



Nebraska Report

There is no Peace without Justice

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NFP Statement on the War in Israel and Gaza

Nebraskans for Peace calls for an immediate ceasefire and for a United Nations-negotiated resolution to stop the bloodshed and dehumanization of “The Other.” Violence by both Israel and Hamas will not solve, and only exacerbate, the underlying root cause of this conflict — the brutal and illegal occupation of Palestinian lands that has existed for the past 56 years.

Both the Israelis and Palestinians are Semitic people. The U.S. govern-

ment has supplied Israel with large amounts of military aid for decades for their survival. At the same time, Israel has used barbaric military force to evict

Palestinians, destroy their homes, and bulldoze their olive orchards to set up new Jewish settlements. The Palestinians in Gaza have endured a 16-year siege denying food, electricity, medical, and humanitarian aid. As Phyllis Bennis from The Hill writes, this siege has made Gaza into an open-air prison. Such collective punishment is a war crime.

Semitic teaching calls for welcoming and respecting sojourners in the land. Following that teaching, we urge

unfolding humanitarian catastrophe, an immediate cease-fire; a stopping of all transfers of arms and military support; and a working toward a lasting peace through diplomacy and negotiation. Each nation has the opportunity to be part of the problem or part of the solution. We implore our nation to be part of the solution.

*Ron Todd-Meyer, chair of NFP
Anti-War Committee*

...we urge the Biden Administration not to escalate this conflict by supplying more money, arms, and military support to Israel.

SOURCES:

1. ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS IN GAZA AND THE WEST BANK (INCLUDING JERUSALEM) Their Nature and Purpose, United Nations

<https://www.un.org/unispal/document/automatic-insert-205221/>

2. USA FACTS website, updated October 12, 2023

<https://usafacts.org/articles/how-much-military-aid-does-the-us-give-to-israel>

3. THE HILL website, As Israel and Gaza erupt, the US must commit to ending the violence — all the violence. by Phyllis Bennis, Opinion Contributor, October 8, 2023

<https://thehill.com/opinion/international/4243830-as-israel-and-gaza-erupt-the-us-must-commit-to-ending-the-violence-all-the-violence/>

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Nebraska Report

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

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2023 Scholarship Winners



Each year Nebraskans for Peace offers scholarships to graduating high school students. Three \$500 scholarships and six \$100 scholarships are awarded to seniors who wish to pursue a college education.

The awards, based upon written essays, are evenly divided among the three congressional districts. The recipients will be students who wish to further their education in an area consistent with the mission of Nebraskans for Peace: peace with justice through community building, education and political action. We are able to provide these scholarships because of generous donations from our membership.

If you would like to contribute to this program directly you can mail a check to: Nebraskans for Peace, P.O. Box 83466, Lincoln, NE 68501. Please put "Scholarship" in the memo line.

Braeden Michael Willnerd - \$500 - District 1

My essay will focus on the third-listed priority: Environment, Food Security & Conflict Prevention. This issue is one that is very important to me, as it is something I plan to dedicate my future and my life to. Next year I will attend Southern Illinois University and I will be majoring in Ecology/Environmental Science. This issue is also very important because it will affect every single person on Earth, regardless of class, location, religion, race, anything. It is a global issue. There is a need for a major mindset shift in the American people, government, and companies.

Environmental issues are very easy to blame on the American people. Drive less. Carpool. Turn off the lights. Don't let the water run too long. But how can we drive less when the government has set up a system that is entirely car-dependent with next-to-zero public transportation available? Why must we worry about how much electricity or water we use when there are massive clothing brands and automotive companies using thousands of gallons to produce their products? Why must the blame fall on the average citizen? Because we allow it to. Because for years people have ignored the corporate nightmare we are living in. Because we have not stopped to have the conversation about what these industries mean for our future

In law, restorative justice allows for a conversation to be had between the victim and offender of a crime. Quite frankly, the American people have fallen victim to the government and big businesses. Restorative justice typically allows for a monetary

sum to be paid to the victim to make reparations for the crime. What price will we put on the environment? How much money do they have to pay us to keep quiet again? I say none. There isn't a price. The only way the government and the corporations can start to do the right thing is by changing how they operate. By using their platforms and funds to truly invest in renewable clean sustainable energy. To invest in finding even better renewable energy than what is already available. To make a measurable impact on all of our futures.



Recently, a lot of emphasis has been put onto the purchasing power that we have. About how we should all get electric cars and buy these more expensive but “greener” products. The problem is, these aren't, yet, accessible. Not everyone can afford a Tesla or \$30 shampoo. However, if more companies switched to these sustainable products, prices would most definitely drop and suddenly the average consumer would have the ability to choose sustainable. Protesting is great and can do a lot, but more needs to be done. We need to have truthful, deep, and impactful conversations. Speaking with those who make these decisions is the only way things will get done.

