



GREEN HORIZON

Magazine

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



**Another
chance
to break
the grip
of the
duopoly**

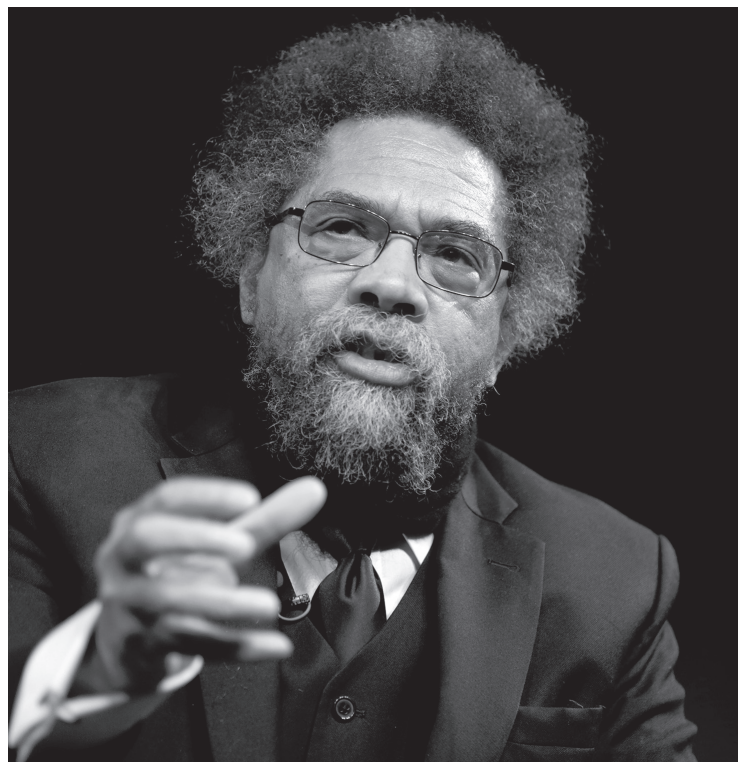


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“Safe and Just Earth System Boundaries”

That’s the title of an article published last May in *Nature*, the leading international weekly journal of science (www.nature.com/articles/s41586-023-06083-8).

Abstract: *The stability and resilience of the Earth system and human well-being are inseparably linked, yet their interdependencies are generally under-recognized; consequently, they are often treated independently. Here, we use modeling and literature assessment to quantify safe and just Earth System Boundaries (ESBs) for climate, the biosphere, water cycles, nutrient cycles, and aerosols at global and subglobal scales. We propose ESBs for maintaining the resilience and stability of the Earth system (safe ESBs) and minimizing exposure to significant harm to humans from Earth system change (a necessary but not sufficient condition for justice). Our findings show that justice considerations constrain the integrated ESBs more than safety considerations for climate and atmospheric aerosol loading. We propose that our assessment provides a quantitative foundation for safeguarding the global commons for all people now and into the future.*

It’s discouraging to consider that we’ve likely gone beyond many of the safe boundaries already; yet it’s encouraging to note that (finally) some scientists and authors are considering issues related to *justice* in their model constructions. This may very well be a response to what Greens have been advocating for the last four decades.

The exciting novelty of this report came with the identification and inclusion in the models of what they’ve called *Justice Criteria*:

* Interspecies justice and Earth system stability: Aims to protect humans, other species and ecosystems; rejects human exceptionalism.

* Intergenerational justice: Examines relationships and obligations between generations, such as ecosystem destruction affecting current youth and future populations.

* Intragenerational justice: Within countries and communities and among individuals.

* Intersectional justice: Multiple and overlapping social identities and categories that underpin inequality, vulnerability, and the capacity to respond.

To get a visceral sense of what’s being disclosed I suggest you access the article and immerse yourself in the graphics and tables to fully appreciate what they’ve found. Seven of the eight global-scale safe and just ESBs that they quantified have already been exceeded. Technological and institutional remedies are imaginable, but implementing such without social transformation toward justice, democracy, and egalitarianism could significantly harm current and future generations.

Many of these observations were noted *fifty years ago* in an “Institute of Ecologists” presentation to the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment. Unfortunately, to date, power elites, governments, and corporations have chosen to essentially maintain the suicidal political/economic **status quo**. Let’s change that!

— Charles Laws

THE TEAM

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EDITORS

Steve Welzer: stevenwelzer@gmail.com
John Rensenbrink, 2003-2022

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF GREEN HORIZON FOUNDATION

Ted Becker, Alabama	Darryll Moch, Washington, D.C.
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Madelyn Hoffman, Colombia	Steve Welzer, New Jersey

INQUIRIES, SUBMISSIONS, DONATIONS, LETTERS: GREEN HORIZON FOUNDATION
P.O. Box 2029
Princeton, NJ 08543 USA
Green.Horizon.Foundation@gmail.com

GRAPHIC DESIGN:
www.SharonPieniak.com

LOGO DESIGN: Sean Hill

EDITORIAL ASSISTANCE:
Paula Fischer

MEMBERSHIP & MARKETING MANAGER, HARDCOPY:
Laura Houck

SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITE:
Deanna Taylor

Green Horizon had been very much John Rensenbrink’s project. With his passing last year a new editor is needed. It’s the only print magazine covering the Green politics movement, and there is certainly resonance for its continuation. Please let us know if you might be interested in becoming part of a new publication team.

Another chance to break the grip of the duopoly

1992

The Democratic Party candidate, Bill Clinton, was not well-known. The Republican Party candidate, George Bush (the incumbent) was not well-liked. In the wake of Ronald Reagan's tax cuts federal deficits were soaring. As globalization gained steam, jobs were increasingly being off-shored to lower-wage countries. The populace was discontented and the electorate was willing to consider a systemic outsider named Ross Perot.

Perot said he knew how to rein in the deficit. He was a straight-talking Texan who ran as an independent and was able to appeal across party lines. He was actually leading in the polls during most of May and June of that year. If he had made it a three-way race and then went on to found the Reform Party from a position of gravitas, we might now look back on 1992 as the year when the American political system started to accommodate "more voices and more choices." But Ross Perot had a temperamental personality and very little in the way of political savvy. He failed to assemble an effective campaign team and he wavered in his commitment to the race. He wound up with less than 20% of the vote in November.

Perot was a loner rather than a party builder. His Reform Party never settled on an ideology or a vision. There's a tendency for third party initiatives to fade into obscurity after about ten years of wheel-spinning. That was the case with Barry Commoner's Citizens Party, Tony Mazzocchi's Labor Party, Rocky Anderson's Justice Party, and Ross Perot's Reform Party.

2000

The Ralph Nader campaign had notable momentum during the late summer and fall. Nader was holding "super-rallies" that were filling the largest municipal arenas across the country. And he was starting to see the potential to build the Green Party into a real force. Those who worked closely with Ralph during the thrilling crescendo of that campaign (I was privileged to) were aware of how he was making plans to keep barnstorming after Election Day in order to galvanize the growth of state party chapters and Campus Greens locals. But the momentum withered after the December Debacle in the state of Florida (where governor Jeb Bush managed to "adjust" the vote total in favor of his presidential candidate brother, George). Vilification was heaped upon Nader for "spoiling" Al Gore's ascendancy.

After that Ralph got preoccupied with deflecting arrows. Some Greens became reticent about having such an impact and pulled

back from the relationship. So when the anticipated breakthrough of 2000 failed to materialize and the Demonization by Democrats accelerated, the Green Party found itself again consigned to the margins. Nader received about 3% of the vote in 2000, but the Green presidential candidate in 2004 barely got 0.1%.

Yet the Green Party did not disappear, as so many others have done since the only-two-significant-choices system became ingrained 150 years ago. Its endurance under adversity has been notable. It can be attributed to the fact that the Greens offer a distinctive and resonant alternative to all the old ideologies. Such is evident in the growth of the Green politics movement worldwide. It indicates that the Green Party is here to stay.

2024

A Gallup poll released in October 2023 showed that 63% of US adults agreed that "the Republican and Democratic parties do such a poor job of representing the American people" that the appearance of alternative parties on the ballot would be welcome. That 63% was the highest figure since Gallup first started asking the question twenty years ago. A number of relatively high-profile alternative campaigns have emerged to offer the clearly desired additional choices. That includes Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. and Cornel West running as independents and a centrist group called "No Labels"—in addition to the persisting minor parties, the Libertarians and the Greens.

One could imagine a scenario where Kennedy and West, by critiquing the duopolistic system, help move the electorate toward thinking outside the box, and then the "build something enduring" message of the Green Party is able to take on a special resonance. Moreover, there has been a consistent background current of advocacy in favor of the idea that the Greens, uniquely, could start to serve as the umbrella electoral vehicle for the leftist social change movement in general.

In a recent interview Jill Stein (who is expected to seek the Green Party nomination) said: "The American people have been hungry for options ... so get ready. What we're seeing is a voter rebellion! It's been a long time coming." If any of the alternative candidates is able to poll high enough to force their inclusion in the televised debates next fall, 2024 may be remembered as the breakthrough year that opened the door toward eventual full multi-party democracy for the long-suffering American electorate.

— SW

Mel King, Presente!

Mel King died in March at the age of 94. A lifelong resident of the South End neighborhood of Boston, he was active in creating community programs and institutions for low-income people in the city and was the founder of the South End Technology Center. At the time of his death, he held the position of Senior Lecturer Emeritus at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in their Department of Urban Studies and Planning.

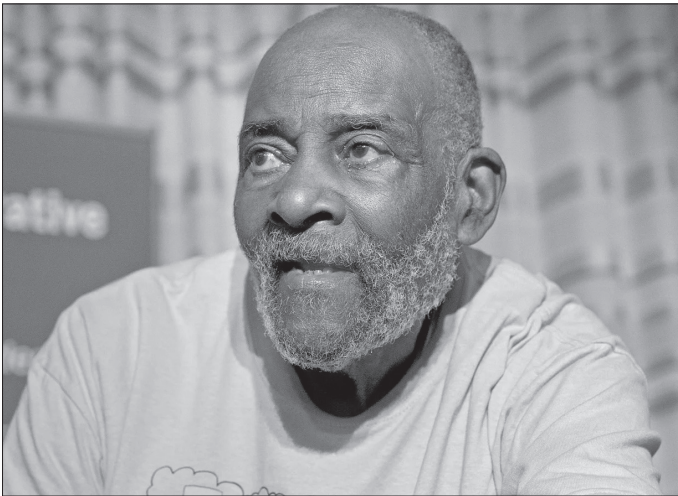
After serving as Director of the New Urban League of Greater Boston and Youth Director at the United South End Settlements (USES), he was fired from the latter position when he promoted neighborhood control rather than government control. Community protests of his firing resulted in his being rehired and given the job of Community Organizer!

His political impact was notable. After serving for many years in the Massachusetts House of Representatives as a Democrat, King founded the Rainbow Coalition Party (RCP) in that state in 1997. In 2002 the RCP merged with the Massachusetts Green Party to become the Green-Rainbow Party, the Massachusetts affiliate of the Green Party of the United States. That same year Mel supported Green-Rainbow Party nominee Jill Stein for governor, saying: “Jill Stein is the only candidate who will speak truth to power. She’s the only one who makes issues of racism and social justice integral parts of her campaign.”

Mel King remained an active member of the Green-Rainbow Party until his passing. His book, *Chain of Change: Struggles for Black Community Development*, focused on housing, education, employment, and political issues in Boston from the 1950s

through the 1970s. Inspired by young activists, he reprinted it in 2018. Two years ago an intersection in Boston’s South End was named the “Mel King Square” in his honor.

* * * *



Mel King

Mel King: *The Arc of the Rainbow Bends Towards Love*

BY ELI BECKERMAN

Boston lost its Lion King in March with the passing of Melvin H. King at the age of 94. It is impossible to summarize the impact that Mel’s life had on the city, and on the people who endeavor to do justice to his life and vision.

State Senator Lydia Edwards put it this way: “All I can say is thank you. There will be a list of political accolades that expand over decades that speak to Mel’s vision and intellect. But it was his steadfast dedication to revolutionary connection every Sunday at his house that left a lasting mark ... the act of breaking bread, enjoying food and thoughts. Thank you, Mel, for fighting, running, laughing, and living. Rest in power.”

King brilliantly balanced holistic, big-picture thinking with small-scale, person-to-person interactions that called all of us to our higher selves. He knew that large-scale systemic

change must be modeled at the community level and built through collaborative action. He was a teacher, an organizer, a writer, an artist, a state legislator—and a transformative candidate for Boston Mayor. Mel knew that his 1983 campaign had put a marker in the sand and that the city would never look back. On election night, Mel described the campaign as “what historians will recognize as a turning point in the social, cultural, and political history of Boston.” Indeed, it ushered in, through countless interactions over the following years, today’s Boston which is brimming with visionary leadership reflective of its diverse populations.

At Mel’s four-hour memorial service and “homegoing celebration,” Boston’s Green New Deal Mayor, Michelle Wu, remarked: “Mel’s flame burned with a radiance and warmth that found and was felt in every corner of our city; and everywhere he went, he carried that light with him. He held it up to our hearts and kindled it to a determination and love for justice and community. He held it up to our city, and kindled the heart of Boston, a heart that burns brighter every day with the fire of his legacy.” She continued with a personal tale that rings true to everyone who knew of Mel and his wife Joyce’s profound sharing through their welcoming Sunday brunches: “I remember the first time I had the chance to join the brunch table, as a new neighbor in the South End, struggling with the day-to-day of how to put one foot in front of the other, raising my sisters, trying to care for my mom, in the throes of crisis, and wondering, ‘where do we belong?’ And I made my way because I heard that all were welcome at Miss Joyce and Mel’s table. And over those little fruit cups, I found myself taking in a big helping of community. A belonging of connection. Of love. And I walked out of there feeling for the first time in this city, that maybe my family and I could belong.”

Mel’s 1983 mayoral campaign gave Boston the Rainbow Coalition, which was borrowed by Jesse Jackson at the national level in two successive campaigns for president. In 1997, King recognized that a new political formation was necessary and he founded the Rainbow Coalition Party. In 2002 he proudly led them into a merger with the Massachusetts Green Party.

A month after Mel’s death, another giant—Harry Belafonte—joined him as an ancestor. In a remarkable documentary about Belafonte’s life, *Sing Your Song*, he recounts a revelation that came late to him: “Those of us who were part of the civil rights movement, as we grew older, as victories began to evidence themselves, I think we took a lot for granted. I don’t think we secured the way in which to pass on the baton.” He first called a gathering of the elders, and then “began to understand that the thing I needed to do next was call a gathering of the young. There perhaps would lay the key.” That insight was intuitive to Mel King. He was focused on the young people in his community from the very beginning. He *knew* that empowering them was the key. And, like Belafonte, Mel knew the power of song. At the 2009 Green-Rainbow Party convention, he had the entire convention divide up into breakout groups to write and then perform uplifting anthems of joyful struggle for change.

His politics represented something entirely distinct from the prevailing image and practice of US politics. They drew

on rich traditions of the African diaspora, woven through the growing political consciousness of the civil rights era and the deepening practice of community organizing. Love and listening and respect and learning were at the center. Sharing was a core principle. Sharing over bread was even better.

As I reflect on what’s possible in one lifetime, and the lessons that Mel’s life generously leaves for those of us who follow, it feels important to honor his gift and his legacy. In many ways, Mel was the consummate ecological political actor; and his deep impact on the city of Boston and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts continues to ripple out in waves infused with his spirit.

*Love of power builds fences.
The power of love opens doors.
Love of power requires institutions.
The power of love builds community.
Love of power sets limits.
The power of love is infinite.
— Mel King*

Rest in peace. Rest in power. Rest in love. Mel King, presente!

ELI BECKERMAN was co-chair of the Green-Rainbow Party of Massachusetts with Jill Stein from 2008-2009 and worked for her nonprofit, the Massachusetts Coalition for Healthy Communities. In part inspired by Ralph Nader’s 2000 Green Party campaign for president, he left the field of astronomy in 2005 to focus on what was happening down here on Earth.

