

Amber Waves of Green

The Voice of the Green Party of Michigan Volume 4, No. 2 Spring 2002



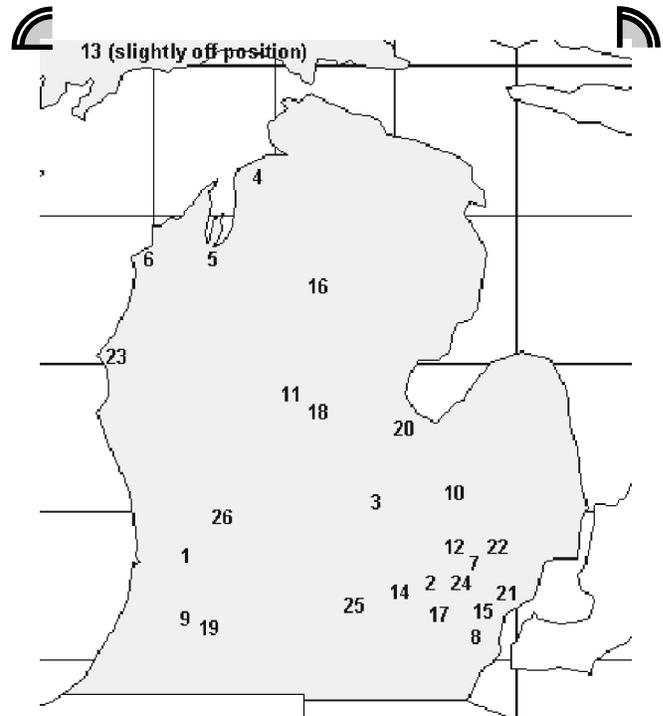
Palestinian Areas in Israel & Israel in the Middle East

Conflict in the Middle East – and in the US

In this issue: Rally to defend Palestine – Divestment – Laissez faire capitalism – Ballot access – Vegetarianism and agri-business – Environmental justice – Labor movement and the war – Freedom of expression – Auditing the environment – and more ...

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Amber Waves of Green, published quarterly, is the official publication of the Green Party of Michigan. It is written by members and friends of the party and assembled by Linda Manning Myatt. Aside from celebrating spacious skies, and purple mountain majesty, it serves to promote the Ten Key Values of the Greens: Ecological Wisdom, Grassroots Democracy, Social Justice, Nonviolence, Community Economics, Decentralization, Feminism, Respect for Diversity, Personal and Global Responsibility, and Future Focus. Submission of articles by E mail or disc is preferred: newsletter@migreens.org. Snail mail can be sent to 50 Woodward Heights, Pleasant Ridge, MI 48069. The Green Party of Michigan can be contacted at: Green Party of Michigan, 548 S. Main St., Ann Arbor, MI 48104, or phone (734) 663-3555. On the Web, visit <http://www.migreens.org>, where there is a feedback form, or send E mail to migreens-subscribe@yahooogroups.com.

Guest Editorial:

Citizens Should Be Able to Vote on Straight Tickets

By *Pete Ponzetti*
Opinion Columnist

Individual American states desperately need to provide uniform voting methods. They need to drastically improve the options made available on ballots – instant run-off voting and none-of-the-above voting options, as examples – so as to encourage fairer elections and higher turnouts.

After what took place in the 2000 national elections – if anyone can even remember that far back – it is sad to see that the Michigan legislature is so seemingly hell-bent on continuing to make the state's voting laws more regressive and difficult.

The process has been gradual, and first began in 1994. At that time, the state legislature and governor approved the disqualification of write-in votes unless the write-in "candidate" formally registered to "run" before an election.

Forgetting the obvious fact that the write-in vote is often used as an "other" category or protest vote, the reasoning lawmakers gave was that vote counters were tired of seeing Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck and various expletives written in for president every four years.

Maybe the solution the two major parties should have considered was to actually run candidates held in a bit higher regard than Disney cartoon characters and four-letter words?

In 1999 the active discouragement of citizen participation in Michigan voting continued, when now-GOP Congressman and then-State Senator Mike Rogers introduced a bill that required driver's license and state ID addresses to match the area where a person was allowed to register and vote. While lawmakers claimed that this was to help prevent "voting fraud," what it really did was help GOP candidate-hopefuls running in traditionally Democratic-voting college towns – like Rogers in East Lansing.

Because of it, plenty of college students wanting to vote either had to mail out synchronized requests for absentee ballots, drive back to vote in the "home" area listed on their driver's license, or simply not vote at all. The latter was often true of first-time voters, who aren't permitted to vote their first time via absentee ballot. The result wasn't much of a surprise, when Republican candidates took over districts that hadn't seen GOP representation in decades.

The voting problem at hand now is the legislature's recent and expeditious doing away with the straight-ticket ballot voting option.

While at first I too agreed that eliminating straight-ticket voting might go progressively hand-in-hand with the rationale that voters would now have to more conscientiously and intelligently flip their way through the entire ballot; now I view it as little more than what it truly is: a numbers game.

This numbers game of course, not unlike the gerrymandering of voting districts, benefits the winning interests of the one major political party over that of the other. And whether you consider

yourself a Republican, a Democrat, a third party voter or an independent, the elimination of the straight-ticket voting option actually does more to discourage than encourage citizen participation in democracy and voting.

The example of cutting out potential voter participation for the sake of gaining easy ground and votes is nothing new in politics of course, but it is just as nauseating as the legislative redistricting fiasco we get to watch painfully unfold every 10 years.

While I haven't utilized straight-ticket voting in my four years of being able to vote, and don't anticipate to in the future, some people I know have. Logically speaking, why shouldn't they be afforded this very helpful voting option? Fortunately, they may be allowed to keep using it. Enough referendum petition signatures were recently gathered and it looks like the question of eliminating straight ticket voting will be decided by the voters – as it should have been initially – in the November 2002 election.

Perhaps then Michigan citizens can finally send a bold message to the state legislature, about its choice of passing very suspiciously-intentioned voting laws over the course of the past eight years: Create voting laws that help, not hinder, or find yourself on a "straight ticket" out of public office.



Green Eggs and Ham

The Often Embraced Environmental Arguments Against Meat Have More Holes than Swiss Cheese

By Wayne Roberts

Vegetarians are biting off more than they can chew when they blame so many environmental ills on meat production.

In 1971, Frances Moore Lappè's classic *Diet For A Small Planet* cooked up a storm with vegetarian recipes for a new food system based on health, equality, democracy and environmental protection. Lappè's runaway bestseller put the excessive energy consumption and environmental destruction associated with meat production on the public agenda. Ever since, it has been recognized that industrially raised livestock – fed a diet of grains and beans instead of traditional grasses, grubs and food scraps – consume much more nutrients (often six or seven times more) than they provide to humans. And, of course, the gap between the amount of food livestock eat and the amount of food they produce for humans is made up by the manure that defiles waterways.

Unfortunately, subsequent vegetarian polemicists repeated Lappè's allegations about meat without the benefit of her critique of the corporate-dominated food system. Without any food system meat on the bones of their vegetarian analysis, their polemics ironically ended up blaming livestock, the ostensible victims of a carnivorous diet, for wasting and degrading so many scarce and precious resources. In this version, it's the livestock who produce so much manure and so little protein per unit of grain, not the system in which livestock are raised.

Lappè's allegations have been narrowly and simplistically framed by well-known writers such as John Robbins, author of the 1987 *Diet For A New America* and the 1992 *Diet For A New World*, together with Jeremy Rifkin in his 1992 book *Beyond Beef*. A raft of articles in vegetarian and environmental magazines – most recently Jim Motavalli's run-on screed, "So You're An Environmentalist; Why Are You Still Eating Meat?" in the January 2002 *E Magazine* – have turned the direct relationship between meat production and environmental degradation into a dogma.

It is time to challenge this dogma.

The now-standard environmental argument against meat is shot through with reckless leaps of logic. Two common debating tricks are used. The first compares apples and oranges. Typically, the staggering waste of resources involved in the production of one pound of hamburger is contrasted with the modest use of resources to produce a pound of potatoes or grain. But if the energy argument is to hold, we have to know more about what we're evaluating. Are we comparing a pound of potatoes grown in our backyards to a pound of factory livestock meat sold in a fast food hamburger joint? Or are we comparing industrially grown potatoes –

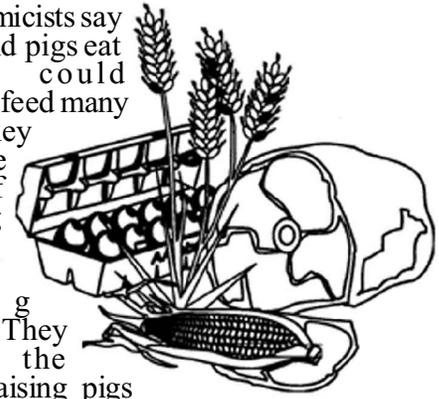
such as the ones associated with soil erosion and fish kills from excessive pesticides in Prince Edward Island, or the ones about to be grown with massive irrigation in southern Manitoba to supply McDonald's French fries in Chicago – with meat from small, family farms sold to nearby cities? Dueling examples is what happens when we override the need to understand and compare all the variables that affect resource use in a food system.

The second debating trick involves "the fallacy of misplaced concreteness," which often involves talking about power-driven social processes as though they are objective facts. Vegetarian polemicists commit this fallacy when they use the term "waste" to refer to the livestock manure that our food system wastes. In doing so, they are confusing a noun with a verb and losing sight of the fact that the wasting of manure isn't a necessary aspect of meat production. Indeed, in mixed farms, manure is commonly composted and used as a substitute for damaging chemical fertilizers.

Likewise, when vegetarian polemicists say that chickens and pigs eat grains that could otherwise go to feed many more people, they overlook the possibility of keeping chickens to eat grubs, thereby reducing insecticide use. They also ignore the possibility of raising pigs on food scraps and culled fruit and vegetables (about 20 percent of all fruit and vegetable production, now largely wasted), thereby producing both protein and fertilizer from what would otherwise be left to rot. The fallacy of misplaced concreteness is a way of making alternative possibilities disappear.

Sometimes vegetarian polemicists combine both logical errors in one allegation. This happens when they argue that livestock production contributes mightily to greenhouse gas production. Livestock emit methane when they pass gas and when their manure rots in huge oxygen-starved piles. By contrast, fruit, vegetables and grains don't fart and don't leave a trail of manure.

To be valid, an argument has to compare real equivalents. It needs to be noted, for instance, that paddy rice produces more methane than livestock; it's inevitable, given that organic material is rotting in water, without access to oxygen. It also needs to be noted that livestock, unlike many plants, can be raised year-round, close to customers in cold



climates, and thereby reduce fuel-intensive food transportation that contributes to excessive carbon dioxide emissions. We should appreciate that the application of composted manure to soil substitutes for fossil fuel-based fertilizers also enhances the ability of topsoil to store carbon underground. Prior to the rise of industrial agriculture, this is one of the roles that livestock always played. Manure was part of a closed loop system that returned plant nutrients back to the soil and enhanced topsoil vitality, thereby permitting the land to sequester carbon that would otherwise go into the atmosphere.

