



Green Parties:

Reflections on the First
Three Decades

Edited by Frank Zelko and
Carolin Brinkmann



HEINRICH BÖLL FOUNDATION

GREEN PARTIES: REFLECTIONS ON THE FIRST THREE DECADES

Heinrich Böll Foundation North America
Edited by Frank Zelko & Carolin Brinkmann

2006

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The Heinrich Böll Foundation is a non-profit political foundation affiliated with the German political party Alliance 90/The Greens. The Heinrich Böll Foundation opened its Washington, DC office in 1998. The Heinrich Böll Foundation North America focuses its work on the issues of foreign and security policy and transatlantic relations, global governance, sustainable development, social equity and gender democracy.

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Published by the Heinrich Böll Foundation North America

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Cover design and interior layout by Sarah Vickers

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FOREWORD

The formation of national Green parties has been closely interwoven with their respective national histories and political contexts. The contributors to *Green Parties: Reflections on the First Three Decades* have in one way or another been part of these histories and the political movements leading to the establishment of Green parties in their countries--as activists, party founders, Green politicians, or analysts. Exploring the interconnectedness of Green movements and their historical circumstances, the authors' reflections highlight the most critical steps in the development of Green parties in different national settings. Equally important, the individual contributions taken together amply illustrate the political impact of environmental ideas across national borders and the emergence of the kind of transnational activism that has come to be an epochal trademark of a globalizing world.

A major goal of the joint 2004 conference on "The Origins of Green Parties in Global Perspective," organized by the German Historical Institute and the Heinrich Böll Foundation in Washington, D.C., was to bring together different perspectives from the global Green movement. Moreover, its purpose was to unravel the underlying political and social conditions, debates, and implications surrounding the movement's origins, internal struggles, and institutionalization as political parties. This volume, based on the conference papers, offers a unique understanding of the roots and accomplishments of Green parties over the last three decades. It thus not only provides common ground for transatlantic exchange on the matter of Green party histories and politics; it is also representative of the sustained cooperation and exchange of ideas between the German Historical Institute and the Heinrich Böll Foundation, North America.

Both the conference and the publication owe much to the support of Christof Mauch, director of the GHI, and the organization and contributions of Frank Zelko (GHI), Sören Haffer (HBF), Carolin Brinkmann (HBF), and Marc Berthold (HBF). On behalf

of the Heinrich-Böll-Foundation, I would like to thank them for their dedicated work. Many thanks also go to the conference participants and contributors to this volume for sharing their insights with us.

HELGA FLORES-TREJO

DIRECTOR, HEINRICH BÖLL FOUNDATION

INTRODUCTION

One of the more tangible political results of the environmental movement over the last thirty years has been the development of Green parties throughout many parts of the world. To varying degrees, these parties have sought to transcend the politics of the conservative, liberal, and social democratic parties that have dominated western democracies since the Second World War. Indeed, while Green parties remain firmly grounded in ecological principles, most of them have developed agendas that extend well beyond the traditional boundaries of environmentalism, encompassing issues such as human rights, social justice, and international relations. In some instances, Green parties have attained a significant degree of direct political power at various levels of government, while in a few cases—Germany being the best-known example—they have even become part of a coalition government. In countries where the political structures are less favorable, such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia, Green parties have had to exert influence in a less direct fashion. Nonetheless, their actions have frequently helped to shape the debate about various political issues, as well as forcing the traditional parties to consider matters that they would perhaps prefer to ignore.

The first identifiably "Green" political parties emerged in the early 1970s in Australia and New Zealand. Soon thereafter, they spread to Western Europe and North America and by the early 21st century there were some 80 national parties throughout the world that embodied the principles of Green politics. While the origins and fortunes of these parties have varied tremendously according to differing political opportunity structures, there are nonetheless some general characteristics which they all, to one degree or another, share. These include: a commitment to environmental protection based on a holistic ecological worldview; the pursuit of social justice; a strong opposition to warfare as a means of resolving disputes; and a devotion to a more participatory, some might say idealized version of democracy.

In order to examine the history of such parties and to evaluate their impact over the past three decades, the Heinrich Böll Foundation and the German Historical Institute in Washington DC organized a symposium featuring prominent Green party activists and analysts from various parts of the world, with a particular emphasis on Germany and the United States. The participants were invited to reflect on their experiences and analyze the historical development of Green parties in their respective nations. In this sense, the symposium represented a kind of transitional intellectual phase between personal reflection and historical analysis, allowing activists who had participated in a movement to step back and interpret their experiences in a broader historical context. The fact that many of the participants have gone on to careers in academia and writing made them especially suitable for such a task. The papers collected in this volume are based on the presentations from the symposium.

In 1972, the Labor government of Tasmania, the island state located some 200 km south of the Australian mainland, authorized the construction of a dam that would flood Lake Pedder, part of a remote and beautiful region in the state's southwest. While environmentalists failed to halt the construction, their campaign nonetheless led to the establishment of the United Tasmania Group (UTG) in March 1972, an organization that many now regard as the world's first Green party. It was at this time that Bob Brown, Australia's most well-known Green activist and politician, arrived in Tasmania and began to involve himself in the state's rancorous environmental politics. In 1983, Brown became the first green to be elected to an Australian state parliament and since 1996 he has been a member of the Australian Senate. My contribution to the volume, based on Brown's presentation at the symposium, examines the long incubation period between the emergence of the UTG and the birth of the Australian Greens in 1996, focusing in particular on several influential campaigns in Tasmania.

While Australia may lay claim to having the earliest Green party, it is the German Greens, *Die Grünen*, who have become the most famous. According to Christoph Becker-Schaum, a former Green member of the District Council of Frankfurt, *Die Grünen* evolved in the 1970s because of the simple fact that none of the other political parties were adequately concerned with environmental issues and social justice. However, the story of their evolution, as Becker-Schaum demonstrates, is a more complex one and involves issues such as the development of new social movements concerned

with quality-of-life issues and the rapid construction of nuclear power plants throughout the Federal Republic.

Hubert Kleinert, a member of the first crop of Greens to enter the German Bundestag in 1983, describes how *Die Grünen* went from being a social movement to a political party during the 1980s. According to Kleinert, two key developments occurred in 1983. First, the Bundestag voted to allow nuclear missiles to be deployed on German soil. This event signaled the end of the growth of social movements in Germany and forced the Greens to abandon their puritanical commitment to grassroots democracy and to enter the arena of ordinary electoral politics. 1983 was also the year in which the Hessian Green Party formed a governing coalition with the Social Democrats, an event that triggered a hefty controversy within the party, the outcome of which was the formation of two factions or wings, the so-called Realos (who advocated political realism) and the Fundis (who adhered to fundamental principles). This dualism constituted a formative influence on the party until the early 1990s. According to Kleinert, *Die Grünen* provide an example of the utmost success one could realistically expect from a social movement in a highly developed democracy. *Die Grünen* became an institution and thereby an integral part of a system they had previously opposed.

Helmut Wiesenthal, a leading researcher of the German Greens and a former member of the Green Party's National Executive Committee, argues that *Die Grünen* had a disproportionate degree of influence given their relatively meager electoral success. By receiving 5 to 10 percent of the vote, they regularly held the balance of power, forcing other political parties to adopt green issues in order to secure their share of the electorate.

The American participants in the symposium came from various factions within the U.S. green movement, many of which have had their differences in the past. In the early 1980s, Charlene Spretnak, a spiritual eco-feminist, and Fritjof Capra, a New-Age physicist, toured Germany in order to learn how *Die Grünen* were transforming German politics. The result was a book titled *Green Politics: The Global Promise*, published in 1984. Spretnak and Capra concluded that the United States was fertile ground for a similar political movement, and many who read their work agreed. The positive response prompted Spretnak to organize a gathering of activists, organizers, and theorists from across the country in order to discuss the formation of a U.S. equivalent of *Die Grünen*. The conference took place in St. Paul, Minnesota, in August 1984, and

the result was the Committees of Correspondence, the forerunner to the Green party. Spretnak argues that much of the energy and momentum of the U.S. Greens was dissipated by the fractious tendencies of various activists and by arguments about whether or not Greens should become active in the American electoral system or remain a grassroots, extra-parliamentary movement. In Spretnak's opinion, the Green party only began to offer an alternative to the mainstream parties when it moved away from the dogmatic marxism and anarchism of some of its more radical members.

Brian Tokar, an associate of Murray Bookchin's Institute for Social Ecology (ISE) in Vermont, is another activist with a long history of involvement in green politics. Tokar analyzes some of the problems that involvement in traditional electoral politics entailed. In response to Spretnak's criticism, Tokar argued that the social ecology eco-anarchist perspective he and ISE represented had filled a vital niche in the movement's history. Rather than attempting to hijack the movement, as some of their critics contended, social ecologists provided an ideological and organizational focus for many activists who were searching for a form of politics outside the American mainstream and for an ideology that explained the link between environmental deterioration and social inequality.

Like Spretnak, Lorna Salzman, who co-founded the New York Green party in 1984 and has written extensively on Green politics, takes issue with the ISE view of Green parties, which depicts them as an outgrowth of the New Left. The major defect in progressive movements in the United States, she argues, is the lack of grounding in an ecological paradigm and sensibility. Salzman contends that the U.S. Green party, contrary to public belief and expectations, has relegated environmental concerns and activism to the back burner, choosing instead to identify itself with more traditional sectarian leftist ideologies, broadly defined as racial and social justice. As a result, the party has refrained from addressing or confronting the numerous transnational treaties and institutions that affect the global environment, such as the Kyoto Treaty, biodiversity protocols, NAFTA, and the WTO. If the US Green party is to become a force to be reckoned with, Salzman insists, it must go beyond those it deems its "natural allies," and offer a broader critique than that purveyed by the New Left movement of the 1960s.

John Rensenbrink, an emeritus professor in political science at Bowdoin College and longstanding Green Party activist, offered

an explanation for the diverging views represented by Tokar and ISE on the one hand, and Spretnak and Salzman on the other. In his analysis of the U.S. Green Party, Rensenbrink employs Max Weber's distinction between an "Ethics of Intention" and an "Ethics of Responsibility." People who hold to an Ethics of Intention, Weber argued, focus strongly on their ideals and principles and are reluctant to bend them, much less break them, to adapt to changing circumstances. For such people, compromise tends to be an epithet. People who pursue an Ethics of Responsibility, on the other hand, are more pragmatic. They devote greater effort to strategy, risk assessment, and readiness to adapt to circumstances. Although they also believe that vision and values must be kept clearly in mind, they are nonetheless prepared to compromise. Most Green parties, Rensenbrink argues, have drawn people from both of these ethical positions, the result of which has been the conflicts and damaging disruptions discussed by Spretnak and Tokar. In Germany, this struggle was best represented by the split between Realos and Fundis. In the United States, the struggle between these two ethical tendencies was intense for the first fifteen years of the Green Party's history. Gradually, however, Greens found a kind of structure that, though seeming to favor the Realos, has also built in some key elements of the Fundi perspective.

Steven Schmidt, a leading American Green activist and organizer over the past two decades, describes how the Greens formed a national party, with Ralph Nader as their presidential candidate, despite the divisive factionalism that plagued it throughout much of its history. Finally, Sara Parkin, a prominent member of the UK Greens during the 1970s and 1980s, takes a critical look at the overall progress of Green politics in Europe over the past three decades. While heartened by Green parties' electoral success at both the national and continental levels, Parkin is nonetheless concerned that the almost exclusive focus on electoral politics has narrowed their vision and stifled their ambition. The result has been an ossification of party structures, an increasing self-absorption, and an inability to appeal to a broad section of the electorate. Although Greens throughout the world have much to be proud of, Parkin contends, they cannot afford to rest on their laurels. Nor can they measure success solely in electoral terms. Instead, Greens need to insure that it is they, rather than various extremist groups, who are able to attract the increasing number of people disenchanted with mainstream political parties.

This project owes its origins to the vision of Helga Flores-Trejo and Christof Mauch, the respective directors of the Heinrich Böll Foundation and the German Historical Institute in Washington DC. Many thanks to both of them for supporting both the symposium and the resulting publication. Marc Berthold from the Böll Foundation, who co-convened the symposium with me, proved an exceptionally capable and congenial organizer. The same can be said for Carolin Brinkmann, who has seen the project through its editing stages with both diligence and good humor. Dean Myerson and the Green Institute in Washington DC also provided much-appreciated support and input. Thanks also to Carl Lankowski, the Deputy Director of Area Studies and Coordinator for European Area Studies at the Foreign Service Institute, U.S. State Department, and Sören Haffer from the Böll Foundation's Warsaw office, for their participation in the symposium.

FRANK ZELKO
BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA 2006

CHAPTER 1

ORIGINS AND PARTY FORMATION

THE TASMANIAN CRUCIBLE: BOB BROWN AND THE AUSTRALIAN GREENS

FRANK ZELKO

If one had to choose a single theme that unites the various historical threads of the Australian Greens, that theme would be preservation. Whether it involved large tracts of “pristine” wilderness, such as the old-growth forests of Southwest Tasmania and the kaleidoscopic underwater world of the Great Barrier Reef, or small pockets of bushland in and around the nation's cities, the various movements that prefigured the Greens were all aiming to preserve some aspect of the natural world from the constant encroachment of development. The diverse array of people involved in these movements mirrored the varied natural habitats they were trying to preserve. Thus upper middle class conservationists found themselves in strange alliances with hippie protestors and communist trade unionists. As in other Western industrial democracies, disaffection with politics-as-usual led to the development of a loose rainbow coalition representing a variety of constituencies and political views. Gradually, enough of these groups realized that they shared enough interests to form a viable and coherent political party. However, unlike in West Germany, where the transformation from social movements to an organized nationwide political party was swift, the Australian Greens only came into being after a long and sometimes painful incubation period.

During the twentieth century, an Australian conservation movement that was similar, if less celebrated, to the one in the United States, had quietly but energetically worked to preserve large tracts of land, particularly forests, throughout the country. Most famous among these predominantly upper middle class bushwalkers were the father-and-son duo of Myles and Milo Dunphy. Myles was an architect with a passion for the bush. In his spare time, and largely at his own expense, he mapped out a series of wilderness

areas in his native state of New South Wales and called for the creation of a system of national parks. Milo continued his father's advocacy and also became a leading player in the more activist environmental movement of the 1970s and 1980s.¹ The two were heavily involved in many preservation campaigns long before the era of Green politics, two of the more famous examples being the Coolong Caves area in the southern Blue Mountains and the Myall Lakes region some 200 kilometers north of Sydney.

Similar campaigns occurred in other states. In Queensland in 1962, a group of conservationists formed the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland, which embarked on a long-term struggle to protect the Great Barrier Reef. Australia's most influential post-war environmental organization, the Australian Conservation Foundation, was also formed at this time and played an important role in the campaign. In Victoria in the early 1960s, a band of traditional conservationists of Myles Dunphy's generation came together with a group of younger activists from Milo's era to protect the Little Desert region on the Victoria-South Australia border.²

However, it was Australia's smallest state, Tasmania, which became the crucible in which the future Green party was forged. An island located some 200 kilometers south of Melbourne, Tasmania's central role in the origination and development of the Australian Greens reflects its place on the periphery. Small in size and population, the island state nonetheless proved that the accidents of history could be magnified with large consequences. In 1874, Andrew Inglis Clark, then Tasmania's Attorney-General, adopted and modified Englishman Thomas Hare's idea of proportional representation. In an article titled "Hare's System of Representation" published in the journal, *Quadrilateral*, Clark outlined the philosophy behind this electoral system:

If equal power is to be given to all classes, then it should be assured this equality is real, and not by a faulty system of voting give a bare minority the power of annulling an

¹ For a very readable biography of the Dunphies, see Peter Meredith, *Myles and Milo* (Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 1999)

² For more details on these campaigns and for an excellent history of Australian environmentalism in general, see Drew Hutton and Libby Connors, *A History of the Australian Environmental Movement* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). For an in-depth study of the Little Desert campaign, see Libby Robin, *Defending the Little Desert: The Rise of Ecological Consciousness in Australia* (Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1998)

almost equal number of votes to their own.....This system would secure the representation of all opinions, and all opinions in proportion to their strength in the country.

The system, now known as Hare-Clark, was finally enacted for Tasmania's lower house and was first used in the election of 1909. It is an historical curiosity that this brand of proportional representation owed much to the vigorous early backing it received from the temperance unions. The result was that Tasmania has had an electoral system that is favorable to small parties and independent candidates. The situation is exactly the opposite in the mainland states and at the federal level, where winner-take-all single member electorates make it extremely difficult for smaller parties to gain representation in the lower house.³

Tasmanian governments of the post-war era, whether run by the conservative Liberal party or the social democratic Labor party, were particularly fascinated with dam-building. Both parties, and the population as a whole, viewed dams as the ultimate examples of progress and modernity; of science and engineering taming nature to better serve humankind. In 1967, the Tasmanian Hydro-Electric Commission proposed to dam the Serpentine and Huon rivers in the state's southwest, an act which would flood Lake Pedder, the region of the state most beloved by Tasmania's bushwalkers and conservationists. One did not have to be a romantic to appreciate the stunning beauty of Lake Pedder. With its swirling mists, its sandy beach and wild mountain scenery, it was the jewel in Tasmania's wilderness crown. Yet, apart from a few wilderness enthusiasts, few seemed concerned by the state government's plan to flood the region. In her fine essay on the Australian Greens, Amanda Lohrey, who grew up in Tasmania, explains the prevailing mood of the era:

At the time I was an active member of Labor Youth and I supported the flooding of the lake, as did most of my political cohort. Though we were in the early stages of a cultural shift that was to significantly change us, at that time we still believed in the "drive towards modernisation", as it was then called. The word "modern" has become dated now, almost quaint, but back then it had a talismanic

³ The Hare-Clark system is also used in the Australian Capital Territory, which is the area around Canberra.

quality; the magical properties of the straight line and the sharp edge.⁴

Throughout the next five years, a group of wilderness advocates, predominantly middle class professionals, mounted a vigorous campaign to prevent the construction of the dam. In the process, they developed an ecologically-driven critique of modernity that was a hallmark of so-called post-materialist movements throughout the world. Despite their efforts, however, they were unable to overcome the bipartisan political support for the dam, and Pedder, like so many lakes, canyons and forests both before and since, was sacrificed on the alter of development. The protestors' struggle, however, was not entirely in vain. In an effort to prevent similar acts of ecological vandalism in the future, some of the activists formed the United Tasmania Group in March 1972, which is now widely considered to be the first Green party in the world, beating the New Zealand Values party by a mere month.

Bob Brown's role in the history of the Australian Greens dates from this period. Raised in rural New South Wales, Brown studied medicine in Sydney in the 1960s, before embarking on the usual right-of-passage journey to the United Kingdom. After returning from London in 1972, he accepted a six-week locum as a general practitioner in the northern Tasmanian town of Launceston. Soon after arriving, he joined a local bushwalking club. As a result, Brown quickly found himself plunging into a nascent Green movement that had sprung up around the fight to save Lake Pedder. Until then, his major environmental concern had been the threat posed by nuclear weapons. But immersion in this new movement quickly broadened his ecological horizons. Dr Richard Jones, the University of Tasmania botanist who led the campaign against the flooding of Lake Pedder and who was instrumental in forming the United Tasmania Group, outlined a political vision shared by many of the new generation environmentalists who were emerging in the early 1970s. Environmental activists, Jones insisted, needed to do more than merely campaign against wilderness destruction. They also needed to reach out to groups such as trade unions and to become involved in electoral politics. Jones and others saw environmentalism as part of a broader progressive agenda that also included social justice issues and the development of new forms of political organization that broke down the rigid

⁴ Amanda Lohrey, "Groundswell: The Rise of the Greens" *Quarterly Essay* #8, 2002, 10.

hierarchies of the established political parties. Here, in embryonic form, were the ideas and coalitions that would later characterize Green parties in much of the world.⁵

While Tasmania's environmentalists were battling to save the state's wilderness areas, other groups were fighting for a more liveable environment in Australia's cities. In 1971, the Builders Labourers Federation (BLF), a trade union with a communist leadership, formed an unlikely coalition with a group of upper middle class conservationists who were trying to prevent the development of some bushland in their Sydney suburb. This was the beginning of the so-called "Green Ban" movement in which the BLF refused to provide labor for building sites that threatened to destroy bush or parkland. Jack Munday, the BLF's outspoken leader, believed that working people needed access to open space within easy reach of their communities. He was therefore prepared to use the union's power to further quality of life issues that went beyond traditional concerns such as workplace conditions and salaries. The Green Bans sparked considerable interest in urban environmental issues throughout the country and also established linkages between the labor movement and wilderness-oriented groups such as the Australian Conservation Foundation and Milo Dunphy's Total Environment Centre. By the mid-1970s, Munday and those sympathetic to him had lost their power in the BLF, and the Green Bans succumbed to pressure from business interests and right-wing unions. Nevertheless, they were a vital early element in the eventual formation of the Australian Greens.

Bob Brown's political career began in the mid-1970s, when he decided to run for the Australian Senate as a United Tasmania Group candidate. It was a valuable, if somewhat sobering experience. At one point during the election evening, as the major party candidates' tallies were reaching into the thousands, Brown's stood at only two votes! It was not long, however, before the attention of the Green movement turned to another Tasmanian wilderness area that was slated for development. By 1976, rumors were afloat that the Hydro-Electric Commission was planning to build yet another major dam, this time on the Franklin and Gordon River system, a remote and rugged area that approximated "pristine wilderness" more than perhaps any other region of Australia, if not the world. That summer, Paul Smith,

⁵ Richard Jones, "A New Movement for Social and Political Change." In C. Pybus and R. Flanagan, eds, *The Rest of the World is Watching: Tasmania and the Greens* (Sydney: Pan Macmillian, 1990).

a forester and experienced rafter, and Brown embarked on a rafting trip down the Franklin River, something that only a handful of European Australians had ever attempted before. Aside from the sheer wonder of the river and the surrounding wilderness, the trip confirmed that preparations were indeed underway to build the dam. At a meeting at Brown's house near the northern Tasmanian town of Launceston, Brown and a group of activists known as the Southwest Tasmanian Action Committee, decided to focus their attention on the proposed dam and do their utmost to prevent its construction. In an effort to create a broader, more inclusive, and less radical identity, the group changed its name to the Tasmanian Wilderness Society (TWS), a name that was in part inspired by the US Wilderness Society.

Over the next eight years, the TWS, along with thousands of sympathizers in Tasmania and on the mainland, mounted the most high-profile and influential environmental campaign in Australian history. The group opened a shop-cum-office in Hobart—the Tasmanian capital—and set about lobbying sympathetic politicians and winning the sympathy of the media. They were bolstered by visits from such internationally renowned figures as Ralph Nader and British botanist and television personality, David Bellamy. Brown made contact with liberal California governor, Jerry Brown, who sent Deni Greene, a high profile engineer who lent further scientific legitimacy to the TWS's critique of the dam proposal. Reports about the campaign appeared around the world in publications such as *Le Monde*, the *Chicago Tribune*, and even *Pravda*. Throughout these years, the growing TWS membership had numerous and frequently exhausting meetings. It was clear that many of the dam's opponents were part of the broader political left, and issues such as feminism, hierarchy, and grass-roots democracy were frequently raised, just as they were in the early Green movements in countries such as West Germany and the US.

The years 1976-1983 were something of a political roller-coaster ride for those on all sides of the Franklin Dam issue. In the end, however, the TWS campaign was remarkably effective. The Labor premier, Doug Lowe, initially favored the dam but gradually came to agree with the anti-dam movement, and in 1981 he nominated Southwest Tasmania for World Heritage listing. Lowe's growing environmental sympathies angered many of his Labor colleagues, who eventually ousted him in November 1981. The new premier, Harry Holgate, was a strong proponent of the dam, as was his successor, Robin Gray, who took the reigns of government after the Liberal party's

electoral victory in 1982. Gray made it clear that he would brook no opposition to the dam. Given the state government's hard-line attitude, the TWS had no choice but to lobby the federal government, led by Liberal prime minister, Malcolm Fraser, to over-ride the state government's authority. Fraser did not support the dam and tried to dissuade Gray from going forward with the project. However, once Gray made it clear that he intended to go ahead with the dam regardless of the federal government's attitude, Fraser, in keeping with his party's traditional reluctance to over-ride state government authority, backed off.

After all legal and political avenues had been exhausted, the TWS decided to adopt the Gandhian strategy of non-violent civil disobedience. Hundreds of protestors from around Tasmania and the rest of Australia converged on the proposed dam site in December 1982, thereby creating an instant media event. Police immediately began to make arrests, and throughout the next few months some 1200 people, including Brown, became acquainted with Risdon Prison, across the Derwent River from Hobart. The protestors came from all walks of life. Some were typical "Greenies"—young and frequently unemployed people practicing various forms of alternative living—while others came from professional middle class backgrounds. Feelings on both sides of the issue were running extremely high, and several anti-dam protestors received death threats. Brown himself was beaten by a group of four young men in a car park in the West Tasmanian town of Strahan.

Outside Tasmania, public opinion was heavily opposed to the dam. Prime Minister Fraser, with an eye to the upcoming federal election, offered to give the state \$500 million in federal funding to build a thermal power station. Fraser knew that the Tasmanian government would not accept the money; the offer was mainly designed to placate voters on the mainland. Sensing the potential to harvest votes from environmental sympathizers in Melbourne and Sydney, the new Labor party leader, Bob Hawke, promised to halt the dam if elected. The TWS protestors were fortified by Hawke's announcement, and the blockade intensified, culminating in over 200 arrests on March 1 1983. Meanwhile, in Hobart, some 20,000 protestors converged on the town center to oppose the dam.

Hawke's promise to prevent the construction of the dam was undoubtedly instrumental in the Labor party's eventual victory in the 1983 federal election. Sensing the possibility that the High Court might rule in Hawke's favor, the Hydro-Electric Commission

intensified its efforts, flooding the area with bulldozers and heavy equipment in the hope that the High Court would not rule to halt the construction of a dam that was already partially built. However, on July 1 1983, in a 4:3 decision, the court ruled that the Hawke government had the power to over-ride the Tasmanian government's legislation, thereby hammering the final nail in the dam's coffin. The court's decision was a massive fillip for the environmental movement and a watershed event in the history of Green politics in Australia.

In the midst of the TWS campaign against the Franklin River Dam, Brown had somewhat unexpectedly become a member of the Tasmanian parliament. He had run for office in 1980 in the seat of Denison, a safe Labor seat in Hobart. Although Brown failed to receive the necessary votes to win a seat in parliament, the former director of the TWS, Dr Norm Sanders, had joined the Australian Democrats—a minor party—and was elected. In December 1982, however, Sanders became fed up with the way the two major parties colluded to stifle debate on environmental issues and resigned in frustration. As the next highest vote-winner in the seat, the position was now offered to Brown, who signed his parliamentary papers in Risdon Prison, at the same time as signing his bail form.

