

BUSH BOMBS IRAN, STRATCOM PULLS THE TRIGGER

by Amanda E. Flott, Omaha Coordinator

Don't be fooled by the Bush Administration's strikingly familiar claims that they're pursuing a diplomatic resolution to the showdown with Iran. While they fooled us once in the run-up to the war on Iraq, we must refuse to let it happen again. If we've learned anything from the last four years, we should know that the overwhelming opposition of the international community and falling support by the troops and folks back home for a military response to Iran have not and will not halt the Bush-Cheney Doctrine of Preemption. The administration's publicly stated goal with Iran is halting the threat of WMD and "regime change" -- the very same lines they used with Iraq. As we all well know now, the real motivating factor though, just as it was with Iraq, is control over Middle Eastern oil fields. History is repeating itself. But the stakes are even more dangerous this time around.

Consensus among international intelligence and inspection agencies suggests that Iran is indeed intent on developing the capacity to build nuclear weapons. The agreement ends, however, on how many years it will take for Iran to develop that capability (and we are talking years here), and what the best means for preventing this development is: diplomacy, sanctions or military action. And as far as U.S. Senator Chuck Hagel is concerned, military force is not an option. "A military strike in Iran will make Iran's determination that much stronger. A military option would also inflame the Middle East and the global Muslim population, crippling U.S. security, economic and strategic interests."

Attacking Iran is clearly a bad idea. But as we know from what happened in Iraq, that doesn't mean Bush won't do it. He's already shown his willingness to turn a blind eye to the wishes of the international community, and even his own generals. And, saddled with the lowest presidential approval ratings in history, politically he's got nothing to lose. Unlike in Iraq, however, the White House is not just planning another illegal preemptive attack.

Anti-War

The White House is actually talking about **using nukes**.

Last January, as part of its new "global strike" mission to combat terrorism, StratCom was ordered to develop a war plan for bombing Iran that included the first offensive use of nuclear weapons since 1945. In order to destroy the hardened underground targets said to house Iran's nuclear program, the administration is considering a combination of conventional weapons and tactical "bunker-buster" nukes. And StratCom is masterminding the whole thing.

This is dangerous territory we are embarking on, and it could happen as soon as this summer. We in Nebraska not only need to stand up and take notice. We need to speak out against what's being planned and orchestrated in our own back yard. **Please join us for a rally to oppose this madness Wednesday, June 14, at 72nd & Dodge. Because...if Bush bombs Iran, StratCom will pull the trigger.**

ANTI-BULLYING ORGANIZING UNDERWAY

by Michael Gordon, Exec. Dir. CFEP
& NFP Omaha Board

Bloody but unbowed after a legislative loss, activists working on the anti-bullying campaign resumed work at a May 17 meeting at Augustana Lutheran Church. Although there were only four of us at this planning session we had a profitable discussion of the next steps in

Civil Rights

building support for passage of anti-bullying legislation in the 2007 Unicameral.

The first step (no pun) is to march together in the **PRIDE PARADE ON SATURDAY, JUNE 10**. All NFP members, with their commitment to justice and nonviolence, are urged to march behind the NFP banner in the parade, showing solidarity in the GLBT struggle to achieve respect and equal protection in this society. (If you have NFP T-shirts this would be a good time to wear them – or shirts with other good political slogans.) Assemble at 9:30 AM at 15th & Jackson, where the parade will form prior to an 11:00 am step-off. The parade will be less than a mile long, ending at 10th & Pacific.

That would be a good time for you to let me know if you would like to serve on a task

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ANTI-WAR TASK FORCE NEEDS YOU

by Virginia Walsh, Omaha Board

At our May 9th meeting we renewed our schedule of displaying anti-war banners ("US OUT / UN IN") and writing anti-war Public Pulse letters for the next month. April had been eventful, with a Tax Day banner ("Taxes for Peace Not War") at the main post office on April 17 and an Earth Day tabling with banner ("End War for Earth's Sake") on April 22. We also discussed our

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anti-war visits with Congressman Lee Terry (ten people) and challenger Jim Esch (two people) on April 24 and 26.