We already see people all over following this approach. In the last few years, sustainability has taken off. However, it is being used as a selling point rather than a standard. There needs to

be an intense mindset shift inside the government and these large companies. To that point, when there is government investment, whether in public transportation or clean energy, we need to use them. To show the government that these resources are necessary and beneficial.

There are tons of behavior examples coming from these procedures. Slowly, sustainable products are popping up in American households. One major example is the reusable water bottle industry. Even five years ago there was an exponentially smaller market than there is now. Now, plastic water bottles are, slowly, going extinct. People are now, more than ever, being cautious of which products they use. Behaviors that are necessary, though, stem from independent upbringings. People need to know it's okay to accept help and use government or public resources. There is such a stigma about using government services, but that's what they're there for. Finally, people, corporations, and the government need to keep the Earth in mind. Whether it's for which product to buy, what material to make something out of, or which policy would help the country the most. The Earth is a priority.

There are a lot of obstacles. The unwillingness for change is the biggest one. The government is divided and compromise is out the window. No one will give and take. We need to change how we view each other. Listen more than we speak. Government funding is another major issue. We can talk about clean energy until we're out of breath, but without funding to make it available and accessible to the average person, it's irrelevant. Lobbying is a huge issue in congress. Corporations are running the country and that needs to change. This planet will not survive if we prioritize profits over people. Who will buy their products when half of the country is underwater? Right now we are unphased by what we see when in all reality, we should be horrified. Media in the United States has gotten so negative and harm-

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Scholarship Winners, continued

Dee-Dee Djon - \$500 - District 2

The changes in global and regional climate patterns, that are largely attributable to increased levels of gases like carbon dioxide and methane in our atmosphere, have been a large problem for many decades now. The effects of climate change and global warming have been and are felt all around the world in many different ways. Heavier rainfall, the melting of polar ice caps and sea glaciers, rising sea levels, more intense storms, and reduced crop yields being some of the major consequences. Even though here in Omaha we live in an area that is urbanized and not very directly agricultural, our state practices a lot of farming and meat production so how global warming and climate change affect things like weather

Humans and the production of greenhouse gases are directly responsible for this period we are now in. That is why people today need to prioritize these concerns and not turn a blind eye to these problems, especially us Midwesterners. Things are being affected in our own backyards. What happens in western Nebraskan farming lands is just as important as what happens here in the cities. That is why the impact that climate has on agriculture and the food supply should matter to us all. Crop cycles can be deeply upended. Crop yields and food supplies can decline. The profession and livelihood that is growing crops not just here in Nebraska and in the Midwest but nationwide could change in ways we are only starting to figure out. Whatever affects and challenges their plants affects and challenges them. The same thing goes for livestock.

Cattle production is essential to our economy, making billions of dollars each year, and affects everyone's life in our state one way or another. This can be said about many of the states around us and beyond. Farmers choose animals that are best suited for whatever location they are in and the fact that so many cows are raised here and have been raised here for so long means that this is a good environment for them. Over the coming years as conditions shift farmers will have to rethink and rework their choices and how they conduct the business of raising and developing livestock. This will not just be on the cattle



front with learning new practices. It will also be on the economic side with dealing with things like learning about evolving markets. This is just one way global warming and climate change can and have been affecting the economy.

Our communities should care the way climate change will impact productivity, human health, energy, and water. The importance of food and water go hand in hand, as does the importance of how global warming and climate change impact water as well as the food availability. Drinking water is affected by increasing temperatures that will start causing evaporation in larger quantities. This will lead to more water vapor in the atmosphere and a negatively impacted water cycle. Add to that the larger chances for floods and major runoff.

So many problems can also occur when you look at how climate change and global warming have and are going to continue to affect energy, more specifically energy needs and energy-generation potential. The water cycle drives hydropower

and hydroelectricity, and a change in it is a change in a major clean energy source. Things like warmer winters and cooler summers also mean more energy needs in living spaces and public buildings.

Accepting human involvement is what set these problems in motion and that certain societal practices would have to change to stop perpetuating this harmful cycle we are in is an inconvenient truth, but we may not need everyone to believe in global warming if they are still willing to do things to help the environment and the state of our planet.

There are a wide variety of things that everyone can do to help lessen climate change. Though more difficult, for those who can afford it powering their home with renewable energy like solar or wind power is an amazing choice. So is investing in energy-efficient appliances, purchasing and maintaining a fuel-efficient vehicle, and owning more eco friendly lightbulbs. For everyday, and more reasonable options, there is being more conscious of food waste, unplugging and turning off things in your home when you are not using them, and walking places when possible. Of course, also reducing water waste. The strides being made in Nebraska's use of windmills and solar panels, promotion of urban agriculture, and advocacy for local food sources should also continue to be strengthened. As should actions like recycling on a daily basis and the development of more recycling plants.

