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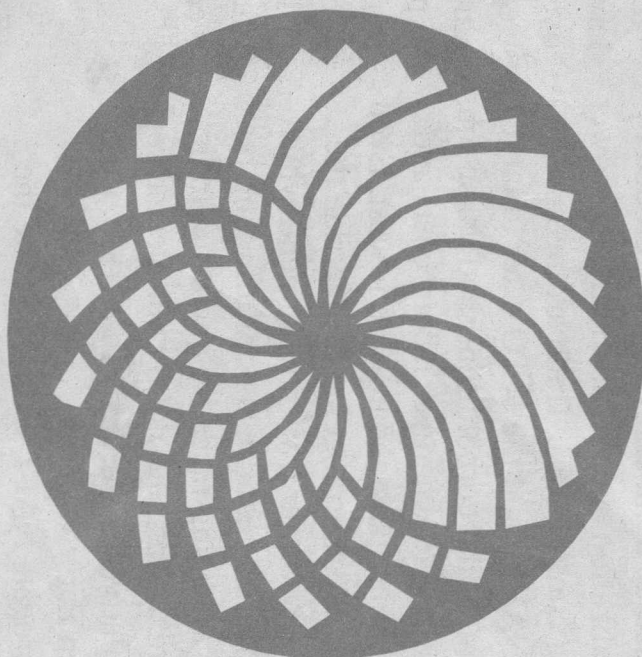
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The Green Guide

To a Healthy and Sustainable Canada



Green Party of Canada 2000 Election Platform

Federal Election 2000

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The Green Party: The Politics of Public Trust

A Clear Vision

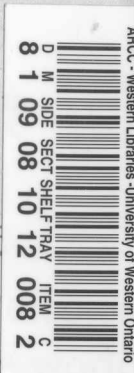
The basic approach of the Green Party is simple - we think ahead. Our policies are designed to consider the needs of Canadians not only for today, but also for tomorrow, and for the future of our children and grandchildren. That's what makes the Green Party unique. That's the vision that underlies all our policies, and that's why we believe that they fundamentally make sense. When you look at our platform, you're getting a glimpse of the future of Canadian politics - the development of a sustainable economy, a healthy society and environment, and a democracy that allows all Canadians to have their voice count for something. That's the Green Party vision for Canada today, and for the future.

A Practical Plan

The Green Party of Canada has spent eighteen years - and drawn on the experience of Greens all around the world - developing a sensible and achievable plan to attain the goals of a healthy and sustainable Canadian society. Of course, it's going to take time to reach those goals, which is why we have put forward a gradual and balanced approach that allows Canadian businesses, citizens, and institutions time to adjust to the changes that need to be made in the future. Many of our policies have already been implemented, with success, in countries around the world. The Green Guide builds on these successes, and offers Canadians real, achievable policy choices for the challenges that lie ahead.

A Bright Future

Green Parties have been to parliaments around the world in the last twenty years. At the moment, the German Greens are actually in power as part of a coalition government! These successes for the Green Party in so many countries suggest that it's just a matter of time before we see Green MPs in Ottawa. Even now, the steady increase in support that the Green Party of Canada is receiving is forcing the big parties to rethink their approach, and to adopt more sensible and environmentally sound policies. We are making a difference, and we are confident that the Green Party will be a major force in Canadian politics in the 21st century. With your help, the Green Party can win!



A message from Joan Russow, the Leader of the Green Party of Canada...

Few will deny that there is an urgent need for change. But without political action, change happens only when it does not conflict with vested economic interests. The result is that **EFFECTIVE RESPONSES** to issues - like erosion of health care, inequitable distribution of resources, environmental degradation, disintegration of communities, overconsumptive models of development, globalization through corporate control, and privatization of essential services - **HAVE NOT OCCURRED**. If positive change is to occur, it must come as a reflection of global/local public trust, rather than at the whim of vested economic interests.

The "politics of public trust," in contrast to the politics of "vested economic interest," is consistent with the international principles that have been established through the United Nations system. Through more than 50 years of concerted effort, the member states of the United Nations have created public trust international obligations through conventions, treaties and covenants, commitments through Conference Action Plans, and expectations through the General Assembly Resolutions in which they have undertaken the following actions:

* guaranteeing human rights, including labour rights, women's rights, indigenous rights, and including the human rights to food, housing, corporate-free education, and universally accessible health care, while preventing environmentally-induced diseases and poverty-related illness.