Brown's first few years as an independent member of parliament were frequently lonely and frustrating. He tried, for example, to reform Tasmania's archaic and discriminatory laws against homosexuality but could not find a single MP to second his proposals. Similarly, his efforts to promote debate on issues such as freedom of information, euthanasia, factory farming, and gun laws were largely ignored by his fellow parliamentarians. Despite his ineffectual efforts, however, support for Green politics was growing. In the 1986 election, Brown comfortably made it over the 12.5% hurdle that was necessary to gain a parliamentary seat. In addition, he had managed to convince Dr. Gerry Bates, an environmental lawyer at the University of Tasmania, to run for office, which he did successfully. Although there was still no official "Green party", Bates' election at least managed to double the parliamentary representation of "Green Independents", as they began calling themselves.

By late 1986, opinion polls in Tasmania showed that Greens were the first preference of 17% of voters. The West German Greens, by comparison, were polling at 9% at this time. This growing popularity occurred just as another showdown between Greens and the

business-backed government of Premier Robin Gray was about to begin. This time, the issue involved the construction of a pulp mill on Tasmania's north coast. Locals who opposed the mill formed CROPS (Concerned Residents Opposed to Pulp mill Siting), which was led by Christine Milne, a schoolteacher who had participated in the Franklin blockade. The developers—the Australian mining firm of North Broken Hill and the Canadian company, Noranda—promised a “world class” facility. Nevertheless, Milne soon learned that the mill would be dumping 13 tons of toxic organochlorides into the ocean every day and that its fumes would contain carcinogenic dioxins. Unlike the Franklin protest, which had mostly revolved around wilderness preservation, the Wesley Vale campaign dealt with a broader array of environmental concerns. In Milne's words, the campaign made environmental issues

mainstream, daily and all-pervasive . . . Wesley Vale was no “single issue” but demonstrated the interconnectedness of environmental concern. Encompassed in the debate were: loss of native forests; appropriate land use; toxic pollution of air and waterways; depletion of greenhouse gases; contamination of food; recycling and waste; public health; community involvement in decision making; and local self-determination.⁶

Environmentalists were fortunate that in federal environment minister, Graham Richardson, they had a supporter who was among the most influential politicians in Australia. “Richo”, as his cabinet colleagues and friends called him, became a convert to the Green cause after Brown gave him a tour of the Southwest Tasmanian wilderness. His support, however, was not based merely on a newfound awe of Tasmania's wilderness; Richardson was convinced that environmental issues would become ever more important to the Australian electorate and wanted to make sure that the Labor party, rather than the Greens, would reap the political benefits of this development. Whatever Richardson's motivation, the Greens were grateful for his support. In 1989, after 10,000 people took part in a rally in Hobart opposing the mill, Richardson demanded that the developers present the federal government with a proper independent environmental impact statement. This was too much for Noranda. If Australians started making such demands, then perhaps Canadians would be next,

⁶ Quoted in James Norman, *Bob Brown: Gentle Revolutionary* (Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2004), 119.

and the company did not want to risk attracting greater scrutiny of its practices in the country where it had the largest operations and investments.

The wave of support for the Greens generated by the successful campaign against the Wesley Vale mill crested in the state elections of 1989. In addition to Brown and Bates, Christine Milne and two other Green Independents were elected. Since neither of the major parties could muster a majority in the parliament, the Greens now held the balance of power. While none of the parties were willing to form a coalition, the Green Independents eventually agreed to support a minority Labor government in an arrangement that became known as the Green-Labor Accord. Under this arrangement, the Greens would guarantee to support Labor's state budget, as well as refusing to support no-confidence motions put forward by the Liberals, while reserving the right to move their own motions in the parliament. While the Greens managed to achieve certain objectives—such as expanding the World Heritage Wilderness in the state's southwest—their differences with the Labor government proved too great to sustain the Accord. Conservatives in the government and the trade unions, as well as the state's business-oriented media, heaped constant criticism on the Accord and the government reneged on certain agreements, such as placing a limit on the wood chipping of native forests. After 15 months, the Accord was abandoned and the Liberal party won the ensuing election. Despite this turn of events, the Green Independents had by now established themselves as a permanent part of the Tasmanian political landscape and provided the inspiration for the eventual formation of a nationwide Green party.

In Tasmania, the Green Independents benefited from the Hare-Clark electoral system and the polarization of the electorate. On the mainland, the former did not exist and the latter was not as stark. Nevertheless, moves were afoot throughout the 1980s to create various city and state-based Green parties. In 1984, the newly-formed Nuclear Disarmament party ran several candidates for federal election, including Jo Vallentine from Western Australia and Peter Garrett, the high-profile lead singer of rock band, Midnight Oil (and currently a Labor member of parliament). While Garrett just missed out, Valentine won a Senate seat, effectively making her the first Green-style politician elected to the Australian parliament. Also in 1984, the renowned West German Green party spokesperson, Petra Kelly, visited Australia and spent considerable time with many of the nation's leading Green activists and

politicians, including Brown and Jo Vallentine. Above all else, Kelly urged Australian Greens to work toward a united, nationwide Green party, thereby concentrating the resources of a hitherto disparate set of political and social groups scattered throughout the country.

In 1986, in an effort to construct a national party, various Green groups organized a "getting together" conference in Sydney. Representatives from all states and territories and many community groups, including a brace of local Green parties, attended the meeting. In the end, however, they failed to agree on many important points and several of them, Brown included, felt as though a united party had become an even more remote possibility than it had been before the meeting. As with similar meetings in West Germany, the US, and various other countries, the Greens' openness and inclusiveness meant that they attracted a wide array of people—urban environmentalists, traditional conservationists, anti-nuclear activists, anarchists, socialists, gay rights activists, aboriginal rights groups—making consensus virtually impossible. Like their German counterparts, Australian Greens also had their "fundis" and "realos," and the former group was implacably opposed to electoral politics. Some, such as the members of the Trotskyite Socialist Workers party, seemed determined to hijack the Greens, much as they had hijacked the Nuclear Disarmament party (causing Jo Vallentine and Peter Garrett to abandon the NDP in mid-1985). A further difficulty was the fact that the federal Labor government, under the influence of high-profile environment minister, Graham Richardson, had convinced a large number of potential Green supporters of its environmental credentials. And to top it all off, the Australian Democrats were also trying to position themselves as the party of social justice and environmentalism, thereby making it extremely difficult for the Greens to find their political niche.

Although a national party continued to elude the Greens, the 1980s nonetheless saw the formation of state and local parties throughout the nation. In 1990, Senator Jo Vallentine joined the West Australian Greens, thereby making her the first ever member of a "Green" party in the Australian parliament. By 1991, many Greens felt ready to try to once again establish a national party. Meeting in Sydney, they encountered many of the same problems as five years before. The Tasmanian and Queensland Greens were willing to cooperate, but the New South Wales group, under the influence of the Socialist Workers party, obstinately refused. Over the next several months, an internal power struggle occurred

among the NSW Greens. Finally, the more pragmatic members of the group succeeded in passing an “exclusionary” motion in which members of the Greens could not simultaneously be members of other parties. The effect was almost instantaneous. Faced with having to choose between the Greens and their own Trotskyite party, the Socialist Workers party apparatchiks departed the scene, leaving the way open for the NSW Greens to join their Queensland and Tasmanian counterparts, thereby forming the Australian Greens. While this was a breakthrough moment for Green politics in Australia, it was not necessarily one that interested the mainstream media. At the North Sydney press conference held to announce the party’s formation in August 1992, not a single television news crew was present.

Once the Australian Greens were up and running, Brown stood down as a member of the Tasmanian Parliament and devoted his efforts to promoting the new party throughout the nation. In addition to helping Green candidates at local and state elections, he co-authored a book with the philosopher, Peter Singer (now at Princeton), which outlined the alternative social and political vision which Green parties around the world were striving to realize.⁷ The years of acting as the party’s spokesperson came to fruition in 1996, when Brown became the first member of the Australian Greens to be elected to the Australian Senate, a position he occupies to this day.⁸

Today the Australian Greens are a confederated party with representatives from each of Australia’s six states and two territories attending its three council meetings each year. It is now blessed with good internal relationships and a rapidly growing membership approaching 10,000. The party is represented in all state and national parliaments which have proportional representation, with the exception of South Australia’s Upper House where the Democrats have had an enduring stronghold. Federally, the Greens have four Senators—Kerry Nettle was elected in 2001 from New South Wales, Rachel Siewert in 2004 from Western Australia, while Christine Milne and Brown represent Tasmania. In 2002 the Greens experienced a major breakthrough when Michael Organ was elected to the Australian House of Representatives, winning

⁷ Bob Brown & Peter Singer, *The Greens* (Melbourne: Text Publishing Co., 1996)

⁸ West Australian Greens Senator Dee Margetts, along with Jo Vallentine, had preceded Brown. However, the WA Greens remained independent of the Australian Greens and did not officially join the national party until 2003.

what had previously been regarded as the safe Labor seat of Cunningham in Wollongong, the steel city just south of Sydney. Organ's victory meant that the Greens were the first new party to enter the lower house since 1946.

The Australian Greens have established themselves as the third force in Australian politics. Due to internal wrangling and lack of political vision, the Australian Democrats have virtually collapsed and the Greens are now the party of choice for many Australian progressives. Over the past twenty years, both the Liberal and Labor parties have embraced the neo-liberal model of globalization, with its emphasis on economic growth at all costs and the attendant social inequalities and environmental despoliation that inevitably flow from it. One result has been an influx into the Green party of disillusioned ex-Labor party members, searching in some cases for the reincarnation of an idealized version of the Labor party they once supported, but with an added environmental gloss. There is tension between these former Labor adherents now in the Greens and those trying to create a genuinely new political philosophy founded on the Greens' four pillars—environment, social justice, non-violence and democracy. Nevertheless, the Greens now have a solid base across the country and their poll numbers hover around 10 per cent. In some inner city electorates of Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane, the number is over 20 per cent and the Greens' youth vote is five times higher than that in the over 50 age bracket.

Despite these positive numbers, Brown and the Greens have no delusions of grandeur. Rampant consumerism and market fundamentalism will not disappear overnight, and the politicians who promote these ideologies will cling tenaciously to them, regardless of the increasingly obvious negative consequences. However, Brown and his colleagues remain cautiously optimistic that they can gradually help turn our society around. Otherwise, there would be no point in continuing.

THE ORIGINS OF THE GERMAN GREENS

BY CHRISTOPH BECKER-SCHAUM

Green parties exist wherever the field has been prepared for them by political and new social movements since the 1960s. How and indeed why these movements exactly became political parties was determined by the structure of the different political systems, by political circumstances, but also by decisions of those involved in these movements and organizations themselves. The research on the origins of the German Greens¹ highlights a variety of rather different groups and movements involved in the process of party building. This process can be seen as one of interaction on different levels, a process that was to continue long after the official party foundation congress on January 13th, 1980. Here, I will only discuss some developments on the way to the founding, which took place first as the *Sonstige Politische Vereinigung Die Grünen* on March 17th, 1979. The party foundation itself and the further developments in the 1980s are beyond the scope of this paper. Instead, I will focus on the 1970s and the groups and movements that first put up "Green" lists at elections in the late 1970s and shed light on the difficulties they had to master before they could form into the Green party.

Among the developments leading towards the formation of the Greens, the State elections of 1978 are of particular importance. The fact that Greens ran for these elections and also how they ran reveals a lot about the way the different groups involved saw

¹ The contribution is based on preparational work and material collected for an exhibition on the origins and the beginning of the Green party. Among the broad literature on the formative years of the German Greens see: Lilian Klotzsch/Richard Stöss. Die Grünen, in: Richard Stöss (Hrsg.), *Parteien-Handbuch*, Bd. 2, Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag 1984, S. 1509-1598. Lutz Mez. 'Von den Bürgerinitiativen zu den GRÜNEN. Zur Entstehungsgeschichte der 'Wahlalternativen' in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland', in: Roland Roth/ Dieter Rucht (Hrsg.), *Neue soziale Bewegungen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung 1987, S. 263-276.

themselves. These groups included recently founded conservative ecology parties, Marxist-Leninist parties founded when the student revolt was fading, political organizations of the undogmatic left, citizens' initiatives, federal and regional associations of environmental initiatives, and direct action groups from the new social movements. To understand these developments, it is necessary to remember the political context of the 1970s. Of particular importance were phenomena such as: the detention policy of the governing social-liberal coalition government; their policy of democratic and social reforms, including their failure to reform abortion law; the *Berufsverbote* law, which forbade those associated with radical political groups or student protestors from gaining government employment; the global energy crisis, which brought about the first economic recession since the German economic miracle; a more restrictive immigration policy; and the terrorism of the Red Army Faction and the government's efforts to combat it.

The first Bundestag, elected in 1949, resembled the last Reichstag of the Weimar Republic in its composition. But in striking contrast to the interwar years, over the course of the 1950s, this system evolved into a two-and-a-half party system with two large parties, the CDU/CSU (the Christian Democrats and their Bavarian sister party, the Christian Socialists) and the SPD (Social Democrats), and the much smaller FDP (the liberal Free Democrats). The other, smaller parties of the 1950s were absorbed by the larger ones, while the radical right and left parties, the SRP and KPD respectively, were outlawed by the Supreme Court in 1953 and 1956.

The increasing dominance of the two major parties culminated in West Germany's first "grand coalition" government in 1966. The formation of the grand coalition, combined with its efforts to pass the so-called *Notstandsverfassung* (legislation that would increase the government's power to crack down on political groups it considered extremist), led to the growth of an extra-parliamentary opposition (APO) supported by some trade unions, the New Left, sympathetic liberals and, last but not least, the student movement. After the passing of the *Notstandsverfassung* in 1968, the extra-parliamentary opposition dissolved, but the Social Democrats owed their election victories of 1969 and 1972 to the broad mobilization of 1968. In the years after 1968, new extra-parliamentary movements came into being, such as the citizens' initiatives, the women's movement, and the alternative movement. In the polarized political climate of the 1970s, the SPD at first profited electorally from the renewed awakening of the

movements, but after the succession in the chancellorship from Willy Brandt to Helmut Schmidt, the APO increasingly perceived the Social Democrats as merely the lesser of two evils rather than as the genuine party of social justice.

Despite the fact that the Federal Republic had effectively been reduced to a two-and-a-half-party system, the German political system—with its proportional representation, its federal structure and its generous party founding system—offered favorable conditions for the emergence of a new party that was able to mobilize more than 5 percent of the electorate. Nevertheless, only one party—the Greens—succeeded in extending the party system before German unification.

From the older parties' perspective, the Greens' rise was caused, at least partly, by the marginalization of internal critics of nuclear policy, especially Herbert Gruhl in the CDU and Erhard Eppler in the SPD. Gruhl quit the CDU in 1978 after having been threatened with expulsion by Lower Saxony's CDU state chairman, Wilfried Hasselmann. In a letter, Hasselmann stated that GDP growth was the supreme goal of the CDU and that environmental concerns must not interfere with this priority. In spite of Gruhl, the CDU's commitment to nuclear energy remained unchallenged. After the energy crisis, the SPD, under the leadership of Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, decided to continue with the social-liberal reformist program only where it did not involve extra costs and put all its energy into protecting and creating employment. Cheap energy for industrial production was to play a key role in these efforts. This energy was supposed to be created by nuclear power, especially by the fast breeder technology, which was not even in trial stage then and is now considered a failure. By the mid-seventies the government's fourth nuclear program aimed at quadrupling the energy produced by nuclear power stations. But this aim was not supported by all social democratic state associations, prompting the increasingly anxious federal government to toughen its stance on dissenting members of the Bundestag, especially during the 1977 social democratic party convention in Hamburg. After all, job creation, the acceleration of GDP growth, and the expansion of nuclear facilities were the key goals of all three parliamentary parties of the era, and they were also subscribed to by the unions, for whom nuclear energy meant secure employment and more modern working conditions.

However, opposition to this nuclear policy had become quite vocal by this time, even if it did not immediately affect election results. The

anti-nuclear movement saw itself as a nonparliamentary movement in the APO tradition and was trying to influence the political parties from the outside. Its preferred type of organization was the local citizens' action group (*Bürgerinitiative*), whose members usually voted SPD. Indeed, leading anti-nuclear activists such as Roland Vogt, Jo Leinen, Petra Kelly, Peter Willers, and the unionist Heinz Brandt were SPD members. Thousands of such citizens' action groups were founded in the 1970s. They were active not only in the anti-nuclear movement but also in the areas of tenant and consumer rights, in urban planning and traffic policy, and in the environmental field. By the mid-1970s these groups had almost two million members, more than all political parties combined (and this at a time when membership in the major parties was at an historic high). As is evident from these figures, the 1970s were the most politicized period of German postwar history.

As mentioned above, the emerging environmental movement saw itself as extraparliamentarian. To understand what this might mean, we have to consider the models for nonparliamentarian activism at that time. These included conflict-orientated forms of activism developed by the women's and workers movements in the early 1970s.

The women's movement first came to the attention of the wider public in June 1971, with the slogan "*Wir haben abgetrieben*" ("We Have Had an Abortion"). In the magazine *Stern*, 374 women publicly admitted having had an abortion, which was illegal in Germany. In Frankfurt, women's groups organized bus rides to abortion clinics in the Netherlands. The women involved in these activities were taking serious risks, for they were publicly breaking the law.

In 1972, a group of unionists at Daimler-Benz in Stuttgart were aggrieved when local union leaders prevented them from running for the works council election. In protest, they formed their own candidate list thereby risking exclusion from the union and grave disadvantages at the workplace. Their electoral success inspired other groups who were disillusioned with politics-as-usual. In 1973, employees in Besançon, France, occupied the watchmaking factory LIP and continued production on their own terms. Their actions inspired German workers to engage in a series of wildcat strikes, including one at Ford in Cologne, as well as various factory occupations throughout the country. All of these actions were rooted in local groups who decided to take direct action to further their causes, rather than relying on "legitimate" organizations,

such as established trade unions, to do it on their behalf. Acting on their own provoked new conflicts, broadened the movement, and developed the struggle. Such action based conflict strategies were used by the anti-nuclear power movement, most famously in February 1975, when 28,000 people occupied the construction site of a proposed nuclear power plant in the village of Wyhl in Baden-Württemberg. These activists were also inspired by an action conducted by French activists at the nearby plant at Fessenheim some three months prior to the Wyhl occupation.

Such actions and movements resulted in various activists running candidates at local elections. However, citizens' action groups, environmental associations, anti-nuclear groups, the women's movement, the third world movement, and alternative lifestyles movements still did not show any interest in even discussing the idea of a new political party. The citizens' action groups and the environmentalist associations considered themselves, at this point, to be nonpartisan organizations.

Rather than participating in electoral politics, the social movement activists of the 1970s felt it was more important to establish public legitimacy. For this they relied on sympathetic journalists and social democratic members of city councils, among others. The demand for an independent newspaper—independent in the view of the social movements—was met in 1977 with the founding of the *Tageszeitung (Taz)* following the example of the French newspaper *Libération*. However, the idea of organizing regional and national networks of local activist groups was very much in the air in the early 1970's. For example, in March 1972, the first federal congress of the new women's movement took place in Frankfurt, and in June, fifteen groups joined to form the *Bundesverband Bürgerinitiativen Umweltschutz* (BBU, Federal Association of Environmental Citizens' Action Groups). Over the next five years, its membership swelled to about 1,000 groups. In 1975, the largest of the environmentalist associations, the *Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz Deutschland* (BUND, Federation for Protection of Environment and Nature Germany) was formed.

On the local level, independent candidacies are possible under German election law. This option had been used by environmentalists since well before 1977. Several such candidates had been successful, most notably in the Kaiserstuhl area around the planned nuclear power station of Wyhl. However, election statistics only show totals for all independent candidacies, so we do not know what proportion of this vote was won by

environmentalists. The typical slate of independent candidates is a group of local business people. Thus, it was always possible for small local groups to take part in elections, though only in a thoroughly nonpartisan setup. Therefore, such independent voters' groups cannot be considered Green Party antecedents.

Such antecedents existed, however. One was the *Aktionsgemeinschaft Unabhängiger Deutscher* (AUD, Action Alliance of Independent Germans). Founded in 1965 and led by the CSU renegade, August Haußleiter, this small originally right wing party had been trying to reach out to the New Left. Its platform contained civil rights, conservative environmentalist (*Lebensschutz*) and anti-nuclear planks, but also calls for the release of Hitler's former henchman, Rudolf Hess. By the mid-seventies, AUD's ties to the environmentalist movement were so strong that the BUND's first chairman was a member of AUD. However, he was replaced in late 1975 by CDU Bundestag member Herbert Gruhl. In July 1975, Gruhl's book *Ein Planet wird geplündert* (A Planet Plundered) was published. By the end of the year, more than 100,000 copies were sold.

Also in 1975, the AUD and the well-known artist, Joseph Beuys, founder of the *Bürgerinitiative für Direkte Demokratie* (Citizens' Action Group for Direct Democracy), signed an agreement allowing members of the BUND, anti-nuclear activists, and Joseph Beuys' *Bürgerinitiative* to run as AUD candidates without joining the actual organization. For example, AUD's North Rhine-Westphalian slate for the 1976 Bundestag elections was led by Gerda Degen, spokesperson for local groups opposed to the construction of the Fast Breeder plant at Kalkar, and Beuys. AUD also maintained ties with the French *Écologistes* via Carl Amery and with Club of Rome member Manfred Siebker. Through them, AUD was involved in the foundation of ECOROPA, the European Ecological Action Group, a network preparing a broad environmentalist candidature for the European elections in 1979.

The year 1977 proved to be the most violent in postwar German history as the RAF stepped up its terrorist activities. In an effort to combat such acts, the government was prepared to restrict certain civil rights that most Germans took for granted. For example, the German secret service, *Verfassungsschutz*, monitored Klaus Traube, the manager of a nuclear research company, a fact that was revealed by *Der Spiegel*. The scandal ruined image of the liberal Minister of the Interior, Werner Maihofer. Robert Jungk wrote his bestseller *Der Atomstaat* disclosing the inherently authoritarian

tendencies of a state with nuclear facilities. At the same time, the protest demonstrations at the nuclear construction sites became more radical. The construction sites at Kalkar, Brokdorf, and Grohnde became virtual military garrisons as authorities tried to prevent radical leftist groups from occupying them. The demonstration at Grohnde on March 19th, 1977, with its failed occupation attempt, became known as the battle of Grohnde. It was at this moment, when the political climate became highly repressive and the political strategy of the radical action groups failed, that the development of non-violent strategies, including running for city councils and parliamentary seats, began to emerge as a serious option.

An important predecessor of the German Green Party was the *Umweltschutzpartei* (USP) founded in 1977. In that same year, two independent Green candidates were elected to district councils in local elections in Lower Saxony, a development which, in turn, led to the formation of a second anti-nuclear party, the *Grüne Liste Umweltschutz* (GLU). One seat was won by the *Wählergemeinschaft* (Voter Group) *Atomkraft - Nein Danke* (Nuclear Power—No Thanks), whose slate of candidates consisted of people prosecuted for their involvement at Grohnde. This was one of the first efforts by APO groups, those who had previously considered themselves to be members of the extra-parliamentary opposition, to gain a forum in parliament. The story of how the other seat was won is rather more complex. The *Bürgerinitiative Schwarmstedt*, originally organized to resist a proposed nuclear reprocessing plant at Lichtenmoor, decided, after the Lichtenmoor plans were dropped in favor of Gorleben, to run for the *Landtag* in 1978 and reconstituted itself—together with activists from other local initiatives from Lower Saxony—as the USP. At that time, the local USP at Hildesheim, led by the “Free Socialist”, Georg Otto, decided to run in the local election. When the national USP chairman, concerned by the Hildesheim group's socialist leanings, prohibited them from running under the USP banner, they formed the GLU and won a seat under this name. At the end of the year, USP and GLU decided to unite under the GLU banner.

In a similar development in the fall of 1977, the members of the *Bürgerinitiative Umweltschutz Unterelbe* (Citizens for the Protection of the Lower Elbe), along with some fifty other local groups, decided to run a list of environmentally oriented candidates in the Hamburg parliamentary elections scheduled for the following year. There were also important changes in the leadership of the BBU and BUND. The BBU changed its rules and elected three

spokespersons instead of one. In the BUND, the conservative Herbert Gruhl, on failing to gain reelection as chairman, promptly quit the organization. Meanwhile, that same year in France, the *Écologistes* were strikingly successful at local elections, winning 10,1 % of the vote in Paris. To briefly summarize the events of 1977: While the German government pushed its nuclear agenda to new levels and the parliamentary parties were forced to unanimously assent to the government's nuclear politics, the anti-nuclear movement was rejuvenated and began to view electoral politics as a legitimate and realistic avenue for the expression of environmental and social justice issues.

In 1978, the organizing process of the various ecology parties and so-called rainbow lists (electoral groups espousing various progressive causes) continued. For example, when the conservative *Grüne Liste Schleswig-Holstein* banned left-wing radicals from membership, an embryonic rainbow list sprang up in the state. In July 1978, Herbert Gruhl left the CDU and immediately formed his own party, the *Grüne Aktion Zukunft* (GAZ, Green Action Future). As a result, hundreds of Gruhl's followers from the CDU proceeded to join the GAZ. Thus, there were now three nationwide ecology parties, all of which were originally founded as bourgeois parties, although the AUD was now attracting younger and more leftist members. Gruhl's GAZ remained the most conservative of the three. Meanwhile, in those states which had Landtag elections that year, such as Hamburg, Berlin and Hesse, the left wing of the environmental movement organized into various rainbow lists. Thus the forerunners of the Green Party clearly profited from the virtually constant stream of elections thrown up by the German electoral system.

1978 was a year with four state elections, beginning in June in Lower Saxony and Hamburg, and then in October in Hesse and Bavaria. In these four states the ecology groups had to run jointly on the ballot paper if they were to stand a chance of winning. Otherwise, they would simply cancel each other out. Unlike local elections, state elections strongly hinder the candidacy of citizens action groups because they only permit political parties. Since the various ecology parties were organizationally weak, they could not run without the support of the citizens initiatives. So, the political question of the year 1978 was: could an alliance be forged between the parties and the initiatives? And if so, what shape would it take?