As long as people everywhere, even climate change skeptics, are willing to try to implement more environmentally conscience practices in their daily lives, improvements will happen and be seen in years to come. The bettering of our world is not just for us, but also for future generations who will be led by example and shown how to take care of the things that in the end matter the most. There is beauty in the fact that collective action will be what saves everything there is to come.

Lance David Jones - \$500 - District 3



I chose the priority of the Environment, Food Security and Conflict Prevention, specifically food security which I can deeply relate to. Food security is a crucial global concern that refers to the ability of individuals, households, and communities to have access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and preferences for an active and healthy life. While food security is a challenge for many

countries worldwide, the state of Nebraska has been particularly affected by the issue in recent years. This essay explores the food security situation in Nebraska and the world as a whole, examines the causes of the problem, and suggests potential solutions to prevent this catastrophe from happening.

Nebraska is a state that relies heavily on agriculture, and it is one of the largest producers of corn, soybeans, and beef in the United States. I happen to live on a ranch and I have a part in beef production. However, despite the state's vast agricultural resources, food insecurity remains a prevalent issue. According to a report by Feeding America, 1 in 8 Nebraskans, or roughly 13.2% of the state's population, struggles with hunger. Furthermore, approximately 36.6% of Nebraska's food-insecure population does not qualify for federal nutrition programs, indicating the need for additional support services.

Several factors contribute to food insecurity in Nebraska. Firstly, the state's agriculture industry, which is responsible for producing the majority of the state's food, is susceptible to climate change, extreme weather events, and natural disasters such as droughts, floods, and wildfires. These events can cause significant damage to crops and livestock, leading to lower yields, decreased income for farmers, and higher food prices for consumers. Secondly, the state's high poverty rate and low wages make it difficult for many residents to afford healthy and nutritious food. Finally, the lack of access to healthy food options in rural areas, as well as transportation barriers, prevent many Nebraskans from obtaining the food they need.

The problem of food insecurity is not limited to Nebraska, as it is a global issue that affects millions of people worldwide. According to the United Nations, approximately 811 million people suffered from hunger in 2020, up from 690 million in 2019, representing a significant setback in the fight against world hunger. The COVID-19 pandemic has

further exacerbated the problem, with disruptions to food supply chains, increased poverty rates, and reduced access to food contributing to a rise in hunger and malnutrition globally.

To prevent this catastrophe from happening, several steps can be taken at the local, national, and global levels. Firstly, investing in sustainable agriculture practices, such as regenerative farming techniques, can help reduce the impact of climate change on agriculture, increase yields, and improve food security. For example, precision agriculture which is the use of technology, such as sensors, drones, and GPS mapping, to improve agricultural efficiency and productivity. By using precision agriculture techniques, farmers can optimize water and fertilizer usage, reduce waste, and increase yields, ultimately producing more food. Or vertical farming which involves growing crops in vertically stacked layers, using artificial lighting and controlled environments. This method can produce large quantities of food in a small space, with less water and fewer pesticides than traditional farming methods.

Similarly, food waste reduction technologies can help reduce the amount of food that goes to waste. For example, food preservation technologies such as refrigeration and canning can help extend the shelf life of perishable foods, while food recovery technologies can help redistribute excess food to those in need. And finally genetic engineering which can be used to develop crops that are more resistant to pests, diseases, and environmental stresses such as drought and heat. This can help increase crop yields and improve food security in areas where climate change is affecting agricultural productivity. Secondly, implementing policies that support living wages, affordable housing, and access to healthcare can help alleviate poverty and make it easier for individuals and families to afford healthy food options. Thirdly, investing in food distribution networks, such as food banks and pantries, can provide crucial support to those who need it most.

At the national and global levels, policymakers can take additional steps to combat food insecurity. For example, governments can implement policies that support small-scale farmers, particularly in developing countries, by providing them with access to credit, training, and technology. Additionally, increasing investment in research and development can help improve crop yields, reduce food waste, and promote the development of more nutritious and sustainable food products. Finally, governments can work to reduce food waste, which contributes to food insecurity by diverting resources away from those who need it most. This can be achieved through measures such as incentivizing businesses to donate excess food, improving food labeling and packaging, and implementing composting and recycling programs.

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2023 Frank LaMere Peacemaker Awards

Every year Nebraskans for Peace holds our Annual Peace Conference. At this event we feature main speakers and workshops for attendees. The event also gives us the opportunity to recognize Nebraskans who work for Peace and Justice with Peacemaker of the Year Awards. This year we were honored to give out three Peacemaker of the Year Awards. The 2023 awardees were Jason Witmer and Mena & Dave Sprague.



