



## Militarizing the Coast?

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## Peter, Dona Tributes

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## Green named to powerful board

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Spring-Summer  
2009



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## Rotten deal didn't give voters choice

*(Note: The following analysis of the May 19 special election was adapted from recommendations provided by the Green Party of Alameda County.)*

The Green Party of California urged voters to vote NO on all items on the ballot in the May 19 special election.

Why?

Of course, we opposed the cuts in transportation, education, social services, and other human services, that were part of this budget deal.

We opposed this deal even though the politicians told us that great hardship would result if their rotten deal failed to pass.

And it may even be true.

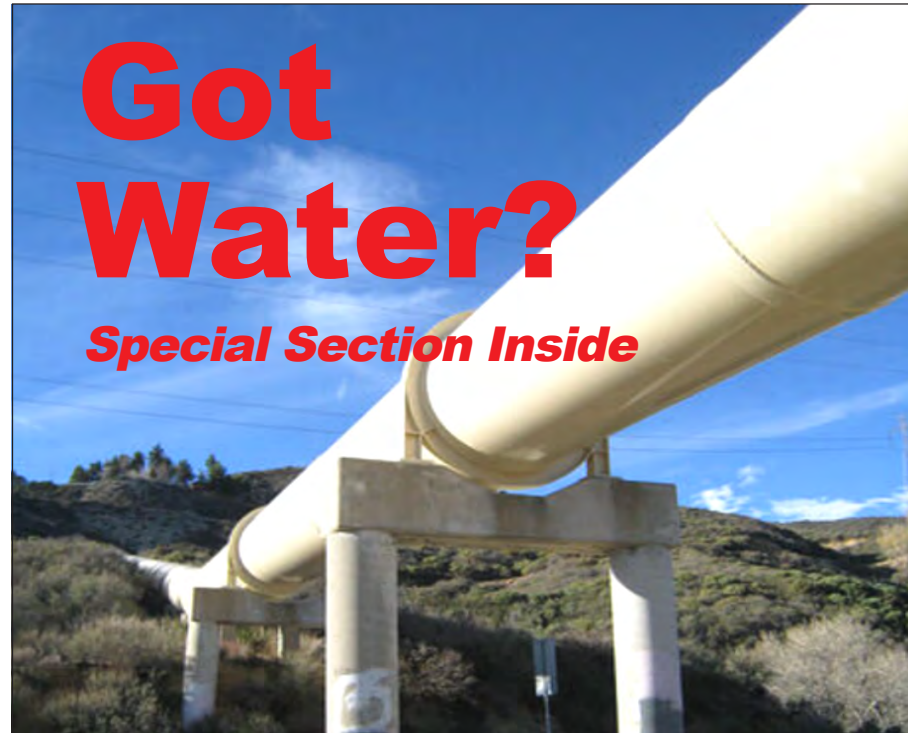
But, even more, we opposed the process which concluded by offering us the "choice" of being shot in the leg or shot in the arm, but did NOT offer us the choice of using our collective wealth to meet human needs.

PROPOSITION 1A was a constitutional amendment. Most of 1A was part of the original budget agreement. The Proposition included additional parts that went far beyond the existing agreement.

Ironically, per the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO), the provisions of 1A would not affect the current budget. Rather, bringing this measure before the voters was the price agreed to by the Democrats to get the Republican votes needed for the budget deal.

Under 1A, "unanticipated revenues" -- revenues in excess of the ten-year average - would be saved in a Budget Stabilization Fund, or "rainy day fund,"

*(See Page 15 PROPS)*



## The big question: What went wrong?

By KJERSTEN JEPPESEN

What went wrong?

That's the question filling the airwaves and print media since September '08. As usual, the media projects the official line: that the crash was a complete surprise. There may be temporary outrage but it's directed toward their usual "culprits" and away from essential information.

It echoes Bush's assurance that "the

economy is essentially sound."

Like many of us, independent economists are not that sanguine. Through independent media they are drawing the curtains back and exposing the fraud. Creative "innovations" (derivatives, credit-default swaps, hedge funds, etc.\*) in investing and lending were actually schemes or scams ca-

*(See Page 12 WRONG)*

## Green to run in 10th Congressional Special Election

Green Party member Jeremy Cloward has announced his intention to run against Rep. Ellen Tauscher (D-Alamo) in the anticipated 10th Congressional District special election. The 10th District includes portions of Alameda, Contra Costa, Solano and Sacramento counties.

President Obama has nominated Rep. Tauscher to serve as Undersecretary for Arms Control and International Security in the State Department. If confirmed, a special election to replace her is expected to be held in Fall 2009.

Cloward, if elected, plans to introduce legislation designed to pave the way toward a "more just and equal society." More info on the Jeremy Cloward Congressional campaign can be found at [www.jeremycloward.com](http://www.jeremycloward.com).

## Green ideas can solve the budget mess

The Green Party of California has recommended - for a long, long time - ways in which we can get out of the budget mess in the state.

They are fairly simple solutions, not convoluted as the Democrats and Republicans claim as they attempt to sell their "flim-flam."

According to the platform the GPCA, and as explained in a publication by the Green Party of Alameda County, alternatives include:

(1) **Abolish the 2/3 vote needed to pass the budget.** (Even State Senator Loni Hancock has introduced a constitutional amendment to do that.)

The current situation gives the Republicans much more power over the budget than their numbers warrant. That is obvious. What is less obvious is that the current situation gives cover to the Democrats while billions of dollars are cut from services to their constituents. But don't blame them -- it's the Republicans' fault.

While a few states do require a "supermajority" (that is, more than a simple majority) to pass their budget, and a few states require a supermajority to raise any state taxes, California is the only state to require both. California must change.

(2) **Amend Proposition 13.** Adopt the split-roll property tax system, in which income-producing property is taxed at a higher rate than primary residences. Amending Prop 13 should also include automatic reassessments when businesses are sold.

(3) **Return to the notion of**  
*(See Page 12 RECOMMEND)*

# Assault on North Coast

## Mendocino Greens launch Pacific Ocean Sanctuary drive to protect coast from military, business interests

By DAN HAMBURG

MENDOCINO – The Green Party of Mendocino County has launched the Pacific Coast Ocean Sanctuary Petition, a direct appeal to President Obama to leave our coast alone and to work with Congress to promulgate Ocean Sanctuary legislation that will permanently protect coastal areas off California, Oregon and Washington.

The effort is needed because greedy eyes are turned to the northern California, Oregon and Washington coastlines as the next area for militarization and commercial exploitation.

At the end of March, 100 protesters greeted the U.S. Navy in Ukiah when it presented a plan to augment naval weapons and sonar training from Puget Sound south to Mendocino County.

Navy representatives listened to nearly four hours of testimony from county residents who maintain that protection of marine species and the overall health of the ocean are of paramount importance.

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors voted 4 to 1 to address a letter opposing the Navy's encroachment for distribution throughout the Pacific Northwest.

The BOS also made clear that they will stand with a score of environmental organizations in the event of a lawsuit intended to stifle the Navy's plan.

And, in April, hundreds gathered in San Francisco to give President Obama's new Interior Secretary, former Colorado Senator Ken Salazar, a piece of their collective mind on proposed Lease Sale 236.

An array of state and US representatives, along with Senator Barbara Boxer and a representative from Governor Schwarzenegger's office, made clear that any plans to drill for oil and gas along the California coast will be strenuously opposed.

What was most strange about the San Francisco hearing was that it occurred in the first place. It was made necessary by congressional Democrats' abandonment of a 27-year old annual moratorium on new offshore oil leases, and by then-candidate Obama's pledge



*WHAT COULD BE?  
This is what the North Coast could look like, above, with increased militarization. And, right, a "romantic" view of expanded oil exploration.*



to "compromise" with the oil industry on new domestic offshore drilling if they would support renewables.

This despite the fact that energy economists believe that the total amount of offshore oil produced from new leases would have no measurable impact on gasoline prices.

Secretary Salazar and the administration want to pursue wave hydrokinetic energy development off the coast.

Rather than have the government sponsor the R&D that must precede commercialization, the Federal Energy

Regulatory Commission (FERC) wants private companies like PG&E, Chevron, Finavera and other developers to try out new technologies.

This seems a fool's errand.

Technical data necessary to intelligently design these mammoth installations are unknown and will require decades of pilot level study. Also, their impacts upon the marine environment are unknown but certainly include: the effect upon migration patterns of marine mammals, their interference with the fishing industry, changes they could

make to the upwelling of nutrients that feed marine mammals, shifting sea-shore erosion patterns, and much more.

The Mendocino Greens ([www.mendocinocountry.com](http://www.mendocinocountry.com)) are asking Greens up and down the coast to download, sign, have your local endorse, and circulate the Pacific Coast Ocean Sanctuary Petition.

*(Note: The author is a longtime Green, former candidate for Governor, former Congressman and former county supervisor)*

# CLEAN ELECTIONS: Vote will give Green Party a great opportunity at polls

By KJERSTEN JEPPESEN

The June 2010 California ballot will include the California Fair Elections Act (CFEA) as a pilot project.

If passed, CFEA will provide public financing on a voluntary basis for candidates running for Secretary of State in 2014 and 2018.

## OPINION

Candidates could choose public funding or the traditional method of fundraising. If candidates choose public funding, they would agree not to accept any private funding.

To qualify for the public funds, candidates would be required to collect a specified number of five-dollar "seed money" contributions along with registered voter signatures.

The donation is to insure that each signature is backed by actual support for the candidate, to discourage frivolous candidates. Proceeds will go into the public campaign fund as "seed money." Within 24 hours, candidates would receive matching funds to counter an opponent's attack.

Major party candidates would be required to collect 7,500 five-dollar donations and registered voter signatures for the primary election.

"Third" parties and independents would have two options. In order to receive the full general election baseline funding amount of \$1,300,000, he/she would have to collect twice as many five-dollar "seed money" donations and signatures (\$15,000) as that required by major party candidates.

