



Nebraska Report

There is no Peace without Justice

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2019 VOLUME 47, NO. 5

2019 Annual Peace Conference Pulling the Planet ‘Back from the Brink’

The 2019 Annual Peace Conference will spotlight the existential threat that has dogged Nebraskans for Peace throughout its half-century-long history. Dr. Ira Helfand, M.D., who is a near legendary figure in the international movement for nuclear disarmament, will deliver a keynote address entitled, “The Growing Danger of Nuclear War and How We Can Move Back from the Brink”.

This year’s conference, which is co-sponsored by the University of Nebraska at Omaha Grace Abbott School of Social Work, will be held Saturday, October 12 from 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. at Augustana Lutheran Church, 38th Street & Lafayette Avenue in Omaha. Registration information is available online at nebraskansforpeace.org.

Dr. Helfand is a member of the International Steering Group of the “International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons” (ICAN)—the recipient of the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize—and co-President of the “International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War” (IPPNW), the founding partner of ICAN and itself the recipient of the 1985 Nobel Peace Prize. He is also co-Founder and Past President of “Physicians for Social Responsibility”, IPPNW’s U.S. affiliate.

He represented ICAN at the Oslo and Nayarit Conferences on the “Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear War”, and in September of 2015 he addressed a Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly. In May of 2016, he led the session on the humanitarian



Dr. Ira Helfand, M.D.

consequences of nuclear war at the United Nations Open-ended Working Group meeting in Geneva that led to the successful negotiation of the “Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons”

in the summer of 2017, and on September 20 of 2017, he represented IPPNW at the signing ceremony for the Treaty.

He has published studies on the medical consequences of nuclear war in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, the *British Medical Journal*, *The Lancet* and the *World Medical Journal*, and has lectured widely in the United States and in India, China, Japan, Korea, Russia, South Africa, Israel, Pakistan, Mexico, Brazil, Columbia, and throughout Europe on the health effects of nuclear weapons. He represented PSR and IPPNW at the Nobel ceremonies in Oslo in December 2009 honoring President Obama, and presented the organizations’ new report, “Nuclear Famine: One Billion People at Risk”, at the Nobel Peace Laureates Summit in Chicago in April of 2012. A second edition was released in December of 2013.

Dr. Helfand was educated at Harvard
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Nebraskans for Peace’s state office in Lincoln is located on land that formerly belonged to the Otoe Tribe

Nebraska Report

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Nebraskans for Peace

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

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College and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. He is a former Chair of the Department of Emergency Medicine and President of the Medical Staff at Cooley Dickinson Hospital, and currently practices as an internist and urgent care physician at Family Care Medical Center in Springfield, Massachusetts.

It is an absolute honor to have Dr. Helfand as our guest in Nebraska. With the command center of the U.S.'s nuclear deterrent based in our state (and the StratCom leadership actively encouraging a trillion-dollar 'modernization' of the U.S.'s nuclear arsenal that is already sparking a revived nuclear arms race), Dr. Helfand's visit to rally support for the "Back from the Brink" campaign could not be more apt nor timely.

At this year's event, we are also featuring a second keynote presentation addressing a long-standing injustice that is consistently thwarting efforts to create world peace. Seventy years after the partition of Palestine, the wounds of expulsion and occupation continue to produce suffering and anger. Until a just solution is found, Palestine-Israel will continue to be a hotbed of violence and terror endangering the entire planet—as witnessed by not only the ongoing military clashes in the region, but by Iran's and Saudi Arabia's pursuit of nuclear capability able to match that of Israel's.



Robert Massoud

In a speech entitled, "How a Just Peace in Palestine-Israel Can Save Our Planet," Palestinian-Canadian Robert Massoud will argue that the survival of our civilization depends on strong and determined global action by governments across the world—with states acting according to international law and working within world governing structures. Decades of Israeli intransigence and impunity towards Palestinians and the illegal occupation of their land, however, has rendered international law and global governance irrelevant in this part of the Mideast.

Justice in Palestine-Israel is the 'red line' which will help determine if we are to progress as humanity on this planet or decline into planetary chaos. Unless the world community reasserts moral authority and leadership in justly and equitably resolving the crisis in Palestine-Israel, any hope for a peaceful resolution of the conflict there, Massoud says, is illusory.

Ensuring justice for the Palestinians is an enormous project that will require global action by the nations of the earth. But just as the Israel-Palestine situation is of direct interest to all humanity, there is a role, albeit small, that each of us can individually perform. It was this individual, personal dynamic that in 2004 inspired Massoud to found "Zatoun"—a nonprofit, grassroots and volunteer-run organization to build bridges between Palestine and North America through the sale of Palestinian-made cultural and symbolic products. The main offering is fair trade extra virgin olive oil to serve as a symbol of light, hope and peace—and also as a life-giving substance which binds us together in the human experience of eating and sharing. By purchasing Zatoun olive oil, North Americans can be in solidarity with Palestinians' nonviolent struggle for justice while practically providing Palestinian farmers with a means of livelihood.

Plan now to attend the Annual Peace Conference October 12 to hear both Robert Massoud's and Dr. Ira Helfand's inspirational talks, as well as partake of the array of afternoon workshops on a host of Peace & Justice topics. There is no Peace without Justice.

Ban the Bomb – Before Our Luck Runs Out

We are closer to a nuclear war than we have ever been

The following article by Dr. Ira Helfand, M. D., appeared in the July 1, 2019 edition of The Progressive magazine and is reprinted with permission.

We are closer to a nuclear war than we have ever been.

That is the assessment of William Perry, who served as Secretary of Defense under President Bill Clinton.

“The likelihood today of a nuclear catastrophe is greater than during the Cold War,” Perry told an audience in Washington, D.C., early in the Trump Administration. “Today, inexplicably to me, we are recreating the geopolitical hostility of the Cold War and we are rebuilding the nuclear dangers of the Cold War. We are doing this without any serious public discussion, or any real understanding of the consequences of these actions: We are sleepwalking into a new Cold War, and there is a very real danger we will blunder into a nuclear war.”

Perry expounded on this theme recently in a *Wall Street Journal* op-ed co-written with former U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz and former U.S. Senator Sam Nunn, who chaired the Armed Services Committee. The trio warned that the world “may soon be entrenched in a nuclear standoff more precarious, disorienting, and economically costly than the Cold War.” They called for de-escalating tensions caused by Trump’s “dysfunctional Russia policy” by building a framework for strategic stability and announcing a joint declaration affirming the senselessness of nuclear war.

This sense of heightened danger is shared by the experts who set the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists’ Doomsday Clock at two minutes to midnight in January 2018 and reaffirmed that decision in January of this year.

“Humanity now faces two simultaneous existential threats, either of which would be cause for extreme concern and immediate attention,” the group said.

“These major threats—nuclear weapons and climate change—were exacerbated this past year by the increased use of information warfare to undermine democracy around the world, amplifying risk from these and other threats and putting the future of civilization in extraordinary danger.”

