, only 16 percent of the continental United States had snow cover.

columnist, blurted out that he loved global warming. Who can begrudge anyone 66 degrees at a time when Omaha's average high is about 32? I can give Nelson the benefit of the climatic doubt and assume he was giving us some of his renowned sarcasm.

More than a thousand record highs were reached in the United States during the first week of 2012. How mild was January? On January 9, only 16 percent of the continental United States had snow cover.

It was mild enough that several thousand Sand Hill Cranes decided to postpone their

migration to Texas until Central Nebraska quit feeling like Dallas. A piece in the *Omaha World-Herald* remarked that the drought in Texas might be causing the cranes to elect an extended stop in Nebraska, although one wonders how they know. Do they watch the "Weather Chan-

nel" fingers of intensifying drought wrap around us.

'Nice day,' is a phrase I have heard a lot during these days of Nebraska winters that seem to have evolved into long thaws punctuated by short freezes. Some of us are old enough to remember local



winters that began in November and ended in April, broken only by occasional (and sometimes dramatic) mid-winter thaws.

So who will begrudge us long strings of mild, dry winter days with dire warnings that this is only the beginning of a natural catalogue of weather weirdness that will turn the natural world on its head, and of feedback loops that will accelerate warmth beyond the survival tolerance of many plants and animals? One might as well save the climatic sermon for especially hot and humid summer

afternoons, with the caveat that, well, weather happens, especially in Nebraska.

The problem with this line of reasoning is that the most dramatic warming is taking place during the coldest periods—that is, winter nights, here, as well as in the Arctic, where cold-season warming is much more dramatic, and dangerous.

Many climate scientists believe that the middle of the 21st century will witness dramatic acceleration in global warming. Various feedback loops are expected to accelerate increases in atmospheric greenhouse-gas levels and, consequently, worldwide temperatures.

Climatic Compound Interest

These include several natural processes that add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere, such as melting permafrost in the Arctic and eventual gasification of solid methane deposits (clathrates) in the oceans. These compound existing problems like a bank account drawing an environmentally dangerous form of compound interest. Evidence is accumulating that these processes already have begun. Parts of the Trans-Siberian Railway's

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Profiles of Prominent Global Warming Skeptics, conclusion

“charges oil and coal interests \$2,500 a day for his consulting services; his 1991 trip to testify before a Senate committee was paid for by Western Fuels, and a speech he wrote, entitled ‘Global Warming: the Origin and Nature of Alleged Scientific Consensus,’ was underwritten by OPEC.”

PBS’s Frontline reported in 2007 that Lindzen is “a member of the Advisory Council of the ‘Annapolis Center for Science Based Public Policy,’ which has received large amounts of funding from ExxonMobil and smaller amounts from Daimler Chrysler, according to a review of Exxon’s own financial documents and 990s from Daimler Chrysler’s Foundation. He has also been a contributor to the Cato Institute (which has taken \$90,000 from Exxon since 1998, according to the website Exxonsecrets.org and a review of Exxon financial documents),” as well as to the George C. Marshall Institute founded by Fred Seitz.

Over the past decade, Lindzen has in addition become ever more closely associated with the libertarian “Heartland Institute,” which in the past has billed itself as “the marketing arm of the free-market movement.” A March 4, 2008 *New York Times* article described the institute as “a Chicago group whose anti-regulatory philosophy has long been embraced by, and financially supported by, various industries and conservative donors”—including tobacco giant Philip Morris, ExxonMobil (which provided \$676,500 in funding between 1998-2006), and Tea Party underwriters David and Charles Koch, whose Koch Industries is now the largest privately held energy company in the U.S.

Since 2008, the Institute has hosted an annual “International Conference on Climate Change,” at which Lindzen has served as a keynote speaker. Nineteen of the sponsoring organizations for the 2010 conference—which included Fred Seitz’s George C. Marshall Institute and Fred Singer’s SEPP, as well as the Heartland Institute—had received a total of \$40 million between 1985-2008 from just three oil interests: ExxonMobil, Koch Foundations and Scaife Family Foundations (Sources: U.S. 990 Tax forms, ExxonSecrets, SourceWatch, MediaMatters Transparency). Reporting on the first conference in 2008, the British newspaper, *The*

Independent stated that the institute’s receipt of donations from both ExxonMobil and Philip Morris indicates “a direct link has emerged between anti-global warming skeptics funded by the oil industry and the opponents of the scientific evidence showing that passive smoking can damage people’s health.”

