

Minutes for the CALIFORNIA STATE GREEN PARTY PLENARY
West Side Community Center, 423 West Victoria
Santa Barbara, California
August 14-15, 1999

SATURDAY, AUGUST 14, 1999 - Morning Session

A. Delegate Orientation - Daniel Solnit

The Green Party process for proposals was explained, including presentation, clarifying questions, concerns, unresolved concerns, and willingness to step aside. If everyone with unresolved concerns is willing to stand aside, there is consensus. If not, the presenter has the following 3 options:

1. Withdraw the proposal
2. Refer the matter back to committee
3. Vote (To pass, a substantive proposal must be approved by at least 80% of delegates in the room, with no more than 20% standing aside).

There must be representatives from 7 out of the 10 regions in order to have a quorum for the meeting, and 2/3 of the registered delegates in order to vote. (There were 54 registered delegates for this meeting.)

A consent calendar allows no clarifying questions or discussion, but simply a vote.

B. Opening Ceremony

After a brief welcome by Steve Shafarman of Santa Barbara, Sheikh Abdoulaye Dieye (a student of landscape architecture, a member of the Senegal parliament and a candidate for that country's president) gave a blessing in French, translated by Michelle Kimball.

C. Housekeeping

Facilitators: Linda Howard and Daniel Solnit; timer: Peggy Lewis; vibe-watchers

Charles Douglas and Gloria Purcell; note-taker: Dorothy Holland

Several changes in the agenda were affirmed, including a 10-minute break Saturday PM.

D. Announcements included the following:

1. Green-Party member Gary Wayers is running for City Council in San Diego.
2. John Strawn is a candidate for Santa Barbara City Council.
3. Dan Solnit distributed Project 2000 handouts.
4. Bud Boothe circulated a petition urging the lifting of the Cuban embargo.
5. A tape of a hearing hosted by Ramsey Clark on war crimes in Kosovo is available from Norris Large (415-242-0993)

E. Because the **minutes of the San Francisco plenary in February 1999** were not in the packet, approval was postponed to the next plenary.

F. State Spokesperson Report - John Strawn

The present State Spokespersons John Strawn and Nancy Marmol reported that the Coordinating Committee recommended Sara Amir as a 3rd spokesperson for the Green Party of California. Sara was affirmed by the delegates for a one-year term and will consult with the Oversight Committee.

G. Consent Calendar

After it was determined that a quorum was present, there was consensus that the following items on the Consent Calendar be approved as a unit:

- #1. Resolution asking for an end to the economic embargo of Cuba (International WG)
- #2. Resolution on protecting the Bison (Ecology WG)
- #4. The following state ballot measures: (Initiatives WG)
 - a. Oppose #1: Legislative Initiative Amendment SB 1878 Murder: Special Circumstances
 - b. Oppose #3: Legislative Initiative Amendment SB 1690 - Peace Officers
 - c. Oppose #4: Initiative Statute 802 - Juvenile Crime.
 - d. Oppose #5: Initiative Statute 819 - Definition of Marriage
- #6. Clarifying Ballot Transfers on Coordinating Committee Elections - Withdrawn (referred back to the Electoral WG)

As a result of a straw vote, the following Consent-Calendar items were considered separately:

#3. Resolution on joining the coalition to protect the Sierra Nevada Forests

After addressing the concern that the packet did not include enough information on this, there was **consensus** that the resolution be approved.

#5. Submissions from Restructuring Working Group

Proposal:

a) That each WG Coordinator compile a physical notebook that would contain the WG's Statement of Purpose, information about the WG, and other important documents of that WG. The notebook would be passed from Coordinator to Coordinator, and would be brought to every state meeting.

b) That each WG submit a Statement of Purpose (aka 'mission statement') for approval by the General Assembly, at either the November 1999 or February 2000 state meetings [subsequently changed to January 2000 and May 2000]. Statements should be no longer than 300 words.

Since these are already in our Bylaws, no vote was necessary.

#7. **Proposal:** That the State of California Green Party oppose the addition of fluoride to any and all of the public water supplies in the state of California.

Because this proposal is controversial, it should not have been on the Consent Calendar and so was withdrawn.

