The Greens agenda, in their own words

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For years, the Greens have been treated as a political curiosity. They won a spot or two in the Senate, but were absent from the real place of political power, the House of Representatives. That has now changed. They will have more senators from July 2011, and a seat in the House. They are in an alliance with the minority Labor government nationally and in Tasmania.

Despite their environmentalism, "the Greens are not a single issue party."[1] Their objective is: "to transform politics and bring about Green government."[2] They are part of a worldwide movement that is actively engaged in the political process[3] and aims at a radical transformation of the culture that underpins Western civilisation.

The Greens should be subjected to the same scrutiny as any other political party.

To comprehend the Greens' political ideology, it is necessary to understand the historical roots of both our own western, liberal democratic culture – and that of the Greens.

Western civilisation

Shared to some extent by all liberal democracies, Australia's values have been adapted to our unique setting. These values reflect strong influences on Australia's history and culture including: our Judeo-Christian religious and ethical heritage; a British Parliamentary democracy embracing an earlier Roman understanding of the importance of the law; and the spirit of the European Enlightenment, with its reliance on the empirical and the scientific.

Christianity in particular, building on the Greek and Jewish traditions, insisted on the dignity of all humans.[4] Based on the belief that men and women are created in the image and likeness of God, the idea of intrinsic human dignity gradually shaped European civilisation.

The idea of human dignity was also propounded by the Enlightenment thinker, Immanuel Kant, who argued: "Everything has either a price or a dignity. Whatever has a price can be replaced by something else as its equivalent; on the other hand, whatever is above all price, and therefore admits of no equivalent, has a dignity. But that which constitutes the condition under which alone something can be an end in itself does not have mere relative worth, i.e., price, but an intrinsic worth, i.e., a dignity."[5]

Kant's famous imperative upheld human dignity: "Act so that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of another, always as an end and never as a means only."[6] As Michael Novak observes, Kant's formulation is "a repetition in non-biblical language of the humanistic half of the essential teaching of Judaism and Christianity: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'[7]

The centrality of human dignity is reflected in many national and international proclamations. The primary and self-evident truth, according to the American founders, is the equality of all men and women: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."[8]

Some 170 years later, in the wake of the massive assault on human dignity during two world wars, many in the international community demanded the protection of human rights. In her narrative history of the drafting of the United Nations *Declaration of Human Rights*, Mary Ann Glendon describes how this international instrument based on the rights of individuals and their inherent dignity was created.[9] Rene Cassin, a French jurist, conceived the Universal Declaration as a gateway to a better world built on the foundations of dignity, liberty, equality and brotherhood.[10] The first words in the preamble of the document reflect the primacy of human dignity: "Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world."[11]

This emphasis on the inherent dignity of the individual was also reflected in the development of the Common Law.[12]

The inherent dignity of the individual is at the foundation of human freedom. If individual liberty is not predicated on inherent human dignity, then what is its foundation? Anything else is ultimately arbitrary.[13] Once dignity is undermined, freedom is in danger. The consequence is George Orwell's description in *Animal Farm* of the loss of freedom: "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others."[14]

The Greens

Tasmania

In their manifesto, *The Greens*, Bob Brown and Peter Singer identify the origins of the Australian greens movement in two strands. The first strand has its origins in the Tasmanian Wilderness Society,[15] and the election of Norm Sanders, Gerry Bates and Bob Brown to the State Parliament.[16] By 1989, the Greens had secured five seats and held the balance of power. In a forerunner to more recent events in Tasmania, both major political parties had said prior to the election that they would not deal with the Greens.[17] Subsequently, Labor leader, Michael Field, did so, agreeing to "a raft of social, democratic and environmental reforms in return for the guarantee of office".[18] Field later regretted the decision, after the Greens had set out on a radical agenda.[19] The subsequent advance of the Greens in state and national Parliaments is well-known.

