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GreenGram

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GPNJ ANNUAL CONVENTION TO BE HELD MARCH 27

The 2010 Green Party of New Jersey Annual Convention will be held Saturday, March 27, 9:00am to 5:00pm. Location: 169 Wilfred Ave, Hamilton Twp, NJ 08690.

The agenda will include election of party officers, consideration of proposals in regard to statewide matters (see below), reports and other presentations. We will enjoy a pot-luck luncheon, so please bring a dish to share! For more information, contact Nick Mellis at: 609-393-4349.

PROPOSALS TO THE CONVENTION

1. Ending the Home Mortgage Foreclosure Crisis

Submitted by Irwin Nack of the Bergen County Greens

Whereas many working people are threatened with foreclosure on their homes, and

Whereas no effective action has been taken by government to end this crisis, and

Whereas the US government has given billions of dollars to Fanny Mae and Freddy Mac, and taken ownership and control of these two government-sponsored mortgage banks, therefore

Resolved that Congress authorize these two banks to set up branches throughout the country to offer refinancing loans at affordable low fixed interest rates directly to individuals owning only one home, which they personally occupy, assessed at no more than the average value of a home in the state, and

Resolved that the principals of these loans be reset to reflect the current market value of these homes, and

Resolved that the new loan banks be authorized to make affordable low fixed interest loans to individuals who are not homeowners to buy a house valued at less than the average value of a home in the state provided that he or she will personally occupy it, and

Resolved that Congress immediately declare a one-year moratorium on foreclosures on owner-occupied one- and two-family homes assessed at no more than the average value of a home in the state and

Resolved that the Green Party petition members of Congress to pass such legislation.

2. Election and behavior of representatives/delegate to the Green National Committee

Submitted by Nick Mellis of the Mercer County Greens

Be it resolved. The GPNJ shall elect it's delegates either online on the Green Council list serve or at it's annual convention or on our monthly Green Council (GC) call. All delegates both regular and alternate will be elected by those means. There will be no seniority in the ranking of our delegates, both regular and alternate. Elections to replace a regular/alternate delegate can take place either online (Green Council list serve) or at a special meeting or at our monthly GC calls. All Delegates serve at the pleasure of the party. All Delegates are subject to recall by the Green Council either through an online or in person or conference call vote. All delegates to the Green National Committee (or GNC) are not considered party officers. All GNC delegates must be registered Greens. All delegates shall behave in a thoughtful, polite and cooperative manner at all times. Bad or abusive behavior towards others in the Green Party shall be cause for immediate recall. In case of a resignation an election shall take place no more than two weeks from when the resignation took place either online or in person or on our monthly calls.

3. Election of Greens to the various national committees

Submitted by Nick Mellis of the Mercer County Greens

Be it resolved: The Green Party of New Jersey is entitled to have three (3) people on each of the official GPUS standing committees. Greens from New Jersey shall be voted on to their committee(s) of their choice by either the Green Council online or at our monthly Green Council calls or at our annual state convention. Any written notice from a committee chair requesting that a member from the New Jersey Green Party be removed shall be reviewed by and voted upon by the Green Council either online or in person or at our regular monthly conference calls. You represent our state party when you join the various national committee(s) so please try and cooperate with your fellow greens from around the country. If you must resign from your committee assignment please notify the state party as soon as possible.

4. The GPNJ Green Council list serve to be used for party business only

Submitted by Nick Mellis of the Mercer County Greens

Be it resolved: That the (GPNJ) Green Council list serve on Yahoogroups be reserved exclusively for Party business and not for other "chatter". Party business to be defined as things relating to the day to day operation's and ongoing discussions (proposals, etc) of the Green Party of New Jersey (or GPNJ). This includes emails from the national party, information from county's and locals. Emails encouraging greens to call their congress-person from a group other than the Green Party shall be deemed unnecessary and the person will be asked to refrain from sending those emails again. If the person refuses or continues then that person will have there messages moderated for thirty days until they stop.

COUNTY LOCAL REPORTS

Bergen County

The Bergen County Green Party sponsored a public forum on January 13th: "The Honduras Coup D'etat and the US." Excerpts of the proceedings can be viewed on YouTube (crank up your speakers!):

Part One

Introduction by Gary Novosielski and Alvin Meyer
www.youtube.com/watch?v=NIVQ5hti00E

Part Two

Professor Heather Cottin of LaGuardia College
www.youtube.com/watch?v=HWkUjairB30

Part Three

Lucy Pagoada of Honduran USA Resistencia
www.youtube.com/watch?v=KHLeT5PQe3s

Part Four

Arya F. Jenkins of the Fort Lee Peace Vigil
www.youtube.com/watch?v=DohQBTmb4_A

(the above videos were created by Bergen Green Joe Pezzillo)

Heather Cottin and Lucy Pagoada participated on a Solidarity Delegation to Honduras last October. They were both well informed and passionate about the SOA (School of the Americas) and US role in supporting the "golpe." Arya Jenkins read a ten-point statement on US complicity with the coup that was written by Andreas Conteris (an American Journalist who was confined in the Brazilian Embassy in Honduras along with the democratically elected President Manuel Zelaya).

