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GreenGram

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The Green Party of NJ Bulletin - July 2009

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REPORT ON THE 2009 GPNJ ANNUAL CONVENTION

(based on draft minutes of the convention as submitted by our former Secretary Ed Fanning)

The Green Party of New Jersey's 13th Annual Convention was held on May 23 in Vineland. About 30 members, friends, and observers attended.

The meeting began with a moment of silence for deceased members of GPNJ. Then county local reports were presented for Bergen, Burlington, Camden, Cumberland, Essex, Monmouth, Mercer, and Ocean. Highlights:

- * The Bergen local hosted a very successful forum on Palestinian-Israeli relations last fall which included Prof. Norman Finkelstein. They were active with Earth Day activities and in providing support for a number of local Green candidates in 2008.

* Rich Fuller of the Monmouth local was acknowledged for his efforts (along with party chair Nick Mellis) in communicating with Earl Gray's family to facilitate Earl's desire to make a large bequeathal to GPNJ and to the Monmouth County Greens. During 2008-2009 the local participated in a plastic cap reclamation project, anti-war activities, and Clean Ocean Action's anti-LNG campaign.

* The Green Party of Ocean County has established a Facebook page:
www.facebook.com/group.php?sid=64d735b96a90d3c1a7810fbe037d16d4&gid=33904545473

* The Essex County Greens have been focusing on a Clean Energy Campaign and have also been hosting a successful film/speaker series.

After the convention's lunch break (featuring much-appreciated provision from the Cumberland County Greens) guest speaker David Petrovich, Executive Director of the Society for the Preservation of Continued Home Ownership, gave a talk on the current foreclosure crisis in New Jersey and the country. He described blatant abuses by the financial industry to provide loans to those who could not possibly afford them. He also pointed out that most credit counselors are paid by the lenders. His presentation was well-received and generated an interesting Q&A discussion afterward.

Highlights of voting on proposals:

* A proposal was passed to establish a link on GPNJ's Web site to the national party's GNC (Green National Committee) Votes page: www.GP.org/vote (this was done immediately after the convention; the link is called "GNC Voting Records" on www.gpnj.org).

* A proposal to have the Green Council determine how our GNC representatives will vote was rejected.

* A proposal was approved specifying that the Green Council has the right to censure a member on any of the national Green Party committees.

* A proposal to establish a GPNJ Coordinator position was approved.

* A proposal to have GPNJ "endorse a constitutional amendment to ban the manufacture, sale, and possession all types of guns except for law enforcement and military personnel" was voted down.

* A three-part proposal regarding organizational dues had the following outcomes:

(a) reduce dues to \$1 annually for unemployed members: passed;

(b) reduce GPNJ annual dues to \$20: referred back to the Green Council for deliberation;

(c) establish a special one-time \$250 dues payment to become a lifetime GPNJ member: failed.

Officer and representative elections

Chair: Nick Mellis

Vice Chair: Matt Theike

Second Vice Chair: Scott Baier

Secretary: vacancy

Treasurer: Lynn Petrovich

Coordinator: Ed Fanning

Mark Heacock, Roger Merle and Steve Welzer were elected to represent GPNJ on the Green National Committee of GPUS. Alternates will be Gary Novosielski and Nick Mellis.

In the weeks following the convention, Lynn Petrovich completed the Political Party Committee Treasurer Training Program with the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission.

Also, Ed Fanning sent this for inclusion in the GreenGram:

"My objectives as State Coordinator will be to:

- . work with the state leadership and members to execute plans;
- . maintain status of efforts;
- . encourage members to follow through on commitments;
- . report to the Green Council the status of efforts;
- . get things accomplished in 2009!"

ELECTORAL CAMPAIGNS

Steven Welzer of the Mercer County Greens will be running for State Assembly in the 12th Legislative District (LD). The district covers parts of Mercer and Monmouth counties. Welzer ran for the 4th District Congressional seat last year and garnered almost 3,400 votes. Campaign contributions can be sent to:

Welzer for Assembly 2009

PO Box 2029, Princeton, NJ 08543

Jason Koralja of the Ocean County Greens will be running for Borough Council in Surf City. For information or to help out (or to make a contribution) contact Jason:

jklbi01 [at] hotmail.com

Holdmel resident Sean Dunne will be running for State Assembly in the 13th District as an Independent (ballot slogan: "Fight Corruption"). He was a Green Party member in Ireland and assisted Green candidates there. Since moving to New Jersey he has attended a number of Monmouth County Green Party meetings and has established good relations with the local members. On this basis the Monmouth Greens have decided to endorse his independent candidacy.