Jack Mundey and the green bans

The Greens party however had an earlier origin in the green bans applied by the Builders Labourers Federation in the 1970s in New South Wales.[20] Indeed the visit to Australia by the German activist, Petra Kelly, in 1977, was influential in the foundation of the German Greens.[21] The then leader of the BLF, Jack Mundey, was subsequently invited to conferences

in Europe and North America. Mundey, a Communist Party official, described himself as "an ecological Marxist".[22] Speaking years after the Communist Party folded, Mundey prophesied that "in the future there is a possibility of what I'd call a Green Red future of socialism".[23] In addition to Marx and Engels, Mundey was influenced by the overpopulation jeremiad of Paul Ehrlich.[24]

These two strands of the Greens are still evident today.

Ideologically driven

The Greens operate out of a set of ideological beliefs that extend beyond the warm, cuddly environmentalism they wrap themselves in.[25] Their policies, if ever enacted, would radically change the economic and social culture of Australia.

John Black has analysed Green voters over a series of elections.[26] Those who vote Green as their primary vote are: "the *Don's Party* group that used to be in the ALP in the sixties and seventies: young university students or graduates, frequently working or still studying in academia, no kids, often gay, arts and drama type degrees or architecture where they specialise is designing environmentally friendly suburbs, agnostic or atheist, often US or Canadian refugees from capitalism, but well paid in professional consulting or media jobs".[27]

The Party has been infiltrated at the parliamentary level by members of the hard left. New South Wales senator-elect, Lee Rhiannon, is a former member of the Moscow-aligned Socialist Party of Australia. Her parents were prominent members of the Communist Party.

The new Member for Melbourne, Adam Bandt, was a radical student activist. He once attacked the Greens as a "bourgeois" party. Writing on a Marxist website in the 1990s, Mr Bandt attacked capitalism, arguing that ideological purity was paramount. It is clear from his 1995 comments – "Communists can't fetishise alternative political parties, but should always make some kind of materially based assessment about the effectiveness of any given strategy come election time" – that Bandt views the Greens as a vehicle for his ideological pursuits.

Ecological Marxism

No description of the Greens seems more accurate than Jack Mundey's own description of "ecological Marxism". This sums up the two core beliefs of the Greens. First, the environment is to be placed before all else. This is spelt out in the first principle in the *Greens Global Charter*: "We acknowledge that human beings are part of the natural world and we respect the specific values of all forms of life, including non-human species." [28]

Secondly, the Greens are Marxist in their philosophy, displaying the same totalitarian tendencies as all previous forms of Marxism. By totalitarian, I mean the subordination of the individual and the impulse to rid society of all elements that, in the eyes of the adherent, mar its perfection.

According to the Greens ideology, human dignity is neither inherent, nor absolute, but relative. Humans are only one species amongst others. As Brown and Singer write: "We hold that the dominant ethic is indefensible because it focuses only on human beings and on human beings who are living now, leaving out the interests of others who are not of our species, or not of our generation."[29]

They equate humans with animals: "The revolutionary element in Green ethics is its challenge to us to see ourselves in universal terms... I must take into account the interests of others, on the same footing as my own. This is true, whether these others are Victorians or Queenslanders, Australian or Rwandans, or even the nonhuman animals whose habitat is destroyed when a forest is destroyed."[30]

> *"the Greens are Marxist in their philosophy"*

Peter Singer charges that humans are guilty of "speciesism", that is, preferring their own species over all others. It leads him to argue in favour of infanticide and doctor assisted suicide on one hand; and bestiality on the other, provided there is mutual consent![31]

Singer's influence is evident in the Greens' ideology. He not only co-authored the Greens' manifesto with Bob Brown, but stood as a candidate for the party in Kooyong in 1994, and subsequently as a Senate candidate.[32]

The goddess Gaia

The Green movement projects the whole planet with a spiritual dimension. The British chemist, James Lovelock, described the Earth as a complex living organism, of which humans are merely parts. He named this planetary organism after the Greek goddess who personified the earth – Gaia – and described "Her" as "alive."[33]

This revolutionary belief involves the creation of a new pagan system, concerned not with the relationship between humans and a creator, but based on a deification of the environment.