Co-sponsors of the event included: American Iranian Friendship Committee; Bergen POP; Fort Lee Peace Vigil; Leonia Peace & Justice; New Jersey Peace Action; Northern New Jersey Socialist Party; People's Organization for Progress; Veterans for Peace: Chapter 21; Westpac

The next in the series of public forums being sponsored by the Bergen County Greens will be: "We the People vs. the Supreme Court." This event will be held on Wednesday, March 10, 7:30pm, at the Ethical Culture Society, 687 Larch Ave, Teaneck, NJ 07666. Doors open at 7:00.

On January 21, with its ruling in Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission, the Supreme Court ruled that corporations are persons, entitled by the US Constitution to buy elections and run our government. We say: To the contrary! Human beings are people; corporations are legal fictions. The March 10th forum will detail how the Supreme Court is misguided in principle and wrong on the law. In a democracy, the people rule!

For full details about the March 10 forum, visit:
www.bergencountygreenparty.org/we_the_people_forum.html

Essex County

Report by Ted Glick, County Coordinator

Climate activists across the Chesapeake region jumped into the Bay to "Keep Winter Cold!" on January 23rd. A short video of the event can be viewed at: www.chesapeakeclimate.org (scroll down a bit and you'll see the video). Thanks to those New Jersey Greens who sponsored me as I participated in the fifth annual Polar Bear Plunge sponsored by the Chesapeake Climate Action Network (CCAN).

Monmouth County

Report by Rich Fuller, County Coordinator

As liaison between GPNJ and Clean Ocean Action (COA), I recently spoke against the latest Liquefied Natural Gas proposal alongside representatives from COA and a handful of other ocean advocates at a meeting of the Monmouth County Board of Freeholders at the Hall of Records in Freehold. This was my third speech there on that subject.

Also, I am currently soliciting other Greens to join me on Saturday, March 20 for a bus trip to Washington, DC to protest US participation in wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. This is a continuation of my ongoing anti-war protests conducted on Saturdays at the gates of the military base at Fort Monmouth.

Monmouth local member Lynn Petrovich had the following letter printed in the Asbury Park Press on Dec. 30:

Single payer system removes profit motive

In response to the Dec. 24 letter "U.S. has succumbed to corporate greed," please be advised that "corporate greed" is an oxymoron, like jumbo shrimp or representative democracy. The sole purpose of a corporation is to maximize profit and shareholder return, by any means possible. So where is the greed?

The health care system is a perfect example. In order to maximize profits, these conglomerates must cut costs (except CEO compensation packages) to satisfy Wall Street and, yes, the investors in their stock, who are ordinary citizens, money market fund managers, Internet day traders and beneficiaries of most pension plans. They must, by charter, deny benefits for health care and annually increase premiums - by as much as 10 percent - if they adversely affect profit.

The more important question is: Why have we allowed corporations to continue to maintain control over our lives - literally - for something that should be considered a basic human right (and in 36 other countries, health care is a human right)? When will Americans wake up and realize this fact? Human, or any suffering, is a non-issue.

The only answer to our health care dilemma is to enact universal single payer, which aside from reducing costs and increasing employment would take the "care" of our citizens out of corporate control.

In his best-selling book "Eating Animals," Jonathan Safran Foer writes about his in-depth investigation into our corporate-controlled animal factory farms that genetically alter, drug, incarcerate, maim, torture and slaughter 90 percent of the meat in America. He points out: "What the (food) industry figured out - and this was the real revolution - is that you don't need healthy animals to make a profit. Sick animals are more profitable.

Yes, sick animals (or humans) are more profitable. So the next time you boast of making a "killing" on trading that health care stock, you are absolutely correct.

Lynn Petrovich
Oakhurst

[Lynn is the GPNJ Treasurer]

Mercer/Monmouth

On Dec. 17 a group of Mercer and Monmouth County Greens met in Holmdel to review the 2009 State Assembly campaigns of Sean Dunne and Steve Welzer. Issues discussed included: fundraising, campaign web sites, social networking sites, candidate questionnaires, lawn signs, newspaper editorial board meetings, letters to the editor, and canvassing. In regard to materials distribution, Sean had success putting education-issues-oriented campaign flyers on car windshields when hundreds of parents were attending "Back to School" nights at the high schools in each town; Steve placed stacks of his flyers in bins on college campuses throughout the district as well as in book stores, libraries, health food stores, cafes, and supermarkets.

Sean and Steve discussed the merits of a party-building campaign vs. an independent campaign supported by a third party. Both agreed that the response to their campaigns was encouraging enough to suggest that if more resources (money and volunteer help) were available, serious alternative candidates could reasonably target 10% of the vote in future State Assembly campaigns. This would get the attention of the press and public, and would be a stepping stone toward eventual victories.

DON'T MOURN, GO GREEN!