While acknowledging his formidable credentials in the climate debate, critics are also quick to point out Lindzen’s contrarian personality. (He even disputes the research linking smoking to lung cancer.) *Vanity Fair*, in its May 2007 issue, chose Lindzen to share the title of “false counselor” in its list of leading “environmental sinners.” As two of his climatology colleagues—NASA climatologist and climate modeler Gavin Schmidt and Michael Mann, director of the Earth System Science Center at Penn State University and a lead author on the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change—noted on the climatologist-run website RealClimate.org, “For a time, Lindzen set himself apart” [from contrarians like Seitz and Singer]: “his scientific challenges were often thoughtful and his hypotheses interesting, if one-sided—he never met a negative feedback he didn’t like. Sadly,” they concluded, “it has become clear that those days are gone.”

Bjorn Lomborg

Author of two best-selling books—*The Skeptical Environmentalist* (2001) and *Cool It!: The Skeptical Environmentalist’s Guide to Global Warming* (2007)—and “famous” (in the words of the UK Guardian) “for attacking climate scientists, campaigners, the media and others for exaggerating the rate of global warming and its effects on humans,” Bjorn Lomborg has been the darling of the contrarian lobby. The Heartland Institute, for instance, claimed the Danish professor of statistics as one its “experts,” even though none of Lomborg’s work has ever appeared in peer-reviewed climatological publications.

So it created quite a stir in August 2010 when the *Guardian* broke the news that “the world’s most high-profile climate change skeptic” announced that not only was climate change human-caused, “If we care about the

environment and about leaving this planet and its inhabitants with the best possible future, we actually have only one option: we all need to start seriously focusing, right now, on the most effective ways to fix global warming.”

In point of fact, Lomborg had always acknowledged the human role in global warming. A line from his 2001 *Skeptical Environmentalist* flatly states: “This chapter accepts the reality of man-made global warming.” And in 2009 he told *Esquire*, “It is a very good thing that President Obama accepts that global warming is real and man-made; his predecessor’s reluctance or inability to recognize the issue was an embarrassment.” Instead, it was always Lomborg’s dismissal of the danger and the need for urgency that attracted the adulation of skeptics and raised the ire of the vast majority of climate researchers. From the moment he stepped into the international limelight ten years ago, critics have highlighted his lack of scientific credentials, charging him with cherry-picking data, shoddy scholarship and intellectual irresponsibility. The chair of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change himself (Rajendra Pachauri, who shared the Nobel Peace Prize with Al Gore) publicly took Lomborg to task in 2004 over his assertion that much of the world’s population would benefit from global warming.

With the publication of his latest book, however, *Smart Solutions to Climate Change:*



Comparing Costs and Benefits, Lomborg’s differences with the scientific consensus over the urgency for mitigation and adaptation have largely been laid to rest. Stating

that “climate change is undoubtedly one of the chief concerns facing the world today” and “a challenge that humanity must confront,” he now advocates institution of a global carbon tax and an expenditure of \$100 billion a year to “essentially resolve the climate change problem

by the end of this century.”

There are of course other less notable figures in the skeptic community. Climatologist Patrick Michaels has the academic credentials, but as White House Science and Technology Advisor John Holdren stated to a Senate committee in 2003, he “lacks Richard Lindzen’s scientific stature... [having] published little if anything of distinction in the professional literature, being noted rather for his shrill op-ed pieces and indiscriminate denunciations of virtually every finding of mainstream climate science.” A signatory of the Leipzig Declaration and Cato Institute expert, Michaels publishes the “World Climate Report,” a newsletter and blog funded by the Western Fuels Association. He openly acknowledged in a recent *CNN* interview that 40 percent of his funding comes from the petroleum industry.

Others, such as John Coleman, who built a career as a television weather reporter and was an original founder of the “Weather Channel,” have generated a lot of publicity with their virulent denials of global warming. (In 2008 on *Fox News*, he publicly pledged to sue Al Gore for fraud over the “scam” of global warming.) Coleman, however, has no academic background in climate science—his sole collegiate credential being a bachelor’s degree in Journalism from Illinois in 1957. Nor do flamboyant conservative political commentators like Rush Limbaugh and Glenn Beck (who regularly call global warming a ‘scam’ and a ‘hoax’) have any scientific expertise on the subject. In fact, both Limbaugh and Beck are college dropouts who only attended college for one year.