* * * *

In memoriam

BY JILL STEIN (APRIL 1, 2023)

The Green-Rainbow Party mourns the loss of Mel King, an icon of Boston politics and founding father of the Green-Rainbow Party, who died at home on March 28. Mel King was a poet, politician, philosopher, and irrepressible force for good. He inspired the best in everyone he touched, as a man who knew no enemies, and for whom “love is the question and the answer.”

As a fearless, unstoppable agent of change, Mel launched the Rainbow Coalition Party in 1997, saying Bill Clinton’s welfare “reform” and immigration policies were “unconscionable ... I cannot be identified with parties that have those kinds of policies, and which really don’t care about workers.” In 2002 Mel led the merger of the Rainbow Coalition and Green parties to “give more strength to our collective and individual voices” for our shared principles and agendas.

Mel was defiant in the face of fear-mongering against alternative parties. “I get angry at the use of fear to exert control, and that’s all it is about...control. Every vote ought to be a revolutionary

act. It ought to be about change. This country offers too many possibilities to allow that kind of fear to keep anyone from being who they truly are and from voting for a future they truly want.”

Mel King was the inspiration for so much of what is just and decent in politics today. He was ahead of the curve throughout his decades of activism, including his pioneering legislation for community gardens, access to sustainable fresh food, and community development corporations to provide affordable housing and jobs for people, not profit. Mel’s vision and courage are more timely and more needed than ever. The Green-Rainbow Party is honored to carry forward his living political legacy.

* * * *

[The following are excerpts from John Rensenbrink’s remarks to the Green-Rainbow Party convention held in Worcester, Massachusetts in November 2014.]

Ralph Nader has urged the creation of a Big Tent. The image that comes to mind for me is the rainbow. Black and brown and red and yellow and white are perforce growing into an interaction of

peoples. Different cultures, different languages, different values rub shoulders such that diversity, in our very mobile society, is beginning to become the norm. It is visible and palpable now right here in Massachusetts. The Green-Rainbow Party! Who would have thought that maturity would ever come to politics? Would ever be allowed in?! Or at least get its foot in the door, as you have done here. All of us Greens in the US can stand and say thank you for showing us a pathway toward where we can go, where we should go.

Nature shouts out at us at every turn and in every way: Diversity! But it also shouts out at us: Relationship! All things are connected! Acknowledging this fact (ecology’s most important finding), we can then address the question: what kind of relationship? Keep in mind that we have available the deep and healing power of dialogue. So: Let us cultivate a seasoned commitment to diversity, relationship, and dialogue. You can build a party on that; you can build a nation on that; you can build a world on that. Speaking of our world: look at us ... over one hundred countries with Green parties organizing and on the march to rescue the nature we are so intimately a part of, to assure our survival as a species, to secure the basis for a just and sustainable livelihood for all.

All hail the rainbow!

The first generation of Green Party leaders—the founding generation—is starting to pass now. It’s poignant. We owe them so much. Our society has been going in a socially and ecologically unsustainable direction for a very long time. Fritjof Capra—who co-authored the seminal book, *Green Politics*, in 1984 along with Charlene Spretnak—wrote another book called *The Turning Point*. Posterity will recognize that we, under the leadership of the founders, started to effectuate a profound civilizational turning point. Arguably it started with *Silent Spring*, Earth Day, *Limits to Growth*, *A Blueprint for Survival*, the UN Stockholm Declaration, and then the emergence of the Green politics movement. The initiators of the latter were unusually visionary. We should keep a list, and we should memorialize each. Here’s a start: Petra Kelly (1992); Rudolf Bahro (1997); Murray Bookchin (2006); Edward Goldsmith (2009); Wangari Maathai (2011); Danny Moses (2021); John Rensenbrink (2022); Dee Berry (2022); Colia Clark (2022); Elie Yarden (2022); Mel King (2023); George Martin (2023).

conservatives should seek to conserve . . .

the Bill of Rights
the rule of law at home & abroad
the buying power of the dollar
the free & independent press
the safety net
the commons
the separation of powers

fiscal responsibility
indigenous traditions
children’s creativity
social security and medicare
scientific curiosity and rigor
comity and conviviality
separation of church and state

jobs
energy
privacy
top soil
democracy
community
wilderness

(inspired by a Charlie Keil poem)

What Is Bioregionalism?

[Below are excerpts from the introductory chapter of the volume Perspectives in Bioregional Education, edited by Frank Traina and Susan Darley-Hill and published by the North American Association for Environmental Education in 1995. It includes an examination of the origins of bioregional thinking and a brief review of its history as a socio-ecological movement. The impact of bioregional thinking on complementary movements such as Deep Ecology and the political Green parties is also discussed. Finally, its viability as an instrument of social change and force for ecosystem restoration is considered.]

BY FRANK TRAINA

The word “bioregion” has been around since 1973, but the ideas and values of the bioregional movement are among the most ancient in human experience. Because the movement has its roots more in the alternative lifestyle of the back-to-the-land movement of the 1950s and ’60s than in the academic establishment of mainstream American culture, the word “bioregion” has not been commonly used in the field of environmental education and in the scientific community. But the process of cultural diffusion has slowly spread the term from its alternative-culture homebase into wider usage in mainstream media and society. Bioregionalism has been introduced to the general public through the writings of many authors. Each offers a definition of what bioregionalism is, but each also admits that the idea is still evolving. In order to understand the ideas of bioregionalism, a brief review of the history of its intellectual development is of value.

DEFINITIONS OF BIOREGION

A bioregion is an area without hard boundaries but which can be distinguished by its many natural features including the flora, fauna, soil, climate, geology, and drainage area. From a social-change perspective, a critical component of each bioregion is the human culture which has developed within and is integral to that area. This essential human element is what distinguishes the concept of bioregion from similar ecological entities which traditionally treat humans and their cultures as interlopers rather than as integral components of a natural community. Altogether, the bioregions of the Earth form a vast patchwork extending over the planet. Political boundaries have little meaning in classical ecological thinking. However, any type of partition, including that of bioregion, is somewhat arbitrary and artificial. “Ecoregion” is a similar term first introduced by J.M. Crowley. The concept was developed for governmental use to catalog natural resources and assist in their management on a regional level. Early maps relied heavily on soil, climate, and potential natural vegetation parameters for defining distinct ecoregions (Bailey 1980). The delineation process was further refined to more clearly reflect the aquatic component and land use in each region (Omernik 1987).

Ecoregion and bioregion are alike in that the partitioning of both is based on physiographic and biotic features. However, the cultural aspects of bioregionalism sets it apart from the more objective purpose of ecoregion definition. The collaboration of Peter Berg, a central founder of the bioregional movement, and biogeographer Raymond Dasmann in the mid-1970s resulted in the original formulation of the concept.

Determining the appropriate size for a bioregion is still a conundrum for bioregionalist thinkers. In some attempts to resolve this, the experience of Native Americans is drawn upon since they lived in a close relationship with nature. Berg and Dasmann were interested in developing a concept which included both culture and nature, so they explored the size of area which Native peoples tended to regard as a home territory. In 1976 they published an article in Edward Goldsmith’s *The Ecologist* magazine in which

The ideas and values
of the movement
are among the
most ancient in
human experience.
Bioregionalism tugs
at many of our
traditional values:
nature, rootedness,
cooperation,
compassion, self-
reliance, participation,
sustainability.

Peter Berg and Raymond Dasmann were interested in developing a concept which included both culture and nature. In regard to scale, they explored the size of area which Native peoples tended to regard as a home territory.

they defined bioregion as a term which “refers both to geographic terrain and a terrain of consciousness—to a place and the human ideas that have developed about how to live in that place.”

Berg and Dasmann argued that the initial determination of a bioregion can be made by examining the climate, the physical features, the animal and plant geography, natural history, and other descriptive natural characteristics. But the final boundaries are determined by the feelings of the people living there “in-place,” that is, who are living there enduringly as “natives”—as people consciously living in such a way “that will enrich the life of that place, restore its life-supporting systems, and establish an ecologically and socially sustainable pattern of existence within it.” (Berg and Dasmann 1990: 35)

A HISTORY OF THE CONCEPT AND THE MOVEMENT

So the bioregional idea fuses two components: humans and nature. As Elan Shapiro puts it, “What bioregionalism means is that in order to survive on this planet, in order to be whole, we need to realize how important it is that we’re part of the immediate place in which we live. We need to know this place in detail; we need to love it in the detail.” (1993: 17) Aberley sees the task of bioregionalism as bringing together dynamic human populations with distinct physical territories defined by continuities of land and life. He adds, “The promise is that these bioregions will be inhabited in a manner that respects ecological carrying capacity, engenders social justice, uses appropriate technology creatively, and allows for a rich interconnection between regionalized cultures.” (1993: 3)

Some credit Helen and Scott Nearing as being the spokespersons for those Americans who, during the middle of the last century, started abandoning city life for the joys and hardships of returning to the land. The Nearings became well-known through their books. During the counterculture movement of the 1960s and early ’70s many thousands of people tried to return to a more simple rural life. In their attempts to “get back to nature” they forged the foundation of the bioregional movement.

Peter Berg recalls formative times during the 1960s: “A lot of us who were Diggers (in the Haight-Ashbury district of San Francisco) went and lived at Black Bear Ranch for a while ... It might have been the most radical commune of the Sixties. Developing a sense of place started happening at Black Bear.

Maybe a quarter of what we ate was wild food ... We were a radical wilderness community.” (*Proceedings of North American Bioregional Congress III*, 1989: 50-51)

Berg first heard of the term “bioregion” in 1973 from Allen Van Newkirk, a Canadian poet and amateur biogeographer. Van Newkirk discussed bioregional strategy and described bioregional research as the study of culturally-induced changes in the distribution of wild plants and animals, and how the different natural regions of the Earth have been successively inhabited and at times deformed by various cultures. Van Newkirk introduced Peter Berg to the work of Raymond Dasmann.

In 1973 Berg, Judy Goldhaft, and others created the Planet Drum Foundation, which over the years would act as a strong advocate for bioregional ideas and organizing. The group published collections of maps, poems, essays and other materials as “bundles.” The early bundles began “laying out the intellectual territory of bioregionalism without even using the word.” (*Proceedings NABC III*, 1989: 52) Others seemed to sense this growing feeling of a “bioregional reality.” In 1975 Ernest Callenbach published *Ecotopia*, a fictional work about a future secession of northern California, Oregon, and Washington from a less ecologically-minded United States. By 1976 the term “bioregion” was incorporated in Berg’s writing. He recalls, “We knew that northern California was a bioregion ... So we formed the Frisco Bay Mussel Group, the first self-consciously bioregional group in the country.”

It should be noted that even in the early period of bioregional development there was a generalized spiritual undertone. Berg says: “Ecology became the ‘religion’ of the non-Eastern-oriented people in the movement. Earth orientation became the spiritual basis for people who weren’t involved in the transcendental cosmological stuff. And I’ll confess that about myself: ecology is a spiritual pursuit for me.” (*Proceedings NABC III*, 1989: 50)

The term “bioregion” seems to have slowly spread among those adopting a countercultural lifestyle because it was a word which expressed what they felt: political boundaries are not as important as natural boundaries; ecology is more important than the interests of the nation-state governments or those of the corporations. In their words, “Nature bats last.”

The experience of David Haenke, a central figure in the growth of the bioregional movement, illustrates this very well. Living in the Ozarks in an experimental homestead community, Haenke

wrote: "A lot of us back-to-the-land people with a nose to the wind and an eye on the newspaper saw the Ozarks being trashed and polluted just like everywhere else." In 1976, while working on a strategy to oppose ecologically destructive practices, an idea occurred to him: "Ozark Free State popped into my mind ... create an unofficial, undeclared, parallel, ecological Ozark nation!" (*Proceedings NABC II*, 1987: 38)

Two years after that revelation, Haenke heard about Berg's Planet Drum and Callenbach's *Ecotopia*. He began speaking to people throughout the Ozarks about bioregionalism. As a result, 150 people attended the first gathering of the Ozark Area Community Congress in 1980. Peter Berg met Haenke at the second meeting of OACC in 1981, where they broached the idea of having a continental bioregional congress. From that discussion emerged the first North American Bioregional Congress in 1984. It was held in Missouri with 217 people in attendance. Participants divided into committees: Agriculture/Permaculture, Bioregional Education, Bioregional Movement, Communications, Culture and the Arts, Deep Ecology, Eco-Defense, Eco-Feminism, Economics, Forests, Green Politics, Intentional Communities, Media, Native Peoples, Social Justice, Spirituality, and Water. Each committee met several times and developed resolutions which were presented to the entire plenary council and, with perhaps some modifications, voted on. The adopted resolutions can be referenced in *Proceedings NABC I*, 1984.

THE IDEA OF REINHABITATION

What Peter Berg calls the "terrain of consciousness" is linked to his ideas involving "reinhabitation." It is the moral dimension of living-in-place since it involves living in such a way as not to diminish the ecological well-being of that place, but rather to help enrich it. Berg and Dasmann state, "Reinhabitation means learning to live-in-place and regenerate an area that has been disrupted and injured through past exploitation." (Berg and Dasmann 1990: 35)

Christopher Plant writes, "Reinhabitation involves becoming native to a place, learning what its unique characteristics and needs might be, and what kinds of human activities it might support if we were to fit ourselves to the land, not require the land to bend to our demands." (Plant and Plant 1990: 104) Bioregional thinking means far more than identifying one's bioregion. It means developing a lifestyle, a culture, a politics which opposes the diminution of the natural integrity of that place. It means following the ethic of Aldo Leopold as expressed in *A Sand County Almanac*: "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it does otherwise." (Leopold 1949: 239)

Like the term "bioregion," the term "reinhabitation" is a construction which describes something that has already actually been going on—that is currently being done by large numbers of people, many of whom have no particular name for what they are doing. It involves the task of building a just, humane, ecologically sustainable culture and society. Industrial modern

growth society colonizes the land and destroys it. Bioregionalists and like-minded allies want to build a new culture that will reinhabit the land and sustain it.

HUMAN DIVERSITY IN THE BIOREGIONAL MOVEMENT

The movement is diverse. Its evolving set of ideas is attractive to many types of people, especially those feeling alienation toward the dominant culture and those with an affinity for the natural world. But even with this diversity there seems to be a common core set of values. Some of these values seem "traditional," that is, rural and old fashioned. "Bioregionalism tugs at many of our traditional values: nature, rootedness, cooperation, compassion, self-reliance, participation, sustainability." (Milbrath 1989: 214) Stephanie Mills states, "What bioregionalists want, and are willing to risk status and apparent security for, is a new way of life: simpler, freer, and more responsible; a life devoted to place." (1991:40) This involves a feeling of community with people in the context of a larger "family" which includes all the natural beings of a region ("all my relations").