* ensuring social justice, fair and just transition programs to socially equitable and environmentally sound employment

* preventing war and conflict, and rejecting the guise of "humanitarian intervention"

* protecting the environment, addressing environmental racism, reducing the ecological footprint, invoking the precautionary principle, and moving away from the current model of over-consumption

* striving for eradicating poverty, and equitable distribution of resources

Green Parties have international, national, and local roots, and the political will to address these urgent issues by applying global principles to local issues, and promoting the politics of public trust. In part the urgency of the global situation has arisen because of the failure of member states of the United Nations to discharge their obligations, to act on commitments, and to fulfill expectations arising from General Assembly resolutions. Unfortunately, the global governments continue to undermine these international obligations.

Canadian governments continually claim that they have obligations and commitments under vested-interest international agreements such as the WTO, but rarely do they acknowledge that they have obligations and commitments under international public trust law. The vision and policies of the Green Party of Canada are consistent with obligations, commitments, and expectations created through the UN system. For example, in 1966 through the Covenant of Social, Economic and Cultural Rights, every member state of the UN incurred an obligation to guarantee the human right to food and housing. In 1972, at the UN Conference on Humans and the Environment, every member made a commitment to eliminate weapons of mass destruction.

In 1981, in a General Assembly Resolution, member states undertook to reduce the military budget and transfer the savings into social programs. In 1992, at the UN Conference on Environment and Development, every member state made a commitment to invoke the precautionary principle, the polluter pay principle, and the non-transference of harm to the environment and human health principle. In 1996, every member state at the Habitat II Conference committed to move away from car dependency.

In Canada, we are living in a wake of negligence resulting from many incidents of government/corporate/military/financial collusion. This collusion has been perpetrated through our society's condoning of corporate "donations" to political parties. During the last federal election, the Reform/Canadian Alliance, Liberal and Conservative Parties received donations from the following industries and corporations: banks and financial institutions, coal, oil, gas, forest, automobile, chemical, mining, nuclear, arms producers, agribusiness, pharmaceutical, and of course, in the case of Reform, the gun lobby. The correlation between funding of political parties and the formulation and implementation of the policy of those political parties has been virtually ignored.

It is time to be bold
and to change in the
21st century.

It is time to Vote Green.

A Sustainable Economy

Our current economic approach, which revolves around exploitive economic growth, has caused great harm to our environment and our health - but it hasn't been able to solve economic injustices like unemployment and child poverty. What can we do? The Green Party believes that there is a better way to do business. It's time for our economy to make the transition from growth to sustainability:

A Socially Just and Ecologically Sound Economy

The Green Party would redirect and reassign government funds to support the transition to sustainability through the following measures:

- * implementing the Precautionary Principle, and ensuring that corporations are responsible for their products from cradle to grave
- * enforcing the Polluter Pay principle by requiring polluters to pay compensation for previous destructive use of resources
- * establishing programs that will phase out harmful activities, coupled with a fair and just transition program for workers and communities

A Renewable Energy Future

Clean and renewable sources of energy like wind, solar, small hydro, and fuel cells will be the foundation of a sustainable Canadian economy. The Green Party will promote renewable energy by:

- * leveling the playing field in the energy

Fair Trade, Not Free Trade

Canadian democracy is being eroded by globalization and the devolution of power to big corporations. Trade arrangements like NAFTA and the WTO cater to large multinational corporations, and cause jobs to migrate to wherever labour costs and environmental standards are lowest. Even worse, these arrangements override the authority of our own government, which means that major decisions affecting our lives are being made by unelected trade organizations, and not by our elected representatives. To remedy this crisis, the Green Party will:

- * abrogate NAFTA, and promote the dismantling of the WTO
- * work out new trade deals in accordance with international public trust laws that protect and promote human rights, social justice, peace, and the environment.

The Reduced Work Week

It's amazing to think that Canadians haven't had their work week reduced in over fifty years. The shift to a 32-hour week - with no overall reduction in pay, since lower health and social assistance expenses will result in lower taxes - is long overdue, and it's a step that will allow us to lead less stressful and healthier lives while reducing unemployment. Plus, all Canadians will enjoy a 3-day weekend, every weekend!

