



### **Alberta Greens AGM**

The Alberta Greens Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday, April 29th from 9am-3pm in Red Deer. Please contact our office at (403) 289-0654 for more information.

### **Update: NEB Hearings on Gas Exports**

The National Energy Board (NEB) reached a decision on exports of natural gas from Alberta to the United States, deciding that environmental impact assessments are not required. Interestingly, they did not decide that environmental impacts did not occur, or that they were outside their jurisdiction, but that gas is usually pooled somewhere between production and the US border, and therefore they cannot figure out exactly where the exported gas comes from. In their own words "The Board conducted an initial environmental screening of each of the applications to determine whether or not there is a necessary connection or proximity between the requirements of the applied-for export licences and any new upstream facilities or activities. The Board found in each case that there is no necessary connection ... The Board, therefore, decided that no further environmental assessment was necessary."

Many environmentalists think that the NEB's logic is wrong, especially considering that gas companies must provide a list of wells from which they are planning to obtain the gas to export. If the NEB really wanted to do the right

thing, they could insist that gas companies only export gas for which an acceptable EIA has been performed. Alternatively, if they were to allow pooling, they could use the same logic that applies to laundering of drug profits. In that case money that is drawn from a bank is considered the same as the money that is put in, although obviously the actual bills are different. Gas laundering can be treated in a similar fashion. But, the NEB is obviously not interested in doing anything but protecting the industry it serves (in the most menial sense of that word). Environmentalists that feel that the NEB is shirking its responsibilities will now have to ask the courts to decide.

Mike Sawyer of the Rocky Mountain Ecosystem Coalition, Greenpeace and the Alberta Greens are still actively fighting the NEB decision in Canada and the United States. Mike can be reached at 266-2468.

### **Logging on Private Lands**

Many landowners in Alberta are greedily liquidating their forests to feed mills in BC. This is allowed because no laws control logging on private lands in Alberta, combined with past government incentives for BC mills to expand, resulting in a desperation to obtain trees to pay off their debts. Some private owners have seen this as a profitable way to clear land for farming, but have been shocked at the sea of stumps left behind. Greens are looking into ways to fight this problem.

### **Designated Funding**

Designated funding is proving successful for both environmental groups and the Alberta Greens. It gives donors the best possible tax credit; up to 75% of their donation returned to them, generates more funds for projects, allows tax credits for projects that would not qualify for charitable status and even generates a little bit of money for the Alberta Greens.

Projects that are currently raising funds include:

- Sierra Legal Defence Fund

This project is raising money for the various environmental court challenges that are undertaken by this group of lawyers with a conscience.

- AWA 2000

The Alberta Wilderness Association is raising money to develop support for the Special Places 2000 initiative of the Alberta Government that gets less than lukewarm support from many members of the government itself.

- Mother Earth Defence Fund

The Alberta Greens have joined forces with this group to support the court appeal of Milton Born with a Tooth. He was convicted of firing a shot at RCMP officers that were invading the Peigan Reserve after the Peigans diverted started to divert the Oldman River from the Alberta Government's dam.\$

## The Draft Water Conservation and Management Act

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The Alberta government released the draft *Water Conservation and Management Act* to replace the outdated *Water Resources Act* in August, 1994. While this new act is definitely an improvement, it is far from a solution to Alberta's water woes.

The new act continues the existing strict concept of seniority for access to water. When there is a water shortage those with the license the longest get their completion allocation before junior licenses get a drop. In the new legislation, the government can own licenses purely to keep water in the river ... but these licenses will be newer, and therefore junior, to allocations held under the old act.

The new act introduces the ability for water licenses to be transferred outside of a sale of land. People of a right-wing persuasion tout this as a way for market forces to encourage conservation. However, the result might just as easily be the fuller utilization of licenses that in total over-allocate all the water in a river that in the past were not fully exploited.

The only bright spot in the ability to transfer licenses is that the government can hold back up to 10% of the water. This is left to the discretion of the government, however, even if the government's own studies have shown the river to be over-exploited.

Another concern with the new Water Conservation and Management Act is free trade. If water licenses can be traded, they may be considered a commodity under GATT and NAFTA. This could eliminate the current prohibition in the act against exporting water to other countries.

If you want to comment on this legislation, ask your MLA for a copy and send comments to the Department of Environmental Protection.

## Green Advances in US Elections

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Green parties advanced significantly in the US civic, state and federal elections in November 1994. While the impact of the Green Parties was almost invisible in most parts of the US, their strategy of targeting a manageable number of seats in favourable areas appears to have paid off, and built a base of support and experience for 1996. Some of the highlights:

### *Greens Elected*

In several states Green Party candidates were elected in civic elections:

Arkansas: Fayetteville City Council.

California: 8 city councillors.

Hawaii: Big Island Board of Supervisors (The Green winner received 60% of the popular vote).

Missouri: Mayor and City Councillor.

New Mexico: A City Councillor previously elected in 1994.

### *Green Parties Registered*

In the United States the easiest way to register a State Green Party is to run a candidate and win at least a specified percentage of the vote. Registration allows candidates to use the party name on ballots and allows citizens to register their affiliation with the party (similar to a party membership in Canada):

Alaska: 10% of the popular vote for a House of Representatives race surpassed the 3% margin required.

Maine: The Green vote of 6.5% for Governor exceeded the 5% required.

New Mexico: Both the 33% Green vote for State Treasurer and 10% for Governor were above the 5% registration margin.

Rhode Island: The 6% Green vote for Lieutenant Governor and 5% for State Senator were enough to register.

## Things Go Better Without Cars

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Auto-Free Ottawa reports on some of the damage and hidden costs of North America's automotive addiction. They can be reached at P.O. Box 57006, 797 Somerset Street West, Ottawa, Ontario K1R 1A1, by e-mail at ab941@freenet.carleton.ca or by phone at 613-234-0923.