Biologist Neil Evernden: "There appears to be a human phenomenon, similar in some ways to the experience of territoriality, that is described as aesthetic, a sense of knowing and of being a part of a particular place ... It's just what it feels like to be home." (1978: 19) In *Orion* magazine Scott Russell Sanders writes that mobility has been the rule in civilized history and rootedness the exception. He argues for the importance of "staying put ... every township, every field and creek, every mountain and forest on earth would benefit from the stable and enduring attention of place-committed men and women." (1992:45)

People engaged in preservation, conservation, or restoration of the natural environment in an area eventually start thinking along bioregional lines. The idea of place which bioregionalists have is different from the "place" of mainstream American culture. For bioregionalists the idea is more subjective; it has "soft boundaries" instead of hard ones like city limits. It's also deeper and richer because it is a product of numerous past evolutions: molecular, chemical, geological, biological and cultural. It is a place nested within places both spatially and temporally. Scott Sanders captures this feeling when he writes, "I think of my home ground as a series of nested rings, with house and family at the center, surrounded by the wider and wider hoops of neighborhood and community, the near-region within walking distance of my door, the more-distant wooded hills and karst landscape of southern Indiana, the watershed of the Ohio Valley, and so outward—and inward—to the ultimate source." (1992:47)

The size of a bioregion needs to be large enough to be relatively self-sustaining. Author Gene Marshall explains that although local bioregions may currently, in our globalized system, be economically linked to and dependent upon distant regions, a fully evolved bioregion ought to, eventually, become largely self-sufficient. Marshall, like Sanders, describes his home place as a series of nested rings. For him, these geographical delineations are important because they chart his circles of responsibility. We

Bioregion refers both to geographic terrain and a terrain of consciousness—to a place and the human ideas that have developed about how to live in that place.

can't realistically be responsible for the entire planet. We can perhaps identify with and feel responsibility for a homestead, a neighborhood, a community, and a bioregion: "The way to save the whole planet is to save its parts." (Zuckerman 1987: 63)

The debate within the environmental community about being locally-oriented or planet-oriented is a moot question to most bioregionalists, who agree with Scott Sanders: "On the wall beside me as I write there is a poster of the big blue marble encased in its white swirl of clouds. That is one pole of my awareness. The other pole is what I see through my window. I try to keep both in sight at once." (1992: 46)

SPIRITUALITY AS A BIOREGIONAL VALUE

In attempting to create a humane, ecologically-attuned culture, the bioregional movement touches on all the major sociological issues found in human societies: economic, familial, educational, political, etc. Because it takes such a strong moral stance with respect to the well-being of nature and the Earth, and since it demands commitment and offers people meaning, it takes on, even unwittingly, a spiritual tone. People from many different religions and philosophies consider themselves bioregionalists. The movement has a pervasive sense of the sacred.

"Deep Ecology" is a term that was coined by the Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess in the early 1970s. Like bioregionalism, it offers an ecocentric perspective which it develops in philosophical detail, and it tends to include a spiritual orientation. Bioregionalism is sometimes described as "applied deep ecology." In his 1984 paper, "Deep Ecology and Lifestyle," Naess describes the qualities which would be reflected by a person abiding by deep ecology principles. This individual would strive to live simply in community with nature, protecting local ecosystems and their wild inhabitants. They would focus on satisfying their

vital needs rather than esoteric consumer desires, behave in a nonviolent manner, and promote an equitable standard of living for fellow humans without undue cost to other species. In its attempts to redefine the relationship between humans and nature, deep ecology has much in common with bioregionalism.

WILDNESS AS A BIOREGIONAL VALUE

The idea of wildness, that is, nature unaffected by human action, receives attention from some environmental groups and is ignored by others—but it pervades the bioregional movement. Peter Berg states that there are four different inhabitory zones within every bioregion: cities, suburbs, rural areas, and wilderness areas. The latter is "the enduring source of a bioregion's spirit and regenerative power. It must be maintained for its own sake."

Wildness is the nature all around us which has overwhelming ultimate power over us. Wildness is the original homeland of the human species and will be here long after we have disappeared. Thoreau said: "In wildness is the preservation of the world." Gary Snyder, perhaps the best-known bioregional writer, sums up the movement quite succinctly when he writes: "We need a civilization that can live fully and creatively together with wildness." (1990: 6) The bioregional movement is experimenting with creating such. One important contribution is the emphasis on the linkages between wildness and our daily actions and behavior. Our eating of hamburger may encourage the destruction of the rain forests in order to construct more cattle ranches. Our disposal of plastic may choke fish in the oceans. To respect wildness, our own culture—the daily ways we do things—must change.

Thomas Berry noted in his talks and writings that people now are "autistic to nature" ... they do not hear, do not see, do not respond to the nature all around them. David Abram stresses how we must

Reinhabitation involves becoming native to a place, learning what its unique characteristics and needs might be, and what kinds of human activities it might support if we were to fit ourselves to the land instead of requiring the land to bend to our demands.

David Haenke: "Ozark Free State popped into my mind...
create an unofficial, undeclared, parallel, ecological Ozark nation!"

learn to listen to the flora and fauna. During the plenary sessions of the Bioregional Congresses, four persons are commissioned to represent "the other species," listen intently to the goings-on of the meeting and determine if their interests are being threatened. If so, they speak up and temporarily stop the meeting. This attunement to the beings of the natural world and their needs is central to the spirituality of the bioregional movement.

The bioregional worldview argues for a consideration of the way Native Americans once lived on the Earth. It's not a question of "going back" but, rather, an appreciation of how (and why) their lifeways were, overall, sustainable. Their long traditions arose out of extended living in close dependence on the Earth. There is no reason why contemporary post-modern people can't, incrementally but steadily, change their culture to reflect a similar Earth-centeredness.

CELEBRATION AS A BIOREGIONAL VALUE

Theodore Roszak, in *The Voice of the Earth*, complains that the environmental movement tends to be too depressing in its efforts to motivate people to save the Earth. He asks, "Are dread and desperation the only motivations we have to play upon? What are we connecting with in people that is generous, joyous, freely given, and perhaps heroic?" (1992: 38) The values and practices of bioregionalism emphasize a positive loving relationship with the natural world and seek to joyfully celebrate it. In fact, Brian Swimme and Thomas Berry argue that the principal role of the human in the universe may be *celebration* "of existence and life and consciousness. We remain genetically coded toward a mutually enhancing presence vis-à-vis the life community that surrounds us. Our own role is to enable this community to reflect on and to celebrate itself and its deepest mystery in a special mode of conscious self-awareness." (1992: 263-264)

THE IMPACT OF THE BIOREGIONAL MOVEMENT

A goal of the movement is to create a human culture which understands and cooperates with the patterns of nature and therefore does not substantially diminish it but even attempts to enrich it. Another goal is to restore the human scale to all aspects of life.

These sentiments are growing, but the movement itself remains marginal at this point—because its decentralized vision is so radically alternative to the extant civilizational trajectories. There are several bioregional proto-institutions that are prefiguring decentralized sovereignties. The "Cascadia Department of Bioregion" comes to mind (cascadiabioregion.org). Another tangible manifestation is the establishment of

ecovillage communities that could network to become the basis for an eventual bioregional reorganization of society.

Some view these initiatives as reminiscent of the monastic communities of past ages whose goal was to act as centers of light in a sea of darkness. Demonstrating to others that it is possible to live satisfying, healthy, fulfilling lives apart from consumerism, high energy use, high pollution generation, and other unsustainable practices is a valuable service which these bioregional advocates offer to the larger, mainstream culture. Some activists are making efforts to bring bioregional principles into practice in the mainstream culture. Elan Shapiro writes, "As a conscious movement in post-industrial culture, bioregionalism is an underground, grassroots movement in many places around the world. So its influence is much broader than is known through the mainstream media." (1993: 18)

Many people are doing things advocated in the bioregional program without being aware of the bioregional label. And many may label themselves primarily as Greens, ecologists, environmentalists, theologians, conservationists, restorationists, etc. Few are "dues-paying, card-carrying" bioregionalists! Yet bioregional ideas are spreading throughout the environmental movement and in the general society. Jeremy Rifkin, in *Biosphere Politics*, writes, "Bioregional awareness is beginning to grow and is already having an effect on traditional domestic politics as well as geopolitics." Rifkin maintains that shortages of fresh water are forcing locales and states to think more bioregionally, especially in the West. Air pollution and smoke pollution from wildfires are forcing a similar bioregional response nationwide.

There have been fruitful interactions between the Green politics and bioregional movements. Greens, of course, are more engaged in the political process, while bioregionalists tend to focus on cultural change. But the Earth-centered "politics" of the bioregional movement is similar to that of the Greens. It doesn't advocate finance capitalism, corporate capitalism, state-socialism, Marxism, centrism, anarchism or libertarianism. It points out that all the old ideologies tended to be quite "developmentalist" and anthropocentric.

The politics of the bioregional movement offers a long-term vision. Jeremy Rifkin maintains, "Only when political and ecosystem boundaries are made compatible with one another will it be possible to properly regulate economic activity so as to make it sustainable and congenial with the temporal and spatial limitations of the environment human communities dwell in." (1991: 289) At continental and local bioregional gatherings a sub-group of the participants often identify themselves as "Greens" and they will often meet together. The methods and

ideas of permaculture as taught by Bill Mollison are common to bioregionalism and the Green movement.

Another important area of bioregional impact has been among churches. For example, at local bioregional congresses of the Central Ohio River Region, the list of financial supporters tends to include more religious organizations than secular ones. Thomas Berry, a Catholic priest, had enormous impact in spreading the ideas of the movement. He gave many talks across the country centering on the Earth and community revitalization. He attended the First Congress in 1984 and was instrumental in introducing bioregional ideas to religious communities in America.

If our society is to start incorporating ecological considerations into its organization and praxis, then it must draw inspiration from bioregionalism.

In an age of near-despair, the bioregional movement has the potential for wide appeal because it directs us to find new hope, meaning, and commitment.

FRANK TRAINA (1943-2014) was an educator and writer. After earning his PhD in sociology from Cornell, he moved to Kentucky to teach at Northern Kentucky University, but ended up devoting himself instead to the farm he purchased in Wilder, KY in 1978. Sunrock Farm hosted educational programs that "raised consciousness," serving mostly Cincinnati-area children. About 25,000 people visited annually for decades. Farmer Frank also published *Pollen*, a journal of the North American Bioregional Congress Education Committee.

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Toward Regenerating the Colorado River Basin

from The Design School for Regenerating Earth weekly newsletter

Barichara, Colombia...May, 2023

As I write this, Joe Brewer, Penny Heiple, and myself are still in Colombia. It's early morning and any hint of the day's first light is maybe an hour away. The small open-air atrium in the middle of the house where I'm writing is casting a beacon to bugs into the dark sky above. That light just lured something big, some kind of wasp with a red abdomen and it's now in the kitchen crashing around. Meanwhile, I just heard a gecko chirp. It's clear we're a continent away from Colorado!

Two days ago, we walked down to the Barichara River to collect water in a small glass bottle. Like the Colorado River, the Barichara is used and abused. The volume of flow is shockingly low for the amount of land it drains, despite the fact that the rains have been coming. Just downstream from where we filled the bottle, untreated sewage is dumped into the flow before the brown water falls majestically several hundred meters off of the band of cliffs that give Barichara its high perch over the wider landscape. Our poor rivers . . .

This small amount of the Barichara that we've collected will be coming along with us on our journey down the Colorado. Next week we'll set off in a rented minivan to first visit several of its headwaters. We'll have with us a second bottle for collecting some Colorado River water in the shadows of mountain peaks from recently melted snow. We'll start at the official headwaters near Granby, then onto the Roaring Fork and Crystal Rivers near Carbondale, the North Fork of the Gunnison River near Paonia, and the Dolores River near Cortez.

We will also meet with people who call these headwaters home. Some are already our friends, others we will be meeting for the first time. From these mountain people, we will accept gifts to represent the high country landscapes, gifts to share with the people of the river's delta when we arrive there.

The two bottles of river water will carry profound stories—one of connecting North and South America through a communion of two degraded river systems. The second bottle will carry the dream of regenerating the Colorado River Basin by bringing waters from the Rocky Mountains to the sea where the river no longer flows on its own. We want to move through the basin and feel the river as a living being and ask how we can serve all of life living within its basin as a coherent whole. How can the people of these landscapes come together to awaken this dream? How can we weave nested sets of relationships as we travel to enliven this audacious story, to open up a new sense of possibility? Our role will be to serve as messengers, storytellers, and to bring what we learn to other regions, because the Earth is made of many regions that want to come to life in new and old ways.

The Potency of the Sub-Continental Scale

Intending to birth a narrative at this scale is, as I said, audacious. But it isn't something we've conjured out of nowhere. It's an idea that is deeply informed by our experiences. An essential pattern of planetary regeneration is weaving together stories, relationships, collaborations, and capacities at nested scales. This is how the Earth is patterned—and emerging bioregional and regenerative human cultures must map and structure themselves onto that reality.

BY BENJI ROSS

Two bottles of
river water carrying
profound stories.

We discovered a certain potency in neighboring communities
stepping in parallel into the narrative of bioregional regeneration.

Think about a river system: It starts with small tributaries in higher elevations; and, like the branches of a tree, those tributaries converge into ever larger flows of water. Then, when looking at a river basin as a whole, there are countless geological, ecological, and climatic patterns of connectivity that interlink that basin into relationship with other neighboring landscapes and their functions, resulting in larger scales of connectivity, up to continents and beyond. That is how the world comes together into nested wholes. Now it's our task to find ways that humans can develop place-based cultures that recognize and embody this reality. It is the only way that we'll develop the coherence to become planetary stewards.

How might all of this unfold? That's what we're exploring. It was a happy accident in our early Bioregional Activation tours that we discovered a certain potency in neighboring communities stepping in parallel into the narrative of regeneration and its developmental process. By doing so, there's support, validation, mutual learning, sharing of resources, and sharing of meaning that emerges. When we first started to collaborate with community leaders in two tributaries of the Colorado River, the North Fork of the Gunnison and the Roaring Fork, we could feel a greater coherence when they came together. These two landscapes share a relationship with the Elk and West Elk Mountain Ranges that hold the life-giving snowpack that melts and keeps waters flowing throughout the year. By seeing both bioregions together, we could better see the Elks. Through perceiving the larger system the importance of connectivity becomes clear and the story of bioregional regeneration feels more pragmatic.

Early on in our conversations with these community leaders, we became aware of the impulse to connect to something larger, to something that could bring an ever-greater sense of identity and purpose: the entirety of the Colorado River Basin. Focusing on local places and local landscape functions sometimes can limit people's sense of possibility. There seems to be something about focusing on bioregional scales that can ignite it. It was in the first days of being in the North Fork of the Gunnison River that one community leader suggested we

all begin organizing towards a Colorado River Basin Summit. A few months later that idea had migrated over the mountain pass into the Roaring Fork Valley and it was presented again, with the person unaware that it had been suggested in Paonia months prior. The impulse to organize at sub-continental scales is undeniable. There's something about communities across the entire Colorado River Basin coming together into the narrative of bioregional regeneration that makes all of this feel more real. There is potency in it. The dream somehow comes to life.

It's not just in the Colorado River Basin where this scale has resulted in greater coherence and possibility. It is the same for the Great Lakes Basin where community leaders from Buffalo, Toronto, Rochester, and Cleveland are coming together to initiate a larger regional project of regeneration. This seems to bring a significant amount of energy to more local efforts. It's the same in Cascadia, where a synergy is clearly being felt by organizing together across many watersheds.

In a matter of days we will set off across the Colorado River Basin, following a sacred river that has brought life-giving water to human communities in dry lands for thousands of years. We intend to be in service to all of its people who are hearing and seeing the pain in their local landscapes. We will be asking: What might be possible by lifting up a shared narrative of regenerating the river basin? What will this journey teach us that can be shared with everyone aspiring toward planetary regeneration the world over? ... #RegenerateTheColorado



BENJI ROSS

says: "I come from a rural place with a blue collar. My colleagues and I are weaving, syncing and coalescing towards more regenerative communities and cultures." Within Earth Regenerators, an international study group for restoring planetary health, Benji leads the Bioregional Catalysts course. At www.patreon.com/benjiross he's "creating processes and storytelling for bioregional adaptation."

What will this journey teach us that can be shared
with everyone aspiring toward planetary regeneration the world over?

Campaigns in Colombia and the United States

BY MADELYN HOFFMAN

Once again, the US Greens are faced with a choice. Four years ago, there was the possibility of a Jesse Ventura campaign for president. However, Jesse came to the process long after it had begun, and he had been a Libertarian/Reformed Party candidate before expressing interest in the Green Party. For those reasons many Greens opposed endorsing him or even entertaining the idea of his candidacy. There was also widespread concern about whether or not he would work with the Greens on a grassroots level and allow for input from state and local members. Many thought Howie Hawkins would be more accessible and, as a founder of the Green politics movement in the US, would fully embody the party's Ten Key Values-based program. There was an idea that Howie could build a stronger independent grassroots movement for change, in part because of that perceived accessibility.

It turned out to not be an accurate perception. There were many problems, not the least of which was a series of attacks by the Democratic Party to keep Howie off the ballot, but also his team's incomprehensible strategy for publicizing the H2O campaign. For example, there was little possibility for my state party (Green Party of New Jersey-GPNJ) to work jointly with the campaign, though several small events of relatively low visibility did materialize.