For the Greens, a pristine global environment represents earthly perfection. It underpins their "ecological wisdom"[34] and is at the core of the new ethic.[35] It is to be protected at all costs. Hence, all old growth forests are to be locked up;[36] logging is to be prohibited; wealth is to be scorned;[37] economic growth is opposed;[38] exclusive ownership of property is questioned;[39] there should be a moratorium on fossil fuels exploration;[40] dam construction should be discouraged;[41] genetic engineering and agricultural monoculture is rejected;[42] world trade should be reduced;[43] and a barter economy encouraged.[44]



It explains why the Greens believe the world's population is excessive and should be reduced,[45] and why human consumption should be cut.[46]

The Greens also "call for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to be amended to include rights to a healthy natural environment and intergenerational rights to natural and cultural resources".[47] The Greens would then be able to rely on international courts to press their agenda. It also explains their concept of "intergenerational rights"[48] which is squarely aimed at the defence of their belief in "Gaia", or the perfect pristine earthly environment.

Faith and belief

For many Greens supporters, environmentalism is ultimately an article of faith and belief. This is best illustrated in the controversy surrounding the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [IPCC]. It is now clear that the process of "establishing" human-caused global warming has been manipulated by a small group of people, using mutual peer processes, and claiming to speak for many more scientists who had little input and no real opportunity to review the final documents. The closed-shop nature of the process is counter to the scientific empiricism of the Enlightenment, and marks another significant break with traditional Western culture

To Greens believers, this is of little consequence. Ultimately, global warming is a matter of faith.

Similarly Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth*. Perhaps one of the most dramatic scenes in the film is the depiction of an ice-wall collapsing which viewers are led to believe is real. However, the scene was taken from a Hollywood movie, *The day after tomorrow*.[49]

Despite the fact that a British court found the film contained significant errors,[50] many environmentalists continue to believe it is true. Worse still, the film is now being proposed for the National Curriculum in Australian schools.

The Greens belief in their environmental nirvana manifests itself in a new coercive utopianism.

Unless we understand the ideological foundations of the Greens, we will fail to effectively address the challenge of their revolution. We will be left debating

instrumental outcomes, as if they are based on the same cultural and philosophical foundations that underpin western civilisation. What the Greens present is the cutting edge of a clash within western civilisation itself.[51]

Greens policies

The Greens 'ecological wisdom' is the principle upon which all other policies are founded. [52] It shapes their views about every aspect of public policy. It is the foundation of their new ethic. [53]

Economics

The centrality of the environment is the foundation of the Greens economic policies: "Human societies exist within, and are dependent upon, natural systems; resource management is, therefore, central to good economic management."[54] "Economic development must be compatible with, ***and subservient to***, ecological sustainability."[55] The Greens advocate high levels of state ownership in the economy and an expanded role for the bureaucracy, including an extensive international regulatory bureaucracy.[56]

Wealth and taxes

Brown and Singer questioned economic growth,[57] advocated higher taxes,[58] sought the introduction of death duties[59] and resource taxes.[60]

Wealth is scorned: "Labor and Liberals share the same myopic vision of what they want to bring about for Australians: more and more individual wealth, measured in money alone."[61] The fact that wealth generation has resulted in economic prosperity for both individuals and the nation, and lifted many people out of poverty is ignored.