Or, by gathering 3,750 signatures and donations (half that required for major candidates), a Green candidate could receive 25 percent of the baseline amount for the general election, or \$250,000. That's still a sizable sum by our standards.

If voters approve CFEA, it would provide a major opportunity for the Green Party. For the first time, Green candidates would receive public funding in a general election.

"Third" party or independent candidates could be awarded public funding in an amount formerly only dreamed about. The challenge is in qualifying.

Qualified candidates would be allowed to place a 250-word statement in the sample ballot. This alone is a boon for a Green, but the real prize is that candidates would be required to engage in two public debates in the general election.

If passed, CFEA will sunset in 2019. Hopefully by then, the pilot project will have provided enough foundational experience for the public, and California will go the way of other states in which public funding has been found to be very successful, and in which the majority of candidates participate.

For example, 81 percent of candidates in Connecticut and 85 percent in Maine were elected by public funding only, leaving them free of obligation to special interests. In Arizona, 9 of 11 candidates were elected with public funds only, and voter turnout increased by 24 percent. CFEA provides that public funds would come from voluntary contributions designated on state



tax returns and on an increase in the registration fee for lobbyists, lobbying firms, and employers of lobbyists.

Presently the fee is \$12.50 per year, one of the lowest in the U.S. It would increase to \$350, the same as in Illinois. None of the funding will come from the state's general fund.

Are we ready for the challenge? Shall we start planning now to get out the vote and counter big money opposi-

tion? To study the Secretary of State's office thoroughly, and find the best qualified Green candidate(s)?

To prepare our candidate(s), and develop and define their positions? To establish support in preparation for the donation/signature gathering and the final campaign?

We need to be ready. Opportunity awaits. (See California Clean Money Campaign, [www.caclean.org](http://www.caclean.org)).

## Green Party needs to stay out in front on same-sex marriage issue

By SHANE QUE HEE

The ban on same-sex marriage, Proposition 8, passed in California with a 4 percent margin (492, 830 votes) and this win spawned a nationwide reaction by LGBTs.

### PROP. 8 ANALYSIS

In fact, the Green Party of California (GPCA) platform has supported same-sex marriage since its establishment in 1992 and the National Green Party since the Nader Presidential campaign of 2000.

However, even support by the Green Party and other coalitions could not outlast the \$26 million funneled into backing the YES vote on 8.

Despite an early poll stating that Prop 8 was winning there was little outreach to grassroots and potential allies like Latinos and African Americans right from the start.

Obama's negative position on gay marriage stated in a Presidential Debate was publicized by YES on 8, but not his opposition to Prop 8.

There was little get-out-the NO on 8 vote—the NO on 8 volunteers were used as poll booth voter watchers and Democratic Party poll booth cheerleaders.

The fallout from the passage of Prop 8 in California continues into 2009. Attorney General Jerry Brown filed a suit to invalidate Prop 8, and filed briefs along with other groups for and against Prop 8.

Representatives of the California Green Party attended the 500-strong Prop 8 Summit at the LA Convention Center in January. Supportive groups were encouraged to continue their educational efforts since all of these were essential to presenting any California Supreme Court decision in the appropriate manner, and to continue to make inroads into homophobia.

### GREEN FOCUS Spring-Summer 2009

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# COMMENT

## Oscar Grant killing puts focus on battle against injustice

BY WILSON RILES

OAKLAND - The residents of Oakland are "rubbed raw" with the injustice and tragedy of the Oscar Grant killing.

Oakland is a unique community in terms of its diversity and extensive progressive history. There is much for Oakland residents to take pride in on top of the City's beauty and vibrancy.

But almost every person living in this City has been faced with relatives and friends asking, "Why do you continue to live in such a dangerous place?"

Often that question bursts from the mouths of people who know nothing about Oakland but what they hear from

racially and class biased, if-it-bleeds-it-leads, corporate media.

These questioners are deaf-and-dumb to the history of struggle in Oakland and to the fact that – other than in parts of West Oakland or East Oakland – Oakland's crime statistics are better than those of most U.S. communities.

Oscar Grant was not from West or East Oakland; he lived in Hayward. Oscar was a 22-year-old African-American father of a baby girl.

Returning from a New Years Eve party in San Francisco, he was shot in the back as he lay face down on a BART platform on January 1.

His killing was caught on multiple cell phone cameras and, like a computer virus, was spread around the country if not around the world. Any viewer of those videos could not help but conclude that this was a colossal injustice committed by BART police officer Johannes Mehserle.

Yet, the 'powers that be,' the County District Attorney, the BART Board of Directors, and many of the affluent and knee-jerk-middle-class-white-cultural-chauvinists are finding it very difficult to hold this officer accountable for what he did.

Accountability is swift for poor and brown residents even when they are not at fault. That is the sharp, painful, cutting edge of injustice that has this community in turmoil, again. There is no established, trusted-by-all process whereby this community could fairly work through the equities in this situation.

Representative democracy does not work when those who have the money control the public agenda and have inordinate influence over elected representatives' decisions.

Our Green Party understands this very well. And, the criminal justice system has bent over backwards to serve the prison industrial complex.

The situation is worse than when Rodney King was videoed being pummeled by L.A. police who were later acquitted by a jury of Simi Valley residents – from the preferred neighborhood for Southern California cops.

The more recent extensive outpouring of official community sympathy and mourning for four Oakland Police Department officers killed in the line of duty gave those, uncomfortable with the Oscar Grant killing by their hero police, the opportunity to full-throatedly express their view of what is purely right and who is always wrong.

Outraged by the Oscar Grant incident, various collections of community people arose spontaneously to voice their pain and anguish. Most of these collections of people were multicultural. Many young warriors, the frequent target for injustices, were not able to control their rage. They have no expectation that the "system" will ever make the fundamental changes necessary to even approach justice for

Oscar's killing or anything else that stifles their opportunity and puts them on a slippery slide to criminality.

Being able to "voice" their pain is short term cathartic relief. Older community members, led by prominent religious figures, expressed their understanding of these outbursts even though they decried the property destruction and the shift of the media attention off the Oscar Grant incident to the burning cars in the streets.

After some "schooling" of these young rebels, it was noticed that they interacted more positively with adults on the streets and with some of the downtown businesses that they had trashed.

Other young experienced community organizers are working hard to keep the community's focus where it needs to be - on justice. These young organizers have a really tough job.

They are on the front lines of the justice movement. They know the history of West Oakland and East Oakland. They are working to build the movement to the place where some significant, fundamental social justice can be achieved.

These organizers still believe that it is possible; they have not given up hope. Young people need to be listened to and meetings and events need to be consciously shaped to allow them to be heard. We must learn to do those things which keep young people involved.

Cross-organizational coalitions, alliances, and expressions of solidarity need to be continually renewed. Cultural, class, generational, racial, and language divides can be bridged. These young organizers are teaching and learning and growing with experience. This is the precious legacy generation of Oakland.

The Green Party of Alameda County is proud of these young folks and what they have to give to all of us.

We are Oscar Grant, Bobby Seale, Elaine Brown, Bill Wahpepah, William Wong, and we are many more and we will not die.

(Note: Wilson Riles served on the Oakland City Council from 1979 to 1992 and ran for Mayor of Oakland in 2002.)

## A violent weed: Let's turn this culture of violence around

BY SHARON PETERSON

In February we marched for Gaza in San Francisco. A few days later, in Oakland, we marched for Oscar Grant, the man who was killed by police at the Fruitvale BART station on New Year's Day. Picket signs for Oscar Grant appeared in San Francisco, and pickets for Gaza appeared in Oakland.

More of us are getting it - police brutality at home and U.S. support and funding of terrorism abroad are joined at the roots. Our government's wars in Iraq and Afghanistan (with attacks on Syria and Pakistan for good measure) are tendrils of the same foul weed.

After a long wait for action from BART and from Oakland law enforcement - Johannes Mehserle is in custody and charged with murder. BART is under increasing pressure to establish a civilian oversight committee to monitor relations between BART police and the public.

A new tendril sprouted on March 21, when four Oakland police officers were shot down in the line of duty. All eventually perished from their wounds. It was the second worst police fatality incident in California's history and the worst ever in Oakland.

The tragedy spurred an outpouring of support from citizens throughout the Bay Area and beyond. Their joint memorial filled the Oracle Arena. The Oakland A's dedicated their first home game to the fallen officers.

While there is no direct causal connection between this latest tragedy and the shooting of Oscar Grant, it springs from the same culture. A culture that supports and promotes violence.

A nation whose taxpayers find themselves paying for prisons and weapons and bailouts for robber barons while school campuses crumble and teachers pay for supplies out of pocket, a nation where illness or accident can bankrupt families. Where water will soon become more valued, and perhaps rarer, than gold. In such a culture, all life appears cheap; for proof, just watch the news.

There is one political party that stands against this overgrowth of violence – non-violence is one of its Ten Key Values. It is not your typical political party, run by leaders who tell their members what to think, and what to do.

The Green Party is run by grassroots volunteers, ordinary people who understand that democracy needs workers ... if it's going to work at all.

Your nearest Green Party chapter can be found at [cagreens.org/locals/](http://cagreens.org/locals/). Please join us. Let's turn this culture around.

# Green Party leader Ross Mirkarimi named to Coastal Commission

By MIKE FEINSTEIN

SAN FRANCISCO – Ross Mirkarimi, twice elected to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, was appointed in March to the 12-member California Coastal Commission, one of the most powerful public agencies in the state – making Mirkarimi the holder of the highest office for a California Green.

“Mr. Mirkarimi brings much experi-



Ross Mirkarimi

ence in grappling with complex land-use decisions in San Francisco. I look forward to him bringing this expertise to his work on the Coastal Commission” said State Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg (D-Sacramento), Chair of the Senate Rules Committee, when he appointed Mirkarimi.

