May Day in LA: Greens and Immigrants Stand Up: Suffer at the Hands of LAPD Goon Squad

By Christine Pinto and Linda Piera-Avila

Los Angeles - May 1, 2007—It was a beautiful day! The sun shone brightly in Los Angeles, which I guess is no surprise, but today especially it seemed to shine down upon the city and bless us with its warmth. Today was May 1st, International Labor Day, and while every other day of the year people labor to make ends meet, today's toil was a labor of love for those who gathered on the steps of City Hall. My heart was filled with optimism and goodwill for the rally to come. I started the journey riding the bus with a fellow Green down to where the rally was gathering. It was my first time riding the bus and I was heartened to meet several smiling faces all going to be a part of the day’s march: some of them going to support those who needed it, some like me, going to march for my own family who needs it.

There was little question as to where we were supposed to go next -- we simply followed the flag waving patriots to our destination. When we arrived, I must admit that it was a little disappointing.

The sea that I was hoping for was more of a trickle of people; but some was better than none, so my comrade and I unfurled our Green Party banner and added our two drops to the flow of those who were marching. As we walked, it became crystal clear to me how very important this rally was to everyone there. People of all races, ages, sizes, it didn't matter who they were or how they differed in other ways, in this march all were united.

It was a dramatic end to a day well spent. As my Green compadre and I took our bus ride home, we smiled and basked in the hope that sprung from deep within despite the extreme brutality that we heard had taken place just one block from where we had gathered. The people spoke loudly but peacefully and the sun shone brightly over City Hall today. That the LAPD met this celebration of freedom, and human determination for fair play with violence was a sad day indeed and a testament to the LAPD's lack of respect for the people they are supposed to serve.

As my Green compadre and I took our bus ride home, we smiled and basked in the hope that sprung from deep within despite the extreme brutality that we heard had taken place just one block from where we had gathered. The people spoke loudly but peacefully and the sun shone brightly over City Hall today. That the LAPD met this celebration of freedom, and human determination for fair play with violence was a sad day indeed and a testament to the LAPD’s lack of respect for the people they are supposed to serve.

The LAPD played a role in the success of this march. They want to justify their behavior in the name of “homeland security.” Treating people that way equates with the tactics of terrorists. This is a local example of the bigger picture of what the U.S. government is doing in Iraq. Perhaps the police action last Tuesday was a training exercise for something else. Unlike last year when things were peaceful, this year the LAPD came out in full force and I hold the mayor responsible. These police tactics are nothing new. But this time the news media were in the middle of it. If the media goes through it, then maybe the public will know what the (immigrant) people go through every day with the police shooting our children. Now we are seeing it on a nationwide level. People must remember the long history of hatred toward the Mexican community. Since the 1848 war of aggression the immigrant laws have not favored the Mexican community. During the Great Depression in the 1930’s a million Mexicans were taken off the streets and deported, including families and people who had been here for generations. Now that people are marching and protesting the deportations, the police are responding with these intimidation tactics in an attempt to stop people from speaking out. Deportation itself equals terrorism! What was beautiful about the May 1 march was that the symbolic meaning of May 1 as a working class holiday has been revived by working class immigrants. It was a successful march because of that...

Editors Note: A “Goon” is a thug hired by corrupt elites to intimidate or punish people for standing up for themselves. Includes COPS, too!
The "peace-in" began on the morning of Jan. 8 at the offices of Rep. Doris Matsui (D-Sacramento) after the middle-of-the-road lawmaker refused to meet with Veterans for Peace, and commit to voting against any new funding for the war in Iraq.

The action did not end until March 22, the day Matsui announced she would vote to further fund the war despite making numerous public statements that she, like other Democrats, wanted to "protect" the troops and was personally opposed to the war. Her vote for $100 billion more for the war continued the war.

On March 22, after Matsui's announcement, three members of the Sacramento Greens county council, Sheila Laracy, Scott Verhoef and Cres Vellucci were arrested as they sat in Matsui's office reading the names of U.S. and Iraqi citizens killed in Iraq. But by seven were arrested, handcuffed and temporarily jailed.

"Rep. Matsui is the poster Democrat from California. She claims to be opposed to the war, but she insists that voting for more war funding will 'protect' the troops when all it does is lead them to 'harm's way,'" said Cres Vellucci, a Vietnam veteran, Veterans for Peace member and Green Party of California press secretary.

"Matsui, like other Democrats, is playing political games. Democrats don't want this war to end because it gives them something to hang on Republicans in the 2008 elections. Instead of trying to stop the carnage in Iraq, Democrats are only thinking about their own political well-being," added Vel- luci, who was a military war correspondent in Vietnam.

"In good conscience, we could not sit by while more people are sent off to die in this war that was initiated not just by the actions of Pres. Bush, but by Democrats in Congress," said Laracy.

Before the arrests, demonstrators engaged in a near-siege of Matsui's district office, including not only the daily "peace-in" inside the office but by holding outside "die-ins" marking the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi civilians, news conferences featuring members of the community opposed to the war and other rallies linking the community to the anti-war action.

News coverage included local, regional and national wire service, television and radio outlets. Matsui's office, seeking to mitigate the damage demonstrators did by exposing an alleged anti-war Democrat as a pro-war politician, even banned the news media from her office after Associated Press and a large newspaper chain ran major stories during the first 10 days of the protests.

The protests also forced Matsui to respond to the war and other rallies engaging members of the community opposed to the war and other rallies linking the community to the anti-war action.

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The protests also forced Matsui to at least recognize the Iraq War. Before January, she did not have even a mention on her web site about the Iraq War, including during her most recent campaign election. Matsui quickly added the war reference, claiming she was "anti-war."

The Sacramento Green Party also contributed $500 to a dramatic television advertising campaign targeting Matsui. The stark, black and white spot ran during prime evening viewing on local CNN, Headline News and other area broadcast and cable stations.

