

# Effects of Vietnam War on Midwest, Nebraska Analyzed— Can People in the United States Have Both Guns, Butter?

By Glenda Peterson  
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What effect does the war in Vietnam have on the folks back home? On the folks in the Midwest? On the folks in Nebraska?

All across the United States that question is answered easily enough by those who have sons or husbands or lovers fighting in the Vietnam war.

The war brings anxiety and dread and fear to the mothers or wives or sweethearts of United States troops in Vietnam. It causes some to pray, and some to forego plans for establishing a home. It causes some to vote, and some to organize drives to send Christmas cards to soldiers. It causes some to march, and some to picket.

But what about those who do not have loved ones in Vietnam? Can they go about their daily business the same as before, and have no contact with the war except in their daily newspaper? Can they eat what they want, and go where they want, and do what they

want? Can the U.S. people have both guns and butter?

**Little Effect**  
On consumer level, the war in Vietnam seems to have had very little effect. The housewives of Nebraska can buy groceries they want at the local supermarket. They can wear dresses they want, and buy furniture they want to decorate their homes.

On the supplier level, it is a different story. Even though the consumer seems to be unaware of it, some suppliers are having a hard time getting certain products from manufacturers.

The businessman who must buy clothing, paper products and leather, who must order guns and fabric and aluminum from manufacturers, have noticed that something is affecting the availability of these goods.

Some products that businessmen order are slow in coming from the manufacturer, and some don't come at all. Could it be that these same manufacturers are turning some of their production away from consum-

er goods, and devoting it to the manufacture of war goods?

**Construction**  
Construction firms, clothing buyers and wholesale gun suppliers in Lincoln were among those asked whether or not they could get the supplies they ordered from manufacturers. Twenty-six firms answered that question, with the following results. This is in no way representative of every product supplier in Lincoln.

**Clothing**  
Shipments of cotton garments, especially men's jeans, are slow in coming, according to one store owner. A buyer of wool sportswear said that wool manufacturers had warned her that there might be a shortage of woolen garments, so she placed her winter order early. The shipment arrived in early July ahead of the usual mid-August delivery.

**Paper**  
A retail dealer reported that pressboard and binder board, used in offices for filing, aren't available from manufacturers. A representative of local paper com-

pany said he noticed a slowdown in delivery of all paper products.

Mill shipments which had been delivered in three to four weeks now take from 60 to 90 days to arrive (eight to 12 weeks). The slowdown in deliveries began in June of 1966, he said, when shipments were a week late in arriving. The lag has become progressively worse until it was quite noticeable this fall and winter, he said.

**Guns**  
A wholesale gun supplier said there was a "retardation in shipments of hand guns." There is also a shortage of brass shell cases, he said, and a delay in the delivery of ammunition. An order which usually took one month to fill now takes six weeks to two months.

Some manufacturers are shipping on schedule, some are just slow, and some manufacturers are not shipping at all, he said. He estimated the slowdown in shipments at 10 per cent over the time required be-

fore. He attributed two reasons for the delay in delivery: 1. There is a shortage of labor at the factory level and 2. Manufacturers are bound by government contracts to supply war guns.

**Groceries**  
Three wholesale dealers in grocery products and one retail grocer agreed that perishable goods have not been affected by the war in Vietnam. But durable goods, such as equipment for food processing, has been affected. There is as much as a 30-day delay in obtaining trucks and motor-driven equipment. The slowdown in delivery of this equipment has been gradual, a food processor said.

**Manufacturing**  
Malleable castings used in pulleys, disk brakes and wheel hubs in building Cushman Motor Scooters are taking up to eight months for delivery, a company representative said. The usual time required to fill an order was formerly six to eight weeks.

Raw copper shipments are taking up to one year for delivery. However, "no

trouble" was reported by manufacturers of fiber glass and dealers in aluminum.

**Construction**  
The lumber market has been hit most directly by the war in Vietnam, a cost estimator for a construction firm said.

A building project at Crete last February called for dimension lumber, but none was available. The government had cleared the market at that time, he said, and lower grades of lumber had to be substituted in building. Since then, better grades are back on the market.

Recently, there has been trouble in getting mirrors. This, the estimator said, may be because manufacturers are busy filling big government orders for priority items to be used in the war effort. However, steel manufacturers are not running at full capacity, he said.

Copper and sheet metal are other items which have been affected by the war in Vietnam, he said, as the cost is way up.

Throughout last summer deliveries were slow. An engineer for another construction firm reported that there was a three-to-four-month period beginning early last spring when plywood was not available. At that time, the government had ordered plywood to be shipped to Vietnam, then cancelled three-fourths of the order, he said.

Now, structural steel is hard to get although the engineer said that he does not feel that this shortage is related to the war in Vietnam.