Then we discussed new projects. We will explore applying for a grant for Alternatives to the Military project in Omaha high schools, as Lincoln has done. We will hold a rally against bombing Iran on June 14 (see front-page article). We want a presence at the College World Series. Are bus bench backs a possible means of asking Omahans to say no to war? At our next meeting on **Tuesday, June 6, at 6:00** (yes, 6/6/06 at 6PM) at **Augustana** we will further these plans and do some general brainstorming. So come and storm your brain with us.

APRIL 30th DARFUR RALLY AND BEYOND

by Colleen O'Doherty, NFP Omaha Member

April 30 was a big day in the United States for those who wanted to end the genocide in Darfur. Omaha was in on the action: the rally, sponsored by NFP, was a big success. There were over a hundred people from co-sponsor Temple Israel, the Darfur community in Omaha and other groups and individuals. The speakers were articulate, and the

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performance from the local interactive Theater of the Oppressed group was fun and thought-provoking, making for a great gathering. With the subsequent signing of a peace treaty on May 5, there is hope that there can be progress.

But the rallies on April 30th cannot be the

last hurrah. If there is to be lasting peace, the international community must continue to work with Darfur to make sure the people there get the rescue they need and the peace they long for and deserve. We as American citizens must



continue to press our government to use all its diplomatic and humanitarian resources to help the people of Darfur.

We must also recognize a problem with



the Darfur movement here in the US: the demonization of Arabs and Muslims. I have heard too many people simplify this conflict into either Christian ("good/victims") vs Muslim ("bad/murderers") or African vs Arab. It is not that simple and to demonize one group of people in hopes of "saving" another will only get us into more trouble.

So let's look forward to more work on this important issue as we all -- white, black, Muslim, Arab, Christian, Jewish, etc. -- work together to reach out to our fellow human beings in need.

"We shall find peace." Anton Chekov

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force on anti-bullying, so we can send you notices of related activities.

CUBA CARAVAN TACO DINNER JUNE 25

by Anne Else, Omaha Board

Briana Harris, a native of Atlantic Iowa, who has been an organizer for Pastors for Peace for the last two years, will be the featured speaker when NFP hosts the Cuba Caravan on **Sunday, June 25, at 5:30 p.m. at North Side Christian Church, 5555 Larimore Street.** A free taco dinner will be served, but donations will be received to help provide aide for Cuban children with special needs. Material aide will also be collected at the event.

Briana Harris has organized and traveled on two caravans to Cuba and one to Chiapas, Mexico. Before moving to NYC, Briana lived in Honduras for 1 ½ years, working on sustainable community development and gender issues in rural areas. She worked extensively as both a translator and facilitator with groups from the US coming to Honduras to work on Hurricane Mitch reconstruction projects. Just prior to joining

Pastors for Peace, she worked for the Latino Workers Center in NY City on immigration and

labor policy. Briana recently returned to Atlantic, IA, to work on her mother's campaign for Secretary of Agriculture, and continues to organize caravans for Pastors for Peace. She graduated with a degree in international studies from Macalester College in St. Paul, MN.

This year there will be thirteen simultaneous Pastors for Peace Caravans to Cuba originating in different states and Canadian provinces, protesting the US embargo against Cuba. Join us June 25th to learn more.

REPORT ON RICE & BEANS DINNER

by Virginia Walsh, Omaha Board

A new place, a new keynote topic and a new record amount contributed. That was the story of the 2006 Rice and Beans Dinner, NFP's annual fundraiser.

The place was North Side Christian Church at 5555 Larimore, a new venue for us. It was smaller than our former site, but the welcome was warm for the 78 adults and 10 children who

attended. Three of our peace banners were taped to the walls, proclaiming our identity. Michael Murphy provided ambiance with his mellow music on flute, harmonica and guitar, and also loaned us his sound system for the rest of the evening.