Dan Solnit made the following **new proposal**, for which there was **consensus**:

That the Plenary request the Coordinating Committee to include in the next agenda packet:

1) detailed, specific description of what is/is not appropriate for placement on the Consent Calendar, and how the coordinating Committee decides this;

2) more detailed description of process for consent calendar items, including how concerns are addressed, and whether a "pulled" item can be revisited/placed back on agenda, etc.

H. **ASGP meeting report** - John Strawn and Lynn Serpe

State Green Party representatives John Strawn and Nancy Serpe (the latter substituting for Sharane Palley) attended the national convention of the Association of State Green Parties in Connecticut this past June. Two delegates from each of 23 out of the 25 member-states, plus several observers from other countries, attended the meeting, which was run democratically and aims to benefit state parties. Among the proposals accepted were:

1. The request of Ralph Nader, who was present, to have his name placed on the California primary ballot as a Green Party candidate for president of the U.S., was approved. [John Strawn is a member of the Candidate Exploratory Committee of ASGP.]

2. No money will be accepted from for-profit organizations.

3. Each of the two Green groups in New York was granted one representative and both were urged to resolve their own differences.

4. The national Green Party presidential nominating convention was set for the weekend of June 24, 2000, in Denver, Colorado. [California is entitled to 65 delegates, with possible use of proxies.]

5. U.S. Greens attending international Green meetings will be observers, not standing U.S. Green delegates. (The next one will be held in Oaxaca, Mexico, September 20-25, 1999.)

I. **Proposal to Join ASGP and GPUSA** - Nancy Broyles and Steve Shafarman

That the California Green Party endorse both the Association of State Green Parties and Green Parties USA equally.

Both Nancy and Steve emphasized that the purpose of this proposal was to bring unity to the national Green Party movement and to reflect our respect-for-diversity key value. At the last GPUSA convention in Washington, D.C., there was general agreement that GPUSA wants to work with ASGP in making a strong national Green Party.

The following friendly amendments were proposed:

1. To sunset our GPUSA membership at the same time that our ASGP membership sunsets, which is the first decision-making meeting after the Nov. 2000 election. Accepted by presenter.

2. That the ASGP be deleted from the proposal, since we are already a member.

Declined by the presenter because of some question about the joining procedure.

Before the proposal was tested for consensus or put to a vote, it was withdrawn by Nancy, who indicated she wanted to rework it.

Lunch discussion groups on the fluoride issue, women's concerns, and men's concerns

SATURDAY, AUGUST 14, 1999 - Afternoon Session

Facilitators: Lynn Serpe and John Strawn

J. Candidates for Presidential Primary - Orval Osborne and Mike Feinstein

Proposals:

1) That the August 14-15th, 1999 General Assembly of the Green Party of California (GPCA) direct the GPCA Coordinating Committee to tell the California Secretary of State to place Ralph Nader's name on the March 2000 Green presidential primary ballot.

In a written statement, Ralph Nader stated that in January 2000 he would make a definite decision as to whether he would run; and that if he decides to, he will formally file as a presidential candidate; will spend at least 100 days on the road, with 3 events in every state, including Alaska and Hawaii; and will give 6-weeks' notice to local Greens prior to his appearance. It was explained that, although he cannot register as a Green Party member because of a promise to his deceased father that he would never join any political party, he has always been on the side of the oppressed and so is behind the Green Party's Key Values.

John Strawn reported that of the numerous people who were approached by the Candidate Exploratory Committee, several showed serious interest, but Ralph was the only one who was ready to make a commitment, and he has shown support of the Green Party by actively supporting several Green Party candidates since the 1996 election, including Audie Bock.

Because there were some unresolved concerns by people not willing to stand aside, a vote was taken, with the following results:

45 Yes; 6 Stand-asides, and 3 No . With 92% in favor, this proposal carried.

The vote is $45/48 = .94$

2) That the August 14th-15th, 1999 General Assembly of the Green Party of California (GPCA) confirm a time line for consideration of other potential candidates, before the November 1999 deadline to place names on the March 2000 Green presidential primary ballot.

