

MORE GOOD OIL

Draft election platform of THE GREENS in Sydney

October 15, 1984

THE GREENS in Sydney come from many backgrounds. Environmental and resident activists. Nuclear disarmers. Dissidents from the Labor Party who have witnessed betrayals by both wings of that party. Feminists. Anarchists. Those inspired by the German Greens. Socialists of various kinds.

THE GREENS have come together because they believe that over the last twenty years a new force has emerged which has already chalked up significant successes and which is beyond the bipartisan consensus of the major parties.

What is distinctive and unifying about this new force in Sydney is the emphasis on encouraging people's self-confidence in their right to have their say, their right to democratically determine matters - whether they are large or small - which affect their lives.

THE GREENS in Sydney are committed to this approach. This, and our goals, mark us off from the old existing parties.

Locked into supporting one power bloc against the other, these parties are unable to take steps out of the vicious and ultimately exterminating cycle of the nuclear arms race. Committed to the current economic system, they find it difficult to check and reverse its continuing destruction of the natural basis of life on this planet. Working hand-in-hand with the Establishment, they are inhibited from moving

towards a more equal and socially just society. Interested in power for themselves, their party and faction, they cannot work for a system where all power is in the hands of the people.

We have decided to run a candidate in the seat of Sydney and to support the NDP in the Senate poll to emphasise the urgency of our politics and to present the alternative to the old, dying politics.

The policies we advocate are ...

1. A nuclear free, peaceful and sharing world

The steps Australia should take are: a ban on the visits of nuclear ships, support to the anti-nuclear initiatives of New Zealand, the removal of the US bases, withdrawal from ANZUS, and an end to the ripping out and export of uranium.

These steps should be co-ordinated by a ministry of peace which would work towards an expanding nuclear-free zone, and switch 'defence' and military funds to Third World aid projects and to research into non-nuclear renewable sources of energy.

2. Grassroots democracy

Our policy of grassroots democracy means the development of decentralised and direct democracy.

If members of society are to have genuine freedom and self-determination then units of government must be small and democratic decisions of these units must be paramount.

THE GREENS political practice will be to encourage the emergence of such a society. While we will seek to create awareness and acceptance of our program by campaigning and publicity, our over-riding objective is to assist in building people's self-confidence in their right to have a say, their right to determine the conditions of life.

In line with this, changes we support now are: the creation of rights for people to initiate referenda on local, regional and national issues, and for the recall of representatives; open decision-making at all levels of government; and full power over the local environment for local Councils.

3. Social freedom and equality

THE GREENS stand for peoples need to control their own lives. Social freedom and equality cannot be conceived without an end to all forms of discrimination and oppression, in particular the breakdown of patriarchy which has as its result the sustained oppression of half the world's population.

THE GREENS stand for internationalism, and freedom of cultural expression that includes full participation in all aspects of community life.

THE GREENS oppose all forms of racism, militarism, and the wasteful exploitation of resources by the advanced industrialist countries.

THE GREENS stand for a social system which exists in harmony with the environment rather than using it as a resource to be plundered.

This means:

- For women, the right to reproductive freedom and an unrestricted right to economic independence, as part of a process of breaking down hierarchical structures and beginning to re-order values by eliminating the division between the public and private domains.
- For Aborigines, cultural and social self-determination in accordance with the aspirations of Aboriginal communities for full land rights, cultural renewal, compensation and inviolable protection for sacred sites.
- For children, the right to participate in society, the right to universal free education and play facilities, and freedom from physical and emotional abuse.
- For non-English speaking migrants, full and equal access to language learning, education, jobs and the media.
- For homosexuals, an end to discrimination against men and women homosexuals in all areas e.g. employment and housing.
- For unions, the right of labour to organise to defend particular needs, and the repeal of all anti-union legislation.
- The right to freedom of political association and expression including the elimination of all restrictions on association, the abolition of the secret police apparatus and an end to all forms of surveillance, the disbanding of ASIO, ASIS and police special branches, and guaranteed access to the media.
- Support for self-determination of all oppressed nations, including an end to occupation of East Timor, West Papua,

Afghanistan, and the withdrawal of all U.S. forces from Central America - the people of all nations have the right to choose a government and social system according to their needs and desires and free from outside interference.

4. A livable city

Right now in Sydney, this means a complete freeze on commercial developments in the Central Business District, abandonment of urban expressway plans, and no second airports and runways.

It means the switching of funds committed to these anti-environment and anti-social projects to environment enhancing and socially useful projects like public housing and the proper treatment and recycling of Sydney's sewage and industrial waste.

It means also the inclusion of all present and future unused harbourside land in the Sydney Harbour National Park.

5. A sustainable and just economy, working in harmony with our natural environment

This part of our platform is undergoing continuing discussion and elaboration. On this we agree ....

Immediate action to safeguard all wilderness areas, starting with the Daintree region, is called for.

Agricultural subsidies should emphasise reforestation programs, protection of water resources, promotion of natural fertilisers, ecological research, and the setting up of experimental eco-systems.

Continuing government support for greater income inequality must be ended and a guaranteed minimum income for all - above the poverty level at least - introduced.

The introduction of new technology must be democratically decided upon, not damaging either to the environment or human health, lead to reduced working time, and be accompanied by the right to continuing education.

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THE GREENS meet on the second and fourth Mondays of the month at 8 pm at Glebe Town Hall.

Supporters and interested people are welcome.