



GREEN HORIZON

Magazine

..... AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL PUBLISHED BY THE GREEN HORIZON FOUNDATION

Hail Green Party of the United States!
OPPORTUNITY BECKONS

CATCH THE WAVE

Seven Articles Tell You How and Why

ALSO INSIDE:

Two POEMS

Four Aspirants for the Green Party NOMINATION FOR PRESIDENT

The Meaning and Practical Relevance of ECOLOGICAL WISDOM

ONE DEMOCRATIC STATE for Palestine and Israel

One Activist's View of BEING GREEN in Minnesota

TABLE of CONTENTS

Two Poems 2
DEBRA CSENGE

The GHM Team 2

STRATEGY

The Local: Where We Need to Grow
America as Well as Our Lettuce 3
SAM SMITH

Editor's Note 3
JOHN RENSENBRINK

Finding the Green Frame: George Lakoff's
Political Mind and the Green Party... 16
SCOTT MCLARTY

A View from the
"Greatest Generation" 30
RHODA GILMAN

ACTION

How the Commons Can Bring Us a
Greener, Safer, More Enjoyable Future. . 7
JAY WALLJASPER

Americans Act to Make Creative Politics
Possible 10
ROB RICHIE

Proposed Letter to the American People:
Feedback Sought 24
KAREN YOUNG & JOHN RENSENBRINK

Love Letter to Occupy Wall Street . . . 27
AUGUST JACACCI

One Democratic State: A Green Solution
to the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict 33
JUSTINE MCCABE

Four Green Presidential Candidates . . 38
STEVE WELZER

THOUGHT

OWS at Princeton & Ideology and the
Occupy Movement 14
STEVE WELZER

Americans are Making Waves for a
Better Future: Will the U.S. Green Party
Catch the Wave? 20
JOHN RENSENBRINK

Ecological Wisdom:
What does it really mean? 28
MORGEN D'ARC

List of Sustainers. 39

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We are the Instruments

We are the instruments
Of accelerated change.
We ignore our own ability
To be wise and
Care full.
We will not fly
To the mountaintop
To see below
What we are doing.
My heart is breaking
For that great forgiving
Planet that is my home.
Each day I wake with hope.
Each night I close my eyes
On my quiet despair.
My heart beats
To the rhythm of her unfathomable systems.
I seek her forgiveness
For my race.
I curl up
On her bosom at night.
And in the dawn,
Like her small birds
And her tiny flowers,
Open hopefully and sing
To the coming day.

- March 19, 2011

Bristlecone

When I return to town,
What story do you want me
To tell there?
Shall I tell about the sound of wind
Rushing through your needles?
Or of how you persevere
Even when most of your body
Seems devoid of life?
Shall I tell them about a patience
That lasts for more than a thousand years
And fills the silence with a solid,
Strong presence?
Shall I tell them how you
Sheltered me from the sun
And shall I tell them of a love so sweet
and accepting?
Shall I tell how you are waiting for us
To set things right?
And how the fluttering of wings
Accompanies your patient vigil?
Shall I tell how your limbs bob
As if animated from within
While your massive trunk is anchored
Like stone to the earth?
Shall I tell how happy I am in your company
And how I will miss your profundity
As I hike back to my car,
Fly down the mountain
And return to
The town I call home.

- August 10, 2011

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THE TEAM

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THE LOCAL

Where We Need to Grow Our America as Well as Our Lettuce

SAM SMITH

EDITOR'S NOTE: *This article by Sam Smith and six more that follow focus on a powerful fact and on an equally powerful opportunity. The fact, still little noticed by the mass media and/or suppressed, is that millions of Americans are not waiting for politicians to save them or solve their problems but are re-building their communities and the foundations of their livelihoods. The opportunity is for organizations like the Green Party, which is free of the ponderous weight and internal rancor of the major parties, to stop the government from doing things that stymie the creative energy of Americans and to goad government instead to facilitate and support that energy.*

You don't have to tell Greens about the importance of the local, but increasingly the issue has become more than just a part of a sane and sustainable society. Now the survival of our country and the remaining freedoms we enjoy depend in no small part on what we do on the local level.

The reason it is so important is that the powerful of this country live today in a culture of impunity, a term Latin Americans use to describe a system when law, responsibility, cooperation, community values, and religious faith no longer matter. They have, Mike Lofgren wrote of the American super rich, seceded from America even as their grip on its control mechanisms have tightened: "Bernard Marcus, co-founder of Home Depot, says about the views of the 99 percent: 'Who gives a crap about some imbecile?'"

Test it out by naming every national politician you actually admire; the problem becomes quickly apparent. Further, the national media has become embedded in the propaganda mill, leaving the capital of the country largely devoid of independent critics. The number of companies controlling a majority of media outlets has declined from 50 in 1983 to just five by 2004.

You even find it in such unexpected corners as corruption. Political corruption used to be a feudal system based in communities and contingent on those in power at least tithing to their constituents. Today, the most powerful constituency consists of campaign donors, whose funds are largely used to confuse and fool the voters. And corruption has fleted up from local jobs, favors and cut corners, to multi-billion dollar development projects and huge defense contracts.

It doesn't mean that every day is bad, only that we now live in an adhocracy, entirely dependent upon the whims of those at the top.

Yet history suggests a way around, if not completely out, of the problem.

For example, Umbria, a section of Italy north of Rome, has — for over 2500 years — been invaded, burned, or bullied by the Etruscans, Romans, Goths, Longobards, Charlemagne, Pippin the Short, Vatican, Mussolini, German Nazis, and, most recently, the World Trade Organization. Yet Umbria has managed not only to survive but keep its culture, a reminder of the durability of the human spirit during history's tumults.

Consider the novel, *1984*. Orwell saw it coming, only his timing was off a bit. The dystopia described in *1984* is so overwhelming that one almost forgets that most residents of Oceania didn't live in it. Orwell gives the breakdown. Only about two percent were in the Inner Party and another 13% in the Outer Party. The rest, numbering some 100 million, were the proles.

Trapped between corruption, confusion and incompetence, Washington is incapable of reform. So it is up to us.

The proles were, for the most part, not worth the Party's trouble. Yet Orwell thought that, if there was any hope, it lay with them.

Orwell's division was almost precisely replicated in East Germany decades later, where about one percent belonged to the General Secretariat of the Communist Party, and another 13% being far less powerful party members.

As we move towards — and even surpass — the fictional bad dreams of Orwell or Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, it is helpful to remember that these nightmares were mainly the curse of elites rather than of those who lived in the quaint, primitive manner of normal humans.

This bifurcation of society into a weak, struggling, but sane, mass and a manic depressive elite alternately vicious and afraid, unlimited and imprisoned, foreshadows what we find today — leaders willing, on the one hand, to occupy any corner of the world and, on the other, terrified of young men with box cutters.

Similarly, many years ago some people built castles, walled cities and moats to keep the bad guys out. It worked for a while, but sooner or later spies and assassins figured how to cross the moats and opponents learned how to climb the walls and send balls of fire into protected compounds. The Florentines even catapulted dead donkeys and feces over the town wall during their siege of Siena.

The people who built castles and walled cities and moats are all dead now and their efforts at security seem puny and ultimately futile - unintended monuments to the vanity of human presumption.

Yet like the castle-dwellers behind the moats, our elite is now spending huge sums to put themselves inside prisons of their own making.

For example, the densest concentration in America of police per acre is around the US Capitol. For a number of years I lived six blocks away and I would tell people I could show them exactly where the War on Terror ended: on Second Street. No one cared if a terrorist lurked in my alley, but a couple of blocks from the Capitol the cement barriers flourished, the guards were on alert, and instantly elevated blockades beneath the street marked the division between former and current America. The police even moved a bus route two blocks, so if a bomb were aboard it would kill ordinary homeowners and not members of Congress.

A CREATIVE IRONY

Strange as it may seem, it is in this dismal dichotomy between countryside and our political and economic capitals that the hope for saving America's soul resides. The geographical and conceptual parochialism of the castle dwellers who have made this mess leaves vast acres of our land still free in which to nurture hopes, dreams, and perhaps even to foster the eventual eviction of those who have done us such wrong.

Because of this, the role of the local in American life has assumed an enormous, yet still largely unrecognized, role. It is no longer just about sensible communities, friends, ecology, or wise buying habits.

Sadly, however, liberal America has become increasingly federocentric, assuming that those speaking of states or local rights are just rightwing nuts. This ignores the history of every important progressive movement in America: from abolitionists, to populists, labor unions, environmentalists, and the advocates of civil rights. Indeed, devolution was a key principle of the 1960s. In each case, success was based not on playing the elite's game but on mass decentralized organizing and pressure. Few things scare national politicians more than people getting together.

One standard objection liberals have to devolution is that it is too similar to the principle of states' rights, which they believe was central to the Civil War. James W. Loewen in the *Washington Post**, recently corrected that:

“Confederate states did claim the right to secede, but no state claimed to be seceding for that right. In fact, Confederates opposed states' rights — that is, the right of Northern states not to support slavery...Slavery, not states' rights, birthed the Civil War...They objected that New England states let black men vote and tolerated abolitionist societies. According to South Carolina, states should not have the right to let their citizens assemble and speak freely when what they said threatened slavery. The South's opposition to states' rights is not surprising. Until the Civil War, Southern presidents and lawmakers had dominated the federal government. The people in power in Washington always oppose states' rights. Doing so preserves their own.”

The role of the local in American life has assumed an enormous, yet still largely unrecognized, role. It is no longer just about sensible communities, friends, ecology, or wise buying habits.

And so, largely thanks to this misconception, liberals have turned the devolution of power into a gift to the right. Instead of fighting over how devolution should be done, the right of the federal government is considered in every case the preferred course. Thus we find such absurd interpretations as a recent federal judge who said the state of Vermont had no power to regulate the safety of its nuclear plants because that was a federal responsibility.

Arthur J. Versluis wrote in *Modern Age*** about Thomas Jefferson's thoughts on the matter:

“Every state again is divided into counties, each to take care of what lies within its local bounds; each county again into townships or wards, to manage minuter details; and every ward into farms, to be governed each by its individual proprietor...It is by this partition of cares descending in gradation from general to particular that the mass of human affairs may be best managed for the good and prosperity of all.”

Jefferson was not alone. Alexis de Tocqueville also spoke of “the political effects of decentralization that I most admire in America.”

As late as 1992, the one hundred largest localities in America pursued an estimated 1,700 environmental crime prosecutions, more than twice the number of such cases that had been brought by the federal government in the previous decade. And as Congress was vainly struggling to get a handle on the tobacco industry, 750 communities passed indoor no-smoking laws.

But, at the top, power was going the other way. For example, the number of elected school boards in America declined from more than 80,000 in 1950 to less than 14,000 today.

THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDIARITY

The most sensible way to think about this is the principle of subsidiarity — the idea that government should be carried out at the lowest practical level. This is complex, to be sure, and repeatedly debatable but that's what politics is meant to be about — negotiating the complex rather than merely passing regulations that ignore the complex and pretend it doesn't exist.

Subsidiarity can even work within the federal government. I learned about this as an officer in the Coast Guard back before

the wars on drugs and terror sadly changed its assignments. In the early 1960s, the Coast Guard had 1,800 units, 30,000 enlisted personnel and only 3,000 officers. All around the country were lighthouses and lifesaving stations run by enlisted personnel who might not see an officer for six months at a time and never see anyone from Washington. Yet the Coast Guard was among the most highly regarded federal agencies.

What made it work was that it not only had the power of the federal government behind it, but understood that it also had to serve the communities in which it was stationed. Thus, I felt as if the cutter on which I was operations officer was not only a federal vessel but the flagship of the town of Bristol, Rhode Island - and that I was responsible to both.

I began collecting similar examples of federal decentralization including US Attorneys, the National Park Service, local postal carriers, and State Department charge d'affaires in cities outside the foreign capital where the US ambassador functioned. Interestingly, these examples are generally among the least criticized of federal agencies but also, unfortunately, the least seldom mentioned as models.

We could easily expand such practices at the federal level, but the devolution of federal powers regrettably is not on the table right now. Trapped between corruption, confusion and incompetence, Washington is incapable of reform. So it is up to us.

The amazingly successful one day assault on the anti-Internet bills is proof that it is still possible. I can't think of another example in our history in which so many national politicians changed their positions for the better in such a short time as a direct result of public protest.

The Occupier movement, the revolts against a national ID and the Citizens United decision are other examples of the potential.

ACTING ON THE POTENTIAL OF THE LOCAL

But it involves far more than protest. It requires a clear willingness at the state and local level to stand up for those constitutional powers that do not belong to the federal government, not to surrender these powers in order to get some federal greenmail dollars, and — most importantly — to begin to define America

*The best place to start is with one's town or neighborhood. What do we want? How do we make that clear?
What do we think? How do we get others to hear? Who are our friends? How do we stay in touch?
How do we bring them near?*

from a local position rather than based on values foisted upon us by corrupt national pols, media and corporations.

It's not just a political matter; it is also cultural. Some places understand this naturally, place as different as San Francisco, New Orleans and Maine that have been notably successful at not only defining their own values but making sure everyone knows it. And this cultural power can translate into political clout as well. I first noticed this in Washington when it was clear that city politicians didn't really want to mess with certain neighborhoods. The reason: they were too well organized.

Which is why I argued, albeit without success, that every neighborhood should create its own plan, written according to its own rules, consensus and values, before citywide urban planners got on the case. What are the most valuable places and buildings in the 'hood? What matters to us? Who requires help? What does the neighborhood need most? Developer buddies of the mayor would rank low in every neighborhood that asked such questions. And while politicians are often bullies, bullies are often cowards if they are just confronted.

Every town and every state in America should do something similar. For example, our national policy is to conduct hyper expensive wars in strange places for no good reason. This is hurting the wallet of locality. What if all the places and states where a majority oppose such national stupidity put it on record just as an increasing number of places are doing with Citizens United?

Less grand, but just as important, is for local voices to come together. In the past few decades a once popular emphasis on coalition building has withered. Yet coalitions are essential for a louder sound. And among the most powerful are coalitions that concentrate on one issue and cut across class and ethnicity.

There also needs to be a greater realization of the degree to which the federal government has come to interfere with state and local government through greenmail i.e. "Yeah, we know it's not in the Constitution, but if you want any money, you have to do it our way." For example the federal government's badly conceived education intrusions are based, in the case of New York, on giving the state merely one third of one percent of its school budgets.

For over two hundred years public education was a local matter, but then the education industry saw money in a test-obsessed system and the whole game changed. Admittedly, it's hard to look a gift bribe in the mouth, but recently, for example,

Hawaiian teachers did just that — 67% of them voting not to accept a Race to the Top contract.

The best place to start is with one's town or neighborhood. What do we want? How do we make that clear? What do we think? How do we get others to hear? Who are our friends? How do we stay in touch? How do we bring them near?

The Internet, which has too often been used by activists only for clicktivism, i.e. applying the simplistic notions of marketing to the web, remains a huge potential tool. It is a way to keep track of what others are doing, finding common ground, and launching joint action of which the recent SOPA web blackouts were a dramatic example.

In the end, however, what really matters is that we understand that those supposed to be leading America have in too many cases seceded morally, politically, and culturally from our country and it is left to us — in our towns, counties and states, to redefine and change our nation the way it should be. In short, America, as well as lettuce, must be locally grown.