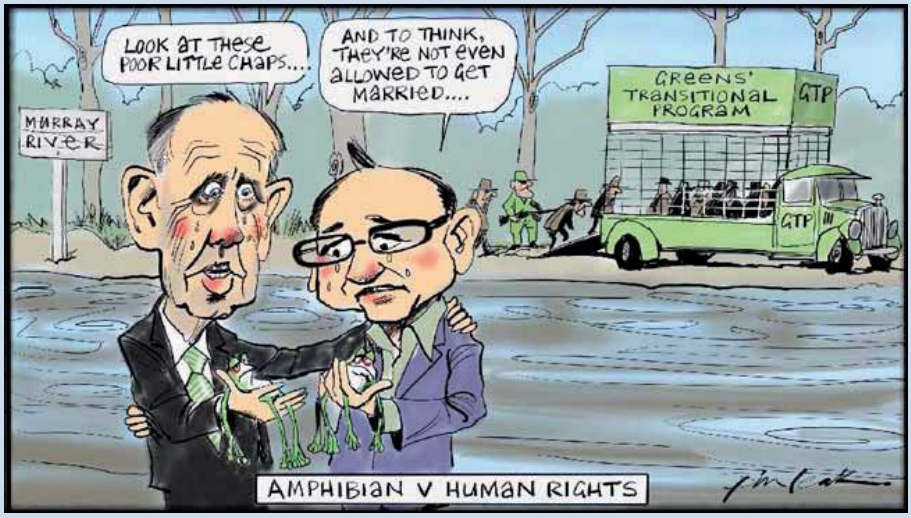
The Greens are a high taxing party whose policies include removing FTB on vehicles, abolishing the Private Health Insurance rebate, taxing family trusts like companies, increasing top marginal tax rates, introducing death taxes and increasing the company tax rate.[62]

Energy

The rapid increase in the standard of living of humanity and the reduction of global poverty is largely due to the energy revolution of the past century. We only have to consider a world without the energy sources that fuel our transport, manufacturing, businesses, communications, agriculture and households, to appreciate how readily available energy has reshaped the world in one of the most significant ways in human history. The policies of the Greens would place much of this at risk.

The Greens support a moratorium on all new fossil fuel exploration and development.[63] They are opposed to building any more coal-fired power stations,[64] and would pressure existing ones by prohibiting any public funding of refurbishments.[65] They would also prohibit the opening of new mines *or expansion of any existing mines*,[66] hence phasing out coal exports, ending one of Australia's largest export industries.

The Greens would force up the price of electricity and other forms of energy significantly: "energy prices should reflect the environmental and social costs of production and use."[67] This insistence on new green energy would be much more expensive for individuals and businesses.



Bill Leak portrayed Greens leader Senator Bob Brown and Adam Bandt, the lone Greens MP in the House of Representatives, in this cartoon in* The Australian *(16/10/10) – satirising their stated priority of legalising homosexual marriage.

Social policies

Population and the environment

The Greens social policies are linked to their belief in the primacy of the environment. Brown and Singer commence their Greens manifesto by reference to the alleged overpopulation of the world.[68] "Little is being done to discuss slowing population growth," they later complain.[69]

The theme is taken up in the *Global Charter* which advocates "eliminating the causes of population growth".[70] Elsewhere, the Greens propose limiting the expansion of cities,[71] opposing freeways and imposing eco-taxes.[72] The Greens state that "population policy should not be driven by economic goals or to counter the effects of an ageing population"[73] This informs what the Greens mean when they insist on "a population policy directed towards ecological sustainability in the context of global social justice".[74]

Greens' policy subjugates the individual to the environment. It repeats the Malthusian fear of global overpopulation, contrary to the latest demographic evidence.[75] Combined with a rejection of economic growth, the Greens' future is the civilisational death already underway in much of Europe.[76]

Life issues and marriage

This ideology is manifest in the Greens approach to life issues – infanticide, assisted suicide and euthanasia – where a person has a right to commit suicide, and be assisted if necessary. The Greens policies support euthanasia; Peter Singer has been an advocate of it and infanticide; the euthanasia practitioner, Dr Philip Nitschke, stood as a Greens candidate in the Northern Territory.

The Greens believe that human (and non-human) sexual relations are based simply on consensual activity. Hence marriage can be between any two persons, regardless of gender.

Drug laws

In their Greens manifesto, Brown and Singer quote Phillip Adams' comments that "we must scrap our drug laws".[77] "Eventually, Australia, like other countries, will have to make peace with illicit drugs," they add.[78]

Following widespread criticism of their 2004 policy of providing addicts with a regulated supply of heroin and ecstasy,[79] the Greens now state that they "do not support the legalisation of currently illegal drugs".[80] However, they have recently stated their continued support for supervised injection rooms.[81]

