



saskatchewan  
**green**  
party

## A Publication of the Saskatchewan Green Party

"We are the flow.  
We are the ebb.  
We are the weaver.  
We are the web."

*A Green-Movement Chant from the 1980's*

"One impulse from a vernal wood  
May teach you more of man,  
Of moral evil and of good,  
Than all the sages can."

*William Wordsworth, The Tables Turned*

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## A POEM ABOUT TREES

*by Neil Sinclair*

A poem about trees  
Ever growing and renewing.  
Giving life and shelter to creatures  
Such as bees.  
From the air we breathe,  
To the shelter we live under,  
To the chairs we rest on,  
Trees are there one way or another.

## WELCOME TO THE WEAVER: AN INTRODUCTION

*by Dave Greenfield*

Back in the early days of the New Green Alliance, as our party was called in the beginning, we published a newsletter called the Weaver. We managed to publish several installments between 1999 and about 2002. Then our publishing seemed to taper off.

With the current atmosphere of renewal in our party, I offered to start publishing the Weaver again with myself as editor. We plan to publish four editions per year, around the times of the solstices and equinoxes. I hope that the content of our successive editions will speak to both current Green Party members and folks in the broader green and progressive movement. I also hope that our content will speak to people's hearts as well as minds, acknowledging you all as whole beings.

I think you will find that this issue has an enjoyable and thought-provoking variety of articles: from Naomi sharing her thoughts as our new leader, to Victor's piece on the guaranteed livable income, to my historical article on some of the very first Green Party activities in Saskatchewan in the mid 1980's, to various other pieces that comprise this issue.

If you think that this type of content can be improved upon, we certainly welcome articles from both members and supporters for future issues. We also accept letters to the editor which we may publish either in full or in part.

Once again, welcome. Have a seat. Make yourself at home.

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR LEADER

*by Naomi Hunter*

It is an honour to have won the leadership of the Saskatchewan Green Party and to share now in such renewal in the party and see such a growth of interest about us at this critical time.

Since the inception of the party in 1999, as the New Green Alliance, we have been a workshop of the hopes of Saskatchewan's grassroots and, together with the global Green movement, have championed the progressive values Saskatchewan people cherish. I find that our six core values of participatory democracy, non-violence, ecological wisdom, social justice, respect for diversity and sustainability, truly do speak to people across party lines, today more than ever. These Green values mean cherishing what nurtures us. They speak to what is best within us.

Lately, as I speak to people across the province about the Greens, I have encountered the misconception that we are "Conservative". The only truth I can see in that is that, progressive as we are, Greens espouse fiscal responsibility, following the example of Tommy Douglas' CCF government, which operated on balanced budgets. Saskatchewan's universal Medicare did not roll out all at once. The province implemented it in stages because we could not afford it otherwise. We hold to this tradition, and fiscally careful people who embrace our progressive policies can find their political home in the Saskatchewan Green Party.

The key Green policies, provincially and federally, are the most progressive policies put forward by any party, bar none. CBC's 2019 Federal Election Vote Compass app was quite right to place the Greens to the left of the NDP, based on the party platforms.

My entire adult life I have been inspired by the intelligence and workability of the Greens' policies, and their potential for achieving the fairness and well-being we deserve as citizens of Saskatchewan and Canada.

As we move into this 2020 provincial election, I find myself thinking about the many reasons why I am Green and why I feel so passionate about what we can accomplish in this election. I believe we are going to burst through into support we have never before achieved. I look forward to representing all of you in the Legislature.

I feel it is vitally important to keep talking about the strong policies we bring forward, the means to a better future, the inspiration for more and more people to join with us to secure that future:

- Universal Basic Income and Ending Poverty in Saskatchewan
- Confronting the Climate Crisis with renewable energy solutions, and uniting agricultural science with grassroots community ingenuity
- Local food security
- The Living Wage Mandate and extending the Workers' Right to Organize
- Alliance for Indigenous rights, deploying Indigenous wisdom, and aid for reunion of Indigenous youth with their traditions and languages
- Strengthening LGBTQ2S rights guarantees
- Pharmacare and Universal Dental care and Mental Health Support
- Affordable Housing Guarantees with Rent Controls
- Domestic violence research and care supports
- Strengthening Seniors' rights
- Creating a Disability Rights Code
- An Elimination of nuclear energy projects and a winding down of uranium mining
- Supporting Small Business
- Preservation and restoration of natural Saskatchewan land
- Furthering alliances for international Peace

The pandemic has shown us that the time for these Green policies is Now. We have seen that society can change when we are aware of a crisis. The new

heightened threat to our health and survival reminds us of the ongoing threat. The strength we use for one can be applied to the other as well. As we strive to secure the health of our children and grandchildren now, let us do the same for their health in the oncoming future!

I look forward to working with many of you during this election year. Please feel welcome to reach out anytime – I would love to hear from you.

- My phone number is 1-306-561-8880.
- My email is [naomi.hunter@saskgreen.ca](mailto:naomi.hunter@saskgreen.ca).
- I am Naomi Hunter on social media as well.

Let's make history and elect the first Green legislator on the Prairies!

Yours,  
Naomi Hunter  
Leader, Saskatchewan Green Party

## INCOME SECURITY FOR EVERYONE:

*by Victor Lau*

This is an unprecedented time for Universal Basic Income or, as the Green Party calls it, Guaranteed Livable Income.

"A Guaranteed Livable Income (GLI) would be an unconditional and universal income administered by federal governments and granted to individuals to ensure that no person's income falls below what is necessary for Health, Life, and Dignity."  
(<https://www.livableincome.org>)

COVID-19 has exposed Canada's Income Security apparatus for what it has been for a long time now: a failure. Income Security programs which are administered and delivered by the provinces and territories are neither at a level of reasonable "income" nor very secure.

Anyone who has taken the time to study Canada's welfare system or knows of friends/family on welfare has seen directly how inadequate the benefits really are. Some would argue being on welfare entitles you to additional benefits, but I am focusing exclusively on the income support side. Most welfare rates hover just below the \$10,000/year level and vary if you have

children/dependents. A single person who is deemed employable can get a high rate of \$11,383/year (Newfoundland & Labrador) to a low rate of \$7,437/year (Nova Scotia). Here in Saskatchewan we pay \$8,883/year. Most Canadians would find living on those amounts ongoing as quite distressing and demeaning.

The reason I believe we do not already have a GLI/UBI is because of how much Canadians and their elected governments believe in work: Hard Work. I do too. But believe me, the system is not designed for workers (hard or otherwise). It is designed to keep a fair number of people working just to survive and pay their taxes. Meanwhile, others can do very little and live a very generous lifestyle.

As a small-businessperson and 31-year active Union Member, I can speak to these inadequate designations. As a worker, I cannot write off car repairs on my income earned. But as a small business, I can do that.

As a worker, I am taxed more and more as I earn more income (the more I earn, the more taxes I will pay). There are generally 3 tax brackets in Canada (low, middle, high). But as a small business owner, I will only pay 9% of whatever I earn (no matter whether it's \$10,000 or \$10 million dollars).

Those are just 2 examples. I could go on to list many more. The point I am making is that GLI/UBI is a program that threatens that system of inequality.

GLI/UBI would give workers (the vast majority of the population) the same level of opportunity to be free. A poor person could now survive with more dignity. A disgruntled worker could quit their horrible job. A high-income person could quit too (likely would not, but they could!). This program would allow all Canadians the freedom to pursue whatever they wanted to pursue; to take care of children, to go back to school, to relax, to go on sabbatical, whatever...

The possibilities coming from a Guaranteed Livable Income are endless. The key is to dream, not to limit ourselves to what is, but to envision what could be. Tommy Douglas, a CCF Premier of Saskatchewan and NDP partisan, created one of Canada's most

cherished social programs: Medicare. Medicare has been with us for just over 50 years. People from both the Conservative and Liberal side of politics generally agree Medicare is a good program. It can be improved, but few would argue for wholesale dismantling of Medicare.

