



Nebraskans for Peace

# Nebraska Report

*There is no Peace without Justice*

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## THE PRICE OF PROCEDURE: Nebraska's Refusal to Free Earnest Jackson

*by Jason N. Witmer, Community Advocate*

In 1999, Earnest Jackson's life took a harrowing turn that would trap him in a system less interested in his innocence than its rigid rules. At just 17 years old, Earnest was charged with first-degree murder alongside Shalamar Cooperrider and another young man, Dante Chillous, in connection with the tragic death of Larry Perry. In what would turn out to be a callous twist of fate, Earnest was the first to stand trial, not because of evidence, but because of a procedural whim.

Alone in that courtroom, Earnest faced a jury who did not hear the testimony of his codefendants, who both invoked their Fifth Amendment rights. Earnest's only defense was that he was with his family the night of the death. It should have been enough—Earnest's family verified his alibi. It should have been

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enough. It was not. Earnest was convicted of first-degree murder but acquitted of the weapons charge. The verdict signaled that the jury did not believe Earnest was the shooter. But the jury's mere belief that Earnest might have been present or aware of this murder handcuffed him to a punishment as severe as if he had taken Larry Perry's life himself.



Shalamar's trial ended the same day that Earnest was set to be sentenced to a mandatory life sentence by the same judge. Shalamar took the stand and confessed to shooting Perry, stating he acted in self-defense and clarifying unequivocally that Earnest was not present during the altercation. The jury heard the full story: the tension, the split-second decisions, the absence of criminal intent. This revelation shifted the entire narrative from a murder to a tragic but justified act. They acquitted Shalamar.

Seeing this dramatic turn, Earnest's attorney petitioned the judge who presided over Earnest's condemning trial and now Shalamar's exonerating trial to reconsider the guilty verdict. A verdict based on that criminal act of murder had

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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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# Earnest Jackson, continued



*Today, Earnest Jackson remains imprisoned, shackled to a sentence for an act deemed justified by the courts.*

*Despite Earnest's innocence, state senators have rejected bills allowing exculpatory evidence—such as the confession of the person responsible for the act—to be considered by a judge.*

occurred now determined not to be a crime. But the judge did not budge, and Earnest was stripped of hope and freedom.

The Nebraska Court of Appeals coldly labeled Shalamar's confession "newly available" rather than "newly discovered" evidence, a procedural distinction that denied Earnest a new trial. Nowhere did the court consider that this testimony exonerated Earnest and confirmed his alibi. Nowhere did the court validate that this testimony led to the later acquittal of the third codefendant. Nowhere did the court weigh the fact that Shalamar's acquittal, based on the absence of criminal intent, nullified the very crime for which Earnest was being punished.

Today, Earnest Jackson remains imprisoned, shackled to a sentence for an act deemed justified by the courts. Despite Earnest's in-

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# Nebraskans for Palestine Organize Pre-Election “Plant the Seed Days” Event as Part of “Pal Dot Nebraska” Project

*Press Release, November 4, 2024*

This past weekend, Nebraskans demanding an end to Israel’s genocide in Gaza and Israel’s illegal occupation in Palestine demonstrated solidarity through a coordinated effort to place Pal Dot (short for Palestinian Dot) yard signs in and around residential yards, places of worship, and friendly local businesses across Nebraska’s Second Congressional District (CD-2).

Organizers called the event “Plant the Seed Days,” part of a larger campaign known as Pal Dot Nebraska, a nonpartisan project organized by the Nebraskans for Peace Palestinian Rights Task Force (also known as Nebraskans for Palestine) intended to focus attention on Palestine as Election Day approaches. Pal Dot yard signs were also staged in and around iconic Nebraska landmarks, including the University of Nebraska–Lincoln’s Memorial Stadium, home of the Nebraska Cornhusker college football team, as well as other high-traffic areas as far west as Grand Island, NE. Students for Justice in Palestine at the University of Nebraska–Omaha and Jewish Voice for Peace Eastern Nebraska supported the action, including a Friday night art build.

The Pal Dot is a quartered watermelon and the central image for Pal Dot Nebraska. Since 1967, when Israel criminalized public displays of the Palestinian flag, watermelon iconography has been a symbol of Palestinian pride, solidarity, and resistance, a way to display the colors (red, green, black, and white) without flying the flag, creatively subverting Israeli state suppression. The Pal Dot is, therefore, an expression of solidarity with Palestine, a declaration that Nebraskans will not look away from or be silent about



Israel’s genocide in Gaza—not during an election season, not until the genocide and occupation end. Pal Dot Nebraska demands an end to military and monetary support of Israel, as well as an end to Israeli genocide, occupation, and apartheid.