Education

The Greens argue for the reduction in "the total level of Commonwealth funding for private schools to 2003-04 levels".[82] This would cut funding by $427 million per year for Catholic schools alone.[83] The Greens would place limits on the number of new private schools, and use anti-discrimination laws to prevent religious schools from giving priority to committed practising Christians when employing teachers. They would also move to stop private schools having control over their

own enrolments,[84] and end the schools chaplaincy program.[85]

Security

The Greens' anti-Americanism is well known. They would end the ANZUS treaty unless Australia's membership can be revised in a manner which is consistent with Australia's international and human rights obligations; close all existing foreign bases in Australian territory and end foreign troop deployment, training and hosting on Australian territory; and reduce Australia's military expenditure.[86]

Governance

The Greens documents speak of "participatory democracy" as one of their foundation principles,[87] but they favour global and central decision-making: hence the creation and expansion of international bodies, including the United Nations and new world environmental courts.[88]

While Greens' leader, Bob Brown, is currently advocating "states rights" to repeal the Commonwealth legislation about euthanasia, and claiming that the decision of the Commonwealth Parliament pursuant to s 121 of the Australian *Constitution* is undemocratic, he has been an active advocate of actions to override State laws on two occasions.[89] In 1996, Brown wrote: "There are other, virtually untried, powers that the federal government could use to protect the environment. Among them is the power granted under the constitution to the Commonwealth to regulate trading entities, including logging, mining and energy corporations."[90] Clearly the use of Constitutional powers is good if it is to advance a Green cause, but bad if to achieve an outcome they reject.

Conclusion

What is at stake in the Greens "revolution" is the heart and soul of western civilisation, built on the Judeo-Christian/Enlightenment synthesis that upholds the individual – with obligations and responsibilities to others, but ultimately judged on his or her own conscience and actions – as the possessor of an inherent dignity and inalienable rights. What is also at stake is the economic system that has resulted in the creation of wealth and prosperity for the most people in human history.