Dave and Mena Sprague

The persistent work for peace and justice in our society can often be a lonely, seemingly endless and exhausting task. In more populated areas of our state there can be a closer physical connection to like minded people, but in rural areas of Nebraska those working for peace and justice can feel very isolated. Dave

and Mena Sprague have never let this stop them in their quest for expressing and fulfilling their desire for a healthy, peaceful planet.

Strong union supporters from their early years working in the airline industry, Dave and Mena Sprague have lived in rural Howard County for many years now and have been, are and will be a voice for peace and justice “come hell or highwater”. Dave and Mena were among the original organizers of the Central Nebraska Peaceworkers group after 9/11 in 2001. Since then the Spragues have continually found and invited new justice oriented people in central Nebraska to join them at the monthly CNPW meeting. Rarely have they missed any of these meetings or the monthly protests held

in Grand Island where each month, in all kinds of weather, they and others hold signs that inform those driving by of the issues people need to be aware of. Over the years, honks and thumbs up have begun to outnumber the negative responses to these monthly protests.

Dave and Mena also help organize and sponsor events elsewhere in central Nebraska that raise awareness and calls for justice when injustices are apparent. Immigrant exploitation, LGBTQ discrimination, threats to our land, water and environment and militarism are just a few of the issues that Dave and Mena along with other members of CNPW have brought to the attention of people in rural Nebraska communities.

Dave and Mena are definitely core members of CNPW and have worked diligently and tirelessly to inform greater Nebraska of peace and justice issues. They are well deserving recipients of the 2023 Nebraskans for Peace Frank LaMere Peacemaker Award.



Jason Witmer

He works tirelessly to try and make changes in the criminal justice system and in the prisons, but also works with incarcerated people to help them to change their lives for the better as well.

Currently, Jason sits on the board of the ACLU. He also works with the Reentry Alliance Nebraska (RAN) group which is a group that supports formerly incarcerated individuals to have successful reentry into society. Jason works on the with

I would like to nominate Jason Witmer for the 2023 Peace Maker of the Year award because of all of the work that Jason does in the community. Jason was incarcerated for 20 years and spent 8 of them in solitary confinement. After he was released, he dedicated his life to helping other impacted people.

Stand In For Nebraska (SIFN) on the Community Organizing Leadership Team. Through Jason’s work with Senators, his lobbying efforts and his testimony, he played a key role in the passing of the law called Unlock the Box, to end the use of solitary confinement in prisons.

He worked with the group People Not Prisons, he does public speaking on behalf of human rights for all people. He is a person that can work with people on both sides of the aisle, helping to educate people about the prison system, the needs of people reentering after incarceration and by sharing his story.

Jason works at MHA- NE, a nonprofit organization dedicated to serving and providing alternative programs to those that live with mental health issues and substance abuse. Jason does training to help officers and emergency responders to learn cultural sensitivity and to take a more mental health approach with people instead of a criminalization approach. He works with Bridges of Hope and is part of the Anastasis Theatre which puts on plays both in and out of prisons. He is an excellent photographer and has taken pictures at many events around Lincoln.

Scholarship Winners, continued

Mackenzie Kobza - \$100 - District 1

Social Justice is not an issue I saw as important until I took a mission trip to Mexico City serving the poor. In my small town private high school, I feel as though many students have not experienced that harsh reality of the evil in the world and many of us even kept in a safety bubble not hearing about these conditions.

Poverty, inequality, and inefficient economic sufficiency are issues that were not brought to my attention before seeing them in a real-life situation. The extreme poverty in the world causes an unforgettable void between the rich and the poor.

I went to Mexico City and saw people living homeless on the streets, in the city dumps, and in very poor orphanages just trying to survive, with little to no concern from the rich. I saw extreme loneliness, abuse, neglect, and addiction from people's mothers, sisters, brothers, and family. I knew many of these people did not imagine life this way and had kind hearts.

In my sorrowful consideration of how I could do my part to help these civilians, I was stumped on what my place was in aiding the poor of the world. I knew there were already multiple charities that work tirelessly to help people all around the world that are struggling to succeed.

The group I went with, called The Hope of the Poor, work very hard to support these people and get them off the streets. My idea stems from the ideas of some of these charities. I would like to start my own charity, but it would be run like a homeless shelter. People would come in or be brought in from the streets where they would be given food, clothes, and aid for whatever they needed. The workers would mostly be people who were homeless because I feel as though you do not truly know what another person is going through until you have

been in their shoes. The workers would be getting paid and helping others who have been in similar situations to them. I want to open these homes in many places around the world. The funds for this idea would be heavily based on donations.

