

Green

ISSUE 18

the magazine of the Australian Greens

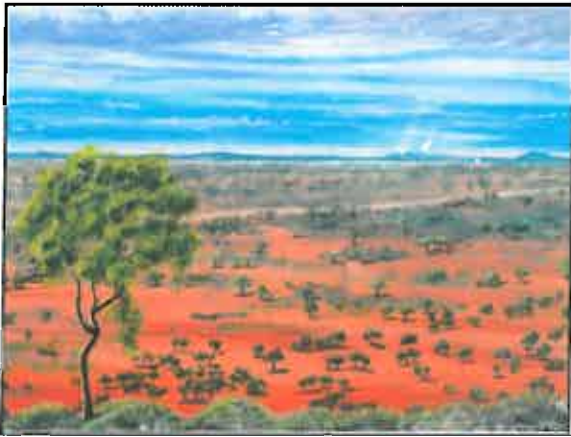
SUMMER 2005

Cover Story

Are the Greens ready for government?



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Keogh's Creek, Tasmania. Photo: Philip Scane



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contents

Cover Story



Are the Greens ready for government? 5-10

- What would convince me to vote Green? *Phillip Adams, Emma Tom, Kim Wilkinson* 4-5
Green government is our goal *Bob Brown* 6
The German red-green coalition *Andrea Humphreys* 7
Getting the Greens ready for government in Tasmania *Peg Putt* 9



articles

- A tribute to Rod Donald 18
Street Voices – a story *Rhys Burley Clark* 19
Getting a life ... Downshifting Downunder *David Wyatt* 20
The Greens: History and Purpose - Impressions by *Gösta Lyngå* 23
Women, keep your seeds! *Suzette Mitchell and Phoenix Arrien* 25
What hope for the Greens? *Richard Denniss* 26

regular features



- News & views 2-4
National Convenor's report 11
Reports from State and Territory Green parties 12-13
National Officer, Communications Group reports 14
Global Greens news 15
Guest Greens *Adriane Carr and Paul George* 16
Green Party contacts 17
Book reviews 27
Bob's back page 28

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Please provide a graphic if possible. Send article in body of email or as an 'rtf' file.

editorial

In this edition we pose the question 'Are the Greens ready for government?' The question is timely for two reasons.

First, more and more Australians are calling for an alternative to the glaring bankruptcy of the existing parliamentary situation. Citizens have been denied choice by the increasing convergence of the Coalition and Labor parties on all significant issues. Amid this convergence, the Greens have offered the only alternative. Greens representatives have spoken with clarity and moral authority on issues as diverse as refugees, the war in Iraq, global warming, privatization and industrial relations.

Second, the Greens are demonstrating a fresh level of political maturity. The recent national conference in Hobart provided clear evidence of this. Policy was further refined and a positive and practical national strategy was foreshadowed. The conference heard of the strong representative roles of elected Greens at local, state, territory and national levels. And recent electoral successes have increased the ranks of those Greens serving in assemblies around the nation.

The lead articles in this edition explore the readiness of the Greens to be in government, rather than scattered voices on the periphery of decision making. The Greens are ready to shake off such labels as 'ginger group'. Certainly, the issues are complex and challenging – the possibilities of coalition and balance of power, for example. For Greens, these questions are pressing. And for Australia, the answers will be vital.

Brian Hoegger and Drew Hutton
Co-editors

letters

Microcredit

I was pleased to read the article in the Spring edition by Michaela Sargent. I share Michaela's concern that our current government has been penny pinching in the overseas aid budget. The recent increase announced by the Prime Minister is welcome. However it falls far short of our fair share and is not really commensurate with the stance we have taken against terrorism. This is a pity as the fight against poverty is one where all nations can be winners in making the world a fairer and therefore safer place. I'm sure this is a view that most readers would share.

Many readers may not be aware that 2005 is the International Year of Microcredit. Microcredit is an important means of reducing poverty and therefore of reaching the Millennium Development Goals. Microcredit is a program for providing small loans to poor people to start their own small businesses. Most of those living in poverty are women and children. By the end of 2003 microcredit programs around the world were reaching nearly 55 million people, 82% of whom are women. Over the last 20 years it has proved a remarkably effective way of enabling people to help themselves out of poverty. You can find out more about Microcredit at <http://www.microcredit.org.au/Home.aspx?element=2>. At present only 0.6% of the Australian aid budget goes to Microcredit. Readers are therefore urged to be aware of, and where possible to raise awareness of, the importance of increasing the aid budget and the Microcredit component.

John Hayes Kingston Beach, Tasmania.

The sanctity of energy growth

Thank you to those who signed the letter 'End of Oil' (edition 17) - pointing out the pivotal role of energy as an absolute policy priority for The Greens. Indeed it was Greens and this magazine who exposed

that the three letters, WMD, used as a rationalisation for the Iraq invasion were actually camouflage for another three letters, OIL.

With the once vast US oil fields of Texas now largely depleted, it is a sobering thought that if all imports of oil were cut off altogether, the total US domestic oil reserves would meet their national energy 'demands' for a mere 4 years and three months. Full stop. Yes, energy, rather than terrorism, is the United States's most pressing security problem, and therefore ours too.

Since the future of the world is to be determined by energy policy what should Greens do? Firstly, the impetus for any campaigns must come from those who possess the inspiration and sense of urgency. The elected MPs and Green magazine are always there to help spearhead any campaign, but any genuine campaign must be driven by the body politic within the movement. Secondly, we must stop debating and reacting to the issue from the vantage point of industry and power brokers.

From my experience of contributing to energy debates for many years, energy is the ultimate masculine issue. It is inextricably entangled with core issues of gender and power. Even the alternative energy brigade is largely imbued with the language and mentality of supply-side solutions and technical fixes, the domain of the male brain.

We need to keep at the forefront of our minds that our energy-guzzling consumer society has been made possible only through the extraction of energy from concentrated fossil fuels. Trying to maintain the same kind of energy-intensive society from diluted energy sources will not only be ultimately futile, it will place impossible additional burdens on the global environment, including agricultural lands.

In recent years I have stopped championing the cause of renewables, accepting that technology is a minor factor in the road towards sustainability, as is technical efficiency.

No, the real block in energy policy is the sanctity of energy growth as the driver of the economy and a philosophical resistance of government to intervention in the energy market place. So long as our wind/hydrogen economy is chasing a non-sustainable growth path under these diabolical mental constraints, then championing these alternatives as our primary policy focus will only make rods for our own backs in the future.



snippets

By all means let's support wind and solar initiatives, but Greens have to go to the core of the matter. And that means driving a national debate on society's primary attitudes to energy and power and the way we live our lives.

Chris Harries *Dynnyrne, Tasmania*

Sleeping with the enemy?

Congratulations on the composition of the spring issue of Green, most of it was well considered and thought provoking. Unfortunately, the inclusion of an article by the secretary of the ACTU bordered on sleeping with the enemy.

There is little conjecture as to the extent to which the union movement influences ALP policy; union inclusion within ALP governing bodies is sufficient evidence for this. There is also little conjecture that the executive bodies within the Labor movement [the ALP and the ACTU] are no friends of the Greens.

Make no mistake that the Labor movement will both sweet-talk and shaft the Greens in order to realise its own goals. Two examples from the recent Federal election will suffice: Latham's half-baked forest policy [which contributed to his demise] and the preferencing of Family First [FF] above Greens candidates on the Victorian and Tasmanian senate tickets. The latter policy indisputably cost us, the Greens, a fifth senator.

Whilst Combet urges Greens to align themselves with the ACTU push against Howard's proposed Industrial Relations legislation, he failed to mention that a number of unions under the ACTU banner advocate measures which are, strictly speaking, anti-Green. There are unions lobbying for further environmental degradation. Two examples from Victoria: union support for the dredging of Port Phillip Bay and opposition to the tighter conservation measures for the Otways.

During my involvement with the Greens I have noticed that there is an element within the party which refuses to completely sever ancient bonds with, and continues to implicitly trust the Labor movement despite evidence to the contrary. ... I am totally baffled by the latitude of some towards Labor. Until Greens stand independently we will compromise our principles, our uniqueness and our integrity. ...

Graeme Drysdale *Ballarat, Victoria*

*Letters do not necessarily reflect the views of the Australian Greens.

Blowin' in the Wind

Slowly, David Bradbury's provocative Blowin' in the Wind is reaching audiences around the country. Shown largely in non-mainstream cinemas, and often as a fundraiser for progressive groups, the documentary describes the impact of depleted uranium weaponry - the far-reaching physical effects and the growing moral outrage. Advocates of the documentary recommend it as a conversation-starter at private home showings to collected friends. DVD versions are readily available for \$49. Go to the website <http://www.bsharp.net.au/html/shop.htm> for details.

Vale Robyn Steller

We mourn the loss of a modest, warmhearted, committed and deeply dedicated champion of her family and friends, of people in crisis and of our natural heritage. We celebrate her rich and memorable life - one lived with enthusiasm, love, compassion and forgiveness. Apart from her three children and her personal influence on family and friends, her lasting legacy is Monga National Park. Generations will cherish the record of its protection. Robyn's publication, Monga intacta - A celebration of Monga Forest and its protection, will remain a beautiful, enduring legacy to her and the fierce battles waged for the permanent protection of this magical and diverse remnant of our Australian bush.

Cutting edge technologies

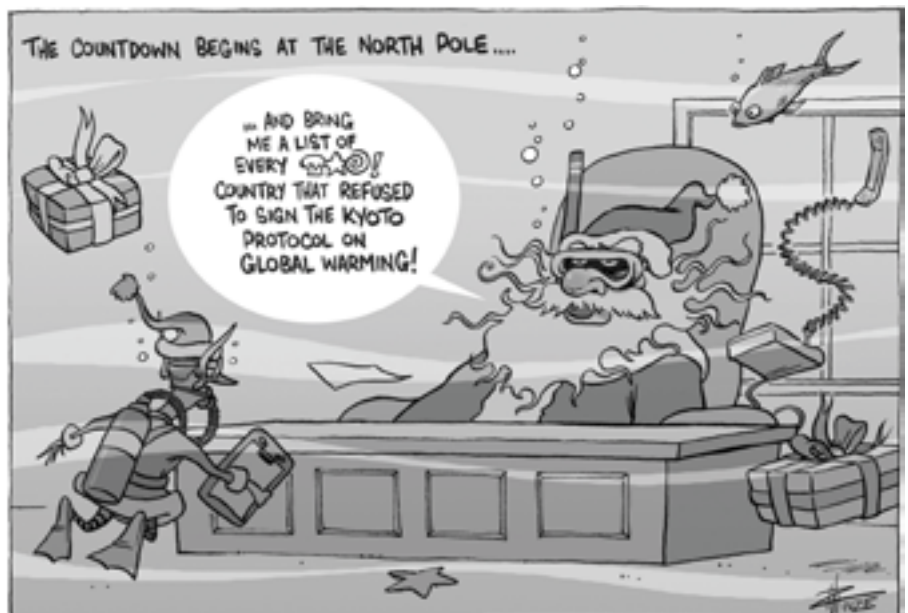
Australians are at the forefront of two new, and highly promising, developments in energy producing and energy saving technologies.