“The Pal Dot is both a prayer and a call to repentance,” said **Pastor Kathy Gerking of St. Timothy’s Lutheran Church in Omaha and a member of the Interfaith Committee of the Palestinians Rights Task Force**. “As Americans, we have long been complicit in building a war machine through our tax dollars.

The machine has abandoned any moral grounding and the rule of law. Now it is time for our political leaders to find a new way. With faith and in hope, God gives us the capacity to love our neighbors as we seek peaceful, authentic pathways to solutions.”

“Regardless of which candidate wins on Election Day, Palestinians in Gaza will continue to suffer under Israel’s genocidal siege,” said **Karima Al-Absy, a member of Nebraskans for Palestine**. “No matter who you vote for, the Pal Dot represents a reminder that the majority of Americans disapprove of Israel’s actions in Gaza. We will not stop holding our elected officials accountable until the genocide ends.”

“We are unifiers, not dividers. We, as students, as humans, want an end to genocide,” said representatives of **Students for Justice in Palestine at the University of Nebraska–Omaha**. “We want an end to occupation. We want an end to the ongoing apartheid and oppression of the Palestinian people. The Pal Dot is a demand for peace, a demand for ceasefire, and a demand for an arms embargo.”

“The Pal Dot allows us to reflect on a deeper issue than simply red versus blue. We want to urge those going to the polls to look deeper than the surface-level politics of our two-party system,” said **Daniel Soloveitchik, co-founder of Jewish Voice for Peace Eastern Nebraska**. “Anyone who has thought ‘never again’ in relation to the Nazi genocide against Jews must show that same conviction in combating the next president and party

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*Because the  
system isn't*

# BROKEN

by Schmeeka Simpson

The System is Working Exactly the  
Way It Was Originally Designed

I was surprised... **to see others surprised**, that a country that has never elected a Woman President of ANY Color...didn't elect a Woman President... **of Color**. Please let's be honest with ourselves and each other and acknowledge that this system is not designed for a Woman to lead it. They are absolutely right when they say a Woman would destroy this system. Simply because this system is designed purposefully and intentionally on the ideologies, predilections, desires, goals and whims of a Man. Women were never included in this system, in its conception, origin story, religious context, legalities, construction, or any of that... and were never meant to be.

This system is for Men, built by Men to be a Man's world. Particularly in the United States, meant to be a White Man's world but globally a Male system around the world of whatever color, race or ethnicity. The sooner we understand that the quicker we move on to the next step of evolution to a more evolved balanced system, built in the image of both Women and Men, Feminine and Masculine, diverse in color and function... like Mother Earth herself.

Once we stop trying to fix a system that isn't broken and understand that it is unable to evolve because this is how it is. A TV cannot be a lawnmower, without destroying the fundamental purpose and function of the Television or the lawn mower. Similarly, a slave system will never grant freedom because that is not what it is designed and created to do. An inherently slave-based system will produce the fruits of slavery, rather it be slavery based on sex, gender, race, class, status, wealth, wage, prison status, nationality etc.

**"You shall know a tree by the fruit that it bears."**

This is a system that has sown the seeds of hate, division, fear, racism, sexism, ableism, ageism, status quo's, and phobias of all kinds etc. A system that has watered these seeds from "Time to Time to with the Blood of Patriots and Traitors alike" and has called it the Tree of Liberty. This system is not acting in error, misjudgment, or ignorance. This system is the direct product of the original

ways instead of actually withdrawing, denouncing and look for ways to replace it. We affirm this system every day by participating in it. We egg on the system by validating it with energy, time and people power. How do we stop validating and participating in a system without losing the aspects of it we like? Losing our creature comforts, the superiority mentality, the "freedoms" of choosing Burger King from McDonalds?

My answer to that is, when do we

*Let's step out of the boxes and mindsets that we've been brainwashed in and be bold with leading the way to a new future. If we believe in each other and ourselves, we know that we are capable of surviving anything and creating something new in 2025 and beyond. So, let's be in community, let's be encouraged, be true to our values.*

intent of its manufacturers and doing what it was designed to do.

