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Contents

Bulletin Matters ........................................... 1
Libertarian Socialists and the Greens: An Introduction,
Frank Girard ............................................. 3
Call for a Left Green Network ............................. 6
Principles of the Left Green Network ..................... 8
Program of the Left Green Network, Draft by Howard Hawkins and
Lowell Nelson ............................................. 11
Toward a Revolutionary Left Green Network, Frank Girard ... 15
Giving Birth to an Ecological Morality: A Left Green Program for
Self-Managed Production, Don Fitz ....................... 21
"What Shall We Do With a College Professor?", Alan Sanderson ... 28
A Socialist Proposal, Committee for Socialist Union ....... 30
Letter, Monroe Prussack ................................... 31

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BULLETIN MATTERS

As usual I must apologize for the last DB. Readers of DB49 please
note this correction sent in by Laurens Otter. He writes that pages
11 and 12 were a text written by Robin Cox of Spanner. Spanner
advocates a "more theoretically consistent and less syndicalist
movement" than Comrade Otter's "industry-oriented confederation."

The greater part of this issue is devoted to the Left Green Network
(LGN), beginning with an article introducing the Greens (usa) and the
LGN to readers, American and foreign, who aren't familiar with the two
groups. The "Call" and "Principles" are major LGN documents, the
latter having been augmented in July by a controversial Fifteenth
Principle on Labor/Work. The addresses of the Greens (usa) and the
Further insight into the LGN is given in the Draft Program of the LGN and the next article, my critique and revision of the program. I should add that the central idea of my articles is that in the LGN we have a potentially revolutionary environmental movement in which libertarian socialists with environmental concerns can find people with whom they can cooperate. Don Fitz's article is essentially an alternative draft program. It has been published twice before (in *Regeneration* and *Green Synthesis*) in shorter, heavily edited versions.

Alan Sanderson's article on Steve Coleman's biography of Daniel De Leon (I hesitate to call it a review) is focused almost entirely on Coleman's assertion that by envisioning a socialist society that used labor time vouchers (LTVs in the language of partisans) De Leon was laying the groundwork for a new wage slavery. DeLeonists will find the title of the article familiar.

The Committee for Socialist Union's "A Socialist Proposal" probably should have been included with the "Green" material, for it is a sort of outline of a "draft program" although it wasn't written for the LGN. It is the only specifically "DeLeonist" environmental program I have ever seen. It builds on ideas in the CSU's "Open Letter to Murray Bookchin..." published in DB41. Next, from Monroe Prussack, is the only letter submitted for publication in this issue.

We end this issue with another ad for Ben's and my history of the SLP. Regrettably August 31 has passed and with it the special offer. We must charge the full price to try to recover a portion of the financial losses amateur authors like us incur when they resort to self-publication. We keep hoping that one of the many DB readers who have copies of the book will send in a review. Modesty and the feeling that readers might be suspicious of the objectivity of self-written reviews prevent us from doing the job ourselves.

DB41 will focus on a different aspect of the LGN: Bookchinism or libertarian municipalism (LM). Featured will be Howard Hawkins' critique of libertarian socialism as well as at least one critique of libertarian municipalism. The puzzling lack of material from readers for this and the preceding issue creates problems here at P.O. Box 1564. We urgently solicit your letters and articles for publication here. We hope the LGN material as well as Alan Sanderson's article on the De Leon biography will, as they say, galvanize some readers into action. Please single space on regular eight and a half by eleven inch paper. We reduce the size for publication. And please use narrow margins and a newer ribbon.

FINANCES: We didn't quite break even this time, but we are still in the black. I realize that the financial statement I print isn't very detailed, and readers may have questions. Because we mailed a complete set of back issues overseas, postage is well above the $80 at which it had stabilized recently. I could detail the expenditures if that seem desirable to readers. The only trouble is that it takes up space. Please let me know your wishes in the matter.

Contributions: Laurens Otter $9.12; Frank Smith $10; Harry Wade $20; Cont'd on p. 25
LIBERTARIAN SOCIALISTS AND THE GREENS: AN INTRODUCTION

Libertarian socialists of the DeLeonist persuasion and, I suspect, most readers of the DB tend to regard single-issue groups with some suspicion. We see their reformist programs as sending an entirely false message to the 90 percent of the population who are not members of the capitalist class: namely that social ills can be solved within the framework of the capitalist system. In fact, most of us would argue that the willingness of elements in capitalism's political system to embrace many of the reformist proposals of such groups is based on the belief that by doing so they can distract members of these groups from seeking a revolutionary solution. As a result, libertarian socialists and the organizations we belong to are unlikely to support single-issue groups.

But this principled aloofness leaves us in an unfortunate position. For by avoiding these groups we isolate ourselves from a major source of recruits for the cause of revolutionary socialism. These people are members of the working class, even though they may regard themselves as middle class—on the rare occasions when they think in class terms. Individually they have identified an aspect of capitalism's disregard for anything except profit that concerns them enough to become active. A further evolution in their thinking is possible. A growing awareness of the futility of finding any real solutions to these problems under capitalism and the agitation by revolutionaries could lead them to the libertarian socialist solution. But our position as outsiders leaves us only the option of handing out leaflets instead of entering the debates and presenting our journals and other literature as members of the group.

Incidentally, a sharp and contradictory exception to this approach—or lack of approach—to single-issue movements is our attitude toward the capitalist union movement. Most of us, including SLP members nowadays, would voluntarily join AFL-CIO unions even though we recognize them as labor merchandising business enterprises. And certainly we would join strike support groups like that which supported the Hormel strikers a couple of years ago. We would do this even though we recognize the futility of any permanent improvement in the lot of workers through union activity and understand the role unions play in pushing the brotherhood-of-capital-and-labor swindle among workers. And we would defend our union activity on the grounds that by doing so we are in a better position to influence potential recruits among union members.

The U.S. Green Movement

The mounting environmental damage caused by capitalism has made the Greens a single-issue movement of major importance. Most of us, when we think of the Greens, think of Petra Kelly and the German Green Party, which has had some success in elections if not in getting the German government to carry out its environmental agenda. Here in the U.S. the comparable, though much less influential, organization is a network of local Green groups loosely affiliated with the Green Committee of Correspondence (Renamed in August, the Greens USA).
Members of the Greens are united philosophically by their concern for the environment as well by the belief that our society in general lacks social justice. The movement has attracted a membership that includes non-political environmentalists, social democrats, anarchists, concerned liberals, earth worshiping mystics, and some political opportunists who see the Greens as a constituency for a new reformist electoral group like the Citizens Party of a few years ago. The address of The Greens (usa) Clearinghouse is: P.O. Box 30209, Kansas City, MO 64112.

The Left Green Network

An apparently diverse group of leftists/radicals led and strongly influenced by partisans of Murray Bookchin's Institute for Social Ecology organized the Left Green Network to advance anti-capitalist and anti-statist ideas among U.S. Greens. The "Call for a Left Green Network" was published in 1988, and the "Principles of the Left Green Network" were adopted in 1988 at their first "Continental Conference."

The LGN is now in the process of writing a "Program of the LGN," to spell out its goals and practice. The difficulty it is having in producing a program acceptable to the membership derives, apparently, from the diverse political backgrounds of its 300 members. Many of them seem to have regarded the LGN as the possible nucleus of a new upsurge of radicalism comparable to the New Left of the late Sixties, this time rising on the tide of universal concern about the environment. Indeed the original "Call for a LGN" speaks of the LGN "carry[ing] forward the anti-hierarchical and anti-authoritarian themes of the New Left..." and basing its program on "social-ecological, anti-capitalist, independent politics."

The LGN was probably saved from being just another radical leftist reform movement by the Bookchinists, whose program of municipal libertarianism is inconsistent with the statist reformism one usually finds in leftist programs. Any program that relies for its implementation on national or state governments is anathema to Municipal Libertarians (MLs) who, like libertarian socialists, advocate the abolition of capitalism and its political state. However, they differ from many libertarian socialists around the DB, in that they envision a society consisting of a federation of local communities that would organize and administer their affairs through town meetings.

Although most of us would see flaws in the ML program, its anti-statist, anti-capitalist foundation, in my estimation, makes principled cooperation inside the LGN possible. This is especially true because the LGN's program is still in a state of flux and libertarian socialist ideas can get a hearing.

* * *

Published below are the two major documents of the Left Green Network: "The Call for a Left Green Network" and the Principles of the Left Green Network." These are followed by the "Draft Program for the Left Green Network," written by LGN members Howard Hawkins and Lowell Nelson for submission to the July 1991 Continental Conference in
Chicago. It was published in the LGN's magazine, *Left Green Notes*, along with a call for additions and amendments. I wrote and submitted such a revision, and also sent copies along with a covering letter to DB readers I thought might be interested. The covering letter and the very detailed revision of the draft program were incorporated in an article "Toward a Revolutionary Left Green Network" and published in the first issue of *Regeneration: A Magazine of Left Green Social Thought* (formerly *Workers' Democracy*). P.O. Box 24115, St. Louis, MO 63180. It has been revised slightly and updated for publication here. It is followed by Don Fitz's recently written version of a draft program, "Giving Birth to an Ecological Morality: A Left Green Program for Self-Managed Production, which was published in a very condensed form in the most August issue of *Green Synthesis* (P.O. Box 1858, San Pedro, CA 90733).

Postscript

At the LGN's July 3-7 Continental Conference, I presented many of the ideas in my revision during the debate on the Draft Program where they received some support. Before the conference Hawkins and Nelson had received several critiques and substitute drafts besides mine. The upshot was that Hawkins wrote a much-expanded (28 vs. 8 pages) second draft for consideration at the conference. In it he advanced a three-phase course: "Immediate, Revolutionary, and Full Programs." The Immediate Program includes an ingenious argument for what he calls "the revolutionary struggle for reforms," asserting that reforms are not reformism. This section should interest revolutionary libertarian socialists. Readers interested in this and other material on the LGN should write to: LGN Clearinghouse, P.O. Box 366, Iowa City, IA 52244.

Hawkins' Second Draft was not adopted by the conference either. Instead the decision was made to have a three-round submission of drafts and comments which would be copied and mailed out to the members. The last edition of these would be submitted for consideration by the 1982 Conference. It is my hope that a revolutionary LGN Program, simply by virtue of its rationality, will prevail at the Conference.

But regardless of the action of future conferences, I think that libertarian socialists who have the time and energy can accomplish something by working within the LGN, that something being the opportunity to present their ideas to people whose basic impulses are revolutionary but who have never had an opportunity to hear the revolutionary socialist solution.

--Frank Girard
Call for a Left Green Network

The existing world system is based on an economic structure with a "grow-or-die" imperative that threatens to destroy life as we know it. Buttressed by militaristic nation-states organized to protect ruling elites, the present system -- in both its capitalist and bureaucratic manifestations -- is increasingly irrational. This irrationality is demonstrated not only by the continued and increasing oppression and dehumanization of people and their communities around the world, but by the vast destruction of the biosphere. It is manifested in Chernobyl and Bhopal, by toxins in food and contaminated water, by rainforest destruction and by acid rain, by the greenhouse effect and by ozone depletion, and recently by drought in the central United States and by the total inundation of the Ganges delta. The ruling elites' answer to global starvation and the destruction of the very foundations of human life is war, from Afghanistan to Nicaragua. To global corporations and state managers, the critical problems are interest-rate levels and the "food glut."