* James W. Loewen, "Five myths about why the South seceded." *Washington Post*, January 3, 2011.

** Arthur Versluis, "The Revolutionary Conservatism of Jefferson's "Small Republics." *Modern Age* 47 (2006) 1:4-17.



SAM SMITH

editor of the online *Progressive Review*, has been editing alternative journals since 1964, longer than almost anyone in the country. Before moving to Maine in 2009, he covered Washington during nine of America's presidencies - as long as almost anyone in the capital. He is the author of four books, three

at the request of editors. Smith has served as an elected DC neighborhood commissioner, a school parents' association president, a founding member of the DC Community Humanities Council, president of the Wolfe's Neck Farm Foundation in mid-coast Maine, Coast Guard officer, and, for four decades, a semi-professional musician.

How the COMMONS Can Bring Us a Greener, Saner, More Enjoyable FUTURE

Welcome to the commons.

The term may be unfamiliar, but the idea has been around for centuries. The commons is a new use of an old word, meaning what we share — and it offers fresh hope for a saner, safer, more enjoyable future.

The commons refers to a wealth of valuable assets that belong to everyone. These range from clean air to wildlife preserves; the judicial system to the Internet; informal social networks that hold communities together to the genetic building blocks of life. Some are bestowed to us by nature; others are the product of cooperative human creativity. Certain elements of the commons are entirely new — think of Wikipedia and the Occupy protests that swept the world last fall (more on that below). Others are centuries old — like colorful words and phrases from the planet's languages.

Anyone can use the commons so long as there is enough left for everyone else. This is why finite commons such as natural resources must be sustainably and equitably managed. But many other forms of the commons can be freely tapped. Today's Hip Hop and rock stars, for instance, appropriate the work of soul singers, jazz swingers, blues wailers, gospel shouters, hillbilly pickers, folk performers, and songwriters going back many years — and we are all richer for it. That's the greatest strength of the commons. It's an inheritance shared by all humans, which increases in value as people draw upon its riches.

At least that's how the commons has worked throughout history, fostering democratic, cultural, technological, medical, economic and humanitarian advances that enhance our lives. But this natural cycle of sharing is now under assault. As the market economy is glorified as the ultimate tool for measuring the worth of everything, more and more people are grabbing portions of the commons as their private property. Many essential elements of society—from ecosystems to scientific knowledge to public institutions — are slipping through our hands and into the pockets of the rich and powerful.

THE WEALTH WE LOST

One example of what we're losing comes right out of today's headlines about spiraling health care costs. The creation of many widely-prescribed drugs, which millions of people depend upon, were funded in large part by government grants. But exclusive rights to sell pharmaceuticals developed from this public research was handed over to private drug companies with almost nothing asked in return. That means we pay exorbitant prices for medicine developed with our tax dollars, and many poor people around the world are denied access to treatments that might save their lives.

Another even more absurd example concerns a subject that you would think stirs no controversy — yoga. Through centuries of evolution as a spiritual practice in India, any new poses or techniques were automatically incorporated into the tradition for everyone to use. But beginning in 1978 an Indian named Bikram Choudbury, now based in Beverly Hills, copyrighted certain long-used Hatha yoga poses and sequences as his own invention, Bikram Yoga, and he now threatens other yoga studios teaching these techniques with lawsuits.

JAY WALLJASPER

The commons refers to a wealth of valuable assets that belong to everyone.

Neighborhood activists eager to revitalize their neighborhood and protect open space are setting up land trusts — a form of community ownership distinct from both private property and government management

Jonathan Rowe — a journalist who was an early champion of the commons and co-founder of a local commons organization in California — notes that the loss of what we share often goes unnoticed. “The value of the commons is beyond reckoning. Yet because there is little acknowledgment of its value in our culture and no legal framework to protect it, the commons is subject to constant invasion, theft, and abuse.”

PROTECTING WHAT BELONGS TO US

The good news is that people all around us are beginning to take back the commons. Neighbors rising up to keep their library open, improve their park, or find new funding for their public schools. Greens fighting the draining of wetlands and the dumping of toxic waste in inner city communities. Digital activists providing access to the Internet in poor communities and challenging corporate plans to limit access to information. Indigenous people instilling their children with a sense of tradition and hope. Young social entrepreneurs and software engineers seeking new mechanisms for people to share ideas.

The Occupy encampments that riveted the world last fall were very much in the spirit of the commons. First of all, Zuccotti Park and the other public spaces being occupied were literally commons — places that belong to all of us even if someone else technically “owns” them. The elaborate support system created by tens of thousands of people to feed, shelter, protect and sustain the movement stand as a textbook examples of the commons in action — an uprising of collaboration in which people shared time, resources, knowledge and hope for the greater good. The inclusive feel of the Occupy sites — even blue-shirt police were regarded as part of the 99 percent — contrasted with the us vs. them divisions common in protest actions since the 1960s. This explains why the occupations were so effective in getting ordinary Americans concerned about the escalating disparities of wealth in our society.

At the heart of each Occupy encampment lies an unwavering commitment to participatory decision making, which is one of the three foundational principles of the commons movement along with economic equity and environmental sustainability.

Those other two principles were the primary message of Occupy. Another word for “the 99 percent” is “commoners”, the great majority of people whose needs have been trampled by the global economic regime that exalts the market above every other human instinct and virtue.

PARALLELS TO THE DAWN OF ENVIRONMENTALISM

While the commons movements represents a fresh approach to politics and culture, it bears a striking resemblance to the another social force that won the hearts of everyday people and fostered significant social progress: the environmental movement of the 1970s. Until the first Earth Day in 1970, there was little talk about ecology or the Greening of anything. There was, however, a lot of concern about air pollution, pesticides, litter, the loss of wilderness, declining wildlife populations, the death of Lake Erie, toxic substances oozing into rivers, oil spills fouling the oceans, lead paint poisoning inner city kids, suburbia swallowing up the countryside, mountains of trash piling up in landfills and unsustainable farming practices ravaging the land. Yet the phrase “environment”, did not become a household word until the first Earth Day — April 22, 1970. Bringing an assortment of issues together under the banner of environmentalism highlighted the connections between what until then had been seen as separate causes, and fueled the unexpected growth of the environmental movement.

The commons offers the same promise of uniting people concerned about the common good in many forms — from social justice to ecology to community life to digital democracy to cultural vitality—into a new kind of movement that reshapes how people think about the nature of ownership and the importance of collaboration in modern society.

A NEW WAY OF THINKING AND LIVING

More than only a philosophical and political framework for understanding what’s gone wrong, the commons furnishes us a toolkit of practical solutions. Neighborhood activists eager to revitalize their neighborhood and protect open space are setting up land trusts—a form of community ownership distinct from

*More than only a philosophical and political framework for understanding what’s gone wrong,
the commons furnishes us a toolkit of practical solutions*

both private property and government management. Savvy web users use the cooperative properties of the Internet itself to challenge corporations who want to undermine this shared resource by fencing it off for private gain. Villagers and city dwellers around the world assert that water is a commons, which cannot be sold, depleted or controlled by anyone.

These kinds of efforts extend the meaning of the commons beyond something you own to the bigger idea of how we live together. Peter Linebaugh, a preeminent historian of the commons, has coined the word “commoning” to describe the growing roster of efforts he sees to protect and strengthen the things we share. “I want to stress the point that the commons is an activity rather than just a material resource,” he says. “That brings in the essential social element of the commons.”

David Bollier, one of the leading theorists of the commons on the international stage, defines the term as a social behavior more than a physical thing. “A commons arises whenever a given community decides it wishes to manage a resource in a collective manner, with special regard for equitable access, use and sustainability. It is a social form that has long lived in the shadows of our market culture, and now is on the rise,” he wrote in the British political journal *Renewal*.

Julie Ristau and Alexa Bradley, organizers with extensive experience working with community groups, find that many people have internalized the competitive ethos of the market mentality so fully that in their minds any cooperative action is doomed to fail. They’re losing the ability to even think of working together. Yet at the same time, Ristau and Bradley detect in many others, “a broad yearning for hope, connection and restoration of some kind. We see a remarkable array of efforts to reconstitute community, to re-localize food, to move toward cooperative economics, to better harmonize our lives with the health of our planet. These efforts spring from a deep human need and desire for a different ways of interacting and organizing resources that will help us reconstitute our capacity for shared ownership, collaboration and stewardship.”

Hope is now spreading that we can move gradually in the direction of a commons-based society, where the fundamental focus on competition that characterizes life today would be balanced with new awareness and social structures that foster cooperation. This vision is emerging at precisely the point we need it most. Deeply held myths of the last 30 years about the magic of the market have not withstood the implosion of the global financial bubble, creating both an opening and an acute need for new ways of living.

Deliverance from current economic and ecological calamities will require more than administering a few tweaks to the operating system we use to run our society. A complete retooling is needed. Some would call this a “paradigm shift”— a reexamination of the core principles that guide our culture top-to-bottom and chart the direction we are headed. At this historical moment the vision of a commons-based society, which elevates “we” to the same level as “me,” shines as a beacon of hope for a better world.

WHERE TO FIND THE COMMONS?

From DNA to Dance Steps, it's all around!

Air & Water

The Internet

Parks, libraries, streets & sidewalks

Our DNA

Blood banks, soup kitchens, 12-step groups, museums, non-profit organizations

Dance steps & fashion trends

Social Security, the National Weather Service, police protection & other public services

Fishing & hunting

Public airwaves (radio, television, cell phone)

Christmas, Halloween, Yom Kipper, Ramadan, Mardi Gras & all Holiday traditions

Poker, hopscotch & soccer

Biodiversity

Aspirin, acupuncture & herbal remedies

Publicly funded medical & scientific research

Wikipedia

Robin Hood, Pocahontas, & the Little Mermaid (but not Mickey Mouse)

Volunteer fire departments

Rock 'n' roll, jazz, hip-hop, classical music

Sushi, pizza, Mexican cuisine & family recipes

The jump shot, kimonos, bookkeeping systems & the Heimlich maneuver,

Open source software

Jokes, fairy tales, slang & anecdotes

The Bible, Koran, Kabala, Upanishads & other sacred texts

The oceans, Antarctica & outer space



JAY WALLJASPER

editor of *OnTheCommons.org*, is the author of *All That We Share: A Field Guide to the Commons* (The New Press). His website: www.JayWalljasper.com

Americans Act *to* Make CREATIVE POLITICS *Possible*

ROB RICHIE

We live in a time of immense challenges, amidst international upheaval, ecological imbalance and economic uncertainty. Humanity's capacity to improve lives may never have been greater, yet it is matched by new powers to destroy and divide. Unfortunately, our government has failed to meet these challenges. Despite Americans' obvious hunger for political change, too many of us are stuck with a "lesser of two evils" choice where no viable candidate speaks for them. Decisions to vote are motivated far more by fear than by hope.

Perhaps it's no surprise, then, that even as the Greens and others do pursue electoral politics, many of our nation's most fervent and astute believers in change abandon representative democracy and any hope to win seats and transform government power and policy. Instead they focus on non-electoral organizing, from high-profile movements like Occupy Wall Street to the less noticed, yet indispensable work of protecting and securing local progress.

SEEK TO MAKE GOVERNMENT AN ALLY

Their efforts are worthy, of course, but the experience of other nations and some local governments show that such efforts' effectiveness is greatest when combined with electoral politics. Engaging with the people of a community, state or nation in the enterprise of seeking votes and winning representation provides a means to build public support and, ultimately, make a government an ally in seeking change. In clashes between corporate power and people, it's better to have government on your side as an instrument of the public good. Given the power and influence of the U.S. government, that's more true of the United States than perhaps any other country.

The glaring disconnect between the urgent demands of the times and the passion and talent of American activists on the one hand, and our narrow, depressingly static electoral politics on the other is rooted in outdated voting and governing laws that discourage creativity, depress competition, diminish debate and destroy accountability. Those rules must be changed - -and can be changed with focus and smarts, given the widespread understanding that our political system no longer functions well even at its most basic level.

It's time for electoral reforms designed to embrace the beauty and power of people coming together for the common good. Even if activists from the Tea Party, No Labels, Occupy and less publicized movements may not agree on solutions, we would all benefit from translating their energy into a voice in government and new policy proposals. Fair elections demand real choices no matter where you live. Real representation means being able to join with like-minded people to elect candidates in proportion to your voting strength. Private money must not exaggerate the power of the few. Democracy rests on our ongoing participation.

Certainly other nations have long ago stopped imitating the American model. Nearly all democracies hold at least one of their national legislative elections with proportional representation rather than winner-take-all rules that exclude so many people from

*It's time for electoral reforms designed to embrace the beauty and power
of people coming together for the common good.*

sharing power. When they elect presidents who wield real power, no well-established nation has an Electoral College and few have plurality voting. Instead they have a national popular vote with a majority requirement, thereby making every vote equal and avoiding “spoiler” effects. They typically have automatic voter registration and establish an affirmative right to vote in their constitution, removing access to suffrage from crass partisan calculations. They often provide free access to public airwaves and other means to provide equity in spending, that do much to check the influence of big money when combined with proportional representation systems that weaken the stronghold of swing voters who are most prone to be affected by campaign ads.

In short, these nations do far better at living up to the motto of my organization FairVote: respect for every vote and every voice. Talking with young people from emerging democracies with such rules provides a marked contrast with talking with young Americans about elections. Their national governments and level of democracy may be far from perfect, but they have hope about the future and passion for understanding the impact of different rules. They believe that elections and politics matter. It's a far cry from the virtual eye-rolling of so many American students who can't even believe you're serious when talking about elections as a meaningful route to change.

THE CORE REFORM: PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

The foundation for a more vital electoral democracy is replacing winner-take-all elections with forms of proportional representation (PR) that are constitutional in the United States and already used in some local elections. Although PR remains new to many Americans, the international trend is decidedly away from winner-take-all rules and toward PR. Even our own political forerunner, the United Kingdom, has adopted PR for electing representatives to the European Parliament, the Scottish and Wales regional assemblies, the London City Council and Scottish local councils.

As the Arab Spring movement takes root, its most democratized countries are adopting forms of proportional representation, just as was true of Eastern Europe nations after the fall of the Communist bloc. Indeed, the degree of proportionality in an emerging democracy is usually the best thermometer of how democratic that nation truly has become.

PR is used loosely to describe a variety of forms. Some involve voting for candidates and others for parties. Some involving lowering the threshold of support necessary to win to below 5% of the vote, and others have much higher effective thresholds. Some essentially drop geography as a means of defining representation, while others keep a geographic definition through using relatively small “multi-seat” districts or having a mixed system that combine our single-seat districts with PR. Within this range, the common thread is that more voters elect a preferred candidate from a broader spectrum of choices, and like-minded voters (be it a party or some other measure of common views) win representation in close relation to their share of the vote. Winning a majority of more than 50% of the vote should result in winning a majority of seats, but not all seats. Ten percent of the vote means one out of ten seats and 25% of the vote means one out of four. The great majority of voters who have good sense of what they want in a representative will likely help that candidate win, making representative government more truly representative. In South Africa's first post-apartheid elections, a party won a seat with just 1/400th of the vote and 99% of voters helped elect representatives.