A brief look at the four state elections reveals the course the emerging Green party had to take. In Hamburg the regional umbrella organization of the anti-nuclear initiatives suggested a joint candidacy of the local grassroots organizations. About fifty local leftist initiatives formed the *Bunte Liste—Wehrt Euch* (Rainbow List—Resist), whose program consisted of the sum parts of its various members' programs. In Lower Saxony the GLU and the local action groups entered into negotiations. After two statewide meetings organized by the *Wählergemeinschaft Atomkraft - Nein Danke*, the direct action groups decided to concentrate their efforts and campaign for the GLU, which they felt best represented their collective interests. In response, the GLU embraced a broader program of social justice issues, in addition to its environmental agenda, and approved of the principles of grassroots democracy. An active member of the *Bürgerinitiative Lüchow-Dannenberg*, the state's strongest anti-nuclear initiative, was elected to head the ticket. In Hesse, left wingers founded the *Grüne Liste - Wählerinitiative für Umweltschutz und Demokratie* (GLW), an alliance based on the Hamburg model. The group organized a joint slate, the *Grüne Liste Hessen* (GLH), integrating candidates from the AUD and the GLU, but they could not bridge the gap between bourgeois and leftist environmentalists. Further attempts to draw in GAZ and GLU failed, thus splitting the green vote. At the same time in Bavaria, Haußleiter proposed a solution in line with the AUD tradition of fielding independent environmentalists. In the event of electoral success, parliamentary seats were to be divided up among the AUD, GAZ, environmental groups and rainbow groups with each group receiving one quarter of the total number of positions. However, at their second statewide convention in Nürnberg, the rainbow groups then put together a compromise in which none of the member groups' names would be used. Instead, they chose to call themselves, *Die Grünen*. The Bavarian list was thus less dogmatic and, in principle, more open to leftists.

Ultimately, however, none of the candidates achieved 5% threshold that would give them seats in the parliament. The best results were achieved in Lower Saxony (3.9%) and Hamburg (3.5%). The weaker results in Hesse and Bavaria, where the green groups got less than 2%, may be explained by the general weakness of environmental organizations in those states.

The next stage in the evolution of the Green Party began in June, 1978. At a meeting in Troisdorf, near Cologne, the election of a coordination committee brought together representatives from the

whole spectrum of the German environmental movement. After having debated only joint protest campaigns at the first meeting of the coordination committee, GAZ, GLU, AUD, and Green List of Schleswig-Holstein (GLSH) decided at a meeting in December 1978 to put together joint programmatic and organizational committees with the purpose of drawing up a joint platform for the 1979 European elections. These committees forged a compromise, which proved satisfactory to the various Rainbow lists at the third coordination committee meeting in February, 1979. The result was the formation of the clumsily named *Sonstige Politische Vereinigung (SPV) Die Grünen*, on March 17th 1979 in Frankfurt, at a joint delegate meeting of AUD, GAZ, GLU, and GLSH. The SPV/Die Grünen (Miscellaneous Political Association/The Greens) thereby emerged as the first national Green organization in the Bundesrepublik.

The founding history of the SPV was reminiscent of the previous year's election campaigns in Lower Saxony and Bavaria. It resembled the Bavarian campaign in that the environmental parties reached their decisions pragmatically and then asked the Rainbow groups to join. And like the Lower Saxony campaign, they embodied the principles of grassroots democracy. The Greens, therefore, received their initial momentum from various environmental groups, some of which were politically conservative, but soon came to embody the broader agenda of the extra-parliamentary political left. Not surprisingly, given the diverse array of groups involved in the founding of the Green party, certain groups, particularly the ecology parties, ended up being more influential than others. As in Lower Saxony, once the nationwide Green party was formed, leftists rapidly took the leading roles. The ultimate symbol of the left's success was the decision by Herbert Gruhl, who had done more than perhaps any other individual to set the foundations for a Green political party, to leave the organization a year after it was founded.

The Miscellaneous Political Association/The Greens was still not quite a real party. It had a board with very limited competencies and a members' assembly, which was quite powerful in theory, but only ever convened once. But that one meeting, on November 4th 1979 in Offenbach, was of considerable importance, for it was at this meeting that the Miscellaneous Political Association/The Greens decided to reconstitute itself as a full-fledged political party simply called, *Die Grünen*.

THE ORIGINS AND FUTURE OF GREEN PARTIES:

THE UK, EUROPE AND BEYOND

BY SARA PARKIN

The Green political movement was born in Australia and New Zealand in 1972. In Europe Greens entered parliament for the first time in 1981 in Finland and Belgium with the most significant success occurring in Germany in 1983. International co-ordination has grown over the last 20 years with the establishment of various trans-national entities such as the European Greens and the Global Greens. Nevertheless, European Greens still lack the visionary and inspiring approach that could animate the values, hopes and fears of 21st century electorates. In recent European elections Greens polled just under 10% in 1999 and slightly less in 2004, resulting in a loss of ministerial posts. No Green party strategy - either collectively or individually - indicates whether this rate of growth in electoral support is considered to be sufficient. While Green efforts continue to result in intermittent electoral success, other sectors - the state, business, and civil society - are variously, but increasingly, setting the agenda for sustainable development.

At the dawn of the 21st century, Green parties are at a cross roads. Although Europe's traditional conservative and social democratic parties are becoming increasingly incoherent and ill equipped to address the big environmental, social and economic challenges of the 21st century, the Greens seem incapable of convincing the electorate that their vision would be more appropriate. Perhaps even more worryingly, the Greens' inability to adequately communicate with neo-liberalism's victims has opened the door to various extremist, intolerant and reactionary forces. So as the environment deteriorates and various extremists threaten Europe's democracies, most Green parties remain parochial, self-absorbed, uninspiring and poorly organized. Without real change in the next

five years, Green parties will have failed to achieve their historical potential – without, perhaps, even recognising it.

My own involvement in green politics began in Edinburgh during the 1960s, where I was influenced by the Limits to Growth debate and the backwash from the fierce student protests in Paris and London. The first satellite pictures of the earth from outer space had a strong impact on many of my generation, and I became active in several of the new conservation and population pressure groups that sprang up at that time. I first became involved with the Green party in 1976 when I moved from Edinburgh to Leeds, the most northerly outpost of the party which at that time had some 500 members nationwide.

Originally called PEOPLE and then the Ecology Party, the UK Green Party—Europe's first—was founded in 1973. As well as home-grown concerns about the environment and social inequality, we were inspired by the United Tasmania Group in Australia and the Values Party in New Zealand. The latter party was the first to garner significant electoral success, polling 5.2% of the vote in 1975, eight years before *Die Grünen* entered the Bundestag in 1983 with 5.6%. My friendship with Petra Kelly began in 1977 after she attended one of our UK conferences. It proved to be an enduring and mutually sustaining friendship which expanded to include some of the leading green women activists throughout Europe. Since the “winner takes all” nature of the British electoral system meant we were not distracted by the prospect of imminent power, the UK greens expended their energies on long, detailed manifestos and policy documents. Petra took our 1977 version away with her to help with the development of the German Green platforms. Looking back it is possible to see that the multi-lateral trading in green inspiration and intellectual capital of that period helped shape the common base on which international Green party alliances were forged in the pre-internet and e-mail era.

Petra and I worked together with other Green parties in the lead up to the 1979 European elections and the eventual establishment of the European Greens. During the 1980s, while working as the UK International Liaison Secretary, I helped write the first constitution for the European Greens, before going on to become one of its first co-secretaries. Looking back, the 1980s proved to be a historic decade for many of us. Our support for the brave east European dissident movements was particularly important in this regard. To avoid the secret police we held meetings with dissidents in the middle of ploughed fields and in what Petra called the “subversive

kitchens." Some of us smuggled scientific papers and photocopier parts into the Eastern Bloc and talked high words in the West to help prevent the persecution of our friends in the East – not always successfully. As a result, we sensed the winds of change before NATO, and it was a privilege to have played a part, however small, in the downfall of authoritarian communism.

Today, the UK Green party has approximately 5,000 members. Our fortunes rose slowly between 1979 and 1989, when we polled 15% of the vote in the European elections, although the unfavorable electoral system meant that we won no seats. The party's response to increased electoral support, however, was disappointing. As membership rose to 20,000, the party's leadership (I was a speaker) responded to my high profile by appointing 30 speakers and refusing to pass press requests on to me. An anti-leader culture and a chaotic organization made the party susceptible to penetration by ideological carpet baggers. As a result of this in-fighting, almost all my briefings came from the pressure groups and others in the green movement, who proved better-organized and were not paralyzed by ideological struggles and personality conflicts.. By 1992, when I resigned from the party, membership had already dropped to 6,000. A few of us had fought, and lost, a battle for a new sort of organization with a revised political strategy; one more suited to a first-past-the-post system where standing in marginal seats (many with only 1000 votes between leading candidates) could attract more attention to our ideas than standing in "safe" seats where a huge majority for one party or another emboldened a small percentage of people to vote Green.

Today, thanks to the system of proportional representation that characterizes elections to the European Parliament and the London Assembly, the UK Greens have gained two Members of the European Parliament and 3 Assembly Members. In Scotland, which also enjoys proportional representation, there are now 7 members of the Scottish Parliament who were elected with 6.7% of the vote. The party organization has benefited from the money and other resources made possible as a result of this electoral success, and there is no doubt that electoral preparedness has improved with the creation of solid electoral strategies. But the electoral system and the drain on financial resources means the party still suffers from the "tyranny of the volunteer" and an enduring ambivalence about power.

Until the beginning of the 1990s, I probably knew more than anyone else about what was happening in Green parties around the

world. As a defence against the growing number of requests for information from the press and PhD students, I wrote it all down in a book which included the details of past election results and, for the obsessively interested, party organograms.¹ If I was to come up with a snappy summary of how and why Green parties developed the way they did, I would say that each was a unique combination of its country's history and culture, its political context (including the electoral system), and the personalities of its leadership—particularly in the crucial start up years. Though not a surprising conclusion, it is one that explains the rocky moments we had in building international collaboration. Given the global consequences of environmental and human degradation, not all Green parties took their international responsibilities – or opportunities – as seriously as they should have done in those early days. The 25 party strong European Green party formed for the 2004 elections to the European Parliament is therefore a matter worth celebrating, as is the grouping known as the Global Greens. Given the sort of changes Greens advocate, the interconnectedness of policy and purpose at that level is of vital importance.

To gain a sense of how the party has changed over the last two decades, it is useful to compare the European Green platform from 1984 with that of 2004. Table 1 contains the complete text of the 1984 Paris Declaration (in the left column) and a summary of the 2004 European Election platform supported by 25 European Green parties. The 1984 text is an almost clinical expression of high-level principles. By 2004, the language had become softer and more detailed, a development that was no doubt due to the considerable experience of the European Greens in national and European parliaments. Nevertheless, it still expresses high level Green principles more than voter interests and concerns. In both texts the focus is heavily on *what* is demanded or proposed; there is virtually nothing about *how* this can be achieved. It leaves many questions unanswered: Who will pay for the necessary changes, what are the mechanics for implementing the policy, how will it be integrated with other policy areas, and what effect will it have on people's everyday lives?

When comparing election results we find that in the past 20 years European Green parties have more than doubled their total vote (3.4 million throughout 10 countries in 1984, 7.3 million votes throughout 13 countries in 1999), and tripled their average

¹ Parkin Sara, *Green Parties: An international guide*, 1989, Heretic Books, London

percentage and number of seats (3.1% for 11 seats in 1984, 9% for 38 seats in 1999). The results of the June 2004 European elections, however, show that although Greens contested seats in all the EU countries (now 25), they polled a disappointing 8.2% on average and gained only 34 seats.

The fact that it took 20 years to gain a mere 8.2% of the vote could be viewed as slow progress—especially in light of the urgency implied by the growing evidence of climate change, the intransigence of poverty, and growing inequality within and between countries.

These figures mean that the question *What about the next 20 years?* is all the more important. Some Green parties, for example, those in Germany and France, have attained strong results in local and regional elections. Will these parties be able to maintain or increase their share of national parliamentary seats over the next 20 years? How vulnerable are those parties that do not have a long track-record of successfully implementing Green policies in towns and communities? Will the cross-national context for Green party organization, such as the EU and Global Greens, help sustain the weaker parties? If the CDU wins a clear majority in a future German federal election, it may be fair to assume that *Bündnis 90/die Grünen* will not collapse. Conversely, if the UK Green party loses its European seats, it will be a substantial blow and one from which it may not easily recover. Electoral systems and cash count for a lot, but so does solid evidence of successful policy delivery on the ground.²

Moreover, and taking the UK as the example, government, the business sector and civil society are also responding to the mounting evidence of *unsustainable* development, including its impact on economies, human health, local environments and international relations, as the following examples indicate.

- **Government:** In 2003, the Blair government set a target to reduce British CO₂ emissions by 60% by 2053. The Treasury has made sustainable development a goal and requires all spending departments to demonstrate a contribution towards it when submitting their spending proposals. The devolved administrations (Northern Ireland, Wales, Scotland) and the new English regions have the responsibility, which in some cases

² Greens are no longer in government in any country in Europe except Latvia, although the German Greens increased their vote in the 2005 national elections.

is statutory, for delivering sustainable development. For its part, the Government Office of Commerce demands a whole-life costing in public service procurement. Progress in such cases may be difficult to measure. Nevertheless, such policies, all of which have been enacted in the past few years, constitute a significant step forward.³

- **Business:** Leading businesses are moving away from a defensive posture and toward active engagement with environmental problems. The responsibility for good corporate performance within companies is moving from marketing departments to the offices of strategic directors, a move that has been inspired by a desire to perform well in new indices, such as the FTSE4Good and the Dow Jones Sustainability Index. An increasing interest in attracting some of the growing ethical investment funds has further contributed to this shift. Some companies, such as BP, are also repositioning themselves to take advantage of future markets in renewable energies.
- **Civil society:** Fewer people are voting in elections at all levels in the UK and other countries where voting is not compulsory. Despite this, or perhaps because of it, the not-for-profit sector and social enterprise in general is thriving. In a study encompassing 35 countries, researchers at John Hopkins University have found that the annual turnover of the not-for-profit sector was approximately \$1.3 trillion. Based on this figure, if the non-profit sector were a state, it would earn a seat at the G8 summit.

It is legitimate to ask just how much Green parties have contributed to driving this sort of change. Causality is always hard to prove, but along with the rest of the Green movement they have certainly been influential, if not always instrumental.

The relationship between implementation of policy nationally and locally and Greens in parliamentary and council seats is well documented. And pressure via the ballot box has always been one of the best routes to changing all colors of political minds. But nowadays the evidence of the consequences of *unsustainable* development arrives directly onto the desks of government and

³ In February 2006, the OECD published a report titled *Going for Growth*, which examined the range of new ways to measure GDP, including equity and quality of life indicators.

business leaders. No longer does the impact of environmental degradation or persistent poverty have to be routed to prime ministers and business leaders via the Green movement. The last 20 years have also seen the globalization of communication systems. Instant information and evidence is easily available. And scientific and other analysis by a range of organizations, including governments, indicates a series of negative environmental and social trends. What remains in short supply on the desks of governments, however, are integrated policy solutions that could shift current development strategies in rich and poor countries onto a sustainable path, and do so, moreover, without causing the sort of economic and social upheaval that governments fear.

So what next for Europe's Green parties? What will their role be in getting Green ideas into power over the next 20 years? To date, the top percentage scored by a European Green party in national elections has been 9.5% in Austria, which translated into 17 seats in the Austrian parliament. In some countries, Green parties have won seats with much lower percentages. The Italian Greens, for example, won 17 seats while only receiving 2.2% of the vote. Members of the European Federation of Green Parties hold a total of 168 seats in national parliaments and a ministerial position in Latvia.⁴ Therefore, while there have been some undoubted successes, one still needs to ask whether a 10% increase in the vote every 20 years is sufficient to force non-Green governments to make the sort of strategic changes to economic policy that would end the social and environmental trade-offs that underpin the current economic system. This question is as relevant to countries like Germany, where the Greens have easy access to the political process, as it is to countries like the UK, the US, and Australia, where the electoral system remains hostile to new or third parties.

The role of Green parties, alongside the larger Green movement, will be to make intelligent use of the democratic process and to continually use its electoral power to force government's to implement incremental change. However, if Green values are to achieve widespread political currency in the near future, it will be necessary to adopt strategies that go beyond the narrow confines of electoral politics.

⁴ Despite polling a reasonably healthy 8.3% in the September 2005 Bundestag elections, the German Greens are no longer part of the governing coalition. Their erstwhile partners, the Social Democrats, have now joined the Christian Democrats to form a *grosse Koalition*.

Given current trends, it appears likely that some Green parties will experience electoral set-backs at the national level, as has recently been the case in Belgium, France and Germany. The resilience of Green parties and their capacity to rebound from setbacks will depend on criteria similar to those that influenced their foundation: the historical and political culture of the country, including the electoral system, and the nature of the parties' organizational leadership. In addition, the track record of Green parties at the sub-national level will be a key determinant of their future success. If they are to continue to exert political influence, Green parties must prove to voters that their parliamentarians and councillors are responsible and attractive holders of power; that they can deliver green solutions to local problems; and that they can play a role in shaping national policy.

On the whole, and using the current European election platform as my evidence, I do not think Green parties are demonstrating the intellectual leadership needed in the fast moving political world of the 21st Century. To start with, there is no evidence that Greens have enough self-belief to imagine, let alone plan for, rapid political success. There is no vision for where Green politics should strive to be in another 20 years time. Not surprisingly, therefore, there is no strategy for getting there. Instead of providing inspiration, Green rhetoric seems exhausted and bereft of innovation.

Is this judgement too harsh? Perhaps. But it is born of 40 years of campaigning for sustainable development and an undiminished sense of frustration at the slow pace of political change. It also expresses the legitimate fear that Green parties have lost, if indeed they ever had, a sense of their potential historical role in that change.

My analysis suggests that if the Greens are to fulfil their potential, they must *collectively* recognize that their historic and international goal must be to get Green ideas into power as quickly as possible. While getting Greens elected as vehicles for those ideas is one way to do this, it is not the only one. More sophisticated tactics may be needed and these will vary from country to country. *Strategically*, Green parties must understand that the alternative they represent is not to the traditional left and right political traditions. The capacity of the ideologies that inspire these traditions to provide all the solutions to the challenges societies face today has been eroding for years – most rapidly after the 1989 democratic revolutions in Eastern Europe. Whether of the socialist

or conservative tradition, mainstream political parties employ an eclectic mixture of policies in their manifestos.

As the public's confidence in parties of the center-left and center-right continues to wane, the role of the Greens should lie in providing an attractive alternative to the rise of extremist, reactionary and intolerant tendencies that feed off people who are fearful, uncertain and bereft of opportunity. In rich and poor countries alike, there is a whiff of decay surrounding traditional power structures that have been built on an understanding of the world that is no longer relevant. This makes for dangerous times. In such a climate, Green parties which remain parochial and self-absorbed, or which are more concerned with their positioning in relation to the increasingly incoherent major parties *within* their own countries than with the strategic challenges of this century, will continue to struggle. Organisationally they will remain unprepared to succeed, and in policy terms they will remain incoherent and uninspiring. If they are to fulfil their potential, Green parties everywhere will need to restore confidence in the democratic political process and provide inspirational, coherent, and engaging policies that speak directly to people's hopes and fears about the future.

Table 1

EUROPEAN GREEN ELECTIONS COMPARISON, 1984 and 2004	
The Paris Declaration 28th April 1984	Manifesto 8th November 2003

Table 1, continued

EUROPEAN GREEN ELECTIONS COMPARISON, 1984 and 2004	
The Paris Declaration 28th April 1984	Manifesto 8th November 2003
<p>are for a reorganisation of economic relations between Europe and the Third World, and for a closer co-operation between solidarity movements and Third World movements in Europe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are for the free expression of the fundamental rights of the people, one of the conditions most important to bring us to an emancipated, ecological society • We recommend an ecological form of agriculture and we wish to preserve jobs in the smaller and middle-sized agricultural businesses 	<p>arms; European Peace Corps; all under UN</p> <p>PROMOTING GRASS ROOTS GLOBALIZATION EU should be in forefront of shaping current unfair system of globalization; ecological and social criteria for trade, aid; more democratic control of economy – at local and sub-national regional level too.</p> <p>Green Achievements Throughout the last 20 years the Greens in the European Parliament have helped to produce a significant political and cultural shift. Before the forthcoming European elections, the members of the European Federation of Green Parties have decided to build a European Green Party with strong common goals.</p>
EUROPEAN ELECTION RESULTS 1984	EUROPEAN ELECTION RESULTS 1999 (2004)
<p>Standing in 10 nations, 3.4 million votes, gained 3.1% of the vote on average, and obtained 11 seats</p>	<p>Standing in 13 nations, 7.3 million votes, gained 9% of the vote on average and obtained 38 seats (June 2004 8.2%, 34 seats)</p>

THE EARLY YEARS OF THE GREEN POLITICS MOVEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

CHARLENE SPRETNAK

SUMMARY

The relationship between the federal electoral triumph of *die Grünen* in West Germany in March 1983, the book *Green Politics: The Global Promise* (March 1984), and the founding of the American Green politics movement (August 1984) is delineated. The origins of the national Green politics organization are presented, as well as the dynamics at the founding meeting. The efforts during 1984-89 to build a movement are considered, at both the grassroots level and the main national gatherings. The effects of a group with a "vanguard mentality" on the movement-building tasks of the American Greens during the 1980s are reflected upon, as is the relevance of the labels "Fundis" and "Reals" to the situation in the American Green movement. A happy ending surprisingly emerged at the beginning of the 1990s, which led to the sudden growth of the state-level Green parties.

HOW GREEN POLITICS CAME TO AMERICA

The origins of the American Green politics movement, which later became the Green party of the United States, were closely tied to the fate of *die Grünen* in their second attempt to win seats in the West German Bundestag, in the federal election of 6 March 1983. This little known linkage had its own origins a year earlier, when I was invited to Germany to give a talk in Munich and to teach two workshops on the feminist spirituality movement, one near Munich and one near the North Sea. While there, I learned about the West German Green party. As I was active in the anti-nuclear-power movement, the feminist movement, and the peace movement of the early 1980s, I was fascinated that the German

Greens had managed to bring together people from all those movements plus others from various social-justice movements, the ecology movement, and the movement to build community-based economics and "a Europe of the regions." I became determined to follow the German Greens via news reports when I got home. Once I was back in Berkeley, however, I discovered that the coverage of the German Greens in the media was extremely biased. Because they were against the "bloc mentality" and advocated West Germany's withdrawal from NATO, the American political establishment and media outlets were not favorably disposed toward them. In the articles I was able to find, the German Greens were typically described as "a jumbled alliance of ecologists, romantic far-leftists, Communists, and enemies of nuclear weapons" (*New York Times*, 20 September 1982). Later, the *New York Times*, among others, informed American readers that the German Greens were "volatile" (13 February 1983), "messianic" (27 February 1983) and "far left" (in nearly every article). I had learned enough during my two-week stay to know that such descriptions were extremely skewed. I pondered the problem of getting accurate information about the Greens to American activists.

It was obvious to me that someone who was sympathetic to the Green analysis and vision should go to Germany and bring back the information. As I was too busy with other work to take on such a large project by myself, I contacted three friends: Fritjof Capra (a German-speaker), the futurist Hazel Henderson, and the community organizer Byron Kennard. Rather soon, the latter two had to drop out of the project, but Fritjof remained involved. Unfortunately, he was so busy that he could interview only a few Greens during a lecture trip and would have time to write only one of the ten chapters, the one on the other Green parties in Europe and New Zealand. In fall 1982 I wrote a book proposal, with Fritjof's participation, which we sent to his literary agent to sell to a publisher. To our surprise, no publisher was interested. As the federal election in West Germany in late winter of 1983 drew near, however, we were told that the book proposal would be bought only if the German Green Party became international news by winning seats in the Bundestag. They won twenty-seven seats, and our book proposal was immediately bought by E. P. Dutton – on the condition that we do all the research, interviewing, and writing by late fall of that same year! The book had to come out in spring of 1984 because, we were assured, the American public buys political books only during election years.

Once our book, *Green Politics: The Global Promise*, was published in March 1984, I began to receive some telephone calls asking when I was going to start the Green party in this country. (Fritjof decided to eschew all political activism so as not to endanger his immigration status during the Reagan era.) When those first calls came, I thought they must have the wrong number! I was still completely exhausted by the huge push to convert my notes and a large stack of transcripts of the scores of interviews I had conducted with German Greens into a finished chapter every week throughout the previous autumn – while teaching full time at the University of California. (Those interview tapes and transcripts have been donated to the archives at the Heinrich Böll Foundation in Berlin.) Why were people now calling me? Surely I had done my part. I had thought that, as the book continued to get positive reviews and became known in activist circles, experienced organizers would come forth and start the Green party. Alas, those experienced organizers never did show up. However, our book became widely recognized in the following years as a central catalyst in the growth of the Green politics movement. As I shall explain in the following section, the founding dynamics followed directly from the book's publication, so it is accurate to say that had the German Greens failed to win seats in the Bundestag in March 1983, our book would not have been published, and the founding of the Green politics movement in the United States most probably would not have happened until much later.

It should be noted that Green inspiration flowed in both directions across the Atlantic, as the German Greens often told me that they were influenced in the years leading up to their founding of *die Grünen* by following reports of the nonviolent strategies of the American civil rights movement, the ecology movement, and the consumer-protection movement. In addition, both the German party and the emergent American Green politics movement benefited from the extremely impressive work of a bridge figure between the two cultures, Petra Kelly. Kelly, who was born in Germany but had an American stepfather, had attended secondary school and college in the United States before returning to Germany to work in the European Community. As a co-founder of *die Grünen*, Kelly was able to present the Green analysis and vision with perfect pitch to both audiences. So brilliant was she at positioning and articulating the Green analysis of world affairs that a conservative journalist who had grilled her during her appearance on the television program *Meet the Press* in 1983 told her afterward that he wished she were on his side! On that day,

many Americans heard for the first time what the word “Green” as a philosophy really means.

THE FOUNDING DYNAMICS OF THE GREEN POLITICS MOVEMENT IN THE U.S

Among the activists who telephoned me after the publication of *Green Politics*, in 1984, the two most persistent – and ultimately successful – callers were David Haenke, a founder of the bioregional movement in the United States, and Harry Boyte, a long-time member of Democratic Socialists of America and author of *The Backyard Revolution*. As they both were personable and interesting, we had many conversations, although I maintained that I was not interested in founding a party or movement. Surely, I repeated, that can happen without me, a mild-mannered bookworm. Why didn't they just do it themselves? They insisted that wouldn't be as good. David Haenke eventually convinced me to attend a bioregional conference in Santa Fe, New Mexico. I liked the bioregionalists I met, and I could see that their movement had a lot of common ground with the Green vision, in fact, adding parts that were missing from the latter. David Haenke then began his telephone campaign to convince me to come to the first large gathering of the bioregional movement, the North American Bioregional Congress (NABC I), to be held at a camp near Kansas City, Missouri, on 21-26 May 1984. He assured me that many people in the bioregional movement would be interested in Green politics, and he urged me to deliver a plenary talk on that subject.