Letter to the Lawrence Ledger from Ken Wolski

July 1

To the editor:

Nick Mellis and I regret that we were forced from the ballot before we ever had a chance to run for the office of Lawrence Township Council as Green Party candidates. Nick and I were given inaccurate information on three separate occasions that directly led to our petition for the council election being deemed invalid.

We were quite excited about representing the Green Party platform, which is available in its entirety at www.gp.org. We were also quite pleased with the show of support that we received from random samples of the Lawrence Township electorate. Lawrence Township is a progressive, well-educated and hard-working community that seemed ripe for the kind of transformative platform that the Greens represent.

The Green platform is transformative because at its heart it represents Grassroots Democracy - in this case, the people of Lawrence Township. The Greens refuse all corporate money and only accept small donations from individual voters. This funding principle represents a sea change in American politics by which the Greens avoid the inherently corrupting influence of corporate money. Politicians who accept corporate donations no longer owe primary allegiance to the American people - they represent their corporate funders.

The Greens have many exciting proposals for a sustainable future in the face of this institutionally corrupt political system that has led to a collapsed economy, a broken health care system, and a bloated and ineffective criminal justice system.

The Green platform goes far beyond bike paths and recycling. The Greens have outlined broad principles that encourage a focus on the future - the lives of your children's children - rather than the acquisitiveness of the here and now. The Green platform includes:

- * Universal, single payer health care - we are already paying for it, we are simply not getting it;
- * An end to the War on Drugs - this would enable a 1/3 increase in every other budget item - health, education, welfare, transportation, etc.;
- * Respect for diversity and women's rights;
- * Non-violence - what Gandhi called the most powerful weapon in the world.

These truly are local issues - all politics is local. By voting for the Green Party, Lawrence residents would have the opportunity to show that they are ready for a viable third party to present exciting new options. By electing Green candidates, Lawrence residents have the power to transform not only our community, but our country and hence, our world. But it is not to be, at least not in the upcoming election.

We want to thank all those who supported our effort, and who gave us such strong words of encouragement. We'll be back. In the meantime, visit www.gpnj.org and consider going Green.

Greens in the northern part of the state are encouraged to go in to New York City to help with the petition drive to get "Reverend Billy" Talen on the ballot as the Green Party candidate for Mayor. About 20,000 signatures are needed by August 16. The campaign headquarters is at 250 Lafayette Street in Manhattan between Prince and Spring (in SoHo). Contact Sean Haugh: 919-402-3489.

There will be a major fundraiser for the campaign on Monday, July 27, 7:00 to 11:30pm - at the Highline Ballroom, 431 W 16th Street in Manhattan. Appearing (in addition to the Rev. and his "Life After Shopping Gospel Choir") will be: Jollyship the Whiz-Bang, Greta Gaines, the New York Street Vendors Chorus, Yetta Kurland, and special guest: Joan Baez.

Tickets on sale now:
<http://bit.ly/vrbtix>

www.voterevbilly.org
<http://twitter.com/revbillytalen>

COUNTY LOCAL REPORTS

Bergen County

Submitted by Pat Alessandrini

Members of the Bergen County Greens joined a large group in Englewood on June 20 for a march for Single Payer healthcare and a demonstration with some wonderful speakers. We had a good showing in spite of the rain!

Essex County

Submitted by Jane Califf

Single Payer health care was explained at a public meeting at Bloomfield College on May 27th, sponsored by the Essex County Greens. The speaker was Winthrop C. Dillaway, M.D., who is a member of Physicians for a National Health Program (PNHP) which has 16,000 members.

Dr. Dillaway stated that the reason for the loud silence on Single Payer is that it would do away with insurance companies and their huge profits. These companies have lobbyists all over Congress doing their best to keep Single Payer off the table and giving donations to Congressmembers to help influence their votes. (At recent hearings in Washington D.C., doctors who tried to speak out for Single Payer were told it was not on the agenda, and when they protested, they were arrested. You can see this on a recent Bill Moyers program on www.pbs.org.)

The term "Single Payer" means there would be one system, managed by our government, in place of the 1,300 paying entities we have now that are run by profit-driven companies. It would improve and expand on Medicare - making it "Medicare for All."

Under a Single Payer system, you would not have to apply for health care; you would get it automatically as a U.S. citizen. You would choose your own doctors and hospitals. In the other words, it would be publicly run but privately delivered.

According to PNHP the country would save at least \$350 billion annually because the insurance companies would not be spending 31% of every health care dollar on paperwork and administration costs. A not-for-profit, government-run system would be able to cover all of the uninsured and upgrade coverage for every American without premiums, deductibles or copays. Dr. Dillaway is outraged that more than 18,000 adults in the U.S. die annually from lack of coverage. He says there is no excuse for the richest country in the world to have 47 million uninsured and another 50 million who are underinsured.