The spot called on Matsui to vote against any further funding for the war to "protect" our troops and end the war. In the background of the spot viewers could hear explosions, sirens and people screaming. The ad campaign was our way of showing the public more of the real face of war...the death, the char- os," said Vellucci, who wrote and produced the spot. "I remember Vietnam, Doris Matsui, and others who say they are opposed to war but are willing to extend it for months and years for political gain, must be made to realize how wrong their position is to the people on the ground in Iraq," he added.

Sacramento Greens also criticized a Sacramento Democrat that called for a return of the California National Guard from Iraq.

Die In at State Capitol: Sheila Laracy, Scott Verhoef and Cres Vellucci, among other members of the Sacramento Green Party gained major news coverage in print, TV and radio with their 52 day successful media campaign against the war in Iraq this spring.

"The death toll in Iraq, for U.S. and Iraqi civilians, continues to climb and all Democrats can do is claim to be opposed to the war, while funding it. This resolution would have been a good idea...four years ago. It's way too late and way too little," added Kravitz, who pointed out that the Green Party has been opposed to the war in Iraq, unlike Democrats and Republicans, since it began.

He said three Democrats failed to vote, thus killing legislation last year that called for a return of the California National Guard from Iraq.
By Shane Que Hee, Los Angeles Greens

LOS ANGELES—How to stop the Iraq War? The Dem majorities in the House and Senate after the November 2006 elections and the opinion polls implied the American people wanted to reverse direction. Except—Bush and Dems contrived to talk about increasing the troops, with the Dems wanting to stop the INCREASE rather than stopping the whole caboodle. Very how convenient for the dupopoly— the Dems get to save face while the Republicans get what they wanted anyhow in their non-binding resolution charades. Congress has the purse strings. IF THE DEMS WERE SERIOUS WHY NOT CUT ALL FUNDING FOR THE IRAQ WAR?

The national call to bring the troops home and cut all funding was first made by United For Peace and Justice (UFPJ) who went all out for a Washington DC extravaganza that ultimately attracted over a million marchers. Amazingly at this event only Dems spoke and Ralph Nader was not invited not to speak. Grudgingly, UFPJ gave late as- sent to a San Francisco event also. Because of the bottom-up tilt of most progressive left organizations, everyone else was supposed to converge on Washington DC on January 27. Many in LA who could not or did not want to go to DC wanted to host our own event, especially since the state Dems and LA City Council in 2006 refused to support efforts to impeach Bush/Cheney and to bring California’s National Guard home from Iraq. And dammit, if San Francisco could do it why not LA?

The local action was first talked about at the January 20 at the Progressive Democrats of America sponsored rally outside Henry Waxman’s office on 3rd Street in Beverly Hills by Vigil Con- gressman Henry Waxman and LA labor, and many other supporters including myself as part of the UFPJ call to lobby congress- man to cut all funding for the Iraq War and to stop it. I convinced 10-15 who had decided to make feverish calls for a major March/Rally within 3 weeks was set for January 27 at Grand Park United Methodist Chair and 12 noon, at City Hall, and then rally again at the Federal Building on Los Angeles Street. The major competing idea was to rally and march in Pasadena at Rep Schiff’s off- fice and at the Parsons Building. We were all asked to get back to our organi- zations to secure endorsements. Com- mittees formed were Logistics, Outreach, Lead Banner/Stage Banner, Media, Program (empty), and Chants. The hat was passed too.

The January 13 meeting convened in the basement of the Echo Park Unit- ed Methodist Church facilitated by Co- alition for World Peace’s Don White, with the same number of organizations as the first meeting with 10 categories of Green Party personnel like LA County Council Rep Jim Odlng (also wearing his other hat of LA Coalition in heat. Finally, it was decided by majori- ty vote to begin with a rally in front of State Democratic Party headquarters at Figueroa/9th Street, march past City Hall, and then rally again at the Federal Building on Los Angeles Street. The major competing idea was to rally and march in Pasadena at Rep Schiff’s of- fice and at the Parsons Building. We were all asked to get back to our organi- zations to secure endorsements. Com- mittees formed were Logistics, Outreach, Lead Banner/Stage Banner, Media, Program (empty), and Chants. The hat was passed too.

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Most of the Greens in the Coalition wore at least two hats anything including me. I encourage you all to work with potential allies—if you don’t work on their issues why should they work on ours? But—be patient too!”

To my dismay, Green Party or Third Party, or Progressive Democ- rats did not make the cut in a March/Rally agitating for Congress to Stop Funding the War. Even Congress Member against the War was not among the priorities of the chosen ten! The Platform Committee who had worked like beavers to set up some available speakers (I had asked Peter Through and Byron De Lear who were both available, and Peter Camejo and Bill Paparian -who both did not reply or were not available) were all urged to select speakers with diversity considerations in mind. Cindy Shee- han, Ron Kovics, Dolores Huerta,and Jamahl were approved. The other Committees then gave their reports. A lobbying day was scheduled for Janu- ary 29. An evaluation meeting was scheduled for February 10. The num- ber of endorsers reached 100. These also included the Green Party of LA County, and the Ventura Greens. Tinkering with speakers and music- ans occurred right up to the Rally/March time. The speakers in or- der were 1st Rally- 1. Rep. Frances pretext (Coalition Against Militarism in Schools); 2. John Parker (International Action Center); 3. Omar Jhibar (Council on American-Islamic Rela- tions); 4. Pat Alviso (Military Families Speak Out); 5. Jabbar Magruder (Army National Guard Sergeant); 2nd Rally- 1. Jason Lemmon (Vietnam Veterans Against the War); 2. Helga Gauyau (wife of conscientious objector Agustín Aguyau); 3. Sarah Knoop (LAUSD, UTLA, International Socialist Organiz- ation); 4. Ron Kovics (Vietnam Vet- eran); 5. Mazin Almoukdad (Al-Awda, Palestine Right to Return Coalition); 6. Nativeo Lopez (Mexican American Po- litical Association); 7. Kent Wongs (UCLB Labor Center); 8. Rev. Lewis Logan (Black/Brown Unity Coalition and Community Call to Action and Ac- countability); 9. Cindy Sheehan (Gold Star Families for Peace). The Green Party was represented through Sarah Knoop (won 700,000 votes in coming 2nd in the Nov election for State Super- intendent of Public Instruction) and Nativeo Lopez (member of the Green Party of LA County Council). Musi- cians were: Tom Morello, Quetzel, Mi- chelle Shocked, and Ross Altman. On Wednesday January 24, the Press Conference in Pasadena outside Schiff’s office featured Cindy Sheehan and local press carried news casts. The march/rally of about 5,000 on Jan- uary 27 attracted a small but loud pro- war faction at Democratic headquar- ters, as the march moved off amidst isolated roundups. Once at the Federal Building, rain became more heavy after the first two speakers. The LA Times and LA Weekly ran short accounts as did some TV channels. LA Indy media also posted many photos and videos. The offices of some 11 members of Congress were visited on January 29.