**Repair Parts**  
A repair parts department manager said all shipments of parts are slow and prices are climbing. He said he has back orders on metal which have not been filled for two reasons: 1. Companies are on strike; and 2. They are naturally slow in filling orders. He said that he did not attribute this delay in filling orders to Vietnam.

**Electrical Supplies**  
Copper wire shipments are indefinite, an electrical company official reported, although two years ago copper wire was available from manufacturers and kept in stock.

Surface wiring devices are not available, he said, because the output of certain manufacturers has been entirely diverted to the war effort. The slowdown in shipment of electrical supplies started about a year ago, he said.

**Transportation**  
Although transportation is

not a supply that can be ordered from a manufacturer, it is a service which consumers use, rely on, and take for granted. Therefore, an air freight service, transportation and storage companies, a bus company, a travel agency and a railroad were asked how their business had been affected by Vietnam.

The air freight service people reported that they had noticed no real change in business that could be attributed to the war, although they had been operating only a year and so felt that they would not be in a position to tell.

A transport and storage company official said that his company was experiencing a bad slump in business after an upswing which began with the phasing out of the Lincoln Air Force Base. From the first of the year (1966) until September (nine months), business had been good.

There has been an increase in sales in bus transportation, a company official reported. However, bus ticket sales were hurt in Lincoln by the closing of the Air Force Base. In spite of this, there has been an overall 10 per cent increase in sales during the year, he said.

He attributed this increase to travel by members of the armed services or by members of their families. He said, however, that the bus company had no way of telling what per cent of actual bus ticket sales went to members of the armed services.

**Railroad**  
A railroad representative said that all over the country many railroad cars probably are involved in shipping supplies for the war in Vietnam, although this business may have no particular effect on any one point.

Food and clothing for the war are not coming out of Lincoln, he said.

Government shipments by rail through Lincoln are in two areas, he said: 1. Movement of ammunition. Raw materials for construction of war guns pass through Lincoln on their way to Grand Island where they are assembled, then shipped out again, and 2. Movement of storage grain.

**State Institutions**  
The purchasing department of the State of Nebraska must order a variety of supplies from manufacturers, supplies ranging from socks for inmates of the state penitentiary to heavy

equipment for construction of state roads.

Dale Karnopp, purchasing agent for the state, buys for 13 institutions. There are only two areas that have been affected by the war in Vietnam, he said — clothing and textiles.

Shipments of these products, including winter coats for the highway patrol, are coming in slower than usual, he said. All other supplies are arriving on schedule.

The availability of supplies may be suffering more from Great Society spending than from the war in Vietnam, according to Richard Bennett, director of special business services at the University of Nebraska.

A great many projects are under construction using federal monies, he said, projects which cut loose heavily in the last 18 months. The same programs which are letting the University build are also letting others build, he said.

These often require the same units, such as cafeteria facilities. The upsurge in demand for these units caught the institutional furniture manufacturers flat-footed, Bennett said.

**Diverse Products**  
Certain products may be short in supply for another reason, Bennett added. Most manufacturers today put out diverse products; that is, a manufacturer of institutional supplies may have a sideline in military goods.

Government contracts with manufacturers for war goods have tight deadlines subject to short-notice cancellations, Bennett said. So naturally government orders are filled first ahead of those for private consumption.

The only item found rather scarce in Bennett's long list of supplies ordered for the University of Nebraska is cotton dressing for hospital use, although prices have held firm. Orders which previously took 30 days to fill now require 60 to 90 days.

A second item hard to obtain, although less scarce than cotton dressing, is mimeograph paper. Deliveries now require 90 to 120 days to fill, compared with 30 days before the war.

Furniture shipments are particularly slow, although Bennett points out that this is related Great Society spending rather than to the war in Vietnam. A shipment of furniture which previously came in 30 to 40 days now takes three to four months, he said.

## Prevention, Not Restoration—That's Nebraska's Approach to Pollution

By Deborah Hansen  
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While most of the nation is concerned with cleaning up areas of extreme pollution, Nebraska has launched preventive programs in air and water pollution control.

Nebraska, because of its agricultural nature, does not have the extreme cases of air and water pollution found in California, Maryland, West Virginia, New York, Pennsylvania and the other industrial states.

Because Nebraska does not have such serious problems of air and water pollution its citizens have not concerned themselves with the problems. But Nebraska's health agencies have launched preventive programs to avoid serious pollution in the future.

The realization that domestic wastes contain pathogenic organisms came to Nebraskans by 1890 when the first control laws were established. The laws prohibited disposal of raw wastes into waters used for domestic consumption, according to T. A. Filipi, state sanitation director.

In 1914 Madison erected the state's first waste treatment plant, Filipi said. There is some speculation that Hastings erected a plant at about the same time, he added. Since these first plants there has been a concentrated effort throughout the state, he noted. By 1920 Grand Island had a treatment plant and in 1922 Lincoln had one too.

