

# Alberta Greens

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## Newsletter

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### **From the Great Whale to Whaleback: Greens Fight the National Energy Board**

Greens from all over North America are joining together to challenge the petroleum industry's previously unfettered right to exploit wilderness areas.

The decline of Alberta's petroleum reserves, along with the increase in exports of natural gas to the U.S. is causing companies to explore for oil and gas in ever more ecologically sensitive regions.

In recent weeks environmentalists have fought against drilling in the Caribou Mountains, Moose Mountain and the Whaleback, with little prospect of success against a provincial government bent on development at any cost.

Environmental groups in the U.S. are protesting the flood of cheap Canadian gas into their energy market, which is destroying any attempts to encourage conservation or develop sustainable energy programs.

In February, 1994 the Supreme Court of Canada issued a decision affecting Quebec Hydro's Great Whale project, which said that the National Energy Board of Canada had the right to review upstream environmental effects when considering licences to export electricity out of Canada.

The Rocky Mountain Ecosystem Coalition, (Director Mike Sawyer,

Green Party provincial candidate), pointed out to the N.E.B. that this ruling must apply to all energy exports including oil and gas. At the present time the N.E.B. is considering submissions from 23 environmental groups, and numerous petroleum companies and government organizations, to decide whether this federal energy regulating body is indeed ultimately responsible for preventing degradation of the wilderness and pollution of the atmosphere caused by the petroleum industry.

While still deliberating the issue, the N.E.B. received another gas export application. This one drew roughly 100 interventions from organizations and individuals with environmental concerns. At this point, the N.E.B. decided to postpone the second license hearing until a decision is made on the first.

The N.E.B. appear to have three choices:

- Hold environmental impact assessments.
- Grant the export licences and risk legal action based upon the Great Whale ruling.
- Turn to Ottawa and ask parliament to rewrite the N.E.B. Act.

Greens are waiting and watching, and gathering the names of more supporters in readiness for future action. If you or a group you are involved with would like to contribute to this effort please call the office for more information at (403) 269-2384.

### **Update: NEB Decision**

The National Energy Board has released its decision on environmental review of Gas Exports. Basically, it is a cop-out. While they agree that they have a responsibility to ensure that the up-stream effects of gas exports are considered, they are making the assumption that the Alberta Government is already considering these. They will only consider the environmental effects of new developments to produce gas for export, and not the impact of existing wells, pipelines and exploratory activities.

While this is a victory of sorts, it will allow gas exports to continue, although in some cases the applicants will have to produce more environmental data before a license is issued.

This decision will probably be challenged, so your support is still needed. Phone the Alberta Greens office at 269-2384 for more information.

### **Toxic Waste in Alberta**

The Alberta Government is conducting hearings into the import of toxic wastes. This is an interesting example of how the government has screwed itself. First it approved an expansion and then decided that oilfield wastes were not toxic waste. This eliminated the need for the expansion and the government now wants to fill the plant with waste from other provinces. Toxic irony indeed!

## A Green Reading List

The following bibliography of books and articles about Green politics was compiled by Mike Feinstein of the California Green Party.

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## Green Election Report

- **21 members of the new European Parliament are Green Party representatives, including members from Ireland and Luxembourg for the first time.** The Green Party bloc in parliament includes 12 Germans, 3 Italians, 2 Belgians, 2 Irish representatives and 2 from Luxembourg.
- The new Mayor of Rome, Francesco Rutelli is a Green! This is the first time a Green has headed a major city in Europe.
- Five new Greens have been appointed to Albany (California) city government commissions. This brings the total for elected and appointed Greens in Alameda County (East Bay) to at least 20. This makes it around 50 Green elected and appointed office-holders in California.
  - The next Lord Mayor of Dublin, Ireland, will be a member of the Green Party.
  - In Tyrol, the People's Party lost its absolute majority in parliament as the Green Party went from three to four seats.
  - Greens in Lower Saxony in Germany increased their percentage of the vote in the recent state election from 5.5% to 7.4% and the number of seats from 8 to 13, making them the third largest bloc in the Hannover state house, up from fourth after the 1990 election
  - German Greens won more than 10 per cent of the vote in local council elections in Schleswig-Holstein partly because of the strong feelings against the Broksdorf nuclear plant.

## Global Green Calendar

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- August 11-15 The Greens/Green Party USA annual Congress & Gathering Boise, Idaho, USA. Information: Jon Knapp at (207) 344-0147 or Susan Whitmore at Internet e-mail gpusa@igc.apc.org.
- August 20-24 Green Party of Canada gathering. London, Ontario. Phone: (416) 924-9099 or e-mail chrislea@web.apc.org.
- September 23-24 European Green Federation. Tblisi, Georgia. Phone Lut Neetesome at 011-32-2-284-7135 or e-mail egc@gn.apc.org.

## Greens Against Nukes

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Greens are standing up against the dangers of nuclear power around the world.