GLI/ UBI can be the next step in improving Canadians' living standards. It has been shown recently by frontline doctors that the number one determinant of health is income. The more income you have, the better your health generally is. This makes sense. With more money you can afford nutritious food, to take vacations, change jobs, have safe housing. Without adequate income none of those things listed comes easily.

Dr. Ryan Meili, now leader of the Saskatchewan NDP and official leader of the opposition in Saskatchewan, has stated, "I would like to see basic income achieved, whether that's on our own (in Saskatchewan) or with federal involvement. The bottom line is I think it's time for one province to truly take the leap in implementing a basic income." That was from an article posted on Basic Income Canada Network: "NDP Leadership Hopeful Says It's Time to Take the Leap on Basic Income" (August 14, 2017)

The Saskatchewan Green Party is way ahead of Dr. Meili and the NDP. Since the founding of the Saskatchewan Green Party (then called the New Green Alliance in 1999) we have been campaigning for a Guaranteed Livable Income. This culminated in the SGP making GLI a major plank in its platform in the 2011 and 2016 provincial elections (where the Party had full slates of Green candidates).

Now in 2020, the news is even better for GLI/UBI being possibly implemented across Canada in the near future.

As I mentioned in the beginning of this article COVID-19 and the following 10 weeks of imposed quarantine (so far) have produced a surprising but not totally unexpected high level of support for implementation of some sort of Universal Livable Income. This income must be easily accessible, without any (or very little) means-testing, cover every Canadian, and be of a "livable" amount. The

amazing thing is that the current CERB (Canadian Emergency Response Benefit) has given GLI/UBI advocates the means and ways to gather together all the supporters of implementing such a new social program and also is a live pilot that we can bring our design option(s) around.

The CERB is \$2000 per month for 4 months (and possibly might be extended). It covers vastly a huge swath of the working population who lost income or are without work due to COVID-19. So far, close to 8 million Canadians are on CERB. That is almost 1/5 of our entire national population. If the CERB program goes the full 4 months (March - June), the socio-economic data from this will be priceless. As well, the \$2000 per month seems to be a very well thought out income point. If done ongoing, that would give \$24,000 per year to any qualifying recipient. Most advocates of GLI/UBI see this as a very nice starting point; not too high and definitely not too low. The \$2000 per month amount of CERB is more than any provincial/territorial income support program anywhere in Canada. It is even higher than the highest amount possible under Alberta's AISH (Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped) program which pays \$19,786/year (\$1,648.83/month). Here in Saskatchewan, we have the second highest amount under SAID (Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability) at \$15,789/year (\$1,315.75/month). As you can see, CERB at \$2000 per month is the best income support amount by far!

Lastly, let me just highlight some of the incredible support that has popped up in the last 10 weeks to support implementation of GLI/UBI. First came the sudden support from Jagmeet Singh, leader of the federal NDP, who said, "CERB must be made universal." Then came various pundits and economists who stated that CERB could/should lead to a permanent form of GLI/UBI. Along those lines, there is a powerful well-financed network of wealthy business individuals across Canada (with many based in Ontario) who strongly support UBI being implemented. Their group is called UBI Works ([www.ubiworks.ca](http://www.ubiworks.ca)) and their spokesperson/ executive director is Floyd Marinescu who is the CEO of C4 Media. Floyd has seen, and believes in, the potential for UBI ever since the UBI pilot trial in Ontario was launched by former Premier Kathleen

Wynne in 2016. Unfortunately, the pilot trial was ended prematurely by Premier Doug Ford in March 2019. Data since analyzed by social scientists from participants of the UBI pilot trial indicate all positive social indicators of health went up, nothing negative seems to have occurred or been of significant note.

The final (but not insignificant) support recently came from 50 Canadian Senators who all signed a public letter asking the Prime Minister and his minority Liberal government to further explore the possibility and promise of a permanent new GLI/UBI social program post COVID-19 so as to better weather a future pandemic and to better improve the income support for all Canadians.

"A Universal Basic Income is something that Federal and Provincial Greens have been calling for since long before Elizabeth May was first elected to parliament in 2011. It's an idea that has gained support across the political spectrum. In particular, I am glad to see that the NDP is now also calling for a UBI. The current COVID-19 pandemic has brought to light those who are falling through the cracks within the Trudeau government's CERB benefit. Right now, the disabled, seniors and others most at risk are being failed by the current system. A UBI is the solution for COVID-19 and the future." Naomi Hunter, Saskatchewan Green Party Leader.

Now is the perfect time for all Green Parties across Canada to work together with these eclectic supporters of GLI/UBI to push for a new permanent National Income Support program that will finally eliminate poverty.

It just so happens that the Saskatchewan Green Party has an upcoming provincial election this fall. Let's make it count!

### Reference Notes:

A Guaranteed Livable Income (GLI) would be an unconditional and universal income administered by federal governments and granted to individuals to ensure that no person's income falls below what is necessary for Health, Life and Dignity.

[www.livableincome.org](http://www.livableincome.org)

Welfare Rates in Canada

<https://maytree.com/welfare-in-canada/canada/>

Small Business tax rate 2019

[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canada\\_small\\_business\\_tax\\_rate](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canada_small_business_tax_rate)

Medicare enacted in 1968

<https://canadiandimension.com/articles/view/the-birth-of-medicare>

Income level is #1 determinant of health

<https://www.google.ca/amp/s/www.thestar.com/amp/opinion/commentary/2015/08/26/basic-income-just-what-the-doctor-ordered.html>

Dr Ryan Meili quote

[http://www.basicincomecanada.org/tags/ryan\\_meili](http://www.basicincomecanada.org/tags/ryan_meili)

8 million on CERB

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/claims-report.html>

Jagmeet Singh, NDP Leader, CERB must be universal

[https://www.google.ca/amp/s/beta.ctvnews.ca/national/2020/4/11/1\\_4892157.html](https://www.google.ca/amp/s/beta.ctvnews.ca/national/2020/4/11/1_4892157.html)

and

<https://www.ndp.ca/news/singh-calls-direct-help-all-canadians-proposes-fixes-cerb>

Media pundits call for permanent income support program

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/article-cerb-and-other-coronavirus-benefits-wont-last-forever-or-will-they/>

Ontario BI pilot project

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-basic-income-pilot>

Ontario BI pilot project ended

Ontario's basic income pilot to end March 2019 |

CBC News - CBC.ca

<https://www.cbc.ca/amp/1.4807254>

Ontario BI pilot results analyzed

People kept working, became healthier while on basic income ...

<https://www.cbc.ca/amp/1.5485729>

Floyd Marinescu, spokesperson/executive director of A Canada Where Everyone Can Pursue Their ...

<https://www.basicincomecanada.org/floyd>

50 Canadian Senators sign open letter 50 Canadian Senators Call for a Minimum Basic Income

[https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/entry/cerb-universal-basic-income\\_ca\\_5ea09c04c5b6b2e5b83c4406](https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/entry/cerb-universal-basic-income_ca_5ea09c04c5b6b2e5b83c4406)

## VIRUS

### *A Poem by Dave Greenfield*

Imagine this virus came  
As a warning from the biosphere  
To tell us it is time  
To stop traveling by airplane everywhere,  
To stop letting our economy  
Expand and expand and expand,  
And to stop thinking  
That we have a right  
To do whatever we like  
All over the planet  
Regardless of consequences.

Imagine this virus came  
To tell us to live more humbly,  
To tell us to envision a future day  
When we live more simply and peacefully,  
And to tell us to treasure Planet Earth,  
All her forests, oceans, swamplands,  
Marshlands, rushing rivers, fields and streams.

Imagine  
What the world would be like  
If we listened  
To the advice of the virus  
If that is indeed its advice,  
And learned to live more simply,  
More humbly and gently.

Imagine its intention  
Is very much to be our teacher,  
To be a gentle spirit guide  
Comprised of small  
Multi-celled organisms,  
Organisms that go viral  
And spread so easily  
From person to person.

Imagine its purpose in the end  
Is to teach us the beauty  
Of being able to walk outside,  
Shake hands and embrace with friends,  
Build gentle beloved community,  
Share meals together,  
Share walks together,  
Share sweet conversation  
And gentle recreation.