Delegates with unresolved concerns were willing to step aside, so there was **consensus.**

K. Possible changes in Green Party primary election rules - Mike Feinstein and Charles Douglas

A history of NOTA (None-of-the-above) was given in order to show why a bylaws change in how our state county councils are elected would be beneficial at this time.

Proposal:

? Addition to the Bylaws, to read as follows:

For the 150 signatures now required for state-wide candidates, at least 10 congressional districts must be represented with at least 10 signatures each, and to insure geographical distribution of these geographical districts, 1 congressional district's worth of signatures

must come from each of the 4 Board of Equalization Districts; and no more than 5 of those 10 congressional districts' worth of signatures may come from any one Board of Equalization District.

There being delegates with outstanding concerns who were not willing to stand aside, a vote was taken, with the following results:

35 Yes; 6 Stand asides; 16 No .

Since only 69% voted Yes, the proposal failed.

L. State Initiatives - Greg Jan

1) Positions on existing initiatives

Since the Plenary had already voted to follow the recommendations of the Initiatives WG regarding Initiatives #1 on Murder: Special Circumstances (oppose), #3 on Peace Officers (oppose), #4 on Juvenile Crime (oppose); and #5 on Definition of Marriage (oppose), the remaining 3 were considered separately as follows:

#2 Cardenas Textbook Act of 2000 - Recommended support

A friendly amendment was accepted that if either of the state teachers' associations oppose it, we will too. However, there being no consensus, we will take no position on this initiative.

#6 Tribal Gaming Compacts - Recommendation to oppose was accepted by **consensus.**

#7 "None of the Above" Ballot Option - Recommendation to oppose was accepted by **consensus** because the NOTA is non-binding.

2) Procedures for stands on future initiatives - Mike Feinstein

Proposal:

That upon recommendation from the Initiatives Working Group to the State Coordinating Committee, we would use the county-by-county endorsement process to take positions on any other propositions which may qualify for the March 7th election. **Consensus.**

Proposal:

For any state proposition which we do take a position on, that if we are approached by the appropriate (pro or con) campaign committee, [that upon recommendation from the Initiatives Working Group,] that the State Coordinating Committee be authorized to have the Green Party of California be an endorser and appropriately participate in the campaign (including the possibility of being part of the ballot argument in the state voter pamphlet).

Friendly amendments (all accepted):

- a) Delete the words "that upon recommendation from the Initiatives Working Group"
 - b) Add "providing that participation will not incur any financial obligations"
 - c) At the first General Assembly following the election of county councils, the General Assembly shall automatically confirm and recognize the members of the county councils certified by local county election officials.
 - d) Add "The Initiatives Working Group will do everything it can to assist the State Coordinating Committee in its work on this;
 - e) Add "and that the existing campaign committees will be notified of the official positions the GP has taken".
- Passed by **consensus**.

M. Restructuring of Working Groups -Discussion (Lucy Colvin)

The members of this WG (Lucy Colvin, Linda Martin, and Mike Feinstein) never succeeded in getting together, so the suggestions contained in the packet were authored by Mike.

Two of these had already been accepted (see G-5). Instead of requesting consideration of the other four, Lucy asked each person present to write the 3 top-priority tasks which would most strengthen the Green Party of California. Those listed orally included:

- *Run credible candidates at all levels
- *Youth organizing
- *Electoral reform (PR/IRV)
- *Regular community economic conferences
- *Register more diverse people
- *Work on local issues

A straw vote agreed that the Ad-hoc Restructuring Working Group should work with the Coordinating Committee, since the former's recommendations (e.g., that each WG prepare a yearly work plan; that all WG prepare their agendas in advance for state meetings; that the CC, with input from each WG, develop a 2-year schedule for the General Assemblies and Gatherings) involve all the Working Groups; and that the members of the Restructuring Working Group (and any other California Greens who are interested in restructuring) are invited to attend the retreat November 13th.

Working Groups Session I: Platform, Bylaws, Education/Media, and Social Justice

The Saturday-night dinner at the Kingston Island Grille was sold out (66 people attended) Speakers included Paul Cienfuegos on "How Corporate Rule has Replaced Your Democracy".