A determination to be more effectual has been evident among the Greens this year. After a brief relationship with Cornel West over the summer they were seeking to recruit a prominent candidate to uphold their banner in the 2024 election. The unusually low approval ratings of the prospective Democratic and Republican Party candidates, Joe Biden and Donald Trump, present an opportunity for a significant third-party breakthrough.

I make these observations on the basis of having been the GPNJ candidate for US Senate in 2018 and 2020, as well as their 2021 candidate for governor. I know from firsthand experience that the Democrats and Republicans do everything they can to keep the Greens off the debate stage and even out of the news. Despite that, in 2020, at the height of the pandemic, my US Senate campaign did manage to garner over 38,000 votes—the second highest total historically for a Green candidate on a New Jersey ballot, behind only Ralph Nader's total in 2000.

All political parties experience some degree of internal factionalization, and the Greens are no exception. One current division arises over clashing positions on the US proxy war in Ukraine, the US role in Syria, and the Russian role in the world. The Ukraine War in particular, of course, is an issue that affects the whole world and millions of lives. It threatens to debilitate both the global economy and the world's environment. Meanwhile, the BRICS coalition—Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, and allies—is working to counter the seemingly unfettered imperialism of the US. This perilous contention among powers could bring the world closer and closer to nuclear confrontation.

More generally, geopolitics is moving quickly toward a dramatic reconfiguration. There is an attempt to get beyond years of what many view as a failed and dangerous US hegemony. Perhaps the world would benefit from seeing another global leader emerge, especially if it is less bellicose and confrontational and more interested in trying to actually create a global community. In Colombia, where I reside now, I have seen the electorate and party leaders acknowledge the need to work with others having diverse platforms. The formation of the Pacto Histórico in 2021 provided enough sense of unity to unseat the right-wing authoritarianism of Iván Duque and the Uribistes, and, at least for now, stave off a soft coup that could threaten to dilute President Gustavo Petro's power. Then, propitiously, the election of 2022 resulted in the vice-presidency of Francia Marquez, an environmental activist and Afro-Colombiana.

In Colombia, where I reside now, I have seen the electorate and party leaders acknowledge the need to work with others having diverse platforms.

Greens in the US could learn important lessons from the resistance to authoritarianism that is alive and well in countries south of the US border.

LESSONS FROM ABROAD

The challenges of running as an independent candidate and the biases built into the political process in the United States were two main reasons for my decision to relocate to Colombia. Now, having seen what has been accomplished here and across Latin America, I've come to believe that Greens in the US could learn important lessons from the resistance to authoritarianism that is alive and well in countries south of the US border.

Such a perspective informs my thoughts about a 2024 US Green Party presidential campaign. American progressives are just as concerned about rising authoritarianism as are activists in Latin America. A strong Green campaign would foster hope and resolve. The impact of the campaign will be augmented if the nominated candidate will be open to receiving endorsements from *all* who can agree with the Greens' distinctly progressive values and positions. This would be analogous to the Pacto Histórico process in Colombia, where broad political unity was achieved thanks to the adoption of a basic set of common minimum agreements in the face of situations that affected a considerable number of city dwellers and campesinos.

The Pacto started by addressing common problems that have been obstructing Colombian development, such as accumulated social debts. Political conversations were motivated to overcome the state of isolation and abandonment in which so many communities live. Inspired by the peace process with the FARC-EP (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia—Ejército del Pueblo*, Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—People's Army), different sectors of the society's progressive bloc—democrats, socialists, environmentalists, and defenders of peace—took on the task of holding meetings and gatherings for three years before the recent presidential election to find points that could strengthen unity and to construct a set of common minimum principles for teamwork and coalition building. This process (in which I occasionally was able to participate) required that all parties had to compromise in order to arrive at clear agreements that would generate an environment of trust, as well as ensuring that the most excluded segments of the population would always be at the center of consideration.

This sincere dialogue allowed participants to envision proposals that could resolve the huge problems they faced in regard to the advancement of society as a whole toward *a healthy environment, water as a fundamental right, access to land for farmers, labor rights, access to healthcare as a right, citizen participation, permanent dialogue with the most vulnerable communities, and all the circumstances that have enabled the war to be overcome*. In this way participants hoped to guarantee that the conditions that generated the problems could be ameliorated and Colombians could build a stable and lasting peace where justice, comprehensive reparations, non-repetition of a violent past, and truth and reconciliation would prevail.

After these talks concluded and we reached an agreement on candidates for president and vice-president, an alternative kind of campaign was launched, one that was quite different from that to which the Colombian people had been accustomed. This was done with thought for new political participants, new citizens, invited

to engage in a new way of doing politics, based on a frank and open social dialogue—from respect for each other to including a banner of transparency in each proposal and political action, with the intention of generating an environment of trust and massive support. This led to the most marginalized sectors becoming the largest number of campaign volunteers! It then became a campaign where everyone felt recognized, included, and part of the change. Gustavo Petro's slogan—"Change for Life"—was very effective, since it represented a counterpoint to what the country has lived for more than 200 years. The fight against corruption was also a key element in the development of this electoral initiative.

For the unity process to be carried out in the best way, a space of mutual trust had to be generated so that each sector or group could calmly and frankly express their vision, hopes, and proposals for the reconstruction of the country. It was also necessary to acknowledge others as people and politicians with different perspectives, where each one contributes elements that allow for and empower a collective movement for change.

I recognize that what occurred in Colombia in 2022 cannot be exactly replicated in the US. But surely there are lessons we can learn to get us beyond the endless bickering and fragmentation of US politics.

2024 COULD BE A TURNING POINT FOR THE US GREENS

Hopefully the campaign will be perceived to be an important opportunity to change the destructive direction that the US has been headed in and the damage that it continues to cause in the world. We badly need an antidote to the growing number of homeless, the inadequate delivery of health care, the widening income disparities, and the inability to address climate change. The Green ticket could give voice to demands to end police brutality and to appreciate the need for reparations. It could stand against the increasing censorship and hyper-partisanship of the duopoly, as well as our country's continuing and seemingly endless appetite for war.

* * * *

Campañas en Colombia y Estados Unidos

La Guerra de Ucrania es un tema que afecta al mundo entero y a millones de vidas. Amenaza con destruir la economía global y el medio ambiente mundial. Mientras tanto, la coalición BRICS (Brasil, Rusia, India, China, Sudáfrica y aliados) está trabajando para contrarrestar el imperialismo aparentemente desenfrenado de los EE. UU. Esta contienda entre potencias está acercando al mundo cada vez más a la confrontación nuclear.

De manera más general, la geopolítica se está moviendo rápidamente hacia una reconfiguración dramática. Hay un intento de superar años de lo que muchos ven como una hegemonía estadounidense fallida y peligrosa. Quizás el mundo se beneficiaría de ver surgir otro líder global, especialmente si es menos belicoso y conflictivo y más interesado en crear una comunidad global. En Colombia, donde resido ahora, he visto que el electorado y los líderes de los partidos reconocen la necesidad de trabajar con otros que tienen diversas plataformas. La formación del Pacto Histórico proporcionó suficiente sentido de unidad para derrocar el autoritarismo de derecha de Iván Duque y los uribistas y, al menos por ahora, evitar un golpe suave que amenaza con diluir el poder del presidente Gustavo Petro. La elección de 2022 también resultó en la vicepresidencia de Francia Márquez, activista ambiental y afrocolombiana.

LECCIONES DESDE EL EXTRANJERO

Los desafíos de postularme como candidato político independiente y los prejuicios incorporados en el proceso político en los Estados Unidos fueron dos razones principales por las que decidí mudarme a Colombia. Ahora, habiendo visto aquí lo que se ha logrado, he llegado a creer que los Verdes en los EE. UU. podrían aprender lecciones importantes de la resistencia al autoritarismo que está viva y coleando en los países al sur de la frontera con los EE. UU. Tiene la oportunidad de elevar al Partido Verde al escenario nacional (e internacional). El impacto de su campaña de 2024 aumentará si está abierto a recibir el respaldo *de todos* los que estén de acuerdo con sus valores y posiciones claramente progresistas.

Escribió Orlando Osman Méndez, “Esto sería análogo al proceso del Pacto Histórico en Colombia, donde se logró una amplia unidad política gracias a la adopción de un conjunto básico de acuerdos mínimos comunes frente a situaciones que afectaron a un número considerable de ciudadanos y campesinos.

“El Pacto comenzó abordando problemas comunes que han estado obstaculizando el desarrollo colombiano, como las deudas sociales acumuladas. Las conversaciones políticas estuvieron motivadas para superar el estado de aislamiento y abandono en el que viven tantas comunidades. Inspirados en el proceso de paz con las Farc-EP (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo), diferentes sectores del bloque progresista de la sociedad —demócratas, socialistas, ambientalistas y defensores de la paz— asumió la tarea de realizar reuniones y encuentros durante tres años antes de las recientes elecciones presidenciales para encontrar puntos que pudieran fortalecer la unidad y construir un conjunto de principios mínimos comunes para el trabajo en equipo y la formación de coaliciones.

“Este proceso requería que todas las partes se comprometieran para llegar a acuerdos claros que generaran un ambiente de confianza, además de asegurar que los segmentos más excluidos de la población estuvieran siempre en contacto. el centro de consideración.

“Este diálogo sincero permitió vislumbrar propuestas que pudieran resolver los enormes problemas que enfrentaban en cuanto al avance de la sociedad en su conjunto hacia, y *un medio ambiente sano, el agua como derecho fundamental, el acceso a la tierra de los agricultores, los derechos laborales, el acceso a la salud como un derecho, la participación ciudadana, el diálogo permanente con las comunidades más vulnerables y todas las circunstancias que han permitido superar la guerra.* De esta manera los participantes esperaban garantizar que las condiciones que generaron los problemas pudieran mejorar y los colombianos pudieran construir una paz estable y duradera donde prevaleciera la justicia, la reparación integral, la no repetición de un pasado violento y la verdad y la reconciliación.

“Terminadas estas conversaciones y consensuados los candidatos a presidente y vicepresidente, se lanzó una campaña alternativa, muy diferente a la que estaba acostumbrado el pueblo colombiano. Esto se hizo pensando en nuevas incorporaciones a la sociedad, nuevos ciudadanos, invitados a participar de una nueva forma de hacer política, basada en un diálogo social franco y abierto con la gente, desde el respeto mutuo hasta incluir una bandera de transparencia en cada propuesta y acción política, con la intención de generar un ambiente de confianza y apoyo masivo. ¡Esto llevó a que los sectores más marginados se convirtieran en el mayor número de voluntarios de la campaña! “Luego se convirtió en una campaña donde todos se sintieron reconocidos, incluidos y parte del cambio. La consigna de Gustavo Petro de “Cambio por la Vida” fue muy efectiva, ya que representó una contraparte de lo que vive el país desde hace más de 200 años. La lucha contra la corrupción también fue un elemento clave en el desarrollo de esta iniciativa electoral.

Para que el proceso de unidad se lleve a cabo de la mejor manera, se tuvo que generar un espacio de confianza mutua para que cada sector o grupo pudiera expresar con serenidad y franqueza su visión, esperanzas y propuestas para la construcción de país. También era necesario reconocer a los demás como personas y políticos con miradas diferentes, donde cada uno aporta elementos que permiten y potencian un movimiento colectivo de cambio.”



MADELYN HOFFMAN

now residing in Colombia, remains a member of the Green Party of New Jersey and co-chair of the Green Party US Peace Action Committee. She has been a six-time candidate for office as a Green. Madelyn earned a B.A. cum laude from Wesleyan University and an MPA from Rutgers-Newark. [Translator Orlando Osman Méndez is Coordinator of the Partido Alianza Verde, Quindío, Colombia.]

Decentralism

[this is excerpted and adapted from Kirkpatrick Sale's 1996 presentation to the International Decentralist Conference held at Williams College in Williamstown, MA]

Some of the things that decentralists agree on:

* Big is too often Bad—the corollary of Schumacher's Small is Beautiful. The centralized state, particularly the mass-society state of our time, is inherently inequalitarian and hierarchical, technocratic and bureaucratic. It is undemocratic, because it is too big to allow direct face-to-face participatory decision-making.

* Power should be diffused, and to the lowest level possible—which means to a bioregional level; or, if possible, to a community level. Things should be decided at a level where the people effected get to have their say and participate in carrying it out. The community is the most important human institution in the life of the species—the small, place-based community, where members are generally known to each other. It is primarily there that power should reside.

In this Age of Authoritarianism, the era of the large and powerful nation-states, it is of interest that the communalist Left and the libertarian Right both favor decentralization. Our socio-economic reality is made all the worse by the fact that it is also the era of the global multinational corporations, superpowerful entities that have all the characteristics of the state except any vestige of responsibility and operate with their own free-wheeling authoritarian ways. So what we face today, in both political and economic spheres, seems to be Authoritarianism Triumphant. And yet:

1. Decentralism is the basic human condition. The community is the oldest human institution, found everywhere throughout the world in all kinds of societies. As Rene Dubos has pointed out, more than a hundred billion human beings have lived on earth since the late Paleolithic period, and “the immense majority of them have spent their entire life as members of very small groups, rarely of more than a few hundred persons.” Indeed, he believes that the need for community has lasted so long that it is encoded in our genes, a part of our makeup, so that “moderns still have a biological need to be part of a group”—a human-scale group, a community, a village, a tribe.
2. Decentralism is the historic norm, the underlying system by which people live even where there arises, from time to time, those centralizing empires that historians like to focus on and pretend are the principal systems of humankind. Empires are infrequent, do not last long, and are sparsely located. There was a Greek empire, for example, but it lasted effectively only for a period of decades; the real story of Greece was long centuries of decentralized city-republics, each with its own constitution, its own social life and cultural peculiarities, hundreds of communities that created the Hellenic civilization that is still a

marvel of the world. Even in the belly of the large nation-states of today there is an underlying current of localism or regionalism. On every occasion when the power of the state is dissipated the power of localism is reasserted, sometimes in the form of spontaneous popular councils, sometimes regional independence movements.

3. Decentralism is deeply American, from the anti-state Puritans, through the communalistic Quakers and Mennonites, and on to the original colonies, which for many years were independent bodies protective of their special differences and characters. A unified state did eventually arise, the product of powerful banking and mercantile forces desiring centralized authority—but even then the contrary forces remained influential. Emerson and Whitman and Thoreau touted the old New England traditions of town-meeting democracy and parish rule; utopians like Lysander Spooner, Benjamin Tucker, and Josiah Warren gave voice to the yearning for community control and villages free from outside interference; the emancipation movement, the women's rights movement, and the populist movement all were impelled by a decentralist anti-statism throughout the 19th century. In the 20th century that tradition continued with the Country Life movement and other communal impulses; with Lewis Mumford and the original Regional Plan Association, devoted to a resurgence of regionalism; with the various communitard movements we now call “the Sixties,” attempting to redress the balance of power even against the most potent government in the world.
4. And it continues even now: the wonderful bioregional movement; the resurgent Indian tribal societies and organizations for tribal culture; the growth of worker-owned cooperatives; the spread of community land trusts, community-supported-agriculture enterprises, and local farmers' markets; the burgeoning of the ecovillage and intentional communities movement. All of this is evidence that the great decentralist tradition, this basic human impulse, is still to be found, even in America.

All the empires will crumble. Time is on the side of the decentralists. Their ultimate triumph will herald the conditions of health and sanity the Greens desire—for the sake of the earth and all its species, including the human.

Power should be diffused, and to the lowest level possible—which means to a bioregional level; or, if possible, to a community level.

UK Greens made historic gains in local elections last spring

A fuller manifestation of multi-party democracy is finally coming to Great Britain. Their electorate suffers from the absence of proportional representation (PR) just as we do in the United States—so, for many years, voters there had the idea of “only two significant choices” (Labour and Tories) as voters do here (Democrats and Republicans). But in England the Liberal Democrats and the Greens have recently started to break through toward opening up the system. Canada also lacks PR, but the New Democratic Party is fully competitive there with the Conservatives and Liberals. Our country seems to be the last to endure an ongoing duopolistic domination. — Ed.