A political force is needed to stop this destruction of the living earth, including humanity itself -- a force organized locally and linked confederally up to the global level. Such a movement is already growing in many forms today -- from Greens in Europe to communities of indigenous peoples fighting the destruction of their rainforest homes. As North American radicals, many of whom were involved in the New Left of the '60s and the environmental movements of the '70s, we see this emergence of the International Green movement as a major step toward creating an alternative to this destructive system.

In the United States, elements of such a new political force exist in the independent socialist and anarchist left; among Blacks and Latinxs for whom the promise of the Rainbow Coalition is not fulfilled; among Native American traditionalists; among feminists; in the gay and lesbian liberation movement; in the nonaligned peace movement; among workers resisting the corporate assault on living standards and fighting to control their work environments; among students and other young people facing a bleak future; in the growing Green movement; and among many people who are realizing for the first time that they are oppressed by this destructive system.

These groups now have an opportunity to converge into a force that can challenge the destruction of our humanity. We are calling for the formation of a Left Green Network in North America as a step toward that end.

Many of us have worked in the Green movement. We hold the concept of "Green" to be explicitly radical, inherently anti-capitalist, and completely wedded to the New Left's commitment to participatory democracy. We believe the Green movement should carry forward the anti-hierarchical and anti-authoritarian themes of the New Left, while advancing a social-ecological perspective as the basis for a new independent political movement.

We see the Left Green Network as an organized educational tendency for activists who share our perspectives within the left, within the Green movement, and within grassroots movements of resistance. We encourage U.S. participants in the Left Green Network to remain in -- or join -- the Green Committees of Correspondence, the principal nationwide Green political organization. But we also welcome participants from other Green and leftist organizations throughout North America, as well as unaffiliated Greens and leftists.

Independent leftists and Greens in the United States need to offer an alternative to the concerted efforts currently being made to steer radicals into the Democratic Party, a party whose purpose is to implement only those reforms necessary to reproduce the capitalist system and to smother those that would conflict with it. It is vital to begin providing a serious alternative for radicals who disclaim both the orthodoxies of the Old Left and the unprincipled compromises that come with seeking piecemeal reforms through the Democratic Party in coalition with the corporate and military interests that dominate it. In the name of a "lesser evil" policy, too many activists are supporting "progressive" capitalist politicians who are hardly distinguishable in substance from the "greater evil" supposedly being opposed.

This damaging trend has created a vacuum where once there was radicalism, making the rebirth of a New Left more important today than at any time since the '60s. Such a movement must be capable of advancing a principled, independent, and anti-capitalist position that addresses current realities and is unencumbered by support either for the western bloc's corporate capitalism or the eastern bloc's bureaucratic statism.

While so many activists have been disappearing into the Democratic Party, the U.S. Green movement has failed
to live up to its promise. Often, the consensus-seeking process is abused to prevent debate on controversial questions, affirmation of majority positions, and decisions to act on them. An equation of accountable structures with hierarchy is fostering an irresponsible revolving membership and a tyranny of structurelessness. The radical potential of the Green movement is being compromised by tendencies that are fostering an anti-intellectual irrationalism, a proselytizing religiosity, and a liberal ‘tolerance’ of an intolerant, mean-spirited materialism. Instead of advancing a coherent alternative to global destruction, the Greens are mired in a contradictory mix of orientations -- peace, justice and ecology activism along with non-political mysticism and “deep-ecological” misanthropy; independent leftism along with opportunistic liberalism and outright anti-leftism. Thus, in spite of the U.S. Greens' claimed openness, the resulting absence of a clear commitment to a convergence of environmental movements with movements for economic justice, racial equality, women's liberation, and other emancipatory movements is deeply offensive to activists Greens and many of the people they are trying to reach.

In this atmosphere of conciliation with the Democrats, on the one hand, and with anti-leftist mysticism on the other, we find it necessary to avow our commitment to the New Left tradition of a radical struggle for human emancipation. By forming a Left Green Network, we hope to advance a programatically coherent leftism policy within the Green movement.

We take this step in a constructive spirit. We want to persuade others of our views, while functioning in a manner completely open and transparent to the movement at large and scrupulously abiding by the democratic processes of broader organizations. By organizing the Left Green Network, we hope to reach out to other currents of the independent left and to popular movements for peace, justice, and the environment. We want to greatly enhance to vitality, social diversity, and political coherence of the North American Green movement.

While we favor the appropriate use of consensus process by tightly-knit local groups if they so choose, we oppose its abuse in newly-forming groups and in large, diverse regional and national meetings. Nor are we opposed to a “spirituality” that means mutual care, respect, and a sense of community to nurture the human spirit and sustain us for political struggle. We want to foster an ecological sensibility that rests on a healthy naturalism with a sense of wonder and respect for natural evolution, and a sense of existential communion with nature -- not a supernaturalism that promotes the separation of humanity from nature and that ultimately justifies domination and hierarchy.

We do not believe that humanity's present collision-course with nature is inevitable, nor that reason excludes intuition and emotion, nor, above all, that the ecological crisis can be separated from the social crisis and dehumanization and spiritual impoverishment from oppression and material impoverishment. Green politics, therefore, are left politics -- and are incompatible with the competition, alienation, exploitation, and endless accumulation that characterize capitalism.

We wish to establish organizational forms for the Left Green Network that embody the Green principle of social responsibility, as well as that of grassroots democracy. Accordingly, we plan to develop an educational and organizational literature that will advance our views, including an organizing bulletin and a discussion journal for in-depth theoretical analysis. We plan to organize Left Green conferences to exchange views and set our policies; to participate in others' conferences by sponsoring workshops, co-sponsoring forums, and the like, to develop international ties; and to promote political action in pursuit of Left Green goals. We will have a clearly defined membership with voting rights, a realistic common commitment to finance the Left Green Network, and local, regional, national, and continental organizational forms based on a confederal system of association. We call for accountability at every level of organization and in every kind of structure -- both in the Left Green Network and in the other groups of which we are a part. We will seek consensus on decisions, but when differences cannot be ironed out in discussion, the majority will have the right to take and implement a decision, while the minority will have the rights to abstain from implementation and to publicly dissent.

The appended draft proposal for a Left Green body of principles provides a philosophical framework for the Left Green Network based on social, ecological, anti-capitalist, independent politics. It is put forth not as a dogma, but as a first step toward the ultimate creation of a Left Green program. It calls for democracy based on equality and solidarity, instead of political rule based on economic power; for social justice as a necessary part of an ecologically sustainable society; for economic justice and material well-being as a necessary part of caring for the world of life as a whole, rather than regarding nature as a resource to be raped for the sake of a "grow-or-die"
capitalist economy; and for the harmonization of human with human -- the elimination of violence and domination in all its forms -- as a necessary part of harmonizing society with nature.

We call upon activists who share these principles to join us in building the Left Green Network in North America within the Green movement and the independent left.

Principles of the Left Green Network

1. Ecological Humanism

Left Greens stand for the creation of a society of human liberty, equality, and solidarity in ecological harmony with nature. We seek to realize the highest democratic and libertarian ideals of the American Revolution and to create the social conditions for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We share the Revolution’s humanistic premise: that all humans are endowed by nature with the capacity for reason, empathy, and free choice and therefore have a natural right to democratic self-government and to basic freedoms, as well as to economic rights.

The humanism that the Left Greens stand for, however, is an ecological humanism. We reject the antinaturalism of traditional humanisms that have sought to create a social "realm of freedom" by means of dominating a natural "realm of necessity." We also reject the antihumanism of ecophilosophies that, in reaction to the destruction of the environment, seek to protect nature by constructing human freedom.

Left Greens oppose all forms of domination, of both human and nonhuman nature, and believe that human liberation and ecological harmony are inextricably connected. We call for a reharmonization of humanity with nature on the basis of a new harmonization of human with nature. We seek a social and ecological ethics for a society in which each individual is free to reach his or her full potential; a free, egalitarian, nonhierarchical society of self-governing communities that are humanly scaled, bioregional integrated, and cooperatively confederated; a society that is a partner with the rest of nature.

2. Social Ecology

Humanity has reached a point in history where the boldest concepts of utopia are possible, yet we remained mired in the legacy of domination, and even the very survival of humanity is now in question. The ecological provision of material security for every human being is readily achievable, yet we remain trapped in a social megamachine that pits humans against each other and devours both people and nature for its own purposes.

Left Greens are social ecologists. We root the ecological crisis in its systemic social causes -- capitalism in particular and hierarchy and domination in general. The present competitive society’s war on the natural world is an extension of the war of each against all that it fosters among humans -- as well as a war of each against his or her own nature. Left Greens oppose the misanthropic orientations that blame human nature, human rationality, or "overpopulation" for the ecological crisis. We believe that a radical transformation of this society is not only possible but imperative for survival as well as to continue natural and social evolution.

Human liberation and the protection of nonhuman life are not merely compatible -- both are necessary. The Left Greens seek to unite social and environmental movements in order to change society. As social ecologists, we stand with every struggle for human freedom, equality, and solidarity, for the liberation of women, people of color, gays and lesbians, working people, young people, old people, peoples dominated by foreign powers, and ordinary people in all walks of life who are weighed down by the institutions and culture of domination.

Left Greens also stand with every struggle for the protection of nonhuman life. As social ecologists, we embrace the conservation of species diversity, habitats, and ecosystems and the expansion of wilderness areas. We call for acotechnologies based on renewable, organic, and nontoxic materials, energy sources, and production processes that harmonize community-controlled economies with the ecology of their bioregions.

3. Racial Equality

Left Greens oppose any compromise with racism in any form. We support affirmative action to create substantive equality and every effort of racially oppressed groups to achieve community empowerment and self-determination. We seek to help an independent “rainbow” movement develop from below in which independent community-based organizations in all of North America’s diverse ethnic and social communities join together on the basis of substantive equality, mutual aid, and grassroots control of the movement.
4. Social Ecofeminism

Left Greens are committed to the liberation of women, to their basic reproductive rights as well as to their full participation in all realms of social life. We believe in a social ecofeminism that seeks to understand and uproot the social origins of patriarcal structures of domination. Unlike other ecofeminisms that accept patriarchal myths and cultural definitions of women as more “natural” than men and as existing outside culture, social ecofeminism regards women as cultural beings, as well as biological beings, and seeks to understand and change the social realities of the relationships between women, men, the political realm, the domestic realm, and all of these to nature.

5. Gay and Lesbian Liberation

Left Greens demand the sexual and social emancipation of people of all sexual preferences. We support every effort by lesbians and gay men to achieve substantive equality and civil rights in all areas, such as jobs, housing, and child custody, as well as anti-AIDS funding. We recognize that lesbians and gay men are demanding not only their own freedom and dignity but that of all people, for as long as sexuality is not free, people are doomed to thwart their most basic desires for love, pleasure, and creativity.

6. Grassroots Democracy

A society in which human beings cooperatively control their own destinies must be the product of the self-activity of a popular majority of the people. Because this kind of society cannot, by its very nature, be legislated from the top down, Left Greens do not seek to get elected to public office for the purpose of controlling the existing power structure. Rather, we want to restructure political institutions along lines that will replace the centralized state with a confederal participatory democracy. Our goal is base democracy, in which public policy at all jurisdictional scales is determined by community assemblies, such as town meetings, that are open to all citizens. Confederations of these community assemblies will coordinate public policy from below. Representatives to the larger scales of confederal self-government will receive ongoing instructions from the base assemblies and will be subject to immediate recall by the base.