Among the factors driving concern upward were President Trump’s decision to unilaterally abandon the Iran nuclear deal and withdraw from the “Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty” while joining other nuclear-armed countries in sweeping programs of “nuclear modernization.”

Hoping for good luck is not an acceptable security policy and, sooner or later, our luck will run out.

Yet despite these alarming developments, the imminent threat of nuclear war barely registers on most people’s radar. In the early 1980s, the danger of nuclear war emerged as a matter of widespread public concern, with one survey finding that 76 percent of Americans believed nuclear war was “likely” within a few years. Millions of people took political action to stop the Cold War arms race, including a rally in New York City on June 12, 1982, that drew one million people, then the largest political demonstration in U.S. history.

But with the end of the Cold War, people began to think and act as though the danger posed by nuclear weapons had passed.

Of course, the danger never went away. Thousands of nuclear warheads remained, along with the possibility that they would be used, perhaps even by

accident. In January 1995, the United States launched a weather rocket from Norway that caused a false alarm in Moscow. We came within minutes of a full scale nuclear war—four years after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War.

Today, at latest count, the nine nuclear nations maintain an arsenal of 14,500 nuclear weapons. The danger of them being used has increased dramatically in recent years (see sidebar). There is an urgent need to rebuild the broad public understanding of this danger to bring about fundamental change in nuclear policy and end that danger once and for all.

We have been incredibly fortunate throughout the nuclear weapons era. As Robert McNamara famously declared after the Cuban Missile Crisis, “We lucked out. It was luck that prevented nuclear war.” The policies of the nuclear weapons states are essentially a hope that this luck will continue. But hoping for good luck is not an acceptable security policy and, sooner or later, our luck will run out.

To erase the threat of unparalleled catastrophe that has existed since the dawn of the nuclear age, we must articulate a clear strategy to eliminate these weapons before they eliminate us.

Internationally, 122 nations voted in July 2017 to adopt the “Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons”, which bans the use and possession of nuclear weapons as well as activities that make it possible to build and maintain them. The ratification process is moving forward; when 50 nations formally ratify the treaty it will enter into force, creating a powerful new standard where it is the countries with nuclear weapons who are the ultimate “rogue states.”

Here in the United States, a grassroots campaign called “Back from the

continued on page 4

Ban the Bomb, continued

Brink” seeks to embrace the goals of the treaty with a “Green New Deal” for the nuclear threat, a comprehensive prescription for how to avoid nuclear war. It calls on the United States to recognize that nuclear weapons, far from being agents of our security, are in fact the greatest threat to our safety and must be eliminated as the only way to assure that they will not be used.

Representatives Jim McGovern, Democrat of Massachusetts, and Earl Blumenauer, Democrat of Oregon, have drafted a resolution, H.R. 302, to adopt this new policy prescription.

The core of the campaign is a five-point platform of policies that the United States should pursue. The central plank is to commence negotiations with the other eight nuclear weapons states for an enforceable, verifiable, timebound agreement to dismantle nuclear arsenals. There is no guarantee such an initiative will be successful, but there is no reason to assume that it will not be: It has never been tried.

While various U.S. Presidents, including Ronald Reagan, Jimmy Carter, and Barack Obama, have given lip service to the idea that the United States will seek the security of a world free of nuclear weapons, none has actively pursued this goal. That is the fundamental change that must take place and to which we must commit.

The other four planks in the Back from the Brink platform are common-sense steps that can be taken to lessen the danger of nuclear war as these negotiations proceed and the weapons are being dismantled. They are:

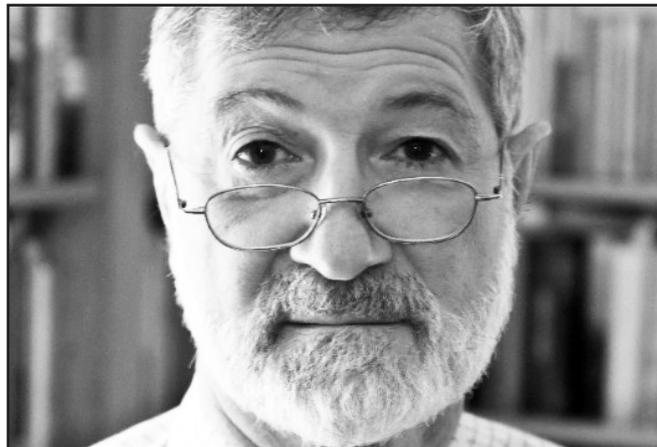
1) The United States should adopt a ‘No First Use’ policy, making it clear that it will not initiate nuclear war. This will reduce tensions during future crises, decrease the possibility of miscalculation by future adversaries, and signal the United States’ disinclination to destroy the world.

Legislation to implement this policy has been introduced in both houses of Congress, the House bill (H.R. 921) by Representative Adam Smith, Democrat of Washington, and the Senate bill (S.272) by Senator Elizabeth Warren, Democrat of Massachusetts.

2) We should end the sole unchecked authority of any President to launch a nuclear attack. The Constitution provides unequivocally that only Congress can declare war, but current practice allows the President to initiate a nuclear attack—surely an act of war—without Congressional authorization and without the approval of the Cabinet, the Vice President, or anyone else.

This policy evolved during the Cold War, when it was felt the President needed to be able to respond quickly to an attack from the Soviet Union that might destroy America’s land-based nuclear missiles. The current sea-based Trident missiles are not vulnerable in this way and there is no need to delegate this terrible power to any one individual. Legislation to limit presidential authority has been introduced in the House (H.R. 669) by Representative Ted Lieu, Democrat of California, and in the Senate (S. 200) by Senator Edward Markey, Democrat of Massachusetts.

3) The U.S. nuclear arsenal should be taken off hair-trigger alert. Hundreds of warheads in both the United States and Russia are mounted on missiles that can be launched in 15 minutes. This makes them vulnerable to cyber



attack, accidents, and impulsive or unauthorized decisions. The policy of maintaining weapons in this high-alert state is a vestige of the Cold War and should be abandoned. If the United States decides at some point that it needs to destroy the world, it can wait 24 hours to do it.

4) The United States should cancel the plan to replace its entire nuclear arsenal with enhanced weapons. The current plan calls for spending some \$1.7 trillion, after inflation, over the next 30 years replacing and enhancing every component of its nuclear arsenal in a program that will assure the existence of nuclear weapons for decades to come (or until they are used). This plan, mirrored by similar efforts in the other nuclear-armed states, will fuel a new and destabilizing arms race. Several bills in Congress seek to curtail this dangerous and unnecessary spending spree including H.R. 1086, S. 401, H.R. 1231, S. 312, H.R. 1249.

The Back from the Brink campaign has been joined by many civic organizations, faith communities, and professional associations and has won the support of a rapidly growing list of cities, towns, and states. It was endorsed by unanimous votes of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, and the Baltimore, Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C., city councils and by an overwhelming vote of the California state legislature. It is currently before the state legislatures in Maine, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Oregon, Washington, and Vermont as well as many town and city councils.