None of this means, of course, that environmentally conscious vegetarians should start eating high on the hog.

The practical consumer benefits of a plant-based diet remain as strong as ever. Vegetarian meals win high marks for nutrition and health. Grains, fruit and veggies cost a lot less money than meat. There's a wide range of tasty recipes that almost anyone can cook. And the grease-free dishes, pots and pans are easy to clean. If the idea is to motivate individuals to change their diet, these consumer benefits make a convincing, evidence-based case.

So why not leave well enough alone and stick with the consumer benefits of a vegetarian diet? Why tack on an environmental argument that just gives defenders of a meat-centered diet a bone to pick?

I think it's because vegetarian beliefs are so deeply felt and require so much conviction, even obsession, in a society that prides itself on living off the fat of the land. That tension creates a pressure toward *vegetarianism*, which like all *isms* tends to become all-encompassing and world-saving. Ever since the 1960s, when lifestyle politics came back in bloom, any all-encompassing lifestyle-based *ism* worth its salt has had to be politically correct on issues as far-ranging as the environment and world hunger. Vegetarianism – a simple dietary preference? A choice made on mere technical considerations such as cholesterol levels? No way!

Vegetarians have made important and positive contributions to public understanding of nutritional and ethical issues involved in food choices. But if they want to talk environment, they'd be wise to stop blaming farm animals for their eating and digestive habits and start thinking in terms of food systems, not just foods. Let's not blame livestock or meat for problems created by industrialized food systems that humans have poorly conceived.

That's the real meat of the matter. □

Wayne Roberts is the co-author of Get A Life! How to Make a Good Buck, Dance Around the Dinosaurs and Save the World While You're At It; and Real Food For A Change. He's the co-ordinator of the Toronto Food Policy Council, and eats vegetarian 98 percent of the time.

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Further information is available at these Web sites:

www.eap.mcgill.ca Based at McGill University in Montreal, the Ecological Agriculture Projects site features an on-line, searchable catalogue of books, articles and reports related to sustainable agriculture, including organic meat production. EAP also provides research services (for a fee) and (free) quick advice.

www.factoryfarm.org The US-based GRACE Factory Farm Campaign works to create a sustainable food production system that is healthful and humane, economically viable, and environmentally sound. Supports sustainable agriculture, including organic and small-scale livestock raising, and opposes factory farms. Includes news and reports, links to other organizations.

Save the Birds?

Turning off building lights in a major city could save thousands of migratory birds a day, say researchers from The Field Museum in Chicago. "For the first time, we now have numbers to back up scientists' claims that turning off building lights during migration season is an effective way to reduce the number of birds who kill themselves by flying into buildings," said Doug Stotz, PhD, a conservation ecologist at The Field Museum.

We don't have results off an academic study to back us up, but we think it might also save money and conserve energy.

Free Markets or Social/Democratic Markets??

By Jo Anne Beemon

In church Sunday, the Youth Leader thanked Lilly for the grant which funded the high school trip to a mosque and to churches in Chicago. It was a wonderful trip, but Lilly paying for food and lodging? I almost fell off the pew. Free corporate advertising from the pulpit rings in the success of new partnerships of churches and corporate charity. (The Heritage Foundation and Bush's favorite "vision" of public welfare.) Kellogg, Mellon and others are very active in Michigan promoting partnerships of churches and corporations in corporate ventures, serving the poor and stressing "accountability" (mountains of paperwork and bureaucratic hoop-la) "long term sustainability" (endowment funds), and good business practices. (If you want grants you must partner, cooperate and be non-political.)

Last weekend's Petoskey paper had two pharmaceutical stories, one the major front page feature, on how locals drive to Canada for cancer medication because they cannot afford prescriptions here. Lilly is not a friend. Another story covered a state "Elder Prescription Insurance Coverage" program (EPIC). The program had been put on hold because the program ran out of money before it paid out one claim in our county!

Corporations work to eliminate all social, ethical and governmental controls over laissez faire capitalism. (Laissez faire capitalism advocates for a Darwinian survival of the best exploiter of people and our environment.) In pursuit of laissez faire capitalism and global corporate control, corporations:

- 1. Work to discredit and downsize government. Corporations want no public or national or local controls.
- 2. Work to eliminate corporate taxes. This is packaged as tax relief for the citizens.
- 3. Work to eliminate labor and environmental controls. Voluntary reporting and honor systems are sold as "efficient."
- 4. Work to eliminate government funded social and environment programs.
- 5. Work to replace public social programs with private volunteers and the "charity" of the rich. This ushers in the era of corporate control of welfare, environment etc.
- 6. Work to *privatize* (for profit), *privatize*, *privatize* – parks, medicine, libraries, education et al. Those who live in gated communities do not need parks and can afford to buy entrance to Yale.
- 7. Work for expansion of corporate rights and global power through "free" trade agreements.
- 8. Work to erode individual rights through the "Patriot Act," the "War on Terror," the "War on Drugs" and being "Tough on Crime"! This creates a large criminal and disenfranchised class of our youth and the poor. Far right control of

welfare (Though shalt marry!) and control of who will receive an education (control of grants and loans for education), further subjugates the poor.

- 9. Work to undermine rights of citizens to due process of law through exorbitant expense and complexities of legal systems and the corporate agenda of mandatory mediation.
- 10. Sell, Sell, Sell the corporate model of "successful business" as the highest good. Profit is God. More and bigger are better. Massive consumerism and escalating GNP are indicators of wealth and health. (Do not inventory the diminishing resources of the Earth. The faster we use it up, the better for all of us.)
- 11. Work to obtain control of large amounts of private capital in long term investments to manipulate markets. Tax rebates and incentives guarantee that capital will stay put.. Capital from 401 k's, social security, community foundations, endowment funds, educational funds etc quickly harvests assets of US citizens and communities for control of global markets.
- 12. Work to eliminate funding for anything that "can't compete (make a profit)."
- 13. Work to control the church and volunteer agendas through grant requirements.
- 14. Work to use the church and community non-profits in P.R. campaigns to make corporations the "Good Guys."
- 15. Work to devalue creativity, inquisitive thinking, quality of life, child care, political education, sustainable life styles, civic participation, cooperation, Earth Stewardship, Real Public Radio and visionary thinking. What has no value will be eliminated.
- 16. Work to establish and encourage (through poverty wages, competitive wages and punitive justice) a criminal, disenfranchised, voiceless class of "under the table" poverty laborers (children, immigrants, child care givers, musicians, carpenters). Those who cannot pay taxes, who fall behind in child support, who owe jail and court costs, who are behind in child support etc. become voiceless Americans.

It is unnerving and startling how many similarities and common goals the Corporate agenda has with Libertarians and even anarchists! *No Rules* sounds soooooo good. Especially if you are very young, not a woman, not black or brown or red. Not physically or mentally ill. Not gay. Not poor.

Since people have been excluded from the political process by the "major parties," citizens who are socially concerned but politically displaced, have thrown their weight into social and environmental concerns through their churches (food pantries, homeless shelters etc.) and through grassroots environmental and social groups. This is where some traditional reformers and social activists can be found today.

These are the people who have come to the conclusion that politics is a waste of time. The vast majority of volunteers, unfortunately, take pride in being “non-political,” and the “intellectual” political activists are suspicious of emotional tree huggers and people of faith.

Pure Capitalism has no human ethic, no higher power other than Profit, and no long term vision.

Churches and small grassroots non-profits are increasingly dependant on “charitable grants” from corporations as the government abdicates responsibility for the common good. The burdens of food pantries and river care groups increase with the government's abandonment of the poor, with the unrestricted rape of the environment, and the increasing diversion of revenues away from our communities and into corporate subsidies, military and war financing, and global investment endowments and funds.

Corporations and the far right, aided by the cry of Middle Class Americans for tax relief, eliminate tax revenues that support the public welfare. Corporate taxes, estate taxes and the taxes paid by the elite are slashed. An impotent, castrated American government takes orders from a bolder and more powerful global corporate hegemony.

It is not the “democratic” leaders or the politicians who are crying out and educating about the injustice of the “war on terrorism,” the oil war and displacement of people in Colombia, the plight of the poor, and the environment. It is the small grass roots groups and small vocal gatherings in the corners of churches who cry out. Large, monied “non-profit” groups, (United Way, the largest conservation organizations etc.) have become corporate partners, frightened to “bite the hand that feeds them,” and holding large endowments to ease future fund-raising obligations and for long term security.

These endowments supply banks and brokers and their “investment and business advisors” with ready liquid capital for global investment. Partnerships with the grassroots and churches furthers corporate agendas and make corporations appear to be the saviors of the poor and the environment. (Phillip Morris' campaign of the gift of a roof to a teen center while addicting millions of children around the globe to nicotine!)

The left, in the past, largely ignored the work of small grass-roots environmentalists and faith communities. Corporations today do not make the same mistake. They are in ministers' and rabbi's inner chambers and at the table in the boards of outreach. Trustees and experts counsel all non-profits to start endowment funds (even supplying “challenge grants” which are reinvested,

along with community donations, in the corporations). Competition is fierce for grants. Corporations and their grantors advise that large endowment funds guarantee the sustainability they need to see in grant giving.

How does a river care group ask for a grant given by corporate oil and gas and timbering interests (through community foundations) and simultaneously protect our forest from resource extraction?

The pathology of our nation is a lack of ethics in government. This will not be solved by a divine natural selection of laissez faire capitalism. Separation of church and state should not exclude ethics (*Not* to be confused with *Religion!*) from the political arena. A political ethic embraces public good, liberty, justice and democratic values.

Today, while corporations steal the assets and resources of the citizens, community decisions are manipulated and made on the basis of cost effectiveness, (no money means no projects), power, profit motivation, and economic sustainability.

... Continued on page 25

Local Activists Show Up in Full Force at D.C. Rally

By Emily Citkowski

On April 20th, between 75,000-100,000 people marched in Washington D.C. to support Palestine and call for an end to Bush's "War on Terrorism." Over 20 busses, and many more cars and vans full of people came from the Detroit area. Many of these were organized by Southeast Michigan's Arab Cultural and Religious institutions. It was, arguably, the largest antiwar protest since the Vietnam era; and undoubtedly the largest pro-Palestine demonstration ever to have taken place in the US. The success of the protest speaks well not only for the Palestine Solidarity and anti-war movements; but for the progressive movement as a whole – and for the future of the Green Party.

The main demonstration was a convergence of four rallies that took place earlier in the day. There were two anti-war rallies. One was organized by a coalition which included National Students Against the War, The Youth Caucus of the Black Radical Congress, Green Party Chapters, Peace Action, the National Muslim Students Association, and Not in My name – a nationwide Pro-Palestine Jewish Group. The other anti-war rally was organized by A.N.S.W.E.R. (Act Now to Stop War and End Racism). These rallies were literally across the street from each other, and many saw it as a weakness that the organizers of each were not able to work together on one rally.