Unfortunately, I discovered on arrival at NABC I that the situation was exactly the opposite. There was a lot of tension among various (male) leaders at this first continental gathering of the bioregional movement about who might emerge as the most important leader. (The main person aggressively acting out this anxiety was Peter Berg, of Planet Drum Foundation, whose major targets were David Haenke and Kirkpatrick Sale, neither of whom were jockeying for any sort of position.) The man who was particularly anxious about being eclipsed made a plenary address prior to mine in which he spoke disdainfully of the parasitic approach of Green politicians (a word he articulated with dripping contempt) who would now be attempting to annex the bioregional movement and dominate it. This dire warning expressed to the new and somewhat insecure bioregional movement was met with wild applause. The anti-Green sentiments were then kept alive by various groups who had been inspired by this anti-Green leader at the conference.

It must be noted at this point that an error about the history of the Green politics movement and its relationship to the bioregional movement is commonly found in some books (for example, *The Green Alternative* by Brian Tokar). Such accounts assert that the Green politics movement and its founding meeting in August 1984 had their origins at NABC I in May. Hardly! The main challenge for the few proto-Greens at NABC I was to try to change the hostile opinion of the bioregionalists about Green politics so that the two movements might be able to work together at some point in the future. Toward that end, a group of us formed a "Green Politics Committee" when the Congress divided into work groups. Over the next few days we labored to create a statement that explained Green politics to the bioregional movement in a way that would disarm their hostility and build a bridge. In this we were apparently successful, as our presentation on the last day was met with enthusiastic applause.

At NABC I, I met two people who had telephoned me shortly before. One was a friend of David Haenke's, Catherine Burton, who had founded a project in Seattle called Earth Bank and was a philanthropist with connections to other donors. The other was the office manager for a small institute in Vermont, the Institute for Social Ecology, Gloria Goldberg. After identifying David Haenke as a leader of the bioregional movement, she had begun telephoning him and had obtained my number from him. Gloria was intently focused on the need to found the Green politics movement as soon as possible (with her institute playing a central role) and insisted that I was needed for the founding to occur. At the time, I did not know anything about the Institute for Social Ecology, her employer. At NABC I, Gloria pressed repeatedly for me to say that I would call for and join a founding of the Green politics movement. Catherine and David were in favor of such a decision on my part, too, but they were not nearly as insistent as Gloria. (Like myself, Catherine and David were unaware that Gloria was on a mission.) I still felt uncertain about the entire endeavor, however, so we all parted without any decision.

After the tiring job of trying to win over the bioregional movement at least to the idea of Green politics, I returned to my apartment in Berkeley to rest. Again, the calls kept coming. I spoke mainly with Harry Boyte and David Haenke. After some time I finally gave them an affirmative answer, agreeing that I would, indeed, form a planning committee that would announce and convene a founding meeting of the Green politics movement. I suggested that we three form the planning committee, along with David's

friend Catherine -- plus the new person no one knew very well, Gloria, from Murray Bookchin's Institute for Social Ecology (ISE).

The planning committee met once in June in New York City. The founding meeting was called for 10-12 August 1984 at Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota. (The site was arranged by Harry Boyte, who lives in Minneapolis.) We sent out 200 letters of invitation to activists and to grassroots organizations in twenty-eight issue areas, inviting each organization to send one or two people to the meeting. Among our list of invitees were several people of color and their organizations. Catherine Burton raised \$10,000 for airfare for low-income people of color; Gloria volunteered to do the clerical work of mailing out the invitations and to be in charge of the money. Sixty-two people accepted our invitation; unfortunately, only five people of color accepted. (In hindsight, personal contact would have been necessary in order to explain the new politics and its relevance to communities and grassroots groups.) Unbeknown to the rest of the planning committee, Gloria then dispensed airfare and expense money from the \$10,000 (which had been raised expressly for low-income people of color) to eight white members or friends of the Institute for Social Ecology. In short, the ISE packed the founding meeting, sending four times as many participants as each institute or organization was allotted. Several months later, Catherine Burton quit the Greens because of this misappropriation of the money she had raised. (By the way, besides David, Catherine, Gloria, and myself, only three people came to the founding meeting who had been on the Green Politics Committee at NABC I, and only one of those was a bioregionalist; the other two had been tracking Green possibilities on their own since the publication of our book, *Green Politics*. To make the point once again: the Green politics organization did not grow from a groundswell at NABC I. It grew out of the founding committee formed by David, Harry, and myself, plus, in the end, the two others.)

The founding meeting was fraught with difficulties for a number of reasons. The first evening consisted of introductions and then a tiresome two-hour challenging of the agenda by the director of a mediation institute (!) in Washington, DC, for no good reason that anyone could determine. We then had an exercise in which the participants, in groups of three, envisioned a Green society in our country. The next day the discussions focused on various issues: the need to deepen and redefine the meaning of "politics"; the question of whether a third party is viable in the United States; the non-party preference for developing Green ideas in a grassroots

movement that would not run candidates; and an emphasis on community focus but an insistence by the participants from Washington, DC, that Greens must work with national organizations as well. We also held a brainstorming session in which participants proposed values and issues for an American Green movement. (A scribe committee consisting of Eleanor LeCain and myself in Berkeley, working with Mark Satin in Washington, DC, subsequently transformed the suggestions from this brainstorming session into the "Ten Key Values," which was mailed to and approved by the entire Interregional Committee, the steering group that emerged from the founding meeting.) There was a general feeling that it would be necessary to lay the groundwork at the grassroots level before a party could be formed.

Throughout the founding weekend, two problematic dynamics occurred repeatedly. One was caused by a woman from a four-person group (two Germans and two Americans) in Washington, DC, called "Euro-Links," who were trying to secure affiliation from the German Green Party. The woman, Linda Bullard, relentlessly argued that she should be appointed the national liaison from the Green Politics movement to the American peace movement. This did not occur; no such appointment was made to anyone. Apparently disgruntled, Bullard subsequently reported on the meeting in a long open letter sent to the following recipients in the German Green Party: the Fraktionsvorstand im Bundestag, the Fraktion im Bundestag, the Bundesvorstand, the Bundeshauptausschus, and the Fraktion in the European Parliament. In the letter, Bullard wrote an extremely dishonest account of our weekend meeting. She told the German Greens that the American Greens are a New Age clique that excludes all leftists, among others. She misleadingly lifted a few words from a sentence I spoke in the opening remarks: I told of being very surprised and not agreeable to the calls that came after *Green Politics* was published, with the callers insisting that I was the "perfect person" to found an American Green Party, but Bullard reversed my meaning and assured the German Green Party instead that "Spretnak told the American Greens that she is the perfect person to lead the party"! She also reported that I was attempting to be a power figure (when, in fact, I declined to serve on the national steering committee), and she went on in this vein for several pages of her open letter, including a misleading account of our book, *Green Politics*, which was not yet published in German. (When I was eventually told about the letter by friends in the German Green Party, I sent a corrective account of the founding meeting to all the German Green recipients of Bullard's letter.)

A second surprising and disquieting dynamic ran through the weekend: the eight members from the Institute for Social Ecology demonstrated that they had fixed, strong, and nearly always uniform opinions on almost everything and that they functioned as a tight-knit group in discussions, far outnumbering any of the groups of two (more often one) from other institutes and organizations, to further their own anarchist agenda. In addition to imposing their "vanguard mentality," they were determined to situate the new national Greens office in their institute in Vermont, which would afford them dominant control.

On the final morning of the meeting, three major issues were decided by vote. First, the naming of the organization had been debated, with several community organizers insisting that we should not use the word "Green" because that would alienate people of color, who at that time were said to associate ecology with middle-class matters that had little concern about social justice. Therefore, the organization was named after a grassroots network during the American Revolutionary War, the Committees of Correspondence. Later, the word "Green" was inserted in front of that name, so that the primary American Green politics organization in the 1980s was called the Green Committees of Correspondence. Second, due to the insistence of the eight anarchists from the Institute for Social Ecology ("Nothing above the local level!"), the national steering committee, composed of a representative from each region of the country, was called the Interregional Committee, rather than the national steering committee. Finally, the location of the national office of the new organization had to be decided. As the eight people from the Institute for Social Ecology made their case for placing it with them, numerous people who had observed their acting almost as a cadre throughout the weekend scrambled to come up with an alternative. To save the situation, Harry Boyte volunteered to set up a national office in Minneapolis, which the majority of the attendees readily voted for. A couple of years later, it was moved to Kansas City, where Dee Berry and Ben Kjelsus ran it efficiently for many years.

THE FRUSTRATING PERIOD FROM 1984-1989

Once founded, the Green Committees of Correspondence faced a very difficult situation. American society was, and is, severely depoliticized. The myriad single-issue grassroots organizations were wary of coming into our "umbrella organization" as they feared a loss of their own position. Although there was considerable

overlap, the Green political analysis and vision was nonetheless different from that of the New Left, and was therefore unfamiliar to many. Finally, many of the people who learned about the Green Committees of Correspondence and came into the Greens by joining or forming a local chapter of the GCoC were politically inexperienced.

Still, the task at hand was to build a national Green politics movement. To accomplish this, we obviously needed to be a group of people committed to that task and to each other as a group. We needed to create the conditions that would attract people, both experienced activists and political novices, who understood the foundational points of a new politics, the Green analysis and vision – expressed in the Ten Key Values and, especially, the “Four Pillars.” Every quarterly meeting of the Interregional Committee of GCoC was an opportunity for us to build those conditions and to reach out to new people, for there were always new observers checking out the Greens.

As in every country in which a Green politics movement has emerged, we had to deal with the fact that everyone was coming in from different directions, that is, from different single-issue movements and orientations. In such a situation, it becomes apparent rather quickly that everyone needs to be in a learning mode, a respectful learning mode. While that openness and respect was present among most of the early Greens, the early Committees of Correspondence soon discovered, as we had glimpsed at the founding meeting, that we had a group in our midst who exhibited a strong vanguard mentality – with the usual characteristics: disdain for the rest of the movement plus the intention to dominate and control in order to further their own agenda, and a Hegelian belief in progress through the smashing together of opposites. This belief required them to try to set up polarizations in any situation and then orchestrate a clash against their so-called opponents among the Greens. The group to which I refer here were the people associated with the Institute for Social Ecology (ISE), which was built around the work and presence of Murray Bookchin. Throughout the 1980s in the Green Committees of Correspondence – in print, at meetings, and in conferences – the ISE people sought to block, dismantle, or otherwise manipulate initiatives that they did not control. They also relentlessly targeted a succession of Green leaders, most of who eventually withdrew from or left the Greens entirely. To put it mildly, this constant aggression weighed down the potential of the American Greens in those

early years, causing countless initial supporters and interested observers to fall away.

MEETINGS OF THE INTERREGIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEES OF CORRESPONDENCE

The first meeting of the regional representatives following the founding of the Committees of Correspondence took place in Berkeley in February 1985. A range of issues were before them regarding the development of strategies for spreading the Greens' political analysis and aiding the grassroots development of the organization. When the two-day meeting was over, I picked up two of the representatives, Marguerite McMillen and David Haenke, to go out to dinner. I asked them eagerly, "What all happened in the meeting?" They were silent for a moment and then said simultaneously, "Nothing." Nothing? They explained that the representative from New England, Paul Mclsaac of the Institute for Social Ecology, insisted that they had no authority to do anything except propose options that would then be taken back to the local level for decision-making. In short, he had paralyzed the Interregional Meeting of the Green Committees of Correspondence by imposing the anarchist conviction that nothing above the municipal level of governance should be invested with any power. Toward the end of that first meeting, according to McMillen and Haenke, Mclsaac disrupted any further work by lying on the floor and literally throwing a tantrum, pounding the floor like a kindergartener.

Mclsaac was soon replaced by a far more tactically minded member of the Institute for Social Ecology, Howard ("Howie") Hawkins. Even though term limits and rotation rules were in effect, Howie managed to remain officially on or attached to the Interregional Committee for years, if not as a regional representative from New England then as a member of various working groups, which he sometimes created. During those years very little was accomplished because Howie would tactically obstruct or obfuscate draft documents or manipulate a call for a re-vote whenever he did not like a group decision. Howie became known to the rest of us as an *agent blockateur*. Very little was done for and by CoC during those crucial "debut years" except for the efficient work at the CoC Clearinghouse, thanks to Dee Berry and Ben Kjelsus in Kansas City. For a more detailed description of GCoC during this period, please see "A Consideration of GCoC History" by Daniel Moses and myself (*Greener Times*, Spring 1989).

Despite the lost opportunities and lack of support materials (how-to guides) for political organizing, local Green groups around the country continued to form. Many of these new Greens were dedicated but inexperienced. Typically, the first announcements of a Green politics group in a town would draw a rather large number of people. Each subsequent meeting would generally have fewer and fewer attendees. No training was offered in designing a meeting, creating a focus, dealing with the media, building bridges to kindred movements, or related matters. Nonetheless, there were about 160 (small) local Green groups by 1988.

THE FIRST NATIONAL GREEN GATHERING: AMHERST, MASSACHUSETTS, JULY 1987

The purpose of this national conference was outreach and education about the Green analysis and vision. Its title was "Building the Green Movement" – which was ironic since the actions and speeches of several of the Institute for Social Ecology members set the Green movement back years. The planning group was dominated by the presence and manipulations of Howie Hawkins, of the ISE. Hence, the first Green conference was held not in the center of the country but on the ISE "turf" of New England. This proximity to many of ISE's young adherents allowed them to flood into the conference, ostensibly on work-trade free admission, though little or no work was ever asked in exchange. These ISE supporters formed a cheering section in the first several rows whenever an ISE person gave a plenary talk – which occurred quite frequently. Howie managed to insert ISE people into seven of the opening thirteen speaker slots. That is, more than half of the opening speakers at the first national conference were from one very small institute in Vermont. (According to another member of the planning committee, David Haenke, Howie originally planned to have even more than seven ISE speakers open the conference, but Haenke blew up over that.)

The evening plenary talk on the opening night of the gathering was obviously very important to the Green movement. Journalists from major newspapers, including the *New York Times*, were in the audience. It was our national debut as a new political option. The most prominent speaker that evening was Murray Bookchin, the author of many books and guiding figure of the Institute for Social Ecology. He delivered one of the most astounding speeches I have ever heard in my life, composed mostly of his attacking a

succession of prominent men who have written books that he feels compete with his own, as well as disdainfully dismissing entire movements such as Deep Ecology, the bioregional movement, and everyone in the Green politics movement who happens to feel that there is a spiritual (which some people prefer to call "deep psychological" or Gandhian) dimension to the Green vision. At each of these mean-spirited put-downs, the ISE kids in the front rows cheered wildly, while the rest of the audience sat in stunned silence.

After targeting and hounding various Greens whom Bookchin and his group considered politically incorrect, particularly those who not only wanted real socio-economic change but also felt that Green politics should allow recognition of a spiritual dimension, Bookchin also disparaged still other Greens who were present at the conference. He continued his attacks throughout the day following his shockingly destructive plenary speech. It was at this conference that the ISE people introduced their surprising dualistic perception that Greens were either political or spiritual. Although they seemed to enjoy a burst of success (among their young followers) with their initial acts of aggression, two subsequent events demonstrated that the vast majority of people in attendance disagreed with the ISE divisiveness regarding supposedly anti-spiritual and pro-spiritual Greens. First, Daniel Moses gave a powerful speech on the broad and deep meanings of nonviolence. When he said that Greens should be able to discuss and disagree but noted, "Let's not create a set of circumstances where people who come to a meeting because they expect to find some invitation to work together can be told that they don't pass the ideological litmus test and, therefore, they can't participate," everyone in the auditorium rose to their feet and cheered because they knew he was referring to Bookchin's aggression against fellow Greens. Second, large numbers of people streamed into the few workshops with a spiritual-political theme to demonstrate their disagreement with the ISE people's mocking of a spiritual dimension of Green political work. Overall, in many ways, the grassroots Greens made clear that they did not want the Green movement to replicate the domineering, insensitive, and destructive ways of the dominant culture – or of the fragmented New Left, which had often been disrupted by anarchists.

What came out of the Amherst conference? Alas, no proceedings volume was published because the task of compiling and editing all the speeches was seized by Howie Hawkins, who first told all the

speakers to get their text to him by a certain date but subsequently announced that there was not enough money left to produce a proceedings volume at all. That meant that the well-received speeches that countered the attacks and divisiveness of Murray Bookchin and his group were never published, while the highly distorting ISE speeches were published in the publications of that institute and then reprinted in various leftist periodicals. In addition, intensely partisan accounts of the Amherst Green conference were written for leftist magazines by two members of the Institute for Social Ecology, Brian Tokar and Ynestra King. This one-sided reporting was continued years later in a book by Greta Gaard, in which the many remembrances of the Amherst and other Green conference are nearly always from ISE-associated Greens, although Gaard rarely identifies them in her text as such, giving the false impression that the views of that one small group were those of Greens nationwide. By far the most partisan, and wildly dishonest, account of the Amherst conference was written by Phil Hill (a EuroLinks colleague of Linda Bullard in Washington, DC) for the *Taz* newspaper in Germany, "US-Grüne zwischen Spiritualismus und Revolution" (24 July 1987). His major target in that article was me. Several Greens who had been at the Amherst conference then wrote letters to the *Taz* identifying Hill's many falsehoods.

Three long-term dynamics were set in play by the divisiveness at the Amherst conference. First, the emergent rapprochement between the Green movement and the bioregional movement was severely damaged by Bookchin's dismissive criticism, which was widely published in alternative periodicals. Second, the ISE Greens, along with the larger Left Green Network that they founded and controlled, continued to orchestrate a false polarization in the Green movement, pretending that Greens with an interest in the spiritual dimension of the work cared nothing about economic or political issues -- and would allow no disagreement about their false polarization (when, in fact, the issue was how Greens should conduct disagreements)! This supposed split, which implausibly asserted that everyone in the movement except the Left Greens was apolitical, was declared and elaborated in countless alternative magazine articles, often under the label of "New Age vs. New Left" or "Deep Ecology vs. Social Ecology" as the only choice for the Greens. (For a response to that situation, see my article, "Time for a Reality Check," *Greener Times*, Fall 1988.) Third, the Amherst conference was the beginning of the sequential targeting and hounding of a long list of Green leaders, mostly female, by the Left Greens in the years that followed.

SUBSEQUENT NATIONAL GATHERINGS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN THE LATE 1980s

Over the next few years, the Green Committees of Correspondence held a regional "Greening of the West" conference in the redwoods south of San Francisco in 1988; a platform conference in Eugene, Oregon, in 1989; and a national conference in Estes Park, Colorado, in 1990. At all these national Green gatherings, there was a constant pressure by the Left Green Network (led by the Institute for Social Ecology people) to dominate and control the proceedings. In the complicated process that emerged in the building of an initial national Green platform, culminating in the SPAKA (Strategic and Policy Approaches in Key Areas) conference in Oregon, the Left Greens, contrary to their claims, were most certainly not the only Greens proposing serious change to the American economic system. The conference brought together serious Green thinkers of many hues, and as always, the ISE group was a small but vocal minority.

The tension generated by the antagonistic attitude of the small network of Left Greens toward all the other Greens was not only felt at various events but also permeated the articles that appeared in left and Left Green Network publications following the Amherst gathering. During this period, the Campus Greens organization was formed by young Greens who had initially been involved with the Youth Greens (a creation and affiliate of the ISE-dominated Left Greens) but who had broken away from that narrow ideology to start what they felt was a more radically Green organization.

The other main development during this period was the fact that Greens began to run for office. The anarchist-ISE/Left Greens vehemently disapproved of this move into electoral politics. However, Greens all over the country were impatient to form a Green party since we had, by then, developed various statements of our analysis, vision, and policy positions. At The Greening of the West conference near San Francisco in 1988, for instance, over 150 Greens signed a list of those wanting to begin local electoral work.

The big split in the Greens occurred in the aftermath of the national GCoC gathering in Elkins, West Virginia, in August 1991, where seven years of tension between the ISE/Left Greens and the rest of the Green politics movement finally came to a head. In one workshop at that conference, Howie Hawkins and other Left Greens were

confronted by several Green women who read a list to them of all the Green female leaders the Left Greens had harassed and driven out of the movement. Always capable tacticians, however, the Left Greens finally succeeded in gaining the controlling majority on the steering council, thereby achieving their long-standing goal of gaining control of the Green Committees of Correspondence. Although a separate group had been established, by John Rensenbrink and others, to proceed with electoral work, when word spread across the country that the Left Greens were now in charge, there was a slow but widespread exodus of Greens from the GCoC. This flow of Green political energy then went into the exciting and successful building of the state-level Green parties in the early 1990s, thereby affecting an optimistic ending to the frustrating first phase of the Green politics movement. The Left-Green-dominated GCoC, meanwhile, continued to lose members, eventually running up large debts before falling apart, largely due to vicious internal fights among Left Greens. In the late 1990s many of those Left Greens entered the state-level Green parties, which they had tried so hard to stop prior to the Elkins split.

ON THE USE OF THE LABELS “FUNDI” AND “REALO” IN GERMANY AND THE UNITED STATES

When I traveled around West Germany in the summer of 1983 interviewing 62 Greens, the Group Z people in Hamburg were not yet known by the label that was soon to be applied to them: the “Fundis” (for Fundamentalists). When I later heard about the currency of that label, I found it a curious usage. The Group Z people were no doubt fundamentally something – perhaps fundamentally ex-Maoist – but certainly no one could seriously claim that they were “fundamentally” Green since they had little respect for core Green values, such as nonviolence and community-based economics. (See, for instance, the excerpts in my book *Green Politics* from my interviews with Thomas Ebermann, Jürgen Reents, and Rainer Trampert, in Chapters 1 and 2.) Rather astoundingly, the “Fundis” originally – and very briefly – consisted of the Group Z people plus some Greens who truly were “fundamentally” Green, such as Petra Kelly and others. These strange bedfellows together criticized various so-called “Realos” who wanted to cut some quick deals with the SPD.

If there was a Realo/Fundi parallel in the United States, it was the self-proclaimed “Fundi” credentials of the Institute for Social Ecology. This group was fundamentally something—Bookchinite

anarchist Social Ecologists—and, like their German counterparts, they viewed some of the core Green values and many of the Greens with contempt. The analogy breaks down, however, in the absence of comparable “Realos” among the American Greens. There was no one who wanted to make quick deals with the Democratic party. Rather, there were lots of Greens who wanted to form a Green Party, which the ISE/Left Greens vociferously opposed because, as anarchists, they viewed such a development as an unthinkable capitulation to “the system.” The split that ran through the American Greens was between a small group bent on political self-expression versus the vast majority of Greens, who were committed to being politically effective and actually achieving change. The former group, dedicated to Bookchin’s ideology, did not hesitate to appropriate the Fundi-Realo dichotomy as an attempt to elevate their own cause as “Fundis” and misrepresent the other Greens as if we were “Realos.”

REFLECTIONS ON THE VANGUARD-ORCHESTRATED DIVISIVENESS

The presence in the Green Committees of Correspondence of the relentlessly divisive Left Greens constantly sapped the energy and diverted the attention of those who were trying to build a politically relevant Green movement. Despite this, there was still a high degree of motivation to continue trying to find a way to build a viable political alternative to the two major parties. Small progress was made in some areas, but a tremendous opportunity was lost because countless prospective Greens and supporters were repulsed by the relentless ISE-led aggression within the GCoC and did not want to get involved in such a conflict-ridden environment. Furthermore, there was considerable skepticism among other activists and observers as to whether or not the American Greens could realize their goal of creating a new kind of political party. Had we been able to develop the reputation of people truly creating a new way of doing politics, as well as presenting a new analysis and vision, the Greens would have progressed much further and faster in United States. By the end of the 1980s, however, most other activist organizations did not consider the American Greens to be effective or even promising opponents of the status quo. Only the fresh start the American Greens made around 1991—leaving behind the Left-Green-dominated Green Committees of Correspondence to move dynamically into the new work of building state-level Green parties, which eventually

became the Green Party of the United States—allowed the Green dream to manifest itself in America.

CHAPTER 2

POLITICS AND PROGRESS

THE UNITED STATES GREEN PARTY: UP FROM THE WILDERNESS

JOHN RENSENBRINK

Early in the last century, the influential German social thinker and philosopher Max Weber delivered an address entitled "Politics as a Vocation". Towards the end of this provocative and still widely read essay, he focused on a distinction between an Ethics of Intention and an Ethics of Responsibility (or, of Consequences).

People who hold to an Ethics of Intention focus strongly on their ideals and principles. They are reluctant to bend them, much less break them, to adapt to circumstances, contexts, and consequences of actions. Compromise tends to be an epithet for them. People who pursue an Ethics of Responsibility or of Consequences, on the other hand, are strong on strategy, on assessing risks, and being ready to adapt to circumstance, context, and consequences, though they also believe that vision and values must be kept clearly in mind. Compromise for them is not a dirty word.

Most Green parties have drawn people to their ranks of both Ethics. This often results in conflict, splits, and sometimes damaging disruption. Initially in Germany, and then also in many other places, this conflict has been named the battle of the "fundis," or fundamentalists, versus the "realos," or realists. In the United States, the struggle between these two ethical tendencies was intense for the first decade and a half of the green movement's history. However, we gradually found a kind of structure that, though seeming to favor the "realo" side of things, has also built in some key elements of the "fundi" perspective.

The adoption of the Ten Key Values followed the first national organizing meeting in St. Paul, Minnesota in August, 1984. There had been an earlier meeting in the state of Maine in January 1984 which established the Maine Green Party/Movement, a name

which reflected the ambivalence that many early members felt toward party politics. Charlene Spretnak was a key figure in the birth of the Ten Key Values, which provided a semblance of unity at the start. Looking back now, I think that without this general umbrella of values the fledgling party may not have survived, much less grown at the pace it subsequently did. They have proved a source of inspiration and solidarity in spite of the very different ways they have sometimes been interpreted.

In the early years, the party was wracked by factionalism, particularly between the "Earth First!" deep ecology proponents and those whose major concerns were with social justice. Gradually these disputes receded somewhat, giving way to a struggle over the nature and degree to which Greens should engage in electoral politics and the kind of structure through which we would make this engagement.

In the late 1980s, Greens began running for office in many different states—states as widely separated geographically as Alaska, Maine, California, Hawaii, and New Mexico. Loosely organized statewide parties formed around these efforts. The state parties began to jostle for attention with the local movement groups that had formed by the hundreds from 1984 to 1989. These local groups formed with the help of the Green Committees of Correspondence whose clearing house was in Kansas City under the direction of Dee Berry. In the fall of 1989, in Washington D.C., a Working Group on Electoral Politics was formed for the first time. In the spring of 1990 it declared itself a Green Party Organizing Committee (GPOC), an autonomous body within the Green Committees of Correspondence. This decision was unanimously approved by the latter organization.

Having been one of the chief motivators and organizers of the GPOC, I was not fully prepared for the degree of opposition it would provoke. The spearhead of opposition was the Left Green Network (LGN), which had been organized, chiefly by Howie Hawkins, in 1987-88. It was created, Howie told me at the time, to "green the left and to left the Greens."