So, what's the next steps? If the system cannot be changed, what do you do? What do we do? Well we can start by understanding that WE THE PEOPLE today perpetuate this unjust system EVERY SINGLE DAY by pretending we can fix it, it's almost a matter of weaponized incompetence at this point. We pretend we can change it through a million different performative

examine our concepts of Freedom? When do we sit down and imagine what a Free system looks like? What does Freedom actually mean to you? We will go to war over G.oid O.il and D.rugs, but will we defend our neighbors if they come for them? Will we defend our daughters, sisters and wives from the ideologies of those that try to dictate their choices? Will we stand our ground to defend love and humanity? If the worst comes to worst in our minds and this system is destroyed

# On the Racism of Gross Domestic Product (and Why Degrowth Still Needs Black and Indigenous Ecology)

by Anthony T. Fiscella

**Economics. Ecology. Racism. Separate and unrelated phenomena? Or intimately interconnected?**

**As with many areas of life, we can see overlaps and interrelationships in various ways and degrees. For example, the U.S. housing and loan institution practice of “redlining” districts to segregate African Americans in neighborhoods that today can have higher temperatures and fewer trees testifies to one way that racial prejudice combined with economic institutions leads to a particular ecological impact.**

Nathan Hare formulated the concept of “black ecology” in 1970 to describe how “white ecologies” reflect certain wealthier, “whiter” living conditions and concerns in contrast to Black ghettos, which reflected pressing ecological concerns of overcrowding, dilapidated housing, industrial pollutants, lead poisoning, vermin, and traffic-related issues more urgent to people living there than saving the whales or redwoods—far from their daily experienced reality.

Seventeen years later, the 1987 study *Toxic Wastes in the United States* showed how industries tended to choose to dump chemicals and toxic waste in low-income regions where African Americans happened to live. This followed similar treatment of Native Americans: in 1985, the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals levied an influential ruling that stated: “Indian reservations may be considered as potential locations for hazardous waste disposal sites [...] because they are often remote from heavily populated areas.” Hardly restricted to the United States, countries and industries from Italy to Japan use Africa and South East Asia as global dumping grounds for electronic and hazardous waste.

For a somewhat more complex inter-relationship, picture the unequal arrest rates for African and European Americans in relation to addictive substances—despite comparable usage rates. Now, picture the ecological impact of underpriced disposable commodities subsidized by prison labor with wages less than 50 cents per hour. With a disproportionate amount of dark-skinned hands performing slave jobs in a country founded on enslavement, we see links between economics, racism, ecology,

addiction, and incarceration tracing back to the start of the United States.

Think for a moment about the economic forces behind the fact that people of color in the United States breathe in more than 50% more pollution than they produce (and suffer higher rates of heart and lung diseases) whereas European Americans breathe in 17% less air pollution than they produce. This type of disparity, labeled “apartheid ecology” or “colorblind environmental racism” by scholars, seems to matter more than class: “Black households with incomes between \$50,000 and \$60,000 live in neighborhoods that are more polluted than neighborhoods in which poor white households with incomes below \$10,000 live.”

Again, not just in the U.S., but globally.

Consider that 600 million people live off-grid in Africa. At the same time, consumers, mainly located outside of Africa, watched a single online video, “Despacito,” more than five billion times, releasing 250,000 tons of carbon emissions and consuming as much electricity as several African countries combined would use in an entire year (e.g., Central African Republic, Somalia, Chad, Guinea-Bissau, and Sierra Leone).

Digest that for a moment.

Think of everything one uses electricity for, from lights, sewing machines, and air conditioning to cell phone usage, skill saws, and refrigeration. Now imagine that you don’t get to use electricity for 90% of what you would want because many people

want to watch a music video many times. Somehow, that desire took priority over your basic needs to make it through each day, to build, to repair, to communicate, to keep food from rotting. Why, you might wonder then, should your life and needs have such little value in today’s world, and how anyone could justify such an unfair allocation of limited resources? And how you ended up with so much toxic waste at your doorstep (if you could even afford a door).

**How?**

**In one word: GDP.**

**(Or three: Gross Domestic Product.)**

Governments use GDP to measure prosperity, but how does it do that? Essentially by assessing the amount of money that changes hands electronically or otherwise. In the GDP framework, any exchange registers as positive/good, and zero exchange of money registers as negative/bad.

