

Freeze movement gains support

By Jeff Goodwin

The nuclear freeze movement is growing not only in Nebraska but across the nation as well, according to Brian Coyne, state coordinator of the Nebraska Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign.

"Groups are springing up all over," he said. "There are religious groups, business groups. It's reaching all levels of society."

Coyne said the freeze movement has achieved respectability.

"People realize it's not a fad," he said. "It (the freeze movement) is not composed of a bunch of left wingers."

A unique feature of the freeze movement, unlike the anti-war movement, is that it began as movement of the middle class.

"We started out as a middle-age, middle-class movement," he said. "We have many people involved in the freeze campaign who have never been active before in politics."

Coyne said the freeze movement is starting to attract interest in western Nebraska, as well as Omaha and Lincoln.

"I give presentations before church groups, women's groups and some high schools," he said. "Occasionally I get someone who's hostile, but that just adds to the discussion."

Coyne said the possible deployment of MX missiles in western Nebraska has created interest in the freeze movement.

"There are many people in western Nebraska who are very concerned about the MX," he said. "We're working with the anti-MX people."

Coyne, who has been state coordinator for the freeze movement since April, spends much of his time on the road, averaging about 1,500 miles a month.

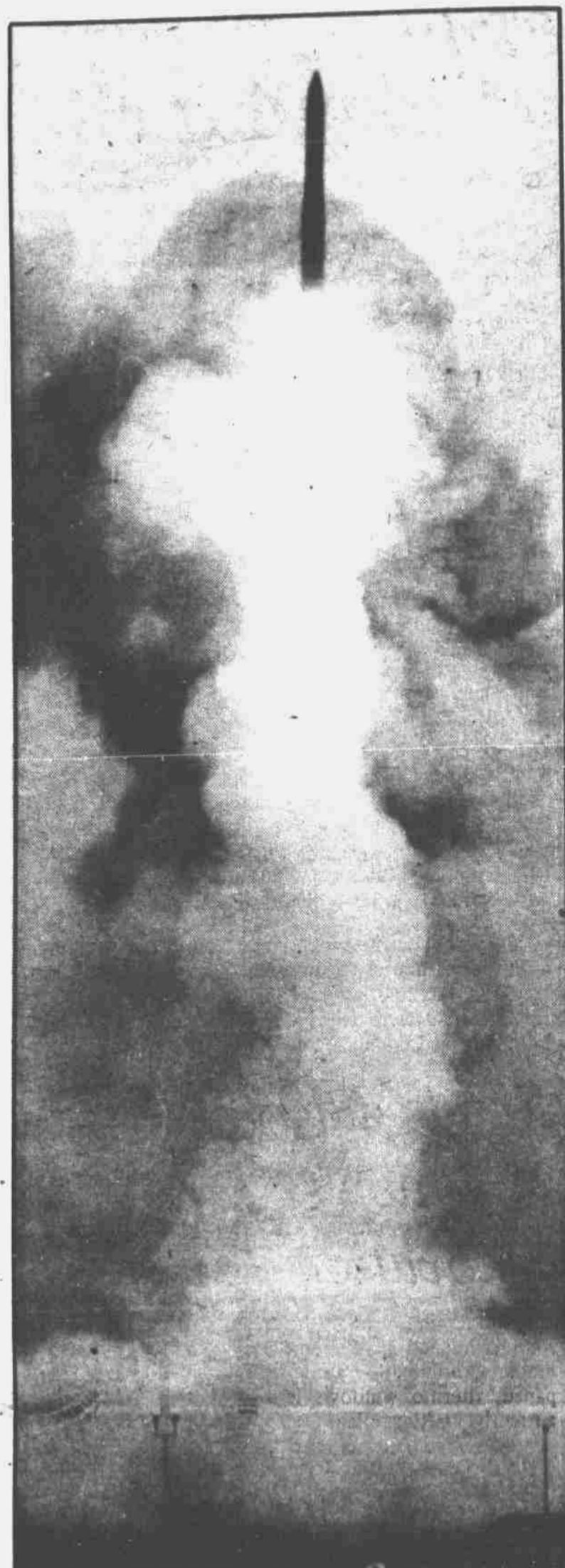


Photo courtesy of the Strategic Air Command

A Minuteman Missile takes off from the launch pad. The missiles are located in Nebraska in underground silos.



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Nuclear Issues

Coyne said he was optimistic about the future of the freeze movement.

"I think 1983 is going to be a very big, big year," he said. "It's the year of scheduled deployment of the cruise and Pershing II missiles in Europe. You're going to see massive protests against that. And you'll see the freeze movement getting bigger throughout the U.S."

Joyce Glenn, coordinator of the freeze campaign in Omaha, was equally optimistic about the future of the freeze.

"It's continuing to grow," she said. "More and more Americans are demanding an end to the arms race."

"We opened our office last October and at the time we had 150 to 200 people on our mailing list," she said. "We now have over 500 people on the list, so that's more than doubled."

The work of the freeze campaign in Omaha was "mainly educational," Glenn said. "We talk to a lot of churches and schools. We're also trying to get political people and businessmen in the city to endorse the freeze."

The group has no current plans to introduce a resolution supporting the freeze to the Omaha City Council, Glenn said.

"We're starting to think in those terms," she said, "but we haven't done that yet. Maybe in the spring. SAC (Strategic Air Command) is a big employer in this town, and that affects people's attitudes."

Coyne said a resolution supporting a nuclear freeze that is similar to the one passed by the Lincoln City Council last month will be introduced in the Nebraska Legislature in January.

"There have been several state senators who have been responsive to us," Coyne said. "They know that their constituents have concerns. This is an issue that you can't really play around with."

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