American forms of PR typically involve voting for candidates in multi-seat districts. In Cambridge (MA), they have a ranked choice voting system where earning the strong support of just over 10% of the vote earns a seat on the nine-member city council. In 2009, a young Asian American grad student ran a strong campaign using new forms of social networking, and surprised the old guard by earning a seat. In 2011, he ended up earning

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the most first choices and won easily. Indeed, the Cambridge city council has had a person of color on its council for more than a half-century, and always represents people with a mix of opinions and from a mix of neighborhoods. Similar systems include cumulative voting, now used in Peoria (IL) and Amarillo (TX) after being adopted to settle voting rights cases and used for more than a century (from 1870 to 1980) to elect the Illinois House of Representatives, during which time nearly every corner of the state always had representatives of both major parties .

Germany, New Zealand and Scotland are among many nations that have a mix of PR seats and district seats. People vote for a local representatives and their party of choice, with the legislature ultimately reflecting the party vote. Roughly speaking, a district's geographic orientation gives representation based on where you live, while PR elections gives representation based on what you think. These approaches are not mutually exclusive and can be complementary. The bicameral structure of nearly all our state legislatures provides an easy opening for such a mixed system, we could use geographic-based representation via winner-take-all districts in a state Senate and proportional representation where voters win representation based on what they think in the lower house.

Congress could impose proportional voting for U.S. House elections with a simple change in federal law. That's not likely soon, but it at least could repeal the 1967 law mandating single-member districts, restoring states with the power to try different systems, as they regularly did before 1967. We also need to be more ambitious in seeking PR in cities. Greens can start in ones where they already have won with winner-take-all elections — sharing power is good precedent, and ensures an ongoing seat at the table. They also could join with racial minorities in seeking PR systems in lawsuits brought under the Voting Rights Act to

change exclusionary, winner-take-all voting systems and team with backers of more women in office, as PR consistently results in more women running and winning. I'd also like to see a serious conversation about identifying a state with initiative rights — let's say Maine or Montana — for a sustained effort to build a movement ready to go for a statewide ballot measure to replace winner-take-all elections with proportional voting.

REFORMS THAT ENHANCE PROPORTIONAL VOTING AND A ROADMAP FOR CHANGE

We can do much to begin the transition from our two-party duopoly to a system where voters have real choice among more parties and independents. Other reforms that would advance this vision include universal/automatic voter registration to boost turnout and changes that give more candidates the ability to reach voters (like access to the airwaves, public financing and better voter guides. The National Popular Vote plan for president is a remarkable state-based effort that shows every promise to result in the 2016 presidential election being governed by a national popular vote for president, with every vote equal in every state — and a whole new conversation about how we can modernize voting and uphold voting rights to catch up with the rest of the world on guaranteeing suffrage.

The reform with the closest connection to PR is the need for a better system for electing one-winner offices (like governors, mayor, U.S. Senators and legislators in one-seat districts). Reformers have made great headway in winning the instant runoff voting form of ranked choice voting (RCV) which eliminates “spoiler” talk from political conversation and upholds majority rule in a one-winner election. RCV allows voters to rank candidates in order of choice (a first, second and third) and uses those rankings to simulate a traditional runoff elections. Often grounded in the work of local Greens, RCV has been used now in more than a

The bicameral structure of nearly all our state legislatures provides an easy opening for a mixed system [of proportional representation].

dozen cities, including San Francisco, Oakland, Minneapolis and Portland (ME).

RCV is a winner-take-all system, but it liberates voters to indicate their true preferences and boosts candidates who work hard at grassroots, neighborhood-based politics. An ongoing pattern in local RCV elections is that big money's influence is weakened. It turns out that the best way to secure first and second choices is through direct interaction. Knocking on doors and looking people in the door and attending local events can show people that you will listen a, even if they disagree with you. Meanwhile, the traditional big money tactics of highly negative attacks on opponents are less effective when you have more than one opponent—you may knock down support for one candidate, but that doesn't necessarily help you win.

RCV is at a key point in its reform trajectory. Advocates regularly are successful in making the case for change. Every election made controversial due to “spoilers” claims — from high-profile presidential campaigns (including likely 2012) to local races — demonstrates how plurality, “first place takes all” voting elections simply are not equipped to handle having more than two candidates. Traditional runoffs uphold majority rule, but present other problems — low voter turnout, increased campaign finance demands and more administrative costs. When on the ballot where the status quo is exposed as a problem, RCV typically wins big — more than 65% in cities like Memphis (TN), Sarasota (FL), Santa Fe (NM), Oakland and Minneapolis. It can make sense to charter commissions and policymakers, including leading major party representatives like Barack Obama, John McCain and Howard Dean.

But advocates are under-funded, and every use of RCV is measured by local partisans by a simple yardstick: did their side win? When not, they can finger the “exotic” new system and attack it before it becomes firmly settled as part of a city's politics.

That alone wouldn't necessarily be a problem, but we also must work hard simply to implement RCV: fighting with voting equipment refusing to implement it and overburdened election officials not wanting to take on new tasks. But if we can sustain and steadily expand RCV's use, those administrative hurdles will soon disappear. With a straight choice between the status quo and RCV that doesn't include new costs, we will win.

Indeed, I believe we can win all of the reforms FairVote advocates far sooner than most people believe. Change breeds change, and our politics has reached a breaking point: current rules just don't work when the major parties are so polarized and when new voices are shut out. In the midst of all our non-electoral priorities and efforts to make progress within the current rules, we must keep our eye on the electoral reform ball: with smarts, good timing and resources, we can make the United States the truly representative democracy so urgently needed as we move forward into a perilous, but promising future.



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IDEOLOGY *and the* OCCUPY MOVEMENT

STEVE WELZER

OWS seeks to inspire solidarity among We the People — “the 99%” — urging a majoritarian crusade for progressive social change.

The springing up of signage promoting the ideas of thinkers as disparate as Ron Paul, Cornel West, Ted Trainer, Paul Krugman, and Naomi Klein at the OWS encampments calls into question the long-term viability of the “99% solidarity” strategy.

The ongoing economic crisis has been creating deep anxieties among the majority of citizens. We find ourselves inundated with news stories about soaring governmental debt, questionable wars sopping up trillions of dollars, unfunded future obligations (re: Social Security, Medicare, private pension programs), huge disparities of wealth and income, joblessness eroding the middle class, taxpayer dollars being used to bail out large banks, and millions of citizens losing, or having already lost, their homes.

The Occupy Wall Street (OWS) movement arose in response to those concerns. The movement has spread to over 1500 towns and cities in all parts of the country. It points to “the 1%” at the top (members of the wealth/power elite, especially those who derive their largesse from the corporations and big finance) as culprits in the drama of economic calamity and injustice. OWS seeks to inspire solidarity among We the People — “the 99%” — urging a majoritarian crusade for progressive social change.

There is an idea that the effectiveness of the movement will depend upon forging a maximally inclusive alliance of citizens. But this raises certain questions: Is it possible to focus concerns that cut across and connect the various layers among “the 99%” (the disadvantaged, the middle classes, the working class, minorities, professionals, intellectuals, students, etc.)? Can demands be kept general enough? Can ideological divisions be avoided?

Only time will tell. The sentiment is certainly understandable and the effort to employ an inclusive discourse is commendable. But there are indications that it may be naïve. The springing up of signage promoting the ideas of thinkers as disparate as Ron Paul, Cornel West, Ted Trainer, Paul Krugman, and Naomi Klein at the OWS encampments calls into question the long-term viability of the “99% solidarity” strategy.

Perhaps even more of a concern than ideological contention is the noticeable lack of ideological clarity within the movement. “I’ve come to favor Ron Paul’s libertarianism because he’s staunchly anti-militaristic.” “I’ll be voting socialist this year in order to send a message that we need a radical redistribution of wealth.” But socialism is not primarily about redistribution and libertarianism is not necessarily anti-militaristic. In fact, something is askew when we see Occupy participants putting forward Ron Paul as the candidate of peace and freedom!

My own sense is that it won’t be too long before the Occupy movement realizes that ideological questions must be addressed. Beyond sentiments for peace, freedom, justice, and democracy (which all the modern political ideologies claim to embrace) lie irreconcilable perspectives regarding fundamental issues such as property relations and the role of government in a modern industrial economy.

Socialism asserts that a pre-condition for overcoming plutocracy is collective ownership of the means of production within the context of a planned economy. How many Occupy activists who identify as socialists really advocate full-scale socialization of the economy? Anarchists, while offering no consistent formulation in regard to property

relations, disparage the centralized structures associated with economic planning. Liberals believe that enterprises are best run privately . . . as long as the federal government provides a strong countervailing regulatory environment. Libertarians have no faith whatsoever in the federal government to do much in the way of regulating or planning or social engineering. And then there are the Greens . . . who question the very essence of an industrial economy/industrial state!

At a high level of generality there can sometimes be feelings of solidarity among the partisans of different ideological camps. But it might not take much more than a pending national election for specifics to start to fissure the Occupy movement, calling into question the “very broad tent” strategy. Some are likely to prioritize support for Obama over movement solidarity. Some will advocate for an independent candidate as the electoral expression of the Occupy worldview. Others will argue against getting involved in the election at all, seeing it as a distraction from the mass movement.

Meanwhile a sizeable percentage of the electorate will be backing the Republican candidate. It’s evident that the left views “Occupy” as a left-wing phenomenon (based on its criticism of corporate domination and the prevalence of anti-capitalist rhetoric), but, of course, only a small minority of the citizenry identify as left-wing. So either the left is misinterpreting the situation or “the 35%” (of the population that votes right-wing) will ultimately voice their alienation and subtract themselves out of the equation!

In any event, initial OWS attempts to avoid ideology and partisan politics are likely to give way to the reality that social change movements eventually must arrive at some degree of solution-specificity and ideological clarity. Calling out “the 1%” has been good, effective P.R. — and makes sense on a certain level — but it doesn’t much advance the movement programmatically. The next phase may very well have to get beyond that kind of imagery and generalized critique. Friends of the Occupy movement should be encouraging the development of distinctive prescriptions which lead to a coherent vision of a better society.



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OWS AT PRINCETON

As a life-long activist I sensed early on that OWS has the potential to shake the foundations of the status quo in a way that few other recent movements have been able to do... and I wanted to get involved. I was girding myself for long train rides to participate with the encampments in New York or New Brunswick. Why? Because I live near Princeton, NJ. The joke around here is that the last time our area might have been considered a hotbed of progressive radicalism was when Washington’s troops were turning the revolutionary tide against the British!

So I was not the only one taken aback when a very active and dynamic Occupy Princeton group sprang up last fall. General Assemblies started on campus in November. An early indication of the creativity of the group was the fact that their initial actions garnered widespread press coverage ranging from the Daily Princetonian to the Trenton Times to the Wall Street Journal to the International Herald Tribune!

In early December recruiters from J.P. Morgan and Goldman Sachs descended upon the campus to start the process of enrolling future financiers. However, instead of encountering docile disciples they were confronted with well-prepared activists intent upon “Occupying the Info Sessions.” Protesters filed into both information sessions under the pretense of being prospective applicants. They listened politely as the recruiters explained the nature of the work and the size of the potential bonuses.

But during the Q-and-A periods a lot of very pointed questions got asked! Then, before staging a dramatic walk-out from each session, the demonstrators concluded with a “mic check” in which one occupier stood up to address the recruiters and audience with a teach-in type presentation critiquing the malpractices of these Wall Street Mammons. The rest of the protestors followed their lead, repeating each line of the presentation to create a call-and-response effect throughout the room. They referred to Princeton’s motto — “Princeton in the nation’s service and in the service of all nations” — highlighting how the actions of investment banks and securities firms often violate that motto through unethical behavior.

As the demonstrators then walked out of the room, one of the Goldman Sachs recruiters tried to make light of the situation by saying: “Well, for the 99% of you who would like to stay and take advantage of this employment opportunity, please feel free to do so.” His plea was to little avail, though. When he tried to get the “information session” back on track, he found himself talking to a preponderance of empty seats.

Occupy Princeton has set out to change the culture on campus and they seem to be succeeding. An editorial in the campus newspaper encouraged their efforts: “Princeton has a reputation for political apathy that is perhaps unique among our peer universities. Recently, as part of a movement sweeping college campuses across the country, a group of Princetonians founded a local chapter of Occupy Wall Street, called Occupy Princeton. We applaud a shift away from the apathy that currently reigns on campus ... [B]ecause of the attention Occupy Wall Street has received nationwide, the inroads it has made so far on college campuses, and the broader national climate of political uncertainty out of which it emerged, we think it likely that OWS will have a more meaningful effect than many other groups.”

FINDING THE GREEN FRAME:

George Lakoff's *Political Mind* and the Green Party

George Lakoff, *The Political Mind: A Cognitive Scientist's Guide to Your Brain and Its Politics*. Penguin, 2009 paperback reprint edition, 320 pages

SCOTT MCLARTY

This past summer, some Green Party members opened up a dialogue with economist David C. Korten, who appeared via Skype on a screen before an audience at the party's annual national meeting in Alfred, New York.

During one discussion with a few Greens, Korten said that the Green Party “must find its narrative.” People can grasp political ideas if they're presented as part of a story. This makes sense. It's impossible to think, for example, of the achievement of legal rights for black Americans apart from the dramatic narrative of the Civil Rights movement. Greens need to find their own story that places the party's ideas and experiences as a growing political movement into a context that will enable Americans understand our claim to be the party of the 21st century.

Professor George Lakoff, a cognitive linguist and professor of linguistics at the University of California, Berkeley, has taken this basic idea much further in a series of books, one of which is “The Political Mind: A Cognitive Scientist's Guide to Your Brain and Its Politics.” Like Korten, Lakoff's sympathy is with progressives. He never mentions the Green Party and we can fault him from viewing US politics from within the restrictive two-party prison. Nevertheless, every Green Party member who thinks about how people think about politics should read the book.

A MISTAKE PROGRESSIVES COMMONLY MAKE

According to Lakoff, progressives tend to subscribe to an 18th-century Enlightenment notion of reason, in which people make logical choices, especially political choices such as who to vote for, based on what's in their own best interests. Lakoff says that this tendency among progressives is erroneous, demonstrably so, since Americans very often succumb to ruling-class propaganda and vote against their own interests.

Instead, says Lakoff, people think according to culturally-based conceptual frameworks and systems of metaphor. Reason and intellect are grounded in our emotions and our physical bodies—there is no difference between the mind and the brain. This doesn't mean that humans are irrational. On the contrary, it's rational to be disgusted and outraged by cruelty, murder, greed, and other evils. Our sense of justice and our political ideals are formed with the help of emotions, which are stimulated by the fields of metaphor in which such notions are communicated. Reason often takes place in the unconscious mind, where these mechanisms function most effectively.

Rightwing politicians and their think tanks have already figured this out. They know how to use the language of metaphor to reach and persuade the public. For example, Republicans describe their plans to lower taxes as “tax relief,” evoking a metaphor of “injury” that depicts taxation as an infliction from which we deserve relief, rather than something (when enacted fairly) that benefits all Americans. (An even more blatant

The lack of cultural frames has stymied alternative parties for most of the last century.

[David Korten has reminded Greens that] people can grasp political ideas if they're presented as part of a story.

example is the Republican decision to label estate taxes, which are applied only to millionaires, as a “death tax” that will affect all of us when we die, as if government were a vulture that feeds on our corpses.)