References

1. Bob Brown and Peter Singer (1996) *The Greens* [Text, Melbourne], [hereinafter *The Greens*] 192.
2. *The Greens*, Preface.
3. *The Charter of the Global Greens*, Canberra, 2001 [hereinafter *Charter*] 1.
4. For example: "Insomuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me;" (*Matthew* 25:40) and the commandment to "love your neighbour as yourself" (*Luke* 10: 25. See also 1 *Corinthians* 13). Earlier Jewish tradition contained many similar ideas. (*Leviticus* 19:18).
5. Immanuel Kant (1785) *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*. Trans. Lewis White Beck [New York: Library of Liberal Arts, 1959], 53.
6. *Ibid.*, 429.
7. Michael Novak, (2002) 'Human dignity, personal liberty: Themes from Abraham Kuyper and Leo XIII', *Journal of Markets & Morality*, 5 (1) 59 – 85, 67, quoting *Leviticus* 19:18.
8. United States Continental Congress (1776) *Declaration of Independence*.
9. Mary Ann Glendon (2001) *A world made new* [Random House, New York].
10. Ibid., 174.
11. United Nations (1948) *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, Preamble.
12. See Sir Edward Coke, *Calvin's Case* (1608) 7 Coke Rep 12 (a); 77 Eng Rep 392; and Sir William Blackstone, " Of the nature of laws in general" in *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, Vol 1 [Macmillan, London, 1979] 29-30.
13. See John Locke (1681) *Second Treatise of Government*, Ch 11, Sec 135.
14. George Orwell (1945) *Animal Farm*.
15. *The Greens*, 70.
16. *Ibid.*, 71-72.
17. *Ibid.*, 74.
18. *Ibid.*, 74.
19. *Ibid.*, 76.
20. Bob Brown and Peter Singer (1996) *The Greens* [Text, Melbourne], 64 [hereinafter *The Greens*] See also Sara Parkin "The origins and future of Green parties: The UK, Europe and beyond," in Frank Zelko and Carolin Brinkmann (2006) *Green Parties: Reflections on the first three decades* [Heinrich Boll Foundation, Washington DC], 31. Note: Although Brown and Singer state that *The Greens* is "not a formal or official statement of Green policy", they also say that it is "generally consistent with the policies of the Australian Greens." (Page 2).
21. *The Greens*, 65.
22. Interview with Jack Mundey (October 6, 2000) at: http://australianbiography.gov.au/subjects/mundey/interview [hereinafter *Mundey interview*].
23. *Ibid.*
24. *Ibid.*
25. See for example *The Charter of the Global Greens*, Canberra, 2001 [hereinafter *Charter*] The Charter is a set of "the core beliefs and ideals" that Green parties hold in common: www.global.greens.org.au The Australian Greens are members of the Global Greens and were instrumental in the conference and charter.
26. John Black, *2010 election profile and some relevant documents*, [Australian Development Strategies Pty Ltd, 2010] See also: John Black "Wealthy Greens the new DLP" *Online Opinion*, June 11, 2010.
27. *Ibid*, 14.
28. *Charter*, 3.
29. *The Greens*, 44.
30. *Ibid.*, 55.
31. Peter Singer (2001) "Heavy Petting", *Nerve*.
32. The Greens, 87.
33. James E Lovelock, (1989) The ages of Gaia [Oxford University Press, Oxford]
34. *Charter*, 3.
35. *The Greens*, 51 ff.
36. *Greens website*, Environmental principles.
37. *The Greens*, 49-51.
38. *Ibid.*, 43.
39. *Charter*, 8.
40. *Charter*, 9.
41. *Charter*, 10.
42. *Charter*, 10.
43. *Charter*, 10 – 11.
44. *The Greens*, 149.
45. *The Greens*, 5, 42, 190; *Charter*, 1.
46. *Charter*, 5.
47. *Charter*, 12.
48. *Charter*, 12.
49. Noel Sheppard, "Gore uses fictional video to illustrate 'inconvenient truth'" *Newsbusters*, April 22, 2008, quoting script from the ABC TV (US) program *20/20*.
50. *Dimmock* v *Secretary of State for Education and Skills* [2007] EWHC 2288.
51. On the idea of a clash within western civilization more generally, see James Kurth, (1994) 'The real clash', *The National Interest*, 3 – 15. See also Robert P George (2001) *The clash of orthodoxies* [ISI Books, Wilmington, Delaware].
52. *Charter*, 3.
53. *The Greens*, 51.
54. The Australian Greens: http//greens.org/policies hereinafter *Greens website*. (Accessed November 7, 2010).
55. *Greens website* (emphasis added).
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57. *The Greens*, 43, 131.
58. *Ibid.*, 150, 161.
59. *Ibid.*, 150.
60. *Ibid.*, 151.
61. *Ibid.*, 49.
62. *Greens website*.
63. *Charter*, 9.
64. *Greens website*.
65. *Greens website*.
66. *Greens website* (emphasis added).
67. *Greens website*. See also *Charter*, 5.
68. *The Greens*, Preface.
69. *The Greens*, 42.
70. *Charter*, 5.
71. *Charter*, 14.
72. *Charter*, 15.
73. *Greens website*.
74. *Greens website*.
75. See for example: Nicholas Eberstat (2007) *Too many people?* [International Policy Network, London] and Nicholas Eberstat (2007) 'Global demographic outlook for 2025' *Speech*, Economic Conference on Demography, Growth and Wellbeing , Zurich [American Enterprise Institute, Washington DC].
76. *Id.*
77. *The Greens*, 177.
78. *Ibid.*, 180 – citing Dr Alex Wodak.
79. Australian Greens, *Policies*, 2004.
80. *Greens website*.
81. See www.victoriavotes.org.au [Hereinafter *Victoria Votes*] and Farrah Tomazin "Greens hold line on drugs" *The Age*, June 11, 2010.
82. *Greens website*.
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84. *Greens website*.
85. www.theage.com.au/national/greens-push-for-counsellors-not-chaplains-20100326-r37m.
86. *Greens website*, Peace and security policy.
87. *Charter*, 3 – 4.
88. *Charter*, 16.
89. The Greens, 39 (the Tasmanian Wilderness Case) and 107 – 08 (the Tasmanian Criminal Law Case).
90. Ibid., 41.