Community Economic Development

The Green Party supports local business because we believe that jobs, profits, and decisions should stay in the hands of our local communities - not with the distant head offices of huge mega-stores that undermine the health of local businesses, and promote car dependence. The Green Party will support small businesses by promoting LETS (Local Exchange Trading Systems), cooperatives, and other



industry by ending subsidies to nuclear and fossil fuel technologies, and working to reduce greenhouse gas emissions

- * providing incentives for renewable energy development such as a \$0.05/ kWh tax credit for green energy producers, and rebates for green energy consumers

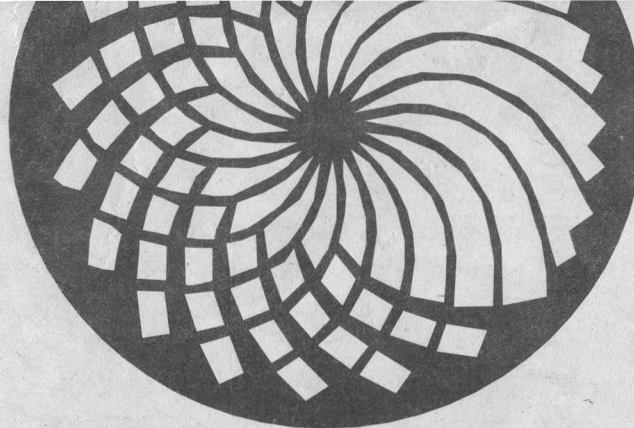
- * redirecting research funding toward field trials for renewable technologies, to encourage their reliability and efficiency

- * promoting energy conservation, to lessen our current dependency on fossil fuel and nuclear power plants

- * stopping the sale of CANDU reactors, ending uranium mining, and providing a fair and just transition program for all affected workers and communities

Alternative Progress Indicator

The Gross National Product is a flawed indicator of our economic progress. Why? Because it adds, but it never subtracts: all economic activities, even those that have catastrophic effects such as the depletion of our East Coast fisheries, are counted as economic gains, with no thought to the social and environmental consequences. The Green Party will introduce the Genuine Progress Indicator, which keeps track of our environmental and social progress along with the fiscal bottom line.



Arts and Culture

Recent Canadian governments have unfortunately been ignoring Canadian arts and culture. The Green Party will support these activities not only because of their positive effect on our quality of life, but because the costs of doing so are low, but the economic multiplier effects are high. We'll promote the arts and culture in Canada through the following measures :

- * providing stable funding for the CBC
- * eliminating the GST on books, films, newspapers, compact disks, videos, and all other means of artistic expression
- * maintaining and increasing funding for the arts, especially for smaller, community-based participatory arts and recreational activity
- * improving federal support for our

programs.

Guaranteed Income Supplement

The Green Party will work with the provinces to create a jointly-administered Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) program. The GIS provides a base income to unemployed Canadians, and tops up the incomes of those who are working in entry-level jobs that are too low-paying to support a family. We will also introduce a Guaranteed Annual Income for parents who choose to stay at home, and offer university students the option of repaying loans through student job creation programs.

Peace and Common Security

We need to reduce military expenses, and promote a culture of peace through Canada's withdrawal from NATO, by closing our waters to nuclear-powered or nuclear-capable ships, and by continuing Canada's peacekeeping operations. The savings should be redirected to social programs, health care, environmental protection, and to provincial transfers.

A Clear Vision. A Practical Plan. A Bright

A Healthy Environment and Society

The Green Party is strongly committed to preserving and improving on Canada's cherished system of universal health care - but we must also address the reasons why we are getting sick in the first place. We believe that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, and that the first step to good health is a healthy environment that provides clean and safe water to drink, air to breathe, and food to eat:

Universal Health Care

The Green Party will build on the strong foundation of the Canada Health Act by bringing in the following health reforms:

- * increasing research funding for healing techniques that complement drugs and surgery, and ensuring the availability of less expensive, generic prescription drugs
- * instituting a program of reproductive health and choice
- * endorsing the precautionary principle, and researching the causes of illness to address environmentally-induced illness, and poverty-related health problems
- * initiating an effective public education program about the health benefits of uncontaminated food, water, and air,
- * implementing a mandatory labeling strategy for all non-nutritive substances affecting food
- * working cooperatively to address the health concerns of Canada's First Nations

Clean Air and Water

We don't have much chance to be healthy if we can't safely breathe the air or have access to safe drinking water. The Green Party will take a number of steps to ensure that all Canadians have access to clean, safe air and water:

- * promoting renewable energy sources to diminish the need for coal and gas plants, and to address the issue of climate change
- * encouraging environmentally-friendly business practices through the Green tax shift, and by heavily taxing polluters
- * initiating a federal public transportation infrastructure program that promotes light rail and other means of providing convenient and affordable public transit
- * adopting the "reverse onus" principle, which means that chemicals or substances must be proven safe before they can be released into the environment, rather than citizens being forced to prove their harm

Organic Agriculture

The way we produce food in Canada will be one of the keys to the future of our health and our environment. The Green Party will support organic agriculture and wild fish stocks by taking these steps:

- * phasing out support for large-scale "agribusiness," and taking steps to restore the financial viability of the family farm
- * supporting funding for field research into alternative, ecologically adaptable crops such as grains, legumes, fruits, native perennials, and hemp.
- * providing tax incentives for Canadian farmers for conversion of their farms to organic methods, and removing the current tax-free status of pesticides
- * working with ecological agricultural organizations to establish organic farming standards and certification processes
- * banning genetically modified foods and fish farming, and restoring wild fish stocks by enforcing the Fisheries Act

Making Our Democracy Work

It's no secret that many of us are losing faith in our politicians, and in our democratic system. After all, how democratic is an electoral system that keeps producing artificial majority governments, and allows big corporations to wield heavy influence over our politicians through huge contributions? The Green Party recognizes how badly we need reforms that will give all Canadians a voice again:

Proportional Representation

Our obsolete first-past-the-post electoral system dates back to the 19th century, when there were only two major parties. It's a simple system, where the candidate with the most votes in each riding wins - but when there are more than two parties, the winner often receives only 30-40% of the votes in that riding. On a national scale, this means that parties can earn big majority governments with less than even half of the popular vote across Canada! In 1997, for example, the Liberals won a majority government, though just 38% of all Canadians who voted supported them.

Most democracies today use some form of proportional representation, in which the share of seats that parties receive after elections is equal to their share of the popular vote. For example, a party with 15% of the overall vote receives 15% of the overall seats. Every vote counts, so there's no need for "strategic voting." The choice is clear - Canada needs to adopt a form of proportional representation.

Fair Elections

One reason why we often don't trust politicians is that they are influenced by the big corporations that provide them with generous donations at election time. Why should this be allowed to happen? Corporations are not citizens - they can't vote, and they should not be able to have such effects on the outcome of elections. To remedy this situation, and to ensure a level playing field for all parties, the Green Party will implement these steps:

- * we will end the practice of corporate sponsorship of our political parties, and place reasonable limits on the donations made by individuals

- * we'll ensure that all political parties have equal access to publicly regulated media during elections

- * we'll end the shameful practice of incumbent governments using taxpayer funds prior to elections to promote their own parties

- * we'll phase out limits to participation, like \$1000 refundable candidate deposits

Judicial Reform

We need a series of reforms to the administration of justice in Canada, which will balance our individual rights with collective security: The Green Party will promote the following provisions:

- * all Canadians will be guaranteed the right to clean air, clean water, and uncontaminated food through an Ecological Bill of Rights

- * discrimination will be prevented on grounds of gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language, religion, disability, age, or other differences.

- * citizens will be empowered to take polluting corporations, individuals, or governments to court, with legislation protecting them from counter-lawsuits by corporations that try to discourage such legal action by means of intimidation

- * legislation that recognizes same-sex marriages and common-law relationships

- * honourable settlements that lead to culturally and economically self-sufficient successors of original nations

Future. It's definitely time to vote Green.

The Green Party needs your help!

Do you like our approach, and our commitment to a healthy and sustainable future for all Canadians? Then, why not give the Green Party a hand?

There are many ways that you can lend your support:

- * you can put a Green Party sign on your lawn
- * you can volunteer to canvass your local neighbourhood
- * you can make a financial contribution (you receive 75% of your donation back as a federal tax credit, up to the first \$200)
- * you can join the Green Party of Canada by sending \$5 - 25 to Green Party of Canada at our head office in Toronto

Contact Us!

Here's how to get in touch with Greens in your region of Canada:

Leader - Joan Russow (250) 598-0071, joanrussow@coastnet.com

Election Organizing Chair - Frank De Jong (416) 929-2397, fdejong@greenparty.on.ca

Head Office - Cheryl Veary (416) 929-2397, admin@greenparty.on.ca

If you would like to make a contribution, please send a cheque made out to "Green Party of Canada" to our head office at 244 Gerrard St. East, Toronto, ON, M5A 2G2