If we learn all this  
The virus will have succeeded  
In its mission,  
And the biosphere can smile  
And dare to think  
That perhaps humanity  
Will take its last chance after all  
And swerve in time to avoid  
Cascading over the cliff  
And down into the rugged valley  
And fast-flowing river stream.

## FOR THE LOVE OF CREATION: A FAITH-BASED INITIATIVE FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

Canadian churches and faith-based organizations have a long history of work in ecological conservation, environmental activism, and advocacy for climate justice. To mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Earth Day, we are coming together on a journey of reflection, dialogue, discernment, advocacy, and action on the issue of climate change. You are invited to journey with us.

**For the Love of Creation - A Faith-based Initiative for Climate Justice** begins today with the support of a growing list of national churches, Christian international development agencies, and faith-based organizations. We come together as people of faith in the hopes of making a meaningful contribution in the next decade towards a sustainable future for all life on the planet.

Never before has the interconnectedness of all humanity – all of creation – been clearer than it is right now. The COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic has dramatically impacted every aspect of our lives. As is too often the case in times of difficulty, existing vulnerabilities are being exacerbated; many are dying and many more faces economic ruin. The way we respond is of paramount importance.

Even before the emergence of COVID-19, we knew that we were entering into a crucial decade for climate action. Now more than ever, we see devastating economic, political, cultural, and social fissures. Indigenous peoples have long reminded us of the interconnectedness of all creation. Respecting

this interconnectedness is critical for ecological and economic integrity, right relations with Indigenous peoples, and for holistic recovery from the pandemic.

**For the Love of Creation** aims to engage people individually and in community, as congregations and organizations, all across the country in a climate conversation centred on three themes:

1. Theological reflection. Together, we will create a space for collaborative responsive theology, exploring our relationship with the Creator and creation, and encouraging theologically grounded and relevant dialogue about climate justice and global warming.
2. Local and congregational engagement. We will endeavor to increase dialogue and reduce polarization in the climate change conversation in Canada; to build consensus on the actions needed to build a sustainable future for all.
3. Political advocacy. As people of faith, we will urge the government of Canada to meet and ultimately exceed our Paris climate commitments by investing in a just transition and establishing a fair and inclusive economy. Honouring the rights of Indigenous peoples and incorporating Indigenous knowledge and experience into any proposed solutions is essential to this work.

Our contribution will also respond to feelings of ecological grief arising from the loss of species and destruction of ecosystems as well as eco-anxiety stemming from the awareness of risks related to climate change impacts. This will be done through pastoral care and ceremony, building community resilience, and by taking collective action for climate justice.

**For the Love of Creation** will explore how we can work together to build healthy, resilient communities, and a better future for all beings in Creation.

The churches and organizations listed below have committed to working together for at least the next eighteen months; beginning in the fall of 2021 participants will recommit on a year-by-year basis. We invite you to join us, **For the Love of Creation**.

For more information or to get involved, contact a member of the campaign coordinating committee:

- Beth Lorimer, KAIROS ([blorimer@kairoscanada.org](mailto:blorimer@kairoscanada.org))
- Karri Munn-Venn, Citizens for Public Justice ([karri@cpi.ca](mailto:karri@cpi.ca))
- Sue Wilson, Canadian Religious Conference ([swilson@csjcanada.org](mailto:swilson@csjcanada.org))
- Luke Stocking, Development and Peace ([luke.stocking@devp.org](mailto:luke.stocking@devp.org)).

*Participants to date:*

- *The Anglican Church of Canada (Primate and National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop)*
- *Development and Peace - Caritas Canada*
- *Canadian Religious Conference*
- *Citizens for Public Justice*
- *The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada*
- *Faith & the Common Good*
- *Global Catholic Climate Movement Canada*
- *KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives*
- *Mennonite Central Committee Canada*
- *The Presbyterian Church in Canada*
- *The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF)*
- *Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)*
- *Federation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Canada*
- *OMI Notre Dame du Cap; OMI Lacombe Province*
- *Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie*
- *Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception; Scarboro Missions*
- *Our Lady's Missionaries*
- *Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada.*

*(While the Green Party has no formal affiliation with any of the above organizations, we welcome the efforts of all communities who strive for climate justice and general ecological balance.)*

## SMALL MODULAR REACTORS

by Neil Sinclair

Small Modular Reactors, or SMRs, are a type of nuclear fission reactor which are smaller than conventional power reactors. The largest can be up to 300 megawatts in size under Canadian regulations.

Their alleged advantage is that they are to be modular in construction and therefore could be manufactured in a factory at lower costs than a conventional reactor.

However, the financial advantages of economies of scale are lost by building many small reactors vs one large reactor.

All the inherent problems of nuclear power still exist, from the waste from uranium mining to long lasting radioactive waste left over from power production.

Uranium mining leaves long term low level radioactive waste that lasts at least as long as the high-level nuclear waste from reactors. As well, the uranium mine tailings contain toxic substances such as arsenic and nickel which can poison the surrounding environment. All the problems of uranium mining are still there with SMRs.

Similarly, the high-level nuclear waste from SMRs must be stored safely and not allowed to leak into the environment for tens of thousands of years. The security risk is always present as well as the risk of a serious accident.

There have been no actual SMRs constructed as there has not been an SMR factory yet built. It is estimated that the cost of building an SMR factory would eliminate any perceived financial advantages of modular construction.

There are many SMRs in the design stage with very few actually finished being designed.

The time frame for SMRs to actually be finished in design, an SMR factory to be built and then an SMR to actually be constructed on site is well over a decade, making SMRs completely ineffective in the

fight against climate change. The technology is simply too slow to implement.

Recently the governments of Saskatchewan, Ontario and New Brunswick entered into an agreement to cooperate in the design of a particular model of SMR. So far nothing has come of this.

For all of the above reasons, I strongly encourage the Saskatchewan Green Party, and Green Parties across the country, to oppose the idea of small modular reactors, and to recognize that this is just one more attempt by the nuclear industry dinosaur to revive itself, and get the tax-payer to foot the bill.

What we need when looking for sources of power is solar, wind, geo-thermal and ecologically sound hydro, not nuclear.

## CANADA ON THE VERGE OF INVESTING IN PLUTONIUM

by Gordon Edwards

(Dr. Gordon Edwards is the long-time president of the Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility, a Montreal-based organization that documents and challenges the nuclear industry from an independent concerned citizens' perspective.)

It seems that the two SMNR (Small Modular Nuclear Reactor) entrepreneurs in New Brunswick (Canada), along with other nuclear "players" worldwide, are trying to revitalize the "plutonium economy" — a nuclear industry dream from the distant past that many believed had been laid to rest because of the failure of breeder reactors almost everywhere - e.g. USA, France, Britain, Japan, ...

One of the newly proposed NB SMNR prototypes, the ARC-100 reactor (100 megawatts of electricity) is a liquid sodium-cooled SMNR that is based on the 1964 EBR-2 reactor - Experimental Breeder Reactor #2. (Its predecessor, the EBR-1 breeder reactor, had a partial meltdown in 1955, and the Fermi-1 breeder reactor near Detroit, also modeled on the EBR-2, had a partial meltdown in 1966.) The ACR-100 is designed with the capability and explicit intention of reusing or recycling irradiated CANDU fuel.

The other newly proposed NB SMNR prototype is the Moltex “Stable Salt Reactor” (SSR) -- also a “fast reactor”, cooled by molten salt, that is likewise intended to re-use or recycle irradiated CANDU fuel. The “re-use” (or “recycling”) of “spent nuclear fuel”, also called “used nuclear fuel” or “irradiated nuclear fuel”, is industry code for plutonium extraction. The idea is to transition from uranium to plutonium as a nuclear fuel, because uranium supplies will not outlast dwindling oil supplies. Breeder reactors are designed to use plutonium as a fuel and create (“breed”) even more plutonium while doing so.