Photo by Ric Urrutia

Of the other two rallies, one was an action against corporate globalization at the IMF organized by the Mobilization for Global Justice. The fourth rally was a pro-Palestine demo organized by the Committee in Solidarity with the Palestinian people.

A20 (the name given to encompass all of the demonstrations which took place that day) was initially planned as a protest of George the 2nd's War policies: the bombing of Afghanistan; the attacks on

civil liberties and racial profiling in the United States; impending war in Iraq and Colombia; corporate globalization; and the cutting of social welfare programs to feed the military budget. But collective horror and outrage over the situation in Palestine compelled the majority of the demonstrators to speak out against US government's support of Israel's military campaign.

The march was much larger than the organizers expected, because as the situation in Palestine grew more dire, more people wanted to make their voices heard.



Photo by Ric Utturia

Here, in the Detroit Area organizers expected 3 or 4 busses, instead of the 20+ that went. As interest in the march increased, so did the number and diversity of the participants. (Well over a third of the demonstrators were of Middle Eastern origin.)

Demonstrators and rally speakers called for a stop to US sponsored Israeli military terror and for an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories. Slogans included "Free Palestine," "End the Occupation," and "Stop US Aid to Israel now." Many of the signs carried by demonstrators drew analogies between the situation in Palestine and the Holocaust.

A similar demonstration of 15,000 took place in San Francisco, and smaller demos of a few thousand took place in Chicago, Boston, Texas, and Salt Lake City. The Washington demo is being called the largest pro-Palestine demonstration ever to have taken place in the US.

That a Palestine Solidarity demonstration of this caliber occurred is important not only to those directly involved in Palestine Solidarity work but to the progressive movement as a whole. First of all, it indicates that the progressive movement has emerged from the tragedy of September 11th capable and ready to organize.

It also shows that the new layer of activists, mostly from the anti-corporate global justice movement, is independent enough from the Democratic Party to break the taboo against criticizing US support of Israel. Lastly, the large participation and leadership by people of color – albeit primarily Arab-American, is a small step towards building a multiracial movement – a goal which has long challenged the left. Both the politically independent and multiracial character of this movement is something the Green Party should consider when thinking about how to broaden our membership base, and deepen our connection with other activists.

Divestment Activism GIFT FOR A WALL IN ISRAEL

The success of the demonstration has inspired people to get involved in what looks to become a sustained movement for justice in Palestine. Activists around the country have been organizing divestment campaigns pressuring their universities to cut their investments in Israeli companies. On May 7th, 18 Palestine Solidarity activists were arrested for occupying the Federal Building in Oakland, CA. They had chained themselves to the building and occupied it for the day.

A number of demonstrations have taken place in Southeast Michigan. The largest so far took place in Dearborn in April. Attendance was estimated by the Detroit News at 5,000. ACCESS, the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services located in Dearborn, is organizing medical relief, clothing, and food shipments. They also organize educational events, which included an event on May 15th for Huwaida Arraf. She is a local Palestinian Solidarity activist who spent a week in an Israeli jail after she entered Yasser Arafat's besieged compound with a delegation of international activists. To find out more about other events log on to ACCESS's Web page: www.accesscommunity.org or contact Muhammad Haimour at (313) 842-7010.



Photo by Ric Urrutia

Other actions in the Detroit Area include a divestment campaign, and a march on Hart Plaza planned for June 9th. You can find out more by contacting the Detroit Coalition for Global Justice DetroitCGJ@yahoo.com, or you can call (313) 833-7796. The Michigan Indy Media Center has updates on the situation in Palestine, as well as information about actions here in Michigan. The website is: www.michiganindymedia.org

Emily Citkowski is a member of the Detroit Green Party, and the Detroit Committee for Global Justice.

*By Rob Haug
Huron Valley Greens and UM Student Greens*

Increasingly, activist groups have been promoting divestment by institutions in corporations whose actions have gone contrary to public interests. Divestment campaigns were a major part of the anti-apartheid movement in the 1980s. By putting pressure on South African corporations and corporations which did business with the South African regime, grassroots activism resulted in noticeable economic pressure on the South African government. Such pressure helped to dismantle the apartheid system in that country. Since then,

4-12-02

By Dawn Wolfe

Why do people speak
in walls?

Walls of brick
Walls of stone
Walls of steel and
glass, ice-cold.

Walls of bullets
Walls of bombs
Walls of bodies,
Walls of tombs.

Like monuments
to cowardice or a tribute
to the smallness that
lives largest in
our hate,

We speak in walls,
We speak in walls,
We speak in walls.

NOMINATING CONVENTION

The Green Party of Michigan will hold its Nominating Convention for the 2002 general election on the weekend of August 3-4, in the Lansing area. The specific site is not known as we go to press.

The Convention will be held in conjunction with the Summer 2002 State Membership Meeting. For much of Michigan, County or Congressional District Caucuses will be held before the Convention, to nominate candidates for local offices and for state and federal legislatures. For information on the dates and locations of Caucuses, and for the location of the Convention, frequently check migreens.org (on the Web), or communicate with your local Green Party contact. (See list of contacts near the front of this magazine.)

divestment tactics have been applied against tobacco companies, clothing companies with ties to sweatshops, and military contractors to name a few.

Student groups are often the instigators behind such movements, since universities are quite possibly the best targets for a divestment campaign. Often at public institutions, operating off of tax and tuition monies, a strong case can be made that students should have a say in the way such money is used.

Essentially, a divestment campaign looks at the ways certain corporations are associated with perceived social ills. Nike's connection to sweatshop labor or Philip Morris's connection to public health issues are good examples. It then seeks to alleviate the problem by financially pressuring the corporations associated with the issue.

In many ways, it is a top down boycott. Instead of publicizing the issues with consumers and encouraging them not to purchase products made by these companies, a divestment campaign attempts to educate major stockholders in a corporation and encourage them to sell their stock or to not purchase stock in these companies.

Often, a boycott and a divestment campaign work together to attack both ends of the corporate bottom line. Since shareholders tend to hold more sway over corporate policies, divestment campaigns can be very productive in changing the ways corporations do business.

In order to run an effective divestment campaign, you must first identify an issue. Second, corporations who have contributed to the problem you are trying to solve must be identified. Then you must learn whether or not, and to what degree, an institution you have an opportunity to affect has invested in these corporations. These institutions could include the university you either currently or formerly attended, your employer, or any organizations of which you are a member. Finally, you need to pressure those who make the financial decisions for the targeted institution. This can, and should, be done through direct education on the issue; education of those involved in the institution, education of the greater public, and a media campaign. Teach-ins, protests, and leafleting are all means to this end.

You should keep the pressure on the institution until they have divested all funds from the corporations you identified earlier, or until the corporations have changed their business practices. For maximum impact, your group should contact other like-minded organizations connected to other institutions in order to increase the number of institutions divesting from the same set of corporations. The anti-sweatshop movement is a perfect example of such a tactic.

Often, a boycott and a divestment campaign work together to attack both ends of the corporate bottom line.

Over the past year, the University of Michigan - Ann Arbor Student Greens have been exploring the possibilities of leading several divestment campaigns against military contractors, Perrier, and Nestle. Our group began by defining the problems, corporate war profiteering, the export of Great Lakes water for profit, and the use of slave labor in cocoa fields. A number of corporations were identified as major suppliers of military technologies; while the other two campaigns were envisioned as focusing on single corporations, Perrier and Nestle respectively, and their owners/subsidiaries.

Currently, we have been trying to identify the ways the University of Michigan is invested in these corporations. This has involved a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request asking for details of the university's investments. In the meantime, we have begun educating the public on the issues surrounding Perrier's new plant in central Michigan and the massive amounts of Great Lakes water it plans to remove at no cost from the region. The delay we have experienced due to the time and resources needed to properly submit a FOIA request demonstrates one of the biggest hurdles in a divestment campaign, learning exactly how an institution invests its money.

On the national level, a grassroots organization called Justice in Palestine has begun a divestment and boycott campaign against Israeli agricultural and industrial goods, Israel bonds, Israeli tourism, and corporations who invest in Israel. This campaign started strong at the University of California - Berkeley and gained national media attention.

Since then, many other organizations across the country have joined forces to press the issue. If you would like to participate in the boycott or begin a divestment campaign in your area, please see the list of targeted corporations below or go to Justice in Palestine's web site at

<http://www.justiceinpalestine.org>.

On a personal level, it is always important to research the business practices and corporate policies of any corporation in which one invests money. It is difficult to work towards corporate reform when you are personally invested in the corporations you are fighting against. If you are someone who invests your money in stocks or mutual funds, do your research before you invest. There are many clean environment and social value funds on the market that yield returns competitive with mainstream

The Credulous Economist

Boycott List

mutual funds. □

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 3Com Corporation | Holiday Inn Worldwide |
| 3M Corp | Home Products |
| America Online | Howard Johnson's |
| A&W Rootbeer | Hotels |
| American International Group | Hyatt Intl Corp |
| Ben & Jerry's | Kentucky Fried Chicken Corp |
| Chase Manhattan Corp Bank | Kimberly Clark Corp |
| Cisco Systems Ltd | Manhattan Bagel |
| Citibank | Manpower Inc |
| Domino's Pizza International | Marriott Hotels |
| E*Trade Group | MCI |
| General Electric | NBA |
| General Motors | Pepsico |
| General Nutrition | Planet Hollywood |
| Haagen Dazs Holding Inc | Ralston Purina Co |
| Hasbro Inc | Royal Crown Cola Co |
| Heinz | Sara Lee |
| Hertz Corp | Taco Bell |
| Hewlett Packard | Texas Instruments |
| Hilton International Co | Tower Records |
| | Toys R Us |
| | UPS |

By Art Myatt
Metro Detroit Greens

You'll probably be hearing about Bjorn Lomborg's *The Skeptical Environmentalist* (Cambridge university Press, 20001; up to number 43 on Amazon's sales list at the end of April, 2002). Perhaps it has already been cited to you by some conservative trying to debunk concern about the environment.

The gist of it is this: "Things" (meaning mostly

the environment, but including some topics that are only tangentially associated with the environment) "are getting better." "Things are getting better" is the title of Chapter One, in which Lomborg asserts:

"We are not running out of energy or natural resources.¹⁴ There will be more and more food per head of the world's population. Fewer and fewer people are starving. In 1900 we lived for an average of 30 years; today we live for 67. According to the UN we have reduced poverty more in the

[After pointing out that the attacks on the buildings in New York and Washington did not "constitute an act of war," and describing the reactions of the president and Congress.]

"... The promise of prescription-drug benefits for the elderly will have to wait; so will nearly everything else that most people associate with the words "national security" - repair of the Nation's roads and schools and the prospect of decent health care for the 43 million citizens who can't afford to buy it at the going rate.

"The country's corporate overlords don't associate the phrase 'national security' with the health and well-being of the American public; they define the term as a means of acquiring wealth and as a reason for directing the country's diplomacy toward policies that return a handsome profit - the bombing of caves in the Hindu Kush preferred to the building of houses in St. Louis or Detroit. The work goes more smoothly when conducted in an atmosphere of constant dread, and how better to magnify that dread than by declaring a war against terrorism?"