7. Cooperative Commonwealth

The Left Greens seek to bring the economy under the control of the grassroots democracy. We call for a cooperative commonwealth -- a fundamental alternative to both the private-corporate-market system of the West and the state-bureaucratic-command system of the East. The world economy today, under both corporate capitalism and state-socialism, is an interconnected system based on the exploitation of the many. Its goal is not to meet human needs in harmony with nature, but the investment of capital to create more capital in order to satisfy the profit and power motives of the elite few that control the means of production and militaristic nation-states. Endless growth-for-growth's-sake is thus structured into this economic system, making it deadly to the planetary biosphere. It is inherently anti-human and anti-ecological. It degrades social and moral bonds into depersonalized, amoral market and bureaucratic relationships. It calls upon the basest of human attributes to motivate economic activity. To attempt to humanize and ecologize this system is like asking a plant to stop photosynthesizing.

Society's common wealth -- the land and natural resources, the banks and the material infrastructure of production -- is the creation of natural evolution and the labor of millions, not of the ruling elites that now control most of it. As our common heritage, Left Greens believe that this social wealth should be held in common and used cooperatively for the common good of people and their ecological context.

In a cooperative commonwealth, people democratically and cooperatively own and control their economy. Global corporations and centralized state enterprises should be broken up and replaced by individual and family enterprises, cooperatives, and decentralized publicly-owned enterprises. Basic industries and services would be socialized through municipalization into community ownership and control, not nationalized into bureaucracy. Confederations of communities would own larger facilities regionally, and confederations of regions would coordinate the economy from below at still larger jurisdictional scales.

This kind of decentralized economic system will uncouple the exploitative growth dynamic of today's economic megamachine and make possible an ecological economy in dynamic equilibrium with the environment. It will empower people to define their own needs and then produce what is needed to satisfy them in harmony with nature. It will enable society to replace the growth-oriented exploitative economy that blindly devours the environment with a need-oriented moral economy that consciously establishes a dynamic equilibrium with the biosphere.

8. Human Rights

Left Greens envision a world where each individual is free to develop his or her full potential because each
individual enjoys basic political, economic, and individual human rights. Left Greens make no compromises in the defense of civil liberties. But formal civil liberties are undermined as effectively by the burdens of economic deprivation as they are by overt political repression. Left Greens therefore call for the creation of a moral economy that ensures that every person's basic material needs are met as a human right. We call for a guaranteed income sufficient to support a decent standard of living and for a just distribution of available work for all willing and able. We demand shorter work weeks and call for the free provision, under community control, of health care, public transportation, and other basic goods and services. These social responsibilities would be funded through steeply progressive taxation, revenues from public enterprises, and voluntary contributions to public funds.

9. Non-Aligned Internationalism

Left Greens support human rights according to one universal criterion--freedom--without regard for national boundaries or the military blocs of the Cold War. They actively solidarize with non-aligned peace, ecology, democracy, worker, feminist, anti-racist, anti-militarist, and anti-imperialist movements in every country--East bloc, West bloc, Third World. They envision a world without borders, a world of decentralized regions composed of confederations of self-governing communities.

Left Greens demand that every nuclear power initiate immediate unilateral nuclear disarmament and conversion to nonprovocative, home-based defense based on both voluntary conventionally-armed militia and nonviolent social defense. These forms of defense should be strictly accountable to civilian authority. Left Greens demand that every country recall all armed forces from stations abroad and use the savings from military spending for social and ecological reconstruction. Only such measures can create the just, democratic, and ecologically sustainable conditions necessary for a durable peace.

10. Independent Politics

Grassroots movements for fundamental change need an independent political vehicle. The Democratic Party has been the graveyard for every popular movement for fundamental change in the United States, from the early workers' parties and the populist movement of the 19th century to the labor movement of the 1930s and, increasingly, the new social movements since the 1960s. Left Greens reject the dependent politics of lobbying and compromising inside the establishment parties, the Democrats and Republicans, which are dominated by the vested interests connected to big business and the military. We oppose any support for their candidates, including "progressive" Democrats who run against more moderate elements of the party establishment. Instead, Left Greens seek independent organization and action outside ruling-class structures. We support Greens who run on an independent Green ballot line as mandated and recallable representatives who are fully accountable to the program and membership of the Green political organization. Left Greens cooperate with and seek to develop unity with other independent political organizations on the basis of compatible political principles.

11. Direct Action

Voting is not enough. Global corporations hold a private economic veto over public policy through threats of disinvestment. The bureaucratic and military structures of the state can veto radical legislative initiatives through bureaucratic inertia and, as a last resort, military repression. Broad, popular direct action is thus needed to counter private corporate power, bureaucratic inertia, and, ultimately, violent repression by the military. Movements from below are the basis for Green political organization. Left Greens help build independent direct action movements that can lay the basis for an independent electoral alternative. Left Green direct action takes many forms: from nonviolent resistance to existing abuses to reconstructive action to build alternatives. The Left Greens call for extending the extra-parliamentary movement into electoral/legislative arenas, not for the purpose of getting into the existing power structure, but to restructure that power fundamentally. We seek to create direct action in its highest form--direct democracy.

Left Greens do not limit their goals to the "left wing of the possible." We aim to change what is possible. We refuse to compromise our program in order to achieve short-term "influence" inside the establishment. Capitalism and hierarchical society generally cannot be transformed incrementally from the top down. Although Left Greens may enter legislatures to advance their program, they refuse the formal executive power of government until the majority of people not only vote for a program of basic social change but are ready to take direct action to insure that the program is implemented.

12. Radical Municipalism

Left Greens "think globally" to understand the large-scale social forces that must be transformed, while we "act locally" to create a local framework through which grassroots people can participate directly in democratic transformation. For Left Greens, community empowerment does not mean electing better representatives to
govern us, but literally the empowerment of every community to practice self-government.

Left Greens call for a radical municipalist strategy that will run independent Green candidates in cities and towns across the continent on a program of building up a popular counterpower based on movements from below, on democratizing municipalities, and on creating municipal confederations that bring increasing political and economic power under community control. We hold that community empowerment must be created throughout the land in order to build up a dual power in society that can initially resist and ultimately replace nation-states and global corporations.

13. Strategic Nonviolence

Left Greens are committed to a strategy of nonviolent revolution, but we affirm the right of self-defense. We practice critical solidarity with legitimate freedom struggles, although we may not agree with every tactic or programmatic goal of such movements. Left Greens work toward a society in which political disputes are solved nonviolently. We understand that this is not currently the case, and that the central reason for this fact is the existence of social hierarchies based on racial domination, patriarchal authority, class exploitation, and an unjust world order maintained by militaristic nation-states. The inevitable instances of violence arising from the conflicts between these structures and their subjects are to be blamed on the structures of domination, not those who resist domination. Such structural violence will be eliminated only by the elimination of these structures of domination.

14. Democratic Decentralism

Left Greens believe in democratic decentralism. Our organizational forms demand strict accountability of representatives, spokespeople, candidates, and elected officials to policies set by the membership. At the same time, we believe in pluralism within the membership, including the freedom to dissent and full ongoing discussion of all positions taken by the organization. Outside of the binding agreements on the Principles and Bylaws that constitute conditions for membership, members are free to abstain from the implementation of majority decisions with which they disagree and to publicly dissent from them. Although Left Green representatives, spokespeople, candidates, and elected officials are required to act in a manner consistent with imperative mandates from the membership, they are free to publicly express their own dissenting views when they differ from such mandates. Left Greens believe in seeking to arrive at decisions by consensus if possible. But when differences exist, minorities should be accorded the right to make decisions in the name of the organization. Minorities remain free to abstain from the implementation of majority decisions with which they disagree and to publicly dissent from them.

Program of the Left Green Network

Draft by Howard Hawkins and Lowell Nelson

Introduction: The Coordinating Committee of the Left Green Network agreed to a process for writing a program of the Left Green Network to be worked on and adopted at our next Continental Conference. The Program has two basic purposes: (1) to provide a succinct, readable document that can introduce readers to the Left Greens’ vision of an alternative society and how we propose to get there—something more concrete than the Principles of the Left Green Network; yet something more accessible than programs which take positions on all the minutiae of public policy, and (2) to provide the LCN with a framework of policies we advocate that can serve as a guide for endorsements, literature, action campaigns, public statements, and the like by the Coordinating Committee, the Clearinghouse Committee, our working groups, and representatives to conferences and the press, and so forth.

What follows is a first drafts outline. Some outline headings need to be filled in with explanation. There are probably additional headings Left Green members will want to add. We are asking members to send comments and proposed wording changes and additions to Lowell Nelson (3093 12th Ave. South, Minneapolis MN 55407) by May 15. A second draft based on these submissions will be circulated about June 1 to Left Greens who pre-register for the Continental Conference and possibly (if the timing works out) in the next issue of Left Green Notes. That draft will include alternative proposals where clear differences exist. We will collectively amend and hopefully adopt that second draft at our Continental Conference on Chicago, July 3-7.

The following points of analysis, program, and strategy are advocated by the Left Greens. We believe they provide basic guideposts for the road to a Green alternative based on ecological sustainability, grassroots democracy, social justice, and peace. We will work for these goals inside and outside of the electoral arena.

Analysis

Our society’s attempt to dominate nature stems from the very real domination of human by human—of women by men, of people of color by whites, of workers by bosses, of one nation by another and of ordinary people in all walks of life who are weighed down, however subtly, by the institutions and traditions of hierarchy and domination. The institutions, values and
Confederal Grassroots Democracy

We envision a North American continent in which nation-states have been replaced by bioregional confederations of self-governing communities, including sovereign native peoples. In order to begin laying the basis for bioregional municipal confederations, we will work to rewrite municipal charters and restructure local governmental institutions as grassroots democracies around the following principles:

- **Direct Democracy in Community Assemblies**—Direct participatory democracy is the foundation for genuine representative democracy at larger scales. We call for the creation of community assemblies in every neighborhood and rural districts in the land, with the power to make policy for all levels of confederal coordination through the right to mandate and recall their representatives to larger scales of self-government.

- **Municipal Confederations**—We call for the confederation of community assemblies into municipal, bioregional, continental, and global public administrations that are controlled from below and are an alternative to centralized, statist institutions.

Cooperative Economic Democracy

The forms of grassroots political democracy are powerless and empty shells without the grassroots power that comes with community control of the economy. We therefore seek to replace capitalist and statist economic forms with grassroots-democratic forms.

**Immediate Demands**:

- **Public Ownership and Democratic Control of Basic Industries**—The question is not whether we will have a planned economy, but who will do the planning—gigantic corporations autonomously or the people democratically. We need a democratic planning system, based on a confederal system of elected local, bioregional, and continental planning boards, charged with overseeing a much expanded public sector. In those sectors of the economy where private industry has failed, the public should take control and run these sectors on a non-profit basis, starting immediately with health care, banking and insurance, energy, transportation, and chemicals.

- **Convert Capitalist Firms to Worker’s Cooperatives**—Exploiting labor is morally wrong. Private sector firms in the market sector should be collectively owned and controlled by their employees on the model of the Mondragon cooperative network in Spain. We call for public funding and technical assistance to enable the workers of an enterprise, by majority vote, to convert capitalist firms to cooperatives.