Progressives have been slow to learn the power of metaphor, which Lakoff called “frames” in an earlier and equally useful book, “Don’t Think of an Elephant.” For this reason, Republicans have been able to pull much of the public and most of the Democratic Party over their side when arguing for things like the invasion of Iraq, even when all the logical arguments were on the side of those who opposed President Bush’s war plans. The US troops sent over to depose Saddam Hussein were heroes fighting an evil-doer who, like a comic-book villain, was hiding weapons of mass destruction and conspiring with al-Qaeda to destroy America. When no WMDs were found and everyone realized that the Saddam-Osama conspiracy was implausible, the hero-versus-villain frame was discarded and replaced with one in which US troops were “rescuers” sent to bestow democracy on the beleaguered Iraqi people. Both of these frames leave out details like the drive to control Iraq’s oil supplies and assert political control over a large region of Asia.

OBAMA IN 2008 WAS AN EXCEPTION

While Republicans have excelled at exploiting frames, thanks to PR whizzes like Frank Luntz, Democrats have mostly relied on stale and ambiguous visions like “Bridge to the 21st Century” and “Hope is on the way.” An exception occurred with Barack Obama’s election victory in 2008, in which he was perceived as the conquering hero who delivered us after eight years of GOP misrule and the young “best and brightest” black man who carried the inherited mantle of Martin and Malcolm into the White House. These frames were effective because they convinced voters that Obama was the voice of progressive, antiwar Americans, even though his actual positions showed otherwise.

Logical thinking, dissociated from persuasive frames, motivates Greens to believe that we can convince the voting public to support us simply by communicating our Key Values and platform positions,

along with some debate to support the ideas we stand for. The campaign brochures of Green candidates sometimes look like laundry lists of what they hope to accomplish if elected.

“THE GREEN NEW DEAL” — TURN IT INTO A STORY

The Green New Deal, a useful distillation of Green Party agenda that many Green candidates have adopted as a sort of campaign manifesto, suffers from the same problem. It suggests President Roosevelt’s New Deal, which put millions of Americans to work and boosted productivity during the Great Depression, but this historical framework is a bit meager for people under 80 years old whose experience of the Depression is an essay they wrote for a high-school history class.

Greens running for office on the Green New Deal must find ways to turn it into a story that can involve voters personally and emotionally. I’m not sure how to accomplish this, but placing it in the context of documents that pushed America towards greater democracy and freedom might be a start: Tom Paine’s Common Sense, the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights and passage of various amendments, the Emancipation Proclamation, Seneca Falls Declaration, etc. Or perhaps a grand dramatic action, with an element of civil disobedience, to publicize the Green New Deal in the spirit of Martin Luther’s nailing of his 95 Theses to the door of the Castle Church of Wittenberg in 1517, which touched off the Protestant Reformation.

The lack of cultural frames has stymied alternative parties for most of the last century. The Green Party is foreign to the two-party paradigm in which most Americans think about politics. There is nothing constitutional about exclusive rule by two parties, it’s simply a status quo that most Americans accept as natural.

Lakoff has famously compared the competition between the Republican and Democratic parties as a rivalry between the “strict father” and “nurturant parent” (usually mother) models that come out of the “family” frame in which government is perceived as the parents and citizens are the children. Alternative parties are irrelevant to this frame, just as Iraqi oil was irrelevant within the hero-villain frame used to promote the Iraq War.

[Lakoff makes the point that] our sense of justice and our political ideals are formed with the help of emotions, which are stimulated by the fields of metaphor in which such notions are communicated.

This is why Green participation in elections seems to have the character of an eccentric distant relative who shows up at the front door when the family unit is about to settle down for dinner. When Greens remind other Americans that Green Parties exist and are often quite successful in elections in Europe, it only contributes further to the perception of the party as something foreign.

The spoiler accusation and other reasons people use as arguments not to take the Green Party seriously are informed by the idea that alternative parties are trying to interfere with something as natural as the family. How can the Green Party of the United States persuade people that we don't only offer good ideas, we represent something that is authentically and indispensably part of the American political landscape?

THE PROMISE OF THE OCCUPY MOVEMENT

Greens must overcome the problem by developing our own frames. Occupy Wall Street provides some clues about how that might be accomplished. Occupy demonstrators seem to fit into a common narrative in US history, that of a popular uprising to defy the power of Wall Street and clear away the corruption of corporate-money politics. In the past half century, such uprisings have been marginalized and objections to the power of business elites have been relegated to the Democratic Party's "nurturant parent" function, where such conflicts are resolved by the enactment of a few modest social programs while the power of elites remains unaffected. The Occupy Movement, if it can resist cooptation by Democratic Party front groups like MoveOn.org that would turn it into "Reelect Obama," has the potential to overturn these facades.

Lakoff writes:

"America is about empathy and responsibility: people caring both for themselves and for one another, and acting responsibly on that sense of care...If progressives can stick

to these basics, activate empathy in our fellow citizens, and frame issues so that they notice all the protection and empowerment that government affords in their everyday lives, then we have a fighting chance that the minds and the brains of our countrymen will align once more with the fundamental values and goals of American democracy. We need to say over and over that this is what true patriotism is. Moreover, we need language to evoke the frames that tell us why conservatism is destructive to democracy."

For Greens, enlightening Americans about the destructiveness of Republican-style conservatism isn't enough. We must also enable people to understand that the Democratic Party shares much of the same mindset, even adopting many of the GOP's agenda. Under President Obama, Democrats have devoted themselves to building the US war machine for deployment anywhere around the world for US interests, often on the basis of "preemption" as in the case of Iran's alleged nuclear ambitions. Democratic leaders have also embraced the temptation to slash Social Security and Medicare, legally questionable mandates requiring everyone to purchase private health insurance, offshore drilling along US coasts, new nuclear power plants, privatization of publicly owned resources and services (including military), taxpayer-funded bailouts and virtual impunity for Wall Street firms whose fraud caused the 2008 economic meltdown but minimal assistance for working Americans hurt by the crisis, and too many other examples to be listed here.

In other words, Greens must introduce their own frames to persuade people that politics restricted to two corporate-money parties is un-American and has damaged our country. This will be difficult. According to the usual media script, bipartisanship is good and gridlock is bad. (We could have used a little gridlock when the US Senate confirmed George W. Bush's 2000 election "victory" despite a possible election theft, when

*Rightwing politicians and their think tanks have already figured this out.
They know how to use the language of metaphor to reach and persuade the public.*

Congress was asked to cede war powers to the White House in advance of the invasion of Iraq, and when the Wall Street bailout was first proposed in 2008.)

Greens must also find frames strong enough to penetrate the psychology of progressives who are too relieved to have a Democrat in the White House, too ready to believe he shares their progressive agenda, and too loyal or impressed by his charisma when confronted with the need to register protest. Professor Lakoff shows the same tendencies when he writes in 'The Political Mind', which came out in early 2009, about Barack Obama's impending move into the White House.

It's important to understand that Lakoff is not talking about propaganda, although conceptual frames can be manipulated for such purposes, as the PR successes of the GOP have proved ever since Reagan was elected president in 1980. The flood of deceptive political ads we're likely to see in the 2012 election, thanks to the Supreme Court's 2010 Citizens United decision that removed limits on advertising by corporate PACs on behalf of candidates, will be a crash course on the use of frames. Some are already at work in the GOP primary contest, with Republican candidates accusing each other of being "Washington insiders," which taps into the "federal government is evil" frame favored by Republicans. (Especially Republicans who work in the federal government.)

Rather, Lakoff means patterns of thinking and communicating that are built into our cognitive wiring, just as all humans use grammar when they speak, even though the particular rules and structures of grammar of a language are learned. Cognitive linguists like Lakoff compare their theory of innate brain structure for culturally learned systems of metaphor with Noam Chomsky's transformational-generative grammar, which sparked a revolution in linguistics in the late 1950s.

Lakoff's responses to Chomsky and other "18th-century Enlightenment" linguistics who are skeptical that there exist deep structures for metaphor and frames analogous to grammatical

deep structures will be interesting to those (like me) who enjoy a good academic dispute, but these topics are only a small part of 'The Political Mind' and Green readers shouldn't be put off.

LAKOFF WAXES TOO OPTIMISTIC IN THE FINAL CHAPTER

Lakoff waxes too optimistic in the final chapter, where he looks forward to an era of truth in politics made possible by the New Enlightenment understanding of metaphor and frames advanced by himself and his fellow cognitive linguists. The sophisticated use of frames by rightwing politicians, with the wizardry of Luntz and other PR experts, suggests that deception might become even more pervasive in this era of saturation propaganda. We've seen how easily the Tea Party movement was manipulated by GOP operatives into endorsing remedies based on deeper entrenchment of the very ruinous policies, like Wall Street deregulation, that triggered the recent economic meltdown.

But this is an argument for the Green Party and Green candidates to find more sustained and persuasive ways to bring the Green imperative to the public. 'The Political Mind' is indispensable for Greens who care about how we communicate.



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AMERICANS ARE MAKING WAVES FOR A BETTER FUTURE:

Will the Green Party Catch the Wave?

JOHN RENSENBRINK

One of the more bizarre features of public discourse, or what passes for public discourse in the contemporary mass media, is the placement of the Green Party of the United States on the “far left” of the political spectrum. Sometimes you even hear the Green Party referred to as the “far-out left.”

This is amusing, troubling, and exasperating all at once. Yet, maybe there is hidden in it a tiny kernel of truth from which we can learn. But before getting to that, we should refute the inaccurate description (better called an “epithet” for that is the way it is flung out there). I then turn to how Republicans and Democrats treat political thinking and to how they relate in their prescriptive way to the people of America. In the last part of the article, I have suggestions for the Green Party on how the party might better understand its relation to — and with — the American people.

THE GREEN PARTY VALUES TRANSCEND THE LEFT/RIGHT SPECTRUM

Ten key values unite Greens of every hue across the country and across all the different social and political perspectives within the party. They have been cited in many media outlets for decades: ecological wisdom, personal and social responsibility, grass roots democracy, non-violence, decentralization, community-centered economics, respect for diversity, gender equality, global responsibility, and future focus — or, thinking to the seventh generation (aka sustainability).

These values are “liberal” in the sense of broad-minded and inclusive, but... “far left”? Most of them are as American as apple pie. Some are akin to what the Tea Party has demanded — for example, decentralization. Other values, like gender equality, diversity, sustainability, and grass roots democracy are embraced by the great majority of Americans. Even ecological wisdom is a watchword for most Americans, though it is usually couched in terms of “the environment”. (See Morgen D’Arc’s article on ecological wisdom on page 28 of this issue.)

IT COULD BE THAT THE GREEN VALUES ARE “JUST TOO AMERICAN”

But maybe that’s the problem. The Green Party is too American for the ruling elite of our country and for its paid scribblers. For them, America must be re-shaped. Their desire for America is in the image of a heavy, top-down, bureaucratic, pro-corporate and militarist country. They have skewed the political spectrum so that what had once been noted as the vital center, for example, must now be regarded and pilloried as suspect. Even Nixon’s style of conservatism, which included a proposed guaranteed annual income for all Americans, would now have to be shoved left of center to be in conformity to the faux political spectrum devised by the ruling elite’s scribblers.

The skewing of the spectrum has been accomplished with the help of the Democratic Party. Once that venerable party was capable of producing an FDR, the Kennedys and Martin Luther King, but in subsequent decades it has shamelessly kow-

Thought, understood as a guide to action, leads directly to the question of how thought is related to the life of the people. This question has enormous significance for those who want to change the world. It has enormous significance for a new political voice such as the Green Party.

towed to the definitions of right and left by the reactionaries. The claim Democratic politicians now make to being in or near “the center” is hollow and comical. For what is called the “center” today was well to the right of center some decades ago.

It takes conceptual power to wrench free of the mind-set emanating from the ruling elite and their well-paid scribblers. The latter, with their degrees from the “best schools and universities”, don’t have that conceptual power. That’s clear. They are inherently lazy and arrogantly comfortable in their intellectual squalor. But without having to stretch your mind too far, it’s very clear that a new political spectrum is badly needed. Either the words left and right need to be brought back to some semblance of what they meant 60 to 100 years ago Or a new way of describing and locating political viewpoints is imperative.

A KEY TO WRENCHING FREE FROM THE SKEWED SPECTRUM

A key to wrenching free is to assess as carefully as possible what constitutes a political position or viewpoint. Here’s where I think things have gone astray. Scott McLarty’s review of George Lakoff’s latest book in the article preceding this one provides a clue. Instead of public speech that deals with the actual and concrete realities of people’s lives, the game is to pin your opponent to the wall with a handy epithet — a label that is repeated over and over again until it sticks as a substitute for thought and dialogue. You don’t talk about realities and concrete matters but you bandy about with labels. These labels are encrusted ideological positions presumably set in stone: left, right, center, radical, conservative, liberal, socialist, fascist, communist, anarchist — on and on. “The Green Party is “leftish”. The Green Party is “far out left”. You can hear the scribblers mumble: “There you are, people of America. Enough said. The Greens are poison. Besides which, they’re so far out, no need to pay any attention to them.”

It’s depressing and surprising how many pundits and scholars who think they are free of such cant, actually exhibit a degree of

the same hauteur and put downs of the Green Party. Lofty put downs creep regularly, for instance, into the descriptions of the Green Party in the *New York Times*. A bit of the same is to be found in many progressive publications.

THE OCCUPATION MOVEMENT: SOME FRESH AIR!

A crowning glory of the Occupy Movement is its resolute refusal to set forth a set of “positions”. They have learned well in this. The scribblers would like nothing better than to seize on “goals” and declared positions in order to caricature them as yet another instance of “leftish ideology.” The Occupiers have been careful not to give the scribblers that opportunity. This hasn’t stopped the scribblers, of course, but their typical rhetorical flights and exaggerations have not registered with the public. The reality of the Occupations have not conformed to the labels lavished upon them. It was and is a piece of wise political savvy by the Occupiers to refrain from an assertion of goals and “positions”.

I sense there is a deeper reason for this than the savvy of the Occupiers. It lies in the way they see their relation to the people of America and in the way they see their relation to one another.

They see the relation to the people in an inclusive way. Posing the issue as one between the 99% and an entrenched 1%, they have drawn a line in the sand to be sure, excluding the excessively and stubbornly rich and powerful, but have also included everyone else in an astonishingly effective embrace. It reminds one of the Solidarity movement in Poland in the late 1970s and 1980s.

Equally important is the internal relationship of the Occupy Movement: the vigorous practice of democracy, the care taken to avoid “the big leadership syndrome”, and the insistence that the way to a good society is to live it as much as possible on the way there, and in the struggle to get there.

BY THIS TIME YOU MAY ASK:

But hold!...are you not seeing things too clear? Are you going back on what you have been advocating for years in the pages of Green

Yes, be a catalyst... Think of yourself along the lines of being the helpful lawyer, the helpful physician, the helpful teacher, the helpful coach, and thus emerge as the helpful political leader.

Horizon? Haven't you been advocating for the development of a framework? Recall your issue #22 (Fall/Winter 2010 with the cover proclaiming "Green framework for Ideas, Values, and Action") Isn't this, also, what George Lakoff is calling for as per Scott McLarty's review? Isn't this what your colleague, Steve Welzer, also in this issue, is calling for in his assessment of the Occupy Movement?