By Don Santina

From Counterpunch 2/26/10

www.counterpunch.org/santina02262010.html

For quite awhile now, the political streams have been flooded with the ever increasing wail of the progressive Democrats. The weeping and gnashing of teeth by peace and justice groups, unions, focus groups, Democratic Party blogs and liberal/left journals has become deafening: What happened, why didn't we get what we voted for on November 4, 2008?

These progressive Democrats organized, campaigned and voted for a progressive agenda and got - drum roll - nothing. That's right, nothing. For the past year, their party has controlled both houses of Congress and the presidency. For three years, their party has enjoyed majority power in the House. What the progressive Democrats got out of all that: absolutely nothing.

They voted for peace, and they got war - expanded into Pakistan and Yemen with escalation in Afghanistan and continuing occupation in Iraq. They voted for health care reform, and they got Big Pharma's Frankenstein. They voted for reining in Wall Street and got multiple bailouts and fat bonuses on Wall Street and ever increasing foreclosures and evictions on Main Street and Back Street. They voted for jobs, and they got spiraling unemployment. Bring back Habeas Corpus? Nah. Close Guantanamo? Nix. Stop torture? Nein. Fair union organizing in the work place? Tax breaks for the rest of us? Mortgage relief? You gotta be kidding.

In all their caterwauling about this deteriorating situation, do the progressive Democrats have any suggestions for turning these policies 180 degrees around? Yes, they do! Send an email. Sign an online petition. Write a letter to your representative in Congress. Tell your neighbors how unhappy you are. Wow, with this kind of muscle, the new dawn will soon be breaking!

One progressive pundit even offered up "don't mourn, organize," the immortal words of the IWW martyr, Joe Hill. The problem with that suggestion is that most of us have neither the time nor the skills to organize anything much past our own personal lives.

The real problem is - and always will be - that the Democrats In Charge (DIC) of the Democratic Party (the Clinton wing and its corporate backers) don't give a damn about the opinions or values of the progressive Democrats because the rightwing DIC knows that the progressive Democrats will always vote for them, regardless of the actual DIC policies. Come election time, the DIC publicity apparatus will trot out all that scary stuff about the Republicans again, and the progressives will line up like bobbleheads on a dashboard and cast delusionary votes for the same people who gave us NAFTA and the WTO, took away welfare for the poor, dismantled Glass-Steagall and equal time in broadcasting, expanded the prison system, and conducted the horrific sanctions on Iraq.

Why don't the progressive Democrats take a page from Joe Lieberman's play book? Lieberman went Independent, and the Democrats In Charge attached their collective proboscis to his corporate posterior. What do you think would happen if Dennis Kucinich, Barbara Lee, Marcy Kaptur, Lynn Woolsey and the rest of the so-called progressive caucus announced themselves as independents? Would they get the same slavish attention from the DIC that the far right Blue Dogs get? What if Senator Durbin, who grumbled "the banks own this place," had the guts to declare himself independent of his bank-owned

party? Do you think that the Clinton/Pelosi/Reid axis and its cronies would be compelled to put Single Payer and multiple other issues "on the table" if they had to negotiate with a sizeable bloc of independent progressives?

On the rank and file level, what if all the progressive Democrat voters registered Green Party tomorrow? Think they'd get the DIC's attention?

First of all, the Green Party authentically represents the values the progressive Democrats ostensibly espouse - peace, justice, small d democracy - so it's not as if these stranded Democrats would have some kind of political heart attack over changing registration. After all, their party is the historic party of segregation, and Franklin D. Roosevelt couldn't even get an anti-lynching law passed by his Democratic Congress. Seventy years later, this same party continues to approve the over-bloated imperial war budget at the expense of critical assistance to economically destroyed non-white cities like New Orleans and Detroit. Also, for all the recent Democratic Party moaning about the Supreme Court decision to legally install the corporate state, let's not forget that 22 of their senators voted to confirm Chief Justice Roberts.

And for those Democrats who resentfully cling to the fiction that Green Party presidential candidate Ralph Nader somehow cost Al Gore the 2000 election in Florida, they should ask the man who invented the Internet why he conceded so quickly in the face of an orchestrated voter fraud of massive proportion which involved the systematic disenfranchisement of the black vote in that state. They should also revisit that historic post-election moment in the Senate when not one Democratic senator - including the revered Paul Wellstone - was willing to provide the single necessary cosponsoring vote in support of the House members' objection to Florida's tainted electoral votes. Not one.

The moment of truth has arrived for those registered Democrats who consider themselves progressives to be part of the problem or part of the solution. It's called "fish or cut bait." Surely these Democrats realize by now that - whatever they thought they were voting for on November 4, 2008 - what they got was Bill Clinton's third term.

GREENS CALL OBAMA'S NUCLEAR SUBSIDIES HIS "WORST IDEA YET"

Green Party of the United States (www.gp.org)

For Immediate Release: February 18, 2010 (excerpts below)

WASHINGTON, DC - Green Party leaders and candidates are calling President Obama's resurrection of nuclear power with a multi-billion-dollar taxpayer-funded subsidy for a Georgia plant his "worst idea yet" and warned about serious public health threats posed by mining, waste transportation, and waste storage. The Green Party disputes the myths that nuclear power is 'green energy' or a solution to the advance of climate change.