Lewis Lapham, the editor of *Harper's*, in the January, 2002 issue of the magazine.

Paid for by Art Myatt

last 50 years than we did in the preceding 500, and it has been reduced in practically every country.

“Global warming, though its size and future projections are either unrealistically pessimistic, is almost certainly taking place, but the typical cure of early and radical fossil fuel cutbacks is way worse than the original affliction, and moreover its total impact will not pose a devastating problem for our future. Nor will we lose 25-50 percent of all species in our lifetime – in fact we are probably losing 0.7 percent. Acid rain does not kill the forests, and the air and water around us are becoming less and less polluted.

“Mankind’s lot has actually improved in terms of practically every measurable indicator.”

Footnote 14 says only, “This and the following claims are documented in the chapters below.” That this comment is presented as a footnote rather than as part of the text perhaps indicates a desire to simply have a lot of footnotes instead of an intention to use them properly.

And later:

“In general, we need to confront our myth of the economy undercutting the environment. ²⁵¹”

Footnote 251 says, “This myth is invoked by e.g. Worldwatch Institute: ‘Just as a continuously growing cancer eventually destroys its life-support systems by destroying its host, a continuously expanding global economy is slowly destroying its host – the Earth’s ecosystem.’ WI 1998a:4, cf. WI 2001a:12. It stems originally from the 1973 Erlich claim of negative environmental impact being determined multiplicatively by population size, affluence and technology (sometimes written $I=PAT$. see common 1996). Consequently this relationship by definition makes affluence affect the environment negatively (although its impact can be temporarily tempered by technological progress).”

If I read this footnote correctly, it implies that the Worldwatch Institute (and, presumably, other commentators) would never have compared economic growth to a cancer, had Paul Erlich never invented his “ $I=PAT$ ” formula. Certainly the footnote does little to support Lomborg’s assertion that the economy undercutting the environment is simply a “myth.”

Some footnotes do provide legitimate citations. All too many of them serve to put poor writing into a section of the book that most readers will skip.

And so it goes, for approximately 500 pages including almost 3000 footnotes and 180 or so tables, graphs, and diagrams. The first impression is one of authoritative scholarship, just based on the weight of the book and the volume of citations. An early and highly favorable review in *The Economist* (September 8, 2001) makes this point when it says, “The accumulating power of the book lies in the sheer toll of carefully documented examples.” The book is basically a crock, but it is such a heavy crock that it is still impressive.

Lomborg, a statistician accustomed to sociology and economic studies, attempts to cover the subjects of population demographics; soil erosion; fisheries depletion; extinctions; biodiversity; air pollution; global warming; the future price and availability of energy and other resources; life expectancies past present and future; acid rain; water pollution; economic development and the reduction of poverty; prospects for food supply and demand and its effect on starvation; the links between cancer and insecticides; weather prediction; forest loss and gain; landfill requirements; fertilizer consumption; measures to combat urban smog; the Dead Zone in the Gulf of Mexico; animal rights, the progress of AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria; water scarcity; renewable energy; and more. In fact, much more – these topics are just from Chapter One.

Lomborg tells us in the introduction that the origin of the book was a class he taught in 1997. In 1997, he was a recovering former member of Greenpeace when he came across a magazine article (in *Wired*) to the effect that the “Litany” of the Green movement was basically just hysterical nonsense. Lomborg, shocked by this rudeness, immediately began the careful and extensive academic research that would refute this view but, to his surprise, found that virtually every verifiable fact he could find proved instead that it was correct. The original Danish edition of his book was ready a year later.

This is amazingly fast work, especially considering the extreme breadth of Lomborg’s topic. Shelby Foote, for instance, spent at least 15 years writing his narrative history of the American Civil War – and he knew a lot about his subject when he started. In his preface, Lomborg states, “I am not myself an expert as regards environmental problems.” He has reviewed some of the published literature in the fields on which he has chosen to speak, but he clearly has not developed more than a superficial understanding of many of them. A statistician by profession, he tends to think that statistics tell everything that needs to be known about some important subjects.

Lomborg’s performance careens far across the line that divides respectable (even if controversial) science from thoroughgoing and unrepentant incompetence.

Lomborg is frequently an academic in the worst sense of the word, acting as though citations in the literature are more important than events, possibly undocumented, in the world. He takes issue with a statement in the 200 edition of a Worldwatch Institute publication that reads, “As the global economy expands, local ecosystems are collapsing at an accelerating pace.” “Of course,” Lomborg says, “we should like to see such an accelerating pace being documented,” and he gives the impression that

no such thing is happening because this particular publication did not cite examples to prove their assertion right in this passage.

If you are the worst kind of academic, this means Lomborg wins the argument because the opponent did not offer sufficient proof. But if it is possible to look at the world outside the particulars of the quoted publication, widely-known events lend substance to the Worldwatch view, even if the Worldwatch author did not cite them.

The mountain slopes of Haiti, stripped of trees by a poor population seeking to make charcoal, erode into the sea in such volume every rain that offshore fishing is choked. The Aral Sea of four decades ago has lost half its volume and split into several bodies of water, making the former sea bed a salt-encrusted desert. Last year, the Yellow River in China, like the Rio Grande on the Texas-Mexico border, dried up before it reached the ocean. Last year, dust storms originating in western China have practically shut down cities to the east (such as Beijing and Seoul, Korea) for days at a time, and have deposited noticeable amounts of pesticide burdened dust on the west coast of the United States and Canada.

There are many more examples of collapsing ecologies. Lomborg should know about them; indeed, does know about some of them. The Dead Zone in the Gulf of Mexico is certainly one he knows about, because he discusses it in his book. It is not just that he is unable to understand the Dead Zone as an example of ecological collapse. He thinks it is a good thing that per capita use of fertilizer is increasing, even though he knows fertilizer runoff causes the Dead Zone and other problems. It is as though he is affected with a form of academic autism; able to do the math better than most mere mortals, but unable to comprehend the connections ordinary people understand as part of daily life.

Lest these comments appear too harsh or too snide, let's sample what some other people have had to say.

Is it just a myth, or is it a reasonable conclusion that economic growth is bad for the environment? Here is a view from Edward O. Wilson, in an excerpt from his new book, *The Future of Life*, 2002, Random House. The excerpt appears in the February issue of *Scientific American*:

"... we can no longer afford to ignore the dependency of the economy and social progress on the environmental resource base. It is the content of economic growth, with natural resources factored in, that counts in the long term, not just the yield in products and currency. A country that levels its forests, drains its aquifers, and washes its topsoil down river without measuring the cost is a country traveling blind.

"Suppose that the conventionally measured global economic output, now at about \$31 trillion, were to expand at a healthy 3 percent annually. By 2050 it would in theory reach \$138 trillion. With only a small leveling adjustment of this income, the

entire world population would be prosperous by current standards. Utopia at last, it would seem! What is the flaw in the argument? It is the environment crumbling beneath us. If natural resources, particularly freshwater and arable land, continue to diminish at their present per capita rate, the economic boom will lose steam, in the course of which--and this worries me even if it doesn't worry you--the effort to enlarge productive land will wipe out a large part of the world's fauna and flora."

The entire excerpt can be viewed on the web at <http://www.sciam.com/2002/0202issue/0202wilson.html>

Here is Matthew Greenbaum, reviewing the book on Amazon.com:

"I dare not try to cram a summary of all Lomborg's errors into 1,000 words. One random example: Lomborg claims that ocean productivity has doubled since the 1970s, and thus fears about rampant over-fishing are exaggerated. Unfortunately--and inexcusably--he's confused production with consumption. The volume of fish caught has indeed doubled since the 1970s, but this is a far cry from showing that the oceans are actually producing more. Try uprooting a few blades of grass from your lawn with just your bare hands. Then go back over that same patch with a lawnmower. You'll have cut much more grass the second time, and not because your lawn started growing more.

"If you see the environment as a scientific matter, 'The Skeptical Environmentalist' will probably be of little value to you.

"If you see the environment as a political argument to be won or lost, then you might find it more useful. It sounds convincing and it makes environmentalists look really bad. Sure, it's wrong, but when has that mattered in politics?"

Here are some highlights from John P. Holdren, an engineer and physicist with a lengthy resume from Harvard, Woods Hole Research Center, MIT, Stanford, U. of California-Berkeley and more, in a response to Lomborg on the Scientific American web site, www.sciam.com:

"Notwithstanding that the author is said to have been trained in statistics, the book shows no sign of the use of appropriate statistical conventions and methods--or any other systematic approach--to distinguish what is right and relevant from what is not.

... "Other reviewers have also commented that Lomborg has the habit of confusing what people actually wrote with what he apparently wishes they wrote; it is difficult to avoid the impression that he is either unable or unwilling to pay careful attention to the content of what he is reading.

... "In fairness, the details of how one calculates back-up capacity requirements for

And Now, for Something Completely Different ... A Scientist Audits the Earth

wind generators in power grids of various compositions are quite complicated. but Lomborg clearly hasn't understood even the rudiments of the issue. As in so much of his energy chapter, he is confusing his readers because he is confused himself.

... "Whole shelves of books, reports, and dissertations have been written about this ["waste" in energy usage]. Nobody who had penetrated the slightest part of this literature would make Lomborg's mistake of offering a precise number for the energy "waste" of a nation with no explanation of how this number was developed.

... "His energy chapter is so permeated with misunderstandings, misreadings, misrepresentations, and blunders of other sorts that it cannot be considered a positive contribution to public or policy-maker understanding, notwithstanding its managing to get right a few (already well-known) truths about the subject.

... "The sad fact is that Lomborg's understanding of the energy issue is so superficial – and his reading of the literature he cites so uncomprehending and uncritical – that he is doing a disservice by trying to propagate what he imagines he has learned about it.

... "That the responses of environmental scientists have conveyed anger as well as substantive content, then, ought to be understandable. Lomborg's performance careens far across the line that divides respectable (even if controversial) science from thoroughgoing and unrepentant incompetence. He has failed thoroughly to

... Continued on page 25

By Anita Speiss,
Editor of: Catalyst, the Magazine of the Union of
Concerned Scientists

Species are becoming extinct at 1000 times their geological background rate. Tropical forests are shrinking 1.5 million square kilometers every decade. We often hear such numbers. But where do they come from?

One of the people pinning down those numbers is Stuart Pimm. A conservation ecologist at Columbia University, Pimm examines the rate at which species are becoming extinct, how that rate is tied to decreased in habitat, and what this suggests about how we should prioritize conservation efforts.

He illuminates these numbers in a new book, *The World According to Pimm*. "One of the most difficult things for us to understand," he says, "is the state of the planet. Over the last 10 years, a number of important papers came out in *Science and Nature* and other places. Many of these papers are hard to

understand, but extremely important. I wanted to bring all that material together, to talk about how we come up with a global audit of where we are at the beginning of the 21st century."

As self-appointed investment analyst of global biological accounts, Pimm takes us on a world tour. As we fly over the planet, he points out areas that are generating interest and others where withdrawals outstrip the interest rate. He brings us down to earth in the Amazon to witness deforestation, out to sea off the coast of Mexico to learn about modern fishing, and into his kitchen to find out how much we consume from *The Joy of Cooking*.