Because GDP only “sees” the exchange of money regardless of purpose or consequence, these built-in limitations prevent the metric from distinguishing between a “healthy” and necessary exchange of funds (such as a farmer selling organic produce locally) and “harmful” or superfluous use of money (such as a corporation building a factory that pollutes a local habitat to manufacture an addictive substance with plastic packaging that creates health problems and pollutes the environment even more). GDP does not register a local, organic urban garden where neighbors share the produce at no cost. Nor can it “see” the positive impact of neighbors performing childcare services for friends or family without pay. It doesn’t even know how much help insect-eating bats give to farmers (until the bats start to go extinct). But a train wreck that injures 100 people, pollutes a river, damages several houses, and requires the involvement of rescue

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# The Permanent Endowment Changes Course a Bit for Rainy Days

by Paul A. Olson

The Nebraska Peace Foundation now has about a million dollars in its permanent endowment. This money is a rainy day fund whose usefulness to NFP depends on its producing dividends or interest that can be spent as the main body of the fund cannot be spent out under law. All must be spent to educate people on the ways of peace. There is no doubt that sometimes NFP will take actions that will offend some of its supporters, and it will lose some of its current giving. It is then that the Nebraska Peace Foundation's resources will allow the organization to speak with courage and forthrightness. So, the amount the permanent fund throws off is important.

The Nebraska Peace Foundation's recent annual meeting saw the Board discuss a proposal from Morgan Stanley to place the stock section (\$600,000) of this permanent fund in a managed account that will invest in two funds managed by ClearBridge ESG that would produce more returns for rainy day needs. ClearBridge has a 37-year history of socially responsible investing. The net returns on the funds recently have been better than our historical portfolio returns. To

assist the transition, Morgan Stanley has discounted their standard management fee (1.5% of managed assets) to 1.36%. (For those unfamiliar with Clearbridge, it is a Franklin Templeton company that has a history of socially responsible investment since 1987. In 1990, it joined the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, and has since supported major environmental and UN initiatives on socially responsible investing.) We will continue to hold our Calvert fixed income positions (roughly \$400,000) as before, and we will continue to use the Morgan Stanley preferred savings account for unrestricted funds.

The Board voted in favor of making this change. The foundation board members who voted for the change include Paul Olson, Marilyn McNabb, Mark Vasina, Jim Johnson, Ron Todd-Meyer, and Marian Carling. In order to make a tax-deductible donation to this fund, please send a check to the Nebraska Peace Foundation with "Endowment" in the memo line. All donations made to this account will help grow the fund that supports the educational work of Nebraskans for Peace. Rainy days will come often in this heavily divided cul-

ture, and we wish to speak with a clear and courageous voice.

New contributions to the Foundation would immediately be split between the ESG funds (40%) and the preferred savings account (60%), in compliance with the Foundation Board guidelines. We would review the need to balance our equity/fixed income mix periodically to determine whether to put additional dollars into the Calvert funds.

The MS cash account has been used to collect the income (interest and dividends) from our portfolio. This cash is unrestricted and may be transferred to NFP when needed. Calvert funds will continue to throw off their income into the cash account. However, the ESG funds will reinvest their dividends. Quarterly reports from MS will include dividend amounts so that when NFP needs these funds we will instruct MS to sell ESG funds to satisfy NFP's need for the unrestricted portion of the ESG funds.

This strategy simplifies our investment decisions, provides easier tracking and reporting of restricted/unrestricted funds, and provides greater returns—all while satisfying our goal of responsible investing.

## COMPARISON OF PERFORMANCE

MS provided substantial information about their proposal and the performance of the ESG funds. All documents provided by MS are included in a zipped file. The comparison of performance (net of fees) is easily summarized below:

Asset	Last 12 Months	Last 3 Years	Last 5 Years
<b>NFP equities</b>	<b>4.14%</b>	<b>-3.04%</b>	<b>7.75%</b>
<b>CB All Value ESG</b>	<b>27.55%</b>	<b>8.40%</b>	<b>9.88%</b>
Russell 3000 (benchmark)	20.18%	7.73%	10.18%
<b>CB Large Growth ESG</b>	<b>39.21%</b>	<b>10.29%</b>	<b>15.21%</b>
Russell 1000 (benchmark)	39.00%	12.50%	18.52%

# THE DEATH MARCH

by Christy Hargesheimer  
Amnesty International State Death  
Penalty Abolition Coordinator  
(SDPAC) for Nebraska

Nebraska has a long and rather tortured history with the death penalty, but these days it is not a statewide priority. We hope to bring abolition back to the discussion in the Legislature in the near future, although the present political climate doesn't seem promising. Nonetheless, it is imperative that we educate ourselves on both state and federal issues regarding capital punishment, in preparation for future action. To that end, this will be the first of a series of articles in the Nebraska Report focusing on this important issue.