Animated to a considerable degree by the anarchist, socialist, and municipalist philosophy of Murray Bookchin, the LGN sought a different organizational pathway to electoral activity than that advocated by the GPOC. The LGN was skeptical of state party formations and would accept them only if they were clearly subordinated to dues paying activists centered in local movement

groups. Only in this way, they believed, could electoral activity be controlled and prevented from compromising Green principles. Their fears of cooptation were strong. They feared that we in the GPOC were hell bent on opportunistic and elitist game playing with the establishment. They worked extra hard in organizing for the 1991 annual Green Gathering in Elkins, West Virginia. It paid off for them and they won the majority of votes on the steering committee. They reduced the GPOC back to a working group and they formed what they called the Greens/Green Party USA.

We in the newly abolished GPOC did not take this lying down. The following year, in 1992, we formed the Green Politics Network. GPN was primarily dedicated to being a catalyst for the emergence of what we called the Association of Autonomous State Green Parties. We opposed dues paying, insisting that the concept of "citizen" was fundamental to a party, rather than the concept of "activist." Greens, we felt and argued, had to learn how the system of electoral politics worked in the various states, adapt to it as much as feasible in order to get ballot status, run candidates, run to win, and develop a practical platform as free of fixed ideological mantras as possible. We wanted to push for political power within the system—a system that we would also be working to transform in the direction of fundamental regime change and systemic economic and social reconstruction.

Within days of the 1996 presidential election, an election that was Nader's first campaign with the Green Party, the Green parties in Maine and Connecticut called a meeting in Middleburg, Virginia. Our avowed purpose was to form an association of state Green parties. In spite of vigorous opposition from G/GPUSA, Greens from all over the country attended. Eleven State parties agreed then and there to form the Association.

In the following year, 1997, the Association of State Green Parties (ASGP) deepened and expanded through meetings in Portland, Oregon and then in the town of Topsham near Portland, Maine. More and more state Green parties were forming and joining the ASGP, so that by the year 2000 approximately two dozen state Green parties had joined. Together, these groups organized the Denver national presidential convention that nominated Ralph Nader for president. This experience fuelled the growth of the ASGP, and in 2001, at their annual meeting in Santa Barbara, California, they morphed into the Green Party of the United States. Within a short time, they were recognized by the U.S. Government's

Federal Election Commission. Dean Myerson, our first political coordinator, played a key role in this achievement.

Meanwhile G/GPUSA fell on difficult times. The hardliners among them urged the organization to refuse to adopt a Unity Agreement stemming from the previous year's meeting of representatives of the ASGP and the G/GPUSA. Not surprisingly, such tensions led to a showdown at the annual meeting of G/GPUSA in Carbondale, Illinois, in July 2001. Most of the moderates, led by Howie Hawkins, abandoned the organization. Henceforth, the moderates channeled their energies in and through the structures of the ASGP -- now the Green Party of the United States. One of the features attracting them to the ASGP was its acceptance of the Unity Agreement's proposal to give voting rights to Identity groups. So a significant structural piece of the G/GPUSA's agenda was grafted onto the Green Party of the United States.

Having come out of the wilderness and having survived the dangerous oppositional tendencies that fracture most new political starts, indeed having been strengthened through this conflict, the Green Party of the United States forged ahead. We were able to take full advantage of Nader's run for president in 2000 under the Green Party banner. New state parties were born and the alliance with Nader proved fruitful for all concerned, increasing the number of registered voters, the number of candidates, the amount of money raised, and the general esprit of everyone involved.

In Maine, in the past four years we have twice doubled the number of candidates for the state legislature, and in 2002 we elected the country's first state legislator, John Eder. He won in Portland's West End with 65% of the vote. In the country as a whole, we ran 283 candidates at all levels in 2000, up from 124 in 1998. We ran 545 in 2002 and the number may well reach over 1000 in the near future, thereby doubling our number of candidates three elections in a row! In terms of electoral victories, we moved from 16 in 1994 to 27 in 1996 to 47 in 2000 and 70 victories in 2002.

Despite this success, there are still numerous obstacles in our path. We are held back by onerous laws in most of the states that make it very hard for third parties to get on the ballot. We are held back by a winner-take-all system in single member districts that allows the major parties to, among other things, gerrymander the territorial lines to such a degree that four fifths of Congressional districts in the country are the permanent fiefdom of one of the major parties—all rotten boroughs. We are also

held back by the widespread and deep aversion to politics of over half the electorate, their aversion reinforced if not caused by the exclusionary and monopolistic practices of the two major parties. An additional factor is the domination of the media by mega-corporations and the top media moguls. Not surprisingly, the mainstream media is indifferent, if not hostile to an avowedly anti-corporate party like the Greens. It is not that the Greens receive no media coverage; but we do have to fight for it. A further troubling factor for us is the tendency of the thousands of progressive-minded NGOs in our country who, though they share so many of our Ten Key Values, nevertheless are still politically allied with the Democratic party.

I have often thought that these seemingly insurmountable obstacles have been both a bane and a hidden blessing. The fact that so few Greens have had actual experience in office has both perpetuated and reinforced naive idealist attitudes and knee-jerk protest politics. Actual experience in office is a great teacher and a sobering discipline. It reminds one of Max Weber's aphorism that politics is "the strong and slow boring of hard boards," and many Greens have yet to learn this lesson. On the other hand, our years in the wilderness have allowed us to work out some of the harder edges of the realo/fundi split. We have also learned what it means to do without, to get lean and tough, and to develop into a quasi-guerrilla force capable of conducting political action over the long haul.

From this short historical assessment, I posit the notion that we have found a way to soften the realo/fundi split and to build a party that is hospitable to both tendencies. Yet the critical factor is a willingness to keep the dialog open between both Ethics. This means that there must be people on both sides of the potential polemical split who are able and willing to acknowledge that the other side is not just a bunch of misbegotten kooks and soreheads, but has an Ethic that grounds them and is deserving of respect. But of course there are always the hardliners on both sides who tend to obscure this and bedevil any rapprochement.

Actually, I prefer to think more ambitiously about what we have accomplished. To some degree we have transcended the realo/fundi dichotomy. We are moving towards a transformational approach to organization and action [cf. Margaret Wheatley's quantum theory-based Leadership and the New Science]. In a transformational mode, people emerge who have gained sufficient trust among many of their own and among some of the

other side so that they can advocate solutions that go beyond hard factional lines, incorporating salient features of each and moving the whole towards a new idea and a new place altogether.

One dwells on this because it is a political party, rather than an NGO, that we are building. Arguments and differences of opinion are an inevitable by-product of any political party, since it is constantly trying to pull together into a meaningful program a great variety of different, even oppositional interests. That is a civic process and a noble one. A political party then becomes a kaleidoscope of society and of its strivings for life and livelihood.

THE U.S. GREEN PARTY IN THE SWEEP OF AMERICAN HISTORY

American political history shows that new political constellations and third parties clearly play a fundamental role in the so-called two party system. Situations occur regularly in which the leading parties are either unable or unwilling to deal effectively with looming problems and crises. This failure mounts up year by year. Into the breach come new parties or powerful new forces in one of the two major parties. With a new agenda and new leadership, they bid for power and cause a realignment within the two party system, a change in the power structure, and a change in major policies.

Such had been the case from the rise of Jefferson's party at the end of the 18th century to the final petering out of the New Deal in 1968. Since the late 1960s, however, with the assassinations of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy, American politics has turned sour; new ideas, new forces within major parties and new parties have struggled to gain a toehold, despite the fact that the political system is continuously plagued by problems and crises abound.

The major cause of our contemporary political crisis is the tightening hold on power of a relatively tiny oligarchic elite. In an effort to amass ever more money and power, this group has succeeded in funneling wealth upward at the expense of a diminishing middle class and an increasingly pauperized underclass. The two major parties have succumbed to this trend: the Democrats swung alarmingly to the right under Clinton, while the resurgent Republicans are pursuing a political agenda that promotes the worst excesses of the 19th century as a panacea for contemporary problems.

Can the Green Party have an impact on the policy log jam and the oligarchic ossification that afflicts the nation? It is too soon to tell. But from the assessment of our internal development that I have sketched here, it seems to me an arguable thesis that the Green party has the potential to challenge the neoliberal consensus that dominates mainstream politics.

A last thought. We need to remember that the rise of Green parties throughout the world is a relatively new phenomenon both in world politics and in the politics of each of the nearly 100 countries that have a Green party. This factor is of utmost significance for the Green party of the United States. It indicates that there is a new solidarity afoot in the world—a solidarity based on a commitment to peace, ecological sensibility and sustainability, democracy, neighborhood values, human rights, and social justice.

THE FOUNDING U.S. GREEN PLATFORM AND FIRST PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN

BY STEVEN J SCHMIDT

The years 1984–1994, the first decade of Green political party formation in the U.S., were as tumultuous as they were promising. Green environmentalism and social activism from the 1960s and 1970s had produced a wellspring of support for green causes. Social reform activists explored links between environmental sustainability and social justice. Deep ecology, bioregionalism and local community organizing, organic agriculture and alternative development, clean air and energy independence were among the many branches of Green political thought that flourished. Drawing on many threads of Green organizing to build a “Green” political party was a natural progression that began in the late 1980s.

The Rainbow Coalition of Jesse Jackson's 1988 presidential campaign was, as some described it, the first Green national electoral effort that focused on bringing together a broad-based coalition of voters concerned primarily with social justice and environmental issues. Jerry Brown's 1992 “We the People/Take Back America” campaign adopted many themes from the Rainbow platform and ran a historically significant and competitive race against Bill Clinton, finishing a close second after winning the Connecticut primary but losing in New York after Governor Brown chose Jesse Jackson to be his vice presidential running mate. Greens were a prominent part of the Brown campaign, helping to draft the campaign's platform and shaping much of the campaign's effort to reach out and pull together a broad coalition that would substantially impact policy at the federal, state and local levels. The reform platform of the Brown campaign was presented at the Democratic party platform hearings but was quickly set aside by the party, which, under the influence of the

assurgent Democratic Leadership Council, chose to move to the right in an effort to appeal to so-called Reagan Democrats.¹

The rightward slide of the Democrats and subsequent rise of the Republican party in federal, state, and local races can be traced to the Democratic party's 1992 shift in direction away from traditional grassroots and progressive policy goals that date back to Franklin Roosevelt's presidency.²

One of the principal goals of the Brown campaign focused on energizing a broad base of electoral support among progressives, fiscal liberals and forward-leaning conservatives. The platform envisioned the formation of many issue and policy-oriented coalitions. One such coalition was the "Blue-Green" alliance that the campaign worked to build between blue-collar supporters and environmental and community activists around common-ground issues such as the World Trade Organization and the North American Free Trade Agreement. Many Greens who were not active in the electoral arena began to glimpse the potential of a Green political party that would draw together many shades of green to form a powerful influence and direct the growing current of Green activism, electoral efforts and organizing.

At the national level, a nascent Green party organization, The Greens/Green Party USA (G/GPUSA) had about 1,000 dues-paying members by 1993–94. After a controversial vote the previous year at a Green national gathering in Elkins, West Virginia, the G/GPUSA organization was formally established in 1992 at a meeting in Minnesota at Augsburg College. It quickly became evident that support for the G/GPUSA would be limited by its program, its organizational structure, and the anti-electoral tendencies of Left-Green "vanguardism." The organization's structure, as described

¹ For more on this point see my book, *American Twilight: On the Edge of a New Frontier* (Washington DC: Green Institute Press, 2003).

² During the eight years of the Clinton administration, the Democratic party lost more political races and offices at the federal, state and local levels than at any time since the 1890's presidency of Grover Cleveland and resulting election of William McKinley. President McKinley's political strategist, Mark Hanna, can be seen as the architect of the Democratic party collapse during that era, similar to President Bush's chief strategist, Karl Rove, who has referred to Hanna as his "hero" and who is often regarded as an architect of 'wedge' politics and the 1990's collapse of the Democratic party. It might also be noted that the autocratic, industrialist excesses of the McKinley presidency led to the birth of muckraking journalism, reminiscent of today's online investigative reporting and Internet "populism."

in many commentaries, was the product of prolonged and often acrimonious struggles that characterized G/GPUSA prior to 1996.

G/GPUSA's ideological underpinnings were revealed in the minutes of the 1992 meeting which established the organization's name, bylaws and working guidelines. Left-Green Network (LGN) proposals put forward by Charlie Betz, Don Fitz and Howie Hawkins were adopted by attendees, few of whom supported electoral efforts. The G/GPUSA model consisted of a dues-paying membership organization in which voting was limited under a structure of rules, mandates and other strictures. Central to the organizing model was a belief that dues-paying activist members would, in effect, be the grassroots of the organization and would act to oversee state Green parties, candidates and campaigns. The G/GPUSA organization appealed to few Greens and quickly became insular and acrimonious. Meetings were infamous for strident disagreements, with various members employing consensus decision-making or invoking list and voting irregularities as a way of blocking proposals they found disagreeable. By the mid-1990s the G/GPUSA had shrunk to a core group of members, local groups and a few affiliated state Green parties as few U.S. Greens chose to join the organization, pay dues or agree to adhere to its bylaws, rules and working guidelines.

However, because the G/GPUSA controlled the Green name and claimed to be the "original and authentic" national Green party, any move toward a more broad-based party willing to engage in electoral politics would prove difficult. Activist members had been given extraordinary oversight powers and blocked efforts to restructure the organization. G/GPUSA activists could order state parties and each other into dispute resolution and require explicit affirmations from candidates, as attempts were made to maintain membership oversight. Grievance tribunals came and went. Mandates and binding mediation under threat of sanction were common and any active member of the party could mount a grievance and demand accountability of candidates, campaigns, state parties or Green party officeholders and representatives. Activist members defined themselves as party's "grassroots," and the rules, bylaws, working guidelines and practices of the G/GPUSA were extensions of this core organizational belief.

G/GPUSA adopted a national program which it described as a manifesto of the Green movement, though little attention was given to local governance, domestic or foreign policy. Electoral-oriented Greens recognized that the G/GPUSA program was not

intended to be a platform on which Green political campaigns could effectively run. The program was much more a visionary expression of the ideological goals of numerous factions within the G/GPUSA and activist members often expressed disfavor toward policies which they perceived as "reformist" or "liberal." Greens seeking to run for office would regularly encounter activist members who insisted that candidates report to them, a dictate that was justified by their somewhat puritanical model of grassroots democracy. The members' oversight model, unsurprisingly, produced few G/GPUSA candidates or campaigns and most Green campaigns from 1992 to 1996 ran separate from the G/GPUSA organization, although the organization subsequently attempted to claim them in a failed Federal Election Committee filing for national committee status in 1996.

By late 1994, the contradictions and failures of the G/GPUSA model had become apparent to many U.S. Greens. Individual state parties and Greens took on the challenge of envisioning and building a viable Green party distinct from the machinations and failures of the G/GPUSA. The New Mexico Green Party was a leader in this effort, as were those of Maine, California, Hawaii, Alaska and several others. According to the political scientist and long-time Green party organizer, John Rensenbrink, the Green Politics Network (GPN) was established as an alternative vision to that of G/GPUSA.³ After the 1992 G/GPUSA formation in Minnesota, Rensenbrink and many others had begun talking about a different vision and definition of Green politics, hoping to create a broader political formation. The Maine group, led by Rensenbrink, advanced a triad model that would combine electoral, educational and movement work.

A number of Greens advocated establishing a federation of state Green parties as an inclusive, far-reaching way to build a U.S. Green party. A resolution to this effect was proposed by New Mexico Greens at the 1996 national Green meeting in Los Angeles, even as debates waged as to how to deal with G/GPUSA's member oversight model and its legacy.

The challenge was to construct a successful model on which to build a growing, vital, U.S. Green party. The model adopted came from an unlikely place: a small state in the hinterland far from

³ See *The Greens and the Politics of Transformation* (San Pedro, Calif. : R. & E. Miles, 1992) and *Against all Odds: The Green Transformation of American Politics* by John Rensenbrink (Raymond, ME: Leopold Press, 1999)

centers of power. In 1994 in Santa Fe, named after St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of the land and animals, the New Mexico Green party proposed a statewide slate of Green candidates that would run a serious and credible campaign based on their founding platform. The campaign was one of the most successful independent, third-party efforts in the United States in nearly four decades and became a model for the national Green "40-State Organizing Effort" launched in December 1994, which led to the founding of the national Green platform and the first presidential campaign in 1996.

NEW BEGINNINGS

A meeting in California between myself as a New Mexico Green and Mike Feinstein and Greg Jan of the California Greens, set in motion both the presidential campaign and a 40-state nationwide organizing effort by Greens in 1995–96. California's Green party was the largest state Green party and the state's Green primary election was crucial to a successful Green presidential campaign and related party building at the state and local levels. I brought with me a resolution I had written that had been passed by the New Mexico Green Council after the November 1994 election. It called on the California party to make its 1996 primary ballot line available to a Green presidential candidate and presented the elements of a national organizing campaign based on the New Mexico model. The resolution became a core element of a subsequent national organizing drive to place a Green presidential and vice presidential candidate on 40 state ballots.

The statewide 1994 New Mexico Green campaign presented a convincing case that a "serious, credible, platform-based" campaign could be exported as a successful party building model. As a former senior adviser to the 1992 Brown presidential campaign who had proposed and participated in drafting the campaign's "We the People" platform, I realized that a national Green campaign would advance key progressive positions that the Democratic party had set aside in its Clinton-era move to take back the South and recapture the votes of Reagan Democrats.

State ballot access laws were a profound impediment to any independent challenge to Democrat/Republican dominance of U.S. elections. Nevertheless, in 1994 Roberto Mondragon and I waged a campaign for Governor and Lieutenant Governor in which we managed to capture 11 percent of the vote. The New Mexico Green party had, as a result, gained ballot standing as

a “major” party, the first “minor” party in New Mexico’s history to achieve this ballot standing.

The 40-state organizing proposal I drafted outlined a party-building model that focused on creating a serious, credible, platform-based presidential campaign. It also proposed a presidential nominating convention to be held in California and a plan to build the Green party at the state and local levels through ballot access and petitioning drives. The presidential campaign would be a catalyst in building the party across states and localities. Greens would be contacted and mobilized and the 40-state effort would reach out to environmentalists, social justice activists, labor organizations, students, community groups, and small and mid-sized business—much like the broad-based coalition that had been mobilized by the Jackson and Brown campaigns. Various Greens began the work of identifying and polling contacts in every state to assess support for the 40-state effort and the new model for building a Green party nationally and at the state and local levels.

Our next generation “Take Back America” message was designed to speak to independents who now, according to polls, made up nearly 30 percent of the American electorate. I spoke of drafting a platform that would stand in opposition to corporate influence, militaristic post-Cold War doctrine and Democrat-Republican hegemony. We would advance ideals and ideas that would not otherwise be part of the national debate during the 1996 elections. We would present a stark contrast to the Republicans and Democrats, who were respectively moving toward neo-conservative and neo-liberal positions aimed at furthering globalization and transnational corporate dominance. In 1994, in a historic shift of political power, a wave of electoral victories led to Republican party control of Congress for the first time in 50 years. Led by House Speaker Newt Gingrich, the resurgent Republicans emphasized evangelicalism, social conservatism and a renewed military buildup. Gingrich’s “Contract with America,” an extension of Reagan’s social and economic agenda, persuaded key Democrats to abandon long-held policies such as the right to universal health care. Democrats also attempted to elicit greater corporate contributions even as insurance and health care proposals were devastated by these same contributors.

The extent of lobbying and the amount of money influencing American politics reached unprecedented levels. The Center for Voting and Democracy, a non-partisan organization that studies

how voting systems effect political participation, revealed the extent that repressive policies, laws and election codes blocked access to those outside the Republican/Democrat "duopoly." Americans were increasingly alienated from the two-party system, and the Greens' challenge was to mount an independent campaign within a winner-take-all system. In order to achieve this, the Green party looked for new ways, such as instant run-off voting, to confront the system of politics-as-usual.

The Democratic Leadership Council continued to push the Democratic party to the right in the 1990s even as the Democrat's adoption of Republican policies relegated the party to the backbench. Voters would soon see a new conservative Democratic party and an emerging neo-Republican era. Republicans effectively moved to consolidate control of the political agenda as Democratic opposition retreated. The shape of U.S. domestic and foreign policy over the coming decade were set in place as Democrats adopted core Republican party positions and each party accelerated their outreach to corporate and conservative interests.

Against a background of rightward-shifting U.S. politics, the U.S. Green Party launched a vigorous effort to create an alternative vision to "Republi-crat" politics. It was increasingly evident that a serious challenge to two-party dominance of American politics was vital to any redirection in American politics. If the Green party was to enter the political arena as a serious, credible challenge to the politics-as-usual, it was also evident it would first have to confront its own politics.

At the 1995 national Green gathering in Albuquerque, New Mexico, the discord between the membership-based G/GPUSA organization and state parties like New Mexico and California had reached a tipping point. A G/GPUSA caucus attempt to "nominate" Mumia Abu Jamal, a convicted felon on death row, and mandate that state parties place Mumia's name on their respective state ballots, was criticized and eventually defeated by the state parties. The bylaws and rules of the G/GPUSA were subsequently challenged and, after the New Mexico gathering, the G/GPUSA organization could no longer purport to be the legitimate national Green party. The following year the U.S. Federal Election Commission rejected a controversial G/GPUSA effort to establish a Green National Committee, thus effectively ending its attempted control of the party. This 1995 split in the Green party

set the stage for the 1996 presidential campaign and the formation of the Association of State Green Parties.

At the 1995 New Mexico gathering in the *Great Kiva*, a traditional Native American place of reflection and decision-making, the assembled Greens heard the results of a national survey which strongly supported running a presidential campaign in 1996. The three presenters of the "40-State Organizing Proposal" were myself, Mike Feinstein and Greg Jan, and we spoke of a short list of potential candidates. We suggested Greens consider three prominent progressives: Jim Hightower, a well-known Texas populist and nationally respected writer, labor advocate and radio personality; Delores Huerta, a Latina activist from California who had worked on environmental and social justice issues since the Caesar Chavez-led campaigns of the 1960s and 1970s; and Ralph Nader, the incorrigible campaigner for consumer causes who had taken on corporations and Congressional barter in the name of a revitalized civic democracy.

The assembled Greens voted to support the Green's 40-state organizing effort and presidential campaign, and shortly thereafter a series of meetings were held to discuss the national organizing plan. A key part of the process would be navigating the intricate and restrictive ballot access laws in each of the states. In this respect, Richard Winger, the editor of *Ballot Access News*, became an indispensable resource. Filing dates and petition requirements were sent to organizers in every state.

At the same time, a platform process was set in motion. With the assistance of Santa Fe Greens, I began approaching Greens from around the U.S., drawing together statements to begin the extended work of drafting policy positions that would serve as a founding document for the Green party and act as a foundation for the first presidential campaign. In creating a platform, we were inspired by many democratic movements and documents. These included Green writings and state party positions; the 1988 Rainbow Coalition and 1992 "We the People" platforms; historic constitutional documents speaking to the foundation of American liberty as a revolutionary ideal; civil rights speeches; Blue-Green alliances; environmental books; and works of engaged citizen coalitions and groups like the Bioneers. With the assistance of long-time Green webmaster, Cameron Spitzer, the drafting process of the ad-hoc committee went online and forums were set up for discussion and debate. I acquired the domain name www.gp.org and the Green platform was made available at this website,

which later became the website of the founding 2000 national Platform of the Association of State Green Parties and then U.S. Green party's home site.

In 1995, key Green organizers took on the new Green party presidential campaign with inspired initiative. Rob Hager, a Green supporter in Washington, DC, virtually set up camp outside Ralph Nader's office in an attempt to convince him to run. Other supporters of a national Green presidential campaign, such as Linda Martin and Tom Linzey, lobbied Nader, while an open letter from a range of supporters across the political spectrum also urged Nader to run. After much discussion about the scope of his campaign, Nader chose to run a limited, but nonetheless robust campaign of ideas and ideals in contrast to the limited sphere of two-party 'business-as-usual' politics.

The Green's first national nominating convention was held at the University of California in Los Angeles. Our venue was particularly symbolic; during his time as Governor of California, Ronald Reagan, the figurehead of American neo-conservatism, had attempted to repress and dismantle the University of California system because of student and faculty protests against the Vietnam War. It was here on August 19, 1996 that Ralph Nader agreed to become the Green party's presidential candidate. His acceptance speech reflected Green party dissatisfaction with the two-party system, and particularly with the Democrats:

You know that you are responsible for all this. All I did was accept. Some of the prior speakers touched on a number of issues and as I was listening to them, what occurred to me was that most of the issues and subjects that the Green party is adhering to are majoritarian issues to the United States of America. And what commended the Green party so much to those of us who were not in on the founding is that if you look very carefully at the Green party platform that's being proposed for your approval, this is by far the most comprehensive, broad-based platform that deals with a wide range of systemic justice that's needed in this country: from the political, to the corporate, to the cultural, the civil liberties, the civil rights platform of any party in the country. I wouldn't begin to compare it with the flaccid, insipid, empty, cowardly platforms of the Democratic and Republican Tweedle-dum and Tweedle-dee parties...

As a matter of fact, the Democratic Party Platform doesn't even contain an affirmation of universal health coverage for all Americans. It even backed off of that. While they took money from the hospital lobby, the medical lobby, the drug industry lobby, the giant HMO's, and insurance lobby. And as far as the Republican Platform goes, this one could've been written by the Fortune 100.

The Nader campaign that began that day would form the core of a Green campaign that reached far beyond 1996 and traditional U.S politics. The results of the 40-State Organizing Effort led to new Green parties being formed, existing ones revitalized and, one month after the November election, the formation of the Association of State Green Parties, which became the Green Party of the United States.

In December 1996, organizers of the first Green presidential campaign and national organizing effort met with representatives of Green state parties to announce a newly structured national party. The meeting took place in Middleburg, Virginia, not far from the estate where Thomas Jefferson had dreamt of a democratic revolution. We had provided a foundation and the party began to grow and flourish. State parties were affiliated; national meetings were held; our 1996 platform became the basis for the founding 2000 national platform; the U.S. Greens and European Federation of Green Parties formed a working relationship with an approved "common ground" platform and shortly afterwards a global Green charter effort was inaugurated.

The legal requirements for formal recognition as the national U.S. Green party had been met and more than exceeded. In association with Tom Linzey, Dave Cobb and Dean Myerson, we successfully filed a 300-page application with the US Federal Election Committee. A U.S. Green party, a "national committee of a national party," had arrived.

POLITICS AND PROGRESS: THE GERMAN GREEN PARTY 1983-2003

BY HUBERT KLEINERT

How do you determine progress in a political party? Merely listing its electoral results is insufficient. A better way to approach the issue might be to ask: How do you gauge progress in political terms? This is the question I would like to address with regard to the German Green Party.