My answer hinges on two things: on how to understand the nature of thought; and on how thought relates to the life of the people.

WHAT THOUGHT IS AT ITS BEST

Thought is at its best when it understands itself to be a guide to action. Yet it is often, and wrongly, understood to provide a set of finished explanations for the how and what of life followed by prescriptions for action based on those presumed explanations. That's very different from being a guide to action. Thought at its best is a conversation — a conversation with the world of nature, with the built world, and with the life-world of the people. True enough, thought does like to pounce on these worlds to find patterns and insights but at the same time it is open, experimental, even improvisational, inviting feedback. No closed loops.

In the prescriptive understanding of thought, the prescriptions so easily turn into abstract formulations — into fixed concepts or patterns—into which the life-world must be fitted. Life, though infinitely varied and pulsating with change and new initiatives, is supposed to conform to what is now dictated by the formulations. "The Market" has long been treated like that, not only by many economists, but by the current masters of public policy, both Republicans and Democrats. "Privatization" is treated like that by most Republicans — worshiped as sacred no matter the mayhem and misery it causes. As if in contrasting and parallel mode, government regulation and prescribed rules are treated like that by many if not most Democrats, also causing mayhem and misery.

The result is battle and warfare of words between entrenched positions. Dialogue is squelched at the roots and thus does not happen. Thought is ruined and turns into propaganda.

It's not as if markets, private enterprise, and government regulation are bad and to be shunned. Of course not. But they've been made into super pooh-bah absolutes in the name of which reality, the life world of the people, is forced into tight boxes. But markets, private enterprise, and government regulation are guides and should be treated that way.

Thought as a guide to action is respectful of action and the life-world. Its effort to frame a problem and to frame a way to meet the problem is an offer to think the problem through and assist in finding effective ways to reach a solution.

HOW THOUGHT RELATES TO THE LIFE OF THE PEOPLE: GREEN PARTY TAKE NOTE

Thus, thought as a guide to action leads directly to the question of how thought is related to the life of the people. This question has enormous significance for those who want to change the world. It has enormous significance for a new political voice such as the Green Party.

I mentioned earlier in this article that there may be a hint of truth in the epithet applied to the Green Party, that it is "leftish" and "far left". During the 28 years since the U.S. Green Party got started in 1984, I have noticed in Green circles a tendency to take an heroic posture towards changing the world. The word "heroic" needs explanation.

I've noticed a steady hope and demand on the part of many Green leaders that the Green Party needs to come up with a clear and compelling message to the world. Of itself that is commendable, I would think. But the hope and demand often has an edge. The edge is that the vision, the message, the ideology as some prefer to call it, must be given and promoted to the people and must be given and promoted as something the people now lack.

Such a posture has real problems in it. It assumes that the people are a blank slate. It assumes the people need reshaping. It assumes that the party and the people are separate and external to one another. It assumes an enormous responsibility on the part of the party — a responsibility to take on the full burden of

Even Nixon's style of conservatism, which included a proposed guaranteed annual income for all Americans, would now have to be shoved left of center to be in conformity to the faux political spectrum devised by the ruling elite's scribblers.

history and conduct a kind of crusade for truth, justice, peace, and liberty. And it assumes an inevitable tendency for “the message” to turn into, or be turned into, a set of prescriptions into which the life-world should be molded to fit.

This posture is a sure burn-out for the party activists. Taking the world on their shoulders they must with courage and heroic persistence conduct their campaigns and promotional work hoping to persuade the people to receive and adopt their “message”. This is so like the posture of the left—not only the self-declared “vanguard” left but much of the left in general. It is also, come to think of it, so like the posture of the right.

There is a different way. To start with, be more relaxed. Don't in your exuberance think that it also depends on you and your ego strength. Which also means, don't give yourself airs! Don't get into the embarrassing pretence that you are the one we've all been waiting for.

But more importantly, think of your thought, your vision, your “message” as a guide to action. This necessarily assumes that there already is action “out there”, there is a vibrant, creative life-world out there. The people are not a blank slate! And, also very important, you yourself are part of the people. Think that way. Don't assume a separation. Seek ways to cooperate with the life of the people. Find out and sort out what is already happening. Listen for it, humble yourself a little. Don't think you've got to invent the future! Realize that there is an historical process taking place, that there is an evolutionary development of which you are a part surely, but only a part. You and your buddies in the party are not the whole — learn to figure what is going on and look for things that need help and guidance, and become a catalyst for change. And don't feel that you've got to find the right “frame”. George Lakoff is right to urge us to find and use effective metaphors and stories, as Scott McLarty points out, but I feel he also suffers a bit from some remnants of the heroic complex.

Yes, be a catalyst. That, it seems to me, says it fairly accurately. Not a prescriber, not a bringer of the truth and the ultimate vision, but a catalyst to help enable good things to happen that

would otherwise not happen. Think of yourself along the lines of being the helpful lawyer, the helpful physician, the helpful teacher, the helpful coach, and thus emerge as the helpful political leader.

Several articles in this issue highlight the emergence of a renewed America. Articles by Sam Smith and Jay Walljasper point to and celebrate an immense, albeit quiet, revolution taking place. The local, the self-help, the neighborliness, the creative and ever inventive small business sector, the huge cooperative movement, the care for and caring about the environment by thousands of communities, the increasing pressure of and on local governments to find ways to support projects in the localization of food, energy, banking, transportation, education — all of these and more are at work in America. They tie in directly with something always present in our country, values that are re-affirmed generation after generation. This is the wave that is now beginning to drive America. This is a great opportunity for the Green Party. The opportunity opens wide to be a catalyst, a helpful political leader. Catch the wave!

The next article, an *Open Letter to the American People*, is an illustration of what being a catalyst and guide can look like.



JOHN RENSENBRINK

is co-editor of Green Horizon Magazine. He helped found the U.S. Green Party and the Maine Green Independent Party and remains active in both parties. Among his books is “Against All Odds, the Green transformation of American politics.” He is professor emeritus of Government and Legal Studies at Bowdoin College and lives

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OPEN LETTER

to the American People

KAREN YOUNG & JOHN RENSENBRINK

This proposed Open Letter is the result of a months-long exchange via e-mail between Karen Young and John Rensenbrink. It was stimulated by the keynote (via skype) address by David Korten of Yes! magazine to the Green Party's Annual National Meeting in Alfred, New York in August, 2011. Korten gave Young and Rensenbrink valuable feedback in their work composing the Letter. The two are considering conducting a Workshop on the Letter at the Green Party's presidential nominating convention in Baltimore July 9-12. The readers of Green Horizon are urged to offer feedback to one or both of the authors. [Karen: Karenyoung521@yahoo.com; John: john@rensenbrink.com] At some point after the Baltimore convention, the Letter will be finalized and offered to people and organizations and political parties to sign on. The plan is to circulate the letter in many ways and places. The hope is to gain the attention of hundreds of thousands of Americans and many media shapers of public opinion.

CONTENTS OF OUR LETTER:

- Who We Are
- Good News: Americans Are Rebuilding America From the Bottom Up
- Problem: Government Stands in the Way. Could it be Part of the Solution?
- Seven Steps You Can Take Today
- Summary

WHO WE ARE

We are Greens of many different social and political persuasions. Some of us take libertarian views. Some are committed to workers' rights and union organizing. For some, protection of the environment is uppermost. Some go to bat for small business and entrepreneurship. For some social justice and humanitarian concerns are uppermost. For some a peacetime society is key. For others cooperatives and non-profits should have the highest priority in organizing the economy. For others the return to local organic farming is of supreme importance along with localization in general. Some are Green-minded Democrats; some Green-minded Republicans; some Green-minded Independents. Many identify with the Occupy movement and its call to reduce income inequality and the power of the 1% versus the 99%. Many support the Tea Party's approach to smaller, less wasteful, and more effective government.

We are committed to help re-build Main Street. We are determined that government must be accountable and accessible to the people. We share ten key values: ecological wisdom, personal and social responsibility, grass roots democracy, non-violence, decen-

tralization, community-centered economics, respect for diversity, gender equality, global responsibility, and thinking to the seventh generation (sustainability).

Our three reasons for writing this letter:

First, to celebrate the fact that people throughout our country aren't waiting for politicians to save them, but are re-building our country from the bottom up. Second, to keep in the forefront of our concerns the fact that our government, rather than helping Americans re-build their country, is standing in the way. And third, to identify seven steps you can take to spur the re-building and help bring about a new society.

GOOD NEWS

Some of us are struggling to stay afloat and too many are sinking. Some have been doing this a long time. Others are new to long-term unemployment, poverty, and homelessness. Even those of us who still have jobs, homes and savings don't feel at all safe. We all know, deep down, that the world we knew, the world of steady jobs and endless growth, the world of every generation doing better than the last, just isn't coming back. We also know that the extreme weather we've been experiencing isn't a fluke. We're all taking a good hard look at our situation, and we know we need to figure out a new way to live.

The good news is that people are figuring it out. We see a movement in America and many other countries that *Yes!* magazine calls the "Do It Ourselves Economy". David Cameron, leader of the Tories in Britain in 2009, called for "a fundamental shift of power and wealth to local people and local institutions." Peggy Noonan, a conservative voice, has said "We know a unique challenge is coming, that it may be soon, and that we will have to get through it together.

People are reclaiming control of their economic and political lives. They are focusing on livelihoods, not just jobs. They are focusing on rebuilding Main Street and revitalizing local democracy in ways that will enable us to create our own work, localize credit, and reduce our dependence on money and paid employment.

People are living well on less money, and building stronger families and communities along the way.

People are growing their own food and supporting local farmers. Even in the cities, people are starting to keep chickens and bees and make gardens on rooftops. In Detroit, for example, people are growing a local, sustainable food system. There are now over 1,600 farms and gardens in the city, nurturing a new education program; and creating social enterprises that build community and capital. This in a city that has lost 200,000 manufacturing jobs and seen the abandonment of 33,000 houses during the last decade.

People in state after state and city after city are starting their own businesses, supporting the small business community and keeping more jobs and money close to home.

People are conserving energy, to save money and save the planet. They are insulating their homes, unplugging their appliances,

hanging clothes out to dry in the sun, developing more energy efficient buildings. We're giving away stuff we don't need, getting free stuff that's used but still good, and fixing stuff instead of throwing it away.

Tremendously exciting is the fact that there are 33,000 cooperatives in the United States with 130 million members (nearly half of the people in the country), with 2 million people employed and \$753 billion in sales in 2009 — this according to a survey by the University of Wisconsin's Center for Cooperatives in 2009.

Recently, hundreds of thousands of people responded to the call of Bank Transfer Day and moved their money from the mega-banks that caused our economic crisis, to the local banks and credit unions that can help keep our money in our communities.

While we still struggle with racism and prejudice against people who don't look like us, there is also a real multi-cultural America taking shape. More of us value the rich experience of living and working with people from cultures or countries that are different from our own. Many Americans take exception to those who scapegoat immigrants for our economic troubles and recognize that the American ideal of justice for all has implications for how we deal with those who in desperation seek refuge within our borders.

The Tea Party has focused attention on the failures of government. The Occupy movement has focused attention on the huge gap between the Wall Street super-rich and everyone else. Together they create space for an important national conversation about the true meaning of democracy and our national commitment to liberty and justice for all.

GOVERNMENT: THE PROBLEM OR PART OF THE SOLUTION?

We believe that hope lies with people who are taking matters into our own hands and creating solutions. There are millions of us.

Even those among us who have traditionally looked to government as the solution, recognize that our government is no longer able to agree on much of anything, as in the Congressional "Super-Committees", or is actively making things worse.

There's very little constructive action on job creation, on crucial environmental issues, on helping small business, on foreclosure and other problems that are destroying lives and threatening our national prosperity.

Unlike most countries that are proud to call themselves "democracies," we have a two-party system that allows us to choose only between Republicans and Democrats. Increasingly, both parties champion the interests of the wealthiest and most powerful 1% against the 99%. The Democratic Party gives lip service to protecting "working people," but often joins with the Republican Party in advancing the Wall Street agenda.

Billions of dollars from corporations and other special interests flood our elections, especially since the Supreme Court's

FROM THE AUTHORS OF THE PROPOSED LETTER TO OUR READERS:

We want your feedback.
If you want to sign the letter, let us know!

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“Citizen United” decision removed almost all limits from corporate contributions. Most of the money is spent on negative and divisive ads that only drive people away from the polls.

While there are a number of decent people in office trying to do the right thing, party leadership in both major parties is firmly in the pocket of Wall Street and other big business and special interest funding.

Trust in government is at an all-time low. The two parties, however, have built institutions that are designed to keep themselves in power regardless of what the citizens want.

Most Americans now say a third party is needed. But from partisan redistricting that tailors districts to incumbents, to restrictive voter registration laws, to ballot access requirements that keep smaller parties out of the picture, there are severe obstacles for those who want to open up the system and give all citizens access to political power.

But government COULD be doing so much to help us move toward the new world we have started building on our own. They could turn over government-owned property for affordable housing and community gardens. They could provide seed money and government contracts to new green businesses, both of which provide jobs and help the environment. They could buy food for schools from local farmers. And they could create a balanced tax system in which the rich and big businesses pay their fair share to fund government services.

To actually move government in this direction, we need candidates and officeholders willing to confront big-money interests and enact policies that support the rebuilding initiatives of the American people. We need citizens willing to accept nothing less. We need people who will actually support third-party and clean money candidates: with their time, their money, and their votes. We need people willing to fight for campaign finance reform and for election laws that open up the electoral system. Making the same old choices between two evils, in the same old way, isn't going to produce different results.

SEVEN STEPS YOU CAN TAKE

If everyone reading this takes even one or two of the steps below, we'll see much stronger communities. We'll see new leaders coming forward. We'll find a renewed sense of confidence in ourselves and in our country. We'll catch the wave of creative and positive change that is moving us to a better world.

1. Get involved in your local community. Join your block or neighborhood association, community garden, activist group, or local theater company: the possibilities are endless. Support local businesses, farms, and banks dedicated to community prosperity. Start your own group, small business, or garden.
2. Find out what's going on in other communities. Other people are facing the same challenges and opportunities as you do. How are they coping?
3. Start conversations with parties, candidates and movements that are open to or, even better, committed to help re-build America and are free of monied interests in politics.
4. Support changes to make elections more fair and representative. Most election laws are made on the state and local level. They can be changed at the state and local level. You may be able to help fight for easier access for third parties; for some form of ranked choice voting or proportional representation to eliminate the third party spoiler effect; for campaign finance reform; for clean election funds; for expanded voting hours; for same-day voter registration; and for non-partisan redistricting.

Some quick background on ranked choice voting and proportional representation: When you have ranked choice voting, there is no “spoiler” effect. If your first choice doesn't win, your vote transfers to your second choice. With proportional representation, groups or parties are represented in the legislature based on the proportion of support they have. For example, with proportional representation, if the Green Party or the Libertarian Party had 20% of the vote, they would receive 20% of the seats. In our current system, 20% of the votes doesn't result in ANY representation. For more information look up FairVote at www.fairvote.org.

On the national level, we urge joining the move to amend the U.S. Constitution to assure that only individual human beings, and not corporations, are persons in the eyes of the law. For information see www.movetoamend.org.