SUNDAY, AUGUST 15, 1999 - Morning Session

Facilitators: Lucy Colvin and Greg Jan; timer Peggy Lewis; Vibes Tyler Snortum-Phelps and Linda Howard

Announcements included the following:

- *The fluoride proposal will be resubmitted.
- *Yasha Muscoso will run for representative from 6th Congressional District (Marin/Sonoma Counties)
- *Paul Cienfuegos will donate to the Santa Barbara Greens 10% of his book-sales receipts.
- *Modesto has 2 Green candidates for City Council.
- *A new issue of *Green Concensus* just arrived; locals were invited to take bundles for tabling
- *Audie Bock will be running for reelection
- *Dan Solnit distributed the 1995 Strategic Plan

N. **Treasurer's Report** - Joe Louis Hoffman

Because he left specific figures at home, he was able to give only the following general information:

Expenses: The Coordinating Committee is under budget (less than \$2,000)
(No other Working Groups submitted expenses)

Most expenses went for Project 2000, budgeted at \$20,00, which covers Dan Solnit's salary plus \$3,000 for travel etc. (The plan was to hire 4 full-time staff instead of the one part-time person we now have.)

Receipts: Rent for the new San Francisco office: \$1,500
\$39,000 gross from 20,500 mailings sent out [890 people sent \$44 each]
T-shirts, *Green Concensus* (30,000 copies costs \$.14 each) etc. sent to people who contributed money, so the net is difficult to calculate

Joe stressed the importance of each local paying dues, (there is \$600 in uncollected dues) and said that for the time being we have \$20,000 in enforceable promises, from which we can borrow up to \$10,000.

O. **Electing County Councils using Choice Voting** - Caleb Kleppner

Three working groups combined to formulate this proposal: Goals & Strategies (Mark Stout), Electoral Reform (Caleb Kleppner), and Bylaws (Charles Douglas).

Proposal: To change the state bylaws to enable but not require counties to use the proportional representation system known as choice voting to elect Green Party County Councils.

Answers to clarifying questions revealed that each county council can decide whether to implement this proposal but would have to submit their bylaws to the County registrar no later than Oct. 1, 1999, in order to apply in the March 2000 primary; and choice votes could be counted in other ways than by expensive new equipment (e.g., hand-written paper ballots; assistance from the League of Women Voters).

Friendly amendments (none accepted except #4):

1) County Councils which do not notify the state coordinating committee of a change in their voting system will not be held to be in violation of our bylaws.

2) Add to the proposal "in implementation of Supreme Court interpretations of a party's 1st-Amendment right to govern itself according to its own rules."

3) If county election officials refuse to implement our bylaws, we will hold them, and not the County Council, to be in violation.

4) At the first General Assembly following the election of county councils, the General Assembly shall automatically confirm and recognize the members of the county councils certified by local county election officials.

After 2 minutes of caucusing, there was **consensus** for the proposal as originally stated, with the addition of the 4th friendly amendment.

Working Group Session II: Electoral Reform, Goals & Strategies, Alliance-building, and Ballot Initiatives (plus a tabling demonstration by Dan Solnit in downtown Santa Barbara)

P. **Coordinating Committee Election**

Using secret ballots, Jo Chamberlain was elected as an at-large member of the coordinating committee (33 yes; 0 no).

Local County Councils were urged to fill the vacancies for representatives of the following regions to the Coordinating Committee: Los Angeles, Sacramento/Sierra, Santa Cruz/ Monterey, and Shasta [The Sacramento/Sierra region announced that Peggy Lewis has agreed to be their 2nd CC representative.]

SUNDAY, AUGUST 15, 1999 - Afternoon Session

Q. **Plans for next Plenaries** - Greg Jan

Proposal: The Coordinating Committee recommends that the next two plenaries be held in January 2000 and May 2000.

Since there were no unresolved concerns, there was **consensus**.

On behalf of her County Council, Linda Martin offered San Diego as the site for the January 2000 plenary. The dates will be either Jan. 22-23 or Jan. 15-16 (Martin L. King Jr. day). She also requested from the Santa Barbara group, information on the cost of food and the number of host-housing requests for this Plenary.