For climate information from actual climate scientists, RealClimate.org (administered by Gavin Schmidt and Michael Mann) provides timely reports and analysis of the growing threat posed by human-caused global warming. ClimateProgress.org is administered by nationally recognized energy and climate policy expert Joe Romm, who in 2009 was named one of *Time Magazine*’s “Heroes of the Environment.” Journalist Mark Hertsgaard’s recent book, *Hot: Living Through the Next Fifty Years on Earth* (2011), also chronicles the latest climate science while offering an accessible introduction to the gravity of this looming crisis.

Alternatives to the Military

Working to Stop Military Recruitment & to Protect Student Privacy in Our Schools

by Barb Van den Berg

Each fall for the past 20 years Alternatives to the Military has engaged in anti-military recruitment in Lincoln high schools. The “No Child Left Behind” legislation requires that educational institutions give personal information about their students to military recruiters—and one of the missions of Alternatives to the Military is to inform students that they can legally ‘opt out’ of having this personal information shared with the military. We distribute informational pamphlets that encourage students to ask questions and be critical of certain claims that the military recruiters make to entice students to sign up for military service.

We have also created a Facebook page for Alternatives to the Military-Lincoln (www.facebook.com/#!/atmlincoln), which has resulted in beneficial networking with other national groups concerned with military recruiting in schools, such

as the National Network Opposing the Militarization of Youth (www.nnomy.org), Project on Youth and Non-Military Opportunities (www.projectyano.org), the Coalition for Alternatives to Militarism in Our Schools ([***The “Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery”—a military entrance exam used to determine a person’s aptitude for various military occupations—is routinely administered in 276 high schools throughout Nebraska.***](http://www.militaryfree-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

schools.org), and the National Coalition to Protect Student Privacy (www.studentprivacy.org).

Although our main emphasis in the state is on the broader issue of the militarization of our society and youth, we also respond to specific issues like the

violation of student privacy rights.

This past year for instance, out of our concern for the privacy rights of students, we investigated the administration of the “Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery” (ASVAB) in Nebraska public

schools, and had communications with the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner of Education, the Nebraska State Board of Education and a number of principals of school districts. The ASVAB is the military’s entrance exam that is given to new recruits to determine their

aptitude for various military occupations. The test is also used as a recruiting tool in 276 high schools throughout Nebraska. In fact, during the 2009-2010 school year, the three-hour test was used by military recruiting services to gain the sensitive and personal information of 8,837 Nebraska high school students—the vast majority of whom are under the age of 18. In high schools throughout the state, the ASVAB is promoted without revealing its primary function as a recruitment tool. Students typically are given the test at school without parental knowledge or consent. This school-based ASVAB Career Exploration Program is among the military’s most effective recruiting tools. Nationally, 12,000 high schools allow the military to administer the test to approximately 660,000 high school students.

Although the Department of Defense promotes the ASVAB as a voluntary “Ca-

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Alternatives to the Military, conclusion

reer Exploration Program” administered to juniors and seniors, the U.S. Army Recruiting Command’s School Recruiting Program Handbook says the primary purpose of the ASVAB is to provide military recruiters “with a source of leads of high school juniors and seniors qualified through the ASVAB for enlistment into the Active Army and Army Reserve.” School counselors and administrators often encourage students to take the test, claiming that the test assists students in matching their abilities with certain career paths.

The military, however, uses the exam to gather a treasure-trove of information to use in a sophisticated recruiting program. After the test is administered, military representatives often meet with youth at school to discuss their scores

and suggest career paths. Later, recruiters make calls to the students, using individualized profiles gathered from test data and other sources.

Federal and state laws, such as, the “Family Educational Rights Protection Act” (FERPA) and Section 9528 of the “Elementary and Secondary Education Act” (ESEA), strictly monitor the release of student information, but the military manages to circumvent these laws with the administration of the ASVAB.

Although military regulations allow schools to administer the ASVAB without sending results to recruiters, many school administrators across the state do not seem to be aware of this option. 76.8 percent of Nebraska’s high school students who took the ASVAB during the 2009-2010 school year had their test results

forwarded to the Pentagon for recruitment purposes without parental consent and often without parental knowledge.