5. Vote for candidates you believe in! You may have become completely disgusted with the system, and that's understandable. But people who get elected to office have a lot of power over you and your community. Don't throw away the opportunity to help decide who gets to be in charge. Don't just leave it to the rich and powerful. If voting didn't matter, they wouldn't work so hard to keep people from doing it. Use your vote wisely. One important guideline is to vote and support only those candidates and political parties who do not take big corporate money.

LOVE LETTER *to Occupy Wall Street*

AUGUST JACCACI

6. Run for office. You can be the face of the change you want to see, and you can energize people in your community to fight for what they need. Even if you don't win, you can bring your ideas to the table and show that there's support for them, and that can change policy.
7. Support independent media. We can't do this without news and views of, by and for the 99%. Seek it out, promote it to your networks, and give financial support. And if you're so inclined, be the media: make and share your own videos, photos, and writing, and tell your own stories of the old world dying and the new one being born.

SUMMARY

We are Greens who love our country. We come from many political persuasions. We share the desire and the capacity to get going on building a new world that's based on local communities, cooperation rather than competition, do-it-yourself jobs, conservation, respect for the planet, sharing and love.

Government right now is the problem: disconnected from the people, enacting a radical Wall Street agenda, unable to grapple with the real and desperate problems we are facing. But government must and can be part of the solution, if we engage in the hard work of making it represent us, and use its power to help make our bottom-up initiatives successful.

We urge you to join us, and the people everywhere, who aren't waiting for politicians or anyone else to save them, but are already at work re-building America and the basis for a new society. We urge you to commit to taking one or more of the actions we've outlined here, or others we haven't thought of.

We have committed ourselves to take positive action. What will YOU do to be part of the solution? With you, your friends and family, their friends and family, and so on, joining in, we WILL get this country moving in the right direction. We will live to see the dawning of a new era.



KAREN YOUNG

has been active in the Green Party since 2002. She is co-chair of the fundraising committee of GPUS, as well as a delegate from New York State, where she moved in 2006. She also served on the GPUS Strategic Planning Working Group in 2004-2005. She is active in the Green Party of

New York City. She joined the Illinois Green Party in 2002, where she served on the IL State Coordinating Committee, chaired the Platform and Website committees, and ran for Secretary of State in 2006, garnering more than 4% of the vote (140,000 votes).

JOHN RENSENBRINK'S picture and bio are at the end of the previous article.

You are announcing a planetary social transformation more profound than the changes from hunting and gathering to agriculture and from agriculture to industry. Now the change is from human created machinery, factory and money to human collaboration, community and soul fulfillment. Industrial jobs are declining while personal and societal roles are emerging. The value and availability of money is declining while the creativity of individual meaning is rising. The human soul is replacing the human machine as the economic and political archetype and icon of this age of global transformation.

Seeking soul is totally different from seeking money. Money is enslaving and addicting; soul is liberating and purifying. Money is momentary and transitory; soul is enduring and inspiring.

The food of money is property; the food of soul is love. The politics of soul is totally different from the politics of money. It is impossible to send anyone anywhere to do your loving for you. That makes representative democracy obsolete and direct participative democracy emergent.

The best most workable contexts and settings for direct democracy are local communities and neighborhoods. They are small enough for the participants to know and care for each other and large enough to serve our planet by respecting and caring for the whole family of life.

There is a field of energy, idea, feeling, value and intention underlying and creating light, electricity and the formation of matter and life. That field is Love which is the source, the substance and the future of all being in the universe. Learning about the presence and power of that field of Love is the defining dynamic of human change and the beginning of conscious human evolution. All of the transformative political and economic action for change is the working forth into human culture of the cosmic dynamic of Love. Love is not just what we do; it is what we are, made so by the birth of our universe as a Love story.



GUS JACCACI

is a leading futurist. He has degrees from Harvard University and the Rhode Island School of Design. He has designed many creative learning events such as the Town

Meeting that opened the United States Bicentennial in 2000, broadcast live on WGBH TV on Patriot's weekend. Jaccaci ran as an Independent candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives from Vermont. He is the author of four books which may be found on his website: www.augustjaccaci.com.

ECOLOGICAL WISDOM: *What Does It Really Mean?*

MORGEN D'ARC

I want to put a plug in here for Ecological Wisdom meaning far more than referring to or meaning the environment.

Ecological Wisdom speaks to a wisdom derived from biological nature that permeates the entire planet and everything in, around, and above it.

It means what it means — which is what?

About ten years ago, I was working with a candidate who was preparing for his campaign. He was reviewing the Green Party's Ten Key Values. Like many Greens, he couldn't cite them all without looking at the list for prompting. He did know the Key Value, Ecological Wisdom. I asked him what Ecological Wisdom meant. He responded quickly that it meant the environment.

Since then, I've heard or read the same explanation from countless Greens. A few, including myself, would interject that it wasn't about the environment, but the discussion would continue as if we had never said anything. The dominant opinion was that it was about the environment. After all, with the Green Party originally forming around environmental issues and being known as the environmental, tree-hugging party, Ecological Wisdom, of course, had to mean the environment.

I want to put a plug in here for Ecological Wisdom meaning far more than just the environment. Ecological Wisdom is different from the ecology that so many Greens assume is just about the environment and nature. The Ecological part of the term is a qualifier for Wisdom. The Green Party Key Value, Ecological Wisdom, speaks to a wisdom derived from biological nature that permeates the entire planet and everything in, around, and above it—with humans and everything they do, produce, and excrete, part of nature.

The Green message to the world, which is so profound and completely unprecedented in all of history and which even Greens don't fully consciously comprehend, is that everything — from human behavior, economics, infrastructure, production, consumption, waste, use, politics, relation to others, government, management, building, planning, justice, education, and everything else, as well as the environment — must be approached with the knowledge and natural wisdom of ecology, hence Ecological Wisdom, in order to achieve the healthy balance we are after for the planet and all that it contains.

SELF-INTEREST VS. ECOLOGICAL WISDOM

The only politics this planet knows is what derives from self-interest instead of interest derived from Ecological Wisdom. The convolutions and distortions that result from this type of approach is the kind of life we know. For thousands of years, humans have been making a bigger and bigger knot of policy based on this self-interest, whether from leaderships that are royalty, dictator, president or systems of democracy, socialism, capitalism, etc. When knots are knotted upon knots, they become impossible to undo. Even if Greens could undo the knots, with the present system of self-interest, it would become knotted again.

Democracy is a theory that has never yet succeeded or proven itself in application and practice. Ecology, on the other hand, has succeeded and proven itself forever, in one way or another. Ecology is not a theory. It is a description of concrete reality. Original ecologists made this brilliant discovery. Greens are taking it further by more widely applying it and taking it into visioning, politics, solutions and day-to-day life with the Key value of Ecological Wisdom. Greens are putting it ever before us, so we don't forget but begin the process of shaping ourselves according to this Value. We really cannot undo the knots, but we have the potential to be reshaped by Ecological Wisdom, just as we were originally shaped by self-interested policy makers.

To really vision Green, we would have to work at envisioning a society based on Ecological Wisdom rather than self-interest. Not easy. We are so shaped by this culture of self-interest policy, we often don't even know when we are doing it ourselves.

The confusion and general lack of understanding of Ecological Wisdom is not benign. It has revealed a chasm for the Green Party. The Green Party has enshrined this phenomenal concept. However, the concept does not bridge to practical reality. I propose that the chasm is the result of not defining and understanding this mother lode, Key value.

BRIDGING THE CHASM: AN EXPANDED DEFINITION FOR ECOLOGICAL WISDOM WILL FORM THE FRAMEWORK FOR DETAILED GREEN POLICY.

A major challenge to the advancement of the Green Party is the scant flesh on so many of its values, policies, solutions and platform positions. In other words, what we stand for. Up to now, we could get away with it, because the Green Party has always been marginalized. Neither its critics nor supporters ever approached that detail and depth. But the day will soon come when the Green Party will be challenged for it — from the public and media in one way and from Greens in another. If we are not somewhat ready, our opportunity to advance, based on that, may close. There's one thing worse than no one being interested in the Green Party, and that is that the Green Party is perceived as not having the goods and is, therefore, not credible.

The situation on the ground currently is that Greens spout issues and solutions, no problem, but if they are asked for details on concrete and practical applications, it's like coming to an abrupt dead-end. Some Greens will try to go past that point, but it is achingly primitive. And because that's so challenging, Ecological Wisdom is not applied and integrated. Greens are like a lot of points of bright light but without connection to the nucleus.

Green policy seems unbelievably different and radical to the greater part of this country's population. It scares people, even though it will help them. If we can't paint the picture for them of how it will be, people will reject us. The only way to gain their interest, trust, consideration, and actual support is to spell out for them what the Green Party doesn't yet know how to spell itself!

Developing that detailed picture is also what will protect the Green Party from the corporate-government co-opting or stealing the fruits of our work, as they have with greenwashing of consumer products and green energy. Instead of the Green Party maintaining its position as the party that is associated with Green solutions that the Green Party should, rightfully, be riding to political success, the very corporate-government that trashed the planet is the beneficiary. As if they needed any more power than they already have. The Green Party lost out terribly with the co-option of the word Green for greenwashing. So did the public, because the greenwashing is the same old corporate style simply donning a false patina, all to make profits and keep power, hardly what Greens had in mind. The thing is, if the Green Party doesn't

flesh out its own policies, the corporate-government will take them for their own benefit, not for the peoples' benefit, much less the Green Party's.

WHAT THE CORPORATE-GOVERNMENT CANNOT CO-OPT FROM THE GREEN PARTY

It is vital that the Green Party develop detailed policies for its positions guided by a more encompassing understanding of Ecological Wisdom. Such policies would provide a hot-wire fence of protection from co-option. The corporate-government is incapable of understanding or even wanting to understand the interrelation of all organisms to their environment, which is the underlying concept of the science of Ecology. It is even less capable of understanding the Green Party's adaptation and transformation of that concept to Ecological Wisdom to extend far beyond the environment to everything and every system in the world. The only way the corporate-government could co-opt Ecological Wisdom and the Green Party policies that are based on it would be to become it and promote it themselves. We wouldn't mind that, would we?

It would be a task for some dedicated Greens, requiring focus and time to accomplish this. But first, we should have a broad discussion to develop this more encompassing definition that will prevent Ecological Wisdom from being misunderstood to mean just the environment. Wisdom is not the environment. It is a knowledge that is deeper than ordinary knowing. Ecological Wisdom is a deeper knowing, a wisdom that can discern the interrelationship of the different components of life as the organisms to their environment which is the totality of all that humans do to maintain and support civilization and societies, including but not limited to the environment. If Ecological Wisdom were more widely understood with this expanded definition, it would directly lead to the flesh the Green Party needs for its policies to be taken seriously as a political party.

I would like to hear what readers think about Ecological Wisdom and fleshing out our policies. You can write me at morgen.darc@gmail.com and/or this magazine by email or on the website green-horizon.org.



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A View from the “GREATEST GENERATION”

RHODA GILMAN

“It was clear to me that what had happened at Hiroshima was not just a mega-bomb.”

“If we had any doubts about the impossibility of unlimited expansion within a limited system, they were settled as we looked back from the moon...”

“Even in defeat, I reasoned, politics offers a platform for reaching the public outside a committed circle.”

As the United States descends into fascism the mainstream media assures us that soon...any day now...we will be coming out of the great depression of the 21st century. Meanwhile the leftish bloggers and environmentalists grow more desperate in their internet rants about corporate oligarchy, buying of public officials, and denial of demonstrated facts. Mesmerized by the tube and the manipulations of the advertising industry, Americans switch channels wearily from the news to the Superbowl.

I am one of the so-called “greatest generation,” — called that for what reason I cannot imagine. I do, however, have a lot of stored-up memories. I can remember quite clearly a time when I still felt hope for the country’s future. That was 65 years ago. In 1946 I was a college student returning to Seattle from a six-week youth “encampment” in New York City sponsored by a whole list of progressive organizations and presided over by Eleanor Roosevelt. World War II had just ended; the United Nations was forming; old-style colonialism was clearly on its way out. I was still humming the songs we had sung that summer: “Solidarity Forever,” led by the New York labor contingent, and “We Shall Not Be Moved,” chanted by the Farmers Union kids from the Midwest.

As my train snaked its way across the Great Plains and the Rockies, I had time for reading and reflecting. One of the things in my bag was a copy of the *New Yorker* magazine that I had picked up in Chicago. The whole issue was devoted to the effects and implications of the atomic bombs that we had dropped on Japan the year before. It was the first real report on the subject to emerge from the mists of wartime secrecy. The magazine had sold out overnight in New York.

Its message was as dark as the bomb’s own mushroom cloud. By the time we crossed the Cascades and descended into the ever-so-green basin of Puget Sound, I, too, had crossed a watershed. It was clear to me that what had happened at Hiroshima was not just a mega-bomb. Humanity held in its hands a destructive power that even the wisest among us only half understood, and war must be eliminated at all costs.

THE COLD WAR BEGAN AND THE U.S. GOVERNMENT COMMITTED ITSELF TO MILITARISM

Those costs were too high, of course, so we froze it instead, and as years passed, the vision of a better world was encased in the ice of the Cold War. Meanwhile, my own life went on. There was work with the Quakers, graduate school, marriage to a former conscientious objector, a year at a work camp in Mexico, a move to Minnesota, and two infinitely precious girl children who would grow up into a new world of freedom and empowerment for women.

I remember the 1950s for protests against nuclear testing and the rise of the civil rights movement — all with a background of red-baiting and fear. Invisibly but permanently we were becoming a garrison society. The 1960s brought unmistakable signs of yet a new threat. This one came along with what had seemed like benign and beneficial advances. The first warning was sounded by Rachel Carson in her book *Silent Spring*, published in 1962. By 1970 the word “ecology” had become familiar, as well as the threats to the earth’s living systems from pesticides, herbicides and toxic

wastes. In that year another ground-breaking book warned us that there were Limits to Growth, and that our capitalist economy and the world's population had almost reached them. If we had any doubts about the impossibility of unlimited expansion within a limited system, they were silently settled as we looked back from the moon at our lovely, lonely globe floating in dark space. The earth was suddenly smaller after 1969.

At just about the same time anger over the spreading war in Southeast Asia was overtaken by revulsion at our grossly swelling consumerist way of life. Thousands of young people turned their backs on affluent suburbs, high-tech jobs, and spreading freeways. They took to anarchist philosophy and living on the land, either in communes or on small farmsteads. As individuals and as families they sought an earth-friendly existence through personal choices. Home births, home schooling, and handicrafts were in; shoe leather, sweat, simplicity, and spiritual search were the signs of the '70s.

THE QUAKER MOVEMENT FOR A NEW SOCIETY SOUGHT TO "LIVE THE REVOLUTION NOW"

Organizations took up the challenge also. Most of them addressed particular aspects of the nation's malaise, but one that proposed to change the very foundations of the system was the Movement for a New Society.* The MNS had radical Quaker roots. It was the direct successor to A Quaker Action Group (AQAG), which had defied the U.S. armed forces by efforts to run boatloads of medical supplies to North Viet Nam. In the mid-1970s the MNS took shape as a loosely knit network of intentional communities scattered in cities across the U.S.. To its principles of decentralization, shared leadership, consensus decision-making, nonviolence, and civil disobedience it added the ringing slogan of "living the revolution now." Decoded, that meant changing the world through one's own lifestyle choices.