Each state determines the guidelines and methods of imposing the death penalty, or establishes either a moratorium or abolition. Nebraska is one of 27 states in which capital punishment is legal, but 19 of those states have moratoriums on executions. 23 states have abolished the death penalty. The federal government, the military, and American Samoa also have the death penalty.

In future articles, we will dive more in depth into the history and the workings of capital punishment, particularly as it is practiced in Nebraska, albeit rarely. But the first of this series of articles will focus on the **federal death penalty**, given the urgency for action following the recent presidential election.

The federal death penalty was reinstated in 1988 after being declared illegal by the Supreme Court in 1972. (States resumed the death penalty a decade earlier.) Until the final six months of Donald Trump's first presidency, federal executions were rare. Since 1988, 16 federal prisoners have been executed: two in 2001, one in 2003, and 13 from July 14, 2020 to January 16, 2021. These last 13 executions all occurred during Trump's final killing spree, in the short space of six months at the end of his

presidency. President Biden subsequently paused federal executions.

What can we anticipate in the coming administration? There are 40 people remaining on federal death row and 4 on military death row, and Trump

***We need to put pressure on President Biden to fulfill his campaign promise to shut down the federal and military death penalty, preventing Trump from carrying out a ruthless string of executions.***

has vowed to execute all of them. He has also said he would like to expand the crimes eligible for the death penalty to include many crimes that do not result in a death. Treason and espionage are currently the only two crimes leading to federal capital punishment that are not the result of causing a death.

It is extremely unlikely that the current U.S. Supreme Court will call for a moratorium on the death penalty. Instead, SCOTUS will do what they can to facilitate President-elect Trump's strongman machismo policies. Indeed, we are likely to buck the international trend toward abolition. Amnesty International's 2023 report on the death penalty worldwide (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/act50/7952/2024/en/>) shows that 144 countries are abolitionist in law or practice, and 55 are retentionist. We are among the top six countries in number of executions, joining ranks with China, Iran, Egypt, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia. Of the 35 nations in the Organization of American States, only one carried out executions in 2023. You guessed it... U.S.A.! (I guess that is what we can call American Exceptionalism!) In fact,

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# What's HOT in Global Warming?

by Professor Bruce E. Johansen

## A Fantasy World Where an Existential Threat is a "Hoax"

As with many of his cronies, Donald J. Trump has a very, very difficult time integrating his sense of fantasy with a reality that stares him in the face. He is blind to reality and soon to be the most powerful single human being on our planet; he seems intent on dragging the rest of the human race, and very likely every other living thing, down with him.

One would think that a person who can build a strategy to become the most powerful person on the planet (and do it twice) could broaden his vocabulary about our most threatening existential threat past one word (HOAX!). We should be so lucky.

Maybe we may need to get nasty. Teach DJT et al. some humility under the eyes of Nature. We are waiting for a Category 5 hurricane to move up the east coast of southeastern Florida, just far enough offshore to feed it from a record-warm ocean—88 F. would be nice. Bring the wind off the ocean at perhaps 130 miles an hour, erode the beach, and then swallow Mar a Lago. Do it on a king tide, please. Do it while DJT is having dinner with a bankroll of his cronies. Chain the entire dinner bankroll to the floor, please.

Before that, however, give DJT and his cronies an hour or so of real science. No good meal would be worth it without



appetizers.

*This lecture comes in five parts:*

1. A heat wave and drought are killing the Amazon basin.
2. A heat wave that is melting what remains of the Antarctic icecap.
3. A heat wave that is melting the Arctic icecap.
4. And, the heat wave that is melting what's left of mountain icecaps
5. Ice that is growing anywhere [zero]

<https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/images/153457/arctic-and-antarctic-sea-ice-approached-historic-lows>.

Arctic sea ice retreated to near-historic lows in the Northern Hemisphere

*A record-breaking drought that is well into its second year is punishing much of South America, including the Amazon rainforest. It is upending lives and local economies and providing an alarming glimpse into the future as the effects of climate change become more apparent.*

this summer, likely melting to its minimum extent for the year on September 11, 2024, according to researchers at NASA and the National Snow and Ice Data Center (NSIDC). The decline continues the decades-long trend of shrinking and thinning ice cover in the Arctic Ocean.