- **Worker’s Control of the Production Process**—In both public and private cooperative enterprises, we call for worker’s self-management of the immediate labor process.

**Long-term Goal**

- **Decommodification**—Progressively, more and more goods and services should be removed from the money economy (decommodified) and distributed free of charge (as public education and use of most public roads are now), until the economy is not a separate sphere from life itself and people contribute according to their abilities and use according to their needs.

On these foundations of grassroots political and economic democracy, people will have the power to carry through measures for economic, ecological, social, and international re-
construction. The struggle for the following policy reforms does not wait for structural changes in political and economic institutions, but is part of the process of building a movement capable of democratizing our political and economic institutions. We are oriented toward building these reforms from below, toward implementing them through municipalities and municipal confederations. If state and national policies are initiated along these lines, we will work for structuring their administration under community control.

Economic Reconstruction

In the short term, our economy is heading into a recession loaded down with debt. The following measures should be taken immediately to stabilize the economy, ensure people's basic needs are met, reduce inequality, and lay the basis of social solidarity needed for economic democratization.

In the longer term, we are entering a technological revolution which is replacing the complex of large industrial mass-production facilities with a new technological complex based on microelectronics and automation, smaller production runs, and radically increased productivity as it decreases the amount of labor required. This technological revolution holds both promise and peril for the prospects of a just and ecological society.

Without fundamental reforms in the distribution of work and income opportunities, this technological revolution will take us toward a society with an increasingly deep and bitter division between an affluent relative few who are permanently employed and growing numbers of marginalized poor people who are underemployed. We need to move to a system where everyone works less so everyone can live better and earn their living by working of their desire. This requires reducing the standard work week, guaranteeing everyone the right to a good job, and paying the difference between 40 hours work and the shortened work week of a public fund paid for by variable taxation on automated production.

This tax will prevent the falling relative prices of those goods and services whose production can be automated most rapidly, but whose endlessly rising consumption is not socially useful or ecologically sound. As automated production causes cost prices to become negligible and threatens market prices with collapse, our best choice is to adopt a system of political pricing (through the variable taxation on automated production) that can reflect our democratic choices and priorities for individual and collective consumption and ecological balance. It can be a democratic means for internalizing social and economic costs in production. These measures also address the longer term implications of the technological revolution we are now entering.

We therefore call for the immediate implementation of:

- **Guaranteed Right to a Job through Public Job Banks** — Public job banks should be established so that people who cannot find decent work in the private sector can take a good publicly funded job that fulfills community defined needs.
- **Guaranteed Annual Income at 125% of the Poverty Line** — Build into a simple progressive income tax a guaranteed annual income adequate to meet people’s basic needs.
- **Progressive Taxation** — To secure funds for public functions and redistribute wealth and income to create a more egalitarian society, we support progressive taxation of income wealth and inheritances.
- **Variable Taxation of Automated Production** — This tax will fund the Worker’s Superfund. It will be varied like a value-added tax according to the social and ecological priorities we choose. We advocate a system of “true cost” pricing to democratically internalize social and ecological costs in production in a way that reflects our democratic choices about individual and collective consumption and ecological balance.
- **$10/Hour Minimum Wage** — The current minimum wage yields an income well below the poverty line. A $10/hour minimum wage, indexed to inflation, will raise demand for basic necessities (an anti-recessionary stimulus), reduce inequality, and lift millions of the working poor out of poverty.
- **30 Hour Work Week with No Loss in Income** — We should equitably distribute income earning opportunities so that technologically induced structural changes in the economy do not create a bitter schism between affluent securely-employed production workers and marginalized under-employed service workers. Immediately introduce a 30 hour work week with income lost from fewer hours made up by a “second check” from a Worker’s Superfund. Then progressively reduce the standard work week with no loss of income by steps in accordance with overall social productivity gains. This “second check” would be a “social dividend,” a worker’s fair share of socially created wealth.
- **Worker’s Superfund** — A Worker’s Superfund should be established to provide income, education, and training to workers displaced by bankruptcies, the shut down of corporate branch plants that leave for cheap labor markets abroad, by the technological conversion of industry from military and hazardous to civilian and ecological forms of production, and by the reduced amounts of labor that are required as technologically introduced productivity gains are introduced. The Worker’s Superfund would: provide income, education, and training grants to all workers displaced by social and economic changes, pay a “second check,” or “social dividend” to all workers representing their share of socially created wealth, paid at their normal salary for the hours they no longer work as the standard work week is reduced in keeping with productivity gains; be funded by a variable tax on automated production.

Ecological Reconstruction

- **Renewable Energy** — A publicly-owned, democratically-controlled energy system (including electric utilities and fuel suppliers such as Exxon, Mobil, Arco, and Social) should implement the following policies: an immediate and permanent shut-down of all nuclear power plants; a rapid phase-out of fossil fuel use; a rapid phase-in of energy conservation and solar-based renewable energy sources; a major public investment to develop solar-hydrogen fuel and fuel cells.
- **Ecological Public Transportation** — A publicly owned, democratically-controlled public transportation system should implement the following policies: de-emphasize private automobile and trucking and emphasize rebuilding a convenient
network of railroads and inner-city trolleys (light rails); work with community planners to redesign human settlements to increase local production for local use and reduce transportation needs; work with community planners to redesign human settlements to increase mixed use areas (residences, organic agriculture, ecological industry) linked by convenient networks of bike and pedestrian paths and trolley

- Nontoxic Chemicals and Materials—A publicly-owned, democratically-controlled public chemicals and materials industry should implement the following policies: research, develop, and progressively safe alternatives to toxic chemicals and materials—moving from synthetic hydrocarbons to natural carbohydrates; assist communities to increase reliance on local resources for local use.

- Waste Management and Recycling—

- Organic Agriculture—Provide public funding and technical assistance for: a phase-out of chemicalized corporate agriculture and a phase-in of organic family and cooperative farming; land reform to redistribute land from corporate holdings to municipal holdings, ecological land trusts, and individual cooperative plots and to give new farmers access to land.

- Sustainable Forestry—Transfer to public holding large tracts of land in all of the representative biomes of the continent, with corridors connecting them, to be returned to their natural states and protected for the use by native plants and animals undisturbed by human settlement; fund expansion of public seed banks and germ-plasm banks and genetic preserves, with an emphasis on balancing native indigenous seeds and germ-plasm.

Social Reconstruction

The following are immediate demands to begin to meet people’s basic needs and secure their rights and liberties:

- Quality Public Education—Increase and equalize funding for public schools; end tracking systems; extend free public education to college and graduate studies at public institutions; incorporate into work schedules paid leaves of absence without loss of seniority for continuing education for adults.

- Public Child Care—Child care should be provided free, as part of the public school system. Child care workers’ salaries should be increased.

- Public Health Service—Health care should be provided free under democratic public ownership and control and funded by progressive taxation. A Public Health Service would replace control by insurance companies, hospital boards of directors, and medical associations with democratic control through elected representatives on local, regional, and national Health Service Boards. The Health Service would emphasize preventive care and employ salaried health workers who would serve the public on the basis of need, not profit.

- Comparable Worth—The Greens will work to reform pay scales so that women receive comparable worth—equal pay for work of equal value. Specifically, we call for: recategorization of jobs where needed to protect women’s rights to equality and comparable worth—for example, if a woman is a manager, she should be called an executive and paid accordingly, rather than called an executive secretary and paid much less; raising salaries for traditional women’s work such as secretarial work, nursing, social work, waitressing, elementary school teaching, and domestic work; supporting unionization of workforces predominantly women; taking affirmative action to train and increase the number of women qualified for all jobs; enforcing existing laws protecting women from job discrimination.

- Reproductive Rights—The Greens will work for the following basic body rights: the right to free and complete birth control information for all men and women and for all adolescents with or without parental consent; the right to free abortion; the right to complete maternity care; the right to free counseling; and support for pregnant women; the right to be free from involuntary sterilization.

- Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Liberation—Prohibit discrimination in hiring and promotion and housing on account of sexual preference; grant equal legal sanction for relationships between heterosexual and homosexual couples; grant full parental and adoption rights for gays and lesbians; recognize and celebrate all democratic personal forms of love whether heterosexual, gay, or bisexual.

- Support Democratic Trade Unions—Repeal the sections of the Taft-Hartley Act that hinder the labor movement from organizing democratic unions. Support efforts of workers to organize democratic unions and rank-and-file movements in existing unions for union democracy.

- Eco-Communities—We call for public funding for experimental eco-communities that are humanity-sized and tailored to their bioregions. They would research, develop, and test ecological technologies and cooperative economic and living arrangements (such as the rotation of all jobs so as to realize all of our creative human capacities and distribute more and less desirable jobs equitably, and decommodified communities based on “from each according to their ability, to each according to their need”).

Peace and International Solidarity

With the collapse of the Cold War system, the U.S. has emerged as the sole military superpower. It now feels little constraint on its use of military intervention to keep the world safe for exploitation by global corporations. The United States’ imperialistic foreign and military policy is rooted in its domestic social structure of competitive, accumulative capitalism regulated by a centralizing nation-state. The most effective anti-imperialist action we can undertake, the most effective international solidarity we can exercise, is to build a radical movement in North America that can uproot the domestic structure that underlies U.S. imperialism and can replace it with decentralized, grassroots democratic institutions that enable us to relate to other peoples through cooperative mutual aid rather than with domination and exploitation.

North America is a microcosm of the world—a mix of Native American, African, European, and Asian-Pacific peoples—not an ethnically homogeneous nation. With national and racial chauvinisms running rampant throughout the world today, North Americans have a unique opportunity and responsibility to show how people of diverse ethnic heritages can live together with equality and mutual respect. A revolution in North America that both honors our diverse heritages and brings us together around a common sense of humanity and a commitment to grassroots political and economic democracy...
would set a powerful example throughout the world.

In terms of immediate demands for peace and international solidarity, we will build a movement in the streets and on the ballot calling on the U.S. government to:

- Institute a Policy of Non-Nuclear, Non-Provocative, Home-Based Defense—
- Unilaterally Disarm and Destroy All U.S. Atomic, Biological, and Chemical Weapons—
- Dismantle the National Security State Apparatus—including abolition of the C.I.A. and all covert operations agencies—
- Bring All U.S. Troops Stationed Abroad Home—including those in the Middle East, Korea, the Philippines, and Europe—
- Cut the Pentagon Budget by 95%—Only 3.5% of Pentagon’s budget goes to the defense of U.S. territory by conventional means. 96.5% is devoted to foreign intervention and nuclear blackmail to make the world safe for exploitation by global corporations. The $1.5-2 billion left after the cuts is more than enough to defend the U.S. by conventional means from all reasonable threats—
- Plan for Peace Conversion—Set up alternative use plans for existing military facilities and industries and provide income and employment grants to help military personnel and defense workers make the transition to a civilian peace economy.
- Establish a NonViolent Civilian Defense System—as an adjunct and eventually a substitute for military defense—
- Support Multilateral Resistance to Aggression—
- Democratize the United Nations—

**Strategy**

We understand that there is a lot more to the power structure than the elected officers of the state. There is capital’s private veto—its ability to go on strike, disinvest and move elsewhere, wreck the economy, and blame the reformers. There is the un-elected bureaucracy which can tie up reforms in red tape and the un-elected military which can crush popular reform movements violently. And there is the corporate and state media, advertising, and entertainment industry that propagates the prevailing ideology day in and day out, hour after hour.