"The twin nuclear reactors in Burke County, Georgia, would be financed with \$5.4 billion in loans from the Federal Financing Bank with money of the US Treasury. According to the GAO, this investment has a 50/50 percent chance of failing. President Obama wants taxpayers to assume 80% of the financial risk to turn the southeast Atlantic states into a big open-pit radioactive barbecue. This investment is a terrible idea - President Obama's worst yet," said Lisa Green, GP candidate for California Assembly, 53rd Assembly District (www.votelisagreen.net). "If built, the plant will be a financial disaster because of high construction expenses and likely cost overruns, compared with other sources of electrical power. As the first of a new generation of nuclear power plants, it'll carry huge technical risks. Even more ominous is the problem of mining, waste storage, and waste transportation through populated areas, which carry huge public health dangers."

Energy Secretary Steven Chu recently told a Senate committee that, for the foreseeable future, the plants will probably store spent fuel rods on site. No long-term plan exists anywhere for storing commercial radioactive waste.

"We are already seeing tritium in the wells in Girard, Georgia, and the cooling ponds at Plant Hatch are filled to overflowing," said Patricia Crayton, co-chair of the Georgia Green Party. "The fuel cycle which feeds the power plants in Hazlehurst and Waynesboro is intricately linked to the one which feeds the bomb plant across the Savannah River near Aiken. \$5 billion could better serve setting Georgia on a sustainable energy path worthy of our children."

"If Republicans and Democrats really believed in the free market, they would strenuously oppose nuclear power, which is enormously expensive and carries astronomically high liabilities. But they don't believe in the market. They believe in targeted, special interest handouts and guaranteed profits for favored corporations, despite flawed corporate agendas. That's why they want nuclear plants built with taxpayer dollars, with utility ratepayers in states like Georgia and Florida assuming the financial risk and local residents assuming the health risk," said Nicholas Ruiz III, Green Party candidate for Congress in Florida's District 24 (<http://intertheory.org/nriiiforcongress2010.html>).

Greens are fighting dangerous nuclear projects across the US. For example, in Illinois Greens strongly opposed a legislative move to repeal a moratorium on nuclear energy (www.ilgp.org/groups/media/ILGPpress-releases/greens-blast-legislative-move-to-repeal-nuclear-moratorium-call). Greens insist that clean energy, not nuclear power, must replace fossil fuels in the effort to fight climate change. The Green Party supports socially equitable carbon taxes; incentives, legislation, and reforms to provide renewable energy technologies; rejection of environmentally destructive 'alternative' fuels produced from unsustainable or toxic feedstocks; rejection of 'clean coal'; comprehensive planning to protect and conserve water resources; and an absolute limit on CO2 emissions through a dramatic reduction of fossil fuel use.

"President Obama is calling for major investments in nuclear, coal, and natural gas, when we should drastically reduce the use of such energy," said Carl Romanelli, 2006 Pennsylvania Green candidate for the US Senate. "Here in Pennsylvania, we have cancer clusters in the eastern part of the state due to too many nuclear plants. Considering advancements in renewable technologies, it would make more sense for our energy resolve to be applied to these industries, not the filthy and destructive forms of energy production so touted by the president. The president continues to act as if fossil and nuclear is the only manner in which energy is produced."

Illinois Governor's Race: Lackluster Democratic and Republican candidates present 'an opening for the Greens'

Illinois News-Gazette 2/7/10 (excerpts)

www.news-gazette.com/news/other/2010-02-07/unpopular-dem-gop-candidates-opening-greens.html

Illinois Democrats have a gubernatorial candidate favored by only half the members of his own party, who faces a difficult budget battle this spring and - for now - is stuck with a running mate who is a political nightmare. The Republican ticket has a gubernatorial candidate favored by 20 percent of his party, with views on social issues that are to the right of the mainstream and who has run poorly in the Chicago area and the suburbs, where the vast majority of the general election votes lie.

Are either of these candidates electable? "Gentlemen, many voters see you as flawed candidates," opined the Chicago Tribune last week. "You will not excite the independent voters who hold the power to decide this election if you do not become more than you until now have been."

It may be another ideal situation for the up-and-coming Green Party. "The economy is in a shambles. The budget deficit problem has grown worse. Everything is similar to 2006, except worse," said Rich Whitney, the Green Party gubernatorial candidate in 2006 and again this year.

Whitney got 10.4 percent of the vote statewide in 2006 (almost 17 percent in Champaign County) and could get much more this time. "Our position is better because we're able to run a full-year campaign which we weren't able to do in 2006, plus we have Green Party candidates all around the state. We should get some synergy with that."

The Greens, now an officially established party in Illinois, ought to be included in any gubernatorial debates, Whitney said. "It will be much more difficult for news organizations or sponsoring organizations to exclude me from debates," he said. "If they do there will be a political price to pay if the other candidates go along with that."