The obstacles to this approach are that we would not be able to help as many people as there is need for and it is hard to ask for help. I would hope to have a team of psychologists to help with addictions and recoveries and many jobs that are linked with my charity that will take homeless civilians and give them a chance to start over and make

money. I feel as though my approach is realistic. The hardest part of this would be the beginning, things like getting the funds to start and reaching the people that need help.

I think another huge aspect of the poverty in America is the ignorance of the wealthy towards these people. Before I went to Mexico City, I did not people lived in such cruel conditions. If more people saw this firsthand and had a true understanding of what some humans go through an dhow poorly they are treated, I believe many people would reach out to help.

Comet Smith - \$100 - District 2

Social Justice in Omaha: How to Stand Up Against Injustice Anywhere

Social justice is a tricky issue. In these times, it can seem impossible to make a difference. It's very easy to simply say, "well, the government controls it all, my vote means nothing, so there's nothing I can do," but there is something you can do. Stand up. To simply stand up to injustice you see in your day-to-day life can mean everything.

It sounds simple, it sounds so simple that you probably think you are already doing it, but when it comes down to it, there are many small injustices that go unnoticed. That one co-worker that talks a little "differently" to female coworkers, or that one friend that makes a little too "edgy" jokes? These are all examples of social injustice that you might encounter day-to-day. Do you do anything about them? Or do you just let them slide?

Social justice does not just mean wide regulations and laws preventing discrimination or providing food for every person in the country. While social justice can include

these things, it can also mean sticking up for the people around you who are being pushed down by the status quo. The best thing you can do for social justice is not just to be righteous and kind, but to be an active, positive influence on the people around you. If you hear your friend tell an offensive joke, where the punchline is an atrocity, or a stereotype, don't just laugh it off. Ask them to explain where the humor is in that joke. Try to get them to think about what they said, and why they think it's okay.

This type of self-reflection is incredibly important for people to improve themselves, and to question their more hateful beliefs. This type of interaction is surprisingly important for communities to become less hateful, prejudiced, and more inclusive.

This all sounds easy, but in practice, it really isn't. It's hard to stop a conversation in its tracks. It's easy to feel like the bad guy when everyone is joking around, and you stop all the jokes to call someone out. It's much,

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What's HOT in Global Warming?

by Professor Bruce E. Johansen

THE BRUTAL TRUTH

by Bruce E. Johansen

Drafts in progress of a very important paper have been rattling around the Internet for the past few weeks. The lead author (with 18 co-authors) is James Hansen, whom a columnist for the *New York Times* recently called “The Godfather of Global Warming.” Many people in Eastern Nebraska and Western Iowa know him for his personal presence, both for the many times that he has shared his expertise with



James Hansen

us, but also as a friend and a neighbor: high school graduate in Dennison, nearby in Western Iowa, paperboy for the *World-Herald*, as well as long-time director of

the Goddard Institute for Space Sciences in New York City. He is now retired from his NASA job, but this has not stopped him from being the first to let those listening to the rough news to come.

The rough news is that we are finishing the hottest year in the history of human experience on our home planet. Aided by a strong El Niño, the last year has utterly demolished extreme heat records for at least 125,000 years. This is merely an estimate. No one was reading thermometers 125,000 years ago. Another estimate takes the figure back to the Pliocene, four to six million years ago, which produced conditions we will not see until thermal inertia (warming “in the pipeline”) produces them.

The paper circulating under the signature of Hansen et al. is titled: “**How We Know that Global Warming is Accelerating and that the Goal of the Paris Agreement is Dead.**”

Its abstract is:

The drive for global temperature change is Earth’s energy imbalance (EEI), the difference between the energy Earth receives from the Sun and the energy Earth reflects and radiates back to space. We have good measurements of EEI today based on precise satellite data for change of reflected and emitted radiation calibrated by decadal ocean heat content change measured by deep-diving Argo floats. Interpreting global

temperature change and predicting future temperature requires knowledge of the principal forcings that now affect EEI: human-made greenhouse gases (GHGs) and atmospheric aerosols (fine airborne particles). Aerosol climate forcing is not being measured, but information on aerosol forcing can be extracted from an ongoing “great inadvertent aerosol experiment” due to discrete changes in International Maritime Organization (IMO) regulations on the sulfur content of ship fuels. These limited assessment tools are threatened by the absence of firm plans to continue direct EEI observations. A shortcoming of our climate science is the failure to communicate well what is known from existing data. Global warming and emissions in the pipeline ensure that the goal of the Paris Agreement – to keep global warming well below 2°C – is already dead if policy is constrained only to emission reductions plus uncertain and unproven CO2 removal methods.