The amount of frozen seawater in the Arctic fluctuates during the year as the ice thaws and regrows between seasons.



Scientists chart these swings to construct a picture of how the Arctic responds to rising air and sea temperatures and longer melting seasons over time. Over the past 46 years, satellites have observed persistent trends of more melting in the summer and less ice formation in the winter.

Sea ice in the southern polar regions of the planet was also low in 2024. Around Antarctica, scientists tracked near-record-low sea ice when it should have been growing extensively during the Southern Hemisphere's darkest and coldest months.

The meager growth in 2024 prolongs a recent downward trend. Before 2014, sea ice in the Antarctic increased slightly by about 1 percent per decade. Following a spike in 2014, ice growth has fallen dramatically. Scientists are working to understand the cause of this reversal. The recurring loss hints at a long-term shift in conditions in the Southern Ocean, likely resulting from global climate change.

"While changes in sea ice have been dramatic in the Arctic over several decades, Antarctic sea ice was relatively stable. But that has changed," said Walt Meier, a sea ice scientist at NSIDC. "It appears that global warming has come to the Southern Ocean."

In both the Arctic and Antarctic, ice loss compounds ice loss. This loss occurs because while bright sea ice reflects most of the Sun's energy back to space, open ocean water absorbs 90 percent. With more of the ocean exposed to sunlight, water temperatures rise, further delaying sea ice growth. This cycle of reinforced warming is called ice-albedo feedback.

Overall, the loss of sea ice increases heat in the Arctic, where temperatures have risen about four times the global average, Kurtz said.

Record dry conditions in South America have led to wildfires, power cuts, and water rationing. The world's largest river system, the Amazon,

which sustains about 30 million people across eight countries, is drying up. Julie Turkewitz, Ana Ionova, and José María León Cabrera. *New York Times*, Oct. 19, 2024 <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/10/19/world/americas/south-america-drought-amazon-river.html>.

Electricity cuts across an entire nation. A capital rations water. A mayor encourages people to shower together to save precious drops. A record-breaking drought that is well into its second year is punishing much of South America, including the Amazon rainforest. It is upending lives and local economies and providing an alarming glimpse into the future as the effects of climate change become more apparent. Long sections of the Amazon River have turned into dry, brown beaches, and officials are dredging sections to make them deeper.

In Brazil, wildfires fueled by searing heat and prolonged dry conditions have consumed vast swaths of forest, wetlands and pastures, with smoke spreading to 80 percent of the country. It has led to canceled classes, hospitalizations, and black dust coating the inside of homes. To the south, in Paraguay, the Paraguay River has hit new lows. Ships are stranded, and fishermen say their most valuable

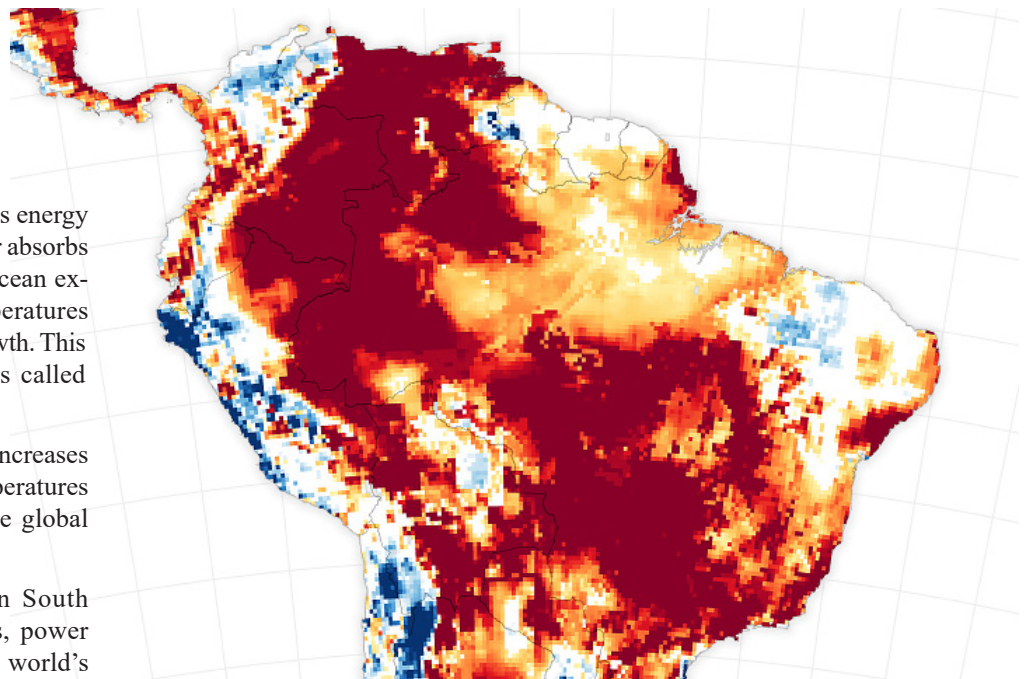
quarry—including the enormous surubi catfish—has all but disappeared, forcing many people to look for work elsewhere to feed their families.