The organizations at the evaluation meeting on February 10 decided to con- tinue to work on joint projects and to endorse the ANSWER March 17 March/Rally to be held at 12 noon, at Hollywood/Vine. I chided them for the lack of LGBT speakers. While the whole drive to mount a major March/Rally within 3 weeks was exciting, the speaker prioritization pro- cess revealed a general dislike of politi- cians. It behooves the Green Party to make more alliances through peace and other groups, and not rely just on politi- cal stance. Most of the Greens in the Coalition wore at least two hats anyhow including me. I encourage you all to work with potential allies—if you don’t work on their issues why should they work on ours? But—be patient too!”

The entire event was
who is on the CHCN board and is battling Wal-Mart in Vallejo to stop Wal-Mart from building on an environmentally-protected wetlands area. “Greens believe in sus- tanability, and that includes the availability of locally produced goods and services, not the junk that Wal-Mart ships from thousands of miles away,” said Feller. “We also, as Greens, want local busi- nesses thriving, and producing jobs that pay a living wage. Wal-Mart represents the opposite of that by not providing de- cent wages or benefits.

About the only thing more abysmal than Wal-Mart’s employment practices is its environmental record,” said Feller. In Vallejo, he explained, Wal-Mart wants to build a 400,000 sq ft center on a body of water called the White Slough. A decade ago, the White Slough area was established by agreement of 50 government, environment, and private entities as a buffer to control erosion of natural wetlands. It has been so successful that last year it rained “biblical pro-
portions” (40 straight days) and Vallejo avoided flooding.

“A side benefit of (the slough) is that many species of birds have returned to the north and south White Slough on their annual migration. A local environ- mental activist started a festival for bird watchers that draws thousands of people annually (and) comes roughly every year through the entire day to see our bird habitat. This kind of activity is an excellent example of ecol- ogy in an old navy town. It is truly a transformation,” said Feller.

But, he warned, if Wal-Mart comes in with 24 hour operations, “the whole effort of the birding community will be damaged if not entirely lost. This is just a local example of the damage that Wal-Mart does. They just don’t care about any local interests. Nothing is as heartless as the biggest corporation in the world,” Feller added.

In Merced, where Wal-Mart seeks to build a 1.2 million square foot distribu- tion center, Greens like Kenny Mostern, the outgoing GPCA treasurer, have helped mobilize citizens to fight the gig-
anti-Wal-Mart effort of the birding community will be damaged if not entirely lost. This is just a local example of the damage that Wal-Mart does. They just don’t care about any local interests. Nothing is as heartless as the biggest corporation in the world,” Feller added.

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tion center, Greens like Kenny Mostern, the outgoing GPCA treasurer, have helped mobilize citizens to fight the gig-
270-acre facility. A local encroachment of Wal-Mart is consistent with the GPCA’s 10 Key Values, Greens are encouraged to contact CHCN and get involved in this social justice issue in their own areas, said Feller.

For more information, see www.calhcn.org or contact CHCN at info@calhcn.org.
National Green’s Shifts Gears: California Delegation Size To Triple

By Greg Jan, Alternate Delegate to GNC

SAN FRANCISCO, Ca. On April 26, 2007, the Green Party of the United States (GPUS) approved a new formula for calculating how delegates to its governing body, the National Committee (NC), will be allocated. California’s delegation will grow from 13 out of 137 appointed delegates (9.5%) to 42 out of 200 (21.0%). (California is home to approximately 40% of the Green Party members in the U.S.). The Green Party of California’s increased role in the GPUS comes at a time when most California voters will likely be wooed more heavily than ever, due to the date of the state’s February 5 Presidential primary, the earliest in California history.

For years, Greens across the country have wanted to change the national delegation allocation formula, which was primarily based on the number of Congressional districts in a state and was therefore proportional to general population data. Champions for reform wanted a model of representative democracy, in which delegates are appointed in proportion to the grassroots members they represent. The press for change reached a head in 2005, after a stormy year following our party’s controversial 2004 Presidential nominating convention (where two California Greens-- Peter Camejo and David Cobb -- opposed each other for the national party’s support). Amidst other internal struggles, the NC finally decided to change itself from its population-based formula (in place since their founding in 2001), and in October, 2005, approved a proposal to “create the fairest possible representation of the Green Party membership... based on the principles of proportional representation.”

In March, 2006, the NC (using proportional representation through ranked voting) selected an eight-person “Delegate Apportionment Committee” (DAC) with two California Greens, Cat Woods and Forrest Hill, winning seats. The DAC, although composed of Greens with widely different viewpoints on creating a fair and workable apportionment formula, was nevertheless able to make hard-fought compromises among themselves, and in November, 2006 submitted their consensus four-part formula to the NC. This DAC proposal then was hotly debated for over four months, went through five revisions and two formal votes, and was finally approved by a vote of 73 to 35, slightly above the required 2/3 threshold.