The keynote speaker, Jeffrey Weiss, described the work done by the American Friends Service Committee in Des Moines, IA, in countering military recruitment in the high schools.

Community

The AFSC project involves providing youth with additional information about the life-changing impact of military service on a person. It also offers opt-out forms to parents of teenagers so they can prevent school systems from providing military recruiters with information about their youngsters.



Three Lincoln members of NFP described similar work they have been doing in the Lincoln schools in the Alternatives to the Military project and left resources for such use in Omaha.

Carole Jeanpierre, a vocalist, led a singalong that increased our togetherness, as we celebrated our collection of cash, checks and pledges totaling \$14,276, an all time high for this event. Thanks to one and all.

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Dear readers: What would you like to see in Peace Matters? Send ideas, letters or articles of 100-300 words (subject to editing) to Amanda Flott, NFP Omaha Office / PO Box 34823, Omaha NE 68134; 453-0776; e-mail nfpomaha@nebraskansforpeace.org. FAX 551-4011.

Answer: President Franklin D. Roosevelt, in a prayer before the United Nations on Flag Day, June 14, 1942.

Peace Matters Committee:
Editors: Amanda Flott, Virginia Walsh and Tim Rinne
Layout: Carol Windrum and Tim Fickenscher

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Calendar of Events

Thursday, June 1, 2006: Peace Seekers Discussion Group. 7:00 PM, Jo Peterson's house. Support group for peace activists. Contact Jo at 556-9057.

Tuesday, June 6: NFP Anti-War Taskforce Meeting. 6:00 PM, Augustana Lutheran Church, 38th & Lafayette. Contact: Cary, 981-1769.

Thursday, June 8: NFP Chapter Board Meeting. 6:00 PM, Augustana Lutheran Church, 38th & Lafayette. Contact: Amanda, 453-0776.

Saturday, June 10: Pride Parade. To walk behind the NFP banner in this parade in support of GLBT's be at 15th & Jackson at 9:30 AM. Contact: Michael Gordon, 714-3810.

Monday, June 12: Palestine Rights Taskforce Meeting. 7:00 PM, Hanscom Park United Methodist Church, 4444 Frances St. Contact: Musa Al-Hindi, 551-0674.

Wednesday, June 14: Demonstration to Protest U.S. Plan to Bomb Iran. 5:30 P.M., 72nd & Dodge. Bring signs. Contact: Amanda, 453-0776.

Saturday, June 17: World Refugee Day. 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM. UNO Milo Bail Student Center. Contact: Amanda, 453-0776

Saturday, June 17: Palestinian Folkloric Dance Troupe. Palestinian teenage dancers. 7:30 PM, Central High School, 22nd & Dodge St. Contacts: Musa Al-Hindi, 551-0674, or Anne Else, 556-5184. Omaha performance sponsored by NFP Palestine Rights Task Force.

Sunday, June 18: Eyes Wide-Open Exhibit. Exhibit of National Guard boots commemorating the lost veterans of World War II as well as newly dedicated to American soldiers and Iraqi citizens and soldiers killed in Iraq. Noon, Second Unitarian Church, 3012 So. 119 St. Contact: Amanda, 453-0776. Co-sponsored by NFP.

Sunday, June 25: Pastors for Peace Cuba Caravan. Free taco dinner and speaker. 5:30 PM, North Side Christian Church, 5555 Larimore. Contact: Anne Else, 556-5184.

Wednesday, June 28: Economic Justice Taskforce Meeting. This will be the first meeting of this taskforce. Come prepared with ideas for issues and activities. 6:30 PM, Augustana Lutheran Church, 38th & Lafayette. Contact: Amanda, 453-0776.

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Question:
Who said, "Of our earth we can make, if we choose, a planet unvexed by war?" (See inside.)