Whitney got a higher percentage of the statewide vote four years ago than Dan Proft, who was invited to all the Republican gubernatorial debates, got this year. Whitney, in fact, received more than twice as many votes four years ago (361,336) as the Republican candidate got in this year's primary.

"I think we have a fair shot at winning," said the Carbondale attorney, who said he is campaigning to win, "not just to make a statement or to be a protest candidate."

Democracy for Humans!

Fighting corporate power in the wake of the Supreme Court's Citizens United ruling

By Scott McLarty, national media coordinator for the Green Party of the United States (which does not accept corporate contributions)

www.CommonDreams.org/view/2010/02/13-5 (excerpts below)

Democracy and fair elections in the US are in grave danger. What are we going to do about it?

The Supreme Court's recent Citizens United ruling removed restrictions on the amount of money that corporations can use to campaign for their preferred candidates. The five justices who voted for the ruling endorsed the idea that corporations should enjoy the same constitutional rights as human beings.

Why is this ruling a threat to America?

Corporations are not human. They are legal creations. They don't eat, breathe the air, depend on health care, or do many of the other things that humans do. They exist to make a profit. Because of their wealth and size, corporations are far more powerful than humans. The Citizens United ruling affirms the power of corporations to control the processes of regulation, taxation, and public policy, and to avoid accountability to the public.

For a hundred years, we've had laws limiting the power of corporations over our government, because government in a democracy exists to serve the people. Now that corporations can spend unlimited money to help candidates who serve their interests, politicians will more and more make decisions based on the demands of lobbyists rather than the people who elect them.

Republican and Democratic politicians already take millions in corporate contributions. The Supreme Court's decision will cement the Democratic and Republican parties' status as subsidiaries of Wall Street, oil companies, defense contractors, insurance firms, media conglomerates, and other top corporations.

Corporate Power vs. Democracy

Are corporations evil? Should we hate them? A corporation is an association, authorized by a charter, for a specific purpose. Corporations are by nature neither good nor evil. They often perform necessary functions, such as manufacturing, services, and trade. A business corporation should be accountable to the public, not just to major stockholders, CEOs, and profit margins. When it betrays the public trust or commits a serious crime, a corporation should have its charter revoked and be dissolved.

When Exxon-Mobil, Lockheed Martin, Goldman Sachs, General Electric, Halliburton, Blackwater, or Disney have overwhelming power to determine the decisions of elected officials, our freedoms, rights, and well-being are in danger. When Wall Street firms insisted that Congress strike down regulations like the Glass-Steagall Act, their recklessness caused the recent economic crisis, with millions of lost homes and jobs. When they press Congress to reduce, privatize, or abolish successful safety-net programs like Social Security, they place millions of older Americans and others at risk of destitution.

Like a car without a driver, a corporation has no will of its own. Its actions are guided by CEOs and other managers, owners and stockholders, a board of directors, or some combination of these people. They profit through the corporation, by receiving salaries and bonuses or through their investments in the corporation. When those who control the corporation use it to break the law, abuse their power, or violate the corporation's own charter, then the corporate charter should be revoked - just as the driver who violates traffic rules may lose the use of his or her car.

What does it mean when a corporation can influence government to act on its behalf, even when such actions are harmful to the public or to its own employees? It means that the CEOs, owners, stockholders, etc. enjoy power far beyond what the rest of us possess as individual citizens. Those who defend corporate personhood, corporate rights, and the Citizens Unlimited decision are arguing for an inequality

that threatens the basis of our democracy. They support a new kind of aristocracy, an oligarchy of elite citizens who get their power from corporations.

Where Did Corporate Power Come From?

When the US Constitution was written, there was no mention of corporations. The writers and signers of the Constitution remembered how Great Britain had given the East India Company, Hudson Bay Company, and other firms enormous power over the colonies. For the first 100 years of US history, corporate power was restricted. Corporations were chartered for a limited period of time and did not have limited liability. They existed to serve the public good.

After the Civil War and the Emancipation Proclamation, Congress passed the 14th Amendment in 1868, which was intended to give freed black slaves equal protection under the law. But around the same time that racist Jim Crow laws were enacted, the protections of the 14th Amendment were in effect transferred from former slaves to corporations in a series of landmark Supreme Court decisions, beginning with *Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad* (1886).

Hundreds of 14th Amendment cases were brought before the Supreme Court between 1890 and 1910. Nineteen of them involved the rights of Black Americans and 288 addressed the rights of corporations. The court sided with the corporations in more than 200 of these cases.

These decisions helped set off the Robber Baron Era of unrestrained corporate power, when factory workers suffered inhumane working conditions and farmers were at the mercy of unscrupulous banks and railroad companies.

Many Americans fought corporate power during the Robber Baron Era, seeking reforms like the eight-hour work day, job safety, and an end to child labor. Groups like the Populist Party and, eventually, progressives like Teddy Roosevelt were able to get laws passed restraining corporate power.

Throughout most of the 20th century, unions fought for and won advances such as the 40-hour work week, health and retirement benefits, workplace safety laws, job security, and good wages. Congress passed laws preventing the excesses that led to the Great Depression and enacted Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. By the middle of the 20th century, millions of Americans enjoyed an unprecedented degree of prosperity because of these battles.