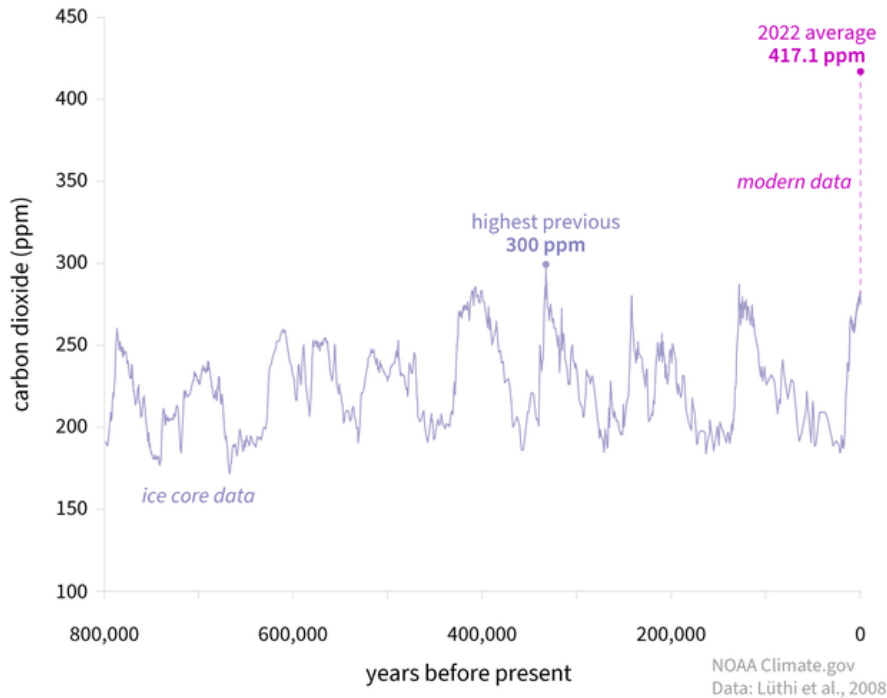
10 November 2023

James Hansen, Pushker Kharecha, Norman Loeb, Makiko Sato, Leon Simons, George Tselioudis, and Karina von Schuckmann, et al.

The battle over climate change is over, and the good guys lost? That this ship has sailed?

Some intelligent people have tried to haul humanity out of this swamp for decades. It’s tough to surrender to what

CARBON DIOXIDE OVER 800,000 YEARS



Global warming and emissions in the pipeline ensure that the goal of the Paris Agreement – to keep global warming well below 2°C – is already dead if policy is constrained only to emission reductions plus uncertain and unproven CO2 removal methods.

the science is telling us. The brutal truth hurts.

Face it: the proportion of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere has steadily risen since the first handful of coal was burned for human comfort, convenience, and profit about 200 years ago. The rise has accelerated since the first oil was put to work about 150 years ago. To reverse this trend, we need to bend that curve and keep it falling for centuries, something human beings have never done. Electric cars and wind turbines are not going to do it. Sorry. We will have to fundamentally change how we conduct our lives, and many of us will have to suffer inconvenience for the good of generations to come.

So here's the letter:

Warm & Warmer

Almost any time I have turned on the TV news or read a newspaper this summer, climate change has played a leading role -- more heat, with records set worldwide and observations that we are living through the hottest period since the beginning of humankind's tenancy on Earth; with heavier and more damaging rainfall, wind and hail, as well as temperatures.

These events are no accident. They are a result of how greenhouse gases operate.

The speed with which temperatures increase in both the oceans and atmosphere (along with the intensity of precipitation) is governed by thermal inertia, the delayed effect of greenhouse gas emissions, and their effects on the air and water. Temperatures' actual effects in the air are evident about 50 years after gases are emitted. In the oceans, inertia requires about 100 years.

When the fossil-fuel age began two hundred years ago, the proportion of CO2 varied from about 180 parts per million to about 280. Since then, it has increased to about 420 ppm. Until that curve begins to decline and fall, heat in the atmosphere and oceans will continue to rise.

Until we deal with humankind's inability to make peace between nations, and the same nations' unwillingness to peacefully set strict, enforceable limits on greenhouse gas emissions, the atmosphere's increasing gases will continue. If it continues, the lives of every living thing in our only home will be in increasing peril. Reducing that peril should be our number one priority. The other path will be increasingly dangerous and unpleasant. This is not a matter of political debate. It's how the world works.



Bruce E. Johansen has written and published several books on this climate change during the past 25 years, the most recent of which will be Nationalism and Nature: War and Warming, due out in October from Springer publishers in Frankfurt, Germany.

Scholarship Winners, continued

Willnerd, conclusion Smith, conclusion

ful that we are desensitized to the horror that we are facing. It's so easy to push our problems away, but we need to snap out of it.