The picture that develops is alarming, but not hopeless. "We have done nothing yet that we cannot correct," Pimm tells us. "The fisheries can recover; forests can regenerate, and so can dryland soils and vegetation. But other human impacts are irreversible. When we deplete the variety of life on Earth, it is gone forever.

“One of the stories I tell in the book is about looking for an obscure little bird in Hawaii called the po’o uli. I recruited two English post-docs. (The fact that they were English is not insignificant. Everyone thinks that Hawaii is a wonderful place to be, but it’s cold and it’s wet and it rains all the time - perfect for Brits.) They spent two years looking for this species. Eventually they found it. When they let this individual go, they realized that nobody would probably ever see that bird again. And I don’t mean the individual, I mean the species.”

In 1999, Pimm joined the UCS [Union of Concerned Scientists] board, in part because of our efforts to conserve biologically rich forests. Such targeted efforts show enormous potential, Pimm says: “If we save 5% of the land, will we save only 5% of the species? With good management, the answer may be closer to 50%”

At Columbia’s Center for

Environmental Research and Conservation, Pimm is training people to help:

“What’s required to save biological diversity, to save forests, to address the biological issues of global change is much more than just being a



scientist. We’re training students not only to understand the science, but the social science and the political science, and so on. Our students take a year’s worth of course work in economics, law, international policy, and anthropology. And that on top of a dissertation in science.”

Research is important, but it’s not necessary to wait until we know every detail. “There is much more that we need to know,” says Pimm, “but we clearly know enough to act.” □

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Dept. of Justice V. Dept. of Labor

In a decision Thursday, May 9, a U.S. Department of Labor Court ruled that the Department of Justice cannot retaliate against its own prosecutors for investigating crimes. The court awarded \$200,000 in punitive damages to Assistant U.S. Attorney Greg Sassé, who charged that he was prevented from pursuing a series of major toxic waste prosecutions, including an investigation of serious contamination on the site of a proposed runway expansion at Cleveland Hopkins International Airport.

The Environmental Movement: Changing The Climate Of Opinion

By Peter Montague

The environmental justice movement has produced many victories in its short lifetime (a few of which were listed in REHN #500 available at www.rachel.org). But what does “victory” mean?

There are three kinds of victories:

(1) First there are local victories in which citizens tackle some problem, vanquish their adversaries, and thus improve or at least maintain the local environment: a “low level” radioactive waste dump is defeated, a community garden is created, an oil refinery reduces its poisonous emissions. Local victories have other benefits as well – they give people real experience making democracy work, they create connections between strangers, and they can even plant the idea that the community should be planning ahead to take control of its own destiny.

After a series of local fights has highlighted a problem, government policy becomes ripe for change. The federal “right to know” law is a typical example. Congress did not invent the right to know law. Congress passed right to know only after a dozen locales across the country had passed their own municipal or state-wide right to know laws. So local fights are the basic engine for identifying problems, inventing solutions, and eventually changing government policies. Local fights “trickle up” to higher levels of government where they generate new policies. It has always been so.

(2) The second kind of victory is the policy victory itself, which occurs when government changes its normal way of doing business. Examples: the burning of hazardous waste by ocean-going incinerator ships is banned nationwide, or Congress declares that workers have a basic right to a safe, healthful workplace. Unfortunately, policy victories are rarely permanent and usually must be defended again and again.

Sometimes policies change not because local ideas have trickled up but merely because of a lobbying campaign (which I call “whispering in the king’s ear”). In those cases, the resulting policies are especially fragile and likely to be short-lived because they can be reversed by someone whispering more loudly in the king’s ear (for example, someone with more money). Thus policy victories, especially robust policy victories that have widespread support at the community level, are desirable but even fairly robust policies are not the ultimate goal of advocacy – they are just important steps along the way toward the third kind of victory.

(3) The third kind of victory – by far the most important kind. – is changing the “climate of opinion.” Today slavery is not only illegal, it is unthinkable. The climate of opinion would not allow a serious proposal to bring back slavery. Likewise, the climate of opinion would not allow a public debate over the proposal, “Women should be

prohibited from voting.” Once a climate of opinion victory has been achieved, it is much more difficult to reverse than a policy victory. The climate of opinion determines what kind of behavior is unthinkable. Climate of opinion changes are so big that often we aren’t even aware of them.

Now let’s examine the victories of the environmental justice movement. The movement has had thousands of local victories and dozens of policy victories. A few of these victories have been described in books.¹ But what makes the environmental justice movement truly important is the changes it has begun to make in the climate of opinion. I can think of two really big ones, so far.

(1) The common definition of “environment” used to be “wild places” *not* including the places where most humans live. I recall that as recently as 1968 the membership of the Sierra Club voted decisively *not* to focus the Club’s attention on urban environments, where the majority of U.S. citizens spend their lives. However, during the 1980s, the environmental justice movement succeeded in redefining environment from wild places to “wild places plus all the places where we live, work, play, and learn.” (Sierra Club has slowly accepted the new definition.) This is a sea change and it’s unlikely that we will ever go back to the old way of seeing things. Now “environmental” issues affect – and can appeal to – huge numbers of people.

(2) The second major climate of opinion change created by the environmental justice movement is reflected in its name: environmental *justice*. This needs some explanation.

About 1970, the emerging legal/scientific environmental movement lobbied successfully for new national laws intended to curb environmentally damaging behavior, the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, etc.

These laws focus almost exclusively on scientific information, and they require citizens to prove scientifically that harm is occurring to humans and/or to the environment before regulatory action can begin. I call this the “prove harm” system of environmental regulation. Initially corporate polluters complained bitterly that the new system was going to put them out of business, but this turned out to be just another “Brer Rabbit in the Briar Patch” story – polluters *love* the prove harm regulatory system.

¹Robert D. Bullard, *Dumping in Dixie* (Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 1990; ISBN 0-8133-7954-7); Bunyan Bryant and Paul Mohai, editors, *Race and the Incidence of Environmental Hazards* (Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 1992; ISBN 0-8133-8513-X); Robert D. Bullard, editor, *Confronting Environmental Racism; Voices from the Grassroots* (Boston: South End Press, 1993; ISBN 0-89608-446-9); Jim Schwab, *Deeper Shades of Green* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1994; ISBN 0-87156-462-9); Robert D. Bullard, editor, *Unequal Protection* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1994; ISBN 0-87156-450-5); David E. Newton, *Environmental Justice* (Santa Barbara, Cal.: ABC-CLIO, 1996; ISBN 0-87436-848-0).

They thrive under the system.

With the benefit of 30 years of hindsight, we now know why the system can't protect the environment or humans. Here is a partial list of reasons:

(1) The prove harm system of regulation requires that harm must occur before action can be taken. This means that many millions of people had to become sick (with childhood cancers, lymphomas, reproductive cancers [breast, prostate], Parkinson's disease, chronic fatigue syndrome, diabetes, endometriosis, asthma, and a host of other environment-related diseases) before regulators could pay attention. Thus regulators were put in the futile and frustrating position of trying to close the barn door long after the horse had left.

Once a climate of opinion victory has been achieved, it is much more difficult to reverse than a policy victory.

As a result, the entire planet is now contaminated with potent, long-lived industrial poisons that were released (and, in most cases, are still being released) on the assumption that they are "safe" because no one has proven otherwise. By the time scientific proof of harm accumulates it is too late to prevent harm. Thus true prevention is generally not an option under the prove harm system.

(2) Science often cannot define "harm" very clearly, much less prove that it has occurred. Take the case of the toxic metal, lead. In 1975, 39 micrograms of lead in a 10th of a liter of human blood was declared harmless (40 was the "action level"). We now know that 39 can cause severe brain damage in children. As science improved, 29 micrograms was declared harmless, then 14 micrograms, and now 9. Today – 30 years and tens of millions of brain-damaged children later – many scientists acknowledge that ANY amount of lead in your blood can damage your central nervous system and reduce your IQ. However scientists hired by the lead industry dispute these conclusions, pointing to uncertainties in some of the data, and so the scientific debate continues while the "safe" level of lead remains at 9 micrograms, which most knowledgeable scientists consider damaging to children.²

(3) As in the case of harm from lead, there is always some uncertainty in any scientific conclusion. Under the prove harm regulatory system, scientific uncertainty provides a green light for business as usual. Under the prove harm system, when you're flying blind, it's full speed ahead until science proves harm. If you don't know what you're doing, just do it.

When scientific uncertainty is allowed to create a green light for business as usual, scientists can always be found who will cast doubt on any study, any set of data, thus creating scientific uncertainty

²Bruce R. Fowler and others, *Measuring Lead Exposure in Infants, Children and Other Sensitive Populations* (Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1993; ISBN 0-309-04927-X)

for the purpose of allowing their employers to proceed with business as usual. Some members of the oldest profession in the world (male and female) now dress up in white lab coats.

(4) The prove harm system focuses its attention on the "most exposed individual" and sets regulations intended to protect that hypothetical person. If "risk assessment" concludes that the most exposed individual will probably not be harmed by the industrial discharge of chemical X, Y, or Z; that discharge is approved. What the system fails to take into account – because science has no means for doing so – is the cumulative effects of thousands upon thousands of "safe" discharges, which add up to contaminated neighborhoods and a contaminated planet. By focusing on individuals and by requiring science to prove harm, the system has sacrificed ecosystems and communities.

(5) The prove harm system has no way to account for the fact that all people (and these days, all plants and animals as well) are subject to multiple exposures – from the soot from power plants and garbage incinerators; from pharmaceutical drugs; from diesel exhausts; from excessive ultraviolet light streaming in through the Earth's damaged ozone layer; from pesticides in air, rain, fog, food and water; from industrial poisons discharged into sewage treatment plants and then into rivers; from radioactive fallout left over from the era of A-bomb tests, from artificial growth hormones widely used in agriculture, etc. etc.

Scientists have no agreed-upon methods for evaluating the combined effects of multiple exposures to toxicants, and so they ignore multiple exposures, pretending that the world is much simpler than it really is. As a consequence, none of the regulatory system's "scientific" determinations of "safety" actually have any scientific validity. They represent seat of the pants estimates, gut feelings, best professional judgments, and plain guesses, all laced with a strong measure of hope that everything will turn out OK. Two scientists analyzing the same data can draw vastly different conclusions.

(6) The prove harm regulatory system bases its determinations only upon science, thus omitting many essential human values. For example, many people today want to protect the environment simply because it is God's creation. The prove harm system provides no place for such unscientific ideas to be expressed, much less acted upon. Many women want their breast milk free of industrial poisons just because their maternal instinct tells them that their babies will be better off. Until science can "prove" that they are right or wrong, their instincts have no place in the scientific debate over industrial discharges. (Indeed, such women are likely to be told that they should go home and leave these matters to the experts.)