The mission of the Coastal Commission is to “protect, conserve, restore, and enhance environmental and human-based resources of the California coast and ocean for environmentally sustainable and prudent use by current and future generations.”

Mirkarimi’s appointment was a strong statement in terms of this balance, with the Commission gaining a new strong voice in favor of public access, affordable housing, public transit and a clean and healthy environment in the coastal zone.

“This is one of the strongest land-use bodies in the country. It’s safe to say that the ‘beach-head politics’ deliberated here could serve as a bellweather for U.S. policy on issues pertaining to our response to climate change, environmental/maritime degradation and

energy independence” said Mirkarimi upon his appointment.

“From the perspective of a sensible environmentalist and/or a progressive, the score card optics of the Commission over the last ten years is not good. As the newest commissioner, I’ll do my best to change it.”

California has 840 miles of some of the most beautiful coastline in the world. At the same time, there are incredible strains and pressures on it. The overwhelming majority of the state’s population lives within 50 miles of the coast, and the state has several major ports, commercial fishing facilities, offshore petroleum and gas development, refineries liquefied natural gas facilities, electrical generating facilities and extensive coastal-dependent development.

To address this tension, California voters passed Proposition 20, The Coastal Initiative, in 1972 with 55 percent of the vote. It established the Coastal Commission for four years. Then in 1976 the commission was made permanent as an independent, quasi-judicial state agency by the Legislature through adoption of the California Coastal Act of 1976.

Part of what makes the Commission so powerful is that in pursuit of that mission, it holds great sway over land use decisions near the coast. Specifically the Commission addresses “development activities,” which are broadly defined by the Coastal Act to include construction of buildings, divisions of land and, perhaps most significantly, activities that change the intensity of land use or public access to coastal waters.

The coastal zone, which was specifically mapped by the Legislature, covers an area larger than the State of Rhode Island, and includes areas in 15 counties and over 110 cities. On land the coastal zone varies in width from several hundred feet in highly urbanized areas up to five miles in certain rural areas, and offshore the coastal zone includes a three-mile-wide band of ocean.

Of the Commission’s twelve voting members, four each are appointed by

the Governor, the Senate Rules Committee, and the Speaker of the Assembly. Six are locally elected officials and six are appointed from the public at large.

Mirkarimi was chosen as the representative of the North Central Coast region, which includes Marin, San Francisco and Sonoma counties. Mirkarimi was also nominated by the Boards of Supervisors of all three counties, as well as the California League of Cities nominating committee.

In San Francisco, Mirkarimi’s record as supervisor has been broad and impressive. In a little over one term, he’s made great progress fighting for accountable community-based policing and violence prevention programs, tenant protections and housing reparations for local African-American and Japanese-American populations due to misguided redevelopment.

He authored the nation’s first mandated law on private company reimbursement for commuters using transit, the nation’s first law banning plastic bags and the nation’s strongest municipal climate change protocol. And in a first for progressive San Francisco, he authored a law furnishing dedicated housing for LGBTQ and Homeless seniors.

Mirkarimi’s Green involvement goes back to 1985, attending the first local Green organizing meetings in the Bay Area. In 1990 he helped co-found the Green Party of California and played a major role in the successful 1990-1992 ballot drive. In 2000, he was the California coordinator of the Ralph Nader/Winona LaDuke presidential campaign.

Among several other ‘firsts’, in 2004 Mirkarimi became the first U.S. Green elected under Instant Run Off Voting, winning in District 5 with its 3,000 Greens and 20,000 Democrats. In 2007 he was easily reelected to a second term, at the conclusion of which he must step down because San Francisco has term limits.

Mirkarimi replaced fellow Green Matt Gonzalez in District 5, who was elected in 2000 and chose not to run for re-election. It was Gonzalez who introduced IRV within the Board and worked hard along with numerous Greens for its successful passage on the March 2002 ballot.

Mirkarimi’s Coastal Commission term is for two years, ending in 2011. That’s also the year of the next San Francisco Mayoral election and Mirkarimi is often mentioned as a potential

candidate. While he has not committed to running, if he did run and were elected, it would be the largest U.S. City in which there is a Green mayor.

In this first Coastal Commission meeting he fought hard but lost on a 7-4 vote against an effort by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and Southern California Edison to overturn the Oxnard City Council’s denial of a proposed natural gas-fired peaker power plant there on Mandalay Bay, and allow the construction of the first new coastal power plant in California in more than 30 years.

“This was a clear case of environmental racism that will particularly negatively impact the local Latino community,” said Mirkarimi. “A small city like Oxnard that has two power plants, a toxic waste site and three landfills doesn’t need more dirty industry in the public’s name.”

## Green Party official Daniel Brezenoff tabbed as aide

By MIKE FEINSTEIN

LONG BEACH - Following a path where his increasing Green activism built a reputation of respect and credibility in his community, former Green Party Congressional candidate and state party spokesperson Daniel Brezenoff was selected May 5 as Legislative Director to Robert Garcia, newly elected City Councilmember in Long Beach’s first district.

“I am grateful to have been able to advance a Green agenda through my activities with the Green Party in the last several years. I now look forward to supporting Councilmember Garcia in his efforts to realize a clean environment, a healthy economy and an efficient and responsible local government in Long Beach,” said Brezenoff.

In August 2007 Brezenoff ran a spirited Congressional special election campaign in Congressional District 37 (Long Beach, Compton, Carson) where he made a name for himself with forceful debate performances that impressed many observers, even including those supporting other candidates.

Brezenoff, who served as a statewide spokesperson for the Green Party of California, is a clinical social worker. He is to be a point person for a legislative focus on environmental sustainability and LGBT issues.

# A new state Constitutional Convention?

## New analysis shows push for another California Constitutional Convention could benefit voter independence, Green Party

By MIKE FEINSTEIN

When most of us hear the term “Constitutional Convention,” we think of white men in wigs in Philadelphia in 1787, drafting the U.S. Constitution.

But California has had its own Constitutional Convention – actually two. Now there is talk of a third, possibly as soon as 2011. What could this mean for our state and for the Green Party?

The California Constitution gives the legislature the ability by a 2/3 vote, to



place before the voters whether there should be a Constitutional Convention. If passed by a majority, “the Legislature shall provide for the convention,” after which the Convention would meet and the changes it recommends be placed on the ballot as a single measure for a majority vote. This is how the California 1878-79 Convention was convened, and its original 1848 Constitution revised.

Today with the legislature unlikely to place such a measure before the voters, a new path is being explored that would involve two simultaneous November 2010 ballot measures – one to give ‘the people’ the power to call for a convention themselves through a ballot measure, and one that would authorize a specific convention with a specific focus. If both passed, the convention could convene in 2011, and its recommendations on the ballot as early as November 2012.

Many people think that once a convention is called, “everything is on the table.” This is not necessarily so. Under the scenario above, the ballot measure authorizing the Convention would establish its scope. Therefore the question is “what are the problems the Con-

vention is trying to solve” and from that, define its scope.

For many, the state is structurally ungovernable, in perpetual structural financial deficit and the legislature has not passed a budget on time in 23 out of the last 32 years. Therefore a Convention should be narrowly focused on reform of the budget and legislative process, ballot initiatives and perhaps a few other specific aspects of how the state is governed and financed. For this reason, there is general sentiment to limit the Convention to structural reforms and not address social issues and individual rights.

The budgetary issue that appears to unite Convention enthusiasts the most is eliminating the 2/3 requirement necessary for the Legislature to approve a budget, followed by eliminating the 2/3 requirement to institute a new tax and amending Proposition 13 to provide for a residential/commercial property tax split roll. There is also a desire to redress the fiscal relationship between the state and cities, how education is funded and implement a two-year budget cycle.

On the legislative side, there has been strong interest in a unicameral legislature, and with it, increasing the number of legislators to provide for smaller legislative districts with fewer voters per representative. This has been joined



by advocates of proportional representation and instant run-off voting, including many Greens, who see an opportunity for a legislature more truly representative of the state’s diversity and with it, perhaps policies and practices that are more likely to work for California.

Why not approach California’s problems with individual ballot measures? Perhaps the main reason is that a Con-

vention offers the opportunity to provide an integrated package of reforms that are stronger if all passed. In addition, qualifying several ballot measures takes an enormous amount of human and financial resources, which could be combined simply to qualify the November 2010 Convention ballot measures and then work to pass the Convention’s recommendations upon its conclusion. Finally, whereas individual ballot measures are seen as the



product of interest groups, a Constitutional Convention is by design meant to bring together a body reflective of the entire state, without a predestined political agenda.

Of course the Legislature could put something on the ballot. But the lack of confidence in the Legislature’s willingness to confront systematic structural reform is part of what has given birth to today’s Constitutional Convention movement. What if the threat of a Constitutional Convention forced the Legislature to act? That is the angle being played by some. While such an approach could lead to some good, it doesn’t warrant delaying organizing to wait for it. Furthermore, it is very possible that the Legislature will try and co-op the Convention by offering some, but not enough reforms to truly address the crisis the state is in.

### Role for Green Party

The possibility of a Constitutional Convention offers multi-level opportunities for the Green Party.

First, proportional representation. If California had a system of proportional representation — which rewarded Green voters rather than

disincentivized them – the Legislature would likely be five percent to 25 percent Green, based upon the experience of Greens around the world in more representative electoral systems. This in turn could have a major positive effect on public policy by broadening the range of issues, policies and possibilities discussed in the state.

On their own, the Legislature’s Democrats and Republicans have little reason to change a system that rewards them with a disproportionately greater number of seats than their share of the popular vote merits. Conversely, a Convention could present a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to reform how the Legislature is elected to a more fair system.

Not only would this be better for the state as a whole, because it would more accurately represent our diversity; but there is every indication that within it, the Green Party in California would also thrive.

Second, one 2010 Green strategy is to run a slate of State Assembly candidates on a common platform on key statewide issues, and show the party has practical alternatives and can help govern the state.