I think this approach of government and corporate change is very possible. It takes good honest people and a value for human life. Our culture right now is so monetarily focused that it seems impossible. I agree it sounds like a stretch to believe that the government could unify for one issue to help out the American people. However, when you look at other nations of comparable wealth, it's absolutely achievable. The problem is in the government's hands, but we need to speak up for ourselves. We need to realize that money is just a system we made up. It isn't real. The environment. The species we have destroyed. The atmosphere we are ripping to shreds. The ocean that we use as our personal trash can. The statistically impossibly perfect balance. They are real. They are important. We must protect them.

Jones, conclusion

Food security is a pressing issue that affects millions of people in Nebraska and around the world. Addressing this challenge will require a multifaceted approach, with efforts needed at the local, national, and global levels. Implementing sustainable agriculture practices, supporting policy and much more. However at the same time this is a very realistic approach to the issue. There are many people who want change but do not act on it. If enough people band together and work toward a common goal it can be done. By working together and delving into sustainable practices, and working to improve technologically, we can put an end to food security in this rapidly growing world.

much easier to just go with the joke and laugh it off, but this is the behavior that teaches the person that these jokes are appropriate and funny. While it is incredibly awkward to stop the conversation in its tracks, if it is handled correctly, it can be an incredibly powerful moment for the person who said the joke. This awkward space will allow for retrospective thoughts. This is one of the first steps of saving people from the alt-right pipeline. It takes someone from the outside to get them to question themselves.

Sometimes people need to be told what they are saying is wrong, even if it is a joke. The person at fault needs to know that what they said was wrong, and why it was wrong. They need to be told directly by someone they respect; only then can they begin to grow from there.

Of course, this does not always work. Sometimes people just won't listen, especially if you are not close with them. Sometimes, if they continue their behavior, you might just have to leave. While it is incredibly valuable to "fix" someone, and to help them be less hateful, it's not always possible. It's also not

always worth the effort. There are times when these actions will cost friendships, opportunities, and social standing, but that does not mean it is not important.

Although it is hard, risky, and uncomfortable, it is everyone's duty to stand up for what they think is right. Even in social situations, it is up to the individual to stand up against injustice, and to advocate for the equal rights of the disenfranchised, disabled, and down-trodden people of our society. Conversations are just as important as voting stations. We don't only vote with our dollars, but with our voice. If we as individuals let discrimination and hatred go unchecked, then our bills and our laws will mean nothing.

This form of social justice is a guerilla tactic. If everyone starts calling out those who make "jokes" or "exaggerations" on stereotypes and discrimination, fewer people will be able to genuinely support discrimination. These "jokes" are how racism and bigotry thrive beneath the surface, cloaked in shadows of irony and exaggeration. If we call out these jokes, we can call out true bigotry and injustice. We can improve the social environment by changing what we call okay. Person by person, and joke by joke.

Dakota Stutzman - \$100 - District 3

Environmental Protection

Growing up, I have always heard about how bad fossil fuels were for our environment. The carbon emission that is released is a major factor in global warming. Over the past few years, it has seemed that global warming has been a hot topic. What can be done to prevent it? I have been fortunate enough to live in a town that has both wind and solar energy sources; this has allowed me to learn about how much better clean energy is for our environment. Piggy-backing off of Nebraskans for Peace's third priority—Environment, Food Security & Conflict Prevention—I have decided to

dig deep in finding ways to help improve overall life within these areas.

Many places throughout Nebraska heavily rely on fossil fuels to help keep their companies and businesses afloat. However, fossil fuels cause serious harm to the environment, especially the Ozone layer. In the case of profit versus restoration, many people choose wealth. Instead of using harmful and nonrenewable materials, companies should look towards cleaner and renewable energy. Companies try to combat this claim by saying that fossil fuels are cheaper than the expensive "new" sources. This just ties back to the choice of wealth over sustainability. In actuality, clean energy sources end up being the better price

option. Yes, at first they may seem more expensive; however, with time these sources become cheaper. The most expensive part is getting the equipment built. Wind turbines and solar panels are becoming increasingly more popular, and this is good for the environment and for Nebraska. By switching to renewable energy sources, Nebraska is taking steps to help make a cleaner world.

According to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, as of 2016 there were 14 wind farms and 473 wind turbines. These numbers are only going to grow, and as they grow, so will the accessibility of the energy. Along with this, the UNL also stated that as of 2017 there were only five solar farms in Nebraska. Again, these numbers are on the rise. A popular approach to increasing the amount of solar panels in Nebraska has been asking farmers to lease out their land. This is a great opportunity for farmers because it allows them a steady income in today's unstable economy. While not only helping the environment, renewable energy sources also help everyday people too.