Delegates will be apportioned according to 1) Green Party membership, 2) campaign strength, 3) state voting strength, and 4) Presidential voting strength, with alternate options for each category. To increase proportionality without reducing the minimum delegation size of two, the size of the NC was increased from 137 to 200 members. (To read the complete text of the approved formula please see: http://gp.org/cgi-bin/vote/proprop/ pid=272)

California’s new 42-member delegation, which will be chosen at the state party General Assembly meeting in San Francisco May 26-27, is currently scheduled to be seated during June, prior to the national party’s Annual National Meeting, July 12-15 in Reading, PA.

Some in the national party have asked whether increased representation also implies increased responsibility. While that question has not been formally debated by the NC, or by our state party, a number of California Greens have already volunteered for national party committees, made financial donations to the GPUS, or offered to assist in other ways. (The GPUS website is: www.gp.org)

It is imperative for the Green Party to have a strong campaign during the upcoming Presidential election year, not least, because most major Democratic and Republican officials continue to work against the best interests of Americans——for example, by providing ongoing support for George Bush’s Iraq War. The passage of a more representative delegate apportionment formula is a major GPUS milestone——a crucial step toward resolving several years of internal party turmoil around this issue. It comes at an opportune time for the Green Party to greatly organize and strengthen itself, both across this country, as well as within California.

Greg Jan, who resides in Oakland, is a founding member of the Green Party of San Francisco From Solar, Wind

By Cres Vellucci, Press Secretary GPCA

SAN FRANCISCO, Ca. (April 20, 2007) San Francisco Supervisor Ross Mirkarimi the Green Party lawmaker who last month pushed through a bill to make San Francisco the first city in the nation to ban plastic bags co-sponsored historic legislation here this week to require at least 50 percent of all the energy to the city be provided by solar or wind electricity.

If approved by the full Board of Supervisors next month, the ordinance for San Francisco’s Community Choice will be the first effort to implement a state law passed in 2002 which allows communities to withdraw from purchasing power from private providers (PG&E, in San Francisco’s case) and become a buying co-op known as a “Community Choice Aggregator.”

The legislation calls for constructing wind, solar and efficiency projects with the goal of meeting over 50 percent of the city’s overall electricity demands through renewables by 2020. “As long as this nation is disproportionately reliant on oil and fossil fuel technology, we stand vulnerable,” San Francisco needs to mount a smart, energetic counterattack designed to protect our environment and safeguard against energy market fiascos,” Mirkarimi has said. The state’s Community Choice bill passed with help from Paul Fenn of Local Power. Fenn was also the main co-author and negotiator for the new San Francisco ordinance, introduced by SF Sups Mirkarimi and Tom Ammiano. The implementation plan was strenuously debated and re-written to reach its current form.

"The newest science on global warming shows that all industrial countries like the U.S. will need to cut our CO2 emissions by up to 90 percent in the next 20-25 years in order to avoid a global catastrophic climate collapse. It is absolutely vital that the Board of Supervisors pass the Community Choice ordinance, asap. we are the only city in the state that can do it immediately," said Eric Brooks, Co-Chair of the San Francisco Green Party Sustainability Working Group. "We should hurry with implementing a way to get more renewable energy to San Franciscans and avoid siting polluting Natural Gas Turbines in southeast San Francis-

Whether On The Street, In The Halls of Government, Or In The Pursuit Of Public Power—California Greens Are On The Move

By Lisa Taylor, Cathy McKnight, and Erin Schmidt

Fellow Los Angeles Greens’, including members Lisa Taylor, Cathy McKnight, Michael Rochmes and Erin Schmidt participated in a march on April 14 as part of over 1400 nationwide actions of Step It Up to bring attention to the threat of global warming. Step It Up is calling on Congress to cut 80% in carbon emissions by the year 2050. www.stepitup2007.org

Seen right: Lisa Taylor and Cathy McKnight, carrying signs at the April 14th march in Los Angeles.

Photo by James McKissack
In Solidarity Move: LA Green Party CC Endorses Latina Activist

By Linda Piera-Avilla
Los Angeles Greens

LOS ANGELES- It has been nearly a year since the encampment and subsequent eviction of the South Central Farmers. Since then the people have shown their resilience in many ways. Perhaps most remarkable is the upcoming trip of one of the elected leaders of the South Central Farmers, Rufina Juarez, to the United Nations in New York City. Ms. Juarez will participate in the Sixth Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues which will take place from May 14 through 25, 2007.

This year’s special theme will be “Territories, Lands and Natural Resources.” In addition to a dialogue on the human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples, there will also be a half day discussion on urban indigenous peoples and migration, a topic germane to the South Central Farmers. This Forum is the only official body that addresses indigenous peoples’ issues.

At the most recent meeting of the Los Angeles Green Party County Council, the Council passed by consensus the proposed endorsement (introduced by Mike Feinstein) of Ms. Juarez’ appearance in this Forum to represent the South Central Farmers’ struggle and organization. The GPLAC has taken actions to support the South Central Farm, many of which can be found at http://www.cagreens.org/lacounty/scf/. Because of the Green Party’s role in supporting the Farm, as an international political party and as a supporter of indigenous rights, we are proud to endorse Rufina Juarez, one of the Farm’s main organizers.

Says Ms. Juarez, “I am going to be speaking out about the injustice that was done by the City of Los Angeles to the South Central Farmers as indigenous peoples and as migrants. I will read my presentation to members of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. My talk will be recorded, analyzed by members and possibly formulated into policy that in turn will be passed on to the appropriate UN agencies that are charged with intervening in human rights abuses, especially with regard to indigenous peoples.”

As San Francisco is First to Ban Plastic Bags; Green Party Supervisor Leads Fight to Save Planet, Marine Life

By Green Focus Staff Writer

SAN FRANCISCO - San Francisco Supervisor Ross Mirkarimi, one of 50 elected Green Party members in the state, pushed through an ordinance late Tuesday that would make San Francisco the first city in the nation to ban the use of all but the most environmentally-sound shopping bags.