**Control Council**  
In 1958 the Unicameral established a Water Control Council. The duties of this council are to protect and enforce the maintenance of the quality of water above, beneath and bordering Nebraska. It also defines pollution and plans the enhancement of all public waters, Filipi said.

Because of Nebraska's efforts the state has not suffered the economic losses felt in other parts of the country. Filipi noted that in the Chesapeake Bay region the oysters raised there cannot be consumed because of severe water pollution.

Most Nebraska communities and private homes get their water from wells. This way they can eliminate the need for extensive treatment of drinking water. Omaha takes its drinking water from the Missouri River, spending approximately \$100,000 a month for purification, Filipi said.

Several years ago Nebraska City drilled wells in-

stead of using river water, he said. Because Omaha was dumping raw sewage into the Missouri the cost of purification was too high.

Filipi noted that a survey indicated that the citizens of Nebraska City are happier with their well water and "Don't want to go back to river water."

Filipi said that according to law raw domestic sewage cannot be dumped into a stream, river or lake.

**Waste Treated**  
Industries must also treat their waste products before dumping them into Nebraska waters, he added.

The treatment of industrial waste is handled by individual cities, Filipi said. Some cities allow industries to use the domestic treatment plant free of charge in order to attract business. Other cities, such as Grand Island and York, have reached financial agreements with their industries, Filipi said.

Grand Island charges Swift and Company \$35,000 yearly for the use of the city treatment plant, according to the city's construction plan. An increase in the amount of slaughtering done by Swift will result in an increase in fees. The plan stated that the city is erecting a device that will accurately measure and sample the meat packing wastes.

York also has a meat packing plant which the city charges one cent for every hog slaughtered. This amounts to about \$15 a day. The packing plant removes the paunch manure, blood and grease collected in the slaughtering processes.

According to Dr. Mark J. Hammer, associate professor of sanitary engineering and soil mechanics at the University of Nebraska, a Nebraska slaughter house

that averages a kill of 500 cattle a day has a solids wasteload average equivalent to 45,000 people. This measurement is made after the removal of paunch, manure and blood, he said.

"The liquid waste is equivalent to 3,700 people," he said.

**Land Fill**  
Paunch manure, blood and heavy grease cannot be treated in a domestic plant, Hammer stressed. They must either be especially treated or hauled to a land fill site.

Feed lots are beginning to present problems for the water pollution control agencies, Filipi said. The Nebraska Livestock Feeders Association has been approached, Filipi said, to encourage its members to improve and expand their treatment facilities.

Most feeders are using the lagoon system of water treatment which Filipi explained, is "nature's way of purifying waste."

For every 100 people 25 miles of river is needed to return the water to its natural state. A lagoon, he said, compresses 17 miles of river water into one acre of water three feet deep.

A lagoon cannot be more than three feet deep because light is necessary for the organisms present to work on the sewage. Also, he said that if the pool is too deep the water in the bottom is too cold for the organisms to work.

**Sludge Scraped**  
The residue left from this organic action is called sludge and must be scraped from the bottom of the lagoon once a year. This ma-

terial can be used for fertilizer.

Because of the sizes of modern cities a lagoon system is not practical, so sewage treatment plants are constructed to do six hours what it takes 125 miles of river to accomplish, Filipi said.

A sewage treatment plant speeds up the process of purification. The waste is aerated before it enters the tank where it is immediately settled, allowing the solids to settle in the bottom. This takes about two hours. From the aeration tank the liquid waste is placed in a heated tank containing bacteria. The solids are removed from the bottom of the tank and treated separately. The liquids remain in the bacteria tank for four hours. During this time they are stirred to activate the bacteria.

The liquid waste is then released into the river, lake or stream. Solids are placed in holding tanks where they are dehydrated and later deposited as fertilizer or humus.

**Industries besides slaughter houses and feed lots contribute a great deal to pollution and to the difficulties of treatment plants.**

Oil, for instance, cannot be treated. The danger of fire or explosion in the treatment plant is one reason, another is that oil impairs the hydraulic capacity of the sewer system the

treatment process and the retreatment process and the receiving waters, Hammer said.

**Run-off Problem**  
Filipi said that Nebraska's major pollution problem is caused by run-off from erosion. "The Blue River is dirtier than the Missouri River because of the run-off," he added.

According to Filipi the best means of enforcement is "persuasive cohesion." Education of the citizens is most important in the state's campaign against water pollution," he said.

"The state has had 330 plants constructed without the need of enforcement," Filipi said.

Members of the Health Department, he said, go out to towns and cities and speak to civic groups as well as to the city councils. They also speak in high schools, he said.

These groups and the students are shown the dangers, to themselves and other communities. They are asked, he said "Is this something you're proud of?"

Another big help in encouraging construction of new treatment plants is the availability of federal aid. A 30 per cent "discount" is provided for construction costs of a new plant. Filipi feels that this is an excellent selling point for treatment plants.

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