It is therefore obvious that this system cannot be changed through elections. A century of reform socialism and now Green parties has demonstrated this conclusively. The only thing that can counter these extraparliamentary powers of the corporations and the state is direct action by a majority of the people—in short, a social revolution. Our role is not to get into the existing power structure, but to build a revolutionary movement to restructure the power.

We therefore base our strategy on:

1. **Direct Action**—Every major reform won by popular movements in the last 50 years in this country has been imposed on the establishment by direct action movements from below—form the labor sit-downs of the 30’s to the civil rights and anti-war sit-ins of the 60’s. The best way to advance our goals in the short term is to build resistance movements based on public demonstrations, civil disobedience, counter-institutions and our own press and media.

2. **Independent Politics**—By giving us direct action movements electoral expression independent of the Democrats and Republicans, we will force the establishment parties to adopt some of our reforms without ourselves having to take executive power within the state capitalist system. We should be a “fundamental opposition”—in the streets, on the ballot, and in the legislative branch—posing basic alternatives and refusing to take responsibility for the impossible task of making an irrational system rational. By entering the electoral arena, we have a public forum in which to link issues and constituencies around a common program of structural change.

3. **Revolutionary Dual Power Based on Municipal Confederations**—As we build and spread insurgent movements city by city, we will begin to create grassroots counterpower to the nation-state and global corporations. The common aim of these municipal movements will be to take over city and county governments, restructure the them as grassrooots democratic confederations of community assemblies, begin democratizing and socializing the economy under municipal public and cooperative control, link the radicalized municipalities in confederal networks of mutual support, and counterpose this confederal grassroots democracy as a popular counterpower that can resist and ultimately overthrow and replace the nation-state and global corporations.

**TOWARD A REVOLUTIONARY LEFT GREEN NETWORK**

Despite its "leftist" name, the Left Green Network (LGN) offers a rare opportunity for revolutionary socialists to cooperate with a group, many of whom one might describe as "imminent" revolutionists—people who don't yet recognize the full implications of the anti-capitalism and anti-statism they espouse. Beginning with the original "Principles of the Left Green Network" the LGN has, in effect, called for revolution: "a cooperative commonwealth—a fundamental alternative to both the private-corporate-markets system of the West and the state-bureaucratic-command system of the East."

Howard Hawkins' and Lowell Nelson's draft of the "Program of the Left Green Network" is more straightforward about the revolutionary goal. After an eloquent explanation of the role of the capitalist system and its political state in creating the ecological, economic, and social
decomposition we see at the end of the twentieth century, the authors
come to an unequivocal conclusion: "If we are to have an ecological
society, capitalism and the nation-state must be uprooted and replaced
by new decentralized forms of grassroots political and economic
democracy."

And if that isn't explicit enough, consider the introductory portion
of the "Strategy" section of their Draft Program. After pointing out
that the real power of the capitalist system lies, not in the state
but in the economic power of capital, the authors say, "The only thing
that can counter these extra-parliamentary powers of the corporations
and the state is direct action by a majority of the people—-in short,
a social revolution."

Under the headings "Confederal Grassroots Democracy" and "Cooperative
Economic Democracy" the authors envision a society in which the
political state has been displaced by a confederation of local
assemblies. At the same time, capitalist ownership of the means of
production has been replaced by social ownership and worker self-
management, a "cooperative economic democracy." These are
revolutionary goals that we revolutionary socialists can all subscribe
to.

For us, the difficulty lies in the middle sections of the Draft
Program. There we find the influence of the past ninety years in
which socialist theory has been dominated by the reformism of the
statist "Old Left"—the social democrats and leninists. Fully three
of the four and a half pages of the Draft Program consist of reforms,
designed apparently to provide the foundation for a kinder, gentler,
more ecologically sound capitalism, perhaps with a thousand points of
light.

The proponents of this "Old left" strategy would argue that, since the
long-range revolutionary goals of the LGN are unlikely to excite as
much popular support as a program calling for immediate relief of this
or that evil, the LGN should combine the two. But surface appearances
notwithstanding, the strategy is hopelessly flawed as one can see from
the experiences of the past:

1. Concessions (reforms) granted by the system and its political state
leave the essential social and economic relationship unchanged. No
revolution has taken place; the capitalist system retains power, and
the revolutionary energy of the people has been expended for a few
crumbs: the minimum the system must concede to buy them off.

2. Our rulers and their political state will not allow a reform group
that is potentially revolutionary to win concessions from them. They
are in a position to gauge the strength and determination of the
reform movement and, when circumstances demand, to coopt it. Consider
the fate of past radical reform movements headed by the Communist
Party and Norman Thomas's Socialist Party. Capitalism's liberal
political wing under the leadership of Franklin Roosevelt coopted the
reform programs of the CP and SP, gauged the minimum reforms needed to
buy off the people, and presented voters with the New Deal.

3. But most serious of all: Aside from the obvious contradiction of
advocating improvements in capitalism at the same time one calls for
abolishing it, the LGN will be sending an unintended message to the
people it is calling on to build the new community and workplace institutions that are to displace those of capitalism. Instead of helping to mobilize them in this effort, the LGN will be calling on them to look to capitalism's political state for relief from the very ills that capitalism has produced in the first place. The message the LGN will be sending is this: **Capitalism and its state can be your salvation.** How can this advance the cause of alternative community and workplace institutions which the LGN is committed to, not to mention the revolutionary goal?

In addition to these criticisms of the LGN's program and tactics, revolutionaries will find some other negative aspects of cooperation with the LGN:

1. The LGN's theory and practice are not based on the class analysis that those of us who come from the Marxist tradition are used to.
2. Many of the people we will be working with come from libertarian and reformist groups which are infected by the radical leftism described above.
3. Finally, the LGN advocates a decentralized structure for the new society, whereas most of us see at least the industrialized aspect of production as being so integrated that it can not function except through a centralized structure.

Despite these negatives, I believe that we revolutionaries can work within the LGN without compromising our principles:

1. The LGN has a clearly stated goal we can accept: the abolition of capitalism and the political state.
2. Because of the "working groups" provided by the bylaws and the broad way the LGN interprets "ecology," membership will allow us to advance revolutionary socialist solutions not just to the single issue of environmental problems but to the whole range of social ills created by capitalism.
3. The LGN program of Libertarian Municipalism (Grassroots Confederationalism) is consistent with the goal we envision. Moreover, it provides the basis for non-industrial social organization that some of us see as lacking in Socialist Industrial Unionism (SIUism).
4. The LGN's concept of building dual economic and political organizations on a local level within the framework of capitalism has much in common with the Wobblies-SIUist-syndicalist idea of building the structure of the new society within the shell of the old.
5. LGN bylaws allow for principled opposition to majority decisions
   "...when differences exist...minorities remain free to abstain from the implementation of majority decisions and to publicly dissent from them."

Clearly there are differences between the thinking of revolutionary socialists and that of most LGN members, but I believe that membership in the group will allow us to influence LGN thinking without being divisive, and events will resolve many of the differences. If we are right, we can take bows.

**PROPOSED REVISIONS OF THE DRAFT PROGRAM**

The following revisions were proposed to eliminate reform measures and thus make the LGN's program consistent with its revolutionary goal. It was written last spring for consideration by the committee in writing an amended draft program. Unfortunately the second draft was even more reform oriented than the first.
(Readers are referred to pp.11-15 of this issue of the DB where they will find Hawkins' and Nelson's original Draft Program. Quotations from the original text will be indicated by quotation marks and ellipses, additions by underlining, omissions by brackets, and comments not intended for inclusion in the revised version, by parentheses.)

(Retain the first paragraph.) "The following points of...for these goals."

Analysis

Confederal Grassroots Democracy

(Retain the entire section.)

Cooperative Economic Democracy

(Retain) "The forms of...grassroots-democratic forms."

"Immediate Demands:"
* "[Public] Social Ownership and Democratic Control of [Basic Industries] the Means of Production--"The question is not...planning boards. [,charged with...and chemicals.] These will work with their equivalents representing the workplaces in agriculture, manufacturing, mining, energy production, etc. to determine productive goals and methods of meeting them." (The word public above is associated with state ownership)

* [Convert...Cooperatives] Take Possession of the Means of Production--"We call on the useful producers to organize themselves to take possession of the capitalist-owned means of production, lock out the capitalists and their managers, and carry on production for use."

* "Workers' Control of the Production Process--"[In both...enterprises] "We call for workers' self-management of the [immediate] labor process" through such means of industrial self-organization as seems best to them."

[Long-term Goal: Decommodification--Progressively...their needs.] (to be omitted here and placed under the heading "Economic Reconstruction")

"On these foundations...reconstruction. [The struggle...community control.](In other words, retain only the first sentence of the italicized material that ends the section headed "Cooperative Economic Democracy.")"

Economic Reconstruction

(I propose that the material in this section, which seems predicated on the continued existence of capitalism and which calls for measures designed to reform the capitalist system be omitted and replaced with the following paragraphs that speak to the economy of the state-less, capital-less social system the Left Greens advocate.)

Recognizing that all social wealth is the result of human labor acting on the resources nature provides, we see the economic reconstruction of our society in terms not of money but of labor time. Since all products and all services consist of concealed labor time, we call on
people to institute a truly cooperative society in which each person contributes his share of labor time to the total needed to produce the goods and services necessary for our society. Each of us will then receive goods and services that took an amount of labor time to produce equal to that of our contribution.

Individual participation under this system will be voluntary, although every able-bodied person will be expected to contribute his/her share of labor time to that needed to produce the social services we all use—like health care, geriatric and child care, education, garbage and sewage disposal, etc. Beyond that contribution, each individual will be able to decide on the style in which s/he wants to live; i.e., the amount of labor time s/he wants to invest in it. It is at least conceivable that some of us, who prefer leisure and a simple life, will do little work beyond the labor time we contribute toward our share of social services.

"Long-term Goal: Decommodification—Progressively, more and more goods and services [should] be removed from the [money] accountable labor time economy and...to their needs"

Ecological Reconstruction

* Renewable Energy—[publicly] socially-owned... [should] would...and fuel cells.*

* Ecological Public Transportation (Retain as-is except for changing publicly to socially and should to would)

* Nontoxic Chemicals and Materials (Retain as-is except for publicly and should)

* Waste Management and Recycling—

* Organic Agriculture—(Omit the text under this heading and replace with the following:) Since agriculture is a geographically localized industry, we believe decisions about how to organize it in a moneyless economy will be made by popular assemblies at the local level. We believe the absence of the profit motive will provide the necessary motivation for the adoption of organic, conservationist agriculture practices.

* Sustainable Forestry—

* Restoration Ecology—(Retain as-is except for the word public)

Social Reconstruction

(Omit this entire section, which is also predicated on the need to seek improvement from the state in social services and redress of capitalist injustices. Replace with the following:)

Under this system, most economic decisions will be carried on at the local level where popular assemblies can determine the amount of labor time needed for such social services as health care, geriatric care, education, child care, etc.

We see social injustice as a part of capitalism's control mechanism.
Foremost are the political state and its laws, law enforcement, and courts. Having no state, the new society will automatically end society's infringement on human behavior. Decriminalizing sexual and other activities that don't infringe on the rights of others.