In order to implement clean energy into powerful companies, steps need to be taken to ensure that companies stay clean. To begin with, companies need to be convinced that renewable energy will save them money in the long run. This can be done by presenting them with research as to how much money it could save them. They will also need to be shown research as to how their one, specific, business is harming the environment by what they're doing. By doing so, hopefully companies will realize that they could be a vital step in reinventing the way our society looks at renewable energy.

When companies choose to switch to renewable energy, they are choosing to put the environment back on the right path. Since power plants contribute to around 40% of carbon emission, reducing that number would be huge for the future of Earth. Along with this, people would feel much better about their actions and would be able to take pride in what they are doing for the environment.

Approaching companies to take a

cleaner approach of production might not always rub off the right way. Some owners will be stuck in their old ways or think that it would be a waste of money to switch. People are creators of habit and breaking that habit could potentially be difficult. Another obstacle that could be an issue would be space to build more farms. While some farmers are compliant and willing to get an extra check in their bank account, others won't be willing to give up their space. Along with this, another issue arises: workers. Workers would be needed to build more farms and in today's economy the price of workers has gone up. Finding a good, contractible business might be difficult.

I believe that my approach is pretty realistic. Clean energy has been growing in popularity, and I think that some companies will want to be the first to hop on the train. Switching would give their

business a good reputation to the public, and that could be enticing. Even with all the possible obstacles, implementing more natural resources and clean energy into large companies will help bring down carbon emission.

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Garrett Hansen - \$100 - District 3

Civil Rights & Economic Justice

Economic justice is the idea that the economy will be more successful if it is unbiased; therefore, creating opportunities for all to succeed regardless of sex, race, age, disability, color, creed, national origin, religion, or genetic information. I believe that the past few years have shown that our country has a lot of economic injustice which is leading to more civil rights wrongdoing. I am going to go against the 'norm' and discuss the economic injustice in the middle-class population.

Over the past several decades, the United States has undergone a noteworthy transformation, with income growth stalling for the middle class. The incomes of those at the top continued to rise, dramatically in some cases, compared to the rest of the working population. Families in the middle class have also pulled away from those at the bottom tier but achieved these modest income gains. How are they achieving this? Mainly by working longer hours, increasing their labor supply, chiefly among wives and mothers, and increasing family debts to maintain expenditures as wages failed to keep pace with

inflation. Since 1971, the middle class has shrunk from sixty one percent to fifty percent. Meanwhile, the upper-income group rose to twenty-one percent of the population, and the lower-income tier rose slightly to twenty nine percent.

While seeking social and systemic changes, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. understood America is a capitalism-based economy. From its inception, the American civil rights movement included a call for equal economic opportunity. Unfortunately, equality is not always equitable. A strong middle class incubates the next generation of entrepreneurs. It creates a stable source of demand for goods and services. While supporting an inclusive political and economic institution which reinforces economic growth. The dynamics of business creation and consolidation are interlinked with those of overall economic growth and the financial health of middle-class families.

According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, small firms, which are defined

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Scholarship Winners, conclusion

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as those with up to 500 employees, represent more than ninety nine percent of employer firms, generate half of non-farm private goods and services in the United States economy, employ about half of all private-sector workers, and have created around two-thirds of net new jobs in the past two decades. Middle class families can provide entrepreneurs with financial security, access to credit; therefore, they have the time to nurture their ideas and take the risk to start a new business. Regardless of how one delineates "middle class," the evidence indicates that as the United States has grown more unequal, the opportunity to become an entrepreneur has moved farther out of reach for many people.

The first start is by improving the education system. An individual in a middle-class

family is more likely than someone from a low-income background to have access to the kind of education that provides the training and skills necessary to start a business. Many policy interventions, including Pell grants and subsidized student loans, have sought to reduce socioeconomic gaps in college entrance. But these policies still fall short when it comes to aid for the middle-class students who don't qualify for grants or subsidized loans. Terms like "the skills gap" have become common in business and industry circles, showing us that we need students in the right schools, going to school for the degrees that can take on entrepreneurship. No longer can we assume prospective employees will have learned foundational skills from parents. We have to begin teaching and assessing them

before new employees can learn technical and higher-level skills.

I truly believe America's future economic success requires increasing opportunity for business creation and ownership. A positive result of that effort is more things will be made by workers in America. The natural effect strengthens our middle class, which necessarily produces the economic growth and political stability we've relied upon for almost 250 years and hope future generations enjoy. In contrast, countries with only "haves" and "have nots" experience political tumult or revolutions on a regular basis. We need to focus on policies that strengthen the financial health of the middle class, which will ultimately foster a bright and dynamic entrepreneurial economy in the United States. As America climbs out of its coronavirus recession, it must reinvest in its middle class, and in the people who will bring good, middle-class jobs forth in the economy.