Yet, obviously, despite this broad grassroots support, negotiations for the elimination of nuclear weapons will require a paradigm shift in the thinking of the leaders of nuclear-armed states, and aggressive leadership by at least one of the nuclear powers. They must be persuaded by the force of world opinion that nuclear weapons are not necessary for their safety.

In the early 1980s, few expected that the United States and the Soviet Union could overcome their enormous mutual distrust and end the arms race. When Mikhail Gorbachev proposed a halt to all nuclear weapons tests in 1986, the United States initially rebuffed the overture. But he persisted, and over time both he and Ronald Reagan were able to understand that nuclear weapons posed a greater threat to both of their countries than either did to each other.

There is not an obvious successor to Gorbachev among today's world leaders. But a large group of U.S. politicians are vying for the presidency in 2020 and perhaps one of them will have the wisdom and courage to follow in his footsteps. The United States cannot afford to elect a good President in 2020; it must elect a great President. And the definition of greatness at this time includes the ability to successfully address the threats we face, from nuclear weapons and climate change. The next President must make these top priorities.

Back from the Brink seeks to enlist ordinary citizens in a national campaign that will create the political space and political pressure that will allow the next President to be successful. Like the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign of the 1980s, it seeks to create a national consensus of what nuclear policy ought to be in the hope and belief that such a consensus will lead to fundamental policy change.

It is not enough to work on incremental changes to our nuclear policy. Such changes are valuable, but will not do what must be done. They must be part of an explicit and clearly articulated plan to actually achieve the security of a world free of nuclear weapons, and we must pursue that overall plan now. Time is not on our side.

Seven Possible Pathways to Nuclear War

1. United States and Russia: These two countries together possess more than 90 percent of the world's nuclear weapons and, despite President Trump's fondness for Vladimir Putin, relations between them are at the lowest point in 30 years, since the end of the Cold War. Events in Syria and Ukraine and tensions in the Baltics make clear the possibility of conflict. Trump's recent decision to withdraw from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty underlines the potentially nuclear nature of a future war.

2. United States and China: The economic rivalry between the world's two largest economic powers has become increasingly hostile and there is now an active military dimension to that rivalry. Chinese and U.S. naval forces routinely play chicken in the South China Sea, a disastrous incident waiting to happen.

3. United States and North Korea: In early 2018, the United States and North Korea appeared to be headed toward a nuclear confrontation. The "on again, off again" bromance between Donald Trump and Kim Jong-un brought a temporary reprieve, but the collapse of the Hanoi Summit revealed how dangerous the situation remains.

4. South Asia: Perhaps the most dangerous potential conflict is one that receives scarce attention in the West. India and Pakistan have fought four wars; there is almost daily low-level fighting on their disputed border in Kashmir; and the military doctrines of both countries create a high level of concern that a future war between them will go nuclear. Use of less than half of the 290 weapons in their combined nuclear arsenal would cause worldwide climate disruption and a global famine putting two billion people at risk.

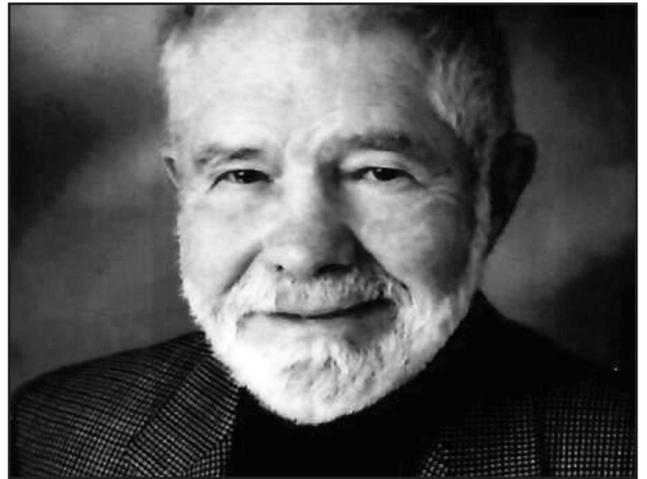
5. Climate Change: The nuclear powers periodically claim they are willing to get rid of their nuclear weapons—just not yet. They say conditions are not ripe today but, in the future, when the world is safer, they will seek to disarm. Unfortunately, the world is not getting safer. Climate change is placing increasing stress on societies around the world and, as it progresses, there will be increased conflict and mass migration on a scale unprecedented in history. If nuclear weapons remain on the table, the danger that they will be used will also increase.

6. Cyber Terrorism: We used to worry that terrorists might build or steal a nuclear weapon and blow up a city like New York or Moscow, and that is still a danger. But the greater danger is that terrorists will carry out a cyber attack that induces one of the nuclear-armed states to launch its nuclear weapons in the mistaken belief that it is under attack.

7. The Trump Factor: Apart from his many wrongheaded policies, Donald Trump's personal instability increases the danger of nuclear war. This is not a partisan comment; concern about his control over a nuclear arsenal is shared by members of his own party. During the 2016 campaign, 50 prominent Republican security experts warned that Trump "lacks the character, values, and experience" to command a nuclear arsenal. For years, the United States has maintained that it would be intolerable for even a single nuclear weapon to fall into the wrong hands, including a rogue state or a terrorist group. In January 2017, we turned 6,800 nuclear weapons over to Donald Trump.

Remembering Bob Epp

*Former Nebraskans for Peace
President and State Board Member
Bob Epp died this past August at age
96. The tribute below was delivered
by NFP State Coordinator Tim
Rinne at the memorial service held
at Bethesda Mennonite Church in
Henderson, Nebraska August 31.
Our condolences to his family.*



Bob wouldn't have been comfortable having me up here... in the sanctuary of Bethesda... delivering a public tribute to him.

Mennonites, he repeatedly told me over the 26 years we knew each other, put a lot of store in being 'humble.'

In fact, he'd always add with a grin, "our 'humility' is the ONE thing we Mennonites take a lot of PRIDE in."

So Bob would've been uncomfortable about being singled out and made the center of attention this morning—particularly in church. It just wouldn't have seemed right.

But this won't be the first time I ignored Bob's wishes to respect his modesty. This is the best chance I'll ever have to express my appreciation in public.

Despite his slight build... Bob was a GIANT.

He was principled, generous, always gracious and brave about the things that truly mattered.

He was the President of Nebraskans for Peace when I was hired in 1993. He'd just turned 70 and I was two weeks away from my 38th birthday.

And despite the 32-year difference in ages... from the first time we met, it was like we'd been chums in high school and fast friends ever since.

Over the next 20 years, we did everything together.

We conducted the day-to-day business necessary to keep Nebraskans for Peace running. But we also protested on the street together,

- testified at legislative hearings,
- staged political stunts at the State Capitol
- slept under the stars on the Pine Ridge Reservation
- traveled to Germany for nuclear disarmament gatherings... and
- committed civil disobedience together TO TRY to stop the alcohol sales at Whiteclay.