We believe Left Greens should take part in protests against the social injustices inherent in capitalism, but we believe our signs, slogans, and literature should reflect our revolutionary program: 1) they should point out the capitalist cause of the injustice, 2) the futility of seeking redress under capitalism, and 3) the socialist solution of the problem.

Peace and International Solidarity
"With the collapse...throughout the world." (Retain the first two paragraphs and add the following:)

In solidarity with other groups protesting war and militarism, we will carry signs and distribute literature consistent with our view that war and militarism are inherent in the capitalist system, that efforts to persuade the ruling class "to study war no more" are futile, and that the road to peace lies in the revolutionary destruction of the capitalist system and its state.

Strategy
"We understand...restructure the power" (Retain the first two paragraphs.)

"We therefore base our strategy on:

1. Direct Action—"[Omit the first sentence.] "The best...and media."

2. [Independent] "Electoral Politics"—Recognizing that the state uses the illusion of electoral democracy as a device to give capitalism's political system credibility and legitimacy, Left Greens reject participation in the electoral farce at all levels, including local-municipal. By doing so we leave ourselves free to carry on during elections at all levels a "Don't Vote" campaign that will be in keeping with our anti-statist position.

We are encouraged by the increased tendency of people, especially those on the lower rungs of capitalism's economic ladder, not to vote. We see this as an unspoken recognition of the fact that voting to improve one's lot under capitalism is futile. We are especially pleased that it seems to worry our rulers.

3. Revolutionary Dual Power Based on Municipal Confederations (Retain this section in its entirety.)

4. Education for Revolution (a new section)—We recognize that a social revolution of the sort we envision can come only when the great majority of the people want it. Consequently we oppose a strategy that calls for the insurrectionary seizure of power and the imposition of social change. We favor the widest efforts, through the distribution of literature and the use of all other media, to inform people of the need for revolution. We are confident that economic and ecological decomposition of capitalism together with the logic of the Left Green program will move people to take the revolutionary path to a new society.

Frank Girard (May 1991)
Giving Birth to an Ecological Morality: A Left Green Program for Self-Managed Production

Humanity has a better potential for experiencing fulfilling lives than ever before. The wisdom handed down through countless cultures gives us the collective knowledge to provide food, clothing and shelter for everyone on this planet. Any person should be able to choose to study from among hundreds of work skills, human languages, and fields of science and art. Every child born should be able to reach personal enrichment while contributing to the happiness and well-being of our species.

Yet the world’s vast wealth is not being used to enrich human life and replenish the earth. Resources are being plundered and irretrievably destroyed so that a tiny minority can wallow in obscene wealth and surround themselves with military armaments which keep the rest of us working to support their system. Human suffering is greater than it has ever been before and it is increasing. Every day, 40,000 children die needlessly from the effects of malnutrition. Every year, more and more species become extinct and lost forever. Every business cycle, toxic and radioactive contaminants destroy an increasingly large part of the Earth.

Who Are the Left Greens?

Left Greens are social ecologists. "Ecologists" are concerned about the poisoning of humanity and the destruction of other life forms. "Social ecologists" believe that this destruction is caused by social systems. We feel that domination of people and domination of the environment go together. Since each type of domination feeds into the sickness of the other, we cannot treat either social disease by itself. Left Greens fight against both.

Left Greens are deeply involved in local struggles to protect the environment. We oppose nuclear power plants, incinicators and dependence on fossil fuels. Left Greens support the development of mass transportation systems, recycling programs and solar/wind power. We participate in campaigns to preserve the ancient forests and we oppose the destruction of family farming through chemicalized corporate agriculture.

The Left Greens view militarism is one of the major causes of planetary destruction. We were active in demonstrations against the US Mid East War of 1991. Left Greens want to remove all US troops from foreign lands, dismantle secret police agencies and destroy all atomic, biological and chemical weapons. We want to eliminate the Pentagon budget, whose funds would be more than enough to provide for public needs such as education for children and adults, child care for working parents, and free medical care, and mass transportation.

Since Left Greens stress the importance of linking environmental and job issues, you are likely to find us supporting the right of elected worker representatives to decide the conditions under which toxic materials can be handled. In order to prevent economic blackmail against workers in dangerous industries, we believe that no plant should be closed or moved without majority approval by workers and communities affected and that employers should pay all costs of job relocation.

While Left Greens are committed to personal life style changes, we are not deluded into thinking that these alone can provide a permanent solution to human suffering and planetary destruction. For example, many of us grow our own gardens and work on projects like solar or wind energy. We do this for our own health and to provide examples of what could be accomplished on a global scale. As a society, we are not free to decide to shift to safe food production or non-fossil fuels as long as huge corporations have more wealth and power than most countries. Similarly, though we recycle our household waste, we know that recycling programs must fail as long as corporations expand the production of useless junk year after year. The Left Green program explains how the American people, through their workplace, electoral and community organizations, can completely remake our society to meet human/ecological needs.

The Old Systems

Two major types of oppressive systems dominate the world today: capitalism and state bureaucracy (often misnamed "socialism"). Understanding the basic problems with these social systems is essential if we are to develop a new society which overcomes their devastation.

Capitalism is based on the private ownership of large corporations. Each corporation pays wages which are only a part of the wealth which its workers create. Profits are the difference between the "costs of production" (wages and raw materials) and the final sale price of the goods and services produced. Capitalism is inherently dominating, inhuman and environmentally destructive. It requires extremes of wealth and poverty, overwork and unemployment, and it intensifies racism, sexism and nationalism. Capitalism supports the individual accumulation of objects by relying on material rewards.

Market production requires each corporation to view the environment with the same attitude of "maximization of return" that it has toward human resources. A corporation is incapable of perceiving a forest, an ocean, or a life form as having intrinsic value. Nature is just another asset. In market terms, "value" refers to the ability of an object to be bought, sold and used for profit.

There is another reason that corporations are driven to ecological devastation: they must expand the total quantity of objects produced. Each business sells commodities to
produce profit. It must create as much profit as it can or it will not be able to innovate as rapidly as other businesses. Therefore, each corporation frantically tries to expand by transforming nature into commodities. Every year, the world’s corporations destroy more of the earth’s resources than they did the year before.

Bureaucratism is based on the state’s owning productive enterprises, as exemplified by the Soviet Union and China. Such enterprises are based on a centrally planned command economy. Enterprises (or units of production) do not choose to produce commodities they think will be most profitable. A Central Planning Committee tells each enterprise what to produce, from whom to obtain raw materials, and where to deliver the finished product. Its manager decides how to produce its goods and services.

Bureaucratic state ownership is incompatible with an ecological society. It is structurally inefficient and entails massive creation of waste during the process of production. The system generates low-quality goods which must soon be replaced and have a poor match with consumer wants. A command economy requires an extensive system of centralized manipulation to motivate labor. Bureaucratism is the result of “public takeover” of business characterizing an entire society.

The Left Green Strategy

Thus, creating an ecological society cannot be based on demanding “public takeover” of private industry. Instead, Left Greens advocate a strategy of people organizing to shift power to their workplaces and communities as they dismantle multinational corporations and the bureaucratic state. There are four ways in which Left Greens organize to bring about this transformation: basic changes in relationships between people; coalition activities; workplace organizing; and, electoral campaigns.

Left Greens do not think that basic changes in relationships between people are something that should wait until “after the revolution” or until New Age consciousness descends upon us. We believe that the relationships we have with each other indicate the type of relationships we want to spread in a new society. This is why Left Greens place a high value on avoiding violence in personal relationships, building a supportive community in our friendship networks, and developing empowering democratic procedures of decision-making in coalitions. We consider reading and discussion groups which look at what is wrong with society and consider how it can be changed to be political work of the highest importance. We encourage every person to participate in social criticism and imagine how the world might be changed.

Since Left Greens know that personal changes, by themselves, cannot alter social systems, we are heavily involved in the coalition activities described earlier. Even though we put tremendous time into defending ourselves from the continued devastation of capitalism, we know that the corporations generate problems thousands of times faster than we can solve them. Therefore, “the issue is not the issue,” which is to say that stopping one particular problem is not a permanent solution. We believe that understanding flows from action. By organizing to resist the degradation of their lives, people can gain the skills necessary to dissolve capitalism and create a new society. Right now, only a small minority of people are active in environmental organizing. But, as social transformation unfolds, more and more will join in defending the quality of their lives. As people overcome their fears of self-organization and their addiction to consumerism, they will become more active in many types of self-organization.

Workplace organizing has a particular interest for environmentalists. Left Greens believe that all areas of organizing are important: anti-militarism, racial equality, gender liberation, electoral campaigns, neighborhood groups, etc. But it is factories and offices where people create those physical objects which we need to survive. In capitalist society, work is where many of us are forced to produce in ways that threaten our health, poison our children, and contaminate the earth for untold generations. For Left Greens, transforming society means developing a new morality where citizens are collectively responsible for the substances they create, use and leave in the world.

Changing work means far more than changing what we produce — the major transformation Left Greens advocate is how we produce it. Worklife under capitalism strengthens authoritarian social relationships of giving and taking orders. This authoritarianism spreads throughout every area of people’s lives and supports racism, sexism, militarism and a host of other social diseases.

In both Western and Eastern social systems, work is often boring or painful; work separates people from their co-workers; and, work alienates people from the goods they create, which are rarely objects of beauty and are more often useless, polluting crap. We believe that our worklives can be spent creating goods and services which are safe and socially useful. We believe that people can themselves reorganize their labor so that it is a time of personal fulfillment and promotes the growth of relationships between those who work together.

Election campaigns are an excellent way to gain publicity for how we want to change society. But Left Greens do not believe that the emphasis of an election campaign should be “winning.” We feel that the most important power which people have is outside of political offices. Electing people to office should always be part of a strategy for strengthening mass movements. Therefore, Left Greens believe that political candidates must be accountable to movements and the movements should always see to it that they have both the right and the ability to remove (immediately) an elected candidate who does not reflect their wishes.
When Left Greens are elected to office, we will use whatever power we have to slow the negative effects of capitalism through measures such as eliminating nuclear power, reducing the military, and putting severe restrictions on corporations. But we do not believe that elected office in capitalist society as a way to make fundamental social changes. New social institutions need to grow from democratically controlled mass movements. The true goal of being elected to public office is not to help the oppressive state "with a human face," but, to dissolve the state.

**Short-term Changes: The Self-Management Forum**

When we become a majority in the US congress, Left Greens will dissolve corporations and the violent state. As a congressional majority, the role of Greens would be to consolidate changes which people would already be making in their workplaces. We call this process the Self-Management Forum because it would begin where people work. Immediately upon becoming a political majority, Left Greens would ask every group of workers to participate in discussions of the reorganization of their branch of production. Roughly 10% of working hours should be set aside for these discussions, which means that those currently unemployed should be hired to fill the time required for self-management. There are five major tasks the Self-Management Forum should undertake.

1. Each workplace should describe how production at their factory, shop or office is safe and unsafe, both to themselves and our entire society. They should develop a plan to cope with identified problems. This could vary from minor changes in techniques of production to elimination of their branch of industry. If they decide to reduce the number of those employed in their branch of industry, they would outline a relocation plan which would cause the least social disruption.