R. **Project 2000** - Daniel Solnit

Daniel announced that as a result of the tabling workshop he had just conducted with a handful of eager apprentices in downtown Santa Barbara, half a dozen Greens and 1 Democrat were registered to vote, and a \$5 donation was received. He emphasized that for each Green voter registered, we should ask for a phone number and an e-mail address ("Can we send you occasional information via e-mail?"), and make 2 copies of each completed registration

form, one for your local group (to use for a phone follow-up) and one for the new state office in San Francisco. He will then mail to each registrant a copy of *Green Concensus* and a reply card and envelope, with a welcome letter and an invitation to get involved locally and to make a financial contribution to the state Green Party. So far we are just barely breaking even financially. He passed out a sheet showing Green Party registration by county from Oct. 1998 to July 1999, and commented that almost all of the top 10 counties have tabling programs.

Working Group Session III: Campaigns & Candidates, Ecology, International, and Finance

S. Affirmatiion of New WG Coordinators; Reports

1) Bylaws - Charles Douglas, substituting for Michael Monnot, reported that the group is not very active, but has endorsed choice voting and plans to disseminate an updated version of the bylaws. Rick Newbury was affirmed as a coordinator for a 9-month period.

2) Platform - Sandy McMillian reported progress on their summary , including a Spanish edition, long-range planning (Woody Hastings), Guidelines (Ona Smith), and nuclear (Pamela Meidel). They have also scheduled a meeting for the 1st or 3rd weekend in November. Budd Dickenson, their outgoing co-coordinator, has agreed to serve again amd was affirmed.

3) Electoral Reform -Gloria Purcell reported for Caleb Kleppner, who will write an article on local action on choice voting for *Green Concensus*. She invited participation by anyone inerested in writing a segment of the electoral code.

4) Campaigns & Candidates - Orval Osborne reported that a female co-chair is needed; that the group is working on arranging a presidential-campaign forum; on compiling a resource list; and on guidelines on how to support campaigns and candidates (training sessions are being planned for early December of January). Mike Feinstein will continue to keep a list of candidates.

5) Alliance - Jo Chamberlain urged that this WG to be sent back to the Restructuring WG, and that all working groups to include building alliances in their mission statements. She feels the Alliance is more of a support group than a working group.

6) Ecology - Don Eichelberger (no co-coordinator). Have recommended supporting two initiatives (Bison protection and joining Sierra Nevada Forest), and will follow up by writing to the respective government agencies. The group is also working on the fluoridation issue, which they will make another proposal on at the next plenary, and on joining the Pesticide Reform Network (Bob Worcester?); is developing its statement of purpose; and plans a workshop on Energy and Global Change at the next Gathering.

7) Media/Education - Had an organizers' training session in July. Have begun working on their mission statement. The present coordinator Mark Stout is stepping down, and Michael Rockness (sp?) has agreed to be a co-coordinator if another can be found. (Affirmation was not requested.)

8) International - Charles Douglas reported that at the January plenary, they will propose a youth wing similar to those in other countries; that no one has volunteered to attend the Green convention in Iraq; that they intend to maintain a notebook and to broadcast information to more groups and to increase relations with other national Greens, as well as to attend the Green conference in Oaxaca, Mexico; and that they hope to get Yoscha Fisher and other international Greens to attend California state meetings.

Co-coordinators Pamela Meidel and Charles Douglas were affirmed - a truly model team representing youth and an older person, male and female, and northern and southern Calif.!

9) Initiatives - Greg Jan. They will send letters stating the California Green Party's stands on the state propositions, and recommend that locals especially emphasize the anti-gay initiative. They will also review all other potential initiatives and will poll county locals on any they feel are important.

10) Goals and Strategies - Daniel Solnit. They will update the sheet passed out at this Plenary to cover the next three years, and will bring it to the attention of other working groups without attempting to implement their recommendations.

11) Finance - Joe Louis Hoffman-The treasurer's report will be sent to all counties.

12) Social Justice - They are woking on their mission statement, the 3-strikes law, and outreach to ethnic communities.

The ending circle ceremony included many expressions of appreciation.

Dorothy Holland, Note-taker