With much of South America dependent on hydropower, electricity production has plunged. In Ecuador, people endure energy cuts of up to 14 hours per day, knocking out the internet and sapping the countries' economies.

In Colombia's capital, Bogotá, the government regularly cuts water to residential homes, and the mayor has suggested that people "bathe as a couple" to reduce water consumption.

In Mar a Lago, meanwhile, King Orangeate I still lives in a world in which deporting 10 million undocumented "aliens" will be good for the United States economy, when the effect will be the opposite, and where an existential threat is a HOAX! And where leadership has a fifth-grade reading level.

*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.*



# “Pal Dot Nebraska” Project, conclusion

who will continue the slaughter of innocents. Our fight for human dignity will stay the same, and we all must continue to meet it.”

**Nebraskans for Peace Palestinian Rights Task Force (Nebraskans for Palestine)** is a grassroots organization advocating for Palestinian liberation through education, activism, and community engagement.

**Students for Justice in Palestine—Omaha (SJP Omaha)** is committed to promoting justice, human rights, liberation, and self-determination for the Palestinian people. It aims to create a space that includes both Palestinian and non-Palestinian students, fostering self-determination and solidarity, with a focus on deferring to the leadership and vision of Palestinian students whenever possible.

**Jewish Voice for Peace Eastern Nebraska (JVPEN)** is a local formation of Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP), the largest progressive Jewish anti-Zionist organization in the world, organizing a grassroots, multiracial, cross-class, intergenerational movement of U.S. Jews into solidarity with the Palestinian freedom struggle, guided by a vision of justice, equality, and dignity for all people.



## Earnest Jackson, conclusion



nocence, state senators have rejected bills allowing exculpatory evidence—such as the confession of the person responsible for the act—to be considered by a judge. At the same time, the Nebraska Board of Pardons has denied Earnest’s appeals for justice. Each denial adds to the growing weight of Earnest’s unjust confinement,

leaving his family and the community wondering if the justice system is no more than a system...absent justice.

Earnest Jackson’s story is a haunting reminder of how unyielding procedure can overshadow the truth. It is a testament to a system more loyal to its rules than the people it is meant to protect.

What more resounding call can there be to those who claim to uphold the rule of law and order than to overturn a case where the crime was determined not to be a crime? Rectifying what is being done to Earnest Jackson each and every day will restore some of the public’s faith that our system values fairness, truth, and people over **procedures and politics**.



# THE DEATH MARCH conclusion

if we were located on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, we would not be allowed to join the European Union, which requires member nations to be abolitionist.

## So, what can we do?

We need to put pressure on President Biden to fulfill his campaign promise to shut down the federal and military death penalty, preventing Trump from carrying out a ruthless string of executions. Biden can't eliminate the federal death penalty by presidential decree, but he can issue commutations to those currently on federal death row in Terre Haute, Indiana.

So here's a call to action. Call or write to President Biden asking him to carry out his promise and commute all federal and military death row prisoners: **202-456-1111** or **202-456-1414**;

**President Joe Biden, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, DC 20500** (Incidentally, some of the federal death row inmates are from abolitionist states or territories, such as Puerto Rico.) You can write or call often!

Or you can sign your name on a petition, such as those sponsored by EJUSA or by Death Penalty Action. If you are a member of a faith group or other organization, have your leaders sign onto an organizational letter on the Death Penalty Action site. (At least two Nebraska organizations have already signed on.) Here are links to both groups. EJUSA: Tell President Biden: Commute The Row. Access Death Penalty Action's featured actions at <https://deathpenaltyaction.org>. (The latter begins with two federal death penalty actions. Scroll down to read Rev Sharon

Risher's moving NYT opinion article about the impact on victims' families.)