Now the environmental justice movement is forcing a change in the climate of opinion, making the prove harm system unthinkable. Having confronted the prove harm system in thousands of local fights, grass-roots activists have now invented a new approach based on real prevention. Call it

“precautionary action.” Under the new system, scientific uncertainty creates a yellow light or even a red light – if you're flying blind, slow down. If you don't know what you're doing, don't do it. Better safe than sorry.

Under precautionary action the government has a duty to prevent harm whenever there is credible evidence that harm is occurring or is likely to occur, even when the exact nature and magnitude of the harm is not proven.

Under precautionary action manufacturers have a responsibility to show that they are using the least harmful alternative to meet a specific need. With precautionary action the potential for harm is thoroughly studied before a new chemical or technology is used, instead of assuming it is harmless until proven otherwise. In addition to using all the available scientific data, precautionary decision-making will also respect and use other kinds of knowledge – ethics, morals, humility, the human sense of what's right and good and just. This major change in the climate of opinion is well along. Thanks to the environmental justice movement, prove harm is becoming unthinkable and is slowly being replaced by precautionary action.

This is big. *Really* big. ☐

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US Nixes International Court

On May 6, the news was released by the Department of State that the United States will not “become a party to” the treaty establishing the International Criminal Court. This renunciation of the treaty was done by a letter from the Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security to the UN Secretary General. An examination of the whitehouse.gov web site indicates that neither the President nor his Press Secretary has since commented on this reversal of policy in the course of conducting the Bush “War on Terrorism.”

The court, which is supported by the entire European Union, most other members of NATO, and most of the world's democracies, will prosecute genocide, serious war crimes and crimes against humanity. The treaty has been ratified by 66 countries,

and the court will come into actual existence on July 1 of this year. *Not* participating, in addition to the United States, are the countries of Iraq, Iran, Lybia, Cuba, Sudan, North Korea, and Myanmar.

Opponents of the War Should Ask:

Would Gore's War Look Any Different?

By Paul Felton

(This is a slightly modified version of a speech given at a Green Party anti-war event in Detroit on March 17th.)

A few days after September 11th, before George Bush declared Osama bin Laden to be the culprit, Congress passed a resolution. It said, "Mr. President, you can bomb any country you like, you can invade any country you like, just tell us it has something to do with fighting terrorism, you don't even need to give us evidence, just go bomb, go invade, you have our blessings..." Well, that's not exactly how it was worded, but that was essentially what the resolution said.

Now I challenge you to think of the name of the most progressive member of Congress from Michigan. You're probably thinking of a Democrat, and there's more than one name that might come to mind. Whoever you're thinking of, they voted for this resolution, and they supported it with their eyes open, knowing it would lead to the evil foreign policy we are witnessing today. Not just the vengeful retaliation against the people of Afghanistan, but U.S. troops in the Philippines, and possibly soon in Iraq. It is a foreign policy not about protecting the ordinary citizen, but about protecting corporate profits and expanding the U.S. military presence around the globe. And it is a foreign policy that has always had the support of both the Democrats and the Republicans.

In addition to being active in the Green Party, I'm a member of the Labor Committee for Peace & Justice. It bothers me that the official leadership of the Labor Movement has taken a stance similar to the Democratic Party: supporting the war, while opposing some aspects of Bush's domestic policy. I say that's impossible. If you support the war in Afghanistan, you support corporate America's war on working and poor people. The two go hand-in-hand.

The Labor Committee for Peace & Justice aims to change the attitude of the labor movement towards the war. It is a daunting task. But it is no more of an uphill battle than that of the anti-war movement as a whole: to change the American public's support for the war, to overcome a media which distorts, and to overcome the near hysterical super-patriotic frenzy that has gripped our nation since September 11th.

Unfortunately, much of the labor movement embraces what I call a phony kind of patriotism. AFL-CIO President John Sweeney fully supports Bush's war. And I saw an article in the national UAW magazine, *Solidarity*, entitled "Building Quality Rifles for the Afghan Campaign." (It starts: "U.S. Special Forces troops are operating in Afghanistan. And the UAW is helping them.")

My words, in a union publication with a much

smaller circulation, were that the people who favor the most aggressive military response are not necessarily the most patriotic. Sometimes the people who ask the hardest questions are the ones who really care about their country.

Unfortunately, the Democratic Party has not been asking many hard questions lately.

Democrats and War

Last November, I heard former President Jimmy Carter on the NPR program "Fresh Air." He not only supported the war, but he said it was time to stop criticizing Bush's domestic agenda as well, because in wartime, we rally around the leader.

More recently, Al Gore stated that the time has come for a "final reckoning" with Saddam Hussein. Personally, I believe it would be easier for Gore (if he were President) to invade Iraq than it is for Bush. The top leadership of the Democratic Party would have no problem with it, and those critics within the Democratic Party would be less vocal if the attack were led by a Democratic President. Just like Clinton was able to get NAFTA and a mean-spirited, cruel "Welfare Reform" bill through Congress when Bush Sr. had failed. And, as a Democratic President, Gore would be more concerned with not appearing to be "soft." So, if Gore were President, I think we'd be invading Iraq sooner, rather than later.

A few days ago, in response to reports that Bush was threatening the so-called "Evil Axis" nations with nuclear weapons, Gore's running mate, Joe Lieberman, said, "frankly, I don't mind if some of these renegade nations think twice about the willingness of the U.S. to take action."

But the best indication of whether "Gore's War" would look any different is to check the record of the Clinton/Gore administration.

Start with Kosovo, the ruthless, devastating bombing, causing tremendous human suffering, for reasons I still don't get.

Then the bombing of Iraq. It seemed like every time the Monica Lewinsky affair got too embarrassing, there we were bombing in Iraq. The excuse given was that Iraq had chemical/biological weapons. It made me angry when I later learned that these weapons were given to Iraq decades earlier by the United States. In short, there was absolutely no excuse for the tremendous devastation we caused in that country.

It is another incident that really sticks in my mind. In 1998, we bombed a chemical plant in the Sudan. This plant produced 90% of the drugs used to fight deadly disease in that impoverished country. We claimed it was also producing chemical weapons for use by terrorists, a claim that proved to be false. Just imagine the immense suffering we caused, how many people died, how many people were in unbearable pain, because the drugs to cure them were no longer available. In short, killing innocent people in the name of "fighting terrorism" is not just a Republican policy, it is a bipartisan policy.

There's a wonderful book, called *Rogue State*, written by William Blum. He used to work for the State Department, and he knows what he's talking about. The book describes how, in systematic fashion, the U.S. for the last 50 years has subverted democratic elections, assassinated leaders, overthrown governments, invaded and bombed all over on the flimsiest of excuses, exported deadly weapons, and trained repressive governments in methods of torture.

It's a book painful to read, if you care about your country, because you learn of the crimes that have been committed in our name. As you go through the pages of this book, one remarkable fact stands out: that it doesn't matter which party occupies the White

House, the foreign policy goes on unchanged.

The aims of that policy, today, as before, are to protect corporate profits (so that, for example, the clothing we wear is mostly produced in overseas sweatshops rather than by union labor); to help the oil companies and the military contractors; and, sometimes, just to be the world's biggest bully - to let everyone know we can get our way, whenever we want. And this policy is combined with a domestic war against working and poor people, whether it's Reagan's busting of PATCO, Clinton's free trade and welfare reform, or just about everything Bush has done since taking office.

The September 11th attack on the World Trade Center was evil. But it has unleashed something equally evil inside our country. I'm sure many people are aware of the attacks on our civil liberties, and the massive roundup and arrest of Arab people in our country - it's a disgrace. I'm going to concentrate on another disgrace. Behind a mask of patriotism, under the guise of fighting terrorism, there has been a massive giveaway of our tax dollars to wealthy corporations, by Democrats and Republicans alike.

Start with the airlines bailout. Fifteen billion dollars to the corporations and the executives - not a dime to the flight attendants, baggage handlers, ticket agents, and mechanics - the working people who got laid off.

A side note on the airports. There was a big fight between the Democrats and Republicans over whether the airport screeners should be federal employees. As a postal worker, I oppose privatization, so I thought the Democrats had won a significant victory for us when they made those federal jobs. I later learned of another provision in that legislation, which made it illegal for these employees to join a union. So what I thought was a victory was really a bipartisan attack on working people.

Joe Lieberman sponsored legislation that protected companies that make bioengineered food and drugs from being sued by consumers who are harmed by these products. He stuck it in some bill about bioterrorism. But the only thing it had in common with bioterrorism are the three letters "BIO"; it was nothing but an attack on the consumer and a gift to some not-very-needy corporations.

The list goes on. Tom Daschle stuck a provision in a military appropriations bill that protected a mining company from having to clean up the toxic mess it left behind in South Dakota. A Democratic senator from Washington state (together with a Republican from Alaska) wrote a provision into a defense bill that required the Air Force to lease some expensive planes (that the military didn't even want) from Boeing Corporation. If it's supposedly for defense, nobody questions it very much. As a postal worker, I'm

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- NO!** to party funding of judicial races.
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- YES!** to instant runoff voting (IRV) and proportional representation.
- YES!** to state/federal financing to update/improve voting equipment and procedures.
- YES!** to vehicle registration fees; higher mileage/lower weight = lower fees.



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- GREEN -

angry that while all this money was given to corporations, Congress would not spend the money needed to protect me, and the public, against the spread of anthrax through the mail.

The fact is, there is a corrupt system in Washington. I'd like to recommend another excellent book, called *Washington on Ten Million Dollars a Day*, by Ken Silverstein. It describes in detail how these lobbyists operate. How intertwined members of both parties are in a system which devises ever new ways to take our money and give it to wealthy corporations. ~~They are stealing our money~~, but it's mostly legal, because corporate lobbyists write the laws which make it so. This process accelerated tenfold after 9/11.

As Jim Hightower put it quite simply, "Our country is being stolen."

I say, it's a dirty system, and both parties are up to their armpits in the filth of legalized corruption. The foreign policy, in Afghanistan, the Philippines, and Iraq, is little more than the use of military force to protect, defend, and expand this corrupt system.

So I urge you to turn away from the filth and evil, and support a new kind of politics. Support the politics of life, not the politics of death. Support the politics of working and poor people, not the politics of corporations. Support a clean environment, and not poisons. Support the politics of brotherhood and sisterhood, not the dog-eat-dog atmosphere of corporate America. If we act together, we can change the country, and we can change the world. I urge you to join a party that has a different vision than the two corrupt parties that have ruined are country and our planet. I urge you to join the Green Party. □

Paul Felton is one of the founding members of Labor Greens Caucus.

Bush and Cumulative Voting

A Texas law that then-Governor Bush signed in 1995 is transforming the electoral landscape in Texas for the better. In fact, a recent vote in Amarillo suggests that it is breaking the grip of Bush's allies in the business community that has for so long dominated Texas electioneering.

The reform that Bush inked with little fanfare seven years ago made it easier for local school districts across Texas to create cumulative voting systems.

Traditionally in Texas, school board members were elected using standard winner-take-all, at-large systems where voters are limited to casting one vote for each candidate. The system made it easy for majority racial or ethnic groups in a district to dominate the balloting. Thus, school districts with substantial minority populations continued to be governed by all-white boards.