When you take a look at the German Greens today, you find, in marked contrast to 1983, a fairly normal parliamentary party. It has been a governing party in one of the leading industrial nations in the world. Just like the other parties, it acts as a political competitor and, like the others, is primarily motivated by the maximization of election returns and by the striving for power. Its internal structures have come to reflect these goals. Its political agenda reflects concepts of ecological sustainability, social causes, but also liberal, or rather, libertarian ideas. The position it occupies within the German party system is now somewhere left-of-center or, if you wish, somewhere between the Social Democrats and the Free Democratic Party. And it is also true from a sociological point of view that over the past 20 years, the Green Party, much like its original constituency, has become socially established, if not settled.

It did not look like that in the beginning. In 1983, the Greens were not so much a party as a social movement. Petra Kelly called this an "anti-party party" in 1982 and Antje Vollmer spoke of "the party which belongs to the social movements" as late as 1986. Although most Greens remained unsure of exactly what they wanted their party to be, they remained certain of one thing; they did not want to be a "real party". The participants saw themselves as part of a wide, multi-layered, and motley group of movements. This was where their pivot leg was grounded, while

their new “free leg” should be placed on the parliamentary stage, allowing them to express their oppositional ideology of extra-parliamentary protest on a nationwide scale in the parliaments themselves. The organizational structures followed suit: No chairman or chairwoman, but a board of speakers; no party apparatus worth mentioning; the strict incompatibility of party office and parliamentary seat; rotation of executives and elected representatives; fixed mandates; and foregoing a large portion of their parliamentary allowances. All this was called “Basisdemokratie”, or grassroots democracy, and it was enacted with the claim of presenting, within the structures of the Green Party, some social model for the future. The Green mainstream was dominated by some suspicions against all “established” forms and structures of politics. In addition, the concepts and feelings of this time reflected all sorts of political theories regarding direct democracy and leftist critiques of parliamentary democracy.

The organizational ideal of grassroots democracy became one of the four “pillars” of Green policy and principles. The other three were ecology, social justice, and non-violence. “Ecology” was regarded by most as a label denoting a broader discourse that was critical of economic growth. For “social”, many would have preferred “socialist”. The “non-violent” emphasis was primarily intended to dissociate the party from the more militant protest groups of the time. But as a label for the party’s direction in questions of foreign policy and internal security, it also combined radical pacifism with anti-Americanism, which was then the hallmark of the anti-nuclear movement’s protests against the deployment of new medium range nuclear missiles in West Germany.

The Greens in the early 1980s viewed themselves as being outside the state rather than a part of it. The state was first of all an opponent. At most, some concessions might be wrought from it. Ecological transformation, however, only seemed feasible through the rejection of the current order of property and its replacement with an economy based on private industries that were outside the confines of the state. Apart from that, the party’s political and programmatic profile remained somewhat hazy. The Green activists at the time were far left socialists, former communists, radical conservationists, ecologists with conservative values, disappointed social democrats, pacifists, feminists, critics of civilization of all kinds, and political sectarians to boot—in short, they constituted a melting pot of protest and opposition against all kinds of phenomena in modern life. The Greens, therefore, were a novel and contradictory symbiosis of red and green, of an

ecological ethic of limitation and responsibility, radical socialist concepts of redistribution, and libertarian world views based on concepts of an almost boundless autonomy of the individual in the face of governmental and social authority. The picture was no less complicated by the fact that there existed, even then, a minority faction bent on the shaping of a party of pragmatic reform.

However diverse the party's elements might have been in terms of its politics and program, its profile in sociological terms was fairly homogenous. The activists were younger people, almost all of them under 40. Most came from the leftist academic environment which had taken shape in West German society in the wake of the events of 1968. In addition to those who left university without specific ideas of a career or who had not yet graduated, there were many school teachers and professionals in the social services sector. In sociological terms, the Greens were the party of the young generation, the party of the expansion of higher education in the seventies, of academic civil servants and of social professions. These characteristics soon extended to those who sympathized with or voted for the party. Among political scientists, the Green party soon came to be regarded as the party that best represented the post-materialism of the post-Wirtschaftswunder generation.

The German Green Party has covered some considerable distance in the last few years, evolving from movement party to a governing one. Let me retrace the more significant stages of this development before I ask, in my final section, what the factors and conditions were which facilitated or furthered this process.

Two developments in the year 1983 became decisive for the future direction of the Green Party. When the German Bundestag consented to the deployment of nuclear missiles in the autumn of 1983, it was not only a defeat for the German peace movement, but also signaled the end of the growth of all social movements in West Germany. The Greens were therefore forced to recognize themselves as a normal political party. Their future political fate depended on their ability to assert themselves in the normal political competition among parties.

The second was the outcome of the regional election in the Federal State of Hesse, where the Greens now held a key position when it came to forming a governing majority in the Landtag. The Hessian Greens decision to consent to an alliance with the Social Democrats triggered a hefty controversy within the party, the

outcome of which was the formation of two factions, the so-called "Realos" (who advocated political realism) and the "Fundis" (who adhered to fundamental principles). This dualism was to constitute a formative influence on the whole of the party, both inwards and outwards, until the early 1990s.

The labels "Fundis" and "Realo", allegedly designating only a difference of strategy, soon came to be understood as shorthand for different attitudes towards parliamentarianism, the state, and the politics of reform as a whole. For Realos, the pursuit of power and active involvement in electoral politics constituted the only realistic road to social and political reform. By embarking on this path, the Realos necessarily became more open to new processes of learning and experience. Meanwhile, the Fundis, in their rejection of the Realos, drifted towards dogmatism. Both developments were equally momentous, widening the gap and heating up the conflict, which was of course, in addition to everything else, a permanent struggle for power within the party. Soon the Realos no longer accepted the party's demand for a withdrawal of West Germany from NATO. Instead of eco-socialist visions of overcoming the system as a whole, they propagated a pragmatic course of what they called an "ecological reconstruction of industrial society" by means of reform politics in parliament. In contrast, the "Fundis" held on to the definition of the Green Party as a fundamental opposition to "the system". With the increasing presence of the Green Party in local and regional parliaments and the withering away of movements of social protest, visions of toppling the political system became increasingly unrealistic. Therefore, the Fundamentalists, who dominated the national party apparatus in the eighties, found themselves increasingly in the role of defenders of an outdated radical vision.

For a long time, there was no way of resolving this essential conflict. True, Joschka Fischer became the first ever Green minister at the state level as early as in the end of 1985. However, until 1990, the Realo-faction never had a nationwide majority in the party, which was dominated by the fundamentalists headed by Jutta Ditfurth. In contrast, the Realos were strong in the Green Bundestag party after 1987. As a result of this complicated constellation, tensions escalated, especially between 1987 and 1989, and the party staggered along on the verge of a split.

The conflict between the wings of the party marred almost every single political debate, becoming an ever bigger obstacle to any creative form of political discourse. At the same time the Social

Democrats, in opposition since 1982, rejuvenated their program, adding touches of green, while a new generation stepped to the fore.

Toward the end of 1988, the Green Party convention cast a vote of no confidence in its executive branch, led by Dittfurth, thereby forcing the group's resignation. Despite this action, however, the crisis of the Greens was not yet over. For a while, the dream of a reintegrated federal Green Party remained wishful thinking. The new party executive proved too weak for the task at hand. Reluctant to accept themselves as a party, the Greens had hesitated to install a center capable of true control. It was peripheral elements of the party which had, until then, provided internal structures and an outward profile. Now, as this dualism came to an end, the initial result was a diffusion of power. And when the Berlin Wall came down in the autumn of 1989 and the borders were opened, the Green Party's organizational style and functional capacities were incapable of dealing with the changes.

For these reasons, the year of German re-unification, 1990, was one of severe crisis for the party. The reality of two German states had been an accepted fact, even for Joschka Fischer, who declared in 1989 that it was "the price we have to pay for Auschwitz". Even among the Realo faction, German unification was not an important political issue. It took some time, therefore, to come to terms – more or less reluctantly – with the new reality.

Now, with a deep split running through the party and without a leadership capable of taking firm control, the Greens tumbled into a general election in which they failed to attain the necessary 5% of the vote in the Western part of the country. Given the historic symbolism of this first truly nationwide election, many thought that this would be the end of the party. The truth, however, is that this historic defeat became the preliminary condition for a successful new start. The debacle paved the way for a change of attitude, and the Greens increasingly came to accept the fact that they were becoming a parliamentary party of reform, rather than a diffuse group of extra-parliamentary gadflies.

How did the Greens profit from this development? The results of regional elections in 1990 and 1991 had installed red-green coalitions in two Western Länder (German federal states). In the absence of a prominent nationwide figure, Joschka Fischer, minister of environmental affairs in Hesse, gained in stature as a Green politician who could be sure of nationwide attention. A

pragmatic policy of reform, which was the condition of the first red-green coalitions, had come to be more or less accepted within the party. Since it had first been proclaimed in 1990, the "truce" between the Realo-faction and the new moderate left wing which now dominated the party executive had come to work reasonably well, thanks to the discipline exerted by reality. The radical group led by Jutta Ditfurth had by then left the party.

In the early 1990s, the new united Germany's basic political conditions also became increasingly favorable to the Greens. While the Social Democrats had appropriated Green issues to some degree, this tendency had passed its peak with Oskar Lafontaine's defeat in the election of 1990. And, contrary to conventional wisdom, the early years after German reunification were characterized by a wave of general dissatisfaction with the "established parties" – a label which did not include the Greens at that time. An example of this dissatisfaction was the emergence of a strange compound word, Politikverdrossenheit, loosely translatable as "political reluctance" and denoting an unwillingness to take an interest in politics, which won the annual trophy for "word of the year" in 1992.

In January 1993, the West German Green party succeeded, after extensive negotiations, in forging an alliance with the East German civil rights movement. The new party was called "Alliance 90/The Greens". Ironically, it was the West German part of the party which profited most. While they won the reputation of a certain commonsense bourgeois respectability in the West, the new party suffered a series of electoral defeats in the East, eventually failing to be represented in any of the regional parliaments of the new Länder. Electoral researchers concluded that the urban post-materialist environments which constituted a stronghold of the Greens in the West barely existed in the East. Up to the present day, support for the German Greens remains far stronger in the West than in the states of the former Democratic Republic.

While between 1990 and 1994 some of the resolutions of Green Federal conventions were still miles away from political feasibility, the party's tone had softened. After the shock of 1990, nobody was willing to go to extremes. Besides, the practice of Green partnerships in the Länder seemed to prove that programmatic radicalism on federal conventions could well coexist with everyday pragmatism in regional parliaments. In the autumn of 1994, the Greens were re-elected into the Bundestag. Joschka Fischer's leading role in the new parliamentary party was accepted even

by his opponents within the party. And when Antje Vollmer was elected vice-president of the Bundestag, with the backing of the Christian Democrats, the Greens had reached a state of political normalcy. A professional attitude prevailed and streaks of liberal thinking became visible in the Green policies of social reform and tax reform.

It was the field of foreign policy which now provided material for conflict. The civil war and the massacres that plagued the disintegration of Yugoslavia triggered a sustained debate over principles within the party. How legitimate was the use of military force in the service of elementary human rights? A first attempt at softening the strict "No" regarding a military intervention in Bosnia had been clearly rejected in 1993, but the UN's failure to prevent the massacre at Srebrenica spurred a new debate within the party.

In the end, Srebrenica was not only a belated turning point in the Bosnian tragedy; it also became a milestone in the history of the Green party. The convention in Bremen in late 1995 saw a deeply moving debate at the end of which the Realos were defeated once again, winning only 37% of the delegates' votes. Nevertheless, they constituted a strong enough minority to enable half of the Greens in the Bundestag to vote for German participation in a military intervention in Bosnia.

The farewell to absolute pacifism in favor of a more considerate weighing up of the elementary values of human rights and non-violence paved the way for a future Green foreign minister and his endorsement of a NATO intervention in Kosovo in 1999. It also constituted the end of the long phase in the political development of the party during which the Greens had subscribed to an ethics of conviction and defined themselves in terms of some allegedly superior fundamental ethical principle.

The years of opposition in Bonn were fairly successful. For some time, the Greens were part of the governments of four Länder. At the same time, public support for Helmut Kohl's government dwindled. By the beginning of 1998, the year of the next general election, the prospects of a first ever Red-Green coalition at the national level began to look increasingly promising.

But in March 1998, the convention to decide the party program for the election campaign ended disastrously. A resolution demanding that the tax on oil be incrementally raised until gasoline was 5 Marks per liter backfired badly. The reaction of the public was

devastating, and the support which had been gained since 1994 vanished within weeks. In the end, the Green Party just managed to break the 5% barrier, but with losses instead of the long-awaited gains. It was only the unexpectedly strong showing by the Social Democrats that led to a change of power in Germany.

In the following years, with the responsibilities of a party in power, the Greens had to overcome massive difficulties. Even with a new moderateness and an advanced social integration of their leadership and their followers, the Greens of 1998 were much further away from the center of German society than any other governing party had ever been in the history of the Federal Republic of Germany. Only a small minority of Germans had actually voted for the Greens to play a role in the German federal government. On the other hand, there were high expectations coming from the party's followers and activists. From migration policy to abandoning nuclear energy, the wish list was as long as it was unrealistic. And the party still lacked a center capable of exercising control.

Despite the fact that they were now part of the governing coalition, many of the Green Party's followers were nonetheless dissatisfied with the party's performance on many issues. And when the Kosovo-crisis became another test for the party as a whole, the coalition verged on the brink of dissolution. In several regional elections in 1999, the Greens regularly lost one third of their electoral returns. The Schröder government was stabilized in 2000, when the financial scandals of the Christian Democrats came to light, but the Greens could hardly profit from this development. They remained on the defensive. In the public eye, they had either asked for too much or achieved nothing. Only the tremendous popularity of foreign minister, Joschka Fischer, saved the Greens from political oblivion.

In an effort to overcome its various problems, the party's leaders embarked upon an effort to reform its structure. On several occasions, various members tried to overturn the rule which prevented members from simultaneously holding parliamentary seats and leadership positions within the party. However, these efforts were rejected at party conventions. The party was placed under further pressure when the Bundestag had to vote on German participation in military operations in Afghanistan. The issue paralyzed the party and threatened to destroy the red/green coalition government. Eventually, the Greens agreed on German participation in Afghanistan, but a considerable number

of members left the party in protest. In the beginning of 2002, the year of the next election, surveys indicated that support for the Greens was at barely 5%, but in the course of the year public response grew more sympathetic. It was the Social Democrats who now ran into difficulties. At the end of a heated election campaign, Schröder even stood shoulder-to-shoulder with the Greens, a stance which he had been hitherto reluctant to adopt. Although the coalition barely scraped into government again at the 2002 election, the Greens, much to many people's surprise, had their best ever result in a general election. In fact, most analysts agreed that it was the Greens who were the true victors. A professional election campaign and a new professionalism in the party apparatus may have contributed to this success as much as a temporary weakness of the Social Democrats, but there is more to it. The idea of the Greens as a partner in government took time to sink in. To the public at large, as well as to its own followers, the role of the Greens as a governing party on the national level must have appeared so strange that it took more than three years before everybody involved finally accepted it.

With the general election of 2002, the structure of the red-green alliance has changed in a significant way. While the urgent need for a basic reconstruction of the social system has meant all sorts of problems for the Social Democrats, the Greens appear to have coped better. They had managed to move quite smoothly towards the political center while remaining a viable force for ecological and social reform. After 25 years, Germans have come to accept the Greens as a normal parliamentary party. Furthermore, successful experiments of local coalitions with the Christian Democrats show that the party's range of options has broadened.

Let me conclude my contribution with an assessment of some of the conditions and factors which played a part in the particular political progress I have sketched. First of all, the German Greens undoubtedly profited in a number of ways from the peculiar characteristics of the German political system. Unlike countries such as the US and the UK, which have a first-past-the-post voting system, the German system of proportional representation provided the opportunity for parliamentary representation and, with it, access to publicity. Second, the combination of proportional representation and the 5% barrier exerted a restraining influence on the party, especially during its early years, thereby fostering a sense of discipline and diminishing the threat of a split. (Not surprisingly, political scientists frequently referred to the German

Greens as “an artifact of the 5% rule.”) Third, this very combination had secured a high degree of concentration and clarity in the German system of political parties, which not only reduced the number of relevant opponents to three but also gave the Green Party a much higher share of public attention than would have been possible in a multi-party-system. Finally, after several decades of coalition governments, the German electorate has come to regard coalitions of a senior and a junior partner as normal. Therefore, in a way that would be unimaginable in the UK or the US, the German public began to consider the possibility of Green a coalition government once the party started to regularly break the 5% barrier. This was especially true after the FDP began to side with the Christian Democrats instead of the Social Democrats. Therefore, the Greens could soon expect—like the Free Democratic Party before them—to profit from a tactical splitting of votes. (German voters have two votes in a general election. This allows them to vote for the candidate of their preferred larger party in the majority vote in their constituency while opting for a small party in the proportional poll.) In fact, it can be shown that a considerable proportion of the electorate did oscillate between Red and Green, voting this way or that way, depending on their preference for a particular political constellation.

It is safe to assume, then, that the characteristics of the German political system have contributed to the success of the Green Party and furthered their progress toward adopting a more pragmatic approach toward politics.

But there are other contributing factors. The post-war generation gap was particularly wide in Germany. Sure enough, a line of separation between materialist attitudes and post-materialism can be observed in all developed Western societies during the seventies. But in Western Germany, the young generation's clash with the generation of postwar reconstruction was more pronounced than anywhere else. This was a result of German history, particularly the tradition of the authoritarian role of the state, the lack of experience in a fully realized republicanism, and, above all, the heritage of National Socialism. Given the collective tendency to hush up Germany's fatal past, the younger generation's rebellion against their parents' pride in postwar reconstruction, the so-called *Wirtschaftswunder*, was virtually inevitable. This urgency created a generational divide which helped create a significant constituency for a post-materialist party such as the Greens. This generation-specific background was such a decisive influence, in fact, that the German Greens have often been referred to as a

"generational party". The fact that environmental issues gained specific significance in the process is, of course, anything but a coincidence. But in comparison with the generational divide, the topic of ecology may well have played a secondary role. The adherence to a common set of radical-libertarian values probably did more to unite the Greens than all their ecological virtues.

The upswing in higher education and the rapid expansion of social service professions within the civil service sector in Germany enhanced these effects, creating, especially in the urban centers, a new cohort of well-educated youth with ambitious aims of changing German society. Without them, the rise of the Greens could not have occurred. Furthermore, rather than being anchored in a kind of utopian ecological socialism, the pronounced individualism of this class placed it firmly within the liberal tradition.

The history of the German Greens is, as I hope to have shown, anything but a consistent story of success. They could very well have failed. During the late eighties, the integration of many Realos into the Social Democratic Party, which embraced certain Green ideas, was by no means out of the question. The remaining fundamentalist part of the party would probably have been reduced to the role of a splinter group. And what if the West German Greens, with Jutta Ditfurth, had won that crucial 0.2% in 1990 and had returned to the Bundestag? It is difficult to know what might have occurred, but it is doubtful that there would ever have been a Green foreign minister called Joschka Fischer.

As it was, the defeat of 1990 accelerated the progress of the Greens towards pragmatism and compromise. Of course, the less glamorous aspects of politics—careerism, opportunism, the complacency of functionaries, institutional self-preservation, an increasing orientation towards power and electoral returns—played their part in the process. This is as obvious as it is inevitable. It is a part of politics, and politics is made by human beings who are rarely pure idealists. The crucial question is, if, and what, a political party can contribute to the beneficial development of the community. And in this respect, the balance sheet of the Greens is something to be proud of. They have changed a great deal over the twenty years since they were first elected to the Bundestag, but they did not merely adapt to changing circumstances. Progress in politics has, for the Greens, always been politics in progress. And as much as they were changed by the conditions they had to cope with, they have themselves changed these conditions:

Germany today is a freer, more liberal, and more environmentally conscious society than it was in 1983. The Greens have contributed greatly to this progress.

I regard the German Greens as an example of the utmost of what social movements can achieve in highly developed democracies: to become an institution and thereby an integral part of a system which they originally confronted in bitter opposition. They could not, however, avoid the fact that their rise coincided with an increasing public disillusionment with politics. Like other mainstream political parties, the present-day Greens have become obsessed with electoral results and maintaining their popularity among voters. But this is an altogether different story, one which should not prevent us from recognizing the party's real and significant achievements.

CHAPTER 3

VALUES AND
CONFLICTS

THE GREENS AS A SOCIAL MOVEMENT:

VALUES AND CONFLICTS

BY BRIAN TOKAR

In the America of the mid 1980s, the dreams of a more just and ecological society that had flourished during the 1960s and seventies seemed in danger of disappearing into the mists of history. The Reagan years had ushered in a culture of resurgent greed, militarism and conspicuous consumption, and a dismal politics of reaction and retrenchment. In this challenging climate, the visionary policies and electoral victories of *die Grünen* in Germany appeared to be nothing short of a political miracle. Hundreds of thoughtful and idealistic people throughout the US, from many walks of life, gravitated toward the idea of an American Green movement as a symbol of hope that the liberatory spirit of recent decades might continue to grow and develop.

Thus it was much more than the pragmatic electoral victories of the German Greens that sparked people's imagination on this side of the Atlantic. We were inspired by Rudolph Bahro's call for an ecological civilization that would transcend the stale divisions between East and West, by Petra Kelly's plea for a convergence of peace and ecological movements, and by the massive outpouring of people across Europe to oppose what the British historian E.P. Thompson termed the "exterminist" politics of a reinvigorated Cold War.¹ For many US activists, the emergence of Green politics in Europe seemed nothing less than the renewal and expansion of just the kind of visionary, ecological politics that many in this country had argued for, but few saw a way to practically implement.

1 Especially popular among early US Greens were Rudolph Bahro, *From Red to Green*, London: Verso, 1984, and *Building the Green Movement*, Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1986, and Petra Kelly, *Fighting for Hope*, Boston: South End Press, 1984.

However this new Green vision meant many different things to different people and, before long, the territory of Green politics in the US became one of often bitter contestation between very different outlooks on both the present and the future. Forward thinking, inspired people of many political orientations saw the Greens as the way to realize their particular hopes and visions. Thus, the very idealism of the early US Greens fostered an ideological polarization from which the project of creating a Green politics for the US would never truly recover.

By the late 1980s, a rather dynamic but loose network of perhaps as many as 300 local groups around the country were practicing Green politics in their towns and cities, and designing the framework for a unified Green organization that would help realize both local and national aspirations. The praxis of these groups varied tremendously. People expressed their Green outlooks in diverse forms of activism, lifestyles, spirituality, political engagement, philosophical inquiry and institution-building. But in the early years, all these activities were seen as important steps toward the realization of a Green politics that could support a different way of living and *doing* politics while inspiring vital changes in US political, social, and cultural institutions.

Early US Greens emerged from many distinct spheres of social and political activity, and the diversity of these activities shaped early Green ideals and praxis. Greens identified themselves by their ideas, their values and by actions in their communities. They made an important mark on countless local issues and political struggles, and showed how work on particular issues could express and embody a much broader political outlook. In scores of cities and towns, Greens built community gardens, fought destructive development projects, declared Nuclear Free Zones, opposed the 1991 Persian Gulf War, and worked to democratize their local governments.²

From New England to Florida to Oregon, Green activists were in the forefront of opposing a new generation of municipal waste incinerators, and implemented wide-ranging recycling programs to demonstrate a practical alternative. Just outside St. Louis, they worked to prevent the incineration of toxic, dioxin-tainted soil from the evacuated community of Times Beach, Missouri, and some years later organized the first comprehensive US activist

² These activities were chronicled in the quarterly Green journal, *Green Letter*, published in Berkeley, California, and subsequently in its St. Louis-based successor, *Synthesis/Regeneration*.

gathering to oppose the development of genetically engineered agriculture. In California, Greens renewed statewide opposition to the expansion of offshore oil drilling and supported a ballot initiative to protect the last remaining old growth forests. In New Mexico, they defended small farmers facing the loss of their water resources due to expanded commercial development and worked alongside low income urban dwellers threatened by the rapid gentrification of their neighborhoods. In Honolulu, a university seminar on Green city planning evolved into a popular effort to map out a comprehensive Green vision for the entire state of Hawaii.³ In Wisconsin, Greens brought together people from across the state to defend the treaty rights of indigenous Chippewa fishing communities in the face of racist attacks and the incursions of transnational mining companies.⁴

Some of these stories were largely of local concern; others became national news. In a few cases, these efforts were stepping stones toward local electoral involvement. But perhaps most distinctively, they all embodied a political outlook shaped by Green values, and aimed at expressing a broader Green transformative vision. They were carried out largely by people who were determined to transcend the traditional divisions between environmental and social activism, between direct action and electoral politics, and between personal and social change. Where Greens did run for office, they had a track record of local involvement that greatly increased their profile and credibility among voters. Nonetheless, these pioneering local efforts are often overlooked in historical accounts of Green politics in the US.

Meanwhile, at the national level, a rather different dynamic was emerging among people who identified as Greens, one shaped by persistent ideological struggle, continual organizational restructuring in an attempt to accommodate emerging factions, and bitter contests to shape the future of Green politics in the United States. Greens at the national level were sharply divided over questions of deep ecology and social ecology, public expressions of spirituality, anti-capitalism vs. faith in small businesspeople, social movement vs. political party orientations, and endless internal debates over organizational procedures, decision making styles, membership rules and the allocation of scarce funds.

3 Ira Rohter, *A Green Hawaii: Sourcebook for Development Alternatives*, Honolulu: Na Kane O Ka Malo Press, 1992.

4 See Al Geddicks, *The New Resource Wars: Native and Environmental Struggles Against Multinational Corporations*, Boston: South End Press, 1993.

Ultimately, this protracted argument about what it meant to be “Green” came to dominate the attention of most active participants. Those with little taste for such debates drifted away, and what is now the larger of the two national Green organizations was founded in the 1990s to promote an entirely election-centered strategy (see below). Despite the aspirations of early state party organizers to recast the Greens as a “mainstream” political force, the US winner-take-all voting system relegated state and national Green parties with a narrowly electoral focus to the furthest margins of national politics. While the Ralph Nader presidential campaigns of 1996 and 2000 drew legions of enthusiastic new supporters to the Green party — and may have helped prevent US political discourse from drifting even further to the right — the Greens by then had largely shed their interest and ability to manifest significant social and political change at the local level.

What were the ideological currents that shaped these Green debates, and what is their legacy for Green politics in the US? The Greens initially attracted a diverse and colorful mix of progressive activists, cultural radicals, dedicated environmentalists, liberal “pragmatists,” spiritual and social ecofeminists, social anarchists, and independent Marxists. The conflicts among these various tendencies shaped organizational debates at the national level, and led to the entrenchment of increasingly inflexible ideological positions.

The original framing of the Greens’ Ten Key Values as a series of rather open-ended questions aimed for a broad appeal, but ultimately conveyed a relatively comfortable, managerial liberalism, with populist aspirations, but little grounding in ongoing social and political struggles.⁵ The goal was clearly to articulate a positive, ethical grounding for Green politics; however, the voice of the original Ten Key Values questions is distinctly personal rather than broadly political, and aims to avoid fundamental conflicts with elite social and cultural norms. It is the voice of those who would intervene, implicitly from on high, to design, shape and “operate” a new social order. The goal for many was to bring Green values into mainstream politics — whether by starting

⁵ The original Ten Key Values were Ecological Wisdom, Grassroots Democracy, Personal and Social Responsibility, Nonviolence, Decentralization, Community-based Economics, Postpatriarchal Values, Respect for Diversity, Global Responsibility and Future Focus. Each was accompanied by a set of 5-6 questions designed to promote discussion; several versions of these were published in pamphlet form by Green locals across the US. The original values and questions are reprinted in Greta Gaard, *Ecological Politics: Ecofeminism and the Greens*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998, pp. 276-279.

a Green party, or by influencing two the dominant parties. A large, but ultimately shrinking, minority viewed the Greens as the harbinger of a new ecologically-based social movement. One element that repeatedly saved the Greens in their early years was the openness of the Ten Key Values to ongoing discussion and continual reinterpretation at the local level.

During the evolution of the Committees of Correspondence as a national Green organization in the mid-1980s, the most vocal counterpoint to the emerging focus on electoralism was from bioregionalists, whose focus was on ecological living and culture rather than policy or activism, and displayed far less interest or faith than many Greens in the project of influencing mainstream US institutions.⁶ The first public discussion of Green politics in the US was at the North American Bioregional Congress, held in rural Missouri in 1984, and it largely reflected this particular outlook.

Another important influence, which became increasingly vocal as the new national Green organization began to take shape, came from the social ecologists. With Murray Bookchin's Institute for Social Ecology in Vermont as their intellectual home, social ecologists had their roots in antinuclear politics, urban alternatives, and a social anarchist political orientation. It was the social ecologists who insisted from the outset that a US Green party could not emerge from the top down, but had to evolve from active networks of autonomous Green locals.⁷ This strategy first took shape in New England, where the affinity group-based organizing model of the anti-nuclear power movement was still a fresh experience, and dozens of local groups soon came together to form the New England branch of the Committees of Correspondence.⁸ For

6 The bioregional outlook and its contribution to the development of Green politics in the US is described in Brian Tokar, *The Green Alternative: Creating an Ecological Future*, Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1992, pp. 27-32.

7 Charlene Spretnak, who was influential in organizing the first nation-wide meetings of Green political activists, suggests that nearly all of the participants in the founding meeting of the Committees of Correspondence in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1984 supported a grassroots focus, with only three participants from Washington, DC arguing for a more centralized organizational model. Remarks made at the "Green Parties in International Perspective" symposium, Washington DC, May 24, 2004.

8 Guy Chichester and Howie Hawkins, *Green Politics in New England? New England Committees of Correspondence, 1984*. The affinity group organizing model was introduced by Quaker-oriented activists in New England and was inspired in part by the anarchist grupos de afinidad of pre-Civil War Spain. Such ideas were first introduced to a US audience by Murray Bookchin in his 1968 pamphlet, "Listen, Marxist!", reprinted in his *Post-Scarcity Anarchism*, San

social ecologists, the focus on local organizing was not only a practical strategy, but a fundamental political principle and an explicit challenge to the entrenched power of the nation state. Social ecologists viewed the emerging Green local and regional networks as the core of a decentralist political strategy, and an incipient grassroots counterforce to oppressive political and economic institutions. Elements of this vision were shared by many Greens across the ideological spectrum; however the appeal of this position was often compromised by a widely perceived ideological rigidity on the part of many in the social ecology camp.

Some Greens viewed Barry Commoner's 1980 campaign for US President, under the banner of the Citizens Party, as the first incipient expression of a Green politics in the US. The first electoral campaign explicitly organized by Greens, however, was in New Haven, Connecticut, home to Yale University, where a group of independent Marxists had long sought to create an alliance of radical intellectuals and the city's impoverished majority. Under the Green banner, they elected a Green city councilor in 1985, fought entrenched real estate interests and sought public funding for efforts to Green their city.

More established progressive activists began to take interest in the Greens shortly after the demise of Jesse Jackson's 1988 bid for the Democratic presidential nomination. Jackson had raised expectations that his Rainbow Coalition would continue beyond the presidential campaign and realize its vision of a "rainbow" alliance across racial and ideological boundaries. When Jackson abandoned this project, casting his fortunes instead with the national leadership of the Democratic Party, many of his supporters looked to the Greens as the next manifestation of the Rainbow. Many left-leaning Greens, along with some centrist Greens, would later form a long-term alliance with the post-Rainbow Independent Progressive Politics Network (IPPN) and its 1992 presidential candidate (now Center for Constitutional Rights executive director) Ron Daniels. Meanwhile, an alliance of libertarian Marxists, spiritual leftists and social anarchists began articulating an explicitly radical Green vision in the San Francisco Bay Area during 1987 -'88, and social ecologists in New England

Francisco: Ramparts Press, 1971. For discussions of the affinity group organizing model in practice see Barbara Epstein, *Political Protest and Cultural Revolution: Nonviolent Direct Action in the 1970s and 1980s*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991, and Joel Kovel, *Against the State of Nuclear Terror*, Boston: South End Press, 1983, esp. pp. 168-189

founded the Left Green Network as an explicit challenge to the Greens' perceived drift toward conventional party politics. The Left Greens issued a detailed manifesto, expanding upon the 10 Key Values, with an explicit focus on social ecology, antiracism, direct action, and a post-capitalist cooperative economics.⁹

When the Greens held their first large gathering to discuss the emerging national Green program, in Eugene, Oregon in 1989, Left Green-sponsored forums attracted well over 100 delegates for provocative discussions of ideas and strategy that continued late into the night. Also in Eugene, Left Greens and the emerging Youth Greens crafted a proposal for a direct action to disrupt business on Wall Street the day after the much-hyped twentieth anniversary of Earth Day in April of 1990. The Earth Day Wall Street Action would unite grassroots Greens with environmental justice organizers, urban squatters, radical ecofeminists and many others, and communicate a strong message that corporate power, not merely individual consumption patterns, was at the core of the day's environmental threats. It was clearly the most successful public project of this broad alliance of Green radicals.¹⁰

At the 1990 national Green Gathering in Colorado, Left Greens tapped a deep reservoir of discontent with the aspiring mainstream Greens' efforts to water down the proposed Green program. While the Left Green presence at this gathering was limited by unusually high travel, lodging and registration costs, and many in attendance appeared more conservative, older and more affluent than in Eugene, proposals from the left proved far more popular than expected. The Green program that was provisionally approved at this gathering opposed the commodification of water and air, denounced racism and sexism, supported Native American sovereignty, and advocated a 75 percent reduction in the military budget as well as decentralized, democratic public control of health care, banking, insurance, energy and transportation. Despite efforts by more centrist Greens to cast these proposals as merely the product of a minority faction, each received the approval of three-quarters of the delegates in attendance in order to be included in the final program draft.¹¹

9 *Call to Form a Left Green Network*, Burlington, VT, 1988.

10 See Brian Tokar, *Earth for Sale: Reclaiming Ecology in the Age of Corporate Greenwash*, Boston: South End Press, 1997, pp. 15-16.

11 *The Greens/Green Party USA Program*, Kansas City, 1992. On the Estes Park, Colorado Green gathering, see Brian Tokar, "Into the Future with the Greens," *Z Magazine*, November 1990, pp. 61-66.

The Youth Greens emerged from the Greens' original campus-based Youth Caucus, but soon forged a unique left-libertarian organizational identity of their own. They added an explicit focus on anarchism and anti-capitalism to their statement of principles, held their own national conferences, and for several years published a theoretical journal, *Free Society*.¹² The merging of youthful rebellion and anti-capitalist politics that took shape in the Youth Greens in many ways prefigured the organizational style and outlook of the emerging antiglobalization movement that made world headlines a decade later with the mass direct action confronting the 1999 ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organization in Seattle. Along with a commitment to directly democratic organization and decision-making, they shared a strong cultural affinity with the "autonomist" youth movements that emerged in Europe during the 1980s.¹³

Meanwhile, those seeking to influence mainstream party politics as Greens were not at all satisfied with the left-leaning outcome of the 1989 and 1990 national gatherings, and they too set out to create their own structures and organizing vehicles. In 1989, they formed a Green Party Organizing Committee (GPOC), partly independent of the Green Committees of Correspondence. In 1991, they proposed a new structure for the Greens in which emerging state-level Green parties would have equal weight with Green locals in an essentially parallel organizational structure. This proposal was roundly rejected by delegates at the annual Green Gathering and Congress in Elkins, West Virginia that year.¹⁴ Instead of following the national gathering's mandate to reintegrate party-building efforts into the existing national Green structure, GPOC members held a series of invitation-only meetings to create a new organization, the Green Politics Network. This network in turn prepared the ground for a new Association of State Green Parties (ASGP), which would overtake the original national Green organization in size and visibility in the aftermath of Ralph Nader's 1996 presidential campaign. The ASGP approach eschewed any structural link between a Green political party and local, movement-oriented activists. In the words of John Rensenbrink,

12 *Youth Greens Political Principles*, July, 1990; also see Greta Gaard, *Ecological Politics*, *op. cit.*, pp. 117-129.

13 George Katsiaficas, *The Subversion of Politics: European Autonomous Social Movements and the Decolonization of Everyday Life*, Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1997.

14 Brian Tokar, "The Greens: To Party or Not?," *Z Magazine*, October 1991, pp. 42-46.

the leading spokesperson for the GPOC and the Green Politics Network, "a party must have scope to push for power, and the movement must be able to act freely as a moral guide for the party."¹⁵

Also in Elkins, social movement-oriented Greens took one last opportunity to steer the national Green infrastructure toward supporting broadly-focused, community-centered activism inspired by Green values. The Congress approved a national Green Action Plan, encompassing: a series of anti-nuclear actions the following spring; support for an inner city renewal campaign, dubbed Detroit Summer; and involvement in October 1992 actions initiated by First Nations activists throughout the hemisphere to protest the Quincentennial of Columbus' first landing in the Americas. The Greens as a national organization, however, were unable to support a sufficient infrastructure for a successful national action campaign. Although a comprehensive organizing guide was produced, a lack of follow-up and organizing assistance meant that only a handful of locals participated. The National Green Clearinghouse did actively raise funds to support Detroit Summer, which brought local youth to Detroit that summer (rather than Greens from across the country, as originally conceived) to participate in rebuilding inner city communities. Even this effort was roundly condemned by electorally-focused Greens as a misappropriation of national Green resources, despite their nominal agreement that the Greens should prioritize alliance-building with urban communities of color.

By 1992, the quest for Green Party ballot access at the local level had become the *de facto* national strategy of the Greens. While left-leaning Greens remained active at the local level in New York, St. Louis and a few other cities, the Left Green Network and Youth Greens soon drifted away from active involvement with the Greens and focused more specifically on their own theoretical discussions and publications. Spiritually-oriented Greens were also largely disillusioned with the increasing focus on electoral politics and many ceased their involvement with the Greens as well, though some continued their involvement in various Green-linked organizations. The main point of contact between left-leaning Greens and centrist Greens was through involvement in Ron Daniels' Independent Progressive Politics Network rather than the Greens' own national organization. With nearly all factions pursuing their

15 John Rensenbrink, "A Green Strategy for the '90s," *E: The Environmental Magazine*, September/October 1990, p. 55.

strategies through independent structures, the original national Green organization — renamed the Greens/Green Party USA in Elkins — was largely hollowed out, and found itself struggling for survival for the remainder of the 1990s and beyond.

Still, the Greens as an organization, movement, and a diverse alliance of local chapters and state Green parties, continued to attract idealistic people seeking an organizational home for their political involvement. By the late 1990s, Green work at the local level was largely overshadowed by the pursuit of permanent ballot access at the state level, and by Ralph Nader's 1996 and 2000 campaigns for president. Greens at all levels came to focus almost entirely on electoral work, and those who identified primarily with the movement-building vision of the Greens increasingly drifted away. Ralph Nader drew hundreds of enthusiastic people to participate in his presidential campaigns, but his promise to build the Green Party as a political force at the state and local levels went largely unrealized. Nader's own decision not to join or actively participate in any existing Green formation contributed to the US Greens' organizational weaknesses. By the summer of 2004, Greens of all political stripes were intensely divided over whether to support Nader's third run for president, or to support the "official" Green candidate, Texas lawyer and activist David Cobb, and encourage Greens in electoral "swing states" to vote for the Democratic candidate, John Kerry.¹⁶

With this twenty year history of idealism and dissention, what is the lasting legacy of the US Greens? From the beginning, the American Greens aspired to create a new way of doing politics in the US. Greens sought an explicit synthesis of social and ecological concerns, and focused on broad values and principles in an effort to challenge the hegemony of pragmatic issue-oriented activism. They helped bring an explicitly feminist outlook into the political sphere, as well as a heightened identification with international social movements, and offered an organizational setting where distinct ideological approaches to ecology (social ecology, deep ecology) and to feminism (cultural, spiritual, social and anarcho-feminism)¹⁷ could be played out in an engaged social and political setting where ideas truly mattered.

16 One widely distributed critique of the Greens' decision to run Cobb as its 2004 presidential candidate was offered by Jeffrey St. Clair in "Suicide Right on the Stage: The Demise of the Green Party," CounterPunch, July 2, 2004, at www.counterpunch.org.

17 Greta Gaard, *Ecological Politics*, pp. 140-176.

THE INTELLECTUAL INFLUENCES AND CONFLICTS IN THE US GREEN PARTY

BY LORNA SALZMAN

Since its inception, the US Green party has portrayed itself as a radically new political force which seeks to fundamentally alter the way that politics is practiced in America. The evidence, however, indicates a different history. It is a history that shows minimal divergence, in theory, analysis and philosophy, from the various movements that have arisen in the US since the mid-1960s.

The major defect of progressive movements in the US has been the lack of grounding in an ecological paradigm and sensibility. The US Green party, contrary to public belief and expectations, has relegated environmental concerns and activism to the back burner and, instead, has chosen to identify itself with more traditional sectarian leftist ideologies, broadly defined as racial and social justice.

As a corollary to this, the US Green party as an organization has refrained from addressing or confronting the numerous transnational treaties and institutions that affect the global environment. These include, but are not limited to: the Kyoto Treaty, the biodiversity and bio-safety protocols, NAFTA, the WTO, the World Bank and IMF, and the G-8 meetings. It has no lobbying or public education function with regard to any of these or, indeed, any of the pressing global environmental problems such as biodiversity, global warming, the destruction of ocean fisheries, and the privatization of natural resources such as fresh water.

The US Green party has so far failed to take on responsibility for leadership on any of these issues. Nor has it managed to gain widespread acceptance as an alternative to the two major parties. As a result the public perceives it simply as a thorn in the side of the Democratic party and little else. This stands in stark contrast to green parties elsewhere in the world, who speak and act regularly

and forcefully on important national and international issues and are looked to as defenders of the planet and its ecosystems.

While the party is officially only a few years old, its predecessor organizations date back to 1984. Since that time, the US Green party has been little more than a loose federation of independent autonomous state parties who come together every four years for the purpose of a national presidential campaign. In between, the Green party is largely absent from the public discourse on issues such as the environment and women's rights abroad, indeed, on nearly everything but the Iraq war. It seems incapable of developing the level of activism and leadership on specific issues which will attract new members and supporters, concentrating instead on professing its Ten Key Values and creating a general image as the "good guys" of American politics.

While the Green party contains many dedicated environmentalists, serious and far-reaching ecological discourse about the source of and solution to global ecological problems is almost entirely absent from the American intellectual community in general, as is the notion of an alternative ecological paradigm or model. Those within the Green party who do address these problems do so in a clear context of promoting socialism, thus allowing the public to associate the Green party with the far left.

That the American left addresses environmental issues for its own purposes—utilizing the usual anti-capitalist rhetoric—is generally not understood by the public at large. If such an approach were to be adopted by the Green party (as the left Greens intend), the Party would lose all hope of becoming a broad-based inclusive third party in American politics.

Earth Day 1970 was a pivotal event in the history of American environmentalism. It spurred millions of people to become informed, activated and committed to environmental action, and the result was a decade of important legislative, educational, institutional and administrative change and progress. Because of this massive public involvement, and the appearance of a broad environmental constituency that cut across class lines, important bodies of law were enacted with little dissent - including the country's most important federal laws regarding endangered species, clean air, clean water and occupational health and safety, which were signed into law by President Richard Nixon.

At the state and local level, environmental regulatory and management bodies were established to both enforce federal

law and oversee key environmental concerns, such as wildlife management. At the same time the number of national, regional and local citizens groups rapidly expanded. Arguably the most successful of these was the anti-nuclear power movement, a collection of individuals and state and regional groups opposing the construction of nuclear power plants. This immense federation of groups succeeded in preventing the licensing of nuclear power plants from 1978 onward, overcoming a corrupt regulatory process and the efforts of self-interested nuclear scientists. An important catalyst for the "No Nukes" community was the annual Critical Mass conference in Washington DC, organized by Public Citizen, one of Ralph Nader's organizations.

But with the onset of Reaganism the picture changed drastically. Ironically, it was the very success and appeal of the environmental movement that brought such change in the form of a deliberate backlash against environmentalism and attempts to discredit established environmental groups and issues. Governments, corporations, developers and private special interests were fully aware of the power of environmentalism, and were highly concerned about the potential threats it posed to deeply entrenched economic interests. Environmentalism implied not just further regulations, controls, and restrictions on traditional business practices, but, when taken to its logical conclusion, posed a direct challenge to the very lifeblood of the US economy: endless untrammelled economic growth fueled by mass consumption and unfettered production. In other words, even before it became associated with various socialist ideals, environmentalism already presented a direct challenge to the very fundamentals of capitalism.

Interestingly, many on the left shared similar suspicions of environmentalism, initially because they themselves were pro-growth, pro-technology, and pro-central planning in the mistaken belief that these were necessary for helping the poor and remedying economic injustice. As a result, mainstream environmentalism was the object of scathing attacks from the American left in the 1970s, and various leftists have continued to promote their race-and class-centered analyses to the present day. I have run across leftists and greens who unabashedly assert that environmental issues are relatively unimportant compared to those of social and economic justice, an attitude that reveals their ignorance of the common roots of these problems as well as of the fact that environmentalism subsumes all of their social justice concerns. Most recently, the left in the US and western

Europe has refused to address the atrocities committed by Islamic fundamentalists, in the mistaken belief that they constitute a bulwark against US imperialism.

In many ways, the socialist left and neoliberal capitalists are two sides of the same coin. Rather than deferring to nature or an ecological model, both favor centralized planning, subsidies and incentives to select industries, and low energy and goods prices. Capitalists are intent on keeping consumer goods, energy and food cheap so as to stimulate higher consumption and accelerate economic growth; socialists are intent on low prices as a way of closing the gap between rich and poor, not understanding that full-cost pricing would be the fastest way to undermine capitalism (and protect the environment).

While the various elements of the American left—the liberal and progressive media, leftist academics, labor unions, and the left liberals in the Democratic party—may have hated Reaganism, they paid scant attention after the early 1980s to the growing ecological crises. A look at alternative media, whether centrist, progressive or far left, showed then and still shows an abysmal indifference to the palpable problems and planetary crises that have the potential to cause the most massive economic and social cataclysms since World War II. A quarter of a century ago, the renowned ecologist Raymond Dasmann, wrote: “We are already fighting World War III and I am sorry to say we are winning. It is the war against the earth”. Neither the US Green Party nor the left greens have taken appropriate action to meet these crises. Ecology remains simply another item on the laundry list of traditional liberal and leftist concerns.

America's schools and universities have also played a role in relegating the environment to a second-tier issue. Mandatory courses in environmental studies, for example, are almost non-existent. The mass media, which carefully avoid any kind of bad news unless it involves child molestation or serial killings, is also part of the problem. But the reason why traditional liberals have failed to support the Green party's electoral politics has nothing to do with environment. Rather, it is their core belief, adapted from the leftist viewpoint, that mass social movements, such as those supporting abortion or women's rights or peace, not electoral politics, are what create change. This helps account for their complete disinterest in the Green party, in proportional representation or in a multiparty democracy, as well as explaining their attacks on Ralph Nader's independent presidential candidacy. This disinterest has morphed

into outright hostility at the temerity of Nader and the Green party in making intellectual and political space for themselves outside the traditional liberal political community—a space into which they have leaptfrogged over the “paleoliberals” who are content with traditional liberal incrementalism. In short, the Green party and Ralph Nader are saying the system is fundamentally flawed, if not rotten to the core, and needs a complete overhaul.

The greens' overall indifference to the global ecological crisis reveals a generic failure of ecological analysis and a flawed understanding of the state of democracy in the US. For left liberals, such as those represented by *The Nation* magazine, it is enough to give knee-jerk support to the Democratic party, the almost indistinguishable corporate clone of the Republican party, because they do not see political parties or electoral politics as contributing to social change. One reads, with growing depression and anger, the writings of purported liberals and progressives, and looks in vain for the word democracy. Or even if the word is used, it is applied narrowly and selectively, in contexts like the Patriot Act which are hard to ignore. The sad fact is that few of these progressives really understand the true meaning of democracy, and even less do they understand what it means with regard to electoral politics. This constitutes a failure of both principle and imagination.

So what has the social movement analysis meant to the Green party in particular, and to electoral politics in general? For starters, it has encouraged that divisiveness called “identity politics,” where citizens are divided and subdivided from each other by gender, sexual identity, race, age and other trivial genotypic characteristics. They are no longer equal citizens; rather, they are members of a group that preaches group rights instead of individual rights. One could hardly find anything more divisive or open to exploitation by the enemies of progressives and the left, yet minorities and the left have embraced this devil's bargain. The US Green party is also guilty of placing too much faith in identity politics, allowing the establishment, for example, of identity caucuses while shunning the establishment of issue caucuses such as ecology.

Single-issue or pressure group politics, where special interests with their own agenda compete with one another for seats at the big table, are further examples of our democracy's ecological blindspot. Lacking a coherent social and political analysis, such groups merely seek privileges within the existing system through

incremental reforms such as minimum wages, women's rights, and desegregation. To a certain extent, the system is able to accommodate such reforms without significantly jeopardizing the interests of elites. In contrast, ecologically oriented groups and movements, whose interests and objectives are clearly and fundamentally incompatible with the existing economic system of corporate globalization and growth, are vilified and marginalized.

While the Green party cannot be accused of practicing single issue politics, its focus on the issues of the day as defined by the media, such as the war in Iraq, distracts people from focusing on ecological issues, particularly global warming and climate change. The Green party's inability or outright refusal to become the leading political voice of ecological sanity—to put itself forward in the public arena as the bulwark against media and corporate propaganda—is puzzling and vexing. If the Green party does not make ecological issues the centerpiece of its philosophy and program, no one will. Why it resists a central ecological message is inexplicable but, again, suggests that the agenda and objectives of the US Green party are little different from the traditional liberal-centrist movements in this country, which may oppose NAFTA and the WTO, but have yet to question the neoliberal globalization model that rules the economy of just about every nation in the world.

Another intellectual influence on the Green party has been the New Age movement, which is loosely comprised of counterculture activists, animal rights groups, and those who believe that only individual moral and spiritual transformation, as opposed to institutional change, can revolutionize the current system. Their influence can be perceived in the green's obsession with molding or reforming human behavior and relationships, guided by a rigid political correctness that borders dangerously on a green form of authoritarianism.

Thus, those who transgress the arbitrary boundaries regarding freedom of speech must be reprimanded, punished and even expelled. My own defense of freedom of speech in the Green party's aspiring women's caucus, my criticism of a black former congresswoman, and most recently the objection to my use of the word "oriental," which some greens view as racist, are only the tip of the PC iceberg which, if left unchecked, will encourage uniformity and ultimately an insistence on obedience, a trend that has already reared its ugly head in the women's caucus.

The tension between those who see the party as a movement or a "movement-party", promoting issues of social change through traditional pressure group and direct action politics, with electoral politics as a by-product rather than an end in itself, and those who see an electoral party independent of outside organizations and special interests, even when these are progressive and hold similar values and objectives to those of the Green party, remains unresolved. A more appropriate model for the Green party might be one in which electoral politics is shaped and beholden to the enrolled party members and to existing election law; one in which the Party articulates policies that demonstrate its commitment to green principles and programs. In this way, it would operate in much the same way as European green parties do in vying for public support. If this happens, it goes without saying that the US Green party must place the survival of the planet and its ecosystems at the center of their philosophy and programs. Anything less would simply mean treading water as the ocean level rises and risks betraying the broad pro-environmental constituency that the Green party has yet to seriously address.

Finally, the 2004 election, in which Ralph Nader for the third time played a key role in national political alignments, has revealed an incipient divide within the Party: between those who profess and promote green principles but only up to the point where green politics actually threatens the strength and position of the Democratic party; and those who see such appeasement as the beginning of an irreversible slide into oblivion for the Green party and the prospect of a multiparty system. This divide, between the "right wing" and "left wing" of the party, and how it plays out over the coming years may well determine if the Green party can survive, let alone thrive in the oppressive duopoly system so assiduously supported by the "paleoliberals."

My criticisms of the Green party are not meant to disparage the hard work and diligence of those who share a commitment to green values. Rather, they are offered as a critique of the tendencies and factions within the Party, which, if not checked, could well turn it into a green Moral Majority, a self-righteous cult bordering on the religious, in which the Ten Key Values evolve into Ten Key Commandments. Of one thing I am certain: a values-based movement is unlikely to be inclusive, diverse or tolerant. Fundamentalist Islam has made this clear. The Ten Key Values, or any Green doctrine, are not scripture or revelation; nor are dissent and criticism heretical.

I have not addressed the historical American political structure that has squeezed the US Green party into a narrow track and killed off the possibility of alternative political views or organizations and structures. In earlier times there were multiple parties in the US. Although a few small parties continue to challenge the Democrats and Republicans, their potential constituencies are limited in number and their electoral participation tends to be limited to a small number of states. They do not, therefore, provoke the wrath of the major parties, and particularly of the Democrats, to the same extent as the Green party. This leads me to the conclusion that the Green party is indeed offering a genuinely different choice and that it may well represent the last best hope of restoring the democracy that America's founders intended. That it contains the seeds of a revolution towards democracy and ecology is evidenced by the outrage it continues to provoke in the Democratic party. By this measure, at least, the Green party must be doing something right.

But—and it is a big but—the Green party faces several internal challenges, the first of which is intellectual discourse itself. No amount of committed on-the-street activism can substitute for a core philosophy that itself takes its meaning from nature, the planet and its ecosystems. A movement that bases itself on arbitrary, even if admirable, a priori political or sectarian ideologies is simply saying: "put Us in charge instead of Them. Our ideas are superior and based on ultimate Truth." This is moralism writ large. It advances no cause beyond that of the narrow in-group, and has no place in the public space we call electoral politics any more than organized traditional religion does.