And on his own, as a committed pacifist, Bob repeatedly—almost annually—traveled into war zones throughout Latin America to witness for peace.

Never once in the 20 years we worked side by side (till he was over 90 and finding it harder to get around) did I see him flinch from taking a stand for the misfortunate and the oppressed.

And though he constantly assured me that Mennonites were renowned for being 'tight with their money'... never once did I see him—who'd had the economic good fortune to be born white

and male and American—turn down an opportunity to financially help someone less fortunate than himself.

Slight of build, soft-spoken in manner, Bob was a GIANT.

But here's what made him GREAT. Bob was COMMON. He was a 'Common Man'.

Smart as a whip, a voracious intellect, and a Citizen of the World, he loved

- living in his hometown of Henderson
- farming his family land
- being married to his beloved wife Amelia
- raising their precious sons Chuck and Tim
- attending Bethesda... and
- serving his community.

He was a true "Local Hero"—showing how each of us... as neighbors and peacemakers... can lead heroic lives right in our own communities.

Bob was one of the most remarkable people I've ever met in my entire life, and I was blessed to be able to have this great man as my friend.

He's reunited with Amelia now.

But for the rest of us still living, his departure leaves this Earth a darker, lonelier place.

Bipartisan Carbon Pricing Bill Finds Broad Support In and Out Of Congress

The bipartisan Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act (H.R. 763) is co-sponsored by more than 67 members of Congress across the political spectrum. It has garnered support from businesses, faith groups, NGOs and editorial boards across the country. This landmark bill will put a price on carbon pollution and return the revenue equally to the public, while creating American jobs, driving innovation and improving public health.

It is easily the most robust climate legislation on the table in Congress, and the only bipartisan climate bill with significant support. The Carbon Dividend Act will drive down America's carbon pollution at least 40 percent in the first 12 years, and 90 percent by 2050. As it does so, it will also improve health and save lives by reducing the pollution that Americans breathe, boost the economy with millions of jobs, and stay revenue neutral to the national budget.

The high-level support for this bill is being driven by concerned Americans building grassroots support in their communities—including in Nebraska. Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, grassroots advocacy group with 430+ chapters across the country. CCL volunteers from every state in the nation flocked to the Capitol in June and held 529 meetings in one day—with nearly every House and Senate office. With this level of constituent pressure for action, more members are stepping up each month to cosponsor the Carbon Dividend Act.

The Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act's price on carbon would shift the runaway costs of damage caused by climate change onto the fossil fuel companies. Those companies, as well as our power and transportation sectors, will be motivated to find cleaner, cheaper ways to power our country, reducing emissions and

stabilizing our climate. By returning the revenue to Americans in the form of a monthly dividend, our economy will benefit, too.

Polling shows majority support for revenue-neutral carbon pricing

In August 2018, the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication updated its Climate Opinion Maps with data that included responses to 14 new questions. One of those questions asked respondents if they "support taxing fossil fuel companies while equally reducing other taxes." Nationwide, 68 percent said they would support this type of revenue-neutral carbon tax. Only 29 percent were opposed.

That support is strong throughout all parts of the country. Program Director Anthony Leiserowitz explained, "Majorities in all 50 states and all 435 Congressional Districts support requiring fossil fuel companies to pay a carbon tax and using the money to reduce other taxes (such as income tax) by an equal amount."

In polling conducted in early 2019, the Yale program also found historic levels of concern about climate change generally: 72 percent of Americans say global warming is "personally important" to them. That number has jumped 9 points since March 2018.

Though the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act directs revenue toward a dividend rather than a tax swap, the polling is clear: America is worried about climate change and wants a price on carbon pollution. With this bill, Congress is responding.

A quick and easy way for you to help get this bill passed into law is to use this website to get your members of Congress, names, phone numbers and a short script to read to them. cclusa.org/call.

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What's HOT in Global Warming?

by Professor Bruce E. Johansen

The Drastic Math of Polar Sea-level Rise

As we watch, projections of ice melt and sea-level rise around the world are becoming more drastic. When I began writing about global warming a bit more than 20 years ago, projections for the end of the 21st century were being made in inches to a foot or two. When James Hansen began to project rises of several feet, he was an outlier. Some scientists called him a sensationalist, but today he is close to consensus.

Glaciologist Eric Rignot, who works



as an Earth systems scientist for the University of California at Irvine and NASA, told the *Washington Post* that ice is melting more quickly than anticipated by climate models. Furthermore, because of thermal inertia, a certain amount of ice loss—and corresponding sea-level rise—is probably already unavoidable, given that carbon dioxide emissions remain in the atmosphere for decades. “If we do something now, it will take 30 years to affect the climate and another few decades to turn the melt-down of glaciers

[around], so probably half of that signal is already written in stone,” he said. “But the impact [that] sea level will have on humanity increases with every 10 [centimeters] of sea-level rise, and right now we are about to commit to multi-meter sea-level rise in the coming century if we don’t do something drastic.”

Sea-level Rise in Multiple Meters

Roll that one over in your mind: in the coming century, a multi-meter

means getting off of fossil fuels entirely, and very quickly, probably within the coming roughly 30 years. This means replacing the infrastructure that still provides more than 90 percent of our electricity and vehicle fuel. By the end of a Donald Trump second term in the White House, that will be 24 years, as the math may have become even more drastic. By that time, high tides may be lapping at the door or Trump’s Mar-a-Lago, and our president, with his usual

...Ice is melting more quickly than anticipated by climate models. Furthermore, because of thermal inertia, a certain amount of ice loss—and corresponding sea-level rise—is probably already unavoidable, given that carbon dioxide emissions remain in the atmosphere for decades.

sea-level rise. Melting also will not cease at the end of this century. It likely will accelerate in proportion to rises in atmospheric greenhouse gases—carbon dioxide, methane and others. Completely melted, Greenland could contribute 20 feet to world sea levels. The West Antarctic Ice Sheet could add 15 to 20 feet, and the East Antarctic Ice Sheet, another 120 to 140 feet. Mountain glaciers, which probably will be largely gone within a century, would add a few feet more.

By “something drastic,” Rignot

climatic acumen, will be blaming Barack Obama for his problems.

Accelerating Ice Loss

Greenland, with the Earth’s second-largest ice sheet, has lost ice at an accelerating pace in the past several decades. Since the 1980s, the rate of ice loss in Greenland has increased almost 600 percent, according to an analysis of a half-century of data published in April, 2019 in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, on which Rignot

Greta Thunberg

Environmental journalist Maria Osterberg, a friend and ally of Nebraskans for Peace, wrote the following article from her home in Sweden specifically for the Nebraska Report.

Climate activist Greta Thunberg does not care whether she is popular or not; she wants a future for her children.

A year ago nobody had heard of her. The 15-year-old Swedish girl had no idea what a huge ripple effect her actions would have as she sat down outside the Swedish Parliament in Stockholm with a sign “skolstrejk för klimatet” (“School Strike for the Climate”) in August 2018. She was tired of reading about environmental catastrophes and decided to do something about it.