"If the hidden, subsidized costs of [the United States] private-vehicle-dominated transportation system (at least US\$300 billion a year) were instead passed on to the motoring public, it would raise the price of gasoline by several dollars a gallon".

In Germany "every 50 minutes a new car is produced that will kill someone; Every 50 seconds a new car is produced that will injure someone."

"Studies undertaken by Pollution Probe indicate that in Ontario we subsidize the auto system \$8 billion a year. This goes to a system that kills 3 and maims 20 people every day in Ontario alone."

"Back in the 1930s when almost everyone took the bus or trolley, transit systems made profits from fare box revenues, and fares were no more proportionately (or less) than they are today. If we can get back to mass transit use, we can get back to transit profits."

Doug Woodward of St. Catharines reports that "the mass use of cars imposes intolerable costs on society and on individuals. Pollution Probe's 1991 study *The Costs of the Car* estimates that each car costs the public \$2000 more than the taxes and fees paid by its owner, and this does not cover the more indirect costs of urban sprawl."

"European cities are living proof that a high standard of living is compatible with a reduced need for cars and that the key is fairly high residential densities combined with mixed zoning and integrated public transportation planning."

## Bill 57: The Privatization of the Alberta Government

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Many Albertans are frightened by the implications of the draft Bill 57 that will allow the delegation of ministerial authority to private organizations; the privatization of our government. Not only is the concept of privatization a concern, but the law gives short shrift to the right of Albertans to information.

The draft law is very simple to read, frighteningly simple in the lack of constraints on government ministers. The only things that the Minister *must* do are:

- a. "the Minister *must* be satisfied that ... the corporation is able to carry out the responsibilities of the Minister or the public official ... efficiently and effectively."
- b. "the Minister *must* be satisfied that ... the corporation will have due regard to the interests of the general public."
- c. "the Minister *must* hold at least one public meeting" ... but ... the notice for the public meeting "must be published in a newspaper circulating in the area in which the meeting is to be held" ... and ... "the Minister must provide those attending the meeting with information the Minister considers relevant".
- d. "the Minister must lay a copy of the annual report before the Legislative Assembly".

In other words, any Minister of the Alberta Government that privatizes jails, welfare, health-care, worker's compensation or whatever, is in complete control of evaluating the ability of the contractor to perform the assigned job and deciding whether the best interests of Alberta citizens are being served. The Minister does not even need to provide any information of substance ahead of time, as the Minister gets to decide where public meetings will be held and can decide that no information of substance is "relevant". The only real requirement is to provide a copy of the annual report, which will be carefully planned to avoid revealing any information that might embarrass the government.

The Alberta government is being extremely patronizing with this legislation. The attitude of the Alberta government publicly and in this law is that they are looking after our best interests and we do not need to worry our pretty little heads with information that we would not understand anyway.

If this makes you mad, phone your MLA and ask for a copy of the legislation (only 11 pages) and let them know your opinion once you have it.

## 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.

### Change of Address

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Please let us know your new address when you move. Include your name, old address and date of the move.

## Breast Cancer and Medical Radiation

According to Rachel's Environment & Health Weekly (#418, December 1, 1994) about 75% of breast cancer may be caused "by exposure to ionizing radiation, principally from medical x-rays". This conclusion is drawn from a book on this subject written by Dr. John Gofman that will be published in February, 1995.

In other research, several factors have been linked to breast cancer:

- Early onset of a woman's period.
- Late onset of menopause.
- Late birth of first child.
- Diet high in fat and low in fibre.
- High alcohol intake.
- Poor exercise habits.

All of these factors, which are linked by having an affect on the estrogen level in a woman's blood stream, account for only 30% of breast cancers. Dr. Gofman claims that radiation accounts for most of the rest.

This theory is not new. Rachel's describes how "in 1961, Dr. Ian MacKenzie, a physician in Nova Scotia, exam-

ined a patient with rapidly growing breast cancer. She explained that she had had tuberculosis and that ... her treatment ... included about 200 fluoroscopic x-rays of her lungs. (... Fluoroscopes deliver a much larger dose of radiation than normal x-ray snapshots [as the x-ray beam stays on while the patient is being examined])". Dr. MacKenzie eventually showed that "women who had had many fluoroscopic exams of their lungs had 24 times as great a chance of getting breast cancer as women who had avoided fluoroscopy." Research from 1968 to the present on Hiroshima and Nagasaki A-bomb survivors has supported this theory.

The book *Preventing Breast Cancer: The story of a Major, Proven, Preventable Cause of This Disease* will be available for US\$15 in February, 1995 from The Committee for Nuclear Responsibility, PO Box 421993, San Francisco, CA 94142, USA.

Rachel's Environment & Health Weekly is available from the Environment Research Foundation at PO Box 5036, Annapolis, MD 21403-7036, USA. A Canadian subscription is US\$31 per year.

## Success of Die Grünen

In the October 1994 German general elections the German Green Party (Die Grünen) became the third largest party in the German parliament. Die Grünen received 7.3% of the popular vote and 49 out of 672 seats, surpassing the liberal Free Democratic Party for the first time. For the first time, the two major parties are vying for the attention of the Greens. We hope they will stay the course.

### Help us Pay the Rent

We need people to make regular donations to help us pay the rent and related expenses, such as phone service. If you can donate \$10, \$20 or \$40 every month, please call us at 269-2384 and our treasurer will contact you to arrange a convenient method of payment. Not only that but due to the Alberta Political Tax Credit your actual donation will only be \$2.50, \$7 or \$17 per month. \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$

### 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 \$ \_\_\_\_\_