“U.S. Military Entrance Processing Command” (USMEPCOM) Regulation 601-4 identifies several options schools have regarding the administration and release of ASVAB information. These op-

organizations and high school principals about the ASVAB and their policies—both on the administration of the test and the safeguarding of the privacy of our students’ information—by advocating the selection of Option 8 for all students who take the ASVAB in Nebraska’s public high schools. Ask questions. This kind

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tions range from Option 1, which permits test results and other student information to be released to military recruiters without prior consent, to Option 8—the only one that prevents test results from being used for recruiting purposes. Inaction on the part of a school will cause USMEPCOM to automatically select Option 1. Students and parents may not determine which release option is used; therefore they cannot opt out of releasing the information individually.

In 2010, Maryland became the first state to enact a law that prohibits the automatic release of student information to military recruiters gathered as a result of the administration of the ASVAB. The Maryland law requires that each public school that administers the ASVAB shall choose Option 8 as the reporting option for military recruiter contact to prohibit the general release of any student information to military recruiters. The law will ensure that the decision to share test results and accompanying private information with military recruiters rests solely in the hands of students and their parents. Hawaii and several large school districts, including New York City, Los Angeles and San Diego, have policies to the same effect.

We encourage readers of the *Nebraska Report* to contact their parent/teacher

of advocacy for our children by parents and citizens in general is extremely important to counter the constant pressure by branches of the military services wanting access to our students at younger and younger ages.

The culture of war creates programs such as Junior ROTC which are now active in a number of our high schools. Math and science are being taught to elementary and junior high students on the National Guard Base in Lincoln in what is called the STARBASE Nebraska program (www.starbasene.org). Military recruiters come to required classes, such as ‘Educational and Career Planning.’ Let your principals and parent/teacher organizations know that the school environment is no place for military recruitment. Ask about the ASVAB testing. Use the website of the National Coalition to Protect Student Privacy (www.student-privacy.org) to find out if and how your high school administers the test and if results are sent to military recruiters with or without parental consent.

As we move into 2012, the necessity for our society to stand down from our culture of war is clear. Alternatives to the Military continues in the struggle to keep our schools from becoming recruitment centers for the armed services.

Join us.

“Chronicles a painful odyssey that should give pause to the caring, the oblivious, and those who don’t give a damn.” Frank LaMere
Winnipeg Tribe of Nebraska
Chair, Native Caucus, Democratic National Committee

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Speaking Our Peace, conclusion

advocating!!” Then I gradually realized—I am a little dense—that no real cuts from the present budget were implied and virtually nothing from immediately future budgets. All the ‘cuts’ were at rainbow’s end. These putative cutbacks, it turns out however, will in no way spell the end of America’s military adventurism, as the President explained that, henceforth, we will now be going after “the Pacific”—i.e. China.

Imagine I dream of a \$400,000 Lamborghini, then realize I am broke. So, still broke, I go purchase a \$75,000 Land Rover to drive up Mount Everest. Everest in this metaphor is China. We are going to take on China with our ‘littler’ budget.

All observers agree that Obama’s shift from the Middle East to “the Pacific,” as he calls it, is a shift to confront China. We are preparing new bases in Australia, ramping up our military in South Korea and Japan, creating our somewhat secret and movable bases in the Philippines, and giving a lot of military aid to Taiwan. Our efforts to control North Korea, to separate Myanmar from its Chinese patrons, and to drive a wedge between Iran and China are less inspired by democratic sentiment than antipathy to China’s allies—all admittedly rogues. But limiting the damage possible from these countries is more appropriate to the United Nations and the international community than to the U.S.

Remember how Obama once spoke about how international dialogue rather than war creates our strategic future. No dialogue now. Obama’s recent speech envisages war with China and, prior to that, endless military spending.

War with China? Why?

China is our banker, source of cheap goods, and buffer against Russia: the largest military power in the world next to us. Obama said, in the same speech, that we plan to keep our military expenditures at least ten times those of our nearest rival, i.e. China. But why? Why confront China?

Because it is there! We are little kids playing ‘king-of-the-mountain’ with the world’s future.

Nothing more illustrates the power of the Military-Industrial Complex than what has happened to Obama. Elected as a peace candidate, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, he has become the apologist for cutting what: A fictional \$489 billion—about what the sequester budget requires, nothing more. Defense spending will still grow about 20 percent per year and be more than it was in 2007, a high-water mark in the George W. era.