She returned every school day and later every Friday and other young people started to join her. Her wish was to pressure the Swedish government to at least work in line with the Paris Agreement.

On March 15 my daughter and I were two of the around 15,000 people striking outside the Swedish Parliament together with Greta. This was the first global strike for the climate and according to media and the organization “Fridays for Future” who organized the strikes in Sweden, over 70 countries and 1.8 million people were participating all over the world.

As I’m writing this, Greta is on her way to the United States in a sail boat that is taking her across the Atlantic Ocean on a two-week crossing. She will participate in meetings about the climate crisis in both South and North America. And her hope is that people of power will start to listen to what scientists have been saying for decades and start working according to that.

Greta has stopped flying, she turned vegan and she is not buying any new clothes anymore, just second-hand. This is her own choice for having a personal impact on what is happening to our world



where consumerism and valuing profit over life has put our planet into an emergency crisis.

But Greta is also contributing on a broader scale than most people will ever do. As an activist and a public speaker, she has been able to influence world leaders and the mass public.

Her blunt speech and the fact that she “does not care about whether she is popular or not” has inspired millions of people around the world. Greta is not a politician or a business person. She is a now 16-year-old school girl who one day had enough of the fact that nothing really is being done to save what is left of our ecosystem and the species on this earth.

“I want you to act as if our house is on fire,” she said while speaking at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland where she also calmly declared that a big percentage of the people present at that very meeting were responsible for the climate problem humankind is facing now... people with economic interests as top priorities. People running global corporations without any consideration of what kind of impact they are having on the environment are the people who have brought us to where we are today:

A big step closer to extinction.

On August 23, French President Emmanuel Macron quoted Greta in a message to Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro. Due to the fact that the Amazon, the lungs of the earth, are burning right now at a terribly fast rate and Bolsonaro had taken no actions to stop it, Macron tweeted “Our house is on fire.” He wanted Bolsonaro to start treating the fires as the international crisis they in fact are and he made clear that they will be on the agenda of the G7 summit. Ireland and France had been pressuring Bolsonaro to immediately take action and finally threatened to not ratify the huge free trade agreement between the EU and South America if he would not.

After that Bolsonaro, although not pleased with the actions of the French president, made public that the Brazilian military will from now on be in charge of extinguishing the fires.

Maybe this is partly what Greta has been talking about? People in superpower positions actually demanding responsibility of one another and actively facing environmental catastrophes instead of neglecting them?

Greta has been shaking the hands of Jane Goodall, Barack Obama, the Pope and many other influential people. She has been talking in all kinds of meetings and settings.

And everything started with her watching a film in school on plastic pollution in our oceans. She began to worry more and more about this and global warming and that led to a depression that she had been fighting throughout childhood.

She has been diagnosed with Asperger’s, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder and selective mutism.

Greta does not know how to pretend.

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What's HOT, conclusion

was a co-author. The figures, for 260 glaciers that the scientists studied, are so large that we have nothing with which to compare them. Greenland glaciers' ice loss increased from about 51 billion tons of ice between 1980 and 1990, to 286 billion tons between 2010 and 2018. So far, Greenland's contribution to world sea-level rise has been 14 millimeters since 1972, according to this study, but more than half of that has taken place during the last eight years. The result is that out of nearly 14 millimeters of global sea-level rise caused by Greenland ice-melt since 1972, half has occurred in the past eight years, researchers found.

A report in the *Washington Post* described how ice losses may accelerate in Greenland: "The regions with the biggest potential ice loss—the frigid far northwest and northeast of the island, which sit up against the Arctic Ocean—have not changed as quickly as other parts of Greenland. Should they begin to melt more rapidly, then Greenland's overall ice loss—and contribution to sea-level rise—could grow even more."

Rignot told the *Washington Post* that "The 1980s marked the transition time when the Earth's climate started to drift significantly from its natural variability as a result of man-made emissions of greenhouse gases." Rignot told the *Post* that this shift portends problems for the future, especially when combined with expected ice losses in Antarctica. "The entire periphery of Greenland is affected. I am particularly concerned about the northern regions, which host the largest amount of potential sea-level rise and are already changing fast."

Accelerating melting in the Arctic has been fed by warming of more than 2 to 4 degrees Celsius (3.6 to 7.2 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels. This is much more rapid than the general 1 to 2 degrees F. at lower latitudes, where most people live, have experienced. From 1972 through 1990, according to the *Post* report, "Greenland was more or less in balance. It lost mass as glaciers flowed out into the sea and broke off large icebergs, but it also gained it back as snow fell on top of the ice sheet. That changed

rapidly in the past 30 years. Ice losses in the 1990s were about 41 billion tons per year, but by the 2000s they were 187 billion tons—and by the 2010s, 286 billion tons." Ice is now melting both at the surface and from the edges of Greenland as relatively warm Atlantic Ocean water erodes glaciers that flow into the ocean.

Rignot also took part in research published in 2018 that indicates that the speed of ice loss around the South Pole has accelerated 600 percent over four decades—very similar to the rate more recently detected for Greenland. "In Antarctica, some big sleeping giants in East Antarctica are waking up, in addition to a large part of West Antarctica being significantly affected," Rignot told the *Post*. "None of this is good news.... We ought to prepare ourselves for what is coming up and take action as soon as possible to avoid the most drastic scenarios."

Bruce E. Johansen, Frederick W. Kayser Professor at the University of Nebraska–Omaha, is author of Climate Change: An Encyclopedia of Science, Society, and Solutions (2017).

Greta Thunberg, conclusion

Like she said in a popular Swedish/Norwegian talkshow where famous people from all over the world are interviewed by "SKAVLAN": "Maybe my words have effect because I'm a weirdo. I don't know how to play the social theater that everybody else is playing."

It has been an overwhelming year for Greta. People have accused her parents of taking advantage of their daughter and using her for publicity and their personal agenda. According to her parents Svante Thunberg and Marlene Ernman, both artists, the decision to become an activist was totally Greta's own. They did not support her absence from school but they did also not force her to attend.

There have been a lot of haters loudly voicing their opinion about Greta and the big media explosion around her.

Other people have been shocked to witness how aggressively some mainstream adult people can react over a young girl worrying about the future for all of us on this planet.

How is it possible to start a witch hunt on a sixteen-year-old girl who is concerned about global warming and collapsing ecosystems one may wonder.

Maybe because if a child can raise awareness in this way, that means we can all do something. At least we can not continue to close our eyes to these facts that scientists have been presenting for decades.

Some people are inspired and will take action. They will choose a different lifestyle. They will educate themselves. They will find like-minded people and feel strong together in the fight for survival.