The San Francisco Board of Supervisors voted 10-1 in March to require the city’s grocery stores and chain pharmacies to use only recyclable paper or compostable bags, despite stiff resistance from the California Grocers Association and the plastic industry. “I have been astounded by the worldwide attention the issue has received. Hopefully, other cities and states will follow suit,” said Mirkarimi, adding that he believes the decision is part of a “trend of making sure that a forward-thinking economy is one that understands its relationship with our environment.”

The measure had been delayed after the grocery industry went to the Legislature to intervene. Now, the law goes into effect for 54 grocery stores within six months, and a year for large pharmacies with at least five locations. It benefits consumers in many ways, says Mirkarimi.

The compostable “plastic” bags are stronger, they can be dumped directly into a compost pile because they are made from starches like corn and potatoes and they won’t pollute the environment, kill marine life or gum up recycling machines. The cost for compostable bags is about the same as paper bags.

Plastic bags are a worldwide environmental disaster and many countries have already made the leap to rid themselves of the bags, of which as many as one trillion are used worldwide every year, according to experts. Sea life, from whales to turtles to sea birds, ingest the bags.

The plastic bags are pervasive. In South Africa, there are two Texas-size “islands” of plastic bags floating at sea, and Bangladesh banned plastic when it was discovered millions of the bags blocked drains and led to massive flooding. In Ireland, a “bag fee” led to a 90 percent reduction in the use of plastic in three years.

Plastic is one of the “trendiest” materials of 2006, according to a recent Los Angeles Times poll. “We also will be networking among others who identify with being migrant indigenous peoples, regarding land and natural resources throughout the world. We expect to learn more about our own struggle and to re-frame it within an international perspective and in comparison to other indigenous struggles worldwide.”

http://www.cagreens.org/lacounty/scf/

Rufina Juarez: right, is an elected leader of the South Central Farmer’s who struggled last summer against corporate greed and government bureaucracy to save their patch of ground for small self sustaining cash crops of food. Her trip to the UN is May 14-25, 2007.
By Ray Toby

After more than four years of nearly full time volunteering on political campaigns, my plate was empty last November. So I started researching how elections are won. Of the 23 campaigns I’ve been involved with, we’ve often made a very strong showing, sometimes as high as 45%. But with only four victories, the final margin has been very elusive.

As part of this research, I’ve asked people “What is the most important quality for a candidate?” I believe the answer is “trustworthiness”. I checked several versions of the ten key values, but the word “trust” was not mentioned anywhere. Some say that trust is assumed, but I believe our lack of attention to the matter goes to the root of our failures at the polls and our troubles within the party.

A few Greens claim that “personal responsibility” is a blanket covering trust. The explanations I checked were all variations on “think globally, act locally”. According to these, one might think that responsibility means we should buy hybrids. Elected officials have always answered my question with “honesty” or “integrity” — both good. However, if I were to ask a friend for help, an honest one might say, “No, I’m busy,” or, “No, I don’t want to do that.” A trustworthy friend would help me, even if it required a sacrifice.

Integrity means “steadfast adherence to a strict moral or ethical code”. Tom Lantos, San Mateo’s 14-term congressman, uses the word as his slogan — and he certainly fulfills the definition. However, his code includes doing anything and everything in support of Israel. This support brings lavish donations from across the country that he uses to ensure both his seat and national influence. Unfortunately, I think Lantos’ actions have damaged the interests of the United States and his constituents. Perhaps this makes him electable, but unconscionable integrity is nothing I could be proud of. I must listen to others and constantly evaluate the consequences of my actions to determine if my code needs improvement.

Only competent candidates are worthy of my trust. If the office is Treasurer, then good standing in professional finance outweighs all of our key values. Yet, no one is perfect, so I must allow for the occasional mistake or disregard of my opinion. Insisting on a paragon of virtue is unrealistic and brings doubt to my own credibility. No one trusts a zealot.

“For Foundations of Social Theory” by James Coleman offers a four-part explanation of trust:

- Placement of trust allows actions that otherwise are not possible. If the person in whom trust is placed (trustee) is worthy, then the trustee will be better off than if he or she had not trusted. Conversely, if the trustee is not worthy, then the trustee will be worse off.
- Trust is an action that involves the voluntary placement of resources (physical, financial, intellectual, or temporal) at the disposal of the trustee with no real commitment from the trustee.
- A time lag exists between the extension of trust and the result of the trusting behavior. People do not vote for values, they vote for candidates. By Coleman’s definition, I believe those votes are acts of trust. Therefore, if I were to run for school board, for instance, what I would like to communicate to each voter is this:

> “You know me, and I know you. I am a mature adult, professionally qualified and emotionally ready for the responsibilities of this office.”

I will listen to you. I am not an ideologue. I can compromise, and, if you present evidence of a better way, I am capable of changing my mind.

If you look at the percentage of registered Democrats and Republicans to the amount of people who actually do the work for the party, I believe the Green Party has the same breakdown of those who actually do the work and those who just cast their vote. With that said, we must all work to get the Green message to the forefront. Simply casting your vote is not enough when we are fighting the machines of the Democratic National Committee and the Republican National Committee who garner support from corporate America and large donors.

If I look at the percentage of registered Democrats and Republicans to the amount of people who actually do the work for the party, I believe the Green Party has the same breakdown of those who actually do the work and those who just cast their vote. With that said, we must all work to get the Green message to the forefront. Simply casting your vote is not enough when we are fighting the machines of the Democratic National Committee and the Republican National Committee who garner support from corporate America and large donors.

However, this means we, the Green Party, must give more of our time to work for Green candidates and Green issues. Campaigns cost money, and if we all gave a minimum of $12 yearly to our local Green Party, we could make inroads in changing the direction of our government.