Amnesty International is focusing on the case of Billie Allen as an example of the egregious federal death penalty. Here's the information and action on his case: <https://www.amnestyusa.org/billie-allen/>. This link will also take you to other actions such as writing to President Biden.

Thank you for taking prompt action. In future articles, some key actors in Nebraska's abolition efforts will discuss our history and make suggestions for future actions. We will focus on issues such as innocence, racial disparities, exceptions for mental or cognitive disabilities, lack of deterrence, etc. **Remember, "Silence = Death." We're all in this together!**

# On the Racism of GDP, conclusion

crews, mechanics, police, lawyers, doctors, and insurance companies registers as tremendously positive because it involves the exchange of vast sums of money.

## How does GDP then translate into racism?

By implicitly equating prosperity with the exchange of money, GDP privileges the use of money by those who have it even when it causes ecological harm or upholds racial inequality (such as a toxic waste dumping ground), and it ignores the type of volunteer work done by activists and others to sustain and protect a community. Studies show that Native peoples protect forests twice as well as non-Natives, yet if their methods don't generate profits, then GDP doesn't value it. Subsequently, GDP functions as a colorblind racist tool that obscures the very structures of racism that organize it.

The rate of vegetarians in Africa and

the Middle East surpasses that of Europe and the United States by more than 250%. Dick Gregory advocated a vegan lifestyle back in the early 1970s and promoted the idea of cultivating kelp to help solve hunger issues. Predominantly Black groups like Rastas and the MOVE Organization both pioneered degrowth lifestyles that also challenged the meat and drug addictions industrial complexes. Blacks and Natives have worked side-by-side toward a society based on values other than money and profits in places such as the Umoja squatted "village" in Miami, Florida, in 2006 and the ongoing Defend the Atlanta Forest alliance working to protect the Weelaunee forest of the Indigenous Mvskoke/Muscogee Creek from city plans to build "Cop City" (a \$90 million new training center for police) in Georgia. But GDP neither registers nor values any of that.

We live in a series of global ecological train wrecks, and GDP helps provide the

ideological fuel for these ongoing disasters. Various critics in the field of ecological economics, ecofeminism, degrowth, and elsewhere have rightly pointed out GDP's destructiveness "precisely because growth does not differentiate between useful and destructive, essential and superfluous" (as Matthias Schmelzer and other degrowthers put it). Even the growth-fixated World Economic Forum has rightly called out GDP as sexist because it fails to measure women's unpaid domestic labor. Yet it seems that no one, not even degrowthers, has called out GDP as racist even though the "blind" metrics of growth obscure, and therefore sanctions using ignorance, the disproportionate harm to people of color due to the ecological consequences of overconsumption.

Like racism, we need to replace GDP with sane, justifiable, and sustainable values. And we need it yesterday.



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## *Because the system isn't broken, conclusion*

by any administration, have we put any thought into what a righteous replacement would be like? Do we have at least concepts of a plan of what a truly free United States would like if a Project 2025 does destroy this current system? What kind of system can we create where a Woman of Color could not only lead in but THRIVE IN and use her full gifts and talents to heal and bring a diverse country on a diverse planet together?

It seems that we have forgotten that any and every system created has been built off the backs of former systems and life on this planet has still continued. We Are the People, and the Power is in the People. The Change is in the People, The Future is in the People. It's time to make connections with those who embody the

change we went to see. Let's step out of the boxes and mindsets that we've been brainwashed in and be bold with leading the way to a new future. If we believe in each other and ourselves, we know that we are capable of surviving anything and creating something new in 2025 and beyond. So, let's be in community, let's be encouraged, be true to our values.

We are the love that a hateful system produced... so what kind of love would a loving system produce? What does a system sewed in seeds of love look like? What does it feel like? What does it sound like? What does the food taste like? What does its educational, medicinal, judicial, etc... systems look like? How do we replace a bad system with a good one if we can't even conceptualize what

a good system is? The reality of a new administration destroying this system is that we now have an opportunity forced upon us to create a new one. One that is originally designed to free and uplift THE PEOPLE. If you truly understand that an unjust system will be destroyed in its unjustness, we can actually see the end from the beginning. We can see a glimmer of hope in the darkness because it's always darkest before the dawn. We can be of good courage and look for ways to create a new system out of the lessons of the old, that works for us and not against us. Every obstacle is actually an opportunity, and we have nothing to lose but our chains.

See you all in 2025.