Green and Gold Energy in Adelaide, South Australia, is in the final stages of pre-production for the SunBall™ (www.greenandgoldenergy.com.au). SunBalls use fresnel lenses (pronounced (fra-nel) - similar to the lenses used in lighthouses) - to concentrate light onto a small number of very expensive high efficiency triple junction solar cells. The resulting unit is dome-shaped, just over 1 metre across, and includes its own tracking and mounting base. Individual units are expected to cost around \$1400, with three units yielding an average of 1000 watts/hour of sunlight.

A partnership between Australia's CSIRO and the University of Texas, Dallas, has developed a way to make sheets and ribbons of multiwall nanotubes, at a rate of seven metres/minute (www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2005-08/uota-utd081505.php). This is the first time sheets of nanotubes have been made on a viable scale. The strength of these nanoribbons already exceeds that of steel and Kevlar. According to Science magazine, 'nanotube sheets can be made so thin that a square kilometre would weigh only 30 kilograms'. Nanotechnology, though fraught with the usual caveats of all new technologies, may make it possible to make every thing we currently produce lighter and stronger while using much less energy in the production, and even make the production process decentralized - to the point that you could cheaply and easily manufacture products using nanotechnology at home.

Money grows on trees!

There are 600,000 forest farmers in Finland - a country of only about five million people. Most of the farmers own less than five hectares. But in total it means that 62% of forested land is privately-owned. The Finnish forest industry yields more than AUS \$53 billion per year. Australian Jon Lambert, following a Churchill Fellowship study tour of Finland, is working to establish similar approaches to small-scale, privately-owned forest farming in Australia. <http://www.theage.com.au/news/business/when-money-grows-on-trees/2005/11/13/1131816810696.html>



snippets

Shanghai's 100,000 solar rooftops project

The municipal government of Shanghai recently launched an initiative to install photovoltaic (PV) systems on 100,000 of the city's 6 million rooftops. The solar roofs are expected to generate at least 430 million kilowatt-hours of power annually, enough to supply the entire city for nearly two days. This equates to savings of about 20,000 tons of coal for power generation and 40,000 tons of carbon dioxide emissions. The project will lessen Shanghai's demand for energy from other sources such as the controversial Three Gorges project. The roofs cost up to \$24,000 AUS each, with life expectancy of 30-35 years.

<http://www.worldwatch.org/features/chinawatch/stories/20051110-2>

A courageous personal stand

In Britain, the court-martial is imminent of Flight Lieutenant Malcolm Kendall-Smith. Kendall-Smith, a veteran of three tours of duty in Afghanistan and Iraq, is charged with 'disobeying a lawful command' for refusing a new posting to Iraq. He claims that new information – particularly the now-released advice of Lord Goldsmith to the Blair government – convinced him that the war and subsequent occupation are illegal. Quoting the RAF's own manual, he claims he is obliged to disobey an order to participate in these manifestly illegal actions. Kendall-Smith was born in Australia, grew up in New Zealand and now holds dual British/NZ citizenship.

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2087-1828054,00.html>

Bicycles outsell cars in Australia

Australians bought more bicycles than motor vehicles in 2004. Bicycle sales in Australia topped 1.1 million for the third straight year of million-plus sales, 18 per cent ahead of the motor vehicles sales.

Year	Motor vehicles	* Bicycles	** Bikes' lead
2000	787,100	926,924	+ 17%
2001	772,681	774,938	+ 0.3 %
2002	824,309	1,109,736	+ 34 %
2003	909,811	1,003,844	+ 10 %
2004	955,229	1,128,306	+ 18 %

* VFACTS figures ** Customs Service import figures

<http://www.abc.dotars.gov.au/news/gnsmar2005.aspx#bia1>

'Person' of the Year

As we go to print, the editors of Time magazine are agonizing over the selection of Time's 'Person of the Year' for 2005. Topping the list in leaked discussions is 'Mother Nature'! The selection criterion reads: 'the person or persons who most affected the news and our lives, for good or for ill, and embodied what was important about the year, for better or for worse'. It seems Mother Nature was nominated mainly because of the impact of the Asian Tsunami, Hurricane Katrina and the Pakistan earthquakes. In 1988 'Endangered Earth' was selected. In 2004 it was George W. Bush! All will be revealed in the Time edition released on 19th December.

<http://www.planetark.com/dailynewsstory.cfm/newsid/33466/story.htm>

Sweet tooth's spin-off!

Green & Black's, the UK's leading organic chocolate maker, has increased sales tenfold in recent years. It now has 6.4% of block chocolate sales in Britain. The surge in demand for organic chocolate has produced a pressing challenge – to source sufficient organic cocoa beans. G&B's is working frantically to convince farmers in Africa and elsewhere to convert to organic production – a process that takes four years. The spin-off, they say, will be higher returns for growers – a group who, generally, continue to be among the exploited victims of globalizing economies.

<http://www.planetark.com/>

dailynewsstory.cfm/newsid/33388/story.htm

Animal testing in the EU

In early November the European Commission and industry leaders agreed to look for ways to cut back on animal testing, with a view to putting an end to the practice in the long run. European businesses and laboratories use about 11 million animals each year for testing, three times as many as 30 years ago.

Seven industry associations from the pharmaceuticals, chemicals, cosmetics and biotechnology sectors agreed with the EU executive commission to map out research activities jointly and to cooperate in developing and validating new testing strategies, such as a test that uses human cells and replaces rabbit testing.

At the same time, paradoxically, there are fears that a proposed new legal framework for chemicals (known as REACH) will cause manufacturers to increase the use of test animals to avoid stricter safety regimes for human tests. The European Parliament was due to vote on REACH in late November.

<http://www.globalgoodnews.com/business-news-a.html?art=113138468773022305>

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WHAT WOULD CONVINC ME TO VOTE GREEN?

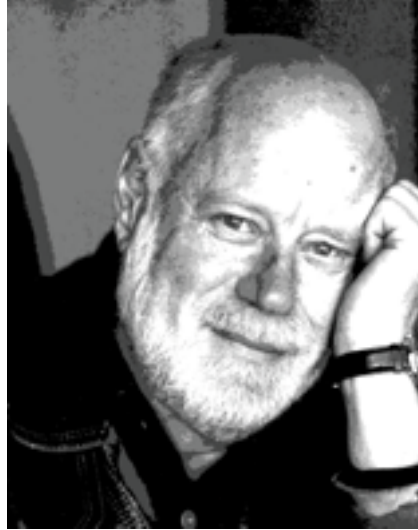
The question 'Are the Greens ready for government' runs in tandem with another question – 'What will convince Australians to vote Green?' We put that as a personal question to three Australians – Emma Tom, Phillip Adams and Kim Wilkinson. Here's what they said ...



Emma Tom

'I'm not party political which means I consider voting for the Greens at every election. I make decisions on a case-by-case basis based on issues such as whether I'm voting in a marginal seat, whether I'm impressed by the calibre of my local candidate and what's happening in the big picture sense. My cynical suspicion is that the pragmatism required to succeed in the political process is inevitably corruptive and I therefore refuse to guarantee any single party my support. As a point of interest, I seriously considered voting for the Greens in the recent state election for Marrickville but gave up on the idea when I saw a poster that said something along the lines of if your train is running late, send a message by voting Green. I thought it was a cheap shot.'

Emma Tom is a feisty award-winning journalist, author and media academic. She has written for leading Australian and overseas newspapers and magazines. Emma's column appears in The Australian each Wednesday. Perceptive and witty, Emma can also be 'loud' - she rides motorbikes, plays bass guitar and sings!



Phillip Adams

'I've gone through a major colour change over the decades, starting off Red in the 1950s, going various shades of pink in the 70s, 80s and 90s, and now, in the 2000s, bright green. The ALP lost its grip when Beazley buckled over the asylum seekers. Ready for government? Not a snowball's in a nation that's surrendered to the worst Prime Minister in Australian history - but IMMENSELY important as the light on the hill that Beasley and the boy extinguished.'

Phillip Adams is a prominent social commentator, author and advocate for progressive ideas in politics, the arts and much more. He's regarded as the 'godfather' of the Australian film industry, and his books have sold in excess of a million copies. Phillip's column appears in the Weekend Australian Magazine. He presents Late Night Live on ABC Radio National.



Kim Wilkinson

'In recent years I have been exposed to a reality that clashes with my idealistic vision - wide-spread poverty, rampant capitalism and a consumerist society content to act now and consider the consequences later. Considering this, I find a number of the Greens' principles attractive. In particular I esteem their policies on environmental sustainability and fair trade. The world's resources won't last forever and as for a free trade agreement, large companies already have too much sway in global politics. What kind of world do I want for my children? A better one. Instant gratification can wait.'

Kim Wilkinson has just completed secondary school and plans to study journalism/social science at university in 2006. As school captain of The Gap High, Kim addressed the 2005 UNIFEM breakfast in Brisbane. Kim feels strongly about global development issues. And she'd love to publish the fantasy novel she's been writing for three years!

Green government is our goal

BOB BROWN

Having the goal of government is fundamental to our Greens' being. Our global and national charter, our policies and our campaigns aim to protect and nurture life on Earth and to foster a fair human society which affords everyone dignity and opportunity. We are here to replace the selfish paradigm.

Government offers the realisation of our aims.

Government is in our genesis. The Greens arose because of the failure of the old parties. We could see no other hope. Our mere presence in parliaments has not materially altered the old parties' trajectory of service to corporations, media barons and conservative think tanks. The option of Green-versus-greed is starker now than in the 1980s.

We are not a lobby group and a ginger group, a faction of the big parties, or a minor party locked into the crossbench. We are, and always have been, on our own way to government.

This is a tough and exciting call. However we made it for ourselves from the start whether it was here or in New Zealand or in Germany or Mongolia. A tougher call would be to expect the old parties of government to transform – they won't.

Nevertheless, an attack of the nerves is probably unavoidable along the way. Balance of power, much less government, is full of pitfalls like compromise of policy, working with 'the enemy', prioritizing the economy and running intelligence agencies.

But guess what? The world is full of pitfalls – like armaments, hateful ideologies, gluttony and cruelty. Our job is not to achieve instant paradise, but to reach for the fairness, tolerance, long-sightedness and compassion with which to pave over such pitfalls and open the road to a secure and happy future for humanity.

We cannot aim lower than government. It takes a lot more gumption to enter parliaments than to remain spectators or sideline critics. The greater gumption is to insist on government. We are not Greens just to call for a better world; we are Greens to create it.

Sure, we must keep vital our healthy and empowering links with green community organizations and the green community at large. But recognizing that their goals have been, are, and always will be frustrated by prevailing materialist politics, our job is to give their goals governance, just as the Howard government is giving the big-monied lobbies and individuals governance right now.