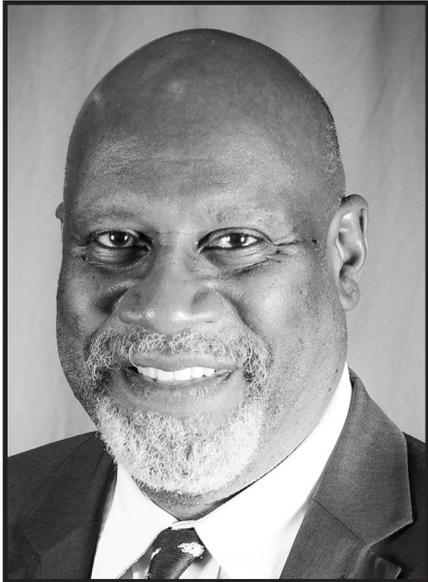
Other people will keep ignoring the facts. They will live their lives and not think about tomorrow.

And then there will always be the ones who will badmouth and attack the ones who are trying to actively do something... Maybe because their lifestyle is threaten if someone tells them: We all have to change or we won't make it.

One of the things Greta has been saying is: "Because you adults who have created this world do not take responsibility for your actions us kids have to step up and demand a change."

The Need To Be ACTIVE

(Or You Are Helping the Oppressors)



by A'Jamal-Rashad Byndon

During the past year, I have encountered many parodies and anomalies affecting low-income, communities of color. Taken as a whole, it is apparent we have the blind leading the blind. How is it, otherwise, that despite over 400 years of slavery and oppression in the United States we have so little to show for our efforts? For any demographic you look at (you pick—education, the criminal justice system, healthcare, housing, employment, whatever), it's clear that too many are stuck on stupid. If you follow the data or keep your eyes on the prize, you would think something in the way of change should be forthcoming. But that's not going to happen if the oppressor is playing the white shell game.

A few weeks ago, I participated in a first-ever real cultural humility training with law enforcement in my community. There were a few concepts and behaviors that struck me from that training. One, we need a lot more

engagement with law-enforcement officials based upon a series of reports from ACLU Nebraska. The last two reports demonstrated there are historically too many racial stops on people of color. Often, according to the ACLU, those stops are driven by racist mind-sets where the officers have not had to check their behaviors. As a board member of ACLU, I have come to see that with open record requests we can acquire data and information that has been hidden from the public view for far too long. We have access to the information we need to create change. But if we have such a wonderful, honest system here in the U.S., then why is there a disproportionate number of youth and adults of color serving excessive time in the Nebraska prison industrial complex? And why are many of the elite “Negroes” (so-called social justice advocates and sell-outs) wasting an inordinate amount of time in self-promotion dances, cocktail parties, and snuggling up to those who mean harm to our community and people. Legislatively, we moved to district elections to provide better representation for the oppressed. Yet if our district-elected officials are spending their time on trivial dance contests and attending rubber chicken dinners, who is minding the urgent work of aiding the oppressed when the community and our families are falling apart?

Case in point. There is plenty of debate about the construction of new buildings, the appointment of new positions, and—most of all—about the people (generally the wrong ones) acquiring these new shiny positions (oftentimes without any real accountability). When I meet professionals who are supposed to be doing the community's

work, there are three questions that I pose to them: 1) Who from the affected class or situations have you invited to your elite tables? 2) Are those meetings (or fake engagement sessions) diverse in terms of race and class? 3) What are your quality or data indicators that you are improving the plight of the oppressed? As one can surmise, they are not prepared to answer any of those questions. Moreover, what invariably happens is they attempt to rephrase the questions or change the scope and tone of the discussion.

I have attended meetings in recent months where I was the only African American in the room—and they were talking about race. There were over 35 white folks at one meeting I was at that was focused on our community and people, and I was the only person of color there. Many years ago, at a leadership meeting at Catholic Charities, I found it shocking how Christian white liberals were throwing around the word “racists” at others when they themselves were smoking the self-same stuff. Look at the most progressive groups in the community and Nebraska and count the number of dark-skinned faces in high places. There is a common phrase that is often repeated by politically correct pundits that “There should be nothing about us without us”. Meanwhile, those who teach those lessons refuse to eat their own soup.

Margaret J. Wheatley in her classic book, *Turning To One Another: Simple Conversations To Restore Hope to the Future* (2002), offers this quote:

“No one will give it to you because thinking is always dangerous to the status quo. Those benefiting from the pres-

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Lawman: Memoir of a Jailhouse Lawyer

by Shan Hopwood

Reviewed by John Krejci

This is the true story of a young man from David City, Nebraska, who foolishly robbed five rural banks, got caught, served 10 years in Federal prison. But, unlike many convicted felons, found redemption as a jailhouse lawyer, and now teaches law at prestigious Georgetown Law School. Even he is in wonder of his transformation from the stupid to the sublime.

The most enlightening insight for me was his vivid description of prison life for a rural, white guy. Spoiler alert: he buffed up and competed with the 'guys from the 'hood'. An unlikely but critical development was his 'rise' to the status of jailhouse lawyer. Most incredible was his submitting two successful petitions, on behalf of other inmates, to the Supreme Court. 7,000 are submitted every year!

The fairy tale does not end there, on exiting prison, he married the love of his life

from high school, who waited for him. He attended law school and, long story short, he is now teaching criminal law at Georgetown,

He spoke in Lincoln last November at the "Freed for Life" banquet, a church-sponsored fundraiser for inmates and former inmates. His passion now, besides teaching, is prison reform, rehabilitation of inmates and their successful integration into society. Professor Hopwood speaks, consults and advocates across the country. (Check out prisonprofessors.com.) He writes in a clear, engaging style. "Lawman" is readable, inspiring and hopeful.

His detailed description of prison life and the coping skills needed to navigate prison culture really gripped me. I have never been in prison, but have read numerous accounts of prison life. Professor Hopwood's account is the best I have ever read.

I have purchased *Lawman* for friends. I can't imagine a more inspiring account of incarceration, rehabilitation and redemption. Granted Shon was white, middle class, gifted, and had family support—but he did have daunting obstacles to overcome. Unfortunately, many are defeated by the multiple pathologies rampant in our prison system.

If I were on my soap box, I would encourage all to read this book and get involved with inmates and prison reform. Until our communities move from apathy and condemnation to empathy and active concern, our prison system will remain an expensive blight on our society.

Shon ends his memoir with:

*I've been reborn,
Grace happens.
Redemption is possible,
Second chances are needed.*

The Need to Be ACTIVE, conclusion

ent system have no interest in your new ideas. In fact, your thinking is a threat to them. The moment you start thinking, you'll want to change something. You'll disturb the current situation. We can't expect those few who are well-served by the current reality to give us time to think. If we want anything to change, we are the ones who have to reclaim time to think.

Thinking is not inaction. When people can think and notice what's going on, we develop ideas that we hope will improve our lives. As soon as we discover something that might work, we act. When the ideas mean something to us, the distance between thinking and acting dissolves. People don't hesitate to get started. They don't sit around

figuring out the risks or waiting until someone else develops an implementation strategy. They just start doing. If that action doesn't work, then they try something different.

