

Beyond 'Left vs. Right'

By Scott McLarty

Green supersedes left versus right, and the party shouldn't be afraid to point out where it's profoundly conservative, in the best sense of that word. Greens call for the restoration of self-reliant, sustainable, and environmentally sound local economies and grassroots civic participation. This means defense of downtown Main Streets and neighborhoods, with locally owned business, threatened by off-the-freeway strip malls and chain stores; defense of family farms about to be snuffed by giant agri-conglomerates; defense of working people, their organizing rights, and environmental protections against the WTO and other international trade authorities; defense of traditional democratic values against government in thrall to corporate lobbies.

What's radical is the post-Cold-War global corporate steamroller that crushes all human and ecological values in its path. Waking people up to this ugly new reality and helping them find the political means to resist its frightening doctrines of privatization, deregulation, 'full spectrum dominance,' and 'total information awareness' should be the fundamental message of the Greens. Voters are vastly less interested in self-declared radical parties than they are in candidates who represent their own interests and ideals. Instead of left and right, Greens should speak in terms of top and bottom.