We will also make mistakes. It is our job to get over them, learn from them and reach for better fortune. It will make that job easier if we keep our eye on political history.

We will have triumphs. Ditto. Whatever our fortunes, as we grow to represent a wider community on the way to government, we must also expect a growing diversity of views. Maybe that means factions. Whichever party avoided them? Rather than fearful avoidance we should foster tolerant accommodation of differences under the Charter – that is the way democracy goes.

Recently, Mark Latham lectured university students on avoiding politics. I spoke at the same forum a week later on why people should engage.

Worse than coming a cropper is going nowhere because of fear of the saddle. Worse still is frightening everyone else about getting a leg up.

The Greens are saddling up and reaching for the reins. A few years ago I was alone in the parliament. I couldn't get a seconder to call a vote. Then Kerry Nettle arrived and, along with the votes, we had much more than a double impact. Now there are four of us and, while we are burdened with about ten portfolios each, we are the lively third force in parliament.

What could 40 of us in both houses do? Or 140? We would change the face of politics. Green government is the recipe for changing this nation to be a more secure, long-sighted and compassionate place. Green government is about giving the world leadership towards a future of genuine security. What better place to make the breakthrough than here in Australia.

Senator Bob Brown is the federal parliamentary leader of the Australian Greens.

The German red-green coalition

ANDREA HUMPHREYS

"The German Greens faced greater expectations for what they could achieve and greater disappointment when they compromised"

The end of seven years of red-green coalition in Germany is a good time to ask whether it was a success for the Greens. One way to answer is by looking at the policies they announced in 1998 as their greatest priorities and the reason Germans should vote red-green: to focus on two - an end to nuclear power, and an eco-tax. The Greens partially achieved their aims, (themselves only moderate versions of long-standing Green ideas), but at some sacrifice; on the other hand they secured some important conceptual breakthroughs towards a 'greener' Germany. It's also important to look at the factors limiting their ability to act, and the policies' fate in the new CDU/CSU-SPD grand coalition.

Nuclear power

This was the Greens' best known goal, and arguably it's where they achieved the least. They envisaged a tough agreement but brokered a gentle phase-out. In mid-2000, after months of tense negotiations by Environment Minister Jürgen Trittin (Greens), Chancellor Gerhard Schröder (SPD) and the nuclear utilities, the terms were set. It established a nominal 32 year operating period, not measured in calendar years but in an output entitlement of electricity, transferable between reactors. Residual electricity is calculated on each plant's five highest yearly production figures, with a 5.5% bonus for 'future efficiency gains.' Individual reactors may run well over 32 years. Nuclear waste could still be sent overseas for reprocessing until 1 July 2005; reprocessed waste would return to Germany - returning waste has since made Greens in government a target of protest activity, where once they were anti-nuclear activists themselves. Activists, many Greens and all national environmental organisations opposed the terms as too lenient, especially in light of the industry's economic difficulties exacerbated by the 1998 liberalisation of Germany's energy market.





Wolfgang Rüdig asked if the phase-out was a success, and answered yes and no. He acknowledged that "the Greens guaranteed the further operation of the nuclear industry in exchange for a production limitation that was close to if not identical with the likely further production of nuclear electricity without any agreement." The Greens' overriding concern to appear reliable as a coalition partner prevented them from "fully using their conflict potential," i.e. risking the coalition over a principled stand. On the other hand, the Greens had little choice, due to entrenched pro-nuclear interests, Germany's corporatist governing character, SPD pressure, and the Justice Ministry's opinion that only a 30-plus year operating period was legally defensible. The Greens were caught between grassroots' expectations and a highly restricted ability to act, yet survey results showed most voters supported the agreement. Since 2000, the transport of nuclear waste overseas has been halted and two reactors have shut down; the next one is due in around 913 days. Moreover, the phase-out agreement has survived the end of red-green - the grand coalition programme retains it, despite strong CDU pressure for an extension.



Eco-tax

The Greens introduced a long-desired eco-tax, but were constrained in negotiations with the SPD by a pre-election debacle, Schröder, and the need to fit mainstream politics. Their March 1998 programme demanded a 10-year rise in petrol prices from 1.6 DM to 5DM/l; this received much negative attention and the Greens' vote plummeted. They subsequently deleted the '5DM'. Before the election, Schröder declared no eco-tax would increase petrol prices by more than 0.06DM/l/year. Over the years Greens had also stopped suggesting revenue from an eco-tax go to environmental initiatives and recommended using it to reduce non-wage labour costs – the focus of the German political class. Introduced in 1999, and gradually increased over 5 years, the eco-tax lost a lot of force through exemptions, damaging Green credibility. EU directives, WTO rules, plus SPD, industry and CDU/CSU lobbying meant, for example, rebates and partial exemptions for the manufacturing industry, which initially paid 20% of the domestic rate.

Yet it is considered a Green success. It has started to shift the tax burden from 'goods' like employment to environmental 'bads.' This year the Environment Ministry claimed the eco-tax saved 20 million tonnes of carbon dioxide in 2003 alone, and created (a disputed) 250 000 jobs. Ninety per cent of the revenue flowed to retirement funds. It is linked to measures such as the Renewable Energy Sources Act of 2000, and emissions trading introduced 2005. This year the CDU/CSU blamed the eco-tax for higher energy prices, while the Greens blamed inadequate competition. Chancellor designate Merkel disagrees with the eco-tax but will only modify it.



By 1998 the Greens had already made crucial compromises. The disputes of the 1980s – questions of movement or party, of fundamental opposition (fundamentalists) or parliamentary reform (realists) – were over, the last fundamentalists having left in 1991. Factions remained, with realists and leftists clashing throughout the 1990s, but they shared the goal of coalition and had accepted fundamentals of post-war Germany (e.g. NATO). Nonetheless these limited policy successes came at a cost to deeply held beliefs. Greens had to accept the impossibility of gender-parity with only three cabinet positions available, and an end to the separation of office and mandate; major compromises divided them from the anti-nuclear and peace movements of their roots. The greatest sacrifices were in foreign policy. Several times, Greens chose the continuation of the government over their own pacifist traditions, the anti-war lesson of German history, and the wishes of many members. In 1999, Kosovo threatened to split the party, when German troops participated in their first combat role since 1945, sanctioned by 444 to 318 Greens at a stormy party conference. Schröder linked support for the war in Afghanistan to a vote of confidence in his government, thus forcing the Greens' leadership to convince (or coerce) Green Bundestag representatives to vote for German participation in a war they opposed. A yes vote was defended as necessary to secure the continuation of the nuclear phase-out.



What chance did the Greens have of implementing their policies? Industrial decline, reunification, and chronically high unemployment meant less support for Green ideas. German policy-making structures (consensus-based, federal), also stifle radical reform. Interest groups such as employers' organisations and industry lobbies exert great influence on policy; hence the eco-tax didn't target industry, and nuclear policy was agreed with the utilities. We can also ask how much leverage the Greens had in the coalition. Junior parties' say in coalitions has been described (somewhat negatively) as 'blackmail power.' The German Greens, as sole coalition partner, had more blackmail power than most European Greens. But it was limited: the SPD had other options and pressured or simply bypassed the Greens; Greens entered the coalition with a low vote (larger in 2002), made tactical errors, and behaved in a self-limiting fashion. Rüdig argues that while the Greens' structural strength (strong social and political position, extensive state-level experience) provided them greater political leverage, paradoxically it also harmed them - they faced greater expectations and greater disappointment when they compromised. However the Greens' seven years in government have seen progress towards a Germany more in line with green ideals, for example the eco-tax is introducing the concept that the cost of a product should reflect its environmental cost, and nuclear reactors should continue to shut down under Merkel.

Andrea Humphreys is a post-graduate student at the University of Qld

Getting the Greens ready for government in Tasmania

PEG PUTT

The Greens have had continuous Greens representation in the Tasmanian Lower House for 23 years including two stints in the balance of power. The Labor-Green Accord of 1989 in Tasmania saw a formal written agreement between the Parliamentary Labor Party and five Green Independents which enabled Labor to govern in minority. The prospect of Greens influence on government was so distressing to Edmund Rouse, head of the Launceston Examiner newspaper and board member of Gunns Kilndried Industries (now Gunns Ltd), that he attempted to bribe a Labor MP to cross the floor and did jail time as a result.

The Accord delivered impressive protection of Tasmanian wilderness and forest areas up front, and prevented the HFP woodchip mill proceeding in the south, but other undertakings such as enactment of land rights and gay law reform never eventuated from a recalcitrant Labor government. The arrangement foundered when Labor unilaterally breached a key signed undertaking - to restrict woodchip exports to 2,889 tonnes per year.

A consistent problem was the lack of agreed processes of consultation between the government and the Greens, who rarely had the opportunity to address Cabinet yet were expected to routinely support every legislative

initiative of that government. Labor behaved as if they were in majority when they were not, treating the Greens as backbench members who must automatically fall into line, rather than appreciating the need for dialogue and accommodation. Thus was born the myth of the 'unreliable, insatiable' Greens.

The election of a Liberal minority government with four Greens in the balance of power occurred in 1996. This time the Liberals governed without arrangement, the Greens simply stating that we would not move 'no confidence' in the government except in the event of gross maladministration or impropriety, and that we would allow supply (ie the government's Budget).

On every other matter an outcome would be reached on the floor of the House. During this period many progressive initiatives blossomed, including an apology to the Stolen Generation and gay law reform, initiated by the Greens.

After two and a half years the Premier spat the dummy when the Greens would not support the sale of the Hydro, colluded with Labor to rush through Parliament a cut to numbers of representatives in the Lower House,

“In balance of power one learns much about the *real-politik* of decision-making”

designed to rid them of the pesky Greens once and for all, and ran to election. I scraped back as the sole Green. Now we are four, and some polls predict that we will again find ourselves in the balance of power in 2006. This time there is an added issue – the smaller Parliament is already stressed for finding competent Cabinet members, and the government backbench is more or less non-existent. We may inevitably have to consider Cabinet posts if Labor loses its majority. Then again, Labor and Liberal may be the natural alliance, and we the official Opposition.

In balance of power one learns much about the *real-politik* of decision-making. Gone is the luxury of the grand gesture, replaced with an imperative for cooperative politics and the need to find reasoned accommodation of views. Decisions have to be made and we have to be part of them, but frustratingly, cannot dictate precise outcomes because we do not hold that democratic authority.

To be in majority, governing in our own right, is enviable and a long way off yet. Along the way we may become the dominant political party in a multi-party government.

Learning the skills and pitfalls of working collaboratively with others and helping to engender a faith in and understanding of multi-party government must be part of the mission. While this is currently regarded as anathema in Australia it is commonplace in Europe.

Our Greens MPs with their breadth of experience, commitment, and intelligence compare favourably with the capacity of others, including government Ministers. Here in Tasmania we have been tagged the ‘real opposition’ and produce a costed and funded Alternative Budget.