- Environmental groups are demanding closure of the Chernobyl plant that was the site of the world's worst nuclear accident in 1986, and a review of plans for the former Soviet republic's nuclear industry. "We have united in one bloc to demand that President Leonid Kravchuk withdraw his decree on the development of the Ukrainian nuclear industry," said Serhiy Kurykin, deputy head of Ukraine's Green party.
- The Irish Greens are calling for action against the British THORP nuclear plant at Sellafield because of evidence that it is causing birth defects, even though it is across the Irish Sea. According to Nuala Ahem, a Green Party councillor "among 1,800 pregnancies of 319 women who attended one School in Dundalk at the time of the [1957] fire [at THORP], there had been 161 miscarriages and 23 premature births"
- The Green Party of Moravia and Silesia is supporting Austria's efforts to prevent a Czech nuclear power plant from going into operation on the Austrian border.
- In related news the Austrian Green Party accused its own government of doing nothing to prevent a

## ALBERTA GREENS INFORMATION

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President	David Crowe	289-6609
Executive Secretary	Madeleine Oldershaw	282-4788
Treasurer	Pam Munroe	245-3441
Recording Secretary	Albert Munz	230-8891

### Meetings

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For information on meeting dates, times and locations, call Madeleine Oldershaw in Calgary or Betty Paschen in Edmonton.

### Comment

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We welcome submissions for the Alberta Greens Newsletter. Please send them to the editor, care of our address above.

nuclear storage facility being built by the Czechs on its border.

- The French Government has given the go-ahead for the start-up of the Superphenix nuclear reactor, the largest in the world. However, because of protests from French Greens, the reactor will be limited to research activities and not the commercial generation of power. This is not good enough for the Ecologists that want the reactor closed. A month-long march under the banner of Europeans Against Superphenix, demanding the definitive closure of the world's only industrial-scale fast-breeder nuclear reactor, left the Superphenix site on April 9 heading for Paris.
- Hesse state Environment Minister Joschka Fischer of the Green party has called for the controversial Biblis nuclear reactor to be shut down after a fire in a cooling pump. His objections were overridden by an order from German federal Environment Minister Klaus Toepfer to restart the reactor.
- German Greens tried to halt shipments of nuclear waste to the Sellafield reprocessing plant in England, but were stopped by German police.

## BC Green Convention

Stuart Parker, leader of the BC Green Party said after their recent convention that they are poised to take advantage of the "profound disappointment" voters have with Premier Mike Harcourt and the NDP. "It is very clear that the NDP is no longer a progressive voice. It is our job to get ready to build our electoral base. What we are focusing on is being the voice for groups that are being disregarded by the NDP -- labor, youth, women, and environmentalists."

In the 1991 provincial election, the BC Green party received 12,650 votes or 0.86 per cent of the total, placing it in fourth behind the NDP, Liberals and Social Credit. Parker said the Green party will build voter support by focusing on key ridings in the West Kootenays, Victoria and Vancouver-Mount Pleasant --Harcourt's own riding. Donna Morton, the party's forestry critic, said "we're confident that we can take several key ridings."

Among the 35 people to attend the four-day convention was Korky Day, activist and long-time NDP supporter. But Day said he is now thinking of joining the

Green party. Marilyn Hogan, a breast-feeding advocate and publisher/editor of Back To Nurture, said while she wasn't a party member, she was impressed with the Green party's support for a resolution to boycott London Drugs and Nestle over the sale and marketing of breast-milk substitutes. "They demonstrated clear support for the health of women and children," she said.

## Greens in Mexico

Jorge Gonzalez Torres, founder of the Partido Verde Ecologista de Mexico (PVEM, Mexican Green Party), is running for President of Mexico in the national elections to be held August 21, 1994. The PVEM is Mexico's newest official political party, having qualified in January, 1993.

According to Natalia Escudero, Secretary-General of the PVEM, "Jorge has not rested one day since the 14th of December when he accepted the candidacy for President of the Republic. He has had some kind of an event every day. He has visited 24 states, and has 7 more to visit, but he has gone to Chiapas 3 times already.

He travels with a group of indigenous people speaking different native tongues, he goes deep into very, very rural communities where no candidate has ever visited. The indigenous people receive him well and discuss their problems with him: their lack of schools, medicine, water, electricity, and justice. Jorge's message to them is believed, because he shows them that we do not speak with empty words. Indigenous people will have 80% of the PVEM's Congress seats, and right now we are registering many indigenous candidates as 'Deputados' (Federal Deputies). Jorge speaks out a lot for them, for land justice, human rights, education, employment, while advocating non-violence."

The PVEM is very concerned about the violent revolution in Chiapas state. "The present conflict is the consequence of many years of oppression and abandonment toward indigenous peoples [that have] made it possible for these people to be used by violent groups who want to break the social peace of our nation."

### Alberta Greens Membership Application

(Mail to: Box 133, Stn. M, Calgary, T2P 2H6)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone(H)\_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Code \_\_\_\_\_

Interests & Skills \_\_\_\_\_

Areas I can Help-Elections \_ Phoning \_ Policy \_ Speaking \_ Fund Raising \_

Membership (\$10) ... \$\_\_\_\_.\_\_\_\_ (includes newsletter)

T-Shirts (\$15) ..... \$\_\_\_\_.\_\_\_\_

Donation \$\_\_\_\_.\_\_\_\_ (75% tax rebate on first \$150)

Total \$\_\_\_\_.\_\_\_\_