Corporations resisted these reforms every step of the way.

Many reforms were reversed in the 1980s and 1990s, when Presidents Reagan, Bush, and Clinton signed legislation striking down many regulations on corporations. During the George W. Bush administration, corporate honchos actually wrote new legislation for Congress to pass. Companies like Enron used 'corporate personhood' to claim that the government had no right to open up their books after they swindled people.

Despite promises of change, President Obama appointed Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner, financial advisor Larry Summers, and others who espouse many of these same policies. The result has been multi-trillion-dollar bailouts for the Wall Street firms responsible for the current mortgage crisis and economic meltdown, with minimal help for suffering homeowners and people who have lost their jobs.

Now the Citizens United ruling eliminates one of the most important restrictions on corporate power and puts America in danger of a new Robber Baron Era. Media commentators and broadcasters like Rush Limbaugh have praised the ruling. Their goal is an America far different from the one envisioned by the

Founders of the republic and by all those who've fought for human rights, freedoms, and fairness for working people and the powerless. They've duped too many Americans into believing that what's good for insurance companies, Wall Street firms, defense contractors, and other behemoths is good for America.

"We the People" does **not** mean corporations. Unless we act now to defend the principle that free speech and other constitutional rights and protections belong solely to human beings, our democracy will be history.

Greens congratulate Cynthia McKinney, recipient of the 'Peace through Conscience' award from the Munich American Peace Committee

GREEN PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES (www.gp.org)

For Immediate Release: February 4, 2010

McKinney will accept the award at a peace conference in the same city as NATO's Munich Security Conference

Greens contrast McKinney's deserved award with Obama's Nobel Peace Prize

WASHINGTON, DC - The Green Party of the United States congratulated former US Representative Cynthia McKinney after an announcement that she will receive the 'Peace through Conscience' award from the Munich American Peace Committee (MAPC / www.mapc-web.de). Ms. McKinney was the Green Party's 2008 nominee for President of the United States.

Ms. McKinney has been invited to participate in an International Peace Conference scheduled to take place in Munich, Germany, from February 6 to 7, coinciding with the Munich Security Conference, which will address NATO strategy towards Afghanistan, including President Obama's planned troop escalation. A long-time proponent of abolishing NATO, Ms. McKinney is scheduled to speak on February 6 at a rally in protest of the NATO conference.

MAPC will present the award to Cynthia McKinney during ceremonies of the Munich Peace Conference on the evening of February 6. The MAPC Peace Prize is normally awarded by the previous year's winner. In Ms. McKinney's case, the award will be presented by Andre Shepherd, a US Army Specialist who applied for asylum in Germany after objecting to the wars in Iraq.

"I am humbled to be so recognized," said Cynthia McKinney. "Clearly, the MAPC gave more thought to the significance of those whose struggle for peace is based on principle and an unshakable commitment, despite the personal sacrifices required, than did the Nobel Peace Committee."

Commenting on the decision to grant President Obama the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize, Ms. McKinney said, "In this way of thinking, peace is now war, lies are now truth, and ignorance is strength."

Ms. McKinney has urged Americans across Germany to gather in Munich and protest US and NATO war policies, noting that Germany has sent its own troops to Afghanistan. She will meet with American expatriates while in Munich.

"We are very proud of Cynthia McKinney's work for peace and human rights in the US and internationally," said Dr. Justine McCabe, co-chair of the Green Party's International Committee (www.gp.org/committees/intl). "Ms. McKinney has led the demand for withdrawal of US troops from Iraq and Afghanistan and strongly criticized President Obama's announcement of a troop surge in Afghanistan. She has challenged NATO's global expansion of military operations and demanded its abolition. Last June, after President Obama urged humanitarian aid for people in Gaza, Ms. McKinney and other Free Gaza activists tried to deliver medical and construction supplies and other relief. They were illegally intercepted by the Israeli navy in international waters and jailed, while the White House remained silent. Unlike our president, Cynthia McKinney truly deserves a peace prize."

UK GREENS ON VERGE OF POSSIBLE BREAKTHROUGH

Poll surge suggests Greens on course for first Commons seat

By Michael McCarthy, Environmental Editor for The Independent, 2/11/10

www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/poll-surge-suggests-greens-on-course-for-first-commons-seat-1863895.html

[The UK is currently the only major European country which has never had a Green elected to its national legislature]

The Green Party is on course to make a historic electoral breakthrough by winning the Labour-held seat of Brighton Pavilion at the forthcoming general election.

A poll of voting intentions carried out by ICM Research shows that the Greens, who had their best-ever result in the constituency in 2005, hold an eight-point lead over their nearest rivals, the Conservatives, with the Greens polling 35 per cent, the Tories at 27, Labour at 25, and the Liberal Democrats at 11 per cent.