Ultimately the voters will decide when we are ready for government. We will not simply be managers of the status quo when we get there, although in seeking parliamentary representation we have made a choice to work within the system. We will change it from the inside so that by the time we take government, being in government will mean something different, more truly representative of the variety of voices and more based in consensus decision making than today.

Peg Putt is the parliamentary leader of the Tasmanian Greens



As many of you will now be aware, the New Zealand Greens Co-leader Rod Donald died on the morning of November 6th. This is a tremendous loss, both for New Zealand and the Greens globally. Rod was a powerhouse of energy, committed environmentalist, passionate about New Zealand and a fierce democracy advocate. His death robs the New Zealand Greens of a dynamic Co-leader and MP as well as fine speaker and advocate for the Greens. He will be sorely missed.

At this point, it is worth all Greens in Australia stopping and reflecting on why we engage in politics and political struggles. Is to gain government, change the world, be part of history, save the planet, stop climate change or a hundred other grand reasons? Maybe it is all these things, but I also think it is far more. Over the last few months I have been spending an increasing amount of time with local grassroots greens in NSW, learning about their struggles and what's important for them.

What this has taught me is that must never forget that elected Greens and party officials speak only on behalf of the many party members and supporters. We do not 'lead' in the traditional sense of 'great men' leading nations, but rather act in their name on the issues that they are most concerned about, equally inspiring and empowering people to act for themselves. And we do get it right nearly all the time; we just need to be clearly aware of the trust placed in us.

What I suspect we need now is an audit of how the party manages this trust. Are the Greens still a grassroots party, like we say in our literature? I for one believe we still are but we should be able to demonstrate this, such as through allowing more robust debate to be held across the party on difficult issues. In line with that, we need to fully discuss within the Greens all the issues surrounding the 'leadership', simply because I do not think we have tackled adequately what 'leadership' in a Green sense means nor how and when it is applied.

I have long believed that leadership is something we demonstrate, not something we vote on; that is something that is shown when we inspire, engage and empower members, supporters and the general public. Bob and Kerry standing up to George Bush was leadership, irrespective of whether you necessarily agreed with their action. It inspired other Australians to not just sit around and accept the direction of Howard and Bush, but to act for their beliefs. What we have come to expect from our MPs is this kind of leadership, but I also believe it is up to all Greens to act in ways that inspire and empower both ourselves and those around us.

So, as I finish two years as National Convenor, I hope that the party can continue to grow, just as much as retaining an ability to be self-reflective. I will be doing my best as a grassroots campaigner to continue the process of growth, just as I will equally be asking that we pay enough attention as to why we are doing it. In this I believe we need also not to be so focussed on outcomes that we forget that how you get somewhere is just as important as where you are going.

On that note, I should add that my wish for the new Convenor, Juanita Wheeler, is that she will be able to continue to inspire Greens around Australia to believe in the vision laid out in our Charter, and continue to build for a Green future.

Stewart Jackson
Convenor, Australian Greens
convenor@greens.org.au



Stewart Jackson

ACT *A new team*

The ACT Greens AGM was held on Saturday 13 August. The day started with four workshops on Canberra city planning, peace and security, links with the unions, and the genuine progress indicator in relation to mental health issues. These resulted in some excellent discussions and a Greens Civic Vision submission to the Canberra Times 'Living City' Planning Competition. Wouldn't it be great if we won that!

At the AGM we elected the year's team of office bearers, and have a few new people who are full of energy and enthusiasm. And with five women and three men, we're well and truly healthy on affirmative action. We've elected a conflict resolution group, held an arts auction on 10th November, are running a facilitation skills workshop on Saturday 4 February 06 and we're working on bringing GreenSchool to the ACT early in the new year. Sadly, our office manager, Jacqui Cooke, will be moving on and away from the ACT at the end of December, so we're on the lookout for a wonderful all-round organiser again.

We're really keen to get together with regional NSW Greens and are talking to some branch conveners about ways we can work more closely together. If that interests you, contact us and your branch convener.

Helen Woittiez: Convenor, ACT Greens

NSW *A fabulous 45 percent ... and more!*

The last few months have been very busy. On September 17, Greens contested by-elections in Maroubra, Marrickville and Macquarie Fields. The by-elections, caused by the resignations of Premier Carr, Deputy Premier Refshauge and Minister Knowles, ran over an intense three week period and the results certainly justified the effort.

The Greens in Maroubra attracted a 10% swing with a primary vote of 18%. In Marrickville, up against the current Education Minister, The Greens won an amazing 45% in the two-party preferred race. In Macquarie Fields, in Sydney's west, we returned 6% in a wide open race. This is a good result in new territory for The Greens.

Coming up on November 26 there will be another state by-election, this time in Pittwater following the resignation of Opposition Leader John Brogden. Quite a shake up in NSW politics! The 2007 state election will be a very interesting contest!

Added to this, September saw the inauguration of two new Greens Mayors in NSW, taking our tally to three with current Mayor Jan Barham in Byron Bay. Sam Byrne in Marrickville and Mora Main in Waverley have both made immediate impacts on their respective communities, stirring public passions on public transport and urban development issues.

Les de Leau: Convenor, The Greens NSW

NT *Campaigning, networking, strengthening*

The current Federal Government just keeps handing us campaign opportunities. We have been active in support of the Timor Sea Justice Campaign, the National Greens Industrial Relations campaign and joining in opposition to the recent Federal Government proposal to site the nuclear waste dump in the NT. During the June NT Election we were successful in focusing attention on environmental and social justice issues and we gained solid ground from this. These campaigns have strengthened our networking across a wide range of non-government organizations, community groups and individuals.

Our recent AGM has brought skilled and experienced people to fill positions on the Management Committee whilst our continued presence at market stalls is raising community awareness about NT Greens.

Contesting three elections in such a short space of time has kept the party focused and maintained our momentum levels but has slowed down the development of a more organized party structure. The Campaign Manager's Election Report 2005 identified a number of critical areas for NT Greens in this regard during 2005-2007. The current two year break between elections will provide us with time to organize ourselves, increase membership, strengthen networks and work towards developing our own strategic plan.

Sue McKinnon: Convenor, NT Greens

QLD *The Green Day Out!*

To follow up our very successful Greens Immersion Day (see Green #17) we organised the 'Greens Day Out'! This innovative event was a major accelerator not only for the Green agenda but also for the engagement of members and branches and their communities. It saw a major mobilisation of Greens members and supporters to get out into the community, hitting the streets with focused local and state campaigns

This all happened on 15 October. Armed with a new and 'different' brochure the vast majority of Queensland Greens branches held workshops, ran street stalls, conducted community interviews, ran stalls at shopping centres and community markets and handed out brochures at key community facilities. They doorknocked hundreds of small businesses in some areas.

The party energies have been raised; the community - slightly bemused yet attracted by the idea of a political party being 'out there' in a non-election period - has been alerted to our agenda; and we have been informed by the feedback from the community. Perhaps an idea is there for a National Greens Day Out?

Howard Nielsen: Convenor, Queensland Greens

SA *The coming State election*

The SA Greens are working hard to get ready for the coming State election in March 2006. We will have candidates in each of the 47 lower house seats for the first time - a landmark for the Greens in SA. We are aiming to win a seat in the Legislative Council (Upper House) for the first time, with prominent environmental lawyer Mark Parnell as our lead candidate. In addition, we hope to retain the House of Assembly (Lower House) seat of Mitchell, held by Kris Hanna.

Some recent events of note include two candidate training schools - the first of their kind held in SA - which have been hugely successful. We hope to provide further training and ongoing support for candidates and their supporters over the next few months.

Kris Hanna provided a highlight by arguing vigorously against the Labor Government's Aboriginal Land Rights legislation, which significantly watered down rights that have been held by Aboriginal people for many years. In the face of a united front from the Labor and Liberal parties in support of the retrograde legislation, Kris argued until 4 am to uphold the rights of the Pitjantjatjara people. While the legislation was eventually passed, the Greens stood their ground in support of the Aboriginal people.

The Greens are going through a period of intense activity in SA. There is a lot of hard work to be done, but the spirits are high and the level of professionalism and commitment being demonstrated by people at all levels is most encouraging. We look forward to success in March next year.

Kevin Phelan: Convenor, SA Greens

TAS *Local government success!*

The Tasmanian Greens recently contested Local Government elections, running 30 candidates across 13 municipalities. The final count saw Helen Burnet and Philip Cocker elected to Hobart City Council, Kay McFarlane to Clarence City Council, Tony Richardson to Huon Valley Council, Michele Higgins to Kingborough Council, Mohammed El-Said to West Coast Council and Delia Thompson to Southern Midlands. They will join Liz Smith on Huon Valley, Julian Bush on Kingborough and Sharon Prior on Sorell Council taking our full complement to ten Green representatives - our highest ever number and with representatives for the first time on the West Coast and in Southern Midlands. Local government elections are always challenging, with candidates largely running their own campaigns. We were pleased overall with our results this time around, but recognise that we can improve the way we manage LG campaigns.

Preselection is currently underway for our coming state election. The hot tip is that this may be called early in 2006,

so we are already talking strategy and planning. We are also contesting two upper house state seats in early May - candidate nominations have closed and preselection will be completed shortly.

We have recently employed a party fundraiser, and hope to have a fundraising plan written and underway by Christmas. With so much campaigning on the cards over the next few months, raising the money to fund it has become a very high priority indeed.

A good deal of our time and energy over the past few months has been focused on national issues and on planning for the National Conference. Now that conference is over, we will get back to focusing on our policy review process, in order to have our revised policies finalised prior to Christmas, when we all intend having a well-deserved break!

Karen Cassidy: Convenor, Tasmanian Greens

VIC *Elections, elections ... and an international study!*

Victoria currently has ten Green local councillors in five local government areas and they are all making huge contributions to their local communities. Cr Janet Rice in Maribyrnong City Council, who is Chair of the Metropolitan Transport Forum, recently won the 2005 MAV/McArthur Management Services Local Government Fellowship. Janet received a \$10,000 international study grant, which she will use to investigate the implementation of sustainable transport models developed by cities that were previously car dependent including Perth, Vancouver, Portland, Copenhagen and Helsinki. She will also investigate how to foster community support and the role local government can play. Congratulations Janet!

We hope to see several more Greens elected to local councils in the municipal elections currently underway around Victoria. We have 31 Greens standing in 17 local government areas. Most are postal elections, with the few attendance elections being held on Saturday 26 November.

The Victorian state election is just a year away - November 2006. We are already pre-selecting the lead candidates for the eight new upper house regions in Victoria so that we can begin campaigning in earnest. Pre-selections for the 88 lower house districts will follow soon after. With the introduction of proportional representation for electing five representatives from each of the eight upper house regions which will make up the Legislative Council, we have a very real chance of electing Greens to the Victorian parliament.