For more information, go to the website of PNHP:
www.pnhp.org

Mercer County

The Mercer County local will host a Green Party Summer Picnic on Sat. August 22, 3:00 to 7:00pm (rain date Aug. 23). Location: 58 Brooktree Road, East Windsor 08520. It will be a pot-luck, so please bring something to share. Info: stevewelzer [at] msn.com.

The picnic will be preceded by a brief meeting of the Green Council.

Monmouth County

In May, Coordinator Rich Fuller gave a presentation to the Mayor and Council of Union Beach seeking their support for Clean Ocean Action's opposition to any Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) facilities off the New Jersey-New York coastline. Happily for all ocean advocates, at its June 18 meeting the Borough of Union Beach passed Resolution 2009-110 stating that the Mayor and Council "do strongly oppose any and all industrial port facilities for Liquefied Natural Gas in the ocean off New Jersey and New York and are in full support of the Clean Ocean Zone which would prohibit these polluting and destructive activities and facilities." The resolution specified support for Clean Ocean Action by name. The County Clerk consulted with Rich as to what the preferred language of the resolution should be. Rich is the Liaison between the Green Party of New Jersey and Clean Ocean Action.

In another clean ocean issue, a public meeting sponsored by the NY/NJ Baykeeper and the Bayshore Regional Watershed Council was held at Keyport Borough Hall on June 11 to update the public on nearby Superfund Sites. Metallic deposits from the late 1960s and early '70s had left shoreline areas along Laurence Harbor and Cheesequake Creek contaminated with very dangerous levels of lead, antimony, arsenic and copper. State and federal experts were on hand to answer questions. They included people from the EPA, the New Jersey Dept. of Environmental Protection, NJ Dept. of Health and Senior Services and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. Rich Fuller asked two questions about whether the environmental commissions of the nearby shoreline communities had been informed of the situation and whether the Association of NJ Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) had been informed. The moderator said 'no' but indicated that those suggestions were worthwhile.

The Monmouth local has endorsed the candidacy of Holdmel resident Sean Dunne for State Assembly in the 13th Legislative District. Sean, a friend of the Greens, will be running as an Independent.

Submitted by Rich Fuller

THE ORDEAL OF CYNTHIA MCKINNEY

The Free Gaza Movement has organized eight boat trips to Gaza since August 2008, defying a blockade imposed by Israel after Hamas won the June 2007 Palestinian elections. Five of the Free Gaza trips have successfully gotten through with their cargo. Two attempts were stopped by Israeli warships last winter (Cynthia McKinney was aboard the Dignity when it was rammed in December).

The most recent attempt was launched on June 29. A Greek-registered freighter, the Arion (renamed the "Spirit of Humanity") left the Cypriot port of Larnaca bound for Gaza with three tons of medical supplies, building materials, and children's toys. There were 21 passengers aboard, including Cynthia McKinney,

Nobel Peace Prize laureate Mairead Corrigan Maguire, and other activists from Britain, Ireland, Bahrain and Jamaica.

The Israeli navy intercepted the ship on June 30. Israeli naval personnel boarded the small vessel without any shots being fired and forced it to sail to the Israeli port of Ashdod. The passengers were taken into custody and their ship was seized. The Greek government issued a statement saying it sent a message to Israel demanding that it release the ship, crew and passengers.

The Spirit of Humanity was in international waters nearly 40 kilometres off the Gaza coast when it was intercepted. "The Israelis hijacked us because we wanted to give crayons to the children of Gaza!" said McKinney.

Israel sought to avoid international culpability for its criminal conduct against the Spirit of Humanity group by getting its victims to sign a statement agreeing that they violated Israeli territorial waters. All the abducted passengers refused. Cynthia's mother said her daughter did not sign the document because it was in Hebrew. "She didn't know what she would be signing," Leola McKinney said.

Two months ago Richard Falk, the United Nations special reporter on human rights in the Palestinian territories, condemned Israel's two-year blockade of Gaza: "Such a pattern of continuing blockade under these conditions amounts to such a serious violation of the Geneva Conventions as to constitute a continuing crime against humanity." In July Falk called Israel's seizure of the Spirit of Humanity "unlawful." He said the move was in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention prohibiting any form of collective punishment against "an occupied people".

Ramzi Kysia, a spokesman for the Free Gaza Movement, said: "On this trip, we had one boat and 21 activists. On our next trip, we'll have more boats, more journalists and more dignitaries."

Green Party reception for Cynthia upon her release

After the Spirit of Humanity was captured, the passengers were detained in a prison in Ramle, Israel. Cynthia was released on July 6 and flown to New York. On the evening of July 8 she joined DC Statehood Green Party members for a reception in Washington, DC. Approximately 50 people showed up on very short notice. Reporters were invited and attended.