Last May saw the Green Party of England and Wales achieve a record result in local elections, doubling their number of city councilors to 481 and securing a Green city council majority for the first time in the UK. Moreover, the Greens’ high-profile victories in historically Conservative-voting areas show a new electoral potential for a party that—like every corner of British politics—has experienced a turbulent decade.

The highlights for the party—winning six percent of seats available all over the country and taking full control of Mid Suffolk District Council—are unambiguously positive. Even more so given, first, the majoritarian electoral system used in English local elections that disproportionately benefits larger parties as votes are converted to seats and, second, that the party only stood in 41 percent of all municipalities, considerably lower than the Conservatives (93 percent), Labour (77 percent), and the Liberal Democrats (60 percent). The Greens actually won around 12 percent of the vote on average in the races in which they stood candidates—around the same as their impressive 2019 European election performance.

RURAL SUCCESS

The broader electoral context sees Labour now having more city council members in Great Britain than the Conservatives for the first time since 2002, and the Liberal Democrats making significant progress in a similar, albeit more widely-expected, manner along with the Greens. Notably, the two biggest Green successes were in rural, previously Conservative-dominated districts in the East of England: Mid Suffolk, where the party won its historic majority, and East Hertfordshire, where they have only been represented in the council chamber since 2019. They also became the biggest party in a handful of other southern rural seats. In South Tyneside the party is now the official opposition. Even where the Green representation is small, just having two councilors in numerous localities allows the party to table bills or prevents one of the two establishment parties from having sole control.

The Greens did especially well in rural areas, reflecting a conscious internal decision to target historically strongly Conservative-voting seats in the hope of gaining 100 councilors. In the end, they gained 241! The only significant disappointment was 13 seats lost to Labour in Brighton and Hove, including those of the Greens’ local leader and deputy leader, showing that even the Greens are susceptible to anti-incumbency voting. They had run the council as a minority administration since 2020—and Brighton is included in the Westminster constituency of their only Member of Parliament (MP), Caroline Lucas. Green Party co-leader Adrian Ramsay—who has built an effective operation in neighboring Norfolk and will run to try to become an MP next year—said that the victory in Mid Suffolk hopefully will “pave the way for electing the first Green MP in the area.” The party’s success follows 20 years of presence on the council, representing the only non-Conservative option in a third of local seats. Aside from benefiting from what the party’s other co-leader, Carla Denyer, described as “a deep dislike of the Tories and Keir Starmer’s



Over the past two decades the Greens have seen a steady increase in their local election performances.

uninspiring Labour,” the party campaigned strongly and effectively on local issues. Perhaps most encouraging are signs that the party made its strongest gains in areas where it had already done best in 2019. This suggests an ability to concentrate votes geographically—all-important in majoritarian electoral systems, and something that eluded the Greens in previous high-water marks in 1989 and 2015. The party’s clearer geographical focus mirrors the early local growth of the Liberal Democrats in the southwest.

Such local success will act as a signal to voters in those areas that the best route to removing a Conservative MP is by voting Green. Left-of-center voters seem to be rapidly re-learning what is their best tactical voting option among the three progressive parties after Britain’s political geography had been in a state of flux following the coalition government, the rise and fall of UKIP (the UK Independence Party), Corbyn’s leadership, and a much-hyped “Brexit realignment.” This will be of concern to Labour, who, under Starmer, had hoped to quietly win a parliamentary majority by being the sole claimant to the anti-Tory vote. That the Greens are now unambiguously considered one of the three progressive options reflects their established position, since the 2015 “Green Surge,” within the second tier of the British party system. They had spent the previous five years seeking to form various ill-fated “progressive alliances” with Labour and/or the Liberal Democrats, but that seems no longer necessary.

STEADY LOCAL GROWTH

Over the past two decades the Greens have seen a steady increase in their local election performances, marked by occasional but increasingly regular episodes of rapid growth and visibility. Prior to this, and despite having a shared origin in Europe’s oldest Green Party, founded 50 years ago, the British Greens fared poorer in the late twentieth century than their sister parties in continental Europe. Compared to elsewhere in Europe, they faced structural challenges such as a less favorable electoral system and a lack of state funding.

Following their shock 1989 European Parliament election success, in which the Greens won 14.5 percent of the vote, all three progressive parties (Greens, Labour, and Liberal Democrats) began competing on environmentalist and left-liberal ground. Green Party local growth culminated in the 2010 election to parliament of party leader Caroline Lucas, who had led internal reforms that increased the party’s exposure by underlining its anti-establishment, social justice credentials. These changes proved effective in attracting a younger generation of anti-capitalist members and signaled that voting Green need not be a wasted vote.

Soon after, the entry of the Liberal Democrats into an austerity-dominated coalition, the rise of UKIP, and the 2014 Scottish independence referendum all triggered increased demand for the kind of party that the Greens were already becoming. These factors manifested in a 2015 polling bounce and a revenue-generating membership boost of mainly young, urban university graduates united by outrage at the rightward drift of British politics. This “Green Surge” largely foretold the election of Jeremy Corbyn as Labour leader. The latter event negatively impacted the Greens

when some shifted into the Labour camp temporarily. But the initial success of Corbyn’s ambivalent position on Brexit ultimately proved untenable ... while the Greens’ “Yes to Europe, No to Climate Chaos” line was successful both at the 2019 European and general elections, and their social base expanded.

The current national parliament—dominated by Brexit, leadership changes for the Conservative Party, and the troubles of the Scottish National Party (the Scottish Greens have shared power with the SNP since the 2021 Scottish election)—has seen further opportunities for the Greens to broaden their electoral coalition. The transformed party system is settling into a new political dynamic whereby the Liberal Democrats chip away at the Conservatives’ wealthier seats and Labour fights to retake its former post-industrial strongholds.

This increasingly geographic focus of the other parties leaves plenty of space for the Greens across England, particularly in seats in which they have already built up a presence, dissuading competition from the other two progressive parties. Moreover, serious issues of sewage and water pollution, a cost-of-living crisis, underfunded public services, an electorate plainly cognizant of climate change, and echoes of 2015 in terms of both immigration politics and Labour’s ambiguous opposition—not to mention the long shadow of Brexit—all are grist for the Green electoral mill, boosting their relevance to voters.

Whereas older voters are still more likely to be tied to the big two parties, the pandemic, working from home, and the soaring cost of living in urban centers have all contributed to pushing young Green-sympathetic families into the very areas where the Greens had already planted their flag. Following the recent local elections, the Greens will be able to make use of their larger local machinery and visibility to attract such voters, while the national relevance and revenues of the party are underscored by established and increasing membership numbers.

POLICIES UNDER SCRUTINY

At the next national election, likely in late 2024, the party will face far greater scrutiny over its policies than it has at recent European or local elections. An over-idealistic list of policies, incrementally added to over decades via successive party conferences, proved detrimental prior to the 2015 election as journalists took aim at plainly unfeasible spending pledges and utopian declarations. Although the party’s platform is more streamlined and realistic now, the success of the Greens at the national level next year will likely hinge on how close the race between the two main parties becomes. Should Labour maintain the large lead that current polling indicates, the Greens might pick up seats as a socially and politically diverse set of voters feel free to express their Green sympathies and misgivings towards the direction of Labour. Should the race tighten, however, as it has slowly done since Rishi Sunak took over as Conservative Prime Minister, the inescapable logic of first-past-the-post could push more progressive voters toward Labour and away from the Greens yet again.

[above excerpted from a June 8, 2023 article by James Dennison in the *Green European Journal*]

50 years of UK Green Party success: Celebrating a legacy of change

BY MICHAEL BENFIELD

On July 16 the West Midlands Green Party commemorated its remarkable 50-year journey at a celebratory meeting held in the heart of Coventry. With great enthusiasm and heartfelt sentiment, the meeting focused on recognizing the outstanding achievements of both individuals and groups over the past 12 months (and 50 years!). It served as a testament to the unwavering dedication and tireless efforts of the Green Party's members, supporters, and volunteers.

The awards ceremony, MC'd by Natalie Bennet, added an extra touch of prestige to the event. Lady Bennet, a prominent member of the party and a distinguished member of the House of Lords, shared her insights and experiences. She spoke of her

work in the upper chamber of Parliament, championing the Green Party's principles and advocating for sustainable policies.

In my own remarks I took the opportunity to reflect on the Party's origins and the arduous journey it has traversed. Inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's timeless exhortation to "Become the change you want to create," I expressed gratitude to the members of the West Midlands Green Party for their relentless efforts and unwavering commitment to the cause over the past 50 years. Their passion and determination have been the driving force behind our movement's transformative impact on society, both locally and globally.

The meeting also celebrated the Green Party's return to its original structured approach to electioneering—now promulgated as "the West Midlands Mode"—which has played a pivotal role in its current success. This renewed focus on effective campaigning strategies has been widely recognized as a significant factor behind the party's recent achievements. By embracing this structured approach, the West Midlands Green Party has further solidified its position as a force to be reckoned with in the local political landscape.

Memo from Caroline Lucas to the Green Party of England and Wales (June 2023)

In 2010, when I first stood to be a Member of Parliament, we asked the people of Brighton Pavilion to take a risk and put their trust in a new kind of politics. And on the day of the general election, 13 years ago, 16,238 did exactly that. With the election of Britain's first ever Green MP, together we made history.

It has been the privilege of my life to serve Brighton Pavilion ever since—and to see my majority increase at each of the subsequent three general elections. I love this city and its people. I know how incredibly blessed I've been to represent this community and to call it home. And I love the Green Party. I know without a doubt that this amazing opportunity to stand up in Parliament for our shared values, to hold this government to account, has only been possible because of you. You are the ones that knock on doors, debate our policies, deliver the leaflets, fund our campaigns, and keep the hope strong. You have always had my back.

But the particular responsibilities of being the Green Party's sole MP, coupled with my commitment to doing the very best for my constituents, has impacted on my ability to focus as much as I would like on the existential challenges that drive me—the ecology and climate emergencies. And as these threats to our precious planet become ever more urgent, I now want to concentrate more fully on these accelerating crises. I have therefore decided not to stand again as an MP at the next election.

The reason I came into politics was to change things, and my determination to do that is stronger than ever, as well as my belief in the power of elected Greens. I have always been an

activist as well as a politician—as those who witnessed my arrest, court case and acquittal over peaceful protest at the fracking site in Balcombe nearly ten years ago will recall. And when I think of the Green Party's potential, and all that's to come, I am as hopeful and positive as ever. So I look forward to having the time to explore ever more imaginative and creative ways of helping make a better future, alongside the party.

For now, though, my strongest emotion is deep gratitude ... to everyone who put their faith in me, everyone who chose the politics of hope above the politics of fear. On election night 2010, I pledged that I would do my very best to make you proud. I can only hope you will judge that that's what I have done.

With love and gratitude,
Caroline Lucas



(you can follow the progress of the UK Greens by subscribing to their online newsletter, *Green World*, <https://greenworld.org.uk/newsletter-sign>)

Babies and the state of things

We seem to hear around, more and more, a certain reticence about bringing children into a world so economically, ecologically, and socially precarious. But there's a viewpoint that could enable prospective parents to feel more sanguine about starting a family:

Greens and allies are working to effectuate an epochal turning point that will open pathways toward the better world that surely can be possible ... if each new generation will make a contribution. Every drop into the stream of change by every conscious individual going forward will be a basis for hope and positivity.

New contributors needed!

Why do newborn babies have their fists clenched almost all the time?

They are getting ready.

They are getting ready for a world of struggle,
to create a future which we can barely imagine.

For a future without billionaires,
for a future without homeless,
for a world where children flourish,
for a future without capitalism.

Is that so hard to imagine?
Is that so hard to realize?
Is that so hard to create?

No wars to die for,
no need for greed or hunger.

Lenin did dream this.
Lennon did dream this.
"You may say I am a dreamer, but I am not the only one."

First: imagine.
Then: ignite the world with your imagination.
Then: struggle to create a future which we can barely imagine.

That is why newborn babies have their fists clenched almost all the time.

Above adapted from a poem by David Schwartzman (2023) who wrote: "I was inspired to write this poem after seeing a photo of my newborn grandson Milo with his fists clenched."

Report Back from the Global Greens Congress

Fighting Radioactive Wastewater Dumping from New York to Fukushima

June 2023

I attended the Global Greens Congress in Incheon, South Korea, as an informal observer intending to interact with and learn from Greens around the world. Leading up to the Congress, I was asked by Tim Hollo, director of the Green Institute, the think tank of the Australian Green Party, to participate in a session on “Power and Grassroots Democracy,” where I made the case that Greens should stand for institutionalizing a confederal grassroots democracy based on citizen assemblies. What I did not anticipate beforehand, but is not surprising given Green anti-nuclear traditions, is that I would participate in actions in South Korea against Japan’s imminent plan to dump over a million tons of radioactive wastewater from the damaged cores of three Fukushima nuclear reactors into the Pacific Ocean.

Anti-nuclear campaigners have been among the primary catalysts for the formation of Green parties around the world, from Germany, France, the UK, and the US to Japan, Taiwan, and Australia. In South Korea in 2023, I found myself coming from a fight in New York to stop the dumping of radioactive wastewater into the Hudson River from the decommissioning Indian Point nuclear power plants into a similar fight against radioactive wastewater dumping with anti-nuclear campaigners in South Korea and around the Asia Pacific region.

I have been an anti-nuclear activist since 1969 when as a teenager I followed David Brower out of the Sierra Club and into the Friends of the Earth that he had initiated because the former supported the proposed Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant near San Luis Obispo, California (which we are still fighting to close to this day, 54 years later). In 1976 I was one of the co-founders of the anti-nuclear Clamshell Alliance in New England, whose mass occupations of the construction site of the Seabrook nuclear reactors in New Hampshire sparked a wave of similar actions across the nation in the 1970s and ’80s, including at Diablo Canyon. The Clamshell Alliance was invited to send two representatives to the first national US Green Party organizing meeting in St. Paul, Minnesota in August 1984. I was selected to go, along with another Clamshell co-founder, the late Guy Chichester.

This year in New York a coalition has been working to stop Holtec International from executing its plan to dump more than a million gallons of radioactive wastewater into the Hudson River from the Indian Point nuclear reactors that have been shut down and are in the process of being decommissioned. On Friday, June 9, the last day of the 2023 legislative session, the State Senate unanimously passed S6893, which prohibits such dumping. But the Assembly failed to pass the companion bill, A7208, before the state legislature went into recess for the rest of the year. Environmentalists in New York immediately demanded a special legislative session to pass the bill before Holtec International goes ahead with its plan to start the dumping.

When I arrived in South Korea, I soon learned how their fight against the much larger proposed dump of radioactive nuclear wastewater from the Fukushima reactors in Japan is a major issue in South Korea and around the Asia Pacific region. The owner of the reactors, the Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO), plans to begin injecting more than 1.3 million tons of contaminated water into the Pacific Ocean. TEPCO claims to be running out of storage space. With a half-life of 12.33 years, the radioactive tritium in the wastewater could be isolated from the environment until it decays into helium. That would take building more storage tanks, but it would be better than rushing to dump the

BY HOWIE HAWKINS

Anti-nuclear campaigners
have been among the
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Dumping Fukushima
radioactive wastewater
into the Pacific Ocean
could affect ecosystems all
the way to North America.



The Fishermen's Union demonstration was far more disciplined and unified than most US demonstrations tend to be.

radioactive wastewater into the Pacific Ocean now, which could affect ecosystems all the way to North America.

THE DANGERS SHOULD BE EVIDENT

Because the ongoing cooling process for the three melted-down Fukushima reactor cores produces more than 130 tons of contaminated water daily, a release of radioactive isotopes could go on for decades. The radioactive wastewater contains cesium-137, strontium-90, and substantial amounts of tritium. The latter is a comparatively weak isotope whose beta radiation cannot penetrate the skin, but it can be harmful when ingested and lodged in the body, where the beta radiation can cause cancerous cell mutations, miscarriages, and birth defects. Scientists warn that the tritium in the water organically binds to other molecules, moving up the food chain. They say the radioactive hazards of tritium have been underestimated and could pose risks to humans and the environment for over a hundred years.