Under cumulative systems, voters are allowed to cast as many votes as there are seats. They can distribute the votes among various contenders or assign them all to one candidate. This, as Harvard professor Lani Guinier has noted, makes it possible for members of minority groups to focus their voting on electing members of their own communities and bringing diversity to elected boards.

Since 1995, groups seeking to increase minority representation on local school boards in Texas have regularly pressed Voting Rights Act challenges seeking to

upset winner-take-all, at-large systems. In a growing number of cases they have, in settling their legal actions, opted for cumulative voting as a vehicle to achieve better balance on boards. At least 57 Texas communities have adopted cumulative voting systems, according to the Maryland-based Center for Voting and Democracy. And there is growing enthusiasm regarding the reform among voting rights activists with the Mexican American Legal Defense Fund, the League of United Latin American Citizens and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

"Cumulative voting allows minority groups to elect their preferred candidate in an at-large election system," said Nina Perales, staff attorney for the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Educational Fund. "It does work. If voters understand the system, it works very well."

Excerpted from The Nation, 5/7/2002

Do the Math: A Quick Look at Maintaining Ballot Access

By Douglas Campbell
Professional Engineer
Candidate for GPMI Nomination for Governor

One of the Green Party of Michigan's current hot discussion topics is ballot access retention and its influence on the 2002 election strategy. This quarter, *Do the Math* takes a closer look.

We will not lose ballot access for the 2002 election. The ballot access petition put us on the ballot for the 2000 election and Ralph Nader & Winona LaDuke's vote total is keeping us there for 2002. Ballot access in 2002 is a done deal; we've got it. What might be vulnerable is the Green Party's 2004 ballot access.

When it's time to prepare the 2004 ballot, the Board of Elections will evaluate whether our 2002 "top of the ticket" candidate received enough votes to meet the threshold. The 2004 threshold will be 1% of the votes cast for the winning Secretary of State candidate in 2002. If our 2002 top of the ticket candidate receives at least that many votes, we're on the ballot for 2004. If not, we can petition again.

A quick note about the threshold: The threshold used to determine our 2002 ballot access status was 20,555 votes - 1% of the 2,055,432 votes cast for Candace Miller in 1998. We won't know what the 2004 threshold will be until after the November 5th general election, but it's a good guess that it will be less than 20,555. It's likely that the election will be closer than 2:1, and a strong showing by our own SOS candidate will reduce the final winner's tally.

A quick note about the "top of the ticket": Currently, the "top of the ticket" is the highest office we nominate a candidate for, the list starting with the Governor. There is a bill pending in the Legislature - the Drolet bill - which would redefine "top of the ticket" to be whichever candidate got the most votes, so that *any* Green candidate reaching the threshold would maintain our 2004 ballot access.

So what's our 2002 ballot performance likely to be? My crystal ball's in the shop for its 12-month, 12 000-prediction checkup, so we'll have to get by with examining the 2000 election results. Here's the list of Greens who ran in statewide elections:

Candidate/Office	Votes
Scott Trudeau University of Michigan Board of Regents	109,192
Ralph Nader & Winona LaDuke President - Vice President of the United States	84,165
Jim Nicita Wayne State University Board of Governors	86,390
Marvin Surowitz University of Michigan Board of Regents (Currently a Green, but ran as a Reform candidate in 2000)	58,157
Matt Abel United States Senate	37,542
Ballot access retention threshold	20,555

So it's evident that any one of our statewide candidates would have kept us on the ballot. The candidate who attracted the fewest votes still almost doubled the threshold. We will certainly do at least as well in 2002. We have a stronger, better-known party now than two years ago when we appeared on Michigan's ballot for the very first time.

For reference, here are the results of the 1998 SOS election:

Candace Miller	2,055,432	67.7%
Mary Parks	938,557	30.9%
Perry Spencer	42,897	1.4%

None Dare Call It Coercion

by Mike Madias

The freedom of expression of journalists, college instructors, op-ed columnists and artists may come under fire by the actions of a national organization, Empower America. They are the sponsors of a project called "Americans for Victory Over Terrorism" (AVOT). This project targets those who are critical of the way the Bush administration is conducting the war effort, both abroad and at home.

Director of AVOT, William Bennett, former "Drug Czar" appointed by the elder President Bush, has said that criticisms of the war effort and its tactics threaten to weaken the Nation's resolve in the struggle against organized groups of terrorists. Empower America is a non-profit group engaged in educational programs and political action in support of its ideological focus. They hold to the right wing canon enthusiastically – without tiring – perhaps even zealously.

In a democracy, spokes-people for Empower America may state their political views and share the public soap box with others. It is part and parcel of American politics for groups to use persuasion and rhetoric as a means of influencing public policy. This freedom is guaranteed by the First Amendment to the Constitution.

If a part of government – federal or state – acts in ways that inhibit free speech and free journalism, this is a something that can be addressed in a court of law. At this time, the Detroit News along with the Metro Times and the American Civil Liberties Union are plaintiffs in one such lawsuit.

But, AVOT is a project of a private organization. One may disagree with the positions taken and the opinions expressed by Empower America. Anyone, who values civil liberties, will defend their right to express their views – even if they find those expressions offensive.

The remedy for those who oppose a speaker's views, of course, is to mount the public soap box, and enter the debate. But when a group uses intimidation, coercion or threats; their tactics drift in the direction of criminality. And there is reason to believe that Empower America has gone beyond the accepted boundaries for political discourse in the recent past – and may do the same in the future.

In the late '90s Empower America worked with an African-American feminist organization called, "The National Political Congress of Black Women." These two groups opposed the production and distribution of CDs by artists, like Snoop Dogg, who were creating some types of hip hop and metal music. The work in question was controversial.

The Empower America campaign asserted that the music's lyrics would have a negative effect on young African-American men and women. They succeeded in getting Wal-Mart stores to remove the best-selling work from its shelves. They also lobbied Warner Brothers Records and got them to drop some

artists who produced this same type of controversial music.

Very few in the press came to the defense of the artists nor recognized this as censorship. Senator Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn) said, "Some of the rap music and other music is just the most violent, anti-woman, pro-drug stuff that I've ever heard. So three cheers for Wal-Mart."

Was this a case of well reasoned argument and friendly persuasion, or did the conversations between Empower America and Wall-Mart, as well as those with Warner Brother Records, include intimidation, coercion of threats? Three cheers for Wal-Mart, indeed.

Having gotten away with this degree of censorship, Wall-Mart went on to take CDs of mainstream folk rock artists off their shelves and to demand that record companies make "cleaned up versions" of their CDs that would be offered for sale at Wal-Mart. The artists in question were Sheryl Crow and John Mellencamp. Crow and Mellencamp both write songs with lyrics that promote political causes.

Their material cannot be termed violent, anti-woman, or capable of having a negative effect on urban youth. But, It might be effective in getting listeners to have second thoughts about the conduct of the government or the business community. It might even be critical of American foreign policy.

Now Empower America has expanded its reach with their current project – Americans for Victory Over Terrorism.

According to Empower America the objective of this new project is "to sustain and strengthen American public opinion as the war on terrorism moves forward. AVOT will promote the democratic ideals of freedom, liberty, equality, and human rights – the very virtues terrorist groups and terrorist states wish to eradicate – and answer those who seek to erode our Nation's resolve and commitment to fight and defeat the evil of terrorism."

Who are those who seek to erode our nations resolve? In a letter to USA Today, Seth Liebsohn, project director for AVOT, wrote that anti-war ferment is growing on college campuses.

He said that, as of late, "... academics have been joined in their carping by journalists, activists and politicians, including former president Jimmy Carter. They must be answered, for criticisms of the war on terrorism are not inconsequential. They enter into the common consciousness and, if unrebutted, become conventional wisdom."

How might they rebut critics of the war – the very people who that they believe are eroding American resolve? Will they use well reasoned argument and friendly persuasion? Will they share the public soapbox with others? Or will they lean on university administrations, editors and publishers of magazines and newspapers with intimidation, coercion or threats?

The professionals did not speak up when Empower America tried to gag Snoop Dogg. Who will speak up for journalists if Americans for Victory Over Terrorism comes after us.

Mike Madias is a Detroit green activist who writes and edits (with Ellen Hildreth) Detroit HARD BALL!

Free Markets continued from page 8 ...

Subsidized Condo's will be more profitable than Parks and Piping Plovers. New marinas for yachts will be funded before roads, and golf courses and gated communities before moderate income housing. Jails will be more profitable than teen programs and drug rehabilitation. Libraries in poor communities will be closed. Our state and federal forests, the forests of the people, will be mined and timbered and destroyed. Polluters and irresponsible developers will thrive because communities do not have the resources to make them accountable.

Pure Capitalism has no human ethic, no higher power other than Profit, and no long term vision. It is time to begin again to talk about *ethics* and *justice*. About *ecological wisdom* and *peace*, about compassion and mercy and liberty, public and common good and the *survival* of the human species.

Until politics springs from an ethic of justice and liberty for all people, the public will remain apathetic. The mission of Greens must be to bring a democratic, ecological, peace and justice ethic to politics. Faith based outreach groups, environmental groups and Greens? Strange Bedfellows, but lovelier far than a world controlled by the seething, greed infested nest of the corporate owned Democrats and Republicans, the Heritage Foundation and their corporate and military advisors – Ashcroft, Kissinger, the Bushes and Powell and their “Far Right” pals, the oil barons and the terrorist dictators of the world. □

Jo Anne Beemon is the Drain Commissioner for Charlevoix County, and the first Green elected in Michigan. She is passionate about clean air and water.

Economist continued from page 15 ...

master his subject. He has committed, with appalling frequency and brazen abandon, exactly the kinds of mistakes and misrepresentations of which he accuses his adversaries. He has needlessly muddled public understanding and wasted immense amounts of the time of capable people who have had to take on the task of rebutting him.”

Professor Holdren is clearly angry at Lomborg's vulgar skepticism. Rational skepticism, which says you should believe an idea or theory only insofar as the evidence supports it, and should never believe absolutely because you should never assume all the evidence is known, is entirely the right way to approach all the scientific issues related to the environment. Lomborg, for whatever reason, wants to believe that continued growth of the economy is ultimately beneficial to the environment, and simply refuses to believe evidence supporting a contrary conclusion.

Thus Lomborg asserts that, of the range of

possible effects of global warming which the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change rates as plausible, only the mildest and most beneficial could possibly be real. The IPCC reports are the result of the collective efforts of thousands of scientists who have spent, in many cases, *decades* studying and discussing the issues involved. They are not certain. Lomborg, who spent some but not all of his year or so's research time on the subject, believes himself qualified to know better.

He seems to be skeptical only when it suits him. When he hears that a smaller percentage of the world's population is “starving” (by some definition) than were starving a century ago, and that by projecting this trend into the future, an even smaller percentage will be starving a century from now, he accepts it without question. When he reads a survey saying that the amount of “forest cover” in the world has increased slightly in the last fifty years, then, by God, all these worries about losing forests must be just silly. Never mind that this survey includes tree farms with as little biodiversity as possible, and second-growth or third-growth “forests” in logged-over or burned-over areas. Never mind that, in North America much of the forest destruction occurred in the century or so before the survey, and in Europe, earlier still. The statistic supports his belief, so it must be true.