If support for the November 2010 Convention ballot measures were part of this platform, it would identify the Greens as in favor of giving a greater voice to the people and distinguish them from most Republican and Democratic candidates. It would provide a critical early platform to promote which reforms need to be considered by the Convention.

Finally, the people may be empowered by all this. Perhaps on the macro level, the Constitutional Convention provides a rare opportunity for ‘the people’ to make systematic change through direct, democratic means.

A movement that empowers Californians in this way will also help them to feel freer to vote for alternatives they believe in.

Combined with a system of proportional representation, this could even lead to a California renaissance of democracy, with more people involved, and having a much greater chance of being heard.

# California's water systems are broken; the blame is on the bureaucrats

By WES ROLLEY

California's water systems are broken.

In some cases, it is the physical system such as the long delayed upgrade and seismic retrofit of the Hetch Hetchy Aqueduct or the many miles of threatened levees in the Sacramento - San Joaquin River Delta.

But mostly, the breaks are in the bureaucratic processes by which water is governed, metered out, charged for and frequently fought over.

California's Little Hoover Commission has previously issued reports on water. The most recent, in January 2009 was Clearer Structure, Cleaner Water Improving Performance and Outcomes at the State Water Boards.

Its conclusions start with the recognition that California has an outdated system for dealing with a crumbling infrastructure, a growing demand and a raft of threats to clean water.

Their solution involved a total re-structuring of the system of State and Regional Water Control Boards, making them appointed by and responsible to the Governor.

Following that, the Commission has taken on the challenge to change the total governance of water in California beginning with a new hearing that was held April 23, 2009 in Sacramento.

At that hearing, Phil Isenberg, Chair of the Delta Vision Foundation, testified that the sum total of documented water rights in California is 8.4 times the average water flow through the Delta.

Even if the State Legislature were willing to undertake the task of reforming water governance, no matter what it decides to do, someone will challenge it in court. California's bureaucracies have some 200 different agencies and boards involved in the process of managing our water resources.

Much of the power over water use is devolved into a long list of local water districts, each with its own set of directors and regulations. As far as I know, there are only four greens on any of these water district boards in the State of California. If there is any office that may be attainable, and which might have a long lasting effect on life in California, it is that of Director of a Water District.

The Green Party of the United States recently passed a resolution (#380) that outlines a new

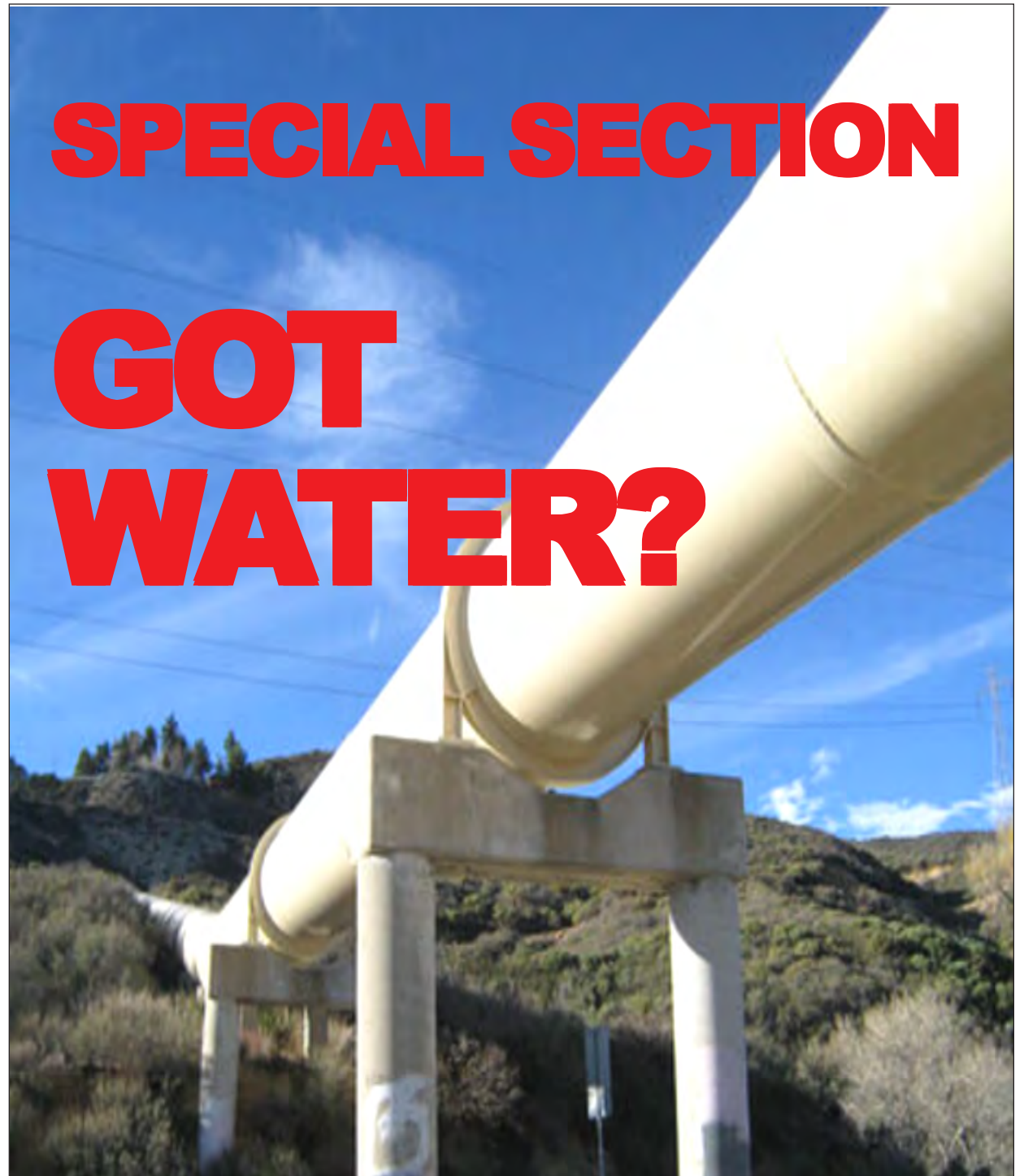


Photo by Chris Austin

process of dealing with water issues.

While Resolution authorizes action by the EcoAction Committee, GPUS, this will not happen without Greens everywhere becoming involved. We must all become active participants in solving California's problems.

We have seen that the California State Legislature is incapable of coming to any hard decision regarding anything of importance. If they can not enact a budget on time, how will they be able to deal with the restructuring of priorities between Central Valley Agriculture and Southern California urban users.

The problems associated with water, its management and its governance in California cry out for Green solutions.

California needs the active involvement of Greens who will take bioregional approaches to the management of watersheds, who will involve the public in the decision making rather than relying on entrenched bureaucracies and special interests to determine our future.

Join the GPCA and the GPUS EcoAction Committee in creating fundamental change.

EcoAction has set up The Green Party Water Works, a public blog at <http://gp.org/committees/eoaction/blog/> That is one place to start. Another is to contact local Green Party councils and to tell them that you are willing to help protect California's future.

It is clear that neither major political party is going to do that.

**BY WES ROLLEY**

I have never driven down the Central Valley without seeing sign after sign that reminded me that "Food Grow Where Water Flows". They are posted along both I-5 and Rte. 99, covering old tanks and stacks of cotton bales.

There is a truth in that statement that we all understand. California's major food producing areas are all valleys: Imperial Valley, San Joaquin Valley, Salinas Valley. They all rely on irrigation. It is mostly through irrigation that California has become the number 1 agricultural state in the country, producing \$36.6 Billion in revenue in 2007.

That is a big argument for maintaining the status quo. In fact, with a growing population to feed, there is pressure to extend agriculture in to ever more lands, some of which are totally unsuitable. The environmental consequences of that are routinely ignored.

The only problem is that nothing can maintain the status quo.

Things are always changing, becoming something different. That is the lesson of ecology, a lesson that Greens have learned even if others have not. We all live in a complex system of things that are created and things that die. Our hope is that we are not the ones who will die.

Currently the major change is climate. The most recent forecasts indicate that we may not be able to avoid a temperature increase of 6° C. by 2100. Such a change would entirely disrupt all of our natural systems and California's agricultural industry is rather ground zero in this.

That is why I call attention to those signs. / Food Grows Where Water Flows/. They are no longer a simple description of California's agribusiness. They are a political slogan. Perhaps they always were. You will hear the same story repeated again and again. California's Agriculture needs water. The environmentalists think a fish is more important than people. Let's set aside the environmental laws so we can build more, develop more, pump more, grow more.

It is never that simple. There is not going to be much more water. The water that we will get will not be stored in the mountain snow pack to melt for summer use.

Building more dams and more canals to store and carry less water does not make sense, but that is what almost every politician in the San Joaquin Valley wants to do.

The campaign to flush the San Joaquin

# Food Grow Water Or N



**This is Owens Lake now. It has not always been this way. When miners were exploiting the silver, it was before the Metropolitan Water District bought up the rights to most of the water in the Owens Valley. By is slowly being restored. The prospect of climate change driven drought may mean that is will never come**



# s Where lows. ot.



shipped across the lake by steamboat to meet a railway on the Western Side. That, of course, was long ago. In 2000, you could drive through the areas and watch the dust devils swirl across the old lake bed. Now, it's all the way back.

*Photo by Chris Austin*

Valley with Delta Water is well organized and picking up more force every week. It has now taken on the overtones of ethnic conflict.

The California Latino Water Coalition are doing all that the land owners ask, showing up at organized protests as though Cesar Chavez were still leading them. This has the makings of a major split between the interests of farm workers and urban dwellers, though both are Hispanic.

California's State Legislature has failed time and again to make the substantive changes in how we deal with water. Each time the problem is recognized, they end up negotiating some compromise like Cal-Fed that solves nothing. Cal-Fed was billed as a compromise and promoted as such by Senator Feinstein.

In reality, it was a capitulation to agribusiness interests.