The only way you can re-use or recycle existing used nuclear fuel is to somehow access the unused “fissile material” in the used fuel, which means mainly plutonium. This involves a chemical procedure called “reprocessing” which was banned in the late 1970s by the Carter administration in the USA and the first PE Trudeau administration in Canada. South Korea and Taiwan were likewise forbidden (with pressure from the US) to pursue this avenue.

Argonne Laboratories in US, and the South Korean government, have been developing (for over ten years now) a new wrinkle on the reprocessing operation which they call “pyroprocessing” in an effort to overcome the existing prohibitions on reprocessing and restart the “plutonium economy”. That phrase refers to a world whereby plutonium is the primary nuclear fuel in the future rather than natural or slightly enriched uranium. Plutonium, a derivative of uranium that does not exist in nature but is created inside every nuclear reactor fueled with uranium, would thereby become an article of commerce.

Another wrinkle on this general ambition is the so-called “thorium cycle”. Thorium is a naturally occurring element that can be converted (inside a nuclear reactor) into a human-made fissile material called uranium-233. This type of uranium is not found in nature. Like plutonium, uranium-233 can be used for nuclear weapons or as nuclear fuel. Although the materials are different, the ambition is the same — instead of the plutonium economy one could imagine an economy based on uranium-233.  
See: [www.ccnr.org/Thorium\\_Reactors.html](http://www.ccnr.org/Thorium_Reactors.html) .

The problems associated with both recycling schemes (the plutonium cycle and the thorium cycle) are:

1. the dangerous and polluting necessity of “opening up” the used nuclear fuel in order to extract the desired plutonium or U-233, and
2. the creation of a civilian traffic in highly dangerous materials (plutonium and U-233) that can be used by governments or criminals or terrorists to make powerful nuclear weapons without the need for terribly sophisticated or readily detectable infrastructure.

See: [www.ccnr.org/non-prolif.html](http://www.ccnr.org/non-prolif.html).  
More authoritatively,  
[www.ccnr.org/Peaceful\\_Atom.html](http://www.ccnr.org/Peaceful_Atom.html).

By the way, in terms of nuclear reactors (whether small or large), whenever you see the phrase “fast reactor” or “advanced reactor” or “breeder reactor” or “thorium reactor”, please be advised that such terminology is industry code for recycling — either plutonium or uranium-233. Also, any “sodium-cooled” reactors are in this same category.

Economically, the use of plutonium fuel is (and always has been) much more expensive than the use of uranium fuel. This is especially true now, when the price of uranium is exceedingly low and showing very little sign of recovering. Cameco has shut down some of its richest uranium mines in Saskatchewan and has laid off more than a thousand workers, while reducing the pay of those still working by 25 percent. There is absolutely no way that plutonium-fueled reactors can compete with uranium-fueled reactors under such conditions. And, as is well known, even uranium-fueled reactors cannot compete with the alternatives such as wind and solar or even natural-gas-fired generators. Governments should not be wasting taxpayers’ money by subsidizing such uneconomical, dangerous and unsustainable nuclear technologies.

## THE TREES WILL SPEAK

A Poem by Dave Greenfield

The trees will speak  
To the falling rain.  
The falling rain will speak  
To the dream-tongued earthworms  
Who come out from underground  
To celebrate  
In the cosmic dance of rain.

Together  
Trees, rain and earthworms  
Will contemplate tree roots democracy  
And tree ring meditation  
That allows us to contemplate  
Each year and each century.

When the trees speak  
It will be like a whisper  
That only raindrops can hear.  
And likewise, when the raindrops  
Voice their mystical visions,  
Only the earthworms  
Will internalize their meaning.

The cosmic dance will move forward.  
Birds and humans  
Will join with the trees and rain,  
All of us contemplating  
New day, when the night is over,  
All of us imagining  
Sister Luna  
Coming to dance in her nakedness,  
Inspiring us in her wild freedom

## THE GREEN MOVEMENT THEN AND NOW

by Dave Greenfield

Part One: The Original Saskatoon Greens  
(1983-1988)

As I rejoined the Green Party this year to support Naomi's leadership, I reflected that this is my third coming to the Green Party.

The first time I got involved was in the time period from 1983 to 1988. The second time I got involved was from 1998 to 2007. I thought I would say a few words about what my experience of the party and the movement were like in these two previous time

periods and how the world and the movement have evolved. I soon realized this would take at least a two-part series, so here is part one.

I first heard about Green Parties in a one-hour discussion about Green politics on an Ideas program on CBC Radio in November 1982.

Then in April of 1983, Dr. Jim Harding was interviewed on the John Gormley show about a new provincial party that Jim Harding and a few friends had started called the Saskatchewan Ecology Party. This was about a month after the Greens in West Germany had attracted world-wide attention by receiving twenty-seven seats in the West German parliament or Bundestag.

Then in the summer of 1983, a different group of people held a gathering at Redberry Lake at which a second party, the Green Party of Saskatchewan, was founded.

In 1983, several thousand Saskatchewan citizens took to the streets on three occasions to march and rally for nuclear disarmament and against the testing of the Cruise Missile. Across Europe and Britain hundreds of thousands were marching and rallying against the stationing of Cruise and Pershing II missiles. The Greens of West Germany had emerged out of these protests. In this time period, 1983 to 1988, we thought of the Green Party as the party of Petra Kelly, a party whose purpose it was to have one foot in the parliament and one foot in the streets, i.e. in the social movements.

In Saskatoon the first Green Party meeting occurred in June of 1983 when Jim Harding and a few friends came up from Regina and met with five enthusiastic interested people at the old YWCA building. The group started meeting on a weekly basis over the next few months, and on October 22nd 1983, the local Green Party attended its first public march, a march against Cruise Missile testing and made its presence somewhat known by carrying a Green Party banner.

I attended my first Green Party meeting at the end of November 1983, a couple days after the provincial NDP had adopted a policy calling for a moratorium on uranium mining in Saskatchewan. A few Green

Party members had taken out NDP memberships to vote in favour of the resolution calling for the moratorium, and some whose only issue was uranium mining wondered aloud whether we still needed a Green Party in Saskatchewan now that the NDP had adopted the uranium moratorium position. The NDP would maintain the uranium moratorium policy while in opposition, but in 1992, a year after getting elected, they would reverse their uranium moratorium position and allow for the ongoing development of uranium mining.

The Saskatoon Green Party chapter met sporadically during the first half of 1984, and then in July 1984, when Turner called a federal election, the Saskatoon Greens came together again and ran two candidates in the federal election, with a total of sixty candidates running across the country.

During the election campaign our two candidates attended a number of public forums organized by progressive groups in town, including a peace forum, a women's issues forum and a labour forum. Our candidates were also interviewed on one or two television interview programs. We also had weekly meetings, on Wednesday evenings, during the campaign, from Wednesday July 25th to the end of August, at the home of one of the leading members.

On election day, September 4th, 1984, our two Saskatoon candidates received roughly 170 and 130 votes, with the party receiving some twenty-seven thousand votes across the country. We were a new party with a long way to go.

We took a bit of a break after the election, but then held a re-grouping meeting on November 7th at which we elected two co-coordinators, as well as a recorder and a treasurer. The two co-coordinators were both women with some background in feminist and ecofeminist theory and process. The following month, one of them provided us all with a very good write-up on consensus decision-making, a model for consensus-building that, to this day, remains my favorite model.

On November 8th we held a public event at the library, at which organic farming advocate, Elmer Laird, spoke about organic farming, and one of our candidates from the summer election spoke more

generally about Green politics. About thirty-five people attended the talk, and a few new people joined. Around this time, we also started a Campus Greens group, since a few of our members were university students.

Feeling it would be better to meet in a public space, rather than in someone's home, we began holding a monthly meeting at a facility where we were able to meet for free.

In December, we participated in a protest against the Strategic Defense Initiative or Star Wars Plan that was being pursued at that time by the Reagan administration. Some representatives of the American military industrial complex had come to Saskatoon to speak to local businesses about possible opportunities for defense contracts, and we along with others from the peace movement felt the need to protest.