In the November election, the voters gave a mandate to Congress to change the direction of our country, to end the war and bring the troops home. Yet, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and the Democrats are infighting, and so as not look unpatriciotic in their desire for the White House in 2008, they are ignoring the will of the voters. This is a strategy which will certainly fail.

But, if we Greens work hard, and speak up to inform these staunch registered Democrats and Republicans not to let both parties take advantage of them by ignoring the will of the people simply because they are registered voters with those parties, but to reregister as Green, Declined to State, Independent or other third parties, it will surely send a message to the DNC and the RNC that we, the voters, will not be taken for granted when we send a mandate for change.
Water is For Fighting Over: California Water Wars From North To South—Impact of Global Warming

By Wes Rolley, Morgan Hill, CA.

Commentary

Almost everyone who has written anything about water in the West has had occasion to use the Mark Twain quotation, “Whiskey is for drinking. Water is for fighting over.” Well, the fight has begun. Like the Iraq War, there are a few who are doing the actual fighting and the rest of us have much less involvement and perhaps no emotional attachment at all. We have not felt the pain... yet.

The public face of the fighting is what the media gives you. The Los Angeles Times wrote about an environmental lawsuit that threatens to stop pumping water from the California Delta into the California Aqueduct. The story, in one version or another, was carried in the major papers of Northern California. They even editorialized over whether in was right to protect the fish of the delta when the economy of California is at stake.

The essence of the decision is laid out in the Los Angeles Times story. “A Superior Court judge has given the state two months to get environmental permits in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta or else shut down the massive Northern California pumps that kill endangered fish in the process of supplying the Southland with much of its water.” (Los Angeles Times, March 24, 2007)

The California Sport Fishing Association (CSFA) brought the law suit under the California Endangered Species Act. The CSFA is not your normal environmental organization. It’s members are more apt to be on the water in a bass boat than a kayak, to drive a Denali than a Prius, to vote Republican rather than Democrat or Green. But, they have used the same legal measures as have the Sierra Club or the Defenders of Wildlife when they felt that there was no other choice.

Just how big of a deal is this? The Delta supplies 60% of the water used by the Metropolitan Water District. Between the State of California and the Federal Bureau of Reclamation, the Delta’s water supports $300 Billion of California’s economy, primarily the agricultural sector.

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) seems to be in a state of denial. In a March 26, 2007 press release, Director Lester Snow says that “We’re perplexed with the court’s ruling in this case. We find the prospect of curtailing pumping to be unacceptable in terms of the economic consequences to the state.” That is probably true, but the threat is surely one hell of a hammer to be hanging over DWR’s head.

At one time, I was sure that the fate of New Orleans would be the tipping point for reform in the management of our water resources in the Delta. Dr. Jeffrey Mount, Director, UC Davis Center of Water and the Environment has already led State Senator Joe Simi- tanian (D – Palo Alto) to author legislation (SB 27) that would have authorized the construction of a peripheral canal, diverting fresh water away from the delta to the pump site near Tracy. While that bill still exists, pressures from the public have gotten the funding of the peripheral canal removed.

The search for acceptable solutions has let Governor Schwarzenegger authorize the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, a massive, 394 page report that goes far beyond the usual PPIC documentation of our political problems. This is not about our temperature but outlining the therapy required for a very sick system. The emphasis is on economic impacts. The leader of the study team, Research Fellow Ellen Hanak is the Director of the Economy Program for PPIC.

I think that all can concur with the PPIC report that adds to the problems of the Delta’s native species, a fundamental change in policy is needed.” Given that current policies have not changed for 70 years, this will not be accomplished without significant change. It is possibly not without large scale disruption of current agricultural systems and possible the need to relocate populations as some delta islands may be abandoned.

Once again, we are faced with a question of whether there is a political will to do what needs to be done if our goal is to achieve a sustainable future. Current policies require a static vision of the delta, one in which everyone has their place: agriculture, development, fish, birds and the role of the State is to maintain that static environment.

We all know that events are not static. The biggest threat to the delta is truly global warming. Sea levels will rise. Precipitation patterns will change. Farmers may need to change their crops as rainfall and temperature change. In the face of this, it may not be possible to maintain a static delta. We know that the economy does not operate as efficiently in the world in countries that have kept the issue in the news, focusingdelta levees and the massive Hetch Hetchy Dam while others are calling for the dismantling of four dams on the Klamath River and the construction of two additional dams create a media event to call for the construction of two additional dams while others are calling for the dismantling of four dams on the Klamath River and the massive Hetch Hetchy Dam which supplies water for San Francisco and other bay area communities.

Yes, the battles have begun. Only you can’t buy a ring-side seat. The deals are done before the events make the news. Delta levees are merely the background for political photo ops. Even the Delta Vision process seems to be a public show when the solutions are already committed. If democracy depends on an informed population, as Jefferson said, we must become at least informed witnesses to these events.
By Wes Rolly, from his blog, http://cagreening.blogspot.com/

If there were ever a good time for the Green Party, that time is now. Let me offer you two pieces of evidence: main camp bickering, and the two major parties’ in the US are decidedly out of step with great segments of the population. The Republican Party, especially here in California is going through a period of high dysfunction that is driving out the sane, competent people who can follow its function is driving out the sane, competent people who can follow its function is driving out the sane, competent people who can follow...
Considering Communication Styles: Self and Others

Editors Note: The following article is taken from a Web site located at: http://members.tripod.com/~LadyFribb/verbal/satir.html

Green Focus is claiming a legitimate use of this material for educational purposes under Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107, which provides for such use.

The Virginia Satir Theory of Modes of Communication

Satir modes refer to common types of verbal behavior patterns. Understanding the five most common will be our first step in recognizing the verbal atmosphere around us.

The Placater

Even though the Placater doesn't dare admit it, she is frightened that other people will become angry, go away, and never come back.

Typical Placater speech:

* "Oh you know me—I don't care!"
* "Whatever anybody else wants to do is fine with me.
* "Whatever you say, darling; I don't care.
* "Whatever anybody else wants to do is fine with me.
* "Oh, you know me—I don't care!"