Most importantly, the Green party does not understand that environmentalism is a social justice movement, one that is arguably an order of magnitude more powerful in its long-term social implications than any other movement today. Nor do greens understand the indissoluble bond between ecology and social justice, a bond that says: those things that threaten our freedom also threaten our survival. Indeed, properly defined, ecology is the only extant philosophy of survival.

By broadening its core philosophy and objectives, the Green party will necessarily begin appealing to new and broader constituencies. Most of us favor this but not all. There are still those who regard the Green party as being the representative of only minorities, the poor, the oppressed and the powerless. Anyone who does not fit into one of those categories is therefore not worthy

of attention. The fact that tens of millions of “politically incorrect” Americans—small business owners and entrepreneurs, farmers, ranchers, artists, hunters and fishermen, meat eaters, white ethnic urban communities—are themselves as victimized by our system as blacks, women and gays apparently counts for little in the mentality of some greens, especially those on the sectarian left. Nothing will spell defeat for the Green party faster than a conscious decision to ignore these other sectors of society.

If the Green party is to become the Second party in the US, it must go beyond those it deems its “natural allies”, to these other constituencies, using a far broader critique than that purveyed by the traditional left and liberals. Such a critique would stress the traditional concerns of all Americans - concerns and issues that have been co-opted by the right and the neo-conservatives: home rule, family, community, self-sufficiency, personal liberty, basic freedoms, conservative but socially just economic principles, and all those things which were once considered universal in our society until neo-liberal greed and identity politics pre-empted them. If the US Green party takes back these principles, and encases them in an ecological vision and model, it may indeed have a bright green future.

FROM A NEST OF RIVALS TO GERMANY'S AGENTS OF CHANGE: REMARKS ON 'VALUES AND CONFLICTS' WITH REGARD TO THE GERMAN GREENS IN THE 1980S AND 1990S¹

BY HELMUT WIESENTHAL

Among the most conspicuous characteristics of the German Greens is not only their record of electoral success but also a history of internal division and fierce conflict. It was not until 1998 that conflict ceased to be endemic in the party. The German Greens were founded in 1979 by a rainbow coalition composed of people with considerably different values, world views and long-term goals. There was little common understanding beside the aim of forming a party distinct from all existing parties and promoting a number of hitherto neglected causes.

"GERMAN EXCEPTIONALISM" AND THE RISE OF THE GREENS

Assessing the factors that allowed for the significant and rather unparalleled success of the German Greens demands a brief examination of the historical context in which they occurred. The German Greens appear to be exceptional not only because their career as a political party began relatively early in comparison with Green Parties elsewhere. They are also exceptional in the sense that they filled a structural gap in Germany's political system and culture. In order to understand the political culture from which the German Greens emerged—and in opposition to which they would

¹ Several sections of these remarks draw on 'The German Greens: Preparing for another new beginning?' (Wiesenthal 1993, ch. 9).

successfully portray themselves—one has to recall the peculiar features of German post-war history.

West Germany after the downfall of the Hitler regime had to invent a new politico-cultural identity. Given the truly disastrous experiences between imperial Germany and the Third Reich, the new identity, not surprisingly, avoided explicitly political rhetoric and instead centered on pride in the German “economic miracle” of the 1950s, the so-called *Wirtschaftswunder*. This was accompanied by rejecting communism and socialism while simultaneously downplaying, if not outright ignoring, Germany's recent history. Thus post-war Germany was characterized not so much by social or class divisions as by a political cleavage. In comparison with the majority—probably 90 per cent—of consumer-minded, security-oriented, and politically abstinent citizens, there was only a small minority of left-wing, left-liberal souls who wished to focus on the past and who had a critical attitude to the self-satisfied society of the Federal Republic. The liberal, pluralist society of the Federal Republic, with its capacity for self-critical analysis, emerged only in the late 1960s. And it was not until the 1970s and 1980s that Germans began to seriously come to terms with their National Socialist past, a process known in Germany as *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*.

Another important backdrop to the founding of the Green party were the explosive events of 1977, when a wave of left-wing terrorist actions coincided with the last surge of the mass movement against the construction of nuclear power stations. If 1968 had been the symbol of a period of liberalization overlaid with utopian revolutionary ideas, the so-called “German autumn” of 1977 symbolized the concerns that a pluralist-liberal democracy, in response to a perceived political “crisis,” could give way to a more authoritarian model of state rule. For many on the German left, the lesson of 1977 was that violent revolution was counter-productive and was only likely to lead to a repressive government with broad popular support. Revolution, if it were to occur at all, would have to be carried out by peaceful means.

Among those engaged in the organizing activities were representatives of the local ‘alternative’ and ‘colored’ (*bunte*) initiatives which had been created to facilitate participation in municipal elections. Other participants included pioneers of ecological thought and critics of industrial civilization, disillusioned social democrats, and, last but not least, the remains of the small-scale parties left over from the student movement, including

"non-dogmatic" socialists and Marxist-Leninists. These groups had in common a critique of modern society, viewing it as a logical consequence of capitalism, the dead end of industrialization, or the vicious cycle of party politics. Whereas all groups in the founding assembly were eager to promote the arrival of something "new" and distance themselves from social democracy and communism, there was only a loose agreement over an anti-institutional understanding of politics and democracy as well as a quest for thorough institutional reforms. Everything else regarding the party's profile and platforms was intensely disputed.

Leaving aside the early frustration felt by prominent representatives of the civilization critique (such as Herbert Gruhl and Baldur Springmann) who left the party soon after its founding, the period from 1980 until 1987 was marked by the dominance of the more radical segments over the moderates and so-called realists. The enduring conflict saw two groups on either side: the "Fundis" presented themselves as an alliance of radical ecologists and eco-socialists, while the "Realos" most often enjoyed the collaboration of the eco-libertarians. Later on, a considerable share of the moderate and mostly undecided majority found themselves on the benches of the group called "New Beginning" (Aufbruch).

There were three issues in particular that gave rise to much conflict during these years: the Greens' collective identity, the party's role in politics, and, last but not least, its organizational form. They will be dealt with in this order.

THE CONFLICT OVER COLLECTIVE IDENTITY

A major theme of conflict was the degree to which the Greens should base their collective identity on a radical critique of the status quo. The more radical elements insisted on a harsh critique of the capitalist market economy, its legal framework and the existing measures of social security. The minority of moderate members, on the other hand, fought for a more precise and careful diagnoses of reality, though their efforts were often futile. This conflict intensified during the second half of the 1980s when the radical wing retained its critique of the entire "system," while the realists argued in favor of policy priorities that would fit into coalition agreements.

The realists' position implied that there were some features of society, such as civil and political liberties, that deserve to be maintained and even extended instead of being viewed merely

as symbols. Those who were more radically inclined gravitated toward conspiracy theories (e.g. of a symbiosis of financial capital, the US government and NATO) or the idea of returning to simple rural life. For the fundamentalists, this kind of radicalism served as proof of one's proper "Green" identity.

In contrast to what early admirers of the Greens (e.g. Fritjof Capra and Charlene Spretnak, 1984) suggested, the first decade offers no proof of the hypothesis that a common basic stance or central idea developed among the German Greens. Instead, from the beginning, there existed considerable differences—and indeed rivalry—between competing models of identity including some brands of anarchism, deep ecology, philosophical reasoning, Marxism and liberalism. However, because none of these belief patterns succeeded in forming a well-organized group, let alone a caucus, the plethora of minor identities added further confusion to the overriding conflict over the options of radical opposition or participation in government. It was almost a decade before the Party abandoned its radical revolutionary attitudes and began working for more piecemeal social and political changes.

There is also a structural explanation for the Greens' susceptibility to radical thinking and ideological conflict. Because green politics is occupied with an array of conflicting issues touching on almost all social spheres—from production, through upbringing and education, state and law, science and technology, to patterns of consumption and individual life-styles—there is no single concise "key issue" and no permanent "primary enemy." As far as the choice of political ends and means was concerned, simple dichotomies such as the historical cleavage between labor and capital or the distinction between "true and false," "good and evil," and "us and them" proved insufficient. The diffuse and often fluctuating structure of conflicts would inevitably manifest itself in problems of orientation.

Radicalization of thought and desire are one way of constructing group identity and stabilizing involvement. Obviously, this is a structural feature—and probably the main reason why catastrophic scenarios, apocalyptic forecasts, and an impassioned critique of civilization and capitalism proved so significant during the Greens' first decade of existence. Radical social diagnoses and therapies appeared to offset the lack of a fully-developed theory after the crisis of Marxism and, at the same time, helped to cope with the centrifugal tendencies inherent in postmodern "new" social movements: i.e. their extremely subjective and particularistic

incentive pattern combined with a strong preference for autonomy that runs counter to nearly all the requirements of formal organization.

From the beginning, the fundamentalists' inability to tolerate ambiguities that were real and rooted in the operational context hindered the Greens from developing their potential for influencing society. This was most clearly demonstrated in their radical posturing on peace policy (e.g. "Out of NATO!"), on women's policy (which was always modeled on the life-style of the most radical feminists of the day), on German unity (which was declared to be the resurrection of the German Reich), or on the first Gulf War (seen as an example of US imperialism).

THE CONFLICT OVER THE PARTY'S ROLE IN POLITICS

The strategic alternatives of either participating in coalition governments or relying on the "power" of social movements meant that the early Green Party was split into two opposing worldviews and political value systems. On the surface, the rejection of participation in government was rooted in the fear of compromising central features of the party's identity. However, it became clear in the mid-1980s that the radicals' plan was to wait for, and if possible contribute to, a situation of revolutionary turmoil that would abolish capitalist relations of production and introduce some variant of socialism, together with institutions of self-governance and direct democracy. From this perspective, violent illegal action, such as the destruction of high-voltage cables during anti-nuclear campaigns, appeared to be an appropriate tactic. In the absence of a revolutionary situation, political practice was seen to consist primarily in the manifestation of identities and intentions. Parliament was to be used only as a "stage" rather than as a means of participating in the elaboration of policy decisions, let alone the formation of governmental coalitions.

This position, however, suffered from declining support among the membership because, following the party's success in local and state elections, an increasing number of people enjoyed the opportunity of participating in policy-making. Thus, the radical wing lost their hold on the majority of delegates in party conventions with increasing frequency. At the same time, the option of Red-Green coalitions began to appear a viable one

in more and more states, though this had more to do with the growing dissatisfaction among voters with conservative–liberal coalitions than with the proposals of reform put forward by the SPD and Greens. Furthermore, many grew increasingly weary of the fundamentalist plea for a critical attitude to the system and for abstinence from politics. This led to a decline in the number of votes won in the fundamentalist strongholds as more Greens were attracted to the opportunities offered by participating in government. Thus, even in radical regional party organs, the option of political co-operation began to attract a majority of members.

In 1989, Greens finally managed to break out of the prison of radicalism. On the one hand, the decline and final collapse of state socialism in the USSR, Poland, Hungary and the German Democratic Republic eradicated any remnant sympathy for their discredited Marxist ideologies. On the other hand, the decision of the West Berlin Greens, a party organization with an indisputably leftist tradition, to form a municipal government with the SPD constituted a genuine breakthrough, leading the Berlin Greens down the more pragmatic and productive road that had been taken by Realo-led Greens in Hessen in 1985 (see Hubert Kleinert's article in this volume). This pattern was followed shortly afterwards by the Greens in Lower Saxony.

Now, the traditional alliance between fundamentalists and 'left-wingers' in the regional executive committees of North Rhine-Westphalia, Schleswig-Holstein, and Hamburg began to collapse. In 1990, the leading 'eco-socialists' Rainer Trampert and Thomas Ebermann split from the party. Similarly, in the spring of 1991, the radical ecologists around Jutta Ditfurth also announced their departure. Now even moderate "left-wingers" joined in the critique of fundamentalism. Their willingness to team up with the pragmatic Realos, their erstwhile enemies, helped to strengthen the party's capacity for integration and political action at the state and federal levels.

THE CONFLICT OVER THE PARTY'S ORGANIZATIONAL FORM

Radicals and realists fought for different models of organizational structure and development, the former seeking the realization of utopian ideals, the latter striving for decision-making efficiency and effectiveness as a political actor in society. As is well known, the Greens' approach to politics has a formal as well as a material (or policy-oriented) side. There has been an attempt, through the

choice of organizational structures and procedural rules, to take account of the fact that attitudes and preferences do not simply flow into the party from outside but are also shaped by the party itself, indeed are in some cases self-generated. What the party wants and how it acts is dependent to an important degree on how it is organized. In order to guarantee that members' interests would always be represented, something that is difficult to achieve within the confines of bureaucratic organizations and hierarchical decision-making structures, the Greens expressly pledged themselves to the principles of "grass-roots democracy."

These principles are familiar from the anarchist traditions of the labor movement. The Greens established the principle of the rotation of official posts, which allowed for short periods of office (from one to two years) and prevented the re-election of office-holders. They prohibited the simultaneous holding of a number of offices, particularly the combination of a party office and a parliamentary mandate (the so-called "incompatibility rule"). They experimented with the "imperative mandate," which binds delegates to the resolutions of the body that has delegated them. And they tried, prompted in part by a lack of funds, to fulfill most organizational tasks using voluntary, honorary, and unpaid workers rather than a paid staff.

The effect of establishing grass-roots democracy within the early Greens was highly ambiguous. Above all, one has to distinguish between the effect which it had outside the Greens and that which it had on the Greens themselves. The "external" effects of the Green experiment in democracy can be adjudged to have been unreservedly positive, and continue to be felt to this day. The fact that organizations could not only function, but also be politically effective without permanent functionaries ensured a high degree of empowerment for the rank and file. Furthermore, a high level of transparency in all formal procedures proved a surprising success. These aspects of the Green Party were widely admired and affected many other organizations, prompting them to develop more democratic structures and transparent decision making processes.

Of course, the internal effects were somewhat less positive. The formal application of the principle of rotation, of the incompatibility rule, and of various other forms of "grass-roots monitoring" of elected party representatives produced the same sort of tendencies toward alienation and detachment as would a rigid ruling hierarchy. Instead of a lively organizational democracy, what frequently developed,

as the sociologist, Herbert Kitschelt, has noted, was a “culture of distrust” (1989a, p. 72).

Because the fundamentalists were the ones who continually devoted themselves to the development of the organization and, until very recently, held the majority in party congresses, they had a monopoly on the intellectual interpretation of the party's image. The impassioned defense of grass-roots principles and any issues concerning the organizational form of politics were declared to be key political issues. In particular, younger fundamentalists regarded the formal principles of grass-roots democracy as having great value in themselves. This inclination impacted heavily on what in 1990 became the major problem of the Greens' internal process; their inability, as Joachim Raschke noted (1991, p. 10), to combine legitimacy and efficiency. What they regarded as legitimate—laxer rules of membership and a high degree of fluctuation, institutionalized distrust and intense self-reflection—proved inefficient when it came to the reality of everyday politics. However, the things that would have improved efficiency—the fostering of creativity, the ability to communicate and co-operate, the delegation of responsibility for a fixed term, the acknowledgement and corroboration of successful work—were considered illegitimate.

When the Greens failed to secure entry into the first all-German parliament in December 1990, they were not just paying the penalty for having shown themselves to be indecisive and petty-minded vis-à-vis the historic opportunity offered by unification; their predicament was also a consequence of their confusing “performance,” a result of the distrust fomented by Greens against other Greens.

Did all these harmful features vanish once the Greens began participating in the federal government? The answer, clearly, is no. Although the party undertook a thorough organizational reform in the mid-1990s, in the course of which most rigidities of grass-roots democracy were abolished, collective decision-making procedures still appear to be aggravated by the needs of addressing constituencies with diverging values. Because of frequent compromising between the divergent demands and expectations of the rank-and-file, the time horizon of strategic planning remains rather limited (Raschke, 2001). However, this is not to deny that great improvements, in terms of political rationality, did eventually occur.

EXACTLY HOW WAS FUNDAMENTALISM OVERCOME?

The end of fundamentalism could well be described as a process of political learning undertaken by the entire party. This, however, is only part of the explanation. In fact, one has to acknowledge a twofold process. On the one hand, fundamentalism suffered from its inherent inconsistencies and a certain lack of clarity. This was demonstrated by the willingness and enthusiasm of its most prominent proponents to work for favorable election results. Even if the new members of parliament felt a degree of affiliation with the radicals, they soon felt dissatisfied with the relative powerlessness of the parliamentary opposition and began to see partnership in government as a valid alternative. This only increased as the stronger Green representatives felt driven to enact certain policies which they had promoted during their election campaigns.

Until the mid-1980s the fundamentalists were the ones who continually devoted themselves to the development of both the party platform and the party's organization. Because they held the majority in party congresses, they also had a monopoly on the intellectual interpretation of the party's image. It was thanks to this monopoly that a rather strange looking reversion to the traditions of the early workers' movement took place in the early 1980s. In their rhetoric and schemes for institutional reform, their goals of socializing the means of production, and their efforts to establish a system of councils that would run parallel to, or in place of parliament, the Greens of the 1980s were like throwbacks to the 19th century labor movement.

At this time, there was a gulf between the self-constructed identity of the Greens, on the one side, and their public perception as a fresh and innovative political actor, on the other. The Greens achieved significant gains in state and federal elections despite their radical and neo-socialist orientation. At the same time, the general public and the mass media continued to picture the Greens as an environmental party with an interest in the rights of minorities and women. Although the conflict between the radical and the realist wing found broad coverage in the media, the realists proved superior in forming the Greens' public image.

While electoral success led to the broadening of the Green constituency beyond the narrow strata of well-informed or devoted voters, participating in parliament gave rise to the development of an additional factor undermining fundamentalism: Green political lobbying. Newly formed lobby groups within the party contributed

greatly to the change in the party's image as well as the processes whereby its objectives were formulated. Green lobbyists came in two versions. The first were those who represented more or less legitimate individual interests, namely those involved in self-managed businesses or projects (e.g. production companies, bookshops, alternative newspapers, cultural centers, music and theater groups). The second group advocated the kinds of collective interests that feature prominently in the catalogue of post-materialist politics. These include citizens' initiatives, environmental or conservation groups, women's groups, and immigrants and foreign workers. Both lobbies succeeded in persuading the fundamentalists to support their particular, more realistic and more short-term political objectives. In return, they gave their backing to the fundamentalists when it was a question of occupying positions of influence or of defending "radical" formulas of identity against the pragmatists' practical view of politics.

However, because the "lobbyists" had no scruples about allying themselves with the "pragmatists"—especially in the lead-up to important elections—they more frequently held fundamentalism in check and, in fact, encouraged the pragmatists to stick with the Greens. Although the "lobbyists" were initially scarcely less radical than the fundamentalists, the experience of parliamentary participation led them to adopt a view of politics that was closer to that of the pragmatists. As policy experts they enjoyed a certain amount of attention in the media and were respected even by officials of other parties—a fact which increasingly had a beneficial effect on both their worldview and the interests which they represented. As a consequence of the Green lobbyists joining forces with the moderates and the pragmatists, the radicalism of the Fundis ceased to be the central feature of the party's collective identity. Hesitancy, indecision and endless debates over points of protocol and political correctness all began to wane.

Strictly speaking, the ideological dominance of fundamentalism was broken not so much by the intrinsically superior arguments of the pragmatists, but rather, as a consequence of the party's changing profile in the wake of favorable election results, which themselves were the result of co-operation between pragmatists and lobbyists. This continuous change of profile and self-image resulted in many fundamentalists leaving the party, thus increasing the share of moderate and pragmatic members. However, according to what Kitschelt refers to as the "law of curvilinear disparity" (1989b), party functionaries, with their more radical

aspirations, frequently maintained their dominance over the assembly of delegates. This, paradoxically, gave rise to the recent conflict over the right of the rank and file to decide over the reform of grass-roots democracy mentioned above. The poll was held against the will of the erstwhile advocates of grass-roots' power.

FAVORABLE CIRCUMSTANCES FURTHERED THE EMERGENCE OF THE GREENS

The German Greens benefited from an institutional setting that provided strong incentives for overcoming their self-destructive tendencies. The joint political project that the Green Party effectively constituted filled a gap of a kind that was unknown in the political systems of other Western European countries; namely, the lack of a genuine socialist opposition. The division of Germany into the Federal and Democratic Republics, the exigencies of the Cold War, and the semi-official anti-communism of the Federal Republic all conspired to insure that West Germany, unlike Italy and France, had no genuinely radical political parties of any significance. The Greens, therefore, found themselves pushed into this role, becoming the de facto representatives of social minorities, the systematic advocates of the effective enforcement of equal rights for women, and the champions of egalitarian principles and morally sound decisions.

The fact that the Greens did not collapse under this strain but instead managed to establish themselves within the network of political actors in the Federal Republic can be credited to the effect of various institutional "pull-factors" which provided the Greens with a favorable opportunity structure. Briefly, these factors include:

1. German electoral law, under which all parties at the various levels of representation obtain parliamentary seats in proportion to the votes cast.
2. The "five-per-cent-clause", which performs the function of preventing a fragmentation of the party-system. As far as the creation of the Greens was concerned, this rule was a strong incentive—perhaps the decisive incentive—to construct the party as an alliance of differently oriented forces. Had it not been for the institutional pressure to put aside the many differences that existed, it is doubtful that the Greens would have formed a viable political party in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

3. The party system in the Federal Republic owes its stability not only to what Jürgen Habermas referred to as the post-war “constitutional patriotism” of its citizens, but also to certain institutional precautions against the populist temptations eventually experienced by the political parties. Probably the stoutest pillar among these measures is the public financial support granted to the parties—the so-called *Wahlkampfkostenerstattung*—which constitutes a legally based system of party finance. It provides parties that win at least 0.5 per cent of the vote with a generous refund of their electoral campaign costs according to their record in state and national elections.
4. The fact that the federal structure of the German political system provides comparatively favorable opportunities for new parties to develop. It is relatively easy to acquire the initial experience and a public profile through participation in local elections (for seats in the city council) or in elections for the state parliament. The state parliaments as well as local governments offer many opportunities for new political groups to make their mark.
5. The fact that there is positive feedback as a result of the close links between the parliamentarian and the corporatist forms of interest representation. Due to the corporatist nature of Germany’s political system, parliamentary representatives enjoy ample opportunities to take part in consultative and supervisory organs of various kinds. Thanks to these opportunities, even small parties benefit from the multiplier effect of media coverage.

In sum, the combined effect of these five elements of relative openness in the political system meant that the Green Party emerged as the result of a favorable political opportunity structure. Within this structure, new political actors receive plenty of incentives to view their success as an endorsement of their political program and of their peculiar interpretation of reality, regardless of its inherent strengths and weaknesses.

THE GREENS’ IMPACT ON SOCIETY

With the rise of the Green Party the entire party system, as well as Germany’s political culture, underwent considerable change. The Greens not only functioned as vehicles for environmental interests and the concerns of disadvantaged groups, but also as monitors of the conduct of governments, mayors, and administrations. With great persistence they set about uncovering corruption,

facit partnerships between politicians and business, and instances where authorities had exceeded their legal power. The influence of the Greens is thus scarcely measurable in terms of mere votes. Their very presence, their politics, and even their internal disputes have left unmistakable marks. This is illustrated by the following points:

1. The general acceptance and "normalization" of environmental issues, is not, of course, due solely to the Greens. But they have clearly had an enormous impact in promoting and reinforcing such issues. By transporting the doubts, critical viewpoints, and anxieties of the social movements into the political system and securing a hearing for "counter-experts," they helped expand the sphere of political debate.
2. Somewhat less striking but no less important is the political change of style fostered by the Greens. Whether because of the dialectic of communicative understanding or because of the career opportunities which up-and-coming non-green politicians saw in a "serious" approach to environmental issues, the style and themes of green politics—and indeed something of the radical impetus of the early Greens—became part of West German political culture. A positive view of pluralism established itself, in which even the representatives of the 'fundamentalist' position enjoyed respect and achieved a certain prominence in the media. Mention should also be made of the successes brought about by the Green-inspired "feminization" of politics, initially confined to the symbolic realm but now a yardstick for women's demands and women's presence in all political bodies.
3. One of the surprising, and perhaps paradoxical, effects of the Greens in the 1980s was the reinforcement of left-right polarization in inter-party rivalry. This has several causes. One is related to the "political ecology" developed by the Greens. Given that many environmental interventions are restrictive in character, it was calculated that there would have to be trade-offs in terms of income and employment. Unjust accusation that they were hostile toward the working class greatly affected the Greens, who saw themselves as both critical of capitalism and concerned about the social welfare of workers. They responded with even more voluminous programs of state expenditure, which, like those of the Social Democrats, adhered to Keynesian logic. But because both business and a majority of the electorate opposed higher taxes and higher public

borrowing, the Greens suffered similar credibility problems as the SPD, particularly when it came to managing the economy.

4. The most significant success produced by this competition between Greens and Social Democrats is undoubtedly the transformation of both the political style and program of the SPD. The Greens provided the Social Democrats with a strong incentive to strengthen their ecological credentials, which subsequently improved the party's prospects with younger voters. One problematic consequence, however, was that the SPD transformed itself rather too quickly into a "post-modern" party, leaving behind older and more traditionally oriented voters. The same thing occurred when the Red-Green government decided to embark upon a program of economic liberalization, budget cuts and reduction in welfare spending. Such policies alienated core elements of the SPD's traditional constituency and caused a considerable number of its supporters to transfer their support to the conservatives or various populists. Thus, the Greens contributed in significant ways to the electoral decline of Social Democracy in Germany. This fact was illustrated by the formation of a new united leftwing party, the *Linkspartei*, which attracted the vote of many traditional SPD voters, thereby contributing to the downfall of the SPD/Green coalition in the 2005 election.

A FINAL REMARK ON THE GERMAN GREENS AS AN OBJECT OF MYTH

More than any other green party, the history of the German Greens has come to be associated with a number of myths, all of which obscure our understanding of the party's origins. Firstly, there is the myth that the founding and early electoral successes of the German Greens were due to a particularly strong ecological and pacifist mood in West German society. However, unconditional pacifism and the ecological critique of civilization that was advanced by the radical ecologists were present in only a tiny proportion of the population and only among a minority of Green Party members.

Secondly, the belief that the German Greens were created by charismatic personalities such as Petra Kelly, Rudi Dutschke and Rudolf Bahro continues to have currency in both mainstream society and among many Greens. Although these personalities made extremely valuable contributions to the development of Green ideology and political culture, their influence on the overall

evolution of the party was minimal in comparison with the broad structural factors outlined above.

Finally, there is the myth that the Greens began as a single-issue party dominated by environmental concerns, before embracing a broader set of political goals and thereby attracting a wider constituency. On the contrary, history reveals that, from the very beginning, the German Greens concerned themselves with the full range of ecological, economic, and social justice issues that formed their ambitious program of societal renewal.

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