Peter Montague, in the November 8, 2001 edition of Rachel's Health and Environment News, (www.rachel.org) had this to say:

“Every couple of years someone writes a new report claiming that most environmental problems have been greatly exaggerated or don't even exist. There are now at least a dozen writers and publicists who spend their days putting a smiley face on environmental trends including Gregg Easterbrook (*New Republic*, and author, *a Moment on The Earth*, 1995), Michael Fumento (author, *Science Under Siege*, 1993), Rush Limbaugh (syndicated radio talker), John Stossel (ABC TV), and John Tierney (*New York Times*), among others. Now a Danish mathematician, Bjorn Lomborg, has joined the ranks of these illuminati with a new book called *the Optimistic Environmentalist* (2001), which we will review in the future.

“The details vary, but the basic message from all these savants is similar: the environment is not seriously deteriorating; indeed, it is improving in almost every way. Human population? Growth has slowed. Forest loss? In many countries, tree cover is expanding. Global warming? It may not be so bad -- northern winters will be more pleasant. Toxic chemicals? The worst is past. The real problem, they say, is all those gloomy environmentalists scaring us to death simply to raise money.”

Peter got the name of the book slightly wrong, but he did spell Lomborg's name correctly – and he has put Lomborg in exactly the right company. [An article by Peter Montague is reprinted in this issue of

AWOG.]

If you want to read more by Lomborg's critics, go to anti-lomborg.com on the Web. There you will find links to a good deal of pro-Lomborg material as

The Media Committee Green Party of the U.S. and the GP of California is pleased to announce an opportunity for state and local parties and candidates to get their messages out with a new on-line streaming video service.

We're now accepting materials about the Green Party and Green Party candidates (as opposed to issue oriented videos) and we have secured hours of space for your short videos on the Web and tapes. Any format – including regular old home VHS tape – is ok, although the better the quality the better it will look on-line when it's posted. Originals always make better copies than anything else.

You can participate one of two ways. If you already have short pre-produced (up to five minutes or so, for now) videos we can get them up and streaming rather quickly, even more quickly if they are already "digitized" on digital video tape (miniDV format) or DVD (both can be done at many photo outlets these days at minimal cost). If you have other longer materials- either raw footage or produced videos about the GP or GP candidates and would like us to review them and put up "the good parts" we will be doing some of that too, although it will take longer for us to sort through, digitize and post them.

well, including a link to Lomborg's own Web site.

Art Myatt is a Green Party member and a photovoltaic engineer.

In addition, if you have press coverage of Green Party or Green Candidate activities in newspapers or magazines, you can submit them for inclusion in the weekly News Circulator by sending them to parx@midpac.net. Please include the date of the article and the name of the publication. Since many URL links to newspapers "disappear" sometimes, it's more reliable to "cut and paste" the text of the articles. The circulator is usually released every Friday. You can read it at the web site or, if you would like, you can get on the emailing list by letting me know.

You can mail videos to: Andy Parks P.O. Box 1308 Lawai, HI 96765 or email parx@midpac.net for more info.

Make sure to include what the content of the tape is and your return address – if possible on the tape label – and let us know if you want to have the tape returned.

Andy Parks, Starlene Rankin, Ann Link, Kendra Markle, Mike Feinstein, USGP Media Committee's Video Committee.

New "Streaming Video Opportunity" for GP's and GP Candidates

Other Organizations Supporting Green Goals

ACLU – Michigan

1249 Washington Boulevard
Suite 2901
Detroit, MI 48226
(313) 961-4662
<http://www.aclumich.org>

Americans United for Separation of Church and State

(734) 789-8790
www.au.org

American Friends Service Committee

1420 Mill St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Amnesty International - Detroit

(313) 531-7647
ADAPTT (animal rights)
P. O. Box 725
Royal Oak, MI 48068
(810) 763-2715
www.adaptt.org

Coalition Against Police Brutality

(313) 610-0418 or (313) 628-4932
Committee for the Political Resurrection of Detroit
P. O. Box 44474
Detroit, MI 48244
(313) 896-1533

Detroit Caucus of Greens (DCG)

Contact: Mike Madias
(313) 883-4833,
detroitardball@aol.com

Earth Works Garden/Greening of Detroit

1820 Mt. Eliot Ave
Detroit, MI 48207
(313) 579-2100
rsamyn@capuchinministries.org

Earthwatch

Claudia Seldon, Mi. Field Rep.
1965 Pembroke Ct.
Detroit, MI 48207
(313) 393-9329

Friends Committee on National Legislation

215 Exchange St.
Marshall, MI 49068
(800) 630-1330 in Washington, D.C.

Gray Panthers

P. O. Box 37033
Oak Park, MI 48327
(248) 549-5170, or (248) 669-6343

Green House – Detroit

22757 Woodward, Suite 210
P. O. Box 20076
Ferndale, MI 48220
(248) 336-9241
<http://www.greenhouseonline.org>

jamrag@glis.net

Jobs with Justice

600 W. Lafayette
Detroit, MI 48226
(313) 961-0800 (313) 961-9776 (fax)
barton_julie@hotmail.com

K Town Hall

124 Lovell
Kalamazoo, MI 49006
(616) 382-6110

Labor Notes

7435 Michigan Ave
Detroit, MI 48210
(313) 842-6262
<http://www.labornotes.org>
labornotes@labornotes.org

Labor Party – Detroit

Margaret Gutshall
P. O. Box 39192
Redford, MI 48239
(248) 788-6528

<http://www.igc.org/lpa>

Metro Detroit Against Sanctions

c/o Peace Action
195 W. Nine Mi. Rd., #208
Ferndale, MI 48220
(248) 548-3920

Michigan Campaign Finance Network

1310 Turner St., Suite B

Lansing, MI 48906
(517) 482-7198
www.mcfn.org mcfn@mcfn.org
Michigan Peace Team
1516 Jerome St.
Lansing, MI 48912-2220
(517) 484-4219
<http://www.michiganpeaceteam.org>
michpeaceteam@igc.org
MichUHCAN (universal health care)
8846 Robindale
Detroit, MI 48239
(248) 477-7911 or (248) 548-3019
<http://michuhcan.tripod.com>
Motor City Blight Busters
17405 Lahser Rd.
Detroit, MI 48219
(313) 255-4355
National Lawyers Guild
Dave Staiger (313) 963-0843
<http://www.michigannlg.org>
nlgdetroit@igc.org

NORML/PRA-YES 2001
Schmidt Law Office
255 N. Center Ave.
Saginaw, MI 48603
(517) 799-4641
www.mi4norml.org
Peace & National Priorities Center
P. O. Box 240344
Orchard Lake, MI 48324
(248) 683-3363
Peace Action
195 W. Nine Mi. Rd., #208
Ferndale, MI 48220
(248) 548-3920
Riverfront East Alliance (REAL)
(313) 438-4143
www.members.aol.com/realriver2
Sierra Club
Linda Mallon (734) 427-1761
mallinl@netzero.net
Solidarity – Ann Arbor
2649 Southlawn

Ypsilanti, MI 48197
(734) 572-2515
finnegan@voyager.net
Solidarity – Detroit
7012 Michigan Avenue
Detroit, MI 48210
(313) 841-0160
<http://www.igc.org/solidarity>
solidarity@igc.org
Transportation Riders United
(313) 885-7588
Triangle Foundation
19641 W. Seven Mile Rd.
Detroit, MI 48219
(313) 537-3323
www.tri.org
US/Cuba Labor Exchange
P. O. Box 39188
Redford, MI 48239
(313) 836-3752
Vegans in Motion
(248) 591-0543

ARE YOU GREEN?

What is the point in joining the Green Party? Why not the Democrats or even the Republicans? Quite simply, we don't believe the big two parties represent us. They are controlled by their fat cat contributors, not their constituency. Greens' politics are based and centered on our values. We believe in the following ten Key Values, and we practice what we preach.

Ecological Wisdom

More than recycling, this means living in harmony with our surroundings. Greens are not anti-technology, but we demand that the creators and users of technology take responsibility for its effects. We try to live lightly on the earth, and want to make it easier for others to do so as well.

Social Justice

The rights in our constitution and promises of our society are meant for all people, regardless of our superficial differences. All deserve the chance to live a healthy, meaningful life.

Grassroots Democracy

People have the right to, and capacity for, self-determination. In practice, Greens make decisions by voluntary consensus whenever possible.

Non-violence

Violence is morally wrong and logistically ineffective, because it treats the symptoms of problems, not the root causes. Greens support self-defense, but only narrowly defined.

Decentralization

Centralization has caused all manner of problems in modern society, because our elected officials are out of touch with those they supposedly represent. Greens believe that the closer decisions are made to those who will be affected by them, the better.

Community-Based Economics

Economics was originally meant to maintain the household, but today, has largely taken on the opposite meaning. Greens believe that the economy should be about individuals and families, not corporations, which are a legal fiction. We value people over profits, when the two conflict.

Feminism

Greens are feminists, which means

that we believe in the equality of women and men (regardless of sexual orientation). No one has the right to define or limit another person.

Respect for Diversity

In ecosystems, diversity is not a pleasant goal to be aspired to, it's a bedrock requirement. Similarly, in human relationships, Greens believe that diversity is both the cause and effect of a healthy society.

Personal & Global Responsibility

The more we learn about our planet, the more we learn that our actions have effects far away. We must be responsible, both socially and ecologically, to our neighbors next door and to our neighbors across the world. We believe in the slogan, "Think globally, act locally."

Future Focus / Sustainability

Similarly, we must consider the lasting effects of our actions. We must be responsible to our descendants. We must use resources in ways that do not use them up.

See more at: <http://www.migreens.org>

Welcome to the Green Movement! Memberships and donations

Please cut out this form, fill it in, and mail it with your check or money order to the address below.

Note: You do **NOT** need to give up membership in any other organization to be a member of the Green Party of Michigan.

- \$20 - Regular member
- \$50 - Sustaining member
- \$1000 - Lifetime member
- \$5 - Student, low income member

Make checks payable to "Green Party of Michigan Committee."

Membership money goes for administrative costs, party building activities, like the ballot petition drive, as well as non-political educational efforts of the Green movement in Michigan.

I am claiming membership in the Green Party of Michigan and believe in the Ten Key Values and/or the Four Pillars of the Greens.

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

City, Zip _____

County _____

Phone (Fax?) _____

Email address _____

Green Party local (if applicable) _____

Send to: Green Party of Michigan
548 S. Main St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Thank you very much!

The question is not whether or not you should become a Green. Rather, the question is whether or not you're already a Green. If you believe in the values above, you are. If you act on them, you're already a part of the Green movement. By working together, we can accomplish more than any of us can do alone. By voting together, we can elect officials who embody and promote our values. The Greens are both a movement and a political party. Through electoral politics, we seek to facilitate responsible lifestyles, and put an end to ecological destruction and social injustice.