At the event Cynthia presented her account of what took place and then opened up for questions. She patiently responded to each, no small feat considering how sleep-deprived she was at that point. Among those asking questions was Stokely Carmichael's sister, Asantewaa.

Look for posting of the video of the event at:
www.slepton.com/slepton/index.pl

Cynthia McKinney - "I'm back home, thanks to all of you"

July 9, 2009

Well, all I can say is "Thank you!" Your calls, faxes, protests, and prayers all made a huge difference and helped to secure our protection and our release.

I just got off the phone with George Galloway who extended a personal invitation to join him and the U.S. convoy in Viva Palestina. I'm certainly excited about that. Maybe I will finally make it to Gaza!

Below is the statement I put out from the Israeli prison:

7/2/09 (excerpts)

Before I left for the trip, there was a last-minute, but urgent request: Please bring crayons for the children.

When I told people that I was going shopping to buy crayons for the children of Gaza, everyone wanted to donate. By the time I left, my suitcase could hold no more. So, full of expectation, I entered the airport in the U.S. headed once again to Larnaca, Cyprus where the Hope Flotilla, consisting of the "Free Gaza" and the "Spirit of Humanity" were to embark to Gaza. The "Free Gaza" was to be donated to the people of Gaza so they could replace some of the boats confiscated or bombed by the Israelis during Operation Cast Lead.

I am now known as Israeli Prisoner #88794. I am in cell number 5, Ramle Prison. If Israel fears for its security because Gaza's children have crayons, then not only has Israel lost its last shred of legitimacy, but Israel must be declared a failed state. I am being held in this prison because I had a dream that Gaza's children could color and paint, that Gaza's wounded could be healed, and that Gaza's bombed-out houses could be rebuilt.

But I've learned an interesting thing by being inside this prison. First of all, it's incredibly Black: populated mostly by Ethiopians who also had a dream. My five cellmates have been here for about six months each. One is pregnant; they are all in their twenties. They thought they were coming to the Holy Land. They had a dream that their lives would be better. The CIA-installed puppet in Addis Ababa, President Meles, has put the once-proud, never-colonized Ethiopia into the back pocket of the United States. It has become a place of torture, rendition, and occupation. Ethiopians must flee their country because superpower politics became more important than human rights and self-determination.

My cellmates came to the Holy Land so they could be free from the exigencies of superpower politics. They came to Israel because they thought that Israel held promise for them.

They made their way to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. They got their yellow paper of identification. They got their certificate for police protection. They are refugees from tragedy, and they made it to Israel. Only, after they arrived, Israel told them, "There is no UN in Israel."

The police have license to pick them up and suck them into the black hole of a farce for a justice system. These beautiful, industrious, proud young women represent the hopes of entire families. The idea of Israel tricked them and the rest of us. In a widely propagandized slick marketing campaign, Israel represented itself as a place of refuge and safety for the world's Jews and Christians.

One of my cellmates cried today. She has been here for six months. As an American, crying with them is not enough. The policy of the United States must be better, and while we watch President Obama give trillions of dollars to the financial elite of the United States, it ought now be clear that "hope," "change," and "yes we can" were powerfully presented images of dignity and self-fulfillment, individually and nationally, that besieged people everywhere truly believed in. It was a slick marketing campaign, as slickly put to the world and to the voters of America as was Israel's marketing to the world. It tricked all of us but, more tragically, these young women.

We must cast an informed vote about better candidates seeking to represent us.

I'm lucky. I will leave this place. Has Israel become the place where dreams die? Ask the people of Palestine. Ask the stream of Black and Asian men whom I've seen being processed at Ramle. Ask the women on my cellblock.

Ask yourself: what are you willing to do? Let's change the world together and reclaim what we all need as human beings: Dignity.

I appeal to the United Nations to get these women of Ramle resettled in safe homes - women who have done nothing wrong other than to believe in Israel as the guardian of the Holy Land. I appeal, once again, to President Obama to go to Gaza: send your special envoy, George Mitchell there and engage Hamas as the elected choice of the Palestinian people.

I dedicate this message to those who struggle to achieve a free Palestine, and to the women I've met at Ramle.

Full text at:

<http://freegaza.org/en/home/testimonies-from-israeli-jail/989-letter-from-an-israeli-jail-by-cynthia-mckinney>

Video of Cynthia McKinney arriving at JFK after Israeli prison release, talking about capture, prison treatment, conditions in the prison:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=EQIC9wOh-II

Democracy Now! July 8:

www.democracynow.org/2009/7/8/fmr_congressmember_cynthia_mckinney_back_in

Also:

<http://dignity.ning.com/>

<http://www.twitter.com/dignityaction>

<http://www.twitter.com/cynthiamckinney>

<http://www.facebook.com/CynthiaMcKinney>

UPDATE!