Times changed again after the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980. A new military push threatened to seed Europe with nuclear warheads. Peace-seekers and environmentalists there resisted with a political movement that adopted the color and the name Green as symbols. It established itself in Germany with the elections of 1983 and spread around the world like a wildfire. Globally, the Green movement rested on four pillars that echoed Gandhi and the MNS: social and economic justice; ecological wisdom; nonviolence; grassroots democracy.

In the U.S. the Greens coalesced in 1984 at a meeting held in St. Paul, Minnesota. First they took shape as a network of bioregional groups connected only by an information exchange. For more than a decade they were shut out of serious politics by a corporate oligarchy that controlled the two-party electoral system and by a national mindset that made frugality unthinkable. During that time an anarchist Left-Green Network formed and dissolved, while the mainstream of the movement struggled with its a-political structure and clung to the conviction that a

vegetarian diet, a brick in the toilet tank, and a bicycle ride to work might somehow lead to change in the capitalist/military/industrial system.

Although the momentous founding conference had been held only blocks from where I lived, I was unaware of it at the time. My own life had moved to a new stage. The children had grown, and after years of illness and depression my husband had died. I now found myself trying to balance a professional career with caring at home for an aged mother and learning to cope with a computerized world. I had explored Eastern mysticism and begun to meditate, but I had also moved closer to the Quakers, drawn in part by the fact that my oldest daughter was a leader in the MNS. In looking back, I have an eerie sense of identifying my life with her generation more than my own. Was I in some sense reborn, I wonder, during all those hours of meditating with the Buddhists?

In 1988 the MNS laid itself down, and at just about the same time soviet communism collapsed and the Cold War ended, leaving the American empire to tower alone over the world. The U.S. immediately unleashed its military power and reached to control oil resources in the Mideast. Environmental news had also become more grim with the discovery of damage to earth's ozone layer and the first predictions of global warming. I joined the Twin Cities Greens as they turned to protesting storage of high-level nuclear wastes on the Mississippi River flood plain.

THE GREEN MOVEMENT SPLIT OVER THE ISSUE OF ELECTORAL POLITICS, AND I BECAME AN ACTIVIST

Already the Green movement in the U.S. was beginning to come apart, and by the mid-1990s it split between those realists who wanted to join the political battle and idealists who shrank from the moral compromises that would entail. States, from Maine to California, were organizing Green parties of their own, independent of the national movement. Wisconsin had led the way, and Minnesota joined the trend in 1994. This time I was there at the founding. Two years later the states formed an Association of State Green Parties and overcame their distrust of centralized leadership enough to nominate Ralph Nader for president. His running mate was Minnesota's Winona LaDuke.

It immediately became clear that despite widespread support, any third party faced enormous difficulties in just getting onto the ballot. For a hundred years — ever since the rising tide of Populism — states had been putting up legal barriers to protect the two-party system. The door was closing on democracy, and it slammed shut in 2000, when Nader and LaDuke ran for a second time as Green Party candidates. Although excluded from the televised presidential debates and from nearly all other media coverage, Nader addressed an audience of 10,000 in Minneapolis alone. Democrat Al Gore won the popular vote, and that, combined with Nader's vote, beat George W. Bush by a wide margin. But the race was decided in Florida by a contested election. With

the active connivance of the Democratic Party, which was fearful of losing corporate support, a Republican-leaning Supreme Court ignored popular will and appointed the new president.

In 2002 the Minnesota Greens found themselves boosted by the Nader vote to major party status and embarking on statewide elections for governor and senator. Ten years earlier I had retired from my position at the Minnesota Historical Society, and during that time I had edited one book and had written a second.** I had supported the Green plunge into electoral politics because for nearly 30 years I had watched those who practiced a Green lifestyle get exactly nowhere in changing society, although some of them had faithfully walked their talk and set examples with their lives. Even in defeat, I reasoned, politics offers a platform for reaching the public outside a committed circle. It is above all a tool for education

Life-changing experiences are not common in one's mid-seventies, but they do sometimes happen, and one happened to me. It started with a phone call from Ken Pentel, the Green Party's candidate for governor and an old friend of mine from anti-nuclear protests. He asked if I would be his running mate for lieutenant governor. At first I said no, but when he asked a second time I felt what Quakers call a leading. I was terrified, but I could not refuse. When the election campaign was over, I was a different person, and I have been a political activist ever since.

NOW IS THE TIME TO TURN BACK AGAIN TO LIFESTYLE CHANGES AND CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

A decade later, however, things are coming full circle. The imbalance of wealth and power in this country has gone so far that change cannot be won at the ballot box. That became clear in 2008. The rules are different now; dollars, not people, determine votes; military and business necessity will always override human rights and the U.S. Constitution.

Nevertheless, a larger force than even economic crisis or social revolution threatens the industrial system and its global stability. The environmental collapse that we assumed would be centuries in the future seems to be already upon us. Arctic ice is melting with immediate implications for climate change; our power grids, our transportation networks, and our spreading cities are vulnerable to fire, flood, and storm; food, fuel, and fresh water are already disappearing around the world; hundreds of nuclear plants are accumulating wastes that will be deadly for ten thousand years; and we are told that ocean life as we have known it is threatened with extinction in less than a human lifetime.

Now, looking back over my own years, what strikes me most forcefully is the accelerating pace of change, both in human terms and in nature. I am reminded of the words of the poet-scientist, Loren Eisley (1907-1977): "Like others of my generation, I was born in an age which has already perished...It [is] as though I peered upon my youth through misty centuries." At the time of his death Eisley had not known the internet, the Hubble telescope,

or genetic engineering. More and more we can appreciate the insight of the Buddha, that all things are fleeting and impermanent. Even our view of what it is to be human has changed.

Should we despair? No. We also know more about the earth's past and the incredible toughness of life. We are an adaptable, inventive species. But we need to take stock of reality and determine what steps had best be taken by individuals and communities to meet the dire times that are dawning. As Bill McKibben has pointed out, the environment is already a human artifact. That does not justify more reckless technological experimenting. What it does mean is regaining control of our own lives and our ways of being together on this earth.

That may sound like going back to the land or to the MNS commune, and there is a certain continuity, but there is also a great difference. We are no longer a counterculture in the midst of a thriving society. All too soon it will be a matter of surviving the chaos of a crumbling civilization. Some programs, like the Transition Towns movement, have already been proposed in the face of peak oil and financial dysfunction.*** The Occupy movement has shown us how quickly the world view shared by millions of people can change. And when the TV screen goes dark...

* A recent book examines the philosophy and history of the Movement for a New Society from an anarchist perspective. See Andrew Cornell, *Oppose and Propose: Lessons From Movement For a New Society* (AK Press, Oakland, CA 2011). A contemporary voice for the alternative movement in the upper Midwest was the *North Country Anvil*, a magazine published in Millville, MN, from 1972 to 1989.

** See Rhoda R. Gilman, *Ringin' in the Wilderness: Selections from the North Country Anvil* (Holy Cow! Press, Duluth, 1996); Gilman, Henry Hastings Sibley, *Divided Heart* (Minnesota Historical Society Press, St. Paul, 2004).

*** See Rob Hopkins, *The Transition Handbook: From Oil Dependency to Local Resilience* (Chelsea Green Publishing, White River Junction, VT 200



RHODA GILMAN began a 34-year career at the Minnesota Historical Society in 1958. During those years she worked as an editor, researcher, and administrator and wrote several books and many articles on midwestern history. They included a textbook of Minnesota history for middle school students published in 1989. She

joined the Twin Cities Greens in 1986, helped to organize the Green Party of Minnesota in 1994, and was its candidate for lieutenant governor in 2002. Her newest book, *Stand Up! The Story of Minnesota's Protest Tradition* has just been published by the Minnesota Historical Society Press.

ONE DEMOCRATIC STATE:

A Green Solution to the Palestinian–Israeli Conflict

For we belong to a single body —
 Arabs and Jews
 Tel Aviv and Tulkarem,
 Haifa and Ramallah —
 What are they
 If not a single pair of shoulders,
 Twin breasts?

(*Our Land* by Israeli poet Aharon Shabtai in *J'Accuse*, 2001)

JUSTINE MCCABE

As we note the anniversary of the “Arab Spring’s” revolts against repressive regimes in the Middle East, democracy remains uncertain. But a linchpin around which these regimes have long operated continues: the Palestinian–Israeli conflict. Indeed, as Egypt’s revolution began, James Jones — former commander of all NATO forces, former national security advisor to President Obama, and former special ME envoy to President George W. Bush — addressed the 2011 Herzliya Conference in Israel insisting that the Israeli–Palestinian conflict is the “knot that is at the center of the mass of all regional and most global diplomatic problems today.”¹ According to *Israel Today*, “Jones rejected the notion that the current turmoil in Egypt proved that even without Israel and its land dispute with the Arabs the Middle East would not have peace.”²

That report criticized Jones for ignoring that “before 1967, Israel did not control the so-called ‘West Bank,’ and yet there was still much conflict.” However, the conflict’s origin is not the 1967 war. Rather it begins with Zionist colonization of historic Palestine from the late 19th century, culminating in the 1948 Nakba— “catastrophe”: Palestinian dispossession and ethnic cleansing of the majority native population from 1947–49 by a newly-created Israeli state, documented by many scholars, including Jewish Israeli historians.³

Acknowledging this history is not only essential to resolving the conflict but also points to the solution: “One Democratic State” (ODS) in the land between the River Jordan and Mediterranean Sea. ODS is also the “Green” solution—most just, legal, non-violent, sustainable. For these reasons, ODS was formally endorsed by the Green Party of the US in its 2010 platform.

THE TWO STATE SOLUTION: INTENTION, PRACTICE AND DEMISE

The “two-state solution” is a chimera, at best meant only to end Israeli military occupation in parts of the West Bank (WB). It is not now, nor has ever been, a sustainable solution to the core problem between Israelis and Palestinians: Israel’s continuing dispossession of Christian and Muslim natives of Palestine and refusal to allow Palestinian refugees to return to their homes because they are not Jews.

This solution is premised on legitimizing permanent inequality between Israeli Jews and Palestinians who would remain dependent on Israel. Concomitantly, it would legitimize ethnic cleansing and seizing territory by force.

ODS (One Democratic State) would create an authentic homeland for Jews, as well as Palestinians. Jews like international law professor Richard Falk assert that ODS would restore a genuine Jewishness to the people of Israel.

How can this not be a recipe for ongoing insecurity, conflict and violence?

Ironically, because of its structural inequality and “facts on the ground,” the two-state solution is already dead. The WB has been integrated into Israel demographically, economically as well as territorially. Palestine-Israel is one de facto state, where one group dominates another. Israel’s orgy of settlement building following the 1967 war have now created 600,000+ Jewish-Israeli colonizers in the WB, many in what are now large cities engulfing Jerusalem. Israel continues to evict East Jerusalem Palestinians to build 13,500+ new homes for Jews only, a policy publicly condemned by South Africa as reminiscent of “forced removals” of their apartheid era. Thus, 2.4 million Palestinians are left scraps—fragmented Bantustans—in the WB, separated from 1.7 million besieged Palestinians in Gaza.

Describing the WB as the egg that cannot be unscrambled,⁴ former Israeli Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem, Meron Benvenisti recognizes the “Inevitable Bi-National Regime:”

One must therefore seek a different paradigm to describe the state of affairs more than forty years after Israel/Palestine became one geopolitical unit again...The term “de facto bi-national regime” is preferable to the occupier/occupied paradigm, because it describes the mutual dependence of both societies, as well as the physical, economic, symbolic and cultural ties that cannot be severed without an intolerable cost. Describing the situation as de facto bi-national does not indicate parity between Israelis and Palestinians—on the contrary, it stresses the total dominance of the Jewish-Israeli nation, which controls a Palestinian nation that is fragmented both territorially and socially. No paradigm of military occupation can reflect the Bantustans created in the occupied territories, which separate a free and flourishing population with a gross domestic product of almost 30 thousand Dollars per capita from a dominated population unable to shape its own future with a GDP of \$1,500 per capita. No paradigm of

military occupation can explain how half the occupied areas (“area C”) have essentially been annexed, leaving the occupied population with disconnected lands and no viable existence. Only a strategy of annexation and permanent rule can explain the vast settlement enterprise and the enormous investment in housing and infrastructure...⁵

Similarly, former national director of the American-Jewish Congress, Henry Seigman, regards Jewish settlements in the WB as having created an “irreversible colonial project” intended to prevent a viable Palestinian state: “Israel has crossed the threshold from ‘the only democracy in the Middle East’ to the only apartheid regime in the Western world.”⁶

Even if Israel supported a sovereign Palestinian state in the WB, there are other legal, environmental and moral problems with the two-state solution.

PALESTINIAN REFUGEES

Where would millions of Palestinian refugees go? According to BADIL, the WB refugee rights center, there are about 7.6 million Palestinian refugees, 4.6 of whom are registered with the UN. Notwithstanding Palestinians’ inalienable right under international law to return home, there is already high population density, insufficient land in the proposed fragmented Palestinian “statelet” to humanely and environmentally accommodate those refugees, most originating from inside Israel.

THE “DEMOGRAPHIC THREAT”

Zionist Israelis speak of ongoing threats to Jewish majority: growing numbers of non-Jews, a higher Palestinian than Jewish birth rate, increasingly low Jewish immigration relative to Jewish emigration resulting in estimates that by 2015 Palestinians will be the majority in historic Palestine.⁷

Israel has responded to this threat by escalating its apartheid-like regime: racist incitement like repeated calls for “transferring” Palestinian-Israeli citizens out; a 2003 law prohibiting Israeli citizens who marry Palestinians from the OPT from living with

their spouses in Israel while Jewish Israelis marrying Jews from the OPT can live with them in Israel; a 2010 law requiring non-Jews seeking citizenship to pledge loyalty to Israel as a “Jewish and democratic state”; and outlawing support for the international Boycott Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement and publicly-funded activities commemorating the Palestinian Nakba.⁸

Given these demographics, Israel can only maintain a Jewish majority by killing or expelling non-Jews from Israel and continuing to make life so difficult for Palestinians they would leave.

ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION OF TWO UNEQUAL STATES

The unequal division of natural resources characterizing the two-state solution portends ongoing conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. Water security has been most negatively impacted. Since 1967, Israel has not only arrogated regional water supplies and diverted over 80% of WB water for Israeli use, but the whole area now faces an absolute shortage of water because of over consumption and development. Meanwhile, (Mediterranean Sea) salt water is seeping into Gaza’s water as its water table falls. Under the two-state solution, USAID is expected to fund an Israeli plan to retain WB water sources in exchange for a desalination plant providing (privatized) water to the Territories. According to Stephen Lendman, “New Scientist points out that if these two projects become reality they’ll make “Palestine more dependent on desalination than almost any other nation in the world.” And given the cost of desalinated water, it will be out of reach for the great majority of impoverished Palestinians.”⁹

Similarly, former US Green senatorial candidate Joel Kovel describes the environmental disaster resulting from Israeli efforts to maintain a Jewish state by dispossessing Palestinians:

“This has led to an ecological situation unique in history, one that hurtles toward environmental ruin. Human beings are ecosystems, too, and their capacity to fit into the great regulatory patterns of nature depends upon their internal integrity, manifest in mutual recognition and coherent communication. Estrangement, or alienation, is the human form taken by ecological breakdown; it is a failure of recognition between human agents, which makes cooperative action impossible and splits humanity from nature as well as itself. It follows that the most severely estranged society will also be the most subject to eco-disintegration. This more or less describes the State of Israel, and certainly its Occupied Territories, which comprise one of the most bizarre social formations ever planted upon the earth. Here, on a tiny plot of ground, dwell two people with two radically different legal and social systems, one the beneficiary of a powerful state and

living in comfort while it works to terrorize and strangle the other who is stateless and bent upon surviving; the two are therefore as radically denied any cooperative arrangement as can be imagined, and primed to be an eco-destructive accelerant to the State of Israel as a whole...Here we find deliberate actions taken to destroy the filaments of human ecosystems, by legal and extralegal means of expulsion, by removing, violently if necessary, the grounds of another’s communal existence, and by introducing physical means of disrupting the other’s relation to nature.”¹⁰

The Clinton administration jettisoned international law in 1994 under the Oslo Accords, thereby dismissing equal protection for two grossly unequal parties. As Edward Said wrote, “So great has Israeli-US cooperation become on issues of illegality in defiance of the entire world community that it’s a gratuitous murder of language — its logic and meaning — to speak of a ‘peace process’ at all.”

In sum, this duplicitous process has mainly provided cover for Israel to seize more Palestinian land, fully aided by the US and often by a quisling Palestinian leadership. It only promises more dispossession and racism.

ONE DEMOCRATIC STATE (ODS)

One Democratic State (ODS) in Palestine-Israel addresses the heart of the conflict: A Zionist Israel seeking to rid itself of non-Jews. Unlike any other state in the world, Israel defines itself as the state of Jews worldwide rather than the country of all its citizens, including approximately 25% who are non-Jews, mainly Palestinians. By law, Israel has institutionalized privilege of Jews over non-Jews. Like South Africa and Jim Crow US, this is institutionalized racism or apartheid under the UN’s 1973 International Convention.

By contrast, transforming Israel-Palestine into ODS has many advantages.

• ODS would observe international law:

- End to Israel’s apartheid-like regime in the OPT, now amply documented.¹¹
- End to apartheid within Israel against its Palestinian citizens, also documented, including by the 2011 [Bertrand] Russell Tribunal on Palestine whose jury included former US Congresswoman and GPUS 2008 presidential candidate, Cynthia McKinney.¹²
- Comply with international law affirming Palestinian right to self-determination. At present, a Zionist Israel violates the law by its zero-sum game — achieving its “self-determination” at the expense of the self-determination of Palestinians.
- Comply with the international human right of Palestinians to return to their homes. In fact, for refugees who wish to return, feasible plans have been proposed creating minimal

Transformed, Israel could no longer be used to deflect attention from oppressive domestic policies of regimes in the region.

displacement of the current population. About 80% of Israeli Jews live in only 15% of the country; the vast majority of refugees could return to vacant or under populated areas from which they came.¹³

- **ODS would transform Israel's growing pariah status as a racist country, bringing genuine security for its Jewish citizens.**
- **ODS would create an authentic homeland for Jews, as well as Palestinians.** Zionist Israel's oppressive policies toward non-Jews are inconsistent with Jewish values. Jews like international law professor Richard Falk assert that ODS would restore a genuine Jewishness to the people of Israel:

"For me to be Jewish is, above all, to be preoccupied with overcoming injustice and thirsting for justice in the world, and that means being respectful toward other peoples regardless of their nationality or religion, and empathetic in the face of human suffering whoever and wherever victimization is encountered..."¹⁴

- **ODS could be a catalyst for peace, democracy and tolerance in a region that has been a source of world instability, especially between the Muslim world and the West.**¹⁵

"Under international law, practices of colonialism and apartheid are judged damaging to international legal order and seriously threaten world peace and security. Findings of colonialism and apartheid legally obligate third parties to oppose the colonialism-apartheid system."¹⁶

Transformed, Israel could no longer be used to deflect attention from oppressive domestic policies of regimes in the region.

- **ODS has growing support.** Indeed, ODS was supported by Palestinians and some Jews before Israel's creation. Recently,

there have been several international conferences devoted to this (Madrid, London, Spain, Boston, Haifa) and working groups have been established, like the Movement for One Democratic State, October 2010 in Dallas, TX¹⁷

Also, inspired by the "Arab Spring," Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, Syria, the OPT, Egypt and Jordan rushed the borders of Israel demanding to be allowed to return to their homes in Palestine-Israel.¹⁸

Polls show that while more Palestinians support a two-state solution, as Palestinians recognize its futility, support for ODS is growing,¹⁹ as it is among even Jewish Israelis like former and current Israeli Knesset Speakers, Avraham Burg and Reuven Rivlin.²⁰ Other polls show that many Palestinians support gaining Israeli citizenship as a way of transforming the struggle into one for equal rights,²¹ while most see the two-state solution as precursor to an inevitable ODS.²²

Finally, ODS reflects reality: Palestine-Israel is, and always has been, a multicultural society, despite Zionism's attempts to deny or Judaize it. In truth, Israelis and Palestinians have become inextricably connected by their mutual suffering and attachment to the same land. By working together to form one democratic state, both peoples eventually could be secure, at home.



JUSTINE MCCABE

is Co-Chairperson of the International Committee of the Green Party of the United States. She also serves as a point person for the International Committee on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. She earned doctorates in cultural anthropology and psychology and has lived and traveled widely in the Middle East, conducting anthropological research in Lebanon and Iran. Since the mid-1990s, she has traveled regularly to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories where she has conducted respite workshops for humanitarian workers. Justine practices clinical psychology in Connecticut.

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...GREEN PARTY CANDIDATES, *continued from page 38*

the Green Party embodies tribal wisdom: consider the seventh generation in our thoughts, actions, and decisions. Our acquisitive culture is one of taking at a time when we need to give back.”

HARLEY MIKKELSON • www.HarleyMikkelson.com

Harley Mikkelson of Caro, Michigan, says that he is “seeking to bring the working class perspective to this race. I want to represent people such as teachers, factory workers, farmers, government employees, health care workers, etc.” For that reason he emphasizes the importance of his trade union experience as an active member of the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) and the United Auto Workers (UAW).

Harley has held several union offices and was the Michigan Green Party candidate for U.S. House of Representatives (2002 and 2004), U.S. Senate (2008), and Governor of Michigan (2010). His 2012 campaign centers around the following issues: shoring up the Social Security system by removing the FICA cap (have everyone contribute a percentage of their full income); instituting single-payer health care; saving hundreds of billions of dollars each year by bringing all U.S. troops home now; ending aid to Israel until that country begins meaningful peace negotiations with the Palestinians; creating jobs by reducing the standard work week to 35 hours (legislate a \$10 minimum wage for the first 35 hours worked per week with an increase to \$20 for all hours worked over 35).

JILL STEIN • www.JillStein.org

Jill Stein of Lexington, MA is a physician and pioneering environmental-health advocate. She was a member of the national and Massachusetts boards of directors of the Physicians for Social Responsibility and her efforts to protect public health have won her many awards, including: Clean Water Action’s “Not in Anyone’s Backyard” Award, the “Children’s Health Hero” Award, and the Toxic Action Center’s Citizen Award.

Jill has been a highly successful candidate for the Massachusetts Green-Rainbow Party, first running for Governor in 2002 and then running for Secretary of State in 2006 (in which campaign she received over 350,000 votes, the highest total ever for a Green-Rainbow candidate). She ran for State Representative in 2004 and has twice been elected to town meeting in Lexington.

Jill’s 2012 campaign is advocating a “Green New Deal” — an emergency four part program for moving the country quickly out of crisis into a secure green future through: (1) guaranteeing the economic rights of all Americans, beginning with the right to a job at a living wage for everyone willing and able to work; (2) transitioning to a sustainable, green economy by adopting green technologies and sustainable production practices; (3) regulating the financial sector so that it serves everyday people and their communities; (4) protecting these gains by expanding and strengthening our democracy so that the government and economy finally serve We the People.

GREEN PARTY CANDIDATES

for President of the United States

STEVE WELZER

Four persons have come forward to run for the Green Party Nomination for President of the United States. One will be chosen at the Annual National Meeting of the U.S. Green Party in Baltimore July 9-12, 2012. Maybe one of the other three will be Vice Presidential nominee. Here they are in alphabetical order.

ROSEANNE BARR • www.RoseanneForPresident.com

Roseanne Barr, who has residences in Hawai'i and California, has been an Emmy-award winning actress, a *New York Times* best-selling author, a recipient of the Eleanor Roosevelt Freedom of Speech Award, six GLAAD Media Awards, two Humanitas Awards and a Peabody Award for excellence in television. Less well known is the fact that Roseanne has been a consistent supporter of Green Party candidates and a persistent advocate for social justice. On Day One of Occupy Wall Street (September 17, 2011) Roseanne became the first public figure to stand with the occupiers in Manhattan's Zuccotti Park, delivering a speech before the initial General Assembly.

Her campaign for the Green Party nomination highlights a Constitutional Amendment to end corporate personhood; reinstating the Glass-Steagall Act (the New Deal legislation intended to control speculation and limit commercial bank securities activities); closing the loopholes that allow some of our nation's most profitable corporations to get away with not paying any taxes; permanently shutting down U.S. military bases in foreign countries; and implementing a single-payer health care system.

Roseanne has stated: "My experience as a public figure and my ability to handle media scrutiny and criticism is great preparation for a national campaign and the national political spotlight. I am welcomed into the living rooms of tens of millions of blue-collar Americans, many of whom appreciate the work I did in honestly portraying their plight on network television. As they have welcomed me into their homes, I will welcome them into the Green Party."

KENT MESPLAY • www.Mesplay.org

Kent Mesplay, of Encinitas, CA, spent the first ten years of his life in the rainforest environment of New Guinea. From this experience he developed a deep commitment to and respect for the environment and for aboriginal peoples everywhere.

Kent currently holds a San Diego County position as an Air Quality Inspector. His Green Party activism goes back to 1995 when he first registered with the Green Party of California. In 1996 he was a Nader delegate to the party's national convention. That same year he was elected Treasurer of the Green Party County Council, San Diego.

In 2004 Kent became a Green Party of California delegate to the Green National Committee and he has served in that position continuously since. On the basis of his commitment to Green politics he sought the Green Party presidential nomination in 2004 and 2008.

Issues highlighted in his current campaign include: fostering community self-reliance with a foundation of basic physical security (water, food, energy, shelter, medicine); transitioning toward sustainable lifeways for ecological reasons, for security, for energy independence, and for social justice (so we do not look elsewhere to extract the resources of other peoples).

Kent says: "Now is the time to change our ways, to decentralize and re-localize, to plan by watersheds, and to abandon ruinous globalization. Through its Future-Focus,

...continued on page 37



GREEN HORIZON

Green Horizon Sustainers for 2012

- Tony Affigne, Rhode Island
Theresa Amato and Jonathan Main, Illinois
David and Gillian Bath, Florida
John Battista and Justine McCabe, Connecticut
Ted Becker, Alabama
Dee Berry, Missouri
James Bitner, Maine
Antonio Blasé, Maine
Peter S. Broeksmit
R. Roy Cannon, New Jersey
Jonathan and Dorothy Carter, Maine
Hank Chapot, California
Susan Chunco, California
David Cobb, California
Chris Cole, Maine
Wallace and Nancy Condon, California
Richard and Debra Csenge, Utah
Bob Dale and Jean Parker, Maine
Morgen D'Arc, Maine
Christine DeTroy, Maine
Jacqui Deveneau, Maine
Romi and Hassan Elnagar, Louisiana
Paul Etxeberri, Nevada
Richard Evanoff, Japan
Valerie Face, California
Jean Galloway Fine, Maine
Olenka Folda, Maine
Edmund P. Fowler, Ontario, Canada
Walter and Francine Fox, Pennsylvania
David and Melissa Frans, Maine
Bruce Gagnon and Mary Beth Sullivan, Maine
Greg Gerrit and Kathleen E. Rourke, Rhode Island
Rhoda R. Gilman, Minnesota
Art Goodtimes, Colorado
Budd Dickinson and Jody Grage, Washington
Lisanne Gray Budwick, New Jersey
David Greenwood, New Jersey
Christopher Gruener, Massachusetts
Tian Harper, California
Holly Hart, Iowa
Charles and Elizabeth McGhee Hassrick, Illinois
Brandon L. Hewitt, Georgia
Douglas H. Holden, Wisconsin
Clare Howell, Maine
Abhi and Sid Hudson, Oregon
Brenda Humphrey, North Carolina
Gus Jacacci, Vermont
Maynard Kaufman and Barbara Geisler, Michigan
Brian W.P. Kent, Maine
Charles Kiel, Connecticut
Robert A. Kinsey, Colorado
Ben Kjelshus, Missouri
Barbara Knox, Maryland
David and Peg Krosschell, Ohio
Jim Krosschell and Cindy Dockrell, Massachusetts
Kathryn Krosschell, Ohio
Paul Krumm, Kansas
Norman D. & Martha W. Kurland, New Mexico
Ellen La Conte, North Carolina
Ross Levin, Pennsylvania
Margie MacWilliams, New Jersey
Audrey Marra, Maine
Linda B. Martin, Washington
Jane Meisenbach, Maine
Kent Mesplay, California
Al Miller, Maine
Judith Mohling, Colorado
Terry Morgen, Maine
Daniel Moses and Charlene Spretnak, California
Dean Myerson, Oregon
Jason Nabewoniec, New York
Jon Olsen, Maine
Linda Overing & R. John Ryan, Jr., Massachusetts
Rosalie Tyler Paul, Maine
Charles Payne, Maine
David Thompson and Leslie Pearlman, New Mexico
Karen Peterson, Arizona
Joshua Roy Pritchett, Florida
Virginia Rasmussen, New York
Carla and John Rensenbrink, Maine
Greta Rensenbrink, West Virginia
Kathryn Rensenbrink and Jon McMillan, Maine
Liz Rensenbrink, Maine
Robert Richie and Cynthia Richie Terrell, Maryland
Barbara Rodgers Hendricks, Alabama
Donna Schmader, Rhode Island
David Schwartzman, Washington, D.C.
Evelyn Seberry, Michigan
Monica Shreiber, Oregon
Mark and Wendy Skinner, Pennsylvania
William Slavick, Maine
Sam and Kathy Smith, Maine
Herschel Sternlieb, Maine
Lisa J. Taylor, California
Marko Ulvila, Finland
Kathleen Vadnais, Minnesota
John C. Van Pelt, Maine
Rhoda Vanderhart, Alabama
Mike Wakefield, Maine
Victor Wallis, Massachusetts
Andrea Walsh and Andy Davis, New Hampshire
Ellen and Lloyd Wells, Florida and Maine
Steve Welzer, New Jersey
M. Vivian White, Alabama
David Whiteman, South Carolina
Julia Willebrand, New York
Natasha Wist, California
Charles Woodrow, New Jersey
Shirley Yurkonis, Missouri
Peter and Margaret Zack, Maine
Betty Zisk, Massachusetts



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