Radioactive isotopes will accumulate in plankton at the bottom of the food chain and bioconcentrate up the food chain through a variety of invertebrates, fish, marine mammals, and humans. The US National Association of Marine Laboratories, representing over a hundred member labs, opposes the Fukushima wastewater release plan. A recent study indicates that microplastics—tiny plastic particles that are increasingly widespread in the oceans and accumulating in the bodies of organisms, including humans—may also be a major vector of radionuclide transport and bioaccumulation. While TEPCO claims it is filtering out the cesium-127 and strontium-90 to “safe” levels, the results have been shown to vary widely from tank to tank. And there really is no safe level of radiation. Strontium-90 is of particular concern because it lodges in bones and increases risks of bone cancer and leukemia.

On June 5, before the start of the Global Greens Congress, I made a solidarity statement at a news conference hosted by the Justice Party of South Korea, which concluded by emphasizing how that party and the Green Party US are excluded from their fair share of government representation by limited or no proportional representation. The point was well-received by the Justice Party members who got nearly 10% of the vote in the last national parliamentary elections, but only 2% of the seats, six out of 300, under South Korea's limited proportional representation. My message was: “Limited proportional representation is limited democracy.”

I participated in the news conference with Michael Feinstein, former Green mayor of Santa Monica; Matthew Skolar, co-chair of the Young EcoSocialists (YES, the youth caucus of the Green Party US); and Austin Bashore, co-chair of the Green Party US International Committee. Austin lives in South Korea and took the initiative to approach the Justice Party for a meeting. Representing the Justice Party were Sim Sang-jung, their 2022 presidential candidate and a representative in the National Assembly; Bae Jin Gyo, another Justice Party representative in the National Assembly; and Party Spokesperson Wee Seon-hee. We concluded the press conference by holding up signs opposing the dumping of radioactive wastewater at Fukushima. The joint Green-Progressive news conference was covered in several Korean media outlets, including *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, an independent employee-owned newspaper that is considered the progressive major daily newspaper of South Korea.

Later in the week, on June 10, I also had the opportunity to meet with Hong Heejin, the youth leader of the Progressive Party of South Korea, at the Global Greens Congress, which she attended as an observer. The Fukushima dumping was a big



issue for the Progressives as well, and Hong Heejin invited me to join the Progressive Party on June 12 for a demonstration called by the Fishermen's Union.

ALL CONNECTED BY THE SAME OCEANS

The Fishermen's Union demonstration was far more disciplined and unified than US demonstrations tend to be. Instead of milling about on their feet talking to each other more than paying attention to speakers on the stage that characterizes American demonstrations, these 4,000 or so fishermen were seated cross-legged in rows on a closed-off street in front of the National Assembly building. They exuded a strong image of unity and militancy for their demands. They chanted out their union slogans and demonstration demands loudly and in unison. The union had its own anthem and hand-dance to go with it that everyone did—several times. They read out a solidarity statement sent by Fukushima fishermen that noted that they are connected by the same ocean to each other and to the whole world, which is why we must stop the dumping. They had scientists explain the dangers of tritium to ecosystems and food chains. There were dozens of media outlets covering it, as well as a heavy police presence.

From my conversations with Greens from Japan, Taiwan, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Australia, and New Zealand, it was clear that the Fukushima nuclear wastewater dumping is a huge concern for Greens and ordinary people throughout the Asia Pacific region. The Global Greens Congress adopted a resolution sponsored by the Green parties of Japan and Australia against it. When I returned to New York I was glad to learn that the state legislature was coming back into session for two days to consider some unfinished business. On June 20 the Assembly finally did pass the anti-dumping bill they had failed to adopt before the regular legislative sessions ended. The anti-

The Global Greens Congress adopted a resolution sponsored by the Green parties of Japan and Australia against the Fukushima nuclear wastewater dumping.

nuclear activism that made a difference in New York should encourage us. Now we need to add our voices to the demands by Asia Pacific countries to prevent the wastewater dumping at Fukushima. Many Asia Pacific nations are opposing it, including South Korea, China, Taiwan, and the Pacific Islands Forum, an organization representing 18 island nations already damaged by decades of nuclear testing in the region. On the other hand, the G7 intergovernmental political forum of wealthy nations, consisting of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States, declared support for the plan at their meeting in April. We need to put the heat on the Biden administration to reverse its policy and oppose the plan. The environmental movements and fishermen's organizations of the Asia Pacific region need our support to protect their environments and livelihoods.



HOWIE HAWKINS

was the Green Party presidential candidate in 2020. A retired Teamster residing in Syracuse, New York, he has been active in movements for civil rights, peace, unions, and the environment since the 1960s.

Grow the Good, Degrow the Bad

BY DAVID SCHWARTZMAN

This is written in response to Steve Welzer's editorial in *Green Horizon* issue no. 46 (Spring 2023), "The Left Must Embrace Living Lightly," which promoted degrowth as the path forward to an ecosocialist future, i.e., "degrowth means degrowth in all aspects."

I disagree with his assertion that population reduction is necessary. If he, rather, had said "stabilization of population growth is necessary" it would not be a boost to neo-Malthusian messaging so user-friendly to ruling classes that was refuted 50 years ago by Barry Commoner (in his *The Closing Circle*, a book I used for many years in my classes at Howard University) and more recently in an excellent book by Ian Angus and Simon Butler, *Too Many People? Population, Immigration, and the Environmental Crisis*.

I agree that the world is overpopulated, in the following sense: Even one billionaire is one too many! The prime driver of unsustainability, of threats to biodiversity and human well-being, is not the global population but rather fossil capitalism with its huge inequalities. Empowering women in society and eliminating poverty stabilizes population growth, as recognized by the UN; see the work of Nobel laureate Amartya Sen.

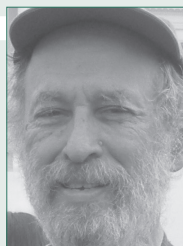
If we conjecture about global population reduction, how would it come about? Most likely by mass famine, pandemics, and climate catastrophes much worse than now witnessed, outcomes we can avoid by defeating fossil capital and its political instruments. Rather than decline, stabilization of population growth with a projected level of about 9 billion by 2050 is welcome. Countries like China and Japan, now witnessing a diminution in their population, are facing a demographic challenge with a declining active workforce needed to support an aging population. India now has the biggest population of any nation on the planet. It's experiencing extreme poverty for hundreds of millions, but one of its states, Kerala, with a democratically elected Communist-led government, is relatively thriving, showing the way forward with near universal literacy and empowerment of women.

Degrowth is imperative, especially in the global North, but let's be more specific, starting with not only degrowing but terminating the Military Industrial Fossil Fuel Complex which is driving the world to endless wars and much worse climate catastrophes. The degrowth trope was challenged a decade ago: "Walter Hollitscher, an Austrian materialist philosopher maintained, in discussions occurring in the late 1970s, that the only thing which should definitely grow is the satisfaction of needs. Basically, from a socio-ecological point of view, the question of growth or de-growth is simple: there cannot be a yes or no answer. Some flows, stock, and activities should grow; others should not grow but decrease, for example, the production of weapons. It does not seem useful to use 'de-growth' without indicating what should decrease, because the general use of the notion 'de-growth' can easily be understood as an undifferentiated

attack on the standard of living and livelihood of many groups of people, especially broad low-income sectors of society."¹

So why not advocate: "Grow the Good, Degrow the Bad"? Giorgos Kallis, a leading degrowther said, "The *global* material and energy 'throughput' has to degrow, starting with those nations that are ecologically indebted to the rest. Energy and material throughput have to degrow because the materials extracted from the earth cause huge damage to ecosystems and to the people that depend on them."² In contrast: With respect to material throughput, Salvatore Engel-Di Mauro and I argue that it should increase globally powered by renewable energy in an ecosocialist transition as a culmination of a Global Green New Deal: "In an ecosocialist transition, as we envision it, the plan would not be simply for degrowth, but for a complete phasing out of the Military-Industrial Complex (MIC). The disappearance of MIC would liberate vast quantities of materials, especially metals, for the creation of a global wind and solar power infrastructure."³

Kallis' call for a global reduction in energy consumption is a prescription for mass death for most of humanity because it will condemn them to a state of energy poverty even worse than present, as well as prevent the creation of wind/solar power capacity necessary for climate adaptation and mitigation. This scenario would make it virtually impossible to meet the 1.5 degrees Celsius global warming target, hence increasing the potential for climate catastrophe with horrors much worse than we now witness. And, finally, degrowthers advocate for the goal of a "satisfactory" quality of life for most of humanity living in the global South, in contrast to a higher standard for many in the global North, instead of demanding and mapping out a path to the highest state-of-the-science life expectancy/quality of life achievable for all children in their lifetime. Prominent degrowthers, and their supporters (e.g., in otherwise an outstanding book by Max Ajl) point to Cuba's low GDP as a goal for achieving satisfactory standard of living. Cuba suffers from energy poverty driven by the US imperialist embargo, more precisely consumes significantly less energy per capita than is necessary to achieve the highest world standard life expectancy.⁴



DAVID SCHWARTZMAN

is Professor Emeritus, Howard University (biogeochemist, environmental scientist; PhD, Brown University). Self-identified as an eco-socialist, David last year ran for an at-large seat on the Washington, DC city council representing the DC Statehood Green Party, where he serves as chair of the Political Policy and Action Committee. He has written extensively for the journals *Science & Society*, *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, and has been published on the web forum *Climate & Capitalism*.

Response by Steve Welzer:

David Schwartzman writes that “Cuban citizens consume significantly less energy per capita than is necessary to achieve the highest world standard life expectancy.” And in his accompanying Note #4: “The present primary energy consumption level consistent with the highest achievable life expectancy is at minimum 3 kW/person. The primary energy consumption level in Cuba corresponds to 1.096 kW/person.”

This is reflective of a typical thought process of a citizen of Western industrial modernity re: kilowatts-per-person as representative of progressive development. A leftist might add: How the kilowatts are used and how they’re distributed is of vital concern.

Nature to humanity: “You’re killing me. There’s too much stuff and there are too many people.”

Humanity replies: “We have a plan: Via expanded development we’ll level ourselves off at nine billion. We’ll redistribute kilowatts so that everyone can enjoy about 3. In addition, we’ll generate enough kilowatts to clean up our act and ameliorate the damage we’ve been doing.”

David is correct to note that it’s not possible to live well within industrial modernity without a lot of kilowatts-per-person. But perhaps we should view that requirement (that dependency) as a problem. A degrowth would say that it’s a misguided mindset to keep striving for more kilowatts. It can lead to advocating for hyper-toxic nuclear energy, which could provide more with fewer carbon emissions. Greens should point out that the dynamics of More tend to lead toward the generalized hypertrophy which is crowding out habitat for All Our Relations (whether the means of production are owned privately or socially).

Yes, it might be technologically possible for the fabrication processes of industrialism to continue to increase material

throughput. The global megamachine complex likely could feed nine billion people. But it takes what we call “development” of just about all the land mass and oceans; farming and resource exploitation just about everywhere; encroachment upon habitat just about everywhere; wild expanses smothered by solar arrays. All told: lifeways that are not very green.

Yes, extant social justice issues are immediate and primary, no doubt. But our praxis can simultaneously be informed by the long-range imperative of Edward Goldsmith’s “Great U-Turn.” And a seven-generations-forward perspective on social transformation can enable us to shift trajectories with gradualness and sensitivity.

I agree with David that we need an ecosocialist transition. It would open doors toward the ultimate creation of a society characterized by both social and ecological sustainability; a society based on an ethos of eco-communitarianism and decentralization. Within that context, population reduction could be a gradualistic process, part of an overall incremental downscaling toward re-localization, re-inhabitation, and the restoration of human scale . . . in all aspects.

Only revitalization of community life can enable the grassroots form of democracy Greens advocate. The kilowatt-consuming modern mega-states and megalopolises should be anathema to us. The former can’t possibly be egalitarian or deeply democratic. The latter are a manifestation of a pathologically atomized and alienated mass society. The Left needs to be more critical of the techno-institutional totality and recognize that there is too much urbanization, too much extraction, too much production, too much pollution, too much exploitation, too many people—and too little of what really provides life satisfaction.

NOTES TO SCHWARTZMAN ARTICLE

1. Baum, Josef. Pages 33-34 of “In Search for a (New) Compass—How to Measure Social Progress, Wealth and Sustainability?” in: *The Left Between Growth and De-Growth Discussion Papers*. Edited and introduced by Teppo Eskelinen, *transform! european journal for alternative thinking and political dialogue*. Hamburg, 2011.
2. Kallis, Giorgos. 2019. Page 192 of “Socialism Without Growth” in *Capitalism Nature Socialism* 30 (3): 188–206. Italics added.
3. Schwartzman, David and Salvatore Engel-Di Mauro. 2019. Page 42 of “A Response to Giorgos [sic] Kallis’ Notions of Socialism and Growth” in *Capitalism Nature Socialism* 30 (3): 40-51.
4. Ajl, Max. *A People’s Green New Deal*. London: Pluto Press, 2021. The present primary energy consumption level consistent with the highest achievable life expectancy is at minimum 3 kW/person (e.g., Italy with 3.07 kW/person in 2020, ranking 7th globally in life expectancy; <https://ourworldindata.org/energy/country/italy>; <https://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/life-expectancy>, United Nations (National Accounts Main Aggregates Database). The primary energy consumption level in Cuba corresponds to 1.096 kW/person (latest data available, 2019, <https://ourworldindata.org/energy/country/cuba>). Cuba’s life expectancy had a global rank in 2020 of 49, with the US ranking 51: World Bank Group, (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_life_expectancy). The latest data for life expectancies will likely show even higher values for Cuba than the US given the Covid deaths/population ratios of the two countries with the US/Cuba = 4.13 (accessed March 30, 2023, <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/data/mortality>). See Schwartzman, David. 2021. “Cuba and Degrowth?” *Global Ecosocialist Network*, July 13, 2021 <http://www.globalecosocialistnetwork.net/2021/07/13/cuba-and-degrowth/>.

FOR MORE OF MY CRITIQUE OF DEGROWTH SEE:

Schwartzman, Peter and David Schwartzman. *The Earth is Not for Sale: A Path Out of Fossil Capitalism to the Other World That is Still Possible*. Singapore: World Scientific, 2019.

ALSO:

<https://climateandcapitalism.com/2022/01/05/a-critique-of-degrowth>

<https://www.jamesgdyke.info/degrowth-ecosocialism-a-discussion-with-david-schwartzman>

Reflections on our Environmental State

BY WILL POWERS

[Will Powers has a work-in-progress that we'd like to preview for Green Horizon readers. The following is an adaptation of sections of an early draft. The work is essentially a survey of the relevant literature about where our civilization has been and where it might be going. The citations alone could constitute a life-long course in eco-communitarian edification! A second installment will appear in a future issue of our magazine.]

The big question is not what technologies are we going to use to continue the same trajectory, but how do we change the trajectory?

Several years ago, when I was a solar panel installer, having a role in bringing renewable energy to the city I grew up in felt pretty rewarding. It was something tangible—each day I was able to help people transition off of fossil fuels to clean energy sources. But gradually I began to have a sense that technological solutions aren't the panacea we've often been told they are. For one thing, while it's true that renewable energy implementation is accelerating, overall energy demand continues to grow—such that the carbon savings clean energy has provided have been more than offset by the rising demand. It occurred to me that *reducing demand* would be the most effective melioration toward accomplishing a transition to an alternative energy future. Yet such is rarely advocated. As Paul Kingsnorth states in a documentary by VPRO, *The Battle Against Climate Change*, “The big question is not what technologies are we going to use to continue the same trajectory, but how do we change the trajectory?”

Unfortunately, those benefiting materially from our current system have proven quite adept at sustaining its trajectory. Their priority, actually, is to *sustain capital accumulation*. The result is, despite the fact that the need to rein in global carbon emissions has been clear for at least thirty years, very little progress toward reaching that goal has been made. In fact, over half of all global CO₂ emissions have occurred since 1990, the year of the first Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Assessment Report.