2. Each workplace should describe dominance relationships at their workplace and develop a plan for empowering themselves. This would include asking:
   a. Does the workforce want appointed supervisors or should they select their own coordinators?
   b. Should management be chosen by a Board of Directors or should those who perform the labor select the group which will coordinate it?
   c. Should positions such as coordinators, supervisors, and managers be permanent or rotated after fixed periods of time?
   d. Should people currently at the bottom of the hierarchy receive different positions immediately, or should they receive training for more skilled tasks, or should there be redefinition of jobs?
   e. Since those at the top of power hierarchies have been denied opportunities to experience many aspects of human labor, should workgroups invite managers to share all tasks, including activities such as cleaning bathrooms, typing letters, working on assembly lines, or mining coal?

3. **Industrial Councils.** Each workplace should select representatives to participate in conferences of reorganization for people in the same branch of production. The representatives will be responsible for sharing experiences and providing information concerning efforts at reorganization.

4. **Regional Councils.** Each workplace should select representatives to participate in regional gatherings of reorganization. These gatherings will have the power to alter or end production which threatens the health and safety of inhabitants of the region. They will examine how the region can become more self-sufficient. They will have the responsibility to ensure that reorganization is for the good of the entire community and that no one is left without work or the necessities of life. Regional Councils will continuously examine the work done by each production unit to confirm that it is fairly divided according to the quantity of work. If inhabitants of the region decide they wish to enjoy the results of dangerous or unhealthy labor, the Council will be responsible for ensuring that such labor is fairly rotated through members of the region.

5. **Planetary Councils.** When Left Greens become the US Congressional majority, movement activists will invite their coworkers to implement Parts 1–4 (above). At the same time, Greens in Congress would ratify their actions and invite all other countries to participate in the creation of a Planetary Council which would have responsibilities and duties on a global level that the Bioregional Councils would have locally.

**Creating a Green Society**

It is unlikely that Greens would be elected with a program like the Self-Management Forum (SMF) unless people were already putting many of its ideas into effect on their own. This has already happened many times this century. The best-known examples are Russia in 1903 and 1917, Seattle in 1919, Turin in 1920, Spain in 1936, Hungary in 1956, Chile and Portugal in the early 1970s, and Poland in 1980. And there are hundreds of less well-known in-
cidents of people taking over and running their own workplaces. These efforts at self-management tend to happen when people feel that there are no other options for preventing old social structures from destroying their lives. Spontaneous takeovers tend to occur during times not unlike the current world-wide ecological devastation. A Green Congress would have less of a role in initiating workplace self-management than it would in preserving it and helping it to become the basis of building empowering relationships in all areas of social life.

Large production units such as steel mills and bus factories will need to decide if they wish to be a collective (where people who work together live separately) or if they desire a more thorough transformation into a commune (by setting aside a common living area for co-workers). Others will create communes which balance a desire to produce relatively little with an expectation that they will consume less than most. Family farms and other small businesses will flourish since they are based on relatives or friends working together rather than the exploitation of wage labor.

The following five tendencies are examples of the types of values to which a green society should give birth.

1. **A green society will have a tendency toward ecological wisdom which includes (a) changes in goods which are produced, (b) changes in the process of production, (c) elimination of uncontrollable growth, and (d) maximization of efficiency in production.**

A primary goal of green restructuring should be maximizing the quality of life of every person on the planet while simultaneously minimizing the total quantity of manufactured objects. A clear example is transportation. A green government would ask those involved in producing cars to redesign factories to create mass transportation systems, while reducing the amount of raw materials used. A major component would be striving toward a closed-loop system, which uses the by-products of transportation and other systems as input for new production.

2. **A green society will have a tendency towards social empowerment through (a) internal rotation within productive units, (b) maximum self-determination of supply routes between productive units, and (c) self-government by production councils.**

Because of their unique ability for self-conscious thought, humans need to exercise cautious judgement in their employment of the world’s resources. Likewise, some individuals will be called by their workgroup to function as coordinators of production because of their abilities. It is the responsibility of these particular individuals to use their power wisely and relinquish it frequently. It is our responsibility as a movement to develop social structures which ensure this relinquishing occurs as scheduled.

Just as positions of authority within productive units should not be static, there should not be a fixed system determining where an enterprise obtains its source materials and to whom it supplies its finished product. Each productive unit should arrange these with other enterprises, according to the quality of products they create and their reliability in delivery.

3. **A green society would reduce the remaining traces of social disempowerment, including (a) ownership of productive resources, (b) wage labor, and (c) work as a separate area of life.**

Left Greens do not support "ownership" in any form: neither corporate ownership nor workers’ ownership nor municipal ownership. "Ownership" means exclusion: "this factory is mine; it is not yours; I can kill you if you try to share it; I can create 'waste' from what I 'own'; I want a State with weapons of violence to guarantee my 'ownership.'" Left Greens support "stewardship," "coordination," or "facilitation." A group of people who intimately know a part of the earth better than others may be asked to use their collective wisdom to coordinate productive harmony with that part of the earth. But they do not "own" it, with "ownership 'rights' of exclusion, contamination and destruction.

While we should not make a rigid blueprint for the "structure" of a green society, we can be very specific about prohibiting inhuman practices. Just as our grandparents said that serfdom and slavery were incompatible with human freedom, we have the responsibility to affirm that people selling themselves into slavery on an hourly basis (wage labor) is incompatible with a society striving toward empowerment.

4. **A green society would reduce extremes of personal wealth and poverty (a) within productive units, (b) between productive units of a bioregion, and (c) between bioregions of the planet.**

Lavish personal consumption is incompatible with human decency. Current social systems are based on the assumption that those who produce more should have more material rewards. This is not a viable method of encouraging social contributions. It leads to overconsumption by a few. It causes starvation and death of those crowded out of market production. It reinforces the feeling that possession of objects is a sign of personal worth, thereby feeding into the culture of consumption. It dehumanizes production and rarely provides the most to those who contribute the most to society. Instead, it rewards those who become experts at manipulating the reward system. One task of building a green economy is developing non-material rewards such as recognition that can effectively replace the accumulation of objects.

5. **A green economy would expand voluntary labor and free consumption.**

There are several ways that we can build on the idea that
people should contribute according to their abilities and consume according to their needs. For example, there are many areas of economic life where "free" consumption is already the norm: roads, parks, water, etc. We can immediately expand free consumption to include public transportation, food, clothing, medical care and basic housing. Many areas of "free consumption" of luxuries can be created through "free availability" rather than "free ownership." Though not everyone in the world can "own" a VCR and personal computer, there is no reason that there cannot be neighborhood centers in every municipality where people have unlimited access, with neighborhood-determined patterns of use rotation if over-demand becomes a problem.

Likewise, voluntary production would naturally exist in many areas that people find intrinsically interesting. Computer technology, teaching, medical research and automobile repair are just some of the activities which vast numbers of people would prefer to do "nothing at all." Other people would choose to farm, build buildings, or develop transportation systems because pride in the product of their collective creation is an important part of their self-conception. A green technology would redesign as much work as possible to make it inherently rewarding.

**Is It Possible?**

Creation of a green social system means creating a new system of moral values that guide our collective production of those things we need to survive and enjoy life. Ecological morality is collective or it is non-existent. People can no more build a moral system by individual acts of conscience than an individual can construct a steel mill. Creating a green morality requires tearing down pillars of greed, personal wealth, and blind obedience. We must actively dissolve institutions of domination if we are to establish empowering relationships with each other in our productive lives, relationships which will become the long-term structural supports for making ecological decisions.

Corporate executives are quite pleased when people respond to ideas for social transformation by saying, "It all sounds nice; but, it will never happen." The Left Green Network believes that all people are capable of understanding world difficulties and making the changes necessary for survival. The destruction of life on this planet is no longer a hypothetical fantasy. It has already begun. As you read this program, the greedy and the powerful continue their destruction of ecosystems which are essential for life. The truly utopian fantasy of our time is the misbelief that the world can somehow survive if the social diseases of capitalism and bureaucratism are allowed to dominate it. The idea that people can build a fair, just and fulfilling social system is not a utopian dream -- it is essential to our survival.

Don Fitz, with considerable help from St. Louis friends
St. Louis MO, May, 91 - LEGRPDOC320 words

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Cont'd from p. 2

Lynn Olsen $2; Thaddeus Metz $2; Mark Manning $15; Chris Fatz $5; William Friesser $2.35. Total $64.47 Thank you, comrades.

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Fraternally submitted,

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for the DB Committee
Stephen Coleman's "Daniel De Leon" (Manchester University Press, 1990) is a bizarre mixture of what's so and what's not so. We can here but briefly sample the mix.

(I) In Chapter 8 Coleman states:

"Chase's lecture was attacked in the People [read Daily People] by Arnold Petersen. Chase, whom De Leon respected as a man of intellectual substance [our emphasis], responded with an article, the main purpose of which was to demonstrate the relativity of Marxian economic analysis, but which also, and more interestingly, criticised those socialists who [he alleged] saw socialism as an inevitability...De Leon responded [in the Daily People] by repudiating such historical inevitabilism..."

Professor Coleman's bibliography includes the New York Labor News publication, "Marxian Science and the Colleges." He should look deeper into it! Here he will find that far from respecting Chase "as a man of intellectual substance," De Leon (as well as Petersen), while answering the "inevitability" allegation, "more interestingly" exposed Chase's demonstration of "the relativity of Marxian economic analysis" as being "false in dialectics; falser in economics and sociology."

(II) In Chapter 3 Coleman states:

"De Leon started his explanation [his address, "What Means This Strike?"] by addressing the fallacy that the capitalists, by paying wages, support the workers. In simple stages, De Leon demonstrated that the reverse is true: the workers produce all the wealth, but receive only a fraction of it back as wages: 'the profits that the capitalist pockets represent wealth that the wage workers produced and that the capitalist ... steals from them.'"

When Coleman thus agrees that the wages system is an exploitive system wherein profits represent capitalist theft, we naturally assume he agrees theft is the hallmark of this system. Imagine our amazement, therefore, when in Chapter 7 we read:

"It is clear that, while De Leon stood for the abolition of the wages system, and deposed the wage-dependent status of the worker under capitalism (which he regarded as a kind of slave status), in a socialist society he envisaged the emergence of a new wages system. He would see it as being a fairer wages system than the capitalist one. Those who did not work would receive no income; those who toiled most, and undertook the least pleasant, most socially valued, jobs would have to work less [hours] for their income. That certainly seems more just than under capitalism, where it is those who do not need to work who receive the highest incomes. But, however just as an ideal, it is not compatible with the claim to have abolished wage labour. It would not end the clock-watching and time-counting which is traditionally associated with work under capitalism. It would not remove work from the status of employment, whereby it becomes a portion of the day in which one is not free, but has to sell oneself, perform work as a
 commoditised cost in the production process, struggle to make a living. In short, wage slavery will not have been abolished: labour-time voucher slavery would prevail."

What a turnaround! Having declared himself agreed that the wages system means capitalist theft, having in effect agreed that capitalist (or statist) theft is the distinguishing characteristic of the wages system without which there would be no wages system, now Coleman proceeds to blur, evade and ignore this pivotal truth by attempting to define the thing as anything but the robber system it is! Thus:

* The wages system is a system of "clock watching and time counting." (Maybe yes, maybe no, but what was that about theft?)

* The wages system is a system wherein work is relegated to "the status of employment." (No matter that Capitalism has transformed individual labor into social labor, into a Labor Force capable of producing wealth in untold abundance and a Labor Force capable of emancipating itself from the status of wage slavery!)

* The wages system is a system in which workers are not "free" during "a portion of the day." (The Socialism envisioned by De Leon also expects workers to work during "a portion of the day"; ergo, according to Coleman, De Leon's concept of Socialism equates with wage slavery. Let's just ignore that bit about capitalist theft!)

* In De Leon's Socialism one would still (as under Capitalism) have to "struggle to make a living." Therefore "wage slavery will not have been abolished." (!)

The professor seems determined to dodge the issue! According to the publisher's jacket, "Stephen Coleman is Professor of History of Ideas on the London campus of Drew University, New Jersey, U.S.A." Well then, he must know that ideas are communicated through language, and that language, to be both intelligible and forthright, cannot afford to play fast and loose with established meanings of terms! In Marxian science "wage slavery" is no idle figure of speech denoting that wage workers have to "struggle" to make a living. The most undoubtedly do, some apparently get by with a modicum of effort. No, the wage worker, while neither a chattel slave nor a serf, is nevertheless every bit a slave in the sociologic meaning of the term. He has no choice but to work for a master and no choice (except within the narrowest of limits) as to the amount of his reward. So how can Coleman argue that social Labor under Socialism, having abolished economic class and class rule, having thereby abolished the conditions for the enslavement of Labor--will nevertheless labor under wage slavery?

As to the "struggle," it should be obvious that once workers claim social possession of the industrial means of life (thereby abolish wage slavery)--once they become masters of the industrial complex and its production potential--in short, once they end the CLASS struggle, they will be on their way towards both abolishing poverty and vastly improving their working conditions.

* In De Leon's Socialism one would still (as under Capitalism) "have to sell oneself, perform work as a commoditised cost in the production process."
Coleman should study his subject! Labor power is a commodity under Capitalism, not under Socialism. And herein, again, is the crux of the whole matter. Wage labor is exploited labor! Under Capitalism labor power is a commodity that fetches a price on the Labor Market. Its price (wage) is on average and in the long run the monetary expression of its exchange value (hereinafter referred to simply as value), which value is the sum of the values of commodities required to produce, maintain, and reproduce it. But that fact is merely the first thorn in the side of the colleges (these capitalist institutions of "higher" learning!); the second thorn is the cardinal Marxian revelation that labor power does not merely produce its own value "in the production process"—it produces more than its value! That something more, that surplus value is the source of capitalist profit, profit for which the capitalist pays the worker nothing in return! Contrary to Coleman, the labor voucher is not payment for a "commoditised cost"; far from limiting the earner to the value of his labor power it entitles him to the full social value of his labor! The labor voucher is thus not a badge of slavery but surest evidence of emancipated Labor!

(III) Flowing directly from the foregoing, we encounter in Chapter 7 the following further example of Colemania:

"The limitation of access to wealth by an exchange mechanism based on labour-time vouchers means effectively that a new monetary system would be established in De Leon's socialist society.... [De Leon] argued that 'Money is a necessary thing under a social system that produces for sale and not for use... Remove that and there is no money any more. Money vanishes absolutely...'. But what are labour-time vouchers, without which one is barred access to the common store of goods and services, if not money?"

The above "economics" are not merely erroneous, they also convey social implications which are nothing if not anti-social.

First, with an eye to Coleman's patently fallacious reasoning that "De Leon's socialist society" would be founded on "a new wages system" (a system in which "labour-time voucher slavery would prevail"), and bridging the same to his above correct observation that without labor vouchers "one is barred access to the common store of goods and services"—making this connection one has to conclude that in Coleman's opinion the essence of slavery is that the slave has to work for a living! If this is what he thinks he is not alone. Rulers and their beneficiaries throughout history appear to have equated work with slavery, not because they themselves learned by first hand experience that work can often be arduous but because they lived their lives in idleness on the backs of slaves. We repeat: Labor that frees itself from economic class and class rule will be slave labor no longer! At the same time we would warn that emancipated Labor would need to be ever vigilant, especially during Socialism's early years, against such probable unhealthy carry-overs from Capitalism as a bourgeois acquisitive fever that, untreated, might well seek new and subtle ways to again convert Labor into virtual slaves. In a word, we firmly believe that everyone able to work should work, and standing on this principle declare that "De Leon's socialist society," like Marx's socialist society, has no room for parasites!

Second: "But what are labour-time vouchers... if not money?" asks Coleman, as if this were a self-evident truth. What indeed? Fact is,
money is a medium of exchange but a medium of exchange is not necessarily money. The labor voucher will serve as a medium of exchange but will not thereby be money. For one thing, products in a socialist society will be "priced" according to the socially necessary labor time required to produce them, thus will accurately exchange with the labor time voucher--value for value. But price as the monetary expression of value is a quite different matter; here it is subject to demand and supply thus oscillates around the product's value, sometimes wildly so. For another, the labor voucher need not be, like money, a circulating medium of exchange; like a VISA card it might well identify the owner.

Third: Among much that is unintelligible in Coleman's "new" economics is his seeming effort to confirm that labor-time voucher "limitation of access to wealth" is "labour-time voucher slavery" by equating it to the "limitation of access to wealth" experienced by the wage slave. In this he outdoes the "best" college professors to date, even outdoes his own previous efforts! A syllogism does the trick: The wage worker is paid in money and the wage worker is a slave; the worker "in De Leon's socialist society" is paid in labor voucher "money," therefore the latter is also a slave. But of course this "logic" cannot stand, let alone crawl.

Coleman's economics is fiction built upon fiction. The ideal society envisioned by him appears to have two basic components: (1) Work is divorced "from the status of employment"; (2) There is unrestricted "access to the common store of goods and services."

As to (1): As previously touched on, what else could this entail but a retrogression from the marvels of productivity achieved by social labor? Coleman offers no explanation.

As to (2): If work is indeed to be divorced "from the status of employment," how could there possibly arise a "common store of goods and services" for any kind of access? much less that envisioned by Marx in the higher phase of Socialism (the higher phase of Communism), to wit: "From everyone according to his faculties, to everyone according to his needs!" Again Coleman fails to explain.

"What shall we do with a college professor?"

-- from the September, 1991 issue of the De Leonist Society Bulletin
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The earth is dying, said Helen Caldicott, a pediatrician and member of the Union of Concerned Scientists, in a recent address at USF, Tampa. Among the most critical problems are deforestation, global warming and increasing ultraviolet radiation due to ozone depletion. She told us that a prestigious panel of scientists have recently estimated that we have only about ten years left in which to reverse the problem of environmental destruction.

Whatever differences Socialists and Greens may have as to our respective vision of the final form of future society, they are minor compared to our general agreement that the present system must be radically changed and its priorities radically altered if there is to be a future. After all, citizens of the future will determine the kind of world they want. Our arguments and debates are pretty much academic. But we must come to terms with how to end the stranglehold a tiny minority has over the economy and how to empower society as a whole.

From a socialist view, we believe the first vital step is for working people to develop class consciousness, consciousness that we need as a class are basically identical with our needs as individuals.

In this connection, the so-called middle class of working people must come to realize that they are in fact part of the working class, people who live by working, not by owning. Now-a-days "middle class" workers are losing their jobs in increasing numbers. They must come to blame the system and not themselves!

We, the working class, are the heart of this nation. Nothing runs without our combined cooperative labor. We produce all the wealth, the social values, and do all the necessary work of society. The problem is that everything is produced for sale and profit for the benefit of a tiny minority, the capitalist class. Under the wage system, we receive only a tiny fraction of the value of our work, thereby limiting our buying power.

The surpluses that the capitalist cannot sell are at the heart of "overproduction," the unnecessary accumulation of inventories, layoffs, poverty, racism, sexism, environmental destruction, war, etc. Simply put, capitalism's fundamental contradiction is that workers do not control their own productive labor. The resulting mismanagement creates vast amounts of waste--useless commodities ranging from plastic Christmas widgets to sophisticated weapons systems, which will never be put to a socially useful purpose. The basic contradiction is partially evidenced by the fact that the collective wages and salaries of the world's working people cannot buy back the mountains of commodities and services produced for sale and profit.

Exploitation is a class act perpetuated by the capitalist class on the working class. As we workers come to understand this, its implications on a world scale become more clear. The knowledge that our interests are in common with workers of other nations could lead us to take measure to end war!

People cannot stop war by protesting and petitioning the politicians if it is contrary to business interest. Before WWI and WWII there were large anti-war movements. Eugene Debs was jailed for speaking against war while workers manned the trenches.

We Socialists believe only a massive organization of the working people in the industries and workplaces of the nation has the power to stop war and bring about fundamental change. Should we refuse to make and transport the weapons, provide the food and clothing and fill the military posts, there would be no war. Because
we are essential to the operation of the entire economy, society could not function even one day without us.

The socialist program for fundamental change advocates a twofold strategy. First, we working people must organize a labor party based on the class struggle and leadership drawn from our own ranks. The party would demand, via the ballot, that all private property in the means of production and distribution be converted to social ownership democratically controlled by the useful producers themselves. Secondly, we must organize Socialist Industrial Unions to back up the right of the majority as expressed by the ballot as well as to form the framework of future society.

Socialist Industrial Unions are socialist because their goal is social ownership of industry, the land and resources; industrial, because future society will be democratically guided by industrial vote (we will vote at work); and unions because in unity there is strength.

The people will then build their new governing organizations based on the industries. They will elect their immediate management and councils in each plant, school, hospital, etc. elect local and national councils from their individual industry, and send representatives to an all-industrial congress which will replace the present property-based government. Production will be carried on for need rather than sale and profit. Concerns for waste and environment will be paramount and cooperative producers will receive the full value of their labor rather than a wage. As indicated above, only the majority, the free citizens of the future shall decide whether to decentralized or regionalize production or to make other alterations which may be necessary.

COMMITTEE FOR SOCIALIST UNION
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Dear readers,

To a greater degree than non Marxists believers in the teachings of Marx and DeLeon believe that their thinking is correct and that they are dedicated to change the world. With the increase of monopoly and international capitalism the defiant shouts of revolutionary workers got softer, not louder as we hoped for. In the last few decades the real wages of the average worker has fallen a lot and so called organized labor has lost members. The membership of left wing and revolutionary parties has fallen off because hope for social change in a popular direction has diminished. With the rapid changes in the Soviet Union and the slower changes in Red China, many Leninists have become rebels without a cause. Under present circumstances the times do not cry out for a great solution because only the inevitable collapse of capitalism can create the need for basic socialist science of Marx and DeLeon.

What is best for believers in a socialist future is to be active in a fraternal but non revolutionary way just to preserve our revolutionary ideas, create more unity among ourselves, to sharpen our thinking, increase our concern for each other and become more convinced that in unity is strength. Daniel DeLeon referred to those who were with him for revolution "the salt of
the earth". We will be able to play the revolutionary role DeLeon dedicated his life to if we are able and ready to speak out with a true and strong voice when the public sees capitalism as unacceptable because its crises has gone too far.

Fraternally yours,
Monroe Prussack

THE SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY 1876-1991
A Short History

By Frank Girard and Ben Perry

LIVRA BOOKS announces the publication of the first full history of the Socialist Labor Party. Written from a non-partisan viewpoint, this 112-page paperback treats the various personalities and events since the party's inception including its dynamic theoretician Daniel De Leon, its important role in launching the IWW and the splits that gave rise to the Socialist and Communist parties.

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