This might sound strange to you, because many of us deal with governments and organizations that can't implement anything. It's true for all bureaucracies—there's a huge gap between ideas and actions. But this is because people don't care about those ideas. They didn't invent them, they know they won't really change anything, and they won't take risks for something they don't believe in. But when it's our idea, and it might truly benefit our lives, then we act immediately on any promising notion." (P. 98)

We are facing trying times with many losing hope for our communities and this nation. If we are not part of the resistance movement for the oppressed, then we have no one to blame but ourselves. And the blame doesn't stop there. Rest assured that future generations will be asking what it was we did when conditions were becoming unbearable? If we are not actively seeking to be part of the solution, then we are part of the problem.

Need I say more?

P.S. The reason that I purchased Wheatley's book was because of one quote that I saw in the book. "It's not the differences that divide us. It's our judgments about each other that do."

Frank LaMere

by Kevin Abourezk
Managing Editor, *Indians.com*

A day after my friend and mentor Frank LaMere died, I received a phone call from a reporter at an Omaha radio station who asked me for an interview. I agreed.

The first question the reporter asked me was this: When did you first meet Frank LaMere?

I couldn't answer the question, because I couldn't remember. And for a while, I felt guilty about that.

Why couldn't I remember my first encounter with the man whose work fighting to close four beer stores in Whiteclay became the most important story of my own career as a journalist, first for the *Lincoln Journal Star* and today with Native American news website *Indians.com*?

In the more than two months since Frank passed away June 16 after a brief fight against bile duct cancer, I've wracked my brain and even researched the archives of my former and current employers seeking an answer to that radio reporter's question—all to no avail.

But I have managed to find some solace in the regret I felt, and it is this—I don't believe it should matter so much whether you remember how you met someone. Rather, it should matter most whether you remember your last encounter with that person, because that speaks to how important that person came to be in your life.

And I remember everything about my last day with Frank.

Frank had spent the entire day—May 11—with his family and friends at

Nebraska Wesleyan University, which awarded him an honorary doctorate for his work fighting beer sales in Whiteclay.

It was a bittersweet day for Frank, whose close friend Alan Jacobsen, a tenacious ally in his fight to end beer sales in Whiteclay, was being buried across town. He expressed his regret at not being there, but he also knew his friend would have wanted him there to accept his hard-earned accolades.

Frank had invited me to join him that day as a friend, but I couldn't imagine not sharing the news of his honorary degree with my website's readers, many

of whom had followed his work for many years.

on the back, hugged him and laughed with him. Many also thanked him for his work as an advocate for Native people who have lost loved ones to police violence and Native parents whose children have been taken from them by state child welfare officials.

"Thank you for everything you've done for this world," one woman told him.

As the reception wrapped up, a university employee led Frank away to a side room, where he received his robe and mortar. His daughter Jennifer and family

"I've said many times that the Whiteclay effort, our win there, was a human rights and civil rights victory. We just have not had time to look at it and celebrate it but that's what it is. And we don't celebrate it because we're right in the middle of it."

of whom had followed his work for many years.

On that cool spring day, when rain clouds threatened but only briefly sprinkled us, Frank ate lunch with his wife Cynthia, daughter Jennifer and her fiancée Frank Harvey, as well as family friend Annette Hamilton. They ate with university leaders and staff.

Throughout the reception, men and women approached Frank and thanked him for his work fighting to close the Whiteclay beer stores. They patted him

friend Annette put the finishing touches on him, adjusting two eagle feathers on his ponytail and straightening his collar.

Later outside, the commencement speaker, Lutheran Bishop Brian Maas, urged the more than 500 graduates to ask difficult questions of the world.

"Consider Frank LaMere and so many others who watched for years the tragedy that was Whiteclay, Nebraska, lives ruined by easy access to alcohol,

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Frank LaMere, conclusion

who were told, ‘There’s nothing you can do. It’s perfectly legal,’ yet who were bold to ask persistently, ‘But is it right?’” Maas said.

“The challenges surrounding Whiteclay have only begun to be transformed, but transformation has begun because people have dared to ask questions. The world waits for more such question-askers. Be those people.”

Today, Indian Country mourns the passing of one of its most powerful and effective advocates, a man who never ceased asking tough questions of those in power. And many have begun asking who will take his mantle and continue his fight to empower those who’ve been made to feel weak and vulnerable.

All seem to come to the same conclusion: No one person can replace Frank LaMere.

While some of us might demonstrate some of his qualities, none of us demonstrates all of them.

How often does such a person come along? Someone so gifted at oratory and imbued with such a ceaseless passion for justice and sublime spirituality and humility. And charisma. Of course, that.

Frank could bring together people with almost nothing in common except a passion for whatever cause he had decided to pursue. Police chiefs and city leaders might find themselves in the same room as homeless women and drug-addicted men. And Frank would make certain each person in that room had as much voice as anyone else.

Many fear his passing may signal the end of the causes he championed—justice for Natives affected by police violence, a treatment center for Native people in Sioux City, Iowa, and resolution to the unsolved murders of people in Whiteclay.

As it turns out, Frank’s light won’t be overshadowed so easily.

One need only look at the presidential candidate forum named for Frank that was held Aug. 19-20 in Sioux City as just

one of many examples of ongoing efforts to carry forth Frank’s message of Native empowerment.

Eleven candidates for president all brought before a crowd of Native leaders, advocates and allies to answer tough questions about Native issues and describe how they plan to seek to improve the lives of Native people if elected. What better evidence that Frank’s penchant for asking tough questions will continue?

And even further evidence that

#IAMFRANKLAMERE

Frank’s work will continue—a T-shirt emblazoned with the outline of Frank’s face and his characteristic long curls and turquoise bolo medallion. Hundreds of shirts being sent to the far corners of the country, all carrying the same message: “#IAMFRANKLAMERE.”

Indeed, we must all be Frank LaMere.

At the end of my last day with Frank, we found ourselves at the Starbucks at 33rd and O Streets, recounting the day’s events. For what would be the last time, I put a camera and microphone in front of him and asked him for his thoughts.

I want to share with you my last interview with Frank. I’ve never shared it before. I hope it gives you some sense of the deep humility and pride he felt on that last day we spent together, that perfect day when the rain menaced but never poured on us.

Frank LaMere speaking to Kevin Abourezk in Lincoln on May 11, 2019:

“I think Nebraska Wesleyan University in my eyes, and I think in the eyes of Native people, I think their stock rose quite a lot today.”

“The awarding of the honorary doctorate was in no way fluff and it was inspiring to me that they would want the story of Whiteclay to be discussed during their commencement.”

“They used the story of the long battle in Whiteclay to instill in their students the need of stepping up and speaking their mind and doing something.”

“All those things that we’ve been saying about Whiteclay for 20 years the Bishop encapsulated those today and he told it to all of the students.”

“I’ve said many times that the Whiteclay effort, our win there, was a human rights and civil rights victory. We just have not had time to look at it and celebrate it but that’s what it is. And we don’t celebrate it because we’re right in the middle of it.”