Sue Pennicuik: Convenor, Australian Greens, Victoria



Mark Jeanes

At the recent National Conference, the Australian Greens adopted an exciting new national strategy. The strategy's four main goals are:

- To have eight Senators in Parliament after 2007 and two lower house reps by 2010
- To build a cohesive national party that is democratic, ethical and member-driven
- To prepare ourselves for the balance of power and for the option to participate in government
- To achieve proportional representation at all levels of government.

These are big goals - but they can be achieved. The last goal is a longer-term goal, but the others can be achieved over the next two years or so.

Members will hear very soon about how they can actively contribute to the strategy. Meantime, major initiatives include: repositioning as a multi-issue party, identifying voter groups using voter research (polling), hiring a national fundraiser, increasing co-operation between states and fostering a better engagement with members.

One of the most important objectives is the 'official' re-positioning of the Greens as a multi-issue party. This means expanding the meaning of the Greens name. In the same sense that Labor does not mean just 'labour' and Liberal means more than (or much less than!) 'liberal', the Greens must mean more than 'green'. If we are to fight not just for the environment, but for social and economic justice, peace, democratic and civil rights, the electorate must associate our name directly with these causes.

You'll read more about the new national strategic plan in the next edition.

Mark Jeanes
National Officer

communications group report

Effective communication continues to be vital for the Greens in conveying their message to Australian electors. Mindful of the need for such effective communication the Australian Greens' national communications working group is continuing to put a lot of time and energy into improving our media.

The Australian Greens' website (www.greens.org.au) has had many recent improvements thanks to our new web editor, Elena Jeffreys, and our national office manager, Sean Downes. Elena has been responsible for putting a lot of issues content on the website including articles about climate change, oil, transport and peace and nuclear disarmament. Sean is doing a great job putting new features on to the website and making sure there is always a constant stream of current press releases posted

to it. By early next year we will be completely rebuilding the look and function of the website.

Brian Hoepper and Drew Hutton continue to do an excellent job as editors of Green magazine which has seen huge quality improvements under their watch. We are now printing about 7,000 copies of each edition of the magazine. At the national conference of the Australian Greens held in November a new national communications strategy was agreed to which, amongst other things, should lead to an increased reach for Green magazine and a standardization of our party logos.

Greg Buckman
Convenor, Australian Greens Communications Working Group

Wanted: Skilled and Talented Greens Members

New Volunteer Appointments - Australian Greens

The Australian Greens have established a number of new volunteer and advisory positions to carry out key strategic initiatives at the national level. The party requires talented, experienced members with advanced 'people skills' and high levels of initiative.

The positions will be unpaid, working from home, of various durations (1-24 months) and of various time commitments (between 1-5 hours work per week).

This is a great opportunity for you to use your skills for the Greens in a highly meaningful way.

Please email volunteer@greens.org.au to receive a full position description and selection criteria.

- Advertising expert
- Branding expert
- Convention Organiser
- Creative Program Director (graphic design, AV, multimedia etc.)
- Economists (several)
- Editor - training manuals
- Electoral experts - Proportional Representation
- Graphic Designer/Layout Artist
- Lawyer - electoral law
- Lawyer - defamation law
- Personal Image Consultant
- PR/Internal Communications expert
- Procedure/Policy Editor
- Rural policy experts (several)
- Submission Writer - Electoral/Civic Education
- Training Consultant
- Web Project Consultant



Globally, Greens are perhaps more important now than ever before in our history, whether as leaders in the fields of climate change, human rights, or in driving the anti-globalisation agenda. For example, Greens in Europe unanimously decided at a May meeting in Latvia to adopt climate change as a major focus for a common campaign in Europe. They were instrumental in promoting it onto the agenda of the G8 meeting, promoting the issue in Kyoto, and are now active in exposing the likely link between climate change and the severity of Hurricane Katrina in the US.

Australia, Asia-Pacific and Global Greens

This year has been very significant for the Greens in Australia and our relationship with global green political parties and movements. Our major activity in 2005 was our participation in and support for the founding meeting of the Asia-Pacific Greens Network (APGN), held in Kyoto in February. We can now proudly boast a formal Greens wing in the Asia-Pacific region, an official body as one of 4 regions within the Global Greens (Africa, the Americas, Asia-Pacific and Europe). Two Australians were elected onto the Global Greens Coordination group and the APGN Membership Panel. We adopted formal Simple Rules specifying criteria for membership (administered by a Membership Panel), and formed new networks such as the Asia-Pacific Young Greens Network (APYGN - convened by an Australian Green) and the Pacific Greens (we funded three of the participants to attend Kyoto). We also passed 11 resolutions on a diverse range of topics.

An exciting event is on the horizon: the second Global Greens Conference is planned for 2007 in Africa (the first was in Canberra in 2001). The Global Greens Coordination Group is consulting at present to choose the best date and location.

The new Asia-Pacific Young Greens Network launched at Kyoto has an active email list, is developing a web site and is making plans to meet again soon. The APYGN has been invited by the Green Movement of Sri Lanka for a Tsunami visit and study trip to Sri Lanka. They are all wonderfully enthusiastic, inspired and inspiring! The Boxing Day Tsunami crisis shocked us all. Our very new Global Issues Working Group sprang into immediate action (holidays notwithstanding!) to launch a web site appeal recommending trusted NGOs to donate to.

AG Global Issues Group (GIG)

Our new AG Global Issue Working Group, established at the AG National Conference in 2004, is developing draft Terms of Reference for endorsement at the 2005 National Conference. Once approved, we will be in a position to respond more effectively to international events.

Other activities

We continue to receive information or requests for assistance from Greens Parties around the world. We also occasionally sign on to international statements, send messages of sympathy, support or condolences where appropriate, and host visits from overseas and from other States.

Information and requests

If you would like more information on Global Greens matters, or would like to receive our Global Greens updates or reports, send me an email or go to <http://lists.greens.org.au/cgi-bin/mailman/listinfo/gig> to apply to subscribe to the GiG email list, open to all AG members. Requests and enquiries from overseas should be referred to the international secretary at global@greens.org.au.

Miriam Solomon is the International Secretary for the Australian Greens.



Miriam Solomon

Adriane Carr and her husband Paul George were guests at the Greens national conference in Hobart. They are two of the co-founders of the British Columbia Green Party. Adriane was elected leader in 2000. After the highly skewed 2001 election gave the Liberals (58% of vote) 77 of 79 seats and the Greens (12.4%) none, she and Paul got over 4,000 canvassers to gather over 98,000 signatures on an Initiative petition for proportional representation.

Q What got the Green Party going in British Columbia?

Paul: In the early 1980s, while campaigning to save some big wilderness areas, we became very frustrated with both the left and right wing parties' support for clearcut logging of the magnificent old growth forests in BC. On the very day that the labour party brushed us off and told us we should wait for them to bring up the environment at one of their future conventions, our newspapers reported the election of the first Greens to the West German parliament. We found out that there were Greens in Tasmania, New Zealand and England, too, and got hold of their constitutions. They spelled out the same values we believe in: an ecological analysis and bottom line, sustainable economy based on a conservator society, citizen-based democracy with local decision making and control, social justice and peace for all. Based on these same principles, in 1983 we formed the Green Party of British Columbia; the first Green Party in North America.

Q How is the BC Green Party doing now?

Adriane: The BC Green Party has 3,700 members and a practical, solutions-based platform that covers all issues. Our last provincial election held in May, 2005 was a tight race between the two old parties. Labour in particular urged people to 'not waste their vote on the Green Party'. Despite the fear-mongering, we got 9.2 percent of the vote and increased our support in many centre-right electorates. Two of us got over 25 percent. But we didn't win any seats, because BC has a 'first past the post' voting system.

Although unelected, we've had positive impact. I was in the 2001 and 2005 televised leaders' debates. This meant daily coverage by all major media throughout both election campaigns. People learned about our ideas and solutions. In a recent poll almost 40 percent of voters said that would consider voting Green in the future. We've succeeded in our campaign to get junk food out of schools.

Q What brings you to Australia?

Paul: We came on a fact finding mission to learn about the various proportional representation electoral systems used in Australia. In a 2005 referendum to establish a Single Transferable Vote (Hare Clarke) system similar to ACT's and Tasmania's, 58 percent of voters said 'yes'. But the government had set the bar at 60%. Still, the Liberals decided they couldn't ignore 58 percent of voters and would put the Hare Clarke system to referendum again in November 2008 – still needing 60 per cent.

Q What has impressed you the most about the Greens in Australia?

Adriane: My first impression: 'you are so lucky!' You have huge voter support compared to Canada (40% in Mar- rickville! 19% across Tasmania!) You are clearly poised to assume power from the regressive and anti-democratic



Adriane Carr and Paul George

mainstream parties. I believe in many jurisdictions you're only an election away from holding the balance of power. When you do, your experienced Green parliamentarians are capable of really turning things around in the next decade. I'm impressed by your plan to make climate change your primary campaign and to strategically build your party's membership and financial resources. We need to do that.

Q. Do you see any weakness of the Australian Greens?

Paul: Hardly any. That said, I feel your Green Policy book it could be expanded. In our 2005 Green Book platform (see www.greenparty.bc.ca) we focused more on ways to transform to a 'green economy' than does your policy book and we phrased our solutions in positive language to reach the broadest range of voters. It is also much more thorough in covering all aspects of governance.

Q. Are there any similarities between what you see happening here in Australia and what is happening up there in Canada?

Adriane: Lots. Both labour and right wing parties ignore the looming environmental crisis. Opposition to the Greens is very similar. The right wing is very sophisticated at obfuscating and using threats of terrorism and job losses as a cover to strengthen corporate control over every aspect of peoples' lives. The Greens are the only ones standing up to these threats with practical, compassionate, forward-thinking solutions. I was pleased to see a 'NO Greens' triangle on the back window of a monster SUV in Hobart. It means they are taking you seriously!

Q. Do you have any final comments?

Adriane: The Australian Greens are a real inspiration for us. Bob Brown came and helped us in our last referendum for a proportional representational voting system. We've had marvelous meetings here with many experts on how your voting systems work. This will help us campaign effectively to win the next referendum on proportional representation and to then elect Greens in BC. Meeting with Greens in Australia convinces me more than ever that our Green Parties are the world's – and our children's – hope!

Adriane Carr is leader of the Green Party of British Columbia. Paul George is director of Free Your Vote society. Email: acarr@telus.net and leader@greenparty.bc.ca

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A tribute to Rod Donald

Rod Donald, co-leader of the New Zealand Greens, died on 6 November at the age of 48. He was a towering figure in the country's green movement and known and respected around the world, especially in Australia which he visited regularly.

He began his green activism as a fifteen-year-old schoolboy in Christchurch in 1972 and a year later joined the Values Party. Just one year later, at the ripe age of eighteen, he cycled from Christchurch to Nelson - to become the campaign manager for the local Values Party candidate.