From the Viva Palestina Convoy

July 12, 2009, 7 pm Cairo time

The Viva Palestina members who spent the night in their buses at the Suez Crossing after they were stopped by Egyptian authorities on July 11 are now making their way to the nearby city of Ismailia and are preparing to resume their travels toward Gaza imminently.

British Member of Parliament George Galloway, who has met up with former U.S. Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney in Cairo, was working with Egyptian and U.S. authorities to expedite the passage of the convoy over the Suez Canal and into Gaza.

New York City Councilmember Charles Barron, who led the group at the Suez Canal, says, "Whether these requirements are genuine or not, we will get around these obstacles. "We are going to Gaza."

GREENS ELECTED TO OFFICE

Some states held local elections on June 9. In Portland, Maine, Greens Ben Chipman and Anna Trevorrow were elected to the Charter Commission. In Whately, Massachusetts, Nat Fortune was re-elected to the School Committee while Joyce Palmer-Fortune was elected to the Select Board (both ran unopposed).

2009 GREEN PARTY ANNUAL NATIONAL MEETING

This year's national meeting, hosted by the North Carolina Green Party, will be held in Durham, NC, July 23-July 26 at the North Carolina Central University campus in downtown Durham.

Information and registration:
www.gp.org/2009-ANM

Join Green Party leaders and activists to participate in 23 workshops and committee meetings. Workshops are categorized into five different tracks and will take place from mid-day Thursday to mid-day Friday. The tracks are: Issues, Party-Building, Strategizing/Future Focus, and a Campaign School.

Details at:
http://docs.google.com/View?id=dcmtq7fw_30cb44rphp

On Friday afternoon there will be a special panel discussion on the merits of a national single-payer health care system featuring:

- * Dr. Jonathan Kotch, Board Chair of Health Care for All NC and senior faculty member at the UNC Chapel Hill School of Public Health;
 - * Justine McCabe, Co-Chair of the GPUS International Committee, Ph.D. alumna of Duke University;
 - * Pat LaMarche, 2004 Green Party Vice-Presidential candidate, 2006 candidate for Governor of Maine;
 - * Carl Romanelli, 2006 Green Party Candidate for U.S. Senate from Pennsylvania, founding member of Luzerne County Green Coalition.
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GREEN FEST 2009

<http://nygreenfest.org/>

Greens will be gathering in Alfred, NY, Aug. 7-9, for a weekend of fun, education, networking, and skills-sharing.

Green Fest is open to all who are interested in sustainable living and Green politics. More than 75 presenters are confirmed, including Joel Kovel, Virginia Rasmussen, Bill Kauffman, Steve Welzer, Lois Hilton, Carl Romanelli, Sander Hicks, Art Weaver, Dan Miner, Jason Nabewaniec, Ismail Mehr and Lyn Gerry; 26 exhibitors will exhibit in the Green Fair.

This event is a benefit for the Green Party of New York and other state Green parties in our region. GPNJ will receive a percentage of the proceeds based on the number of attendees from New Jersey.

Green Fest 2009 will be held on the campus of Alfred University in rural Allegheny County near the

Pennsylvania border. The Short Line Bus runs three buses daily between New York City and Alfred. The bus stop in Alfred is just a few blocks from Green Fest.

Driving directions:

<http://nygreenfest.org/directions.html>

Offers and requests for rides:

<http://nygreenfest.org/rideshare.html>

Meals and lodging on the Alfred University campus and Foster Lake campground must be reserved before August 1st. You may register and reserve camping spaces, dorm rooms and meals online at:

<http://nygreenfest.org/registration.html>

Registration in advance is \$85 for the weekend. An additional \$20 fee will be charged for walk-in registrations. Meals prepared from locally-grown food are available in the Alfred University dining hall. Three different meal-plan options are available. Lodging and meals for children are discounted.

For more information:

<http://nygreenfest.org/> or call 607-569-2114.