Obama knows that we do not need such a budget: 1000 overseas bases, endless weapons systems dreamed up in the pork barrel, weapons all over space. He knows that now about one third of U.S. people are poor, that 20-25 percent of its children are hungry, that essentially one in ten are unemployed, and that military spending generates very few jobs. He knows our security is our people. But he knows and fears the power of ‘superpacs’ and corporate spenders. He should channel Ron Paul on defense spending and wars. He should channel Roosevelt and Johnson on poverty in America. He should channel Martin Luther King in everything.

Write to Mr. Obama. Write to your Congress. Write while we have a country to gain or lose.

What’s HOT, conclusion

track has twisted and sunk due to melting of permafrost, causing delays of service of several days at a time. Scientists in Siberia report methane and carbon dioxide bubbling out of melting permafrost that refuses to freeze even during colder seasons.

The danger, according to many people who are familiar with the paleoclimatic record is: once this journey has begun in earnest, any return trip may become a matter of many centuries as well as copious human pain and suffering. Sir John Houghton, one of the world’s leading experts on global warming, told the London *Independent*: “We are getting almost to the point of irreversible meltdown, and will pass it soon if we are not careful.”

The ultimate feedback is the so-called ‘methane burp,’ in which solid methane in the oceans turns to gas in the atmosphere, breaks down into carbon

dioxide, and accelerates greenhouse warming. During past periods of rapid warming, methane in gaseous form has been released from the seafloor in intense eruptions. An explosive rise in temperatures on the order of about 8 degrees C. over a few thousand years accompanied a methane release 55 million years ago, called the “Paleocene/Eocene Thermal Maximum.”

The ‘methane’ burp will not be tomorrow’s news, but climate scientists pay attention to such things because rising greenhouse-gas emissions could be taking us down a similar path. This is the ultimate destination on a journey that begins with all those ‘Nice day, eh?’ winter salutations.

Bruce E. Johansen is Jacob J. Isaacson Professor at the UNO and author of The Encyclopedia of Global Warming Science and Technology (2009).

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by Loyal Park, Nebraska Peace Foundation President

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Speaking Our Peace

I write on Martin Luther King Day: a day we celebrate being nice to each other—no bad racist talk, no insults, diversity—and that's about it. Ronald Reagan, an affable old man who never said nasty things to black people's faces, declared the day. But Reagan's White House, according to Secretary of Education Terrell Bell, was full of talk about "Martin Luther Coon," and Reagan himself ran a racist campaign for president and destroyed the livelihoods of millions of members of our underclasses, both persons of color and white. In his Red-baiting days as the head of the movie actors' union, in his union-busting days as the governor of California, and throughout his presidency, he deliberately destroyed unions and Affirmative Action, and shifted money to the military to destroy the social safety net.

Reagan hated King's values. He destroyed unions for whose cause King died in Memphis. He multiplied military budgets, fostering spiritual death (see poster). And counter to Dr. King's dream, the "sons of former slaves" and "sons of former slave owners" never sat down on the red hills of Georgia "at the table of brotherhood" during Reagan's presidency. Nor, with catsup being declared a vegetable, did they get real food. (A lot of them don't now—in the nation and in Nebraska, 20-25 percent of our kids are hungry or nutritionally challenged.)

Reagan escalated the class war by using government to impoverish the laboring and middle classes. Every president since has followed him. Jacob S. Hacker and Paul Pierson, in their 2010 *Winner Take All Politics*, show that "while the share of America's income gains between 1979 and 2005 for the bottom middle- and lower-income 60 percent of the population was just 13.5 percent (and most of that gain came from working longer hours), the top 0.1 percent's share was over 20 percent. In other words, the top 300,000 Americans gained half again as large a slice of income as the bottom 180 million." Hacker and Pierson demonstrate that the lower and middle classes' impoverishment—and the ballooning of the robber barons—did not result from educational deficits in our workers. Government created it: bank deregulation, union-busting, and tax-cuts for the rich. The 1 percent used government to destroy the 99 percent.

Winner-take-all-politics now prepares us for more war, more domination of the world's resources by the 1 percent.

The other day Barack Obama gave a speech purportedly announcing cuts to the military budget. In my excitement, I immediately called the NFP State Office to say, "Barack is going to cut \$487 billion from the current budget, almost what NFP had been

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Martin Luther King & Barack Obama

by Paul Olson, NFP President Emeritus