Hopeless conversation: Two Placaters trying to make a decision.

The Blamer

Because the Blamer feels that everyone is indifferent to his/her needs and feelings, s/he uses a verbal behavior pattern that declares that s/he is the one in charge.

Typical Blamer speech:

* "You never consider my feelings.
* "Nobody around here ever pays any attention to me.
* "Do you always have to put your self first?"
* "Why don't you ever think about what I might want? I've had all of this I am going to take!"
* "Why do you always insist on having your own way, no matter how much it hurts other people?"

Two Blammers talking to each other usually ends in a very nasty screaming match.

The Computer

Think of Data or Spock, and you have a good reference for the Computer. The Computer is terrified that someone will find out what his or her feelings are. S/he wishes to give the impression that s/he has no feelings at all.

Typical Computer speech:

* "There is undoubtedly a simple solution to the problem."
* "It's obvious that no real difficulty exists here."

Clear the advantages of this activity have been exaggerated.

* "Preferences of the kind you describe are rather common in this area."

Computers work hard at never saying "I", unless they qualify it heavily, as in "I suppose it is at least possible that..."

They also use a very limited set of hand movements and facial expressions.

The Distractor

The Distractor will cycle rapidly through the other Satir Modes. The underlying feeling of the Distractor is panic: "I don't know what to say, but I've got to say something, and the quicker the better!"

The Leveler

The Leveler is either the easiest or the most difficult to handle. A genuine Leveler is the easiest to deal with—just level back and tell them how you feel about their statement. One of the greatest ironies of verbal interaction is that many people mistake the statements of a Leveler for verbal violence and never suspect that the nice guy/gal down the hall is the one who is really giving them a hard time. Sometimes the difference between a Blamer attack and a Leveler's statement of fact, is the heavy stresses placed on the words by the Blamer:

Leveler - "Why do you always smoke so much when you're driving?"

Blamer - "Why DO YOU ALWAYS SMOKE so much when you're driving?"

The Phony Leveler - A Phony Leveler, however, is more dangerous than all the other categories put together, and very hard to spot. They still use the attack patterns that will be described, with the proper vocal stresses present, but with a different vocabulary, so their attack is not as obvious. Their goal is to deceive you, lure you into a position of trust and vulnerability, and then sock it to you.

One of the best ways to spot a phony Leveler is to look for signs that they are lying. Most of what people "know" about lying is folklore. The two main rules for detecting lying are:

* Watch for mismatches between their words and their actions.

When looking for mismatches, pay attention to the parts of language behavior that are the hardest to control.

The face (eyes included) is the easiest thing for a person to control, and therefore, the most unreliable focus for detecting lying. Remember, Phony Levelers are expert liars. When trying to detect lies, pay first attention to the speaker's voice, then their body, then their face, and last of all their words.

For a more detailed description of what to be alert for, read the section on phony Levelers, in Chapter 10 of Elgin's The Last Word on the Gentle Art of Verbal Self-Defense. I am not detailing this here because when dealing with most people, the signs are a lot clearer.

Pay attention to your gut. Sometimes your subconscious will pick up on clues your conscious mind will miss. If you suspect you are indeed dealing with a phony Leveler, PLEASE read Elgin's books yourself. The best defense against a phony Leveler is knowledge, and there is no way I could give you enough of that on this here.

Although most people have a preferred Satir Mode when they are under stress, they are not confined to it. They can choose to use any of the other modes to meet the needs of the situation. The switch between inner feeling and outer expression may not exist at all. You should only suspect the internal conflicts listed, when the person you're dealing with uses a particular Satir Mode or two, most of the time—especially in relaxed situations.

Consensus Decision-Making Flowchart

1. Introduce issue
2. Define question
3. Discussion
4. Make proposal(s)
5. Discuss proposal(s)
6. Amend or change proposal
7. Test for consensus
8. Consider options
9. Implement decision

Consent achieved when:

All agree.

Options:

- Consider options
- Amend or change proposal
- Discuss proposal(s)
- Make proposal(s)
- Discussion
- Define question
- Introduce issue

Seeds for Change

- Consider options
- Amend or change proposal
- Discuss proposal(s)
- Make proposal(s)
- Discussion
- Define question
- Introduce issue

Also, be aware that you should have an alternate plan(s) for each proposal, and be familiar with the major objections and blocks that are most likely to arise.
Call To Action: Presidential Nomination Process

Urgent Need For GPCA to ACT NOW for February ’08 Presidential Primary

By Warner S. Bloomberg III
Coordinator, Campaigns and Candidates Working Group.

The GPCA currently has no formal procedure for the selection of delegates to the national presidential nominating convention. In 2000, the GPCA adopted procedures to select delegates to the ASGP presidential nominating convention, but those rules were intended only for that year.

In September 2001, the General Assembly agreed by consensus that, among other provisions to proposed GPCA Election Code sections, "nominations for Green Party of California candidates for President and Vice-president of the United States...occur by primary election and not a convention." The Green Party of the United States (GPUS) obtained national legal status in November 2003. In September 2003 (by consensus) and March 2004 (by vote), the GPCA General Assembly again adopted temporary procedures for the selection and distribution delegates and alternates to the GPUS Presidential nominating convention held June 2004. The March 2004 rules, particularly regarding how to treat March 2004 primary write-in votes, were a disputed compromise.

The current draft of proposed GPA Election Code sections (approved by consensus at the June 2006 General Assembly) expressly refer to GPCA bylaws for the selection of delegates to presidential nominating conventions.

All the worlds waste. In 2001, per capita waste in the U.S. was 4.4 pounds per day, for a total of 89.2 million tons! The world can’t tolerate a continuation of this wastefulness, and it is up to each of us to start thinking how we can make changes in our individual daily habits. For example, we can start by refusing to buy electronic equipment, an especially toxic contributor to our waste problem, unless the manufacturer agrees to reclaim and recycle the product after use, as is common in European countries. We can reduce our use of petroleum based, non-biodegradable plastic and Styrofoam, by switching to re-usable containers and other products.