Paul Gilding calls what we will eventually be going through “The Great Disruption.” Of course, those in power don't want any kind of disruption to the status quo. Nor, actually, does most of the populace. Psychologist and philosopher Erich Fromm pointed out that the mechanisms of society tend to mold the character structure of its members in such a way as to encourage them to do what is desirable under the specific social and material conditions of the prevailing economic system and culture. Through its institutions, education system, advertisements, media, and so on, society tends to produce the “social character” that it needs.

In a consumer culture, people are socialized to consume extensively. In the United States consumption is the largest component of GDP—about 70%—in the country with the highest GDP in the world. It's what propels our economy (and the global economy). But the extent of it was socially engineered. As Clive Hamilton describes in *Requiem for a Species*, marketers have planted a poison deep within affluent society, spawning generations of alienated individuals deliberately molded into hyper-consumers. Such marketers came to prominence beginning with Edward Bernays, Sigmund Freud's nephew, who was among the first to harness the emerging science of mass psychology. His aim, back in the 1920s, was to create a more dependable and dependent consumer. Now, a hundred years later, we are tasked with liberating ourselves from dependencies—upon the state, upon the corporations, upon the “need” for cheap goods and institutionalized

services, the “need” for technological panaceas. Our liberation will require nothing less than forging a new—a countercultural—social character.

COLLECTIVE PROBLEMS

What our civilization needs is a revolution in values, and the need is urgent. Focusing on the personal and private, over the public and collective, has been detrimental to our democracy, the common good, and our own mental health. Studies and polling have indicated that life satisfaction among Americans has declined steadily alongside pervasive decreases in connectedness and community.

From the standpoint of praxis, we are facing *collective problems* that require *collective action*. But in our individualistic and consumer-oriented society, we seem to have lost faith in the possibility of such. In our world of impersonal institutions we have largely forgotten what it means to be embedded in community. The highly individualistic story we are currently living out does not comport with comprehensive climate change action.

Identifying with and being involved in our local environs and community was the norm for most of human history. It wasn't until quite recently that we've become radically disengaged and alienated. As Susan Murphy suggests in *Minding the Earth, Mending the World*, our air-conditioned, plugged-in level of material comfort estranges us from the earth and insulates us from the high cost of our affluenza and self-absorption.

As Douglass Rushkoff notes in *Team Human*, “Social control is based on thwarting social contact and exploiting the resulting disorientation.” The recent pandemic increased social isolation beyond already excessive and unnatural levels. It put into stark relief the need for revitalization of community life. The good news is that projects committed to exactly that do exist. Unfortunately, they tend to be far removed from mainstream culture. They exist on the fringe, outside the awareness of the general public. The prevailing system tends to work against their recognition and growth. Roberto Unger developed the theory of Empowered Democracy, which envisions a more open and plastic set of social institutions through which individuals and groups can interact, propose change, and effectively empower themselves to transform the social, economic, and political structures of society under the banner of “Ecology and Community.”

We must appreciate that the climate/ecological crisis isn't just another issue, it's an alarm, challenging us to reconfigure our socio-economic system and our system of values. One vital element of social change, inspired by the legacies of Thoreau and Gandhi, is civil disobedience and nonviolent resistance. Few are inclined toward that kind of expression, but studies show that if just 3.5% of any population is actively engaged in sustained resistance over a concentrated period of time, governments will be significantly impacted. In fact, the research of Erica Chenoweth indicates that nonviolent forms of resistance are the most effective forms, even at that scale.

Of course, while social criticism and direct action resistance are important, we need to have more than a language of criticism. We need a vision of alternatives. We need to be *building* alternatives—tangible examples for people to see and experience. We can more readily encourage systemic and cultural change when we provide a compelling vision of what comes next, with viable examples.

One thing we can do is foster more participatory cultures locally. As George Monbiot points out in *This is How People Can Truly Take Back Control: From the Bottom Up*, local projects create opportunities for “micro-participation.” When enough of these projects have been launched, they synergistically catalyze a deeper involvement. A tipping point is reached when 10 to 15 percent of local residents are engaging regularly. Community then begins to gel, triggering an explosion of social enterprise and new activities that start to draw in the rest of the population. Monbiot: “Participatory culture stimulates participatory politics. It creates social solidarity while prefiguratively proposing and implementing a vision of a better world.”

COLLECTIVE TRANSFORMATION

In *Democracy Matters*, Cornel West writes, “The market-driven media leads many young people to think that life is basically about material toys and social status. Democratic ideas of making the world more just, or striving to be a decent and compassionate person, are easily lost or overlooked.” Corporate marketers effectively target the youth with an array of distractive amusements, and this incessant media bombardment can hinder people along their struggle towards maturity. Nonetheless, many

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persevere and prevail. West adds: "They hunger for something more, thirst for something deeper ... They know something is wrong with America and something is missing in their lives."

As Susan Murphy asserts, "We must find a livable transition away from an economic system that is at war with the earth." If we're able to, she notes, "We'll still have to pay every part of the price wrought by the changed climatic circumstances already incurred, but we can at least work to ameliorate them and avoid the truly unpayable price of continuing to pretend that this collective fantasy can endure."

In order to transition, we must recognize what Yuval Noah Harari portrays in his book *Sapiens*: what has set us apart as a species has been primarily collective—our ability to cooperate as social animals. In that light, Dan Buettner advises that we must go beyond the individual-change approach. "The most important thing is shifting the focus away from the delusion that we're going to change individual lives of a population one-by-one with behavior modifications." Through his Blue Zones Project, Buettner has demonstrated just how much our social environment affects health, well-being, and longevity. He talks about how we tend to put too much emphasis on individual responsibility, when so much of health and happiness is determined by our surrounding environment. Personal responsibility and accountability are important, no doubt, but we can see its limitations all around us. Not only have we exacerbated the ecological crisis over recent decades, but we have also witnessed the rise of a dramatic public health crisis.

During his work and travels for *National Geographic*, Buettner discovered the areas in the world where people live the longest, healthiest lives, which he dubbed Blue Zones. He then developed the Blue Zones Project (BZP), which applies lessons to entire communities. BZP representatives partner with local communities and help transform well-being at the neighborhood, city, and county levels. Their programs and initiatives have been effectively applied throughout the country, in over fifty different communities to date. They have improved the health of millions of Americans by changing and improving the environments around them.

Currently, most of us live in social environments which, on the whole, are neither sustainable nor satisfactory. But human societies are social constructions that can be reconstructed. It needs to be done collectively; we have over-emphasized the role of will power and self-determination. The BZP framework for change is based on the idea that modification of the physical and social environment

can foster changes in behavior. For example, creating more bike lanes, walkable sidewalks, and clean parks can result in more physical activity in a community. And: more biking is not only health-enhancing for individuals, it also lessens auto emissions.

GRASSROOTS DEMOCRACY

Arguably, what's most significant about the Blue Zones Project is the example being set. They've established a proven model, demonstrating what can be accomplished with a community-based approach. The aspirations of the Transition Towns movement are similar. It began in 2006 in the small town of Totnes, England, and soon became a model emulated worldwide. It has grown into a network of communities that collaborate and learn from one another for the sake of transitioning away from dependence on fossil fuels, big corporations, and distant supply chains.

In another example of how networking among transformational projects has become international, the city of Preston, in Lancashire, England, was inspired by the work of the Democracy Collaborative in Cleveland, Ohio. The latter was instrumental in creating the Evergreen Cooperatives, a pilot project demonstrating how worker cooperatives could bring much needed green jobs to rust-belt communities. When the pilot was deemed successful it was generalized into the Cleveland Model, which brought community economic development and the purchasing power of anchor institutions together into a single coordinated strategy. Its adoption by Preston soon became influential in England, known there as the Preston Model. The idea is to demonstrate, in theory and in practice, the principles of a democratic economy. Central to the framework is the idea of community wealth building, a new kind of economic development which focuses on creating locally-oriented economies. A key element is to have anchor institutions support local businesses and to have financial institutions prioritize investing in the local community.

Anchor institutions are typically large, nonprofit institutions that have a stable presence in and commitment to their geographical settings. That puts them in a unique position to improve and enrich the surrounding community. They include museums, libraries, churches, universities, and non-profit hospitals. With the proper incentives and motivation, anchor institutions have the economic potential to leverage their assets and revenues to promote local development.

Re-localization can foster both community wealth-building and participatory democracy. Frank M. Bryan, who studied

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New England town meetings, notes, "My findings show that citizens will participate when they know the political arena is small enough for them to make a difference and there are issues at stake that really matter to them." Local communities, and the groups and organizations within them, are where people can really engage and make a difference. This is especially the case if there is an explicit community-building strategy in place, supported by larger institutions that not only have broad social interests, but also are dependent in part on public programs supported by the community's tax dollars. A winning strategy involves gaining the support of these extant institutions, but also building new, democratic-from-inception forms, in ways that can slowly but steadily change the culture.

Erich Fromm suggested that in the economic sphere we need co-management of all who work in an enterprise, and in the political sphere, a return to town meetings within humanly-scaled municipalities. As Alexis de Tocqueville asserted, "Local assemblies of citizens constitute the strength of free nations." Any public forum that provides opportunities for people to actively and democratically participate with others in their communities is of value.

One of the four pillars of the Green politics movement, *Grassroots Democracy*, advocates for the idea that democratic decision-making should become the base norm in our society and in our day-to-day lives. Toward that end the worker cooperatives movement is slowly gathering momentum. The Evergreen Cooperatives are an example of a *cooperative complex*, an alternative business model based on the Mondragon Corporation of Spain. They emphasize the network aspect of the Mondragon system—a connected group of enterprises owned and controlled by their workers as part of a mutually supportive association. This model has the potential to be an enhancement over the more fragmented worker co-ops that have existed in the US for many years. It links together co-ops in an organized fashion and includes joint worker-community structural designs.

As Gar Alperovitz suggests in *What Then Must We Do?*, the goal now is not simply worker ownership, but a broader democratization effort integrated into a community-building strategy that might also incorporate land trusts, local public banks, public utilities, etc. He proposes an "institutional displacement" theory of social change ... where the objective is to supplant, rather than just rein in corporate power, creating new institutions which directly advance community-sustaining

outcomes. This is an embodiment of the Green Party's key value: *Community-based Economics*. It involves reorienting economic development such that traditional community, workplace, and political organizing can be meaningfully complemented to institutionalize gains in a durable way.

THE VISION THING

Roberto Unger suggests that we think about social transformation programmatically; we must first mark the direction we want society to move in, and then identify the steps involved in getting there. In this respect the bioregionalist vision is vital toward guiding our praxis. As Unger puts it, transformative politics is "not about blueprints; it is about pathways." Systemic change at the macro level is significant, but most of the pathways will be forged at the local level. Projects that begin in that way often impact regionally via networking. Furthermore, as Laura Roth describes (in "The Importance of the Local in Today's Context") one of the benefits of building power from the immediate context of life is that it allows individuals to become protagonists, and not just objects, of politics.

New thinking and approaches do not mean abandoning all traditional efforts. For example, labor struggles remain no less important today than they were at the height of union power. Trade unions continue to be the defensive organs of the working class, even if their systemic influence has been greatly reduced. As Aperovitz advises, any serious strategy must "walk on two legs." Efforts to rein in and regulate the actions of corporations also remain vitally important, especially given looming ecological and climate catastrophes. But, ultimately, a national-level movement to overcome the power of big, private businesses will not be sufficient unless there are complementary efforts for community-based alternative provisioning. The counter-cultural/counter-institutional movement might adopt an ethos such as: "Don't work for, and try not to buy from, the multinationals that have been dominating the economy to such an overwhelming extent. Disdain them and, as much as possible, displace them."

An interesting example of such can be found in Boulder, Colorado, where residents and city council members came to understand that an effective and speedy transition to renewable energy was unlikely as long as a corporate conglomerate, in their case Xcel Energy, continued to run the local electric utility. Activists started a campaign to put municipalization on the ballot. As might be expected, corporate power doesn't yield

The objective of “institutional displacement” is to supplant, rather than just rein in, corporate power—creating new institutions which directly advance community-sustaining outcomes. This is an embodiment of the Green Party’s key value:

Community-based Economics.

quietly when threatened. Xcel has gone to great lengths to hinder the municipalization initiative. So far it has been successful, but the social changers have a long-term perspective (as we all must) and will keep making their case until they are able to prevail.

Alperovitz refers to a “checkerboard strategy.” The term suggests that the game of politics is variegated and contingent. It involves “many different squares on the board” ... some of which may currently be blocked, while others may be open for consequential activity. We can endeavor to expand the number of squares on the board that are open to change. This is akin to the concept of “expanding the Overton window” (which frames the range of policies that activists can recommend without appearing too extreme to gain or keep public support, given the climate of public opinion at the time). This expansion is dependent upon the degree to which the emerging historical context drives people to think differently as pain levels from the current system increase. In this sense all localities are distinctive and any might be conducive to change at any particular time. Within the US, each of the states can be viewed as potential incubators of policy advancements. For example, state-based single-payer health insurance has been proposed in Vermont and in California. Ranked choice voting is catching on, city by city and state by state. We’ll be looking forward to a critical mass of support and then a leap that takes these scattered changes to the national stage.

REBUILDING THE FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIETY

So: Many of the systemic changes we need may begin at local, comprehensible, manageable scales. As David Orr describes in *Dangerous Years*, traditional reforms have been thwarted not only by the combined effects of an entrenched oligarchy and by ideological differences, but also by challenges related to geographic scale and regional differences. The latter may indicate that we’ve reached the limits of continental-scale governance. Orr references Lewis Mumford, who advocated for the community-scale organization of competent, informed, and motivated citizens. Mumford promoted the development of practical capabilities and infrastructure at the local and regional levels, by citizens and neighbors willing and able to take back those parts of their lives closest to them, such as growing food, energy production, governance, and finance.

A steady withdrawal from the big, distant powers running our society would move us toward a richer civic culture. Due to the deeply entrenched power of money and media, it may be that changes in our political economy need to start at the local and regional levels, then propagate upward. We could think of it as a process of rebuilding the

foundations of society from the grassroots. Every town, city, state, and bioregion has its own unique blend of assets and possibilities that can be imaginatively developed in different ways. Action at the local level enables new forms of coordination between public bodies, social movements, and citizens. And it arguably can produce better results through a more democratic process. The Left should be clamoring for re-localization because with a more immediate and direct context for information-appraisal and management, public ownership becomes more practicable.

There are major challenges to switching from private to public enterprise at a national scale; and statist solutions to problems tend toward bureaucratization. Municipalization might make more sense in many cases. Energy provision is one such case. As part of his Ecosocialist Green New Deal program, Howie Hawkins advocates for municipal-level public power utilities. And as Jennie C. Stephens explains in her book *Diversifying Power*, “Energy democracy is an alternative way to frame our response to the climate crisis as an opportunity for investing in communities and redistributing power literally and figuratively. All too often the climate crisis is perceived as an isolated scientific problem that requires a technological fix. With the latter framing, social justice, social change, and institutional innovation are usually ignored—and then the challenge seems distant to most people.”

A technocratic focus limits public engagement and excludes people, when in fact, as Stephens explains, a future powered by renewables could “allow more people, communities, and organizations to benefit and be involved—and could bring widespread benefits by allowing for local and community-owned energy.” In her article, “Energy Democracy: Redistributing Power to the People Through Renewable Transformation,” Stephens explains how energy democracy embraces a vision of more distributed, locally-based energy systems with a regionally appropriate mix of different renewable sources: “Advancing the vision of the energy democracy movement requires prioritizing local and community-controlled renewables and scaling-up and mainstreaming cooperative-model, publicly owned energy infrastructure.”



WILL POWERS

is a former solar panel installer and mechanical insulator. He’s an aspiring organizer and Permaculturist and is involved in the ecovillage and Transition Towns movements.