Between January and April of 1985, we held a weekly vigil on Sunday at noon in front of Saskatoon City Hall opposing the testing of the Cruise Missile. Usually anywhere from two to ten people would come to the vigil.

On Sunday February 3rd, ten or twelve of us gathered in our regular meeting place to come up with wording for a leaflet that we could use to promote the Green Party in our community. The temperature outside was about minus forty, but at noon all ten or twelve of us climbed into a few vehicles and drove down to City Hall to hold our weekly vigil. Downtown Saskatoon was totally deserted, and it was minus forty, but we didn't care! We marched around and sang songs to keep ourselves warm. Yes, I remember with a smile the sometimes wild and crazy things we did.

Beginning in February, we also began renting an office on Broadway Avenue, an office with a third story window facing on to Broadway that was fairly visible to passers by. We kept the office until the end of October and did get a few new members who noticed our Green Party sign in the window.

On April 20th, 1985, we took part in a peace and non-intervention march and rally which combined a call for nuclear disarmament, opposition to weapons

in space, opposition to uranium mining and opposition to U.S. military intervention in Central America. Two years earlier, on April 23rd, 1983, twenty-five hundred people had filled the streets of Saskatoon marching for nuclear disarmament and against Cruise Missile testing. Now, in April of 1985, even bringing together all the above causes, Saskatoon could only manage a turnout of about five hundred. We were learning how mass movements ebb and flow.

In early 1985, we learned about a plan by the people of Wollaston Post, a largely Indigenous community in north-eastern Saskatchewan, to blockade the road to the Rabbit Lake uranium mine to oppose the proposed expansion of uranium mining under Collins Bay, a bay on the west shore of Wollaston Lake. At our February or March meeting we agreed to let a few of the organizers use our office to do some of their organizing work, and in general to support the blockade to the best of our abilities.

The Wollaston Blockade, as it would come to be called in movement history, would occur from Friday June 14th to Monday June 17th, 1985. Four of our members went up to the blockade, as well as a few additional folks who would later get involved with the Greens.

The plan had been to have the blockade run through the course of the summer with the possibility of arrests and of new people joining the blockade over the course of several months. On June 17th, however, the chief of the local band announced that the blockade would be lifted temporarily. As history unfolded, the blockade never resumed. The three days of resistance, however, did get a lot of attention in the peace and environment movement in Europe, particularly in countries that receive our uranium to power their nuclear power plants.

In August, a group of some six or eight anti-nuclear activists, mostly from Sweden and Finland, naming themselves Scandinavians Against Nuclear Development or SAND, came to Saskatchewan, stopping first in Saskatoon and then going up to Wollaston Post.

The Wollaston blockade was definitely one of the more important events with which our chapter

interacted. It made uranium mining a front and centre issue for several members of our chapter, recognizing that uranium mining is an issue both because of the environmental and health issues arising from the mine tailings here in Saskatchewan, and because of the use of our uranium in both nuclear weapons and nuclear power plants around the world. It also caused several of us to think about issues of colonialism, racism, corporate power and the abuse of state and police power. Through contacts made through the blockade, some of us learned about the Big Mountain struggle, the Leonard Peltier case and the history of state violence toward the people of the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota.

In May we began using our office to hold weekly educationals, (beginning on Monday evenings then eventually moving to Friday evenings). These educationals consisted of an individual giving a talk on a particular green-related topic, followed by discussion. They continued until the fall of 1986.

In June, with an eye on the municipal election coming up in October, we began holding Sunday afternoon discussion meetings about municipal politics. After October, these meetings evolved into Sunday afternoon general business meetings.

At that time in Saskatoon, every year around July 19th, there would be a Nicaraguan Street Dance downtown to celebrate the 1979 Nicaraguan revolution and express our solidarity with the Sandinista-led movement for social change in Nicaragua. I remember several of our members attending the street dance in both 1985 and 1986.

That summer of 1985 across Canada, an idea emerged in the peace movement encouraging people to paint shadows on the sidewalks of their local city, during the night before Hiroshima Day, (August 6th), to symbolize the shadows that were left behind when people were vaporized during the bombing of Hiroshima in 1945. In Saskatoon a few of the more conservative peace groups shied away from participating, fearing such an action might be illegal. So, on the night of August 5th to 6th a few of us Greens, along with a few peace-activist friends, went out and painted shadows on the sidewalks, and the police left us alone.

On the Labour Day weekend, 1985, we held our first provincial gathering at Crow's Nest Acreage, the home of Jim Harding and family. About seventeen people came from the Saskatoon and Regina chapters, as well as from the newly formed Prince Albert chapter. While it was a provincial gathering, I don't recall us talking much about the provincial party or planning for the provincial election that needed to be called in the next year and a half. A lot of the discussions were more philosophical, asking how to define the green movement and placing the green movement in progressive history.

As the Saskatoon October municipal election approached, one of our local members decided to throw his hat into the ring and run for City Council. Several of us helped him with his campaign, including leafleting and door knocking. He came in third, receiving around 350 votes.

One issue that had arisen that year in Saskatoon was the question of whether to build a new larger stadium, mostly for sports events and large gatherings of ten thousand or more people. Among the Saskatoon Greens, most of us felt this was a waste of money, and that the variety of smaller gathering places served us well enough. Some time in the early fall, one of our members wrote a letter to the editor expressing the point of view that the citizens of Saskatoon should be given a vote on whether or not to build the stadium, including his phone number at the end of the letter. As a result, he got some sixty-five phone calls from people who agreed with him, and between them they formed a campaign to get the required number of signatures, (at that time about eight thousand) to require the city to hold a referendum on the question of building a new stadium. The process of getting signatures stretched out through the winter and came to fruition in the spring with a referendum in which, in the end, the citizenry voted in favour of building the stadium.

In November of 1985 we held a second provincial Green gathering, this time in Saskatoon. This time we did discuss some policy, but also sometimes got bogged down in questions of what our role should be as an organization.

In September of 1985, I began taking classes at the university of Saskatchewan, and I organized the rather dormant Campus Greens group at the U of S into a group that at least held meetings and discussed the question of doing some organizing. The Campus Greens organized two events that year. We held a commemoration of the life of M. K. Gandhi on the 38th anniversary of his assassination, January 30th, to which a small circle of people came. We reached out to the Indo-Canadian student community on campus for this event, the only time I recall reaching out to a community of newer Canadians. Then in late March the Campus Greens held what would prove to be one of the most successful events of the Saskatoon Greens' four-year history. We held a campus pub on campus to which some forty or so people came, at which a few of our members spoke about the Green perspective and three or four new members joined.

During the spring of 1986, we organized a raffle as a fund-raiser, and spent some time sitting at tables selling tickets. While this was less directly political, it did give us a chance to meet members of the public and chat with them about our perspective.

In early 1986, a welfare rights organization called Equal Justice for All or EJA was formed in Saskatoon. A few of our members were people receiving social assistance, while others knew the system from the viewpoint of activists critical of the system. So, a few of our members got involved with EJA in its early days.

The spring and summer of 1986 were somewhat overshadowed by the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in Ukraine and the blanket of radiation it released around the world. In early July we organized a talk at the library on the fallout from Chernobyl and nuclear and radiation issues in general.

One highlight of the summer of 1986 was when four Green activists from the Lillooet area in the B.C. interior came through in late August, on their way back from the second North American Bioregional Congress in Michigan. These activists were very much part of the back to the land movement in the B.C. interior, and they had much to say about the bioregional movement across North America, a

movement seeking to re-create culture and governance from the ground up, along ecological lines, based on natural regions such as valleys, watersheds etc.

Another highlight I remember from 1986 was when West German Green spokesperson Petra Kelly was interviewed by Vicki Gabereau on CBC Radio, in late April 1986, while she was attending the Vancouver Peace Symposium. The Vancouver Peace Symposium brought together peace activists from many parts of the world, and one of our local members was able to attend. As well, in August, a few of our members, along with other peace activists, helped organize an all-night vigil in front of City Hall on the night of Hiroshima Day, August 6th.