SCHEDULE:

Friday, August 7

10:00 am, Registration opens

12:00 noon, Exhibits open

1:45 pm, Afternoon Workshops and Panels begin

4:15 pm, Swimming, hiking, yoga

5:30-6:30 pm, Dinner in Dining Hall

7:00 pm, Forum on the Politics of Sustainability

Saturday, August 8

7:30-8:30 am, Breakfast in Dining Hall

8:30 am, Workshops and Panels

9:45 am, Forum on Sustainable Energy

11:15 am, Workshops and Panels

12:30-1:30 pm, Lunch in Dining Hall

1:45 pm, Afternoon Workshops and Panels begin

4:15 pm, Swimming, hiking, yoga, drumming

5:30-6:30 pm, Dinner in Dining Hall

7:00 pm, Forum on Politics and Nature

9:30 pm, Music and Dancing

Sunday, August 9

7:30-8:30 am, Breakfast in Dining Hall

8:30 am, Workshops and Panels

9:45 am, Forum on Regionalism and Sustainability

11:30 am, Workshops and Panels

12:30-1:30 pm, Lunch in Dining Hall

1:45 pm, Forum on Visioning a Green Future

3:30 pm, Adjourn

WORKSHOPS, PANELS, FORUMS AND ACTIVITIES:

Allegheny Anti-Nuclear Campaign; Approaches to Landscape for Food; Build Your Own Wind Turbine; Drawing Political Cartoons; Drumming Circle; Economics as a Cultural System; Empire to Earth Community; Gaza's Dilemma; Green Campaign Lessons; Green Media Panels; Hatha Yoga; Importance of Political Theory; Liberation Ecology Workshop; Living off the Grid; Local Food Supply Systems; Nature Walks; Organizing for Peace; Out of Time: Global Warming; Post Carbon Economies; Poetry from Place Workshop; Political Organizing on Campus; Sovereignty and Sustainability; Spiritual Basis for Green Living; Sustainable Cities Panel; Swimming; Third Party Ballot Access; Third Parties in the U.S. Experience; Visioning a Green Future; Watershed Protection; Why Localism Matters; Zero Waste Workshop

Green Pages, the official publication of record of the Green Party of the United States, is now online:
www.gp.org/greenpages-blog

Vol. 13, No. 1 is the latest issue available. The online version is downloadable for easy printing if you need hard copies.

BOOK RECOMMENDATION

Submitted by Alvin Meyer of the Bergen County Greens

I have just finished reading the recently published book: "Mirrors" published by Nation Books and written by Eduardo Galeano. I found the book to be delightfully entertaining and insightful.

Here is an excerpt:

Only Human

Darwin told us we are cousins of the apes, not the angels. Later on, we learned we emerged from Africa's jungle and that no stork ever carried us from Paris. And not long ago we discovered that our genes are almost identical to those of mice.

Now we can't tell if we are God's masterpiece or the devil's bad joke.

We puny humans:

- . exterminators of everything,
- . hunters of our own,
- . creators of the atom bomb, the hydrogen bomb, and the neutron bomb,
- . the only animals who invent machines,
- . the only ones who live at the service of the machines they invent,
- . the only ones who devour their own home,
- . the only ones who poison the water they drink and the earth that feeds them,
- . the only ones capable of renting or selling themselves, or renting or selling their fellow humans,
- . the only ones who kill for fun,
- . the only ones who torture,
- . the only ones who rape.

And also:

- . the only ones who laugh,
- . the only ones who daydream,
- . the ones who make silk from the spit of a worm,
- . the ones who find beauty in rubbish,
- . the ones who discover colors beyond the rainbow,
- . the ones who furnish the voices of the world with new music,
- . and who create words so that neither reality nor memory will be mute.

DC LOBBY DAY AND RALLY FOR SINGLE-PAYER HEALTHCARE

"Medicare: Made in America"

Hosted by Healthcare-NOW!

July 30 in Washington, DC

Celebrate Medicare's 44th birthday by showing Congress and President Obama the people, unions, doctors, nurses, seniors, faith groups, and Americans of every stripe support a single-payer system.

As President Obama says, "We must build on what works and leave out what doesn't." Medicare has successfully provided care to seniors and people with disabilities for almost half a century.

The best way to save this system is to expand it and make it a truly single-payer system by removing the for-profit interests and guaranteeing healthcare as a right for all.

Info: 800-453-1305 or info@healthcare-now.org
www.healthcare-now.org/campaigns/single-payer-rally

GREEN PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES

www.gp.org

For Immediate Release: June 4, 2009

Green Party leaders challenge Sen. Baucus and defenders of private insurance to debate Single-Payer advocates

Greens challenge major media to air the debate

Green leaders available to speak on health care: www.gp.org/speakers/speakers-health-care.php

WASHINGTON, DC - Green Party leaders challenged Sen. Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and other defenders of health care reform based on private insurance to debate advocates of Single-Payer national health care in a public forum.

Greens also challenged the major media to broadcast the debate.

"Americans deserve to hear a debate on the merits of Single-Payer/Medicare For All versus the merits of a health care system dominated by for-profit insurance companies and HMOs," said Angel Torres, co-chair of the Green Party of Maricopa County (www.maricopagreens.org), which organized a rally for Single-Payer in front of the office of Congressman Harry Mitchell (D-Ariz.) on May 30.