In a similar manner, the Delta Vision process initiated by Governor Schwarzenegger was directed to define a comprehensive solution for our water needs with a concentrated focus on the Delta. Once delivered, every interest group is picking and choosing from a menu of solutions, choosing only those that they were looking for at the beginning and ignoring the rest.

Schwarzenegger wanted the peripheral canal. San Joaquin Valley Agribusiness wants more

guaranteed water. The Metropolitan Water District wants to keep supporting unlimited growth. We can't have it all. There is not now enough water to do that, even in a good year and we have had three dry years in a row.

Unless the people of California decide to tell their legislature to get serious about our future, we won't have a very good one. If our legislature is not ready to apply real science and ecological systems planning to the management of our watershed, then it is time to elect someone who will.

Two Green Party candidates for the State Assembly, Lisa Green (53rd AD) and Jack Lindblad (39th AD), have started their campaigns with strong positions about the changes needed in our water management systems.

The California Green Party is the only real option if we want to secure a future before our economy dies of thirst.

# YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT?

## Research shows we waste most water at the 'dinner table'

By PEGGY KOTEN

You're warned about not watering your lawn as much, and not to take long showers - but it's quite possibly what you do at the dinner table that wastes the most water.

In fact, our water supply is inefficiently used and is tremendously polluted by the animal farming industry. It's not even a debate any longer.

Growing all food requires water. However, raising animals to eat uses water that could otherwise be used to raise crops to feed humans.

Large amounts of water are used to irrigate corn, soy, and oat fields that are required to feed farmed animals.

The farmed animal industry places a serious strain on our water supply from the necessity of watering the crops that farmed animals eat, providing drinking water for billions of animals each year, and cleaning away the filth in factory farms, transport trucks, and slaughterhouses,

According to author John Robbins, it takes 5,000 gallons of water to produce 1 pound of meat, while growing 1 pound of wheat only requires 25 gallons.

A totally vegetarian diet requires only 300 gallons of water per day, while a meat-eating diet requires more than 4,000 gallons of water per day.

In the U.S., half of all water resources, plus 70 percent of all grains, 80 percent of all agricultural land, and one-third of all fossil fuels are used to raise animals for food. A legislative



Photo by Chris Austin

**Meat Patty = 616 gallons of water.**

committee estimated nearly 80 percent of all water used in California is used in animal agriculture, one way or the other.

Raising animals for food is also a

water-polluting process. Animal waste from large factory farms threatens the water we drink and swim in, and the future of our rivers, lakes, and streams.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has stated that the runoff from factory farms pollutes our rivers and lakes more than all other industrial sources combined.

Livestock produce an enormous amount of waste. In the U.S. every second, chickens, turkeys, pigs, and cows in factory farms produce nearly 89,000 pounds of excrement, which is contaminated with the antibiotics and hormones that are pumped into these animals.

Corporate livestock industry's waste disposal practices - spraying it onto croplands or storing it in open-air waste pits called lagoons, as large as several football fields - often result in leaks, spills and runoff that pollute ground and surface water and create a health risk to people and wildlife.

An example of this contamination seen in CA is when the California Foster Farms Poultry plant in Merced discharged approximately 11 million gallons of storm water polluted with decomposed chicken manure into the San Luis National Wildlife Refuge between December 1994 and April 1995.

Chicken and hog waste from factory

farms in Maryland and North Carolina have washed into the Chesapeake Bay and North Carolina rivers, triggering outbreaks of the toxic microbe *pfisteria* that have sickened people and killed millions of fish.

(For many more examples of water pollution by cow, pig, or chicken farms, see [http://ecosyn.us/ecocity/Links/My\\_Links\\_Pages/Hog\\_Pollution.html](http://ecosyn.us/ecocity/Links/My_Links_Pages/Hog_Pollution.html) ([http://ecosyn.us/ecocity/Links/My\\_Links\\_Pages/Hog\\_Pollution.html](http://ecosyn.us/ecocity/Links/My_Links_Pages/Hog_Pollution.html)))

While millions of people across the globe are faced with droughts and water shortages, much of the world's water supply is diverted to animal agriculture.

It is clear that raising animals for food puts a tremendous strain on our already limited water supply, and water is used much more efficiently when it goes toward producing crops for human consumption.

Every time we sit down to eat, three or six times each day, we get to choose whether to eat chicken, beef, pork, fish, and other animal-derived foods that devastate our water supply or to eat a diet based on a variety of grains, fruits and vegetables.

As we talk and debate about water, its uses and shortages, our eating habits need to be part of that discussion.

## Parting Shot

### Why we don't get true story

*(The following is excerpted, leaving much out. For that, we apologize).*

By WES ROLLEY

I write a column for my local paper and always find it interesting to see how the editor writes the headline. In the May 8 edition of Morgan Hill Times ([www.morganhilltimes.com](http://www.morganhilltimes.com)), the headline was "Institutional Knowledge needed to make decisions."

That is not what I would have said, but on re-reading it, maybe he got the point.

We expect little more from our water districts than to open a faucet and have the water flow. There is much more to it than that and most of us are not paying attention. We expect the

media to do that for us.

When newspapers cut reporters, they lose more than the salaries. When term limits force out legislators, we lose their experience. It becomes increasingly difficult to understand just how the governance of the local water districts are failing us when all you hear is about cutbacks in water supply or that the rates are going up.

But, in spite of this, I recommended a full house cleaning of the Board of Directors for the Santa Clara Valley Water District. These pseudo government districts are failing us and they get by due to voter apathy and the lack of a media that knows enough to hold their feet to the fire.

That is where I learned at a recent session at the Morgan Hill Community Center at which the Water District presented its Annual Report on the Pro-

tection and Augmentation of Water Supplies - 2009 and to explain its Recommended Groundwater Production Charges for Fiscal Year 2009-2010.

The problem was that I was not able to attend the public hearing. Neither was it reported in the local paper. The fact that I was not there, in itself, has consequences beyond the fact that I may have missed important updates to the document they provided. Surely, the presenters must have commented on the fact that a San Jose judge has ruled that the current method of computing and collecting groundwater charges is not constitutional in California.

However without media coverage, maybe no one tied this together. Underlying this is another thought, one concerning the role of the media, especially in the coverage of our government and local issues.

The result is that our community, no matter how broadly we define that term is not well served. We see many stories about the fact that farmers are not going to get any water this year and many of these stories contain the framing of jobs vs. fish. Nothing could be further from the truth. Were the question of term limits brought to the voters here, I am not sure what I would do. In a certain sense, the Directors need to acquire that same institutional knowledge, of course with an informed media that can hold their feet to the fire.

I can say I would not support the reelection of any of the current directors; those who have allowed an unconstitutional method of charging out costs to continue un-questioned for years, and those who failed to provide adequate long term, ecologically-sound planning for meeting our true water needs.

# IN MEMORIAM

## Remembering a 'Dangerous Man:' Peter Miguel Camejo (1939-2008)



By SHARON PETERSON

BERKELEY - On November 23, 2008, an unseasonably sunny Sunday afternoon, over 400 family members, friends, colleagues and occasional opponents packed UC Berkeley's International House auditorium.

They came to remember and celebrate the life of activist, politician, financial manager and family man, Peter Miguel Camejo, a man whom then-Gov. Ronald Reagan called one of the "10 most dangerous men in California."

Camejo died from a recurrence of lymphoma on September 13, 2008, at the age of 68.

It is deliciously ironic that Camejo would have been a UC Berkeley alumnus had he not been expelled for "unauthorized use of a bullhorn" during an anti-war demonstration in the 1960s.

Upon learning that his lymphoma had returned, Camejo asked Claudette Begin to create and host his memorial. Begin and Camejo's wife, Morella Camejo, began working together. Soon the team grew to include Camejo's brother, Dan Ratner, Begin's husband, Alex Chis, longtime friend Carol Reed and Mike Wyman, close friend and veteran Green.

Claudette Begin opened the event, and served as host throughout. Peter Camejo's family took the stage, then Morella Camejo and brother Antonio Camejo welcomed the crowd and

shared their personal memories. Dan Ratner produced a slideshow of Peter Camejo's life, which played against the stage backdrop. Mementos from political campaigns and copies of his books lined the back wall of the large Spanish-style hall.

Morella Camejo said, "He couldn't stop coming up with ideas. His mind was restless, forever making plans for the future."

Antonio Camejo said of his brother, "He firmly believed that we would rally the American people around just causes."

Peter Camejo was perhaps best known for his runs for president on the Socialist Workers Party, Green Party and independent tickets, and for Governor of California on the Green Party ticket. In the 2003 gubernatorial recall election campaign, Camejo's incisive remarks during the debates received national attention and brought higher measures of visibility and respectability to progressive thought.

He was a friend of Malcolm X, and he marched in Selma with the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. He was a pioneer advocate for immigrant rights and, after 9/11, worked for civil rights and freedom from hate for Muslim citizens.

Camejo wrote books on political activism, American and Californian history (*Racism, Revolution, Reaction, 1861-1877: the Rise and Fall of Radical Reconstruction and California Under Corporate Rule*) and socially responsible investing (*The SRI Advantage*). He founded or co-founded progressive political action groups such as the North Star Network (1983), the Progressive Alliance of Alameda (1990s) and IDEA PAC (2005) and the Environmental Justice Fund (empowering environmentalists of color), and he sparked growth in many others, such as the Green Party.

During and after the Contra War in Nicaragua, Camejo helped promote fair trade sesame farming in Nicaragua, which is now one of the world's largest of exporters of sesame seed. In

(See Page 14 PETER)

## Dona Spring: Irreplaceable Green, held office longer than any other

By JOHN SELAWSKY

BERKELEY - Dona Spring died on July 13, 2008. For the past thirty-five years she courageously battled rheumatoid arthritis, which progressively took away her mobility, her stamina, and her health, but never her dignity and integrity.