If repeated in the general election, the result would see the Greens snatch the seat from Labour with a majority of 3,500 over the Conservatives. The Green candidate, Caroline Lucas, the party Leader who is already an MEP [Member of the European Parliament], would take her seat at Westminster in a key political advance for the British environmental movement. The UK remains the only major European country which has never had Greens in its national legislature.

Several developments boost the chance of Britain's first Green MP. The first is that Brighton Pavilion's incumbent Labour member, David Lepper, is standing down. Mr Lepper is a popular local figure. A key factor in his holding on to the seat last time around was that he had voted against the Iraq war. The Greens' 2005 candidate there, Keith Taylor, scooped 22 per cent of the vote, beating the Liberal Democrats for third place and coming within a thousand votes of pipping the Tories to second. That was the party's best general election performance.

Another is that dissatisfaction with the Government of Gordon Brown does not, in radical Brighton - perhaps Britain's most "alternative" city - translate into automatic support for the Conservatives. If Ms Lucas is seen as a credible "keep the Tories out" candidate, she will likely attract considerable support.

But the most significant development is the candidature of Caroline Lucas herself, Britain's most accomplished Green politician. Articulate, passionate, radical without seeming threatening, the former

Oxfam adviser has been MEP for Southeast England for ten years, and is a world away from the old image of the Green Party activist as someone who lived in a tepee eating brown rice.

She presides over a party which has shifted from its purely ecological roots to an identity which might be described as radical social democrat; although still with the most demanding agenda for fighting climate change, and resolutely anti-nuclear, the Greens are now equally concerned with job creation in the recession and defending the National Health Service.

The Greens now have their best and highest-profile politician standing for their most winnable parliamentary seat. The party has 126 councillors in 43 municipalities across Britain as well as two MEPs, Caroline Lucas and Jean Lambert. It intends to field a "half slate" of just under 300 parliamentary candidates in the forthcoming election, scheduled for May 6.

But in what many see as another sign of its political coming of age, it is concentrating its efforts in three target seats: Brighton Pavilion, Lewisham Deptford and Norwich South.

In Norwich South, the party's deputy leader, Adrian Ramsay, is standing against the former Labour cabinet minister (and leading critic of Gordon Brown) Charles Clarke. The Greens have 13 councillors in Norwich, making them the official opposition, and came in first in the city in last year's Euro elections.

In Lewisham Deptford they will field Darren Johnson, local councillor and chair of the London Assembly, against Joan Ruddock, the minister for Energy and Climate Change; they have six Green councillors in Lewisham and in the most recent local elections polled 27 per cent.

But Brighton Pavilion represents their best chance of all. The Greens' hope is that they, and not the Tories, will benefit from Labour voters' disenchantment. The ICM poll - at present - bears this out. For not only do the Greens have the greatest support, with 35 per cent; what excites the party campaigners is the large number of centre-left voters, Labour and Liberal Democrats, likely to switch their vote to Green if the party is best placed to stop a Tory win.

Although the headline on the website of the Labour candidate, Nancy Platts, asserts that "Voting Green Will Mean A Tory MP For Brighton" - by splitting the Labour vote - it is clear that some Brighton Pavilion electors take the opposite view, and consider that voting Green may keep the Conservatives out - with historic consequences.

SATURDAY, MARCH 20

March on Washington D.C. to end the endless militarism; wars, occupations, threats; Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, Yemen, Next.

Latest info on transportation options from NJ and other states, listed at these sites:
www.pephost.org/site/PageServer?pagename=M20_transportation
or:
www.facebook.com/1/e9070;rawmachine.org/NJAreaTrans_Mar20_2010.html

Some of the current sources of transportation are below:

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New Brunswick

Central Jersey Coalition Against Endless War:
www.againstendlesswar.org

Flyer: www.againstendlesswar.org/central_contents/pub/NationalDCmarch-3-20-10.pdf

On Facebook:
www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=271881217111&index=1

Fare: \$40 due in advance (if you can not afford full fare and can only afford \$30 or \$20, or less, let us know - nobody will be turned away for inability to pay). Arrive by: 7 am for check in. Leaves New Brunswick: 7:30 am / Return to New B.: 9pm. Checks payable / mail to: Central Jersey Coalition Against Endless War, PO Box 7726, North Brunswick, NJ 08902.

To register your seats, e-mail [dcmarch2010\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:dcmarch2010[at]gmail.com) (or contact Bob Witaneck in Facebook) and follow up with payment. Questions?: call Bob Witaneck at 908-881-5275 or Dorothy Schwartz at 732-235-1444.

Please reserve seats and make payment as early as possible since early registration is a guideline to help us figure out if we can order additional buses to get more people to the march! Under 18 without adult accompaniment? We will need a note from a parent or guardian for you to ride with us. Can't afford full fare? Contact us. We are sure to have scholarships for reduced fare. If you want to contribute toward the fare of one or more additional marchers, please call the above numbers and send checks to the above address. \$40 can allow one additional marcher to get to DC. \$80 can provide for two. Donations of \$10 or \$20 can allow us to reduce the rate for individual riders. Times are rough but if you can help another get their feet into the march, that will help grow the movement!