While we had spoken in passing about running candidates in the provincial election that we knew would need to be called, most likely some time in 1986, we really had not prepared to run. When the provincial election was called in mid September for October 20th, we were unprepared, and we did not field any candidates. This reality caused a certain amount of pain in the group. Here we were, claiming to be a political party, and yet, when an election was called, we came up short and were unable to field candidates.

In 1983, as mentioned above, two provincial ecological parties had been founded in Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Ecology Party and the Green Party of Saskatchewan. Both parties were deregistered when they failed to run any candidates in the 1986 election. The two parties had been founded at a time when all you needed to start a party in Saskatchewan was ten signatures on a registration form. By 1998, when a mostly new group of people set out to found our current party, we needed twenty-five hundred signatures to found a party. I have sometimes said that if we had gotten our act together in 1986, and run ten or more candidates, (and kept running candidates through the 1990's) we would have saved the people in 1998 a lot of work.

During these years, from 1985 to 1987, we published a newsletter, usually two to three times per year, called Green News. In our summer 1986 edition of Green News, one of our members wrote an article

about how the theory that the burning of fossil fuels was heating up the atmosphere was now becoming reality. This was one of the first articles to be published in a Saskatchewan publication about global warming.

In November to December of 1986, most of the women in our chapter formed a women's circle which began to discuss green politics from a women's perspective. On December 22nd, one of the women hosted a wonderful Winter Solstice party at her house, and in January some of the women organized a Despair and Empowerment workshop based on the writings of Joanna Macy.

As we entered 1987, our local chapter continued to get involved in activist currents in the community.

In February, a made for television drama series called "Amerika" was causing controversy across North America with its extreme anti-communist cold war mentality. The Saskatoon Greens joined a coalition of groups in Saskatoon speaking out against the series.

In March we produced a television program on the local community channel on which we interviewed local environmental activist, Maisie Shiell, regarding her concerns about a plan by one of the uranium mining companies to extract gold from uranium tailings.

The spring of 1987 brought a series of socially regressive cutbacks by the government of Grant Devine. A Social Justice Coalition was formed at the provincial level to fight the cutbacks, and in Saskatoon a local group called the Social Justice Network was also formed. Three or four members of our local Green chapter got involved.

In May of 1987, we learned about an upcoming visit to Saskatoon by French president, Francois Mitterrand. Two years earlier, President Mitterrand had personally ordered the bombing of the Greenpeace ship, the Rainbow Warrior, because of its planned involvement in a flotilla of ships protesting French nuclear weapons testing in the South Pacific. Now Mitterrand was coming to Saskatchewan to celebrate and further the involvement of the French state-owned nuclear

company, Cogema, in its mining of uranium in Saskatchewan. We decided we could not let this go without a protest. So about ten of us gathered in front of the office of Cogema and held a protest to draw attention to how Cogema's mining of uranium in Saskatchewan connected us to the French government's testing of nuclear weapons in the South Pacific and the bombing of the Rainbow Warrior.

In July several of us attended a tree-planters' protest gathering near Big River and spoke about Green Politics, and a few new, though short-lived, chapters were started in communities along Highway 3.

While we were continuing to get involved in coalitions and attend events in 1987, our numbers were clearly dwindling. A few folks had moved away, and others were feeling tired.

On the Labour Day weekend in 1987, we held another provincial gathering at Crow's Nest Acreage with around fifteen or so folks attending. This time the one concrete idea to come out of the gathering was the idea of organizing an international conference on uranium mining and related nuclear issues to be held here in Saskatchewan, to which we would invite anti-nuclear activists from all over the world, particularly activists from countries that receive our uranium. We agreed to organize this conference, and it came to fruition in Saskatoon in June of 1988. Our small remnant of the Saskatoon Greens did on the ground organizing from the Saskatoon end, while the Regina group worked from Regina.

Meanwhile our enthusiasm for having a Green Party chapter in Saskatoon had largely dwindled by the late fall of 1987, and we formally folded up the chapter in January of 1988.

During the four and a half years that our chapter existed, we had a number of influences on our thought.

In the summer of 1984, when our two candidates campaigned in the 84 election, they largely made use of a document called "Die Grunen" a document outlining the policy platform of the West German Greens. When a particular topic wasn't directly

addressed in the document, our candidates would answer a question based on what felt right. That summer the book "Green Politics: The Global Promise" by Fritjof Capra and Charlene Spretnak was published. It was the first somewhat in-depth popular book about the West German and European Greens to be published in North America. By mid fall of 1984, several of the leading members of our chapter had read the book. Capra had previously written "The Tao of Physics" and "The Turning Point", two books that made him a popular figure in the New Age futurist crowd, while Spretnak had previously edited an anthology of essays called "The Politics of Women's Spirituality" which had made her a well known name in ecofeminism and Goddess spirituality.

While their book was quite informative about the early West German Greens, Capra and Spretnak did tend to come from a rather anti-left bias. They wanted to see in the West German Greens a kind of New Age "radical centrist" party, which was neither left nor right but forward, and which tended to leave questions of class justice behind. In April of 1986, when one of our local members attended the Vancouver Peace Symposium, he had a chance to speak with Petra Kelly and mentioned the Capra and Spretnak book. Petra indicated that she felt Capra and Spretnak had gotten a lot wrong. The West German Greens were in fact far more rooted in progressive-left thought and movements. While the West German Greens did sometimes use the slogan "neither left nor right", this was largely to ward off the accusation that they were Communists. The Communist Party was illegal in West Germany, and the accusation of being Communists in disguise could potentially have serious consequences. So, they demanded the right to sit in the centre in the German parliament, sitting between the Social Democrats and the Christian Democrats, but they generally presented policy ideas that were from the left.

There is one quote from Petra Kelly that Capra and Spretnak did not mention in their book. When Petra was asked to define Green Politics in one sentence, she said, "It is a type of emancipatory socialism."

We learned about various perspectives among European Greens as well as in the ecological

movement in general. Among the West German Greens there were two predominant factions, the Realoes and the Fundies. The Realoes believed in Real Politick, (in other words, pragmatic politics), and wanted to form a coalition with the Social Democrats if the opportunity arose. The Fundies, (short for Fundamental Oppositionist), advocated fundamental opposition to militarism, the expansionary industrial economy and so forth, and didn't really wish to form a coalition with anyone. They felt that the Green message was very radical and would be watered down by coalitions with anyone. While Petra Kelly represented the more public face of the Fundi faction, another thinker on the Fundi end of the Green spectrum was Rudolf Bahro. We learned about Bahro first in the pages of Capra and Spretnak's book, and then in 1986, when he published a book of his writings from his five years with the Greens (called "Building the Green Movement"), we read him in his own words. Bahro impressed us with his vision of dismantling the industrial capitalist growth system and working for a totally new societal alternative.

At the Realo-end of the spectrum was Joschka Fischer who wanted the West German Greens to become the "kingmaker", the party that would use its popularity to get the balance of power in the West German parliament and then bargain with the larger parties to form coalitions and get Green policies adopted.

We also learned about the school of thought called Deep Ecology. In the summer of 1984, two internationally known advocates of the Deep Ecology perspective, Arne Naess and George Sessions, wrote up an eight point platform for the Deep Ecology movement, a platform which was published the following spring which generated a certain amount of discussion about the idea of Deep Ecology. Likewise, some of us in our local Green chapter learned of Deep Ecology as a school of thought in the environmental movement and as a way of defining a deeper, more profound movement for ecologically-focused transformation.

Many of us were avid CBC Radio listeners, and we often listened to the "Ideas" program hosted at that time by Lister Sinclair.

There are three Ideas series that I remember having something of an impact on both myself and other members of our group.

In September or early October of 1985, Ideas producer Max Allen did a two-part series on the women's peace camp at Greenham Common. A group of women in Britain had established a peace camp on the edge of the Greenham Common missile base, (about ninety km west of London), in September of 1981, and had begun a campaign of nonviolent civil disobedience against the base, protesting the stationing of Cruise missiles at the base and elsewhere in Britain. I had heard in passing about the peace camp in the preceding years but was pleasantly surprised to learn that the camp was still there and still raising its voice. There were peace camps in several countries across Europe, (as well as in the U.S.), but the high profile nature of the women's peace camp at Greenham tended to inspire people around the world to think about ways in which nonviolent action could be used to confront militarism and other destructive forces.