Dona served on the Berkeley City Council, representing District 4, for 16 years. This is the longest term for any elected Green in the state of California, and the second longest in the country.

Her longevity in office is attributable to her persistence, intelligence, and compassion as a representative on state, national, and international issues and on the day-to-day issues that impacted her constituents in District 4: street sweeping, stop signs and traffic lights, traffic calming, disability access, public works, and other city services. She was accessible, available, intelligent, and responsive. She was a rare public official in so many ways.

We will remember Dona Spring for many things: zipping through her District 4 to attend a neighborhood meeting or to City Hall in her motorized wheelchair and her tireless advocacy of social justice issues — for people with disabilities and the need for funding a new warm-water therapeutic pool, for a new Berkeley animal shelter and animal rights, for environmental issues, including strong and early support for the Berkeley Farmers' Markets.

She authored the resolution strongly condemning U.S. military action in Afghanistan, and gained national attention and vociferous criticism elsewhere for that resolution, but not here in Berkeley. She received death threats for that proposal, and for others she carried and sponsored.

I don't believe she feared death, since she had been facing it for many years. I would be remiss if I didn't mention Dennis Walton, Dona's companion of 25 years, who supported, aided, and more and more cared for Dona over the years. His commitment to Dona was unwavering. Dona's mother, Paula, had



moved to Piedmont, only 5 miles from Berkeley, to be near her daughter during the last few years of Dona's life.

My own experience and relationship with Dona goes back over 15 years. We met first as Green Party activists; she had already been elected to her first term as a Berkeley City Councilmember in 1992 (she ran against and defeated in a mild upset a well-known and respected environmentalist in his own right, John Brauer).

She appointed me to Berkeley's Community Environmental Advisory Commission in 1995, on which I served for five years, eventually serving two terms as chair of the commission. I note this as an example of Dona's unerring eye and ear for placing people in positions where they could succeed, and grow.

From that five-year experience on CEAC, and with my own work in the school district, I ran for and won a seat on the Berkeley School Board in 2000. I am currently the President of the Board.

Dona supported the unrepresented, the voiceless, and the hidden amongst us. She never backed down from a debate, never apologized for taking the side of the disabled, or homeless, or poor.

She understood and lived the understanding that we are all ultimately

(See Page 12 DONA)

## WRONG

(From Page 1)

pable of bringing unbelievable rewards to the perpetrators and their associates while creating havoc in local communities.

The response from the mainstream becomes, "It's not the system, (or "capitalism") it's people!"

Warning signs were there all along. Anyone old enough to remember "the great depression" could recognize that the concentration of "wealth" at the top of the population is not, and could never be, sustainable.

And outside the mainstream media, many voices cried out against the take-over of our lives and our system by multi-national corporations under the guise of "freedom from big government." Among the many voices of dissent was Tony Clarke, head of the Polaris Institute in Canada. In the preface of his book, *SILENT COUP*\*\*, he writes of a 1994 Clinton gala for heads of state from North and South America. This commemorates the first Summit of the Americas on the expansion of free trade throughout the hemisphere. Also present were chief executives from some of the largest corporations in the U.S., and/or the world.

Two Mexican journalists asked David Rockefeller, "Mr. Rockefeller, you were present back in the 1960's, during President Kennedy's Alliance

## RECOMMEND

(From Page 1)

**progressive Taxation.** For too long, there has been a bipartisan agreement (Federal, State, and local) to move away from progressive taxation and substitute a trickle-down theory. It goes like this: If the rich get richer, perhaps a crumb can be gotten for the rest of us. Forget it.

When Peter Camejo ran for Governor he made progressive taxation a centerpiece of his campaigns. We should follow his example. Progressive taxation does not just mean graduated tax rates on income. We need to tax wealth as well as income.

(4) Change the state laws that govern redevelopment districts. In Oakland, for example, taxes generated by the big office buildings downtown have to be spent within that redevelopment area. This is deliberate starvation of the cities' general funds.

It is unacceptable.



for Progress Summit with the leaders of Latin America. Can you tell us what, if anything, has changed since then?"

"Well," he replied, "back then, businessmen like myself, were sitting on the sidelines, watching the negotiations unfold. But now we're sitting in the driver's seat, and we're writing many of the documents ourselves."

In the book's text, Clarke runs through the steps in which Canadian legislation handed control of government to corporations. In reading the narrative, anyone who paid attention to U.S. congressional actions would recognize and remember the same legislative steps having occurred earlier in our own country.

Yet, we see that the government solutions are geared to preserving the institutions that allowed or perpetrated the scams. In their gut, most of us are thinking, should "our money" continue to go to crooks that've ripped us off?

Independent economists like Joseph Stiglitz fault the shift to de-regulation of the financial institutions. Along with us, they recognize that our elected representatives have ignored their responsibility to us, their constituents, and as

Molly Ivans once said, "they danced with the guys what brung 'em."

That means bail-outs for failed businesses and cut-backs in services to communities and the needy. It means more unemployment, and more need for food banks and presently unavailable low cost housing.

It means an increasingly deteriorating infrastructure, and increasing costs to the environment and ecosystem, more poverty and thus more crime, more stresses and anger resulting in

## DONA

(From Page 11)

judged, and the society we build is judged, on how we treat and empower those who have had little or no opportunity in their lives, or have had hardship and setback. We all need to remember that message in the work we continue to do.

(Readers can find more memories of Dona Spring from the Lindsay Vurek video, "Courage in Life & Politics -- The Dona Spring Story." This hour-long portrait can be found on YouTube.com. Search under "Dona Spring Courage").

more scapegoating of perceived enemies. It means possible new wars to supply perceived needs.

So where does that take us? Does the Green Party have some answers?

Well, let's look at our ten key values: Grassroots Democracy, Social Justice and Equality, Ecological Wisdom, Non-Violence, Decentralization, Community-based Economics and Economic Justice, Feminism, Respect for Diversity, Personal and Global Responsibility, Future Focus and Sustainability.

Which system would you expect to do a better fix? Better still, would a GREEN economy have created our present problems?

*\*Stiglitz includes what he calls "liar loans" with the other "innovations" and quotes Warren Buffet's labeling of derivatives as "weapons of mass destruction." VANITY FAIR, Jan., 2009. \*\*Tony Clarke, SILENT COUP, Confronting the Big Business Take-over of Canada, Canadian Center for Policy Alternatives, and James Lorimer Ltd. 1997.*

## State Greens hail Obama presidency, but say Democratic Party is on notice

SACRAMENTO – The Green Party of California hailed the inauguration of the nation's first African-American President - President Barack Obama - and suggested that much of what Pres. Obama said in his inaugural speech should put his fellow Democrats in the state Legislature here on notice.

"When the President called for an 'end to the petty grievances and false promises, the recriminations and worn out dogmas that...strangle(d) our politics,' he seemed to be speaking directly to California Democratic leaders who have failed the people repeatedly by not following through on their promises," said Alex Walker, a Green and civil rights activist in Southern California.

Greens, Walker added, hope the state Democratic Party – which controls both the Senate and Assembly – will heed Obama's call for laying "a new foundation for growth...harness the sun and winds and the soil to fuel our cars and run our factories."

"This should remind the Democratic Party not to pander to oil companies, and begin moving legislation, which they have failed to do until now, that truly exploits alternative energy and quits subsidizing 'old' energy," he said.

By JAN ARNOLD

My general approach is "tax and spend." Tax those with more money than others, and spend what we should to provide for health, education, welfare, the environment.

The package the Duopoly proposed was really terrible from the point of view of further cutting spending in areas where the spending has already been inadequate for years, failing to tax those who have plenty of money, and failing to start spending for future-focused environmental and energy needs.

A very useful source for ongoing analysis of the many issues is the California Budget Project ([www.cbpp.org](http://www.cbpp.org)). The gap between the business-as-usual expenditures and the business-as-usual revenue has been growing. (Currently the budget gap in California is the largest as a percentage of the General Fund of any state in the US.)

In recent years various one-time accounting tricks, pieces of luck, borrowing, deferring necessary work, and other such gimmicks have been used to stumble from one near-calamity to another. This failure of our elected leaders to tell the truth and deal with the real problems has been pointed out by many commentators.

Proposition 1A proposed a spending cap. This has been proposed and voted down in the past. If a spending cap had been enacted in 1995-96, we would have had to cut about \$40 billion in spending in 2006-07, 2007-08, and 2008-09.

The official ballot summary said 1A "strictly limits state spending and mandates a bigger rainy day fund -- forcing politicians to save more in good years to prevent tax increases and cuts to schools, public safety and other vital services in bad years."

This statement gave the misleading impression that state revenue and state spending have been just fine except for this current crisis this year, and all we have to do is return to the good old days (of the dot-com bubble, the stock market bubble, or the housing bubble, all of which temporarily raised state tax revenues.

But there were many problems with the business-as-usual expenditures even before the current round of cuts. I'll start with the topic that is most valued by the average voter, K-14 education.

Voters approved Prop 98 in 1988 to assure the proportion of funds spent on the schools (40 percent of the General Fund) stays at the same inadequate

# Why 1 Green voted 'No'

level it was then, rather than continuing to lose not only by comparison with what would be needed for a good school system, but in comparison to other budget items. Prop 1B proposes changes to Prop 98. (That's why Greens opposed 1B).

Another major part of the budget is welfare, including aid to the disabled, blind, and aged low-income people of California. The Federal SSI program has a built-in cost-of-living adjustment annually, as does Social Security. Many states, including California, supplement the Federal SSI grant with a "state supplement."

By failing to increase the SSP (that is, passing along the Federal increase but freezing the SSP), or even by reducing it so that the check received by the beneficiary does not go up (the re-

dren. Another large item in the budget is health care. MediCal is the Federal/State program providing some health care for some, but not all low-income Californians.

As of December 2007, California spent \$5695 per recipient on each MediCal enrollee, less than Mississippi, less than Georgia, less than Alabama, far less than the national average of \$7534, and, although this is hard to believe, less than ANY OTHER STATE.