Candidate Training Program Videos Available

DVDs of the Candidate Basics training program held in Petaluma March 19, 2006 are available for distribution to County Green Party Organizations to use to recruit candidates and as a program resource. The program was designed for prospective GPCA candidates and campaign helpers who have no or little previous campaign experience. Topics include: Deciding to be a candidate; Initial filing requirements; Media basics; and Campaign finance issues. Program sessions are about an hour and can be shown in order or separately. For more information, contact Warner Bloomberg CCWG Coordinator at (408) 295-9353 or wsb3attyca@aol.com

Host Sought For Summer 2007 Candidate Training Program

The CCWG is seeking a host for a one-day candidate training program in July or August 2007. Local Green Party members will need to identify a weekend date and location for the program and provide volunteers for helping with the program. The CCWG will provide speakers and materials. The program will build on the March 2007 Candidates delegate votes on subsequent ballots. In that event the Primary Election results are to guide the delegates as to what would be the voters’ intentions under those circumstances.

Candidate selection of delegate lists is intended to allow a candidate’s backers to be proportionally represented in the delegation without the candidate having any claim to control their decisions. The GPCA Delegate will go to the convention as a California delegate votes on the first ballot at the convention. Write-in votes for a candidate running for nomination in another political party will not be counted towards delegate votes or NOTA votes. (One of the compromises was that someone running as an “Independent” is not disqualified.)

The results from the surveys or County Polling will not be binding on the delegation, but will be information for their collective consideration at the convention. Eliminating non-random surveys and making survey and County Polling results non-binding were among the compromises made in developing the proposal. For transparency and accountability purposes, all of the votes of the delegates are to be recorded and reported after the Convention.

For additional proposal details, read the full text in the agenda packet for the plenary.

As It Becomes Available

If your working group has announcements for the general Green membership or others, you may post it to the GPCA Candidate Working Group email list. For additional proposal details, read the full text in the agenda packet for the plenary.

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The current draft of proposed GPA Election Code sections (approved by consensus at the June 2006 General Assembly) expressly refer to GPCA bylaws for the selection of delegates to presidential nominating conventions.

In the past six months, two proposals for delegate selection procedures were posted on the Electoral Reform Working Group email list.

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The Ten Key Values of the Green Party in English and Spanish

Grassroots Democracy - Develop participatory ways to control the decisions which affect our lives.

Social Justice - Create a system which promotes equality and dignity for all.

Nonviolence - Develop alternatives to current patterns of violence at all levels.

EcoLogical Wisdom - Operate our human society knowing we are a part of nature, and learn to live within the ecological and resource limits of the planet.

Decentralization - Move power and responsibility away from larger and more distant institutions toward individuals and communities, with the goal of a decentralized, democratic society.

Community-Based Economics - Redesign work to encourage employee ownership and workplace democracy, and establish basic security for all and a fair distribution of wealth and income.

Feminism - Replace the ethic of dominance and control with cooperative ways of relating to each other.

Respect for Diversity - Honor cultural, ethnic, racial, sexual, religious and spiritual diversity, reclaiming our country’s shared ideals, the dignity of the individual, democratic participation and liberty and justice for all.

Personal and Global Responsibility - Learn from and be of genuine assistance to grassroots groups in all parts of the world.

Sustainability - Act not for the short range narrow interest of one country or group of people, but for the collective future of the entire planet.

Sabiduría Ecológica - Deberemos actuar en la sociedad humana con el entendimiento de que somos parte de la naturaleza, y aprender a vivir dentro de los límites económicos y de los recursos del planeta.

Democracia de Bases - Elaboración de sistemas participatorios que nos alienten a controlar las decisiones que nos afectan la vida.

Justicia Social - Creación de un sistema que promueva la igualdad y la dignidad de todas las personas.

No Violencia - Encontrar alternativas para erradicar los patrones actuales de violencia a todo nivel, y al mismo tiempo eliminar la injusticia y sentido de impotencia que conducen a la misma.

Descentralización - Transferir el poder y la responsabilidad de instituciones grandes y lejanas a los individuos y comunidades, siendo la meta eventual una sociedad democrática y descentralizada.

Economía Basada en la Comunidad - Rediseño de las estructuras de trabajo para fomentar la propiedad para los empleados y la democracia en el trabajo, al mismo tiempo que se establece una seguridad básica para todos y una distribución justa de la riqueza y los ingresos.

Feminismo - Sustituir la ética de dominación y control por la de relaciones de cooperación.

Respeto por la Diversidad -Respeto a la diversidad cultural, étnica, racial, sexual, religiosa y espiritual, volviendo a los ideales compartidos de nuestro país: la dignidad de cada persona, la participación democrática, y libertad y justicia para todos.

Responsabilidad Personal y Global - Debemos aprender de los grupos de base del resto del mundo y ser de verdadera ayuda para ellos.

Sostenibilidad - Pensar en términos del futuro colectivo del planeta entero, no en los estrechos intereses de corto plazo de un país o grupo de personas.

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Imagine That Folks!

The Green Party is planning on a sustainable future for all. But we need your help to make it happen.

The Green Party of the State of California is working hard to promote candidates and provide financial support to campaigns on the local and regional level that we feel we have a chance of winning, or in which we feel we can make a spectacular showing in the media.

Further, we are improving our ability to speak truth to power, provide training programs for candidates and managers across the state and gaining media access through a viable network of spokespersons and a press agent for the party. To do this, and to fulfill our dreams of a permanent office in our state capital, we are looking for people who can step up and become Monthly Sustainers to the Green Party of CA. And as your added benefit, you will receive a free subscription to the GREEN FOCUS newspaper. We invite you to fill out the form below and help grow the party in a meaningful way. Today!

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