Then in January 1986, Merlin Stone did a four-part Ideas series called "The Return of the Goddess". Ten years earlier she had written a ground-breaking book, "When God was a Woman", which had helped initiate the women's spirituality movement. In this Ideas series, she interviewed women who had been influenced by women's or Goddess spirituality, including discussing the political dimensions of a spirituality that cared for the earth and attempted to transform the nature of power. This series, and the ideas of a number of the writers interviewed, such as Charlene Spretnak, hawk and Marilyn French, would have a significant impact in our group, later in the year when the women in our group formed a Green women's circle and became interested in telling the story of our time from a women's perspective.

Then in May to June of 1986, David Cayley did an Ideas series called "New Ideas in Ecology and Economics". The series was somewhat eclectic, but he did interview a number of interesting individuals, including several Deep Ecology advocates, as well as Murray Bookchin the founder of Social Ecology, (a rival school of thought to Deep Ecology), and Peter Berg, the founder of the Planet Drum Foundation and leading figure in the Bioregional movement.

In these instances, our public broadcaster was doing what it should be doing, engaging with some of the great progressive thinkers and activists of the day and sharing their conversations with the listening public.

Our strongest progressive influences were initially feminism, ecofeminism and the peace movement. Through the thought of Murray Bookchin, whose background was in social anarchism, a few of us encountered the anarchist perspective and writers such as Noam Chomsky, George Woodcock and Dimitrios Roussopoulos, who at that time were publishing in the "Our Generation" periodical.

Increasingly we were articulating a criticism of economic colonialism, imperialism and capitalism. In the spring of 1987, one of the young women in our group happened upon a poster advertising crime prevention week. She wrote on the poster, "Capitalism is a Crime.". We had come to realize that capitalism was a major dimension of the system that needed to be confronted.

In these pages, I have told the story of our Saskatoon Greens group as it rose and fell between 1983 and 1988. I have chosen not to mention any names of people who were members during those years, mentioning only activists and thinkers well known to the progressive movement in Saskatchewan or internationally.

When I count up the people who I remember as having been involved for some length of time during the four years or so that our original chapter existed, I count a total of around forty, with there being slightly more men than women. We ranged in age from our late teens to our mid to late thirties, with most of us being in our twenties. At any given time, there were roughly from eight to fifteen active members in the group, with some dropping out and others joining during any given time period.

In some ways, we were more of an activist group than a political party. This reality was probably most manifested when we failed to run candidates in the October 1986 provincial election. Having said this, there is no doubt that we did a lot of good work and functioned as something of a catalyst for work on a variety of issues in Saskatoon and Saskatchewan.

In Part Two of this series, I will talk about my experience in helping to form the New Green Alliance in 1998-99, and what it was like creating a Green-Left party just over ten years after our original chapter had dissolved.

## WHERE ARE WE GOING?

### A review of "Four Futures: Life After Capitalism" by Peter Frase

*Reviewed by Dave Greenfield*

In his book "Four Futures: Life After Capitalism", Peter Frase imagines four possible scenarios for the direction in which the world could go in the coming decades and beyond. He refers to these four scenarios as communism, rentism, socialism and exterminism.

These four scenarios or futures are based on two variables: the variable of equality versus hierarchy and the variable of abundance versus scarcity.

By equality he implies a society in which we overcome class stratification and related types of inequality such as patriarchy and colonialism. By hierarchy he implies a society in which class domination remains and may even be deepened in its level of control and all-pervasiveness. By abundance he implies a society in which technology has enabled us to radically expand the range of what we are able to have and do, and by scarcity he implies a society in which we are limited to the boundaries of the biosphere.

His first possible future, which he calls communism, is a future based on equality with abundance in which technology has enabled us to duplicate everything many times over, rendering money and the financial value of things obsolete, enabling all humanity to share all things in common in a very high tech way. His model for this kind of society is the ultra-abundant economy of Star Trek, particularly the Next Generation series, in which the ability of technology to create and duplicate material goods has done away with money, ownership and disparities of wealth. This vision is obviously rather fanciful, but interesting.

His second possible future, which he calls rentism, is a society of hierarchy with abundance in which, similarly, advances in technology have created a situation of dramatic abundance, but in which ownership and domination structures remain in place. Those who own the patents, the programs and the communication platforms rule the world. The rest of the people must rent space or time from the owners. Life is livable because there is more than enough to go around, but ultimately life is not equitable.

His third possible future, which he calls socialism, is a society based on equality with scarcity. In this scenario, technology has not brought us a world of super-abundance. We have instead remained within the boundaries of the earth's biosphere with all the limitations that that implies. In this future, human beings, to the best of our abilities, seek to build a just society with measures ranging from a guaranteed annual income to various forms of cooperative ownership.

His fourth possible future, which he calls exterminism, is a future prized of hierarchy with scarcity, presenting a deeply and fully dystopian vision of a nightmare world in which the worst of what we currently have is expanded to its greatest extreme. It is a world in which a small human elite controls a global army or police force of robots and surveillance systems that terrorize and control a global population of unnecessary, disenfranchised and impoverished human beings. This fourth future is the most graphic and the most believable, since it is essentially an extension of the direction in which we are already going. The name he gives to this fourth scenario, exterminism, is meant to imply that this fourth future could move beyond totalistic domination and control over the marginalized billions, to a policy of extermination where the marginalized billions are put to death, community by community.

With regard to the first two scenarios, I am doubtful as to whether technology will give us the super-abundant world of Star Trek which the first two scenarios rely upon. More likely we are faced with a battle between some variation of the last two. The equitable and livable future that he calls socialism includes the various measures that most of the

green-progressive movement is fighting for, while the nightmare vision of exterminism is a future that is only too easy to imagine if corporate will continues to dominate in our society and the great mass of people become more and more excluded.

One comment Frase makes toward the end of the book is that, regardless of which of the four futures humanity ends up moving toward, one thing is fairly certain. We cannot go back to the economy that existed at the height of the industrial capitalist era. In all four of the possible futures, he predicts that there will be one or more additional waves of automation in which robots and computers will replace the vast majority of current jobs. Human beings in the coming decades will need to find alternative sources of both income and meaning.

The question, in a nutshell, is will the common people be able to shape that future and create a livable and equitable world, or will we have our future shaped for us by the few, designed only for the benefit of the few. How history answers this question will depend greatly on whether the green-progressive movement is able to organize and mobilize at both the local, regional, national and global level.

## THE GODDESS REIMAGINED: A Review of "The Book of the Goddess" by Anna Livia Plurabelle, *Reviewed by Tristen Wintering*

In the 1970's, as the women's movement emerged out of the movements of the sixties, an interesting secondary movement occurred. Many women began questioning some of the deepest underlying ideas in western culture, such as the idea of a patriarchal male God, and an accompanying patriarchal cosmology which had, for centuries, been used to justify male dominance in western society.

Some women were drawn to the idea of the Divine as female, often referring to this concept as "The Goddess". The Goddess was not seen as some kind of superwoman in the sky, but as a gentle presence who dwells within us, among us, in nature and throughout the cosmos. Goddess spirituality, as it came to be called, came to be identified both with

the assertion of the dignity of women and with a love for the earth. Goddess spirituality was a natural companion of eco-feminism which likewise combined a feminist perspective with care for the earth.

Some women were drawn to the pre-existing tradition of Wicca. Modern Wicca as an organized movement can be traced back to the 1930's to 1940's, when Gerald Gardner came together with some women who were part of a Rosicrucian group. Modern Wicca borrowed from a number of esoteric traditions including the Rosicrucians, the Golden Dawn tradition, the thought of Aleister Crowley, and the Kabbalah tradition.