About ten states spent more than \$10,000 per enrollee. (Source; CPB)

Then there are the prisons, currently overcrowded to the point where even the courts are demanding a reduction in the number of incarcerated people. We support reducing the prison budget and releasing enough of the cur-

**'Despite rhetoric about how everyone will need to sacrifice, everyone is not equally able to pay higher taxes (and) meet their basic needs.'**

reduction "swallows" the Federal increase), the earning power of this safety-net program decreases over time.

Using June 1990 as 100, the purchasing power of SSI/SSP in California has fallen to about 80, and the current proposals would reduce it still further. It bears repeating that all of this reduction is due to California's cuts over the years, as the Federal share has continued to rise. (source; CPB)

Aid to low-income families with children, now called Cal-Works, has declined in that same period to about 70 percent of its value in 1990, and the proposed cuts now will reduce that to 50 percent. (source: CPB)

Because the 1996 "welfare reform" law limits the time adults can remain on welfare, currently almost 80 percent of the people on Cal-Works are chil-

renly imprisoned to relieve the overcrowding. (Of course we also insist on state funding for community support for the people released.)

Corrections (and rehabilitation) spending has grown at nearly four times the rate of General Fund spending as a whole since 1980-81. General fund spending is up by 381 percent and corrections and rehabilitation spending is up by 1491 percent (source; CPB) This cruel and disgraceful trend in California's history should be reversed.

So, what should the Green Party recommend regarding the "spending" part of the budget? (Our Platform has many excellent suggestions.) And where should the tax revenue come from to pay for all that?

Republican rhetoric about "everyone having to sacrifice" suggests that those who already are unable to afford ad-

equated food, shelter, health care, and education should give up still more, such as dental care, so that millionaires and multi-millionaires don't have to pay more, although the rich can pay more with no actual deprivation resulting.

As (the late) Peter Camejo pointed out during his campaigns for Governor (2002, 2003, 2006), the lowest-income households pay the largest share of their income in state and local taxes.

"Corporate income taxes have declined over time as a share of General Fund revenues and as a share of corporate profits.

If corporations had paid the same share of their profits in corporate taxes in 2006 as they did in 1981, corporate tax collections would have been \$8.4 billion higher."

The yield of the state's sales tax has declined over time, reflecting the shift in economic activity from goods to services and the rise of Internet and mail-order sales that escape taxation.

"If taxable purchases accounted for the same share of personal income in 2007-08 as they did in 1966-67, the state would have collected an additional \$16.4 billion in sales tax revenue." (Source; CPB.)

While there are some states which require a "supermajority" (that is, more than a simple majority) to pass their budget, and some states that require a supermajority to raise any state taxes, California is the only state to require both. That situation allows the most parsimonious anti-tax legislators (that is, the Republicans) to dictate terms although they are in the minority in the Legislature.

Despite rhetoric about how everyone will have to sacrifice, everyone is not equally able to pay higher taxes while still being able to meet their basic needs.

During the period 1995 to 2006, the taxpayers in the top 15 percent of the state's income distribution have had their income double, while the bottom four-fifths saw their income increase between 8.55 and 10.8 percent.

The wealthiest 1 percent could easily afford to pay higher taxes while the vast majority would suffer far more hardship if they had to do so.

Measures 1B, 1C, 1D, and 1E are orders by those who think they are our leaders (the legislature) to drop our silly and childish opinions about what the holes are in the budget.

Therefore I recommended voting NO on those Propositions (on May 19).

# Former Green Party mayor ties campaign to ‘encourage’ cities to face climate change with local election battles of the future

By CRESCENZO VELLUCCI

CONTRA COSTA – A former Green Party mayor here is targeting every city in this county to participate in a campaign to promote public awareness about the causes and impacts of climate change.

And she says that future city elections will have a lot to do with how cities react.

Lynda Deschambault, who was past mayor of Moraga, launched the campaign, which now has 15 of 19 cities in the County (Concord, Clayton, San Pablo and Pleasant Hill are not on board yet) participating.

“It is more important than ever that local advocates support, encourage and hold our elected local decision makers accountable to making critical policy decisions,” said Deschambault, who is executive director of the project, part of the nonprofit Generation Green. Since its inception in 1990, Generation Green has informed

citizens and encouraged environmental action in Contra Costa County. Two other Generation Green projects include the Dumpster Diversion Project which is working to recycle materials through art and education and the Green Rheem Movie night, an environmental documentary film series with local food and wine on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month

“Although some may be surprised to see so many cities in this sometimes conservative county taking such a strong stand on this topic, it is important to keep in mind that as city budgets continue to tighten, energy efficiency and cost cutting sustainability measures are a mainstream way of doing city business and saving money,” Deschambault said.

The cities have agreed to participate in the Cities for Climate Protection Campaign ([www.iclei.org](http://www.iclei.org)). As a participant, each city pledges to take a

leadership role in promoting public awareness about the causes and impacts of climate change.

Each city will conduct a greenhouse gas inventory, set goals, and write a climate action plan to address opportunities for reducing Greenhouse gas emissions.

A baseline inventory provides a city with an overview of its emissions and allows for tracking success, said Deschambault.

Equipped with these inventories in hand, each city will individually discuss, review and address their quantified energy related emissions in their city.

Deschambault explains that the inventory is all inclusive of activities within a city’s boundaries and calculates emissions from all facilities and all sources. Electricity, water, garbage, miles traveled...all of these have associated CO2 emissions, which will

be included in the city reports.

Why Contra Costa County, an expansive county geographically located near San Francisco?

According to Deschambault, statistics indicate that the Contra Costa contribution is significant to the health and well being of the Bay Area as a whole.

“The CCC emission rate in tons/person is the highest of all the Bay Area counties. Our population is significant in size (1 million as compared to Alameda’s 1.4 million). The growth rate of CCC (8 percent) is much higher than the other counties and higher than California as a whole (6 percent),” said the Green.

Deschambault said Generation Green provides local decision-makers with a monthly newsletter, quarterly workshops, and a website for cities to share best practices. [www.cccclimateleaders.org](http://www.cccclimateleaders.org).

## PETER

(From Page 11)

support of lesbian and gay rights, Peter created an IRA to help fund the San Francisco Aids Foundation. Another venture was the Council for Responsible Public Investment to assist the California Health Department’s anti-tobacco divestment work.

The family remembered the devoted husband, father and grandfather. Colleagues remembered the financial planner who was obsessed with the stock market game, but left lucrative positions at Merrill Lynch, and then Prudential to create his own firm, Progressive Asset Management, because neither institution would promote socially-responsible investing. Everyone remembered the quick wit of a born comedian scholar.

Among the speakers were such progressive political luminaries as Ralph Nader and his 2008 presidential running mate, former San Francisco Supervisor Matt Gonzalez, Cindy Sheehan, who ran against Rep. Nancy Pelosi in 2008 and plans to do so again in 2010, Donna Warren, Camejo’s run-

ning mate in his 2002 and 2004 gubernatorial bids, Mayor Gayle McLaughlin of Richmond, and Jo Chamberlain, former candidate for State Assembly and Camejo’s 2006 gubernatorial campaign manager. Jason West, former Green mayor of New Paltz, NY and brand-new Bay Area resident as of that day, was a surprise guest.

Ralph Nader said that Camejo “always renewed himself. Some people learn until they’re about 30, and then run on fumes for 30 or 40 years.

Peter was always learning.”

Dr. Agha Saeed, of the American Muslim Alliance, and Miguel Araujo, leader of Centro Azteca, praised Camejo’s civil rights advocacy and urged progressives to keep on working.

Kalman Stein, CEO of the environ-

mental charity organization EarthShare (Camejo had been a boardmember) flew in from Washington, D.C. to share his memories. Visibly moved by prior speakers, Stein observed that “it’s a joy to find out about all the parts of Peter I didn’t know.”

Mike Wyman, long time friend and Green Attorney General candidate in 2006, said Camejo will be most remembered as “a man of great passion and boundless compassion for the poor, uninsured

Sanchez read a statement from the Venezuelan Ambassador, Bernardo Alvarez Herrera. Sanchez apologized for Herrera’s absence, noting that the Ambassador had recently been expelled from the United States.

In his final months, Camejo focused on writing his autobiography. He had barely enough time to finish it.

His editor, Leslie Evans, reported that he is working on the final chapters and that the book, with the working title, North Star, has been approved for publication by Haymarket Publishing.

All who attended the memorial came away with the same knowledge of great loss that brought them together.

But they also took with them a strengthened determination to continue Peter Miguel Camejo’s work.

(Suzanne Baker contributed to this story, which was largely adapted from the Berkeley Daily Planet of November 26, 2008)



Peter and Ralph Nader share a lighter moment

workers and for immigrant workers in their struggle for justice and legalization.”

Peter Miguel Camejo was a first-generation American, born to Venezuelan parents in the Borough of Queens in New York City.

Venezuelan Consul General Martin

**For more about Peter Miguel Camejo, and his life pursuing social justice, in an unjust world, see [www.cagreens.org](http://www.cagreens.org)**

## The Ten Key Values of the Green Party

**Grassroots Democracy**—Develop participatory ways to control the decisions which affect our lives.

**Social Justice**—Create a system which promotes equality and dignity for all.

**Nonviolence**—Develop alternatives to current patterns of violence at all levels.

**Ecological Wisdom**—Operate our human society knowing we are a part of nature, and learn to live within the ecological and resource limits of the planet.

**Decentralization**—Move power and responsibility away from larger and more distant institutions toward individuals and communities, with the goal of a decentralized, democratic society.

**Community-Based Economics**—Redesign work to encourage employee ownership and workplace democracy, and establish basic security for all and a fair distribution of wealth and income.

**Feminism**—Replace the ethic of dominance and control with cooperative ways of relating to each other.

**Respect for Diversity**—Honor cultural, ethnic, racial, sexual, religious and spiritual diversity, reclaiming our country's shared ideals—the dignity of the individual, democratic participation and liberty and justice for all.