His activities over the next thirty years focused on community-based initiatives such as recycling, co-operative housing and fair and sustainable trading. However, he will probably remain best known for his leadership of the campaign between 1989 and 1993 to change New Zealand's voting system to proportional representation, a feat he achieved in the 1993 referendum. Consequently, he changed the face of New Zealand politics, breaking the monopoly of the two big parties and allowing smaller parties like the Greens to achieve parliamentary representation.

Rod joined the Greens in 1994 and was made its co-leader with Jeannette Fitzsimonds in 1995. They were both elected to parliament under the Alliance banner in 1996. Several years later the Greens parted from the Alliance and have been represented separately in the New Zealand parliament ever since with Rod and Jeannette as co-leaders.

Rod's other great passion was for his partner Nicola and his three daughters. The five of them often came to Brisbane on holidays and, while he loved catching up with old friends, he was obviously besotted by his family and treasured every moment he spent with them.

He was a man of boundless energy and passion, universally well-liked, whose life was a monument to the values of green politics.





Street Music

Rhys Burley Clark

I stop for a pie in a big cafeteria, noisy with lunchtime. I have never noticed that there is a piano in the place ... until now. An old man is playing fine, happily rhythmical classical music. His clothes are old but not ragged, and he has placed his little hat on top of the piano while he plays. He is white-haired, tall and lean. He doesn't look as if he owns a piano now, but he certainly has at sometime in the past.

As I slop the pie in gravy and chips I listen, remembering how readily joy can come. He who owns little makes it for us now, gives it freely as his own spirit moves.

On my way back to the small park where I like to eat a piece of fruit before going back to work, I pass through a construction site and find they've finally shifted the temporary pedestrian tunnel that I'd walked through so often. I loved its ill-lit walls of ply, roughly undercoated, and the graffiti that appeared day by day. What profusions of handwritings, comments, signatures and dates could be seen there, a variegated planted in a semi-wild garden! I had favourites that I used to read every day, and every day I tried to read something new, without slowing my pace – only a moron, I reasoned, had to stop to read graffiti!

Today I read nothing: the boards had all been taken down, and randomly recombined when the tunnel had been erected at a new point. Bits and pieces of familiar comments flash into my sight to be reconstructed from memory. Letters, phrases, words and even signatures are broken, only to be recombined into new and haphazard wisdoms. Nothing new has been added to the walls this morning.

For the first time in my life I commit an act of folk vandalism. One of my favourites reappears from the nib of my anonymous pen:

*Why should walls and floors and plaster ceilings
separate us from each other's feelings?*

Back onto the street from the dark safety of the tunnel, I see the musician before I can hear him. He is busking with a ukulele, and at last I hear. His music is fair, but he is so poor that his hat ('a busker's second essential') is floppy and worn. The only money I have left is my bus fare, so I throw my pen into the cloth cap at his feet.

DOWNSHIFTING **DOWN** simpler richer living

Getting a life...

A strong counter culture is emerging in Australia that values quality of life and wellbeing more highly than more economic growth, more work, more money and more mindless consumption.

While this is nothing new to many green-minded people who chose to never fully engage in the consumer rat race anyway, more and more mainstream consumers have been asking whether there must be more to life and many have started taking control by stepping off the consumer treadmill.

Enter the downshifters who choose to trade money and stressful jobs for time, health and sanity – ie: simpler, richer lives. Related but distinct phenomena include sea changing and tree changing both of which involve moving out of cities. Most downshifters change lifestyle and work patterns but don't necessarily move house. Of course moving to a smaller, simpler house or apartment is an obvious way to unlock capital or reduce living expenses, especially if close to public transport or cycleways or work.

This cultural shift to simpler living has been unfolding in Australia in the past decade and almost nobody noticed just how significant this trend was until recently.

Research from Dr Clive Hamilton and The Australia Institute discovered that 23% of Australians have downshifted in the past 10 years. (The definition of downshifting was quite strict in the study and only included people aged (30-59) who voluntarily chose a long term change in lifestyle, other than planned retirement, resulting in less income.) Contrary to a widely held view, Australian Downshifters are broadly represented across all socio-demographic groups. Most downshift to spend more time with family, more balance or fulfillment or a healthier lifestyle. Only a small proportion seems to initially downshift for environmental reasons. Reducing work hours is the most popular way to downshift but taking a lower paying job, stopping paid work and changing careers are also common. Downshifters are overwhelmingly happy with their decisions even though some miss the extra income.

What is really interesting about the downshifting phenomenon is that it has not been an organized movement and has been almost invisible until recently. Most downshifters so far have made a personal courageous decision to downshift often without any support network.



Downshifting Downunder

DAVID WYATT

Downshifters Downunder – some personal stories:

Fiona (52) from Sydney experienced exhaustion and anxiety after years of supporting her partner in his own business. They decided to close down their business as both felt they desperately needed a change:

I felt an absolute stressed out mess, as if I'd lost my whole personality and self completely. We both wanted to do something different, work fewer hours and have less work stress. We'd paid off our house, our kids were grown up, so we felt we were in a position to live on less.

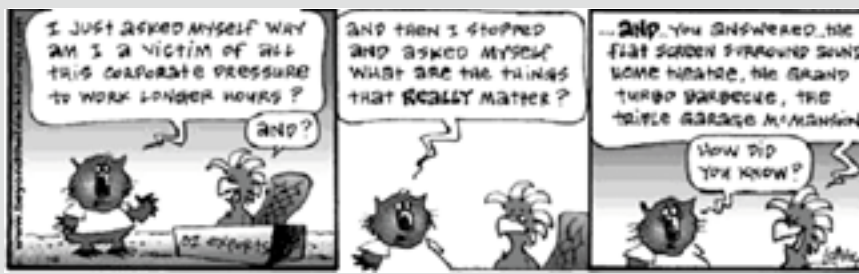
Franco (29), who downshifted from a highly paid job in corporate finance, thought a lot about the failure of material possessions to bring him any sense of fulfillment:

Once when I was negotiating with my boss about work I realized I didn't want more money to motivate me. I was looking for more challenges, more responsibility, a certain type of work, and I was more than willing to sacrifice money for it.

Once she had left Sydney and settled gradually into a different, simpler way of living in a small, rural town, Zelda talked of how much happier she felt:

Living up here, I'm much more aware of the weather, of how significant droughts and floods are, how the garden is affected. I'll never forget the excitement of growing our own vegetables – picking, cooking and eating them. I now have time to 'smell the roses'.

(Source: The Australia Institute: 'Downshifting in Australia'. July 18, 2005)



Downshifting Downunder - an organization to promote and facilitate downshifting.

In January 2005 I had been reading *Growth Fetish* by Clive Hamilton and was inspired to encourage increased downshifting by starting an organized movement called Downshifting Downunder. One of the goals of Downshifting Downunder is that a majority of Australians will have downshifted by 2015. I had progressively downshifted myself since 1998 and found more time to learn and think about environmental issues and become a more active and responsible citizen again. I reasoned that if larger numbers of Australians downshifted and were networked as a movement, this could have a significant positive impact on our society and ecology.

I was encouraged and supported by Prof Ian Lowe and Dr Clive Hamilton of The Australia Institute (www.tai.org.au) and a small group met in Sydney in early 2005 to plan a conference to launch the movement. We quickly found that there were lots of downshifters out there, clearly feeling isolated, delighted to find kindred spirits, proud to share their stories and keen to network and support other potential downshifters.

The conference was held in Sydney in July 2005 and over 100 people attended from as far away from Perth and New Zealand. About half were experienced downshifters and the others were usually potential downshifters or just curious. The conference attracted significant media interest that is ongoing.

Since the conference we have upgraded the website www.downshifting.net.au to appeal more to potential downshifters. We have emerging regional networks, a newsletter *Simpler Richer Living* and plans for a National Downshifting Week. Media interest continues to be high as they see this as a significant social trend and there are many human interest stories of downshifting all over the country. This year's Woodford Festival Greenhouse will feature a forum on Downshifting Downunder with Clive Hamilton, Ian Lowe and Ruth Ostrow.

Politics of Downshifting

We have all heard John Howard talking about his 'aspirational' voters who all aspire to the 'Great Australian Dream' whatever that is these days, worry about their mortgages and debts and vote with their hip pocket nerve when scare-mongered at election time. But is the 'Great Australian Dream' becoming a nightmare based on a fruitless search for fulfillment through more consumption. Despite huge increases in GDP, income, wealth and debt over the past decades where is the evidence that it increases our wellbeing? Do we see any links between our huge consumption binge and environmental damage? By downshifting and reducing consumption in line with income we can not only find deeper more sustainable sources of personal wellbeing but we can help the environment as well.

23% of Australians have quietly downshifted in the past decade. Politicians have recently recognized the groundswell and are testing the waters by trying to identify with this downshifting. Senator Barnaby Joyce recently even suggested that the Downshifters and Sea changers are part of the newly emerging support base for the Nationals. Julia Gillard also tested the waters recently in a similar way for the ALP.

But surely downshifters are fertile demographic ground for the Greens. If the mainstream parties are trapped in the old economic paradigm they can never seriously reach out to the downshifters as can the Greens.

I learned (sadly) that I could not always engage mainstream people for long in a conversation on environmental issues. But work/life balance, consumption and downshifting as a topic is different ...try it yourself!

David Wyatt began downshifting around 1998 when he was CEO of PanBio, a successful medical diagnostics company. He is Adjunct Professor in Corporate Sustainability at the University of Queensland Business School.

The Greens: History and Purpose

Impressions by Gösta Lyngå

During twenty years in Green politics I have often tried to analyse what our ultimate aims are and why we at different times prioritise different issues.

There have clearly been shifts in emphasis and policies among both the Swedish Greens, during the 1980s, and here in Australia during the 1990s. From single environmental issues the trend has been to include social and also economic issues. This seems to be an effect of the widening of our movement to include a diverse range of environmental and social activists, but I believe that it is also a response to changes in society.

Let me first recall how it started in some of the many communities where the views of protesters were not heard, and where protesters then realised that they had to gain entrance to the chambers where decisions are being made. I will then comment on our change in emphasis from single issues to fighting for a multitude of issues. Finally I'll hail the amazing development of the Global Greens with holistic views encompassing all human activities, who aim to help create a world worth living in for future generations.



Single Issue Environmental Actions

My examples are from the two countries where I have been active, Sweden and Australia; though many similar actions have taken place in other countries. The background has been the same: the optimism and strong belief in economic growth during the 1960s was followed by serious misgivings during the 1970s. What was actually going on, why did environmental values have to be destroyed, why didn't people's opinions matter?

A road in the South of Sweden

One of the first environmental actions in Sweden came in 1972 when 4,000 people protested against a road planned through a sensitive area near the town of Igelholm. The local Council ignored the protest. The people then realised that acting outside the Council was not enough and formed PMM, the Party for Environmental Protection and Joint Decision Making. This fledgling Green Party won three seats in the Local Council the following year and was able to influence many more issues than the one that had been the igniting spark.