"Greens are prepared to defend Single-Payer publicly. We also challenge groups like Physicians for a National Health Program, the Healthcare-Now Coalition, Single-Payer Action, and the California Nurses Association to represent the Single-Payer side. Single-Payer supporters have been fighting to get public attention, especially for Rep. John Conyers' Single-Payer bill, HR 676," said Mr. Torres.

Greens participated in national Day of Action for Single-Payer events throughout the U.S. on May 30. In Augusta, Maine, 2004 Green vice presidential candidate Pat LaMarche hosted a Single-Payer rally at the statehouse (<http://morningsentinel.mainetoday.com/news/local/6407921.html>).

According to the Center for Responsive Politics, Democrats and Republicans accepted over \$46 million in insurance industry donations in 2008 (www.opensecrets.org/industries/indus.php?ind=F09). According to Consumer Watchdog, Sen. Baucus has taken more campaign contributions from health insurance firms (\$183,750 in the last two election cycles) and pharmaceutical companies (\$229,020) than any other Democratic member of the House and Senate.

Greens blast misleading TV ads

Green Party health care activists warned that private insurance defenders are placing ads to mislead the public about health care reform, even to the point of confusing private insurance-based plans favored by President Obama and Democratic leaders with Single-Payer.

Recent TV ads have featured Rick Scott, chair of Conservatives for Patients' Rights, who was fired from his position as CEO of Columbia/HCA in 1997 after he was caught trying to defraud the federal and state governments for hundreds of millions of taxpayers' dollars in false Medicare and Medicaid payments, the largest Medicare/Medicaid fraud in history. The company had to pay back \$1.7 billion, but Mr. Scott, instead of facing prosecution, received \$10 million in severance pay and \$300 million worth of stock.

Greens argue that for-profit health insurance adds high costs (administrative overhead, demand for profit) but no value (medical treatment). All other industrial nations guarantee their citizens health care; no one in Canada, which has a Single-Payer system, faces financial ruin because of illness or injury.

Single-Payer, based on Medicare (administrative costs: about 3%), eliminates the inefficiency of private coverage, drastically cutting costs while covering all Americans ("everyone in, no one out") and allowing full choice of physician and hospital. Greens said that the reforms favored by President Obama and many Democrats don't curb inefficiency, because they leave the insurance/HMO gatekeepers in charge.

Green leaders noted that polls have shown widespread popular support for a national health care program that guarantees universal coverage:

www.wpsinglepayer.org/PollResults.html

In 2008, the US Conference of Mayors endorsed Single-Payer:
www.usmayors.org/resolutions/76th_conference/chhs_03.asp

Green Party information page on Single-Payer
www.gp.org/organize/sicko.html

Single-Payer advocates:

Physicians for a National Health Program www.pnhp.org

Healthcare-Now Coalition www.healthcare-now.org

Leadership Conference for Guaranteed Health Care <http://guaranteedhealthcare4all.org>

Single-Payer Action <http://singlepayeraction.org>

California Nurses Association www.calnurses.org

GPUS TELE-WORKSHOP SERIES

The subject of the next program will be: "Outreach." It is scheduled for July 14 (9 p.m. EDT). It will feature GPUS webmaster, Dave Doonan, with a "webinar" on using internet tools to reach out to the media and increase awareness of Green candidates, campaigns and issues.

If you wish to participate in this program please send an e-mail to Holly Hart: [hhart11 \[at\] gmail.com](mailto:hhart11@gmail.com). (These teleconferences are not conducted on an "800" number, so if you don't have an unlimited calling plan you will be charged long distance charges by your telephone carrier, as applicable).

The first Tele-Workshop (June 3) featured Brent McMillan, GPUS Executive Director, speaking about:

- * An overview of the 2008 presidential campaign from the perspective of the National Office.
- * Security issues. There have been Green candidates targeted by other parties, sometimes using the FBI as a political tool, in Minneapolis and Connecticut. Problems in this area have picked up in the last few years (especially during the presidential campaign) and have not decreased under the Obama administration.
- * Brent said we need more party members, especially younger people, involved with fundraising. Celebrity outreach should be considered in this regard.

Time was allocated after each section of his presentation for Q&A from the listeners.

GPUS SENDS AN OPEN LETTER TO BILL MAHER

For Immediate Release: Wednesday, July 1, 2009

A Real Party for 'Real Time'

WASHINGTON, DC - The Green Party of the United States (GPUS) has sent an open letter to Bill Maher after a June 19 broadcast of 'Real Time' in which Mr. Maher said, "[W]hat we need is an actual progressive party to represent the millions of Americans who aren't being served by the Democrats. Because, bottom line, Democrats are the new Republicans."

See:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=DtUAHPYYzeM

(the relevant section comes about 2 minutes into the video)

The Green Party's reply to Mr. Maher: "Hey, Bill, we're over here! What you described is the GREEN PARTY! We already exist!"

The progressive party sought by Bill Maher describes the Green Party: "Shouldn't there be one party that unambiguously supports cutting the military budget, a party that is straight up in favor of gun control, gay marriage, higher taxes on the rich, universal health care - legalizing pot - and steep, direct taxing of polluters?"

The open letter urges Mr. Maher to acknowledge the Green Party and have a Green candidate or leader on the show. The text of the letter is appended below.

The Green Party is currently preparing for its annual national meeting, to take place in Durham, North Carolina, from July 23 to July 26 (www.gp.org/2009-ANM). Reporters are invited to cover the meeting (www.gp.org/forms/media).

"America's First Party"

An Open Letter to Bill Maher from the Green Party

Dear Mr. Maher,

We were thrilled to hear you talk about us when you discussed the need for a new party - a "first party" - during the June 19 broadcast of 'Real Time.'

The only part you left out were the words "Green Party."

Here's what you said:

"We don't need a third party. We need a first party. You go to the polls and your choices are the guy who voted for the first Wall Street bailout, or the guy who voted for the next ten."

"Shouldn't there be one party that unambiguously supports cutting the military budget, a party that is straight up in favor of gun control, gay marriage, higher taxes on the rich, universal health care - legalizing pot - and steep, direct taxing of polluters? These aren't radical ideas. A majority of Americans are either already for them or would be if they were properly argued and defended."

"[W]hat we need is an actual progressive party to represent the millions of Americans who aren't being served by the Democrats. Because, bottom line, Democrats are the new Republicans."

Hey, Bill, we're over here! What you described is the GREEN PARTY! We already exist!

Maybe you forgot about us because the major media have an aversion to mentioning the Green Party and our candidates. Maybe the FCC has banned "Green Party" along with the late George Carlin's seven dirty words, "Chomsky," "End the Drug War," and other language that offends delicate sensibilities.

For the major networks, and apparently PBS and NPR too, the very idea of more than two candidates in an election makes talking heads explode.

If Green candidates started getting elected to higher office, the radical ideas that aren't really radical would get a fair hearing and a chance of passage.

Imagine if a few Greens got seated in Congress. Greens don't take corporate contributions, so they'd be immune to the influence of Exxon-Mobil, Goldman Sachs, Bank of America, Raytheon, Monsanto, etc. When Rep. Nancy Pelosi sends out orders not to seek a probe of Bush-Cheney officials who authorized torture dungeons, Greens could tell her to take a hike.

A few Green congressional victories would cause a seismic shock to the political landscape. Democrats would no longer have Republicans as their sole competition. The scope of national debate would no longer be Dems on the left, Repubs on the right, a phony middle ground between them, and a narrow range of political ideas (comparable to the corner grocery limiting your choice of beverage to Coke or Pepsi).

With some Greens in Congress:

Democrats couldn't pretend to be the antiwar party while voting for more war funding.

Single-payer national health care would be on the table and might even pass. President Obama and most Democrats already know single-payer is the best proposal. But they feel compelled to appease the health insurance, pharmaceutical, and other lobbies and find common ground with Republicans who believe the free market has sufficient mojo to cure every illness and injury.

We'd hear the truth: that "emissions trading" is a license for corporate polluters to keep polluting, that "clean coal" is a plot to turn West Virginia into a crater, that the trillion-dollar Wall Street bailout and confiscation of savings and pension money are the greatest transfer of wealth from working people to big banks in history. There's a bipartisan consensus that corporate profit margins always take precedent over Americans facing financial ruin due to a health emergency or credit card debt or a mortgage or a lost job. Whenever you hear the word "bipartisan" on the evening news, check the silverware.

What are we going to do about this situation, Bill? If you really want a "first party" for America, will you throw us a bone on your show? Will you have a Green candidate or Green leader on once in a while? (Ralph Nader doesn't count - he's not a member of the Green Party.)

How about Rev. Billy Talen of the Church of Life After Shopping? Rev. Billy is now a Green candidate for Mayor of New York City (www.voterevbilly.org). Rosa Clemente, our 2008 vice-presidential candidate, said that the Green Party "is more than an alternative, it's an imperative." Based on your comments, Bill, it sounds like you might agree with Rosa.

We look forward to hearing back from you. You can see what we're up to on our web site (www.gp.org).

Sincerely,

The Green Party
