

Getting MX to ballot not easy

By Kevin Oursland

Calling the nuclear arms race the "most threatening" development facing the world today, Brian Coyne, director of the Nebraska Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign said he is confident that enough signatures will be collected to put the organization's MX initiative on the November ballot.

The petition calls for a verifiable bilateral freeze on nuclear weapons between the United States and the Soviet Union. It also includes a statement of opposition to the proposed deployment of the MX missile in Western Nebraska.

In order for the petition to be submitted, 38,383 signatures must be collected by July 6. Although the approximately 15,000 signatures gathered throughout the state as of early May amount to less than half of the required number, Coyne said he is confident growing awareness of the nuclear problem will work in favor of the campaign, and that enough signatures will be collected in time to meet the July 6 deadline.

If the petition is successful, it would require the governor of Nebraska send a written communication to, among others, the chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, stating that the people of the state of Nebraska, by their approval of the law, oppose the deployment of the MX missile in their state and favor a "bilateral halt to the testing, production and further deployment of all nuclear weapons, missiles and delivery systems in a manner that can be checked and verified by both

countries."

The campaign is not without its opponents, however. Even if the drive succeeds in collecting the required number of signatures, there is no guarantee the proposed law will find its way to the ballots come November. Secretary of State Allan Beermann, acting on the advice of Attorney General Paul Douglas has placed a formid-

able hurdle before the campaign by refusing to file the petition. Contacted at his office, Beermann said his refusal was a legal decision, based on the fact that the law provided no provision "to have an initiative petition, the object of which is a public opinion poll." An initiative petition can only be used to change an existing law, he said; it cannot be used as a public opinion poll with the purpose of creating new law.

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The Nebraska Freeze MX Initiative Committee has filed suit in the Nebraska Supreme Court to have the petition accepted. A ruling is expected within the next week. If the court accepts an expanded interpretation of the law to allow initiative petitions to be used as a means of creating new

laws, the Freeze will be free to continue its campaign. If, however, the court rules to leave the law as it is, the campaign must cease.

The secretary of state also voiced concern about how the intended message of the petition would be interpreted by the Soviets.

"What if the law passed by a vote of say, 51 to 49?" he said. "What kind of message would that send to the Soviets?"

Asked to comment, Coyne said it made "little difference" if the law passed 51-49 or 70-30. It still amounted to a plurality, he said, which, while perhaps not overwhelming, still conveyed the intended message that the majority of Nebraskans favored the stipulations set out in the petition.

Coyne said he did not think the MX missile would ever be deployed in western Nebraska. Growing opposition to the MX program will ultimately force its being scrapped, he said, citing recent developments in the House of Representatives to support his view of a growing opposition to the MX program. A Senate subcommittee recently approved funds for only 15 of the 40 missiles requested by President Reagan. These funds would be allocated in the event that the Soviets do not return to the arms negotiations table by April. Asked whether the subcommittee's decision would adversely affect the

proposed deployment of 31 MX missiles in Western Nebraska, Major Jim McGuire of the Strategic Air Command in Omaha, said no impact is expected on the initial operational capabilities of the missiles, as the decision to deploy them was made prior to the subcommittee's decision. The decision to place the missiles — called Peacemakers — in Nebraska was made in April 1983. McGuire said initial operational capabilities are expected by 1986. No Peacemakers have yet been deployed.

"Citizens need to speak out," he said. "Nebraskans will be better served by the initiative (petition) campaign." It is essential the public understand the nature of the threat confronting it. Nuclear war could signal the end of human existence. The U.S. and the U.S.S.R., despite their differences, must mutually coexist, he said.

Coyne said while a "strong paranoia" of the Soviet Union is natural, people must not allow this concern to push them into thinking that the only way to deal with the Soviets is through arms proliferations. A verifiable bilateral freeze, according to Coyne, would provide a stabilizing factor in this "critical time of history."

While the issue of the arms race may be considered primarily an ethical matter, Coyne cited several other reasons for not wanting the Peacemaker in the state. First, recent developments in the Soviet defense systems may, if these reports are to be believed, severely limit the destructive capabilities of the MX missiles. Major McGuire, while not denying possible Soviet advancements, said that the Peacemaker periodically is updated in order to redress any imbalance that may result from Soviet technical advancements. Second, Coyne said the MX missiles were to be placed in silos in which they would be extremely vulnerable to a Soviet strike.

Prevention aim of FIRE program

By Jim Berryman

Although Lincoln has one of the lowest percentage of fire-related deaths in the nation, a program has been started to make a good record better, the chief of the Lincoln Bureau of Fire Prevention said.

Jerry McGinn said that Fire Inspectors Reach Everyone is the result of a study that found in the past four years that five Lincolniters died in fires. Further, he said, most of the victims were people 69 and older, and the fires were preventable. As a result, FIRE will target this group, he said.

"The response to the program has been outstanding," McGinn said. "And, the program has also attracted a number of younger people."

FIRE, which has been in operation since May 1, has about 60 volunteers, McGinn said, including 45 elderly volunteers.

Volunteers go through a training program in fire prevention, he said. After the training period, volunteers take their fire prevention knowledge door-to-door to people in their respec-

tive neighborhoods. The volunteers carry identification cards from the Bureau of Fire Prevention. They talk to neighbors about typical fire hazards, how to make a home fire safe and how to test their smoke detectors, he said. Also, FIRE volunteers answer any questions about fires or fire prevention.

The program is not entirely door-to-door, McGinn said. Residents can simply accept fire prevention pamphlets from the volunteers or call the Bureau of Fire Prevention to set up a time for a FIRE volunteer to come to their house, he said.

A Nebraska law requiring installation of fire detectors in new buildings is one reason Lincoln has a good fire record, McGinn said. About 55 percent of Lincoln residents have fire detectors in their homes and apartments, he said. This figure is much higher than the national level, he said.

McGinn said most fires result from careless smoking or kitchen cooking, and are preventable.

Anyone interested in the FIRE program can call the Lincoln Bureau of Fire Prevention at 471-7791.

Adaptability main topic of career planning workshop

By Kim Sproule

Many people feel trapped in their careers. UNL's Center For Continuing Education, 33rd and Holdrege streets, is sponsoring a career planning workshop designed to give people the tools to make career decisions and gain control of their lives, Daniel Wheeler, leader of the workshop, said.

Workshop participants, he said, will learn to assess their career goals and examine future options. They also will learn how to analyze their lives and talents and present the information in resumes and portfolios.

People usually strive toward goals. But in this rapidly changing world things often don't work out as planned, he said. For example, he said, many

students graduate from Teachers College and find no traditional jobs available. These people, he said, must evaluate their skills and market them in other fields. People must learn to adapt and respond to changing situations, he said.

Steps to take to get control of careers include responding to changes and building upon previously learned skills, Wheeler said. The workshop will focus on information sharing and is a step toward self-determination, Wheeler said.

The workshop will be Wednesday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Nebraska Center for Continuing Education in the Holdrege room. The cost is \$30. There is no registration deadline. For more information, contact Elmer Miller at the Division of Continuing Studies.



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