A deceitful referendum on Nuclear Power

During the 1970s the future of nuclear power was seriously challenged by NGOs in Sweden and a referendum was held in 1980 on whether Sweden was to continue using nuclear power for electricity generation. Originally two options were announced: Yes or No. However, opinion polls showed that the No side was ahead, so a third option was created: Discontinue nuclear power but sensibly. This option got 39% of the votes coming ahead of the No option. Disgusted over the decision as well as the deceitful referendum, the anti-nuclear groups initiated Miljöpartiet – 'The Environmental Party' - in September 1981. The name was later changed to Miljöpartiet de Gröna – 'The Environmental Party the Greens'.

Seals dying in the North Sea

After several years of Greens presence in local councils, gradually adding more issues to the agenda, two events brought the importance of the environment to voters - the Chernobyl nuclear accident in 1986, when people had to be told that reindeer meat was radioactive and must not be eaten; and the appearance of dead seals in the North Sea in 1988 as a result of a nutritional imbalance in the seas, highlighting the importance of ecological stability. This, together with the respect earned by local Greens councillors opened the doors to the Swedish Parliament in 1988.

Having served for three years in the local council of Kävinge, a region where one of the controversial nuclear power stations was situated, I was then elected to Parliament; serving during a period when our policies expanded to include social and economic issues. That the environment was still the underlying issue in economic policies was shown by a tax reform which we were part of, and which included carbon tax as well as several taxes on poisonous substances.

The Australian Woodchipping Industry

Having come to appreciate the unique Australian bush during my stay in Canberra in the 1960s, I was appalled on returning in 1991 to witness the devastation inflicted by the woodchipping industry. It is fair to say that the environmental movement's reaction to the forest policies of the day was one of the primary factors in forming the Australian Greens in 1992.

In Australia as well as in Sweden, it was a major environmental issue that made conservationists aware of the need to be represented where decisions are made. And, similar to Green parties in so many other countries, the Australian Greens have developed into the fastest growing political force, widening its scope into all areas of politics.

This gradual inclusion of other issues on the Green agenda is to a large extent due to the failure of the older political parties to understand the rising problems in modern society and their neglect of important minority views. When minority groups are ignored by the old political parties, it is our pillar of social equity that gives them hope. When the economy is encouraged to grow without control, then it is our belief in sustainability that guides us to propose alternatives. When the government engages in wars in foreign countries, our principle of nonviolence makes us the political voice of the peace movement.

Holistic Views and Global Vision

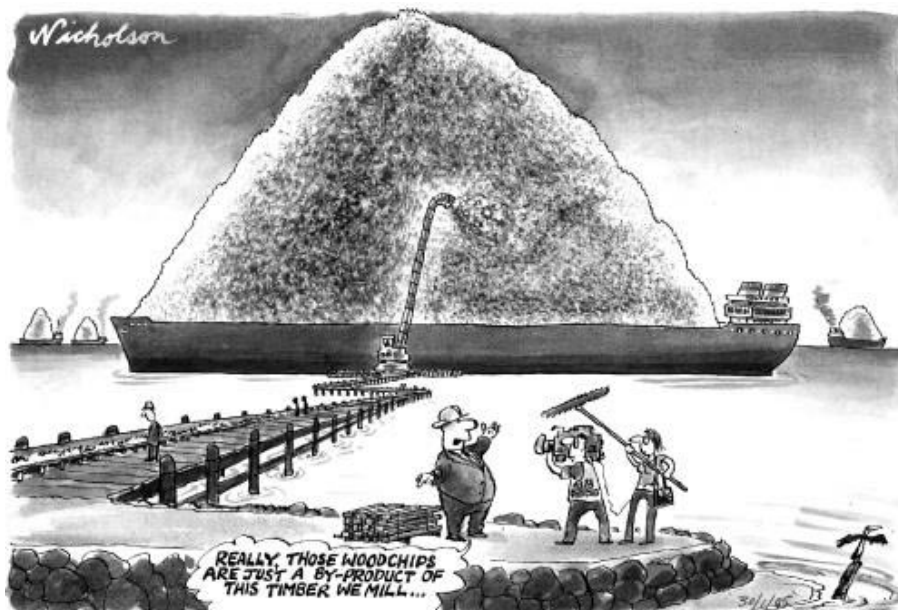
The Greens have gradually adopted a very wide range of policies based on fairness to people as well as on the ecological integrity of the earth. Our policies have become expressions of an overall view, rather than a collection of individual statements; a more holistic view has become the basis for specific actions.

Green parties have formed spontaneously in many countries in response to the global character of economic rationalism and ubiquitous disdain for environmental values. When in 2001 delegates from all over the world came together in Canberra, found common themes and developed a common charter, this became a unique network of likeminded political groups. The problems are global, the cooperation must be global. Environmental issues like climate change and pollution of the ozone layer are obviously global, but so are socio-economic issues such as an unfair trade system and international currency speculation.

We are here to stay

At the beginning of my political life I actually thought that the main purpose of the Greens was to pioneer the way for traditional politicians, that our policies would be taken over and we could retire after a job well done. I have had to change my mind on this. The more unfair the world is growing and the less regard is taken for ecological balance, the more important our alternatives become. We are here to stay: our emphasis may be changing but our long-term aims towards a better world are vital.

Gösta Lyngå is now a dual citizen of Australia and Sweden, was one of the founding members of the ACT Greens, has been and still is involved in many activities of the Australian Greens.



Nicholson of 'The Australian' newspaper. www.nicholsoncartoons.com.au



“Sisters, keep your seeds!”

For women in Bangladesh there has never been a more important time to practise traditional seed saving.

SUZETTE MITCHELL AND PHONEIX ARRIEN

A very nervous woman stood in front of 10,000 farmers at a 1994 festival in Bangladesh. She was shy and the odds of being listened to were against her. However there was much at stake and behind her stood the knowledge of generations of Bangladeshi women and the threat to their survival.

Her message was a simple but powerful one: ‘Sisters, keep your seeds’.

Traditionally the women of Bangladesh have saved and shared seeds perfectly suited to the local soils. Now their expertise is undermined by the widespread introduction of genetically engineered (GE) and hybrid seeds.

GE seeds are often designed for use with herbicides whose long-term effects are largely unknown. As many of these seeds are sterile, the women also have to buy new ones each year. Paying for what has always been free does not benefit these communities.

To address these issues, the Australian-based non-profit International Women’s Development Agency (IWDA) is working with UBINIG, a local group who became involved in the seed issue when farmers asked for support after a flood and a cyclone affected their livelihoods.

‘We call this project Nayakrishi’ said UBINIG Director Farida Akhter, ‘this means neo-agriculture.’ It’s a contrast to the seeds given to us by so called ‘modern technology’ which, despite claims of high yield, actually don’t work as well.’

‘It is necessary for women to keep seeds in the household. They are used for many purposes. For instance, to grow herbs for childbirth and ceremonial occasions such as weddings; to grow food such as pumpkins, okra and eggplant. Traditionally Bangladesh has over 15 000 varieties of rice such as aromatic, coarse and red. Maintaining this diversity is a cultural and social need.’

The traditional system is that every household keeps beans which are so valuable, they are kept in bedrooms. Farida tells of a woman whose home was floating away in a flood,

and who swam after it to get the tin of seeds she had fixed to the ceiling. This woman risked her life for her seeds because to her they meant life.

Women exchange seeds with sisters, relatives, friends, neighbours especially when they have a good crop, so they already sharing seeds without outside help.

‘We are working primarily at village level,’ explains Farida, ‘to strengthen what women are already doing. We are working with women farmers to train others in differentiating between varieties and in different specialisations.’

The project, as well as providing training and exchanges, assists the women in building large seed huts to store the seeds, each servicing several villages. According to Farida, this project is one of the few women’s empowerment projects men in the village are fully behind. ‘Impressed by the pictures of big shiny vegetables on the front of the imported packets, the men tried the new seeds only to be disappointed. They now joke of using the leaves from the imported okra seeds as umbrellas, but can’t do much with the tiny vegetables.’

Although IWDA’s 20 years of experience show that when women benefit the whole community benefits, it is refreshing to have full support from the entire community at the beginning of a project.

IWDA needs to raise \$15,000 to support this seed saving work project. For more information about IWDA’s work with women and communities in the developing world go to www.iwda.org.au or call 03 9650 5574

Suzette Mitchell is Executive Director of the International Women’s Development Agency (IWDA), Melbourne. Phoneix Arrien is a Freelance Photojournalist.

What hope for the Greens?

RICHARD DENNISS

Supporters of 'progressive' or 'Left' politics are not usually seen as a happy bunch. Sure some of us might be good for a laugh one on one, but put us in a room together and it all comes tumbling down. At the moment we can blame our collective state of mind on the Howard Government and its heartless policies towards the vulnerable, but the Left was unhappy under the last government and will, most likely, be just as unhappy under the next.

The fact is the Left is much better at articulating what it is opposed to than stating what it supports. Yes, the Left is in favour of equity, compassion, fairness and sustainability, but who isn't? None of those 'objectives' would be out of place in a speech by John Howard, but while we know that he misuses those words, we don't feel the need to define what we mean by them. The Greens must begin this process.

In 1996 the Prime Minister was elected on a platform of making Australia 'relaxed and comfortable'. In 2001 he promised to make Australians safe and secure. The 2004 election, he declared, was about 'trust'. These promises were politically attractive and successful for the simple reason that they offered people hope. Many may comfort themselves by calling John Howard a liar but the fact is that more people voted for him in 2004 than in 2001.

This is not a plea for the Greens to become as cynical and insincere as the Howard Government. On the contrary. The Greens must maintain their values based approach to policy and politics, but they must enhance

their capacity to provide hope to mainstream Australia. One thing is clear from the last two federal elections, Australian voters will vote for parties that promise them hope for a better world.

Conservative politicians have learned this lesson well, taking a leaf straight from the churches and corporations strategy book: To get people on side offer them hope. Economic growth, spiritual salvation, and a plasma screen TV are all sold to people on the back of hope, the hope that our lives will be better in the future as long as we support their god, their government, or their brand.

The Left used to know how to use hope to get its message out. Roosevelt's New Deal was sold on hope, as was the Whitlam agenda. But progressive politics in modern Australia is far more interested in guilt and fear than it is in hope and joy.

Mark Latham tried to sell a message of hope, but his mistake lay in defining aspiration in entirely material terms - a bigger car, bigger house, private schooling. By contrast, Greens can match Australians' deeper aspirations for cohesive communities, healthy family life, quality hospitals and public schools.

The Left's obsession with the shortcoming of both fellow travellers and political opponents has distracted us from articulating what we stand for. We all agree that we need to tackle global warming, that large corporations have too much influence and that employers are ruining the lives of Australian families with unfair demands for flexibility. But apart from calling for 'urgent action' we are often unsure exactly what it is we want to do.