**Personal and Global Responsibility**—Learn from and be of genuine assistance to grassroots groups in all parts of the world.

**Sustainability**—Act not for the short range narrow interest of one country or group of people, but for the collective future of the entire planet.



## PROPS

(From Page 1)

for future years in which they could be spent for the Proposition 98 K-14 educational spending mandate (under Proposition 1B, below) or, if 1B failed, to pay off various loans and bonds.

This Proposition was unclear and not transparent. It could not do what it claimed to do; instead, it would create new problems.

1A asked us to accept a permanent spending cap (a zero-growth budget) as the price the Legislature insisted on to raise some taxes temporarily. If such a spending cap had been in effect this year, it would have mandated billions of dollars in additional cuts.

State spending on education, health care, the safety net for low-income people, and other essential services is inadequate now, and has been for many years. Freezing the state budget (except for population growth and inflation) means that the inadequate spending levels could never be raised.

In addition, population growth alone does not reflect the different needs that different people have. One obvious example is that children whose families recently immigrated to the US and who

do not speak English at home require more spending on school services, at least for a few years.

Another example is that, as California's population ages, more per capita spending for health care and social services will be required.

How would the 1A spending cap affect any new programs Californians may want to create? We'll use the example of "Health Care for All Forever."

It is possible to pass a Single-Payer ("Medicare for All") health care plan in California, such as SB 840, which passed the Legislature but was vetoed by Governor Schwarzenegger twice, and is now being introduced again as SB 810. The new revenues such a plan would mandate would not be subject to the spending cap.

However, studies which have shown that Californians could afford to cover everyone with the money that would be saved by cutting the health insurance companies out of the loop depend on also rolling existing programs into the new program. The deep cuts that have been made in state health care spending make this much more difficult.

Although the budget battle was mainly portrayed by the mainstream media as Democrats (tax, cut, and bor-

**Sabiduría Ecológica**—Debemos actuar en la sociedad humana con el entendimiento de que somos parte de la naturaleza, y aprender a vivir dentro de los límites económicos y de los recursos del planeta.

**Democracia de Bases**—Elaboración de sistemas participatorios que nos alienten a controlar las decisiones que nos afectan la vida.

**Justicia Social**—Creación de un sistema que promueva la igualdad y la dignidad de todas las personas.

**No Violencia**—Encontrar alternativas para erradicar los patrones actuales de violencia a todo nivel, y al mismo tiempo eliminar la injusticia y sentido de impotencia que conducen a la misma.

**Descentralización**—Transferir el poder y la responsabilidad de instituciones grandes y lejanas a los individuos y comunidades, siendo la meta eventual una sociedad democrática y descentralizada.

## Los Diez Valores Fundamentales del Partido Verde

**Economía Basada en la Comunidad**—Rediseño de las estructuras de trabajo para fomentar la propiedad para los empleados y la democracia en el trabajo, al mismo tiempo que se establece una seguridad básica para todos y una distribución justa de la riqueza y los ingresos.

**Feminismo**—Sustituir la ética de dominación y control por la de relaciones de cooperación.

**Respeto por la Diversidad**—Respeto a la diversidad cultural, étnica, racial, sexual, religiosa y espiritual, volviendo a los ideales compartidos de nuestro país: la dignidad de cada persona, la participación democrática, y libertad y justicia para todos.

**Responsabilidad Personal y Global**—Debemos aprender de los grupos de base del resto del mundo y ser de verdadera ayuda para ellos.

**Sostenibilidad**—Pensar en términos del futuro colectivo del planeta entero, no en los estrechos intereses de corto plazo de un país o grupo de personas.

row) vs. Republicans (cut, cut, and cut), there were some parts of the deal that even some Democrats could not bring themselves to support. District 16 Assemblymember Sandre Swanson, for example, voted against 1A (and several other budget cuts), and was stripped of a committee chairmanship by the Democratic Speaker of the Assembly, Karen Bass.

**PROPOSITION 1B** actually looked good at first glance.

It claimed to restore, starting in the 2011-12 school year, \$9.3 billion dollars that were diverted from K-14 education spending guaranteed under Proposition 98. There is no question that deep cuts in education funding are being made all around us.

Thousands of teachers and other school employees are threatened with layoffs. However, 1B was contingent on passage of 1A. That is, 1B was the sweetener for the worst part of this rotten deal.

While the California Teachers Association recommended support of 1B, many teachers, including the Oakland Education Association (by a unanimous vote of their Rep Council) opposed both Propositions 1A and 1B.

**PROPOSITION 1C** allows the state to borrow \$5 billion against future lot-

tery revenues, and use the funds for programs other than the schools. We opposed this Proposition because we are opposed to the entire process and this entire deal.

**PROPOSITIONS 1D and 1E** altered past Propositions to plug some holes in the current budget, and that is why they appeared on our ballot. We oppose these measures as part of opposing this entire deal. 1D redirects money from the Prop 10 (California Children and Families Act) Trust Fund; 1E redirects money from Prop 63 (the Mental Health Services Act).

**PROPOSITION 1F** was deceptive. The Legislature tried to look like they were sharing the sacrifices that the rest of us are being asked to make in these tough times.

But 1F merely bars increases "during budget deficit years" so the Legislature would continue to receive their normal salaries and per diems. People losing their jobs or their benefits get nothing. Some equality of sacrifice!

Voters must not accept the really terrible budget cuts that were made to pass the budget, or the various bad policies in these Propositions.

We sent a strong message by defeating Propositions 1A through 1F. Greens were not alone.

# Help us work for peace.

Since the end of World War II, the No. 1 priority of Republican and Democratic Congresses has been to fund the Pentagon. But, that is bankrupting our country, strangling our communities and making us less safe.

The front side of the card at the right ([www.notmypriorities.org](http://www.notmypriorities.org)) was the central message of my campaign for Congress last year in portions of San Francisco and San Mateo counties. And, in two years of campaigning, **virtually every single person I met agreed: Not My Priorities! was their priority.**

Yet, our representatives in Congress (including a large majority of the California delegation) vote nearly unanimously to fund the Pentagon.

Republican and Democratic legislators may disagree on everything else, but when it comes to funding the Pentagon, they stand united about spending more and more taxpayer dollars for defense.

Where is the debate? How much do we need to spend to defend ourselves? In 2008, the Pentagon budget was “only” \$460 Billion. This year, it is \$542 Billion. In fact, President Obama asked for ANOTHER \$84 BILLION for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

**This is why those of us in the Green Party of California need your help desperately.** We are the lone voice of a national political party that is in total agreement with the people: war is NOT our priority.

Our California Congressional delegation – consisting of both Democrats and Republicans – has to be challenged. I did that last year, and as our Party of Greens gets stronger, the voters will see that our priorities are their priorities.

**Greens are having a major impact every day.** Our grassroots activists up and down the state organize and participate in actions to stop the war, save our environment, protect the rights of all peoples...fighting daily for social justice.

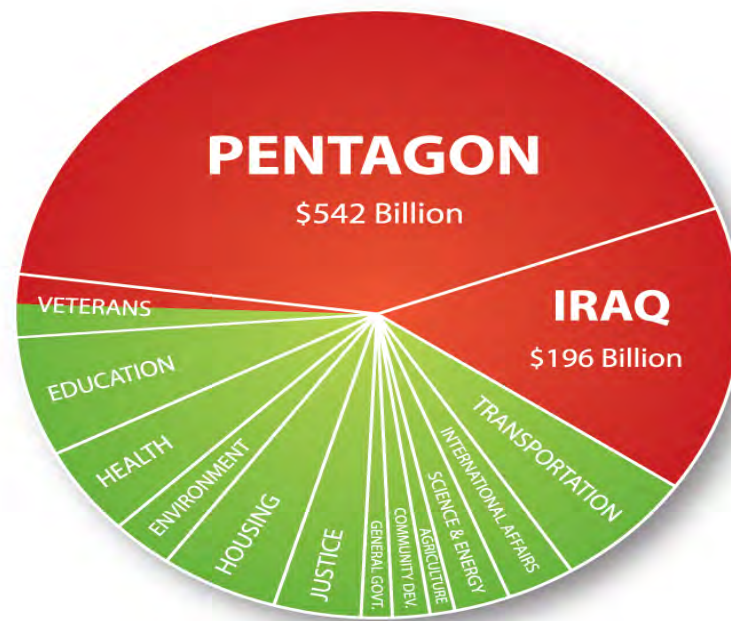
Help us make a difference for peace. Go to ([www.cagreens.org](http://www.cagreens.org)) and contribute your time, your energy and your money. Thank you.

Peace,

Barry Hermanson  
Green Party of California / Former Congressional Candidate

Green Party of California  
Post Office Box 2828  
Sacramento, CA 95812

## U.S. BUDGET PRIORITIES



## NOTMYPRIORITIES.ORG

*(This chart is the 2009 U.S. Discretionary Budget. It does not include funds for the bailout or the economic stimulus package. [www.NotMyPriorities.org](http://www.NotMyPriorities.org) for source data)*

<p><b>Dear President Obama,</b> <i>We need to defend ourselves, but this kind of spending on the military is bankrupting our country financially and morally.</i></p> <p><b>My funding priorities:</b></p> <p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. _____</p> <p><small>Visit <a href="http://NotMyPriorities.org">NotMyPriorities.org</a> to list your name and priorities on the web site.</small></p>	<div style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto 5px auto;">PLACE ZIP STAMP HERE</div> <p><b>From:</b> Name: _____ Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____</p> <hr/> <p><b>To:</b> <b>PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA</b> The White House 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW Washington, DC 20500</p>
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*To obtain postcards like this to distribute in your community, and mail to President Obama and California members of Congress, write [barry@barryhermanson.org](mailto:barry@barryhermanson.org). Let him know how many of the cards you would like sent to you. Thank you.*

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