In the preface to her book, "The Book of the Goddess", Anna Livia Plurabelle comments that drawing from such esoteric traditions isn't necessarily the only place to draw upon to create a Goddess-centred perspective. In "The Book of the Goddess" Plurabelle sets out to create a Goddess tradition which draws upon more mainstream sources.

The Goddess revival would grow from its most recent origins in the 1970's to become a wide-spread religious movement with formal organizations in many western countries.

From the 1980's onward, Starhawk and the Reclaiming Community would become one of the more high-profile spokespersons and spokes-groups for the Goddess revival, combining an Earth-based Goddess spirituality with progressive ecological and social justice activism.

Anna Livia Plurabelle, publishing her book in 2002, borrows from a variety of sources including Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam and polytheistic traditions from several cultures, to create a synergistic text of prayers, hymns and poems to the Goddess and to a number of individual goddesses.

She begins by stating nine principles of the Goddess, and then stating nine names of the Goddess, each with an explanation of their role.

Following this is a creation story followed by hymns to the One Goddess. She then moves on to prayers or hymns to the nine goddesses she has named: the Japanese sun goddess Amaterasa, the Hindu goddess Kali, the Greek moon goddess Selene, the Greek earth goddess Gaia, Demeter the bringer of the seasons and crops, Aphrodite the goddess of love, Maria the goddess of the sea and the all-enveloping ocean of space and time, Athena the goddess of wisdom, and Eris the goddess of joyful creative chaos.

She follows this with an interesting section called the Testament of Gaia, which seems to consist largely of a rewrite of ethical passages from the Christian Gospel from a Goddess perspective. She then returns to the nine goddesses, matching each of them with one of the nine principles and giving the reader an invocation for each of the nine goddesses which the worshipper can recite silently to themselves or speak aloud in a group setting.

She then closes with a Prayer to the Goddess, which seems to be a beautiful Goddess-centred rewrite of St. Frances's Canticle to Brother Sun and Sister Moon.

In addition to the above influences, she draws upon Hindu and Buddhist thought with her perspective on reincarnation and karma and draws upon Judaism by putting various passages from the Book of Ecclesiastes into the mouth of the Goddess.

She seems to sense that, while many women as well as men may be attracted to the idea of the Divine feminine and the idea of a very immanent down to earth sense of the Divine, many will not necessarily be drawn to Wicca or the practice of ritual magic. She seems to have created a book for people who prefer prayer and quiet meditation who wish to meditate on the Goddess.

She does not overtly bring together Goddess reverence with political activism the way Starhawk and the Reclaiming Community do, but she definitely associates the Goddess with values such as living in balance with the earth, respecting human dignity and honouring sexuality in all its diversity. It is up to the readers to respond in as political or non-political a way as they choose.

From the 1970's to the present, the movement for Goddess spirituality has grown and matured along side both the environmental and feminist movements, and all three movements have interacted and given strength to each other. There are now many books on Goddess spirituality and neo-paganism and Plurabelle's "The Book of the Goddess" is one of many. Her title may seem a bit presumptuous when one considers that there is no one book of the Goddess but many.

To the best of my knowledge, she did not publish her book in hard copy, but published it online, which has meant that her book is one of relatively few recent writings to be included in the Women's section of Sacred-texts.com.

Goddess spirituality, drawing upon the honouring of goddesses and earth gods from Europe and elsewhere in the Eastern Hemisphere, continues as a spiritual movement participated in by tens of thousands of women and men throughout the world. Plurabelle's book will likely stand as one of many books helping to nourish this movement.

*(Note: While the Green Party doesn't promote any particular religious belief system, we do take an interest in various faith communities who are grappling with the question of our relationship with the earth. We thank Tristen for an interesting review of an interesting book.)*

## DATES OF HONOURING AND COMMEMORATION from June 22nd to September 21st

Here is a listing of days honouring or commemorating either particular peace, justice and environmental topics, or past events that deserve to be remembered.

### June 26

June 26th is the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture.

### July 4

The first Saturday in July, this year falling on July 4th, is the International Day of Co-operatives, a day when we celebrate the positive social role of co-operatives throughout the world.

### July 10

July 10th is the thirty-fifth anniversary of the bombing and sinking of the Greenpeace vessel, the Rainbow Warrior, by the French Secret Service in 1985. The Rainbow Warrior was preparing to help lead a flotilla of ships protesting French nuclear weapons testing in the South Pacific. One man, the free lance photographer, Fernando Pereira, was killed in the bombing. We remember this act of state terrorism by the French government with sorrow, and we reflect on how we in Saskatchewan are connected to the French nuclear industry by allowing the French state nuclear company, Areva, to mine uranium in our province.

The night of July 10th to 11th is the 125th anniversary of the Doukhobor's Night of the Burning of Arms, when the Doukhobor in Czarist Russia burned their guns, and vowed they would not serve in the military. This led to a round of persecution by the Czarist government, and the immigration of most of the Doukhobor to Canada in the following years.

## July 16

July 16th is the seventy-fifth anniversary of the exploding of the first atomic bomb at Alama Gordo New Mexico, the day the world entered the nuclear age with this first test of a nuclear weapon.

## July 27

July 27th is the day, in 1918, that Canadian west coast labour leader and war resister, Albert Ginger Goodwin, was shot and killed by the Dominion Police. Albert Ginger Goodwin had been conscripted in 1917 and had hid out near the town of Cumberland on Vancouver Island, refusing to go to war which would mean killing people who he considered to be his fellow workers. The Dominion Police put a bounty on his head, and when a police officer spotted him on July 27th, 1918, he shot and killed Goodwin on sight. We remember Goodwin's martyrdom to the cause of peace and universal humanity.

## August 1

August 1st is Emancipation Day, the day in 1834 that slavery was officially abolished throughout the British Empire, including in Canada.

## August 6

August 6th is Hiroshima Day, and this year we mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the tragic atomic bombing of Hiroshima by the U.S. military.

## August 9

August 9th is Nagasaki Day, and this year we mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the equally tragic atomic bombing of Nagasaki by the U.S. military.

August 9th is also the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples.

Here in Saskatchewan, August 9th was also the date of the tragic shooting of Colten Boushie in 2016. The shooting of Colten Boushie revealed painful tensions between the Indigenous and settler communities in Saskatchewan, and the racism of some settlers. We reflect with sorrow on the events of August 9th 2016, the racism of some of the public responses, and the inadequate response of the court system, and we pledge ourselves to do better in building respectful and equitable relations between Indigenous and settler communities.

## August 12

August 12th is International Youth Day.

## August 23

August 23rd is the International Day in Remembrance of the Slave Trade and Its Abolition.

## August 29

August 29th is the International Day Against Nuclear Tests.

## September 5

September 5th is the day that the Greenham Women established the Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp on the edge of the Greenham Common military base in Britain in 1981, a peace camp that would stand for nineteen years until the women voluntarily dismantled it on September 5th 2000.

## September 6

September 6th is the date of the fatal shooting of Indigenous Rights activist, Dudley George, in 1995, by the Ontario Provincial Police during a standoff at Ipperwash Park Ontario. Dudley George would die from his injuries shortly after midnight on September 7th.

## September 11

September 11th is the day, in 1906, that M. K. Gandhi began his first nonviolence campaign and the word, Satyagraha, was coined to describe the process of nonviolent action. Satyagraha is a term that means truth force or soul force.

September 11th was also the day, in 1973, that the democratically elected government of Salvador Allende, in Chile, was violently overthrown by a U.S.-backed military coup, and thousands of Chilean citizens were arrested, tortured and killed in the months and years that followed.

## September 13

September 13th is the day when the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted by the U.N. General Assembly in 2007.

## September 15

September 15th is the International Day for Democracy.

September 15th is also the date of the murder of Chilean folksinger and activist, Victor Jara, in 1973.

## September 16

September 16th is the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer.

## September 21

September 21st is the International Day for Peace

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## THE WEAVER – SUMMER SOLSTICE EDITION, 2020

### Editing by:

Dave Greenfield  
Naomi Hunter  
Neil Sinclair  
David Walther

### Layout and formatting by:

Samantha Kirk  
Ward Pederson