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Oregon emerging as the nation's trailblazer for political reform

[The full original interview can be found at: <https://democracysos.substack.com/p/interview-with-blair-bobier-on-oregon>]

Oregon became the 33rd US state in 1859 and today is the ninth largest and 27th most populous state with 4.2 million people. In the last few years, the Beaver State has emerged as the nation's leading trailblazer for political reform. This year the state legislature voted on the final day of the legislative session to pass House Bill 2004, which puts a proposal to use ranked choice voting for federal and statewide races (including president) on the November 2024 ballot. This was the first time in modern US history that a state legislature has allowed voters to decide whether to use an alternative electoral method for its elections. As a precursor to that bold move, Oregon's largest city, Portland, voted last November by a 57% margin to pass proportional representation (as: proportional ranked choice voting) for local elections, following a near-unanimous charter commission recommendation. That same election saw Multnomah County, Oregon's most populous (where Portland is located), approve single-winner RCV for county offices. This all has amounted to a small revolution, and it didn't happen overnight. It took years of groundwork and patient, multi-partisan coalition building. At the center of much of this activity for the past 25 years has been Blair Bobier, one of Oregon's and the nation's early proponents of ranked choice voting. Blair is an attorney by occupation, having worked professionally as a public defender and then for Legal Aid, which provides legal services to low-income Oregonians. He also has specialized in election law and was a co-founder of the Pacific Green Party of Oregon. Steven Hill spoke with Blair by Zoom on June 29, a few days after the Oregon legislature voted to put RCV on the statewide ballot. The following transcript has been condensed due to limited space in Green Horizon.

Steven Hill: Oregon has become arguably *the* national leader in regard to political reform, making huge strides in recent years. To what do you attribute this sudden surge in success and interest?

Blair Bobier: It's been a combination of factors. I'd like to think we got the ball rolling here in Benton County, where we got RCV on the ballot in 2016 for implementation in 2020. Then Corvallis, which is the largest city in Benton County and a university town, did it on their own through the city council in 2022. Then Portland and Multnomah County followed suit via ballot measures in November 2022. And now we've had the state legislature put RCV on the ballot for November 2024. I think some people look at this as something that's happened suddenly. But I liken it to the singer-songwriter who's been playing in dive bars for 30 years, and then one song gets played on the radio and it's an overnight sensation!

I think that our success in Benton County made things legitimate for the rest of the state. We started reaching out to different groups in the community. We got a diversity of support, we worked closely with the county officials, and we got it passed. Corvallis went next because it is within Benton County. They said: We can do this here because the county administers the city elections.

SH: They didn't have to reinvent the wheel. They just had to do it by a vote of the council.

BB: Right. And after that, I think what caused things to kind of mushroom is the interest that followed in Portland. Most people have considered the Portland city council and government to be pretty dysfunctional. So the City Club, an influential nonprofit civic group, started looking at reforming city government, and one of the areas they looked at

INTERVIEW WITH BLAIR BOBIER
BY STEVEN HILL

A diverse, broad activist coalition was successfully formed in Portland. In the last election, both proportional and single-winner RCV were approved for use there.

Activism is a marathon and not a sprint!

was what type of election method should be used. They considered proportional ranked choice voting. They also looked at multi-member districts, and ultimately a lot of what they came up with, in terms of their research and recommendations, was embraced by the Portland Charter Review Committee, which was empaneled a couple of years ago. The review committee then came forward with the proposal for proportional ranked choice voting for city council, multi-member districts, expanding the size of the council, and electing the mayor directly by ranked choice voting.

Portland is located in Multnomah County, which had its own charter review committee going. So in the last election, both proportional and single-winner RCV were approved for use in Portland and in Multnomah County. Particularly for the Portland effort, there was this really diverse, broad coalition that was formed. And it was led and centered by communities of color. That, I think, has been one of the more important components of the success. When we shifted to a statewide measure, we were able to have many of those same organizations leading the effort in the state legislature.

SH: Could you say a bit more about the coalition-building, and about building that groundwork?

BB: We have a relatively small nonprofit, Oregon Ranked Choice Voting, which formed after the Benton County success with the idea of taking things to a broader level. We provided technical support, logistical support, and legal support. It was Portland United for Change that put together the coalition that was at the center stage.

SH: In Oregon, the movement for electoral reform was for many years led by the Green Party, since you were one of the founders and leaders of the Greens in Oregon. How did the Democrats get on board?

BB: When we started talking in Benton County about getting RCV implemented, some people were dreaming pretty big and said: we can do this statewide. And I said, yes, eventually, but right now we don't have the resources. But I knew there was a relatively new local state Democratic representative from Benton County, Dan Rayfield, who was interested in election reform and what we were calling instant runoff voting—IRV—back then. He started working his way up through the ranks in the Capitol. Now he's the Speaker of the House! RCV was one of his priority bills.

SH: Wow, that was a great stroke of luck.

BB: This wouldn't have happened but for, I think, all the different efforts and coalition-building creating the groundswell. I don't think there's been a second thought that Dan and I were from different political parties. In fact, in Benton County, I believe the guy who was Dan's Republican opponent also endorsed the local ballot measure. And there was a Libertarian running for some local office, maybe even against Dan, and *he* endorsed it. So we started building this multi-partisan group.

SH: Dan Rayfield ... yes, he's Speaker, he has leverage, but he's got a lot of other priorities. He's got to use that leverage for not just ranked choice voting. How did the rest of the Democrats get on board for RCV?

BB: The folks within the statewide coalition did an amazing job of lobbying. They get kudos from all sorts of people in the legislature about the work that they did. And one clever thing that someone within the coalition came up with, and which many in the Capitol reacted positively to, was that the coalition came to the Capitol and had legislative staff voting on and ranking things—like favorite State Park or best place to get a drink in Salem, the capital. Sometimes they went around with candy or taffy or different kinds of treats to rank. And they went around with a ballot every week, maybe twice weekly, and legislators got to expect to see the ranked choice voting people. That brought a lot of attention to it!

In the State Senate it went down to the wire. The Republicans in the Senate chose to do a walkout, so the Senate didn't have a quorum. The Republicans wanted to block certain bills around pro-choice legislation and firearm regulation. It took a lot of closed-doors negotiations to bring them back into the building and to appease them. And then they had hundreds of bills that were backlogged. Our RCV bill was one of the ones heard on the last day of the legislative session before they had to adjourn for the year. And because it had been amended in the Senate Rules Committee, it had to go back to the House for concurrence just on the amendment. All that happened on the last day of the legislative session!

SH: It's hard not to notice that the state legislators applied RCV to every office but their own. Federal races, including president, and state executive offices, yes, but not their own state legislative seats. Was that due to constitutional restraints, or was it more of a situation of the state legislators saying, "We'll try it out on some other offices first, let them be the guinea pigs"?

BB: I think that that came out of the sausage-making process. In part, it was because the county clerks and elections officials wanted to limit the number of races that it would apply to. So that, according to them, the ballots wouldn't get longer and more unwieldy. Ultimately, the coalition decided to focus on the races where RCV would make the most difference. Most legislative races typically have only two candidates at best. So the coalition said: let's focus this on statewide and federal races.

SH: That's really interesting. It's actually kind of a tacit admission about the winner-take-all, single-seat-district system ... there's rarely any competition in the vast majority of these legislative races, so why bother trying to change it? Let's do it only in races where there's actually competition. Anyway, this is a huge victory. Even getting it on the ballot is a huge victory. Nevada is also on the ballot. So, for proponents of RCV, it's going to be an exciting November in 2024!

LIVING A LIFE OF PUBLIC SERVICE

SH: Blair, shifting gears just a bit, I'd like to ask you, what has driven you all these years to continue with your advocacy?

BB: In terms of these kinds of democracy reforms, initially I was looking at opening up the system, getting more voices at the table, because things haven't changed a whole lot since Dr. King was talking about the triple evils of poverty, racism, and militarism. To me, it's kind of a bit of reverse engineering: If our government is perpetuating these catastrophic societal situations, can we get more voices into government? How? Well, I went to a lecture by this guy named Steve Hill 30-some years ago (laughter). I learned about proportional representation, and that's actually what interested me at first. And then the whole instant runoff voting movement took off and that seemed like something that was doable and applicable and achievable for local and state offices. It just made sense to focus on that.

SH: Electoral reforms are crucial to the Green Party's future, so you moved into Green politics in a fairly major way. Do you have any lessons that you've learned that you think could be imparted to a new up-and-coming generation of reformers?

BB: Activism is a marathon and not a sprint. That's one thing I learned. Persistence pays off. It's good to dream big and not let people say you can't succeed. Focus on specific projects and find good people to work with. And I'd say be open to coalitions and realize that the proverbial politics does sometimes make strange bedfellows, because the first person I approached to organize the Benton County campaign was a Democrat. And then there was someone from the Independent Party of Oregon, the Libertarians, and a Republican. You've got to be open to working with people who think differently than you.

SH: I'm from California. Many there are excited to see our neighbor to the north taking this big step. Do you have any advice for us?

BB: The League of Women Voters of Oregon has been looking at election methods for years and their support has been critical. In our coalition we have a lot of groups—labor organizations, the Latino Community Association, Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon, Tribal Democracy Project, a farmworkers group, the Rural Organizing Project, Urban League of Portland, Common Cause, Community Alliance of Tenants, Unitarian Universalist Voices for Justice.

SH: I think for Los Angeles, and “multi-everything” cities in general, where it's really hard to give adequate representation to all the various diverse communities using winner-take-all districts, passing proportional ranked choice voting via a charter commission might be the only way to get something like this done. You need some sort of commission that has weighed in to

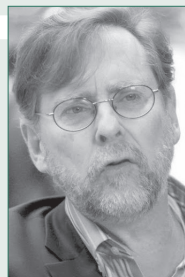
bring the different sectors and interests to the table and confer some legitimacy. For example, labor. I see you had a lot of support from labor unions. How did that come about?

BB: Folks in labor are already part of or connected with some of the other coalition groups. So there's cross-pollination going on. I think some of the unions use RCV for their own internal elections.

SH: That's pretty key, since it allows many people to get used to RCV.

BB: Proportional representation would be the next step beyond that. I think one of the benefits of ranked choice voting is that it opens people's minds to using a different type of voting method.

SH: Blair, thanks so much, it's been great talking with you. It's going to be an exciting year as Oregon prepares for the ballot measure in November 2024. Best of luck with it.



STEVEN HILL

is the chief editor and contributor @ DemocracySOS. He has authored seven books, including *10 Steps to Repair US Democracy*; *Fixing Elections*; and *Europe's Promise*. Steve was a co-founder and former assistant director of FairVote. His writings and interviews have appeared in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, CNN, C-Span, and others.

From our friend, supporter, and contributor Richard Evanoff

A lifetime to conceive and three years to write, my novel, *One with the Father: A Novel of Mysticism, Heresy, and Rebellion in the Middle Ages*, has now been published by Wipf and Stock: <https://wipfandstock.com/9781666771107/one-with-the-father/>.

It's also available from Amazon and other distributors. There's a short YouTube video of me explaining what the novel is about and why I wrote it at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDD5S2HXI20>. The book is listed on my website at <https://www.richardevanoff.com> (along with free articles, stories, and poems!).

Publisher's blurb:

When Justin escapes the comfortable medieval estate his overbearing father has kept him sheltered in to pursue the servant girl he has fallen in love with, he finds himself caught up in a social order torn between extremes of wealth and poverty, feudal hierarchy and peasant revolts, ecclesiastical corruption and monastic piety, gross injustices and boundless mercy.

The mid-fourteenth century was a time not only of burgeoning towns, majestic cathedrals, and nascent universities, but also of debauchery and violence, the Black Death and Inquisition, torture and ordeals. In his encounters with noblemen and peasants, alchemists and hermits, monks and heretics, knights and revolutionaries, prostitutes and miscreants from the medieval underworld, Justin comes to realize that he is entirely on his own as he confronts his personal moral failings and struggles to find faith in a world where God no longer seems to exist.

Written as a reply to Dostoyevsky's The Brothers Karamazov and Tolstoy's The Kingdom of God Is Within You, One With the Father stands at the intersection between mysticism and anarchism in the Christian heritage, while simultaneously interweaving insights and archetypes from a variety of other spiritual traditions—Eastern, Western, and indigenous—in a fast-paced narrative. With its controversial, even subversive, religious and political themes, this novel will certainly not be for everyone, though some may find the wisdom articulated by the sages of the past as relevant now as it's always been.

Letters

FOR A FUTURE ISSUE please solicit an article (or perhaps even a forum of multiple articles) addressing the decisions of the Green Party of Germany to send armaments to Ukraine. That party was founded forty years ago notable for its advocacy of non-violence. Can there be justification for its recent divergence? I think that would make for an interesting, hopefully enlightening, discussion.

— Robert Selmith

I READ WITH INTEREST the article “Travelogue: Three Green Women in Nicaragua” (*Green Horizon*, Spring 2023), and I applaud the efforts of these women to understand Nicaragua and its ongoing efforts to improve the health care, and the liberation of its citizens (from the clutches of US foreign policy). Wouldn't it be nice if US citizens could be liberated from US policies?

One portion of the article mentioned (shamefully), “In 2020, the US rate for maternal deaths was 24 per 100,000 live births, the highest of all the wealthier nations in the world, and we keep getting worse every year! Perhaps our priorities are misplaced.” I totally agree. But here's another shocking statistic: The US also has the highest day-one infant mortality rate in the developed world. (But no one talks about it.)

“A pregnant woman never drinks alone,” we are reminded, but so-called US health agencies recommend five vaccines (Flu, Dtap, which is 3 vaccines, and Covid-19), for pregnant women, many of which contain aluminum, mercury, aborted fetus DNA, and more, resulting in pre-born mortalities. Further, within 24 hours of birth, these same agencies recommend both the Hep B vaccine (a pharmaceutical orphan drug for which day-old infants are not at risk because hepatitis is transmitted primarily through sexual activity or intravenous drug use), and the Vitamin K shot

(which contains an FDA black box warning). Uniquely, the US exposes fetuses and infants to a total of seven vaccines through the first day of birth, with horrifying results.

Every medical procedure (including vaccines) carries risks and side-effects. If you examine the inserts provided by the pharmaceutical companies for each vaccine, they expose these risks through so-called clinical trials (which are not double-blind placebo trials); these threats include SIDS.

Without uncensored, open, and honest conversation leading to true informed consent (and not preapproved propaganda), women and children in the US will continue to be victims of these uniquely American policies.

Perhaps what the US needs is a ‘Women in US Brigade’ to fight for their liberation.

— Lynn Petrovich

GREENS ARE AWARE that Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. did a good deal of admirable environmental activist work over the course of his career. This year the Democratic Party has tried to squelch his electoral challenge by keeping the focus, instead, on his controversial views about vaccinations. I don't have the expertise to evaluate his specific recommendations in that area, but in a more general sense it occurs to me that over-medicalization might be a valid concern—one which the mainstream media tends to ignore or avoid. How ironic it would be if, in the long run, neither nuclear winter nor climate disruption ultimately dooms the human race, but, rather, the over-use of antibiotics! Scientists know that we could be breeding resistant pathogens.

There are many similarly complex discussions where, after listening to both sides, I'm left wondering— because I don't have the background to do the appropriate in-depth analysis. Nonetheless, I do feel strongly that possible over-medicalization is an instance of why we should pay more attention to the Precautionary Principle in regard to all of our touted technological innovations.

— Paula Fischer

Two Haiku

A traditional Japanese haiku is a three-line poem with seventeen syllables, written in a 5/7/5 syllable count. Haikus tend to emphasize simplicity, intensity, and directness of expression.

**Standard religions:
Competing superstitions!
(all lacking appeal)**

**Despair is in the
air these days, but solace still
can be found afield.**

The production of Green Horizon is funded by the generous contributions of the Sustainers who are listed on the following page (though some are anonymous). We're the only print magazine in this country focusing on Green politics and related movements. We endeavor to provide vital coverage and thought-provoking discussions, but we need your support. Please join the Sustainers list by sending a check to the address on the back cover or via PayPal at our website: <https://Green-Horizon.org>.



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