“And today was really interesting because Whiteclay, it was the focus of the graduation today. It was as if Whiteclay shut down last week. Things take time and now that Whiteclay is shut down the greater population, the Native people, the dominant culture, is taking a look at what happened there. They’re assessing it and they’ve come to a place that we came to as Native people two years ago. They support the shutdown and they’re celebrating the shutdown. They’re using the shutdown as a way to inspire and instill in young people to step up and do the right thing, to speak their mind. I was very much moved by the commencement address by the Bishop.”

“Sometimes people speak to me about the need for change and they’re speaking to the choir.”

“Today, even though I’m a member of the choir, I was inspired by the Bishop.”

“It was a good day at Nebraska Wesleyan University. I will remember this the rest of my life. It was a very meaningful day, a very powerful day, no fluff, all business. I think we changed some young people’s minds about themselves today.”

Hard Truth, conclusion

and wholesale waivers of renewable fuel standards), and David Koch went to Hell for using his vast fortune to deny climate change and thereby to keep the world safe for the Koch fossil-fuel empire.

Just in case, please note that despite testimony by 90 landowners, the Ponca Tribe and other opponents, the Nebraska Supreme Court ruled on August 23 that the Public Service Commission did not act improperly when it gave approval to a proposed alternate KXL pipeline route, which has undergone no legitimate environmental, property rights or cultural reviews and was approved without proper notice to landowners and Ponca members.

The PSC is empowered by the Nebraska Constitution to “regulate telecommunications carriers, natural gas jurisdictional utilities, major oil pipelines, railroad safety, household goods movers and passenger carriers, grain warehouses and dealers, construction of manufactured and modular homes and recreational vehicles, high voltage electric transmission lines, and private water company rates.”

Originally, the commission was created to regulate the railroads, and while undoubtedly regulation in the public interest was the intention, the current PSC website is strangely silent on that part of the mission. Nevertheless, given the words “public” and “service,” and their appearance in the closest proximity, it is not unreasonable to expect our public service commission to perform to that standard.

How exactly is the public interest served by the PSC approval of the Main Alternate route?

TransCanada (TC Energy) would argue that simply by NOT taking the more direct route through the Sandhills, across the watershed of the Ogallala Aquifer, the approved route is in the public interest. I have pointed out elsewhere that the Sandhills route was a strategic distraction by TransCanada to keep the discussion about WHERE the pipeline goes instead of WHETHER the pipeline to bring tar sands

product to market OUGHT to be built at all.

As it stands, Nebraskans don't benefit in any meaningful way from a Nebraska pipeline if built, but landowners and tribes will suffer irreparable loss immediately. As for the KXL per se, ALL Nebraska, in fact ALL life on Earth, has already begun to suffer the true costs of bringing millions of tons of new carbon from Western Canada into the atmosphere.

The positive economic impact of a Nebraska pipeline to the state is negligible, an uptick in convenience store, motel and bar receipts for a few weeks in a few towns while the crews move through. Norfolk steelmaker Nucor? The project uses foreign steel. And no state or local taxes are levied on the dilbit, remember? Nor does the end product, diesel fuel, provide energy security for Nebraskans, or any Americans, as 100 percent is destined for export, tax free. That's the point. Otherwise, TC Energy would have to run the dilbit due east, build refineries on Hudson Bay and pay serious taxes in Canada.

IS there any real need for the Nebraska pipeline, even from Big Oil's point of view? Because the KXL pipeline itself is in fact already DONE! East by southeast across Canadian prairie almost to Winnipeg, then south into North Dakota and on to the Gulf! Since 2016! A pipeline through Nebraska just shaves off a few hundred miles.

Mark this: Big Oil will make this land grab if it can, BECAUSE it can. Toni Morrison said racism is a distraction that keeps us busy fending off the racists so we can't do our real work. By analogy, ecocide works the same way. Nebraskans are the only folks with any real skin in the game at this point. TC Energy costs are mostly just lawyers' hours so far—suits already on retainer. Final investment decisions have yet to be made.

In the end, the Nebraska pipeline might just wither away. Remember “Save Boyd County”? When a nuclear waste

“repository” (con man talk for “dump”) was going to be built by a five-state compact—in a wetland? Turns out the compact never needed a dump after all. The industry learned to recycle nuclear material more efficiently. In that case, time and technological progress made a travesty obsolete before it got built.

Pipeline opponents aren't counting on good luck, of course. The Trump Administration has tried to start the pipeline approval process over by ending the previous Executive Order which governed transnational pipelines. A Trump executive “Memorandum” was issued “saying TransCanada's ‘permit’ was approved, without any need for standard reviews that govern critical water crossings and other environmental permits. This action in turn prompted three new federal lawsuits,” according to BOLD Nebraska.

It's not over until the good guys give up. And we're not giving up.

Molly Ivins made the saying famous, but I've heard it all my life—when you find yourself in a hole, the first thing you do is quit digging. An alcoholic who can't quit drinking until all the alcohol is gone will die. A human race that can't leave carbon in the ground while there is still a dollar to be made will go extinct.

The public interest of Nebraskans would be truly served by enormous private capital investment and public policies which privilege carbon sequestration practice in agriculture, cover the countryside with wind and solar installations and double down on renewable fuel standards and biofuel production—almost entirely responsible for any profit the state's farmers have seen this century.

The public interest of Nebraskans would be truly served by public servants at every level who do not regard themselves as water carriers for entrenched power, but as honest and diligent stewards of fair play, working for the folks who bring them to the dance—the voters back home.

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HARD TRUTH

by Sally Herrin

KXL and the Public Interest

My cherished fellow traveler, classicist Tom Winter posted, “About 40 years ago, I chatted with one of the music pros. He was an oboist, and so was forever carving reeds. He didn’t mind company while he was whittling. I said: ‘I don’t think I’m making progress.’ And he replied: ‘Me either, but I keep playing.’”

Likewise, I sit down to write YET AGAIN in opposition to the world-historical folly that is the damned, doomed KXL pipeline. The proposed Nebraska seg-

ment was designed to shorten the distance diluted bitumen (dilbit) travels from the Western Canadian Sedimentary Basin—one of the largest reserves of petroleum and natural gas on Earth, supplier to much of North America, “producing more than 16,000,000,000 cubic feet... per day of gas in 2000. It also has huge reserves of coal” (Wikipedia)—to one of the great tax havens of the world, on the Gulf of Mexico. From this U.S. “Enterprise Zone”, exporting refiners pay NO local, state or federal taxes

on their black gold. Western Canadian coal becomes dilbit for the Gulf Coast becomes diesel for Third World markets, most with little or no environmental enforcement, where it fuels industrialization and grows the atmospheric carbon burden of the Earth.

Maybe you got distracted the week that Donald Trump admitted he is “The Chosen One”, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture mocked farmers who are going broke (due largely to Trump’s trade fiascos