

Letters on the socialist critique of the Green Party

8 November 2006

The following is a selection of letters sent to the World Socialist Web Site in response to an exchange of letters between Tim Tacker, communications director for Rich Whitney, the Green Party candidate for Illinois governor, and WSWWS writer Kate Randall. The exchange was in response to Randall's article published October 11, "SEP candidate Joe Panaruskis addresses University of Illinois forum".

Thank you to Kate Randall for clearly distinguishing the SEP's political program from that of the Greens. Community based economics as a solution to current problems is at best wishful thinking, and at worst a cruel mirage. It diverts people's attention from the fundamental problem facing humanity, i.e., an archaic social order that is rotten to the core and must be replaced.

As a bonus, Ms. Randall's comments also debunk web sites proposing that pressing social and ecological problems can be similarly solved by establishing locally controlled economies. Solutions such as "self-sufficiency," "sacred lifeboats," "relocalization," etc., all suffer from the same fundamental flaws identified by Ms. Randall, i.e.:

"In the present era of capitalist globalization and transnational production, the community-based economy advocated by the Greens is utterly unrealistic. Were it somehow come to pass, however, it would actually represent a huge regression. It would entail a massive rollback in the level of productive methods and technology and an incalculable reduction in the living standards of hundreds of millions of people around the world."

So before anyone runs for the hills, builds community lifeboats, or takes any other socially regressive steps in the face of our current problems, they would do well to study the world view presented by this web site.

With careful study real and effective solutions should

become obvious.

Regards,

DP

Canada

I enjoyed your dissection of the Greens. It is interesting to note that despite the relatively recent emergence of the Greens as a political force, they actually represent an old tendency, albeit clad in a new garb. In the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels describe a certain type of reactionary socialist, namely, the petty-bourgeois socialist:

"This school of Socialism dissected with great acuteness the contradictions in the conditions of modern production. It laid bare the hypocritical apologies of economists. It proved, incontrovertibly, the disastrous effects of machinery and division of labour; the concentration of capital and land in a few hands; overproduction and crises; it pointed out the inevitable ruin of the petty bourgeois and peasant, the misery of the proletariat, the anarchy in production, the crying inequalities in the distribution of wealth, the industrial war of extermination between nations, the dissolution of old moral bonds, of the old family relations, of the old nationalities.

"In its positive aims, however, this form of Socialism aspires either to restoring the old means of production and of exchange, and with them the old property relations, and the old society, or to cramping the modern means of production and of exchange within the framework of the old property relations that have been, and were bound to be, exploded by those means. In either case, it is both reactionary and Utopian.

"Its last words are: corporate guilds for manufacture; patriarchal relations in agriculture.

"Ultimately, when stubborn historical facts had dispersed all intoxicating effects of self-deception, this form of Socialism ended in a miserable hangover."

EG

South Africa

3 November 2006

I found your piece very informative on clarifying the position of social change held by the SEP. The only thing I would add to my comments at this time is that because the ownership of the means of production is held in private hands (20 percent of American people own over 90 percent of stocks) we can overthrow capitalism by political action based on developing an international working class force. This seems naive to me given that the working class in each nation state tends to act nationally and not internationally (the German working class fought for the Kaiser) and that political power follows economic power with the latter controlling the mass media enabling them to delude the mass majority of people. We should just keep telling the truth about the system, which is worthy in itself.

RLB

Bradenton, Florida, US

3 November 2006

One of the attractions of debates among movements of the far left, and the WSWS in particular, is the lucid manner of the debate and the ferocity of the debate. It isn't a bit like the garbled, rabid, demonizing, scapegoating, hair-splitting of the USA's two parties.

LL

Whitehall, Pennsylvania, US

3 November 2006

I appreciate your clarification of the major difference between the Socialists and the Greens. While there is a great deal of good to be found in Green Party policy, their economic plan (that which, for any society, is the basis of all social activity) is fundamentally weak. Do they honestly believe that a profit-based institution would ever have any interest in supporting the will of the workers and the community?

I have heard these same pro-Green arguments in my own community. In pointing out the essential flaw in their plans, I find myself walking a fine sociopolitical line in disagreeing without completely separating myself from them. This is made even more difficult when one presents a Marxist economic perspective to those who have been flooded with well over six decades and many billions of dollars worth of anti-socialist information. Therefore, I am very thankful to you for noting this essential difference and, thus,

putting another coat of paint on that fine line.

RV

Athens, Georgia, US

4 November 2006

Thank you very much for your arduous and thought provoking article concerning the Green Party. I have worked with the Green party for years but now am a hot blooded socialist.

In solidarity and peace,

JK

Fairborn, Ohio, US

3 November 2006



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact