

The Green Movement Doesn't Need a Political Party

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The Green movement was originally a loose coalition or network of six main constituencies: radical ecologists, peace activists, feminists, social justice activists, decentralists, and participatory democrats. The basic socioeconomic and political principles of these six groups are essentially anarchist — that is, they imply opposition to hierarchy, bureaucracy, patriarchy, authoritarianism, and the State. Hence they also imply opposition to the electoral political system, which is thoroughly hierarchical, bureaucratic, patriarchal-authoritarian, and statist.

Green political activity at the national or state level merely ratifies the statist electoral system. There may be something to be said for limited participation by Greens in local elections, since as Bakunin recognized, local politics is often permeable to influence by ordinary citizens (though in a huge city like (e.g.) Los Angeles, this is probably not true).

The State — along with the corporate industrial system it serves — is the root cause of the ecological crisis and also of the main problems addressed by feminist, social-justice, and peace activists (e.g. discrimination, wealth disparity, militarism, etc.) These problems will never be solved until the State and capitalism are dismantled and replaced by a decentralized federation of worker-controlled enterprises which are responsive to local participatory-democratic community assemblies in which Green principles of social and ecological responsibility prevail.

Creating this new society from the ground up is the goal that Greens should be working toward, through local grassroots organizing, by forming affinity groups, communes, neighborhood action committees, community assemblies, worker-controlled business, etc., and by engaging in many other forms of both “negative” (disruptive) and “positive” (constructive) direct action. We should not pursue the misguided statist goal of electing candidates to state and national legislatures, which is a waste of time because it coopts and diverts our energies from more radical and effective forms of activism.

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