Hunterdon County

First UU Fellowship of Hunterdon County

We'll be travelling from the Clinton/Pittstown area in Hunterdon County by comfortable charter bus. We are open to making stops to pick up other marchers if they are on our route. Exact information will follow but we plan to leave at about 7am and return at about 9pm. Cost per seat is \$32 at this time. Contact: FUUFHC (First UU Fellowship of Hunterdon County) - Ruth Coules at [hunterdoncounty\[at\]march20.org](mailto:hunterdoncounty[at]march20.org) or 908-268-4417.

Montgomery Township

Car pool arrangement to hook up with New Brunswick bus. Leaving 6 am. Few seats available. Call 908-881-5275 or e-mail [bwitaneck\[at\]jgc.org](mailto:bwitaneck[at]jgc.org) for details.

Newark Area

There is discussion of a possible bus but there will at least be car pool arrangements from Newark to hook up with the New Brunswick bus if there is not a Newark area bus. Call 908-881-5275 or e-mail bwitanek[at]jgc.org for details.

Hackensack

Pickups in Hackensack, Newark and New Brunswick. Contact: New Jersey Independents (Steve Cooper) at hackensacknj[at]march20.org or 201-487-3748.

Northwest NJ (Newton)

North Jersey Fellowship for Peace

Flyer:

www.nwnjpeace.org/M20.newton.pdf

For more information call: 973-903-8384.

Van transportation to the demonstration will leave from the Marshall's parking lot on Water Street in Newton at 6:30am. We expect to leave Washington at 5:30pm and be back to Newton about 10:30pm. The cost will be \$30/person. One 14-passenger van has been reserved. More will be rented as needed.

Please make checks payable to Thomas Bias (cash is good, too). If you need to mail a check, send it to: Thomas Bias, 6 Hickory Tree Lane, Sparta, NJ 07871.

Teaneck

Nice large bus with restroom to leave from Teaneck between 6:30- 7:00am to arrive approx. 11-11:30am in DC. Cost will be \$45 with cheaper seats available if necessary. We hope to arrive home around 10pm. Contact: Nancy Nygard (with VFP Ch. 21, MFSO, Bergen, Green Party) at teanecknj[at]march20.org or 201-836-2123.

The US Green Party is amending its platform. You can help update the platform in an open, collaborative process on the website of the national party:

www.gp.org/committees/platform/comments/

EVENTS OF INTEREST TO GREENS

Tuesday, March 2 - 6:30pm

Next meeting of the anti-LNG coalition. Location: Long Branch City Hall - 344 Broadway, Second Floor (Council Conference Room), Long Branch, NJ 07740. Info or to RSVP: Noreen Benjaminsen, Outreach Coordinator, Clean Ocean Action: 732-872-0111 or email: outreach[at]cleanoceanaction.org

Wednesday, March 3 - 6:00pm

Dialogue: Mumia Abu-Jamal, Dr. Cornel West, and Patricia Fernandez-Kelly. Location: Labyrinth Books, 122 Nassau St, Princeton 08542. Info: 609-497-1600.

Mumia Abu-Jamal will be calling the store to talk to Dr. Cornel West and Professor Fernandez-Kelly about the politics of race and to take questions about his new book, *Jailhouse Lawyers*, in which he tells the stories of fellow prisoners who use the court system to represent other prisoners. In Mumia's words, "This is the story of law learned in a stew of bitterness, under the constant threat of violence.... It is law learned with stubs of pencils, or with four-inch-long rubberized flex-pens, with grit, glimmerings of brilliance, and with clear knowledge that retaliation is right outside the cell door. It is a different perspective on the law, written from the bottom, with a faint hope that a right may be wronged, an injustice redressed. It is *Hard Law*."

Angela Davis has said: "Mumia Abu-Jamal is one of the most important public intellectuals of our time.... *Jailhouse Lawyers* is a persuasive refutation of the ideological underpinnings of the Prison Litigation Reform Act. The way he situates the PLRA historically - as an inheritance of the Black Codes, which were themselves descended from the slave codes - allows us to recognize the extent to which historical memories of slavery and racism are inscribed in the very structures of the prison system and have helped to produce the prison-industrial-complex."

Mumia Abu-Jamal is author of many books, including *Live From Death Row*, *Death Blossoms*, *All Things Censored*, and *We Want Freedom*. He has been living on death row in a Pennsylvania prison since 1982. Dr. Cornel West is Class of 1943 Professor at Princeton University. He is one of this country's premier champions for racial and social justice and long-time critic of the American incarceration system. He is the author of many seminal books, including the contemporary classic *Race Matters* and, most recently, the memoir *Brother West: Living Out Loud*. Patricia Fernandez-Kelly is Professor of Sociology at Princeton and has published widely on issues of race, immigration, and gender. Among her forthcoming publications are *Art in the Life of Immigrant Communities in the U.S.* and *The Hero's Fight: Endurance and Survival in West Baltimore*.

The event is co-sponsored by ABC Prison Literacy. It is free and open to the public. Please RSVP to info-pr[at]labyrinthbooks.com.