The Government's proposed IR reforms are a backward step; the Greens can articulate a new IR system to help families cope with modern work/family problems. The government will not ratify Kyoto; the Greens can develop, cost, and lobby for a comprehensive redesign of energy pricing in Australia.

All the Greens I have spoken to are passionate about seeing policy and behavioural changes that will make Australia a nicer, safer, and more sustainable country. Yes we have to shine a light on the failings of our opponents, but we must also put more effort into developing, and communicating, the kind of country we would like to live in.

Dr Richard Denniss is the strategic adviser to the four Greens senators. Prior to his current role he was Deputy Director of The Australia Institute. He is the co-author with Clive Hamilton of the recently released 'Affluenza'.



Here's a taste of what our reviewers have said about these two books.

You can read the complete reviews on the Australian Greens website:

www.greens.org.au



Beyond Right and Left: New Politics and the Culture Wars

DAVID MCKNIGHT, 2005

Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 286pp.

ISBN 1 74114 570 8 RRP \$24.95

This contemporary look at the big picture of Australian politics does a rare thing: it takes the ideas of the Right seriously. It does so in order to understand their success and find a way to defeat them, not to praise them.

David McKnight argues that new-Right ideology (neo-conservatism or neo liberalism) is the truly radical force in modern Western politics.

Politically neo-liberalism has succeeded in delivering economic growth, while pushing the public's conservative buttons on the family and the nation. One of the great political ironies of our time is that the market-driven policies of neo-liberalism are actually undermining the family, the nation state and other institutions normally held dear by the Right.

McKnight sees that this presents a historical challenge for the Right as well as the Left. Its very radicalism has split the Right, with traditional right-wing conservatives just as horrified as the Left by the wholesale dismantling of social institutions and traditions.

What about the Left? While McKnight states bluntly he thinks 'old' Left thinking no longer offers a useful or correct way of understanding the modern world or going about modern politics, his purpose is to find a new way forward for the Left, not to gloat over its demise.

The Greens claim to be 'neither Right nor Left, but in front', a bold claim, and one McKnight acknowledges positively, although with qualifications.

So McKnight ventures where few have yet been, although many are looking – 'beyond Right and Left'. He sees a coming-together of certain key values to form a new political vision – a "new humanism".

Greg Giles

Reinhabiting Reality: Towards a recovery of culture

FREYA MATTHEWS, 2005

Sydney, UNSW Press, 208pp,

RRP \$39.95

Most people are aware that we have, as a society, mistreated the environment. ...To ease our conscience, we might push the half-flush button on the toilet more often, become better at using the recycling bin, or refuse to pack our groceries in plastic bags. Though admirable and worthy, these initiatives often continue to reflect our self-interested outlook. ... The needs of matter itself are not considered. ...

The consequences of this outlook are rationalistic science, profit-driven economics, an ideology of progress, a liberal polity, an ethos of consumerism, and colonialism on the international stage.

Matthews argues that many environmental movements fail to grasp the nature of the present ecological crisis because they remain within the parameters of modern culture. ... The urge for a genuine alternative requires a nondualist or 'panpsychist' culture. ... A panpsychist metaphysics can resolve much of our anxiety, teaching us to 'reinhabit reality'. For Matthews, it does not mean we have to throw away our computers or destroy our skyscrapers and freeways. It involves being grateful to the places in which we live, and treating all matter with reverence.

These arguments are not new. But Matthews' book is novel because it is more than just a sequence of philosophical claims. It is also a series of personal reflections and meditations on past experiences. ... Many readers may well reject some of the personal opinions and specific recommendations, while taking on board the general arguments. But it is refreshing to have a philosopher come out from the usual hiding place — impersonal prose and excessive specialisation — to articulate the lived experiences behind an analysis which stretches across the entire field of the humanities and social sciences.

Martin Leet, The Brisbane Institute



Recherche Bay, Tasmania

Rod's Cathedral

Every seat in Christchurch Cathedral (there was no other venue in the city big enough) was taken and hundreds stood outside as we mourned and celebrated the New Zealand Greens co-leader Rod Donald on Thursday 10th November. With Rod's partner Nicola and daughters Holly, Emma and Zoe, co-leader Jeanette Fitzsimons and many Green and non-Green New Zealand MPs, the Prime Minister and Governor-General, Rod's eulogy began with a Maori tribute and ended with Zimbabwean dancers (he had cut his activist teeth on anti-apartheid demonstrations against the Springbok's tour 30 years ago). Just 48, robust and healthy, Rod was felled by a sudden viral infection to his heart. Kerry Nettle and Yarra City's former Green Mayor, Greg Barber (Rod was due to speak in Melbourne this weekend) and I represented the Australian Greens, paying homage to this noble New Zealander.

No yolk

I was committed to the World Conference of Parliamentarians for Tibet in mid-November and then two days in Paris to lobby for Tasmania's Recherche Bay. But the truncated Senate Inquiry into the Government's terror laws was lobbed into the same time. Nationals Senate leader Ron Boswell crowed that the Greens had 'egg on their faces from head to toe' over our claims that Prime Minister Howard timed the recall of the Senate, to change 'the' to 'a' to relegate his odious industrial relations bill from the headlines. It turns out that top police were 'livid' at Howard's recall which alerted the alleged plotters and let at least one escape. White of egg can be good for one's complexion. However, risking national security to gain political advantage is a seriously ugly thing to do.

Wielangta

My Federal Court challenge to the Howard Government's environmental law began on 5 December. It's over logging in Tasmania's wild Wielangta Forest which harbours rare and endangered species. You can help. See www.bobbrown.org.au

Two new stars

Ebony Bennett is my new media officer in Canberra, replacing Ben Oquist. Ebony has been with the Financial Review in the Press Gallery for five years and is already proving a great asset for the Greens.

Now hear this: Greens candidate Mahommed El-Said was elected to the rather conservative West Coast Council in Tasmania in November. Mo, a nurse and 'a voice for the disadvantaged and the environment' is Tasmania's only elected Muslim. Go Mo!

Rescuing Recherche

The Recherche Bay peninsula in far south Tasmania is the centre of one of Australia's most historic and beautiful landscapes. It is where the French scientists spent such happy times with the Palawa people in 1793. It is also about to be woodchipped. The Recherche forest is just 140 hectares and is privately owned. One way to rescue it would be to buy it. In Hobart on 5 November, thousands protested the impending logging at Recherche Bay. Maybe a public fundraising effort will spur Canberra and Hobart into saving this historic precinct by paying the owners just compensation. If you can pledge \$1,000, please find a Recherche Bay pledge form at www.bobbrown.org.au. By the way, Senate President Paul Calvert and House Speaker David Hawker have banned my photo exhibition of Recherche Bay from Parliament House as it would be 'partisan and controversial'. If you're coming to Tasmania this summer, please also call in at the Weld River protest camp where brilliant people are defending forests which should be World Heritage, not woodchips (see www.huon.org/weldvalley).

Summer Days

It is so great being with Kerry, Christine and Rachel in the Senate. We are powering along and, with our splendid staff, looking forward to a few lazier days in summer. We hope you find them too. Have a joyful summer season and may peace advance across the Earth.

**Happy days
Bob**



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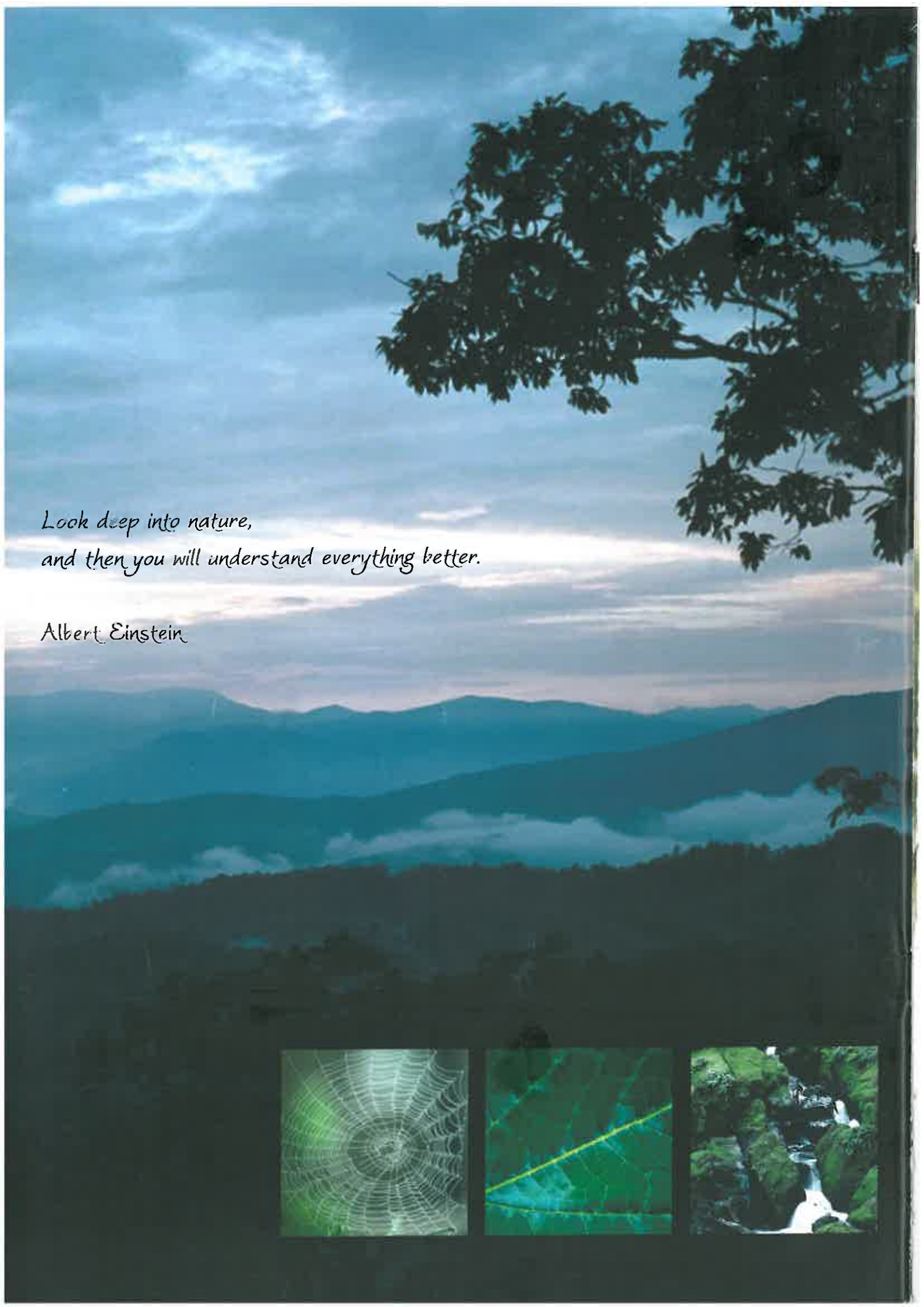
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*Look deep into nature,
and then you will understand everything better.*

Albert Einstein

