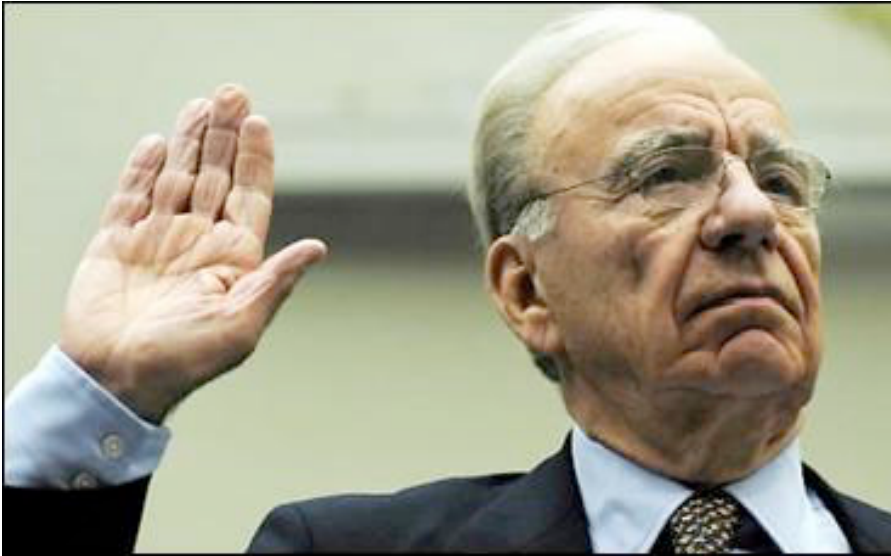


PISSING ON THE GREENS



Editorial: Green is not the political go

September 02, 2004. Amended by www.richardneville.com

TO sneer at the Australian Greens insults the intelligence of the 570,000 electors who voted for the party in lower house seats in the 2001 election. **But here at News Corp, we'll sneer to our hearts content; both in this editorial and in the accompanying rant by our Foreign editor.** And with the party polling around 6 per cent there is a good chance it will replace the dimming Democrats as the second star after Labor for left-leaning voters in the imminent election. Through his endless energy in parliament and canny campaigns in the media, Greens leader Bob Brown has kept environmental issues at the forefront of political life - **with a little help from the wild weather, vanishing species, land degradation, melting glaciers, bleaching coral, rising sea levels, sinking water**

tables and countless other signals of an ailing eco-system. In Murdoch's Matrix, the Day After Tomorrow never comes.

[Bob Brown] has championed the cause of asylum-seekers against the policies of the major parties. **Imagine that. The Greens standing up for the rights of the wretched, the powerless, the stateless.** The Greens could win more Senate spots next month, perhaps pick up inner-city Melbourne and Sydney lower house seats. Senator Brown actually suggests his party could hold the balance of power in a hung parliament after the election. **We won't let that happen.**

The Greens are now too powerful and popular to be dismissed as eccentrics. Which means their platform should be subject to serious scrutiny, **unlike ~~those of any other major political~~ the Liberal party and this company's record of tax avoidance. (In four years from 1994 – 98, News Corporation paid only £128m in taxes on a total profit of £2.1 billion, just 6%:**

http://www.corporatewatch.org.uk/profiles/news_corp/newscorp5.htm)

And this is where the green gloss starts to ~~fade~~ **get the blow torch.** The party's policies demonstrate an utter absence of ~~coherent~~ **vicious, Blimpish** thinking on the issues that matter most for a safe, fair and prosperous **Australia News Corp.** Given the chance, the Greens would ~~end~~ **re-define** our existing alliance with the US by closing joint **faulty** intelligence facilities on our soil and banning nuclear powered ships and nuclear armed planes from our skies and seas, **thus making this country safer. (Opposition to nuclear weapons accords with the policies of most civilised nations).** The Greens would ~~cripple~~ **manage** productivity and economic growth by reducing ~~working hours,~~ **compulsory overtime,** cutting foreign **take-overs of our cultural entities and icons** ~~investment levels~~ and increasing **tax rates for wealthy corporations and the well-off** ~~taxes for high income earners.~~

And while they want a migration program focused on family reunions and humanitarian criteria, Australia must have an ecologically "sustainable population". Whatever that means. **It means that this country should grow at a rate commensurate with the ability of the environment to cope. This rate will increase with the**

discovery of a ubiquitous source of cheap, clean energy, a high priority of the Greens. The Government remains firmly committed to coal. News Corp pins its hopes on infinite supplies of cheap oil, which is why this paper so ferociously promotes the killing of Iraqis. ("Let's get the war over with ... it will bring oil down to \$20 a barrel").

There is a great deal more of the same, including a suggestion to provide "social drugs" in "controlled environments". **In other words, to move beyond media fanned witch hunts towards looking at the POSSIBILITY of providing an acceptable environment in which to consume a safe dose of a regulated party drug.**

The Australian Greens offer us a collection of generalities, demonstrating they have ~~no idea~~ **a multitude of original ideas on** ~~of~~ how to deal with the mass of detailed, difficult issues governments ~~always face~~ **often screw up**. This did not matter much while Senator Brown was the only Green in parliament. But the prospect of any government having to negotiate with him to pass its program is ~~alarming~~ **refreshing**. There is no need to call Senator Brown and his supporters unnecessary names to demonstrate that his party presents ~~a threat~~ **an uplifting program for the** ~~to the~~ prosperity and well-being of all Australians **and the eco system on which their livelihood depends**. The Australian Greens' program does the job very well.

No third party insurance, a degradation of politics

GREG SHERIDAN, Foreign editor.
September 02, 2004

THIS election will probably see the emergence of the Greens as Australia's most important third party. This will be a sad and a bad day for ~~our political culture~~ **my employer**, for the Greens represent the triumph of **ethics over** extremism ~~over moderation~~, of **uncommon sense over** the paranoid style ~~over commonsense~~, and the ~~flight from that~~ **embracing of a** civic, **ethical and environmental** responsibility which characterises a maturing ~~e-polity~~ **electorate**.

The Greens are essentially ~~left twin-wing Hansonites~~, **democrats** ~~simultaneously reactionaries and revolutionaries~~, who combine a ~~hatred~~ **an informed critique** of modern society as it actually exists with a ~~conspiracy-laden, fantastical~~ **realistic** view of how the world works. ~~They~~ **Whereas I** offer nothing positive beyond dreamlike cliches, ~~and~~ slogans, ~~but their~~ **and** negative power, **their acumen** is ~~quite~~ great. They **believe another world is possible, while I** can build nothing, **except Murdoch's profits** ~~they and~~ can damage much.

But they may hold the balance of power in the Senate. It is conceivable, though not likely, they will hold the balance of power in the House of Representatives. Bob Brown, the canny, ruthless, manipulative politician who leads the Greens, says 1 million Australians may vote for them. **(My boss is also a canny, ruthless and manipulative politician, and no Australian votes for him.)**

It is **not so** hard to believe 1 million Australians really support the ~~anti~~ **sustainable**-growth, ~~anti~~ **post**-modern ~~prejudices~~ **insights** of the Greens. Many will just be lodging a protest vote, but it's sad that the vehicle of protest should be so ~~disreputable~~ **hated by this newspaper; which long ago was a voice of reason and reform.** Australia has a good tradition of third parties. The old Country Party, which was not always in coalition with the Liberals in every state and federally, in a sense was a **mild** third force between the business-backed Liberals and union-backed Labor.

The Democratic Labor Party was a wholly **dis**honourable expression of Labor people who were especially motivated by anti-communism, **religious bigotry and book banning** and for 20 years from the mid-1950s played an important and ~~constructive~~ **destructive** role in Australian politics, **keeping the ALP out of office for 18 years.**

The ~~ideology~~ **beliefs** of the Greens **and that of a growing number of academics and even some corporate titans**, rejects the ~~very~~ legitimacy of ~~a the modern economy~~ **“voodoo economics” that fails to include the true costs of bringing goods to the market; and in. the cost to nature, to public health, to communities.** In many ways the modern Australian state **will benefit from a post industrial, holistic economics that values the whole system and**

not just those who exploit it. (As outlined by Paul Hawkins in Natural Capitalism, and elsewhere, including the doco, The Corporation).

The rise of the Greens mirrors the rise of **the politics of consciousness and sustainability** ~~extremist third parties of Left and Right~~ throughout western Europe. To some extent a similar process is under way in the US, with Brown and Hanson imperfect but rough analogues of Ralph Nader on the green Left and Patrick Buchanan on the xenophobic and isolationist Right.

The Greens' policies on the party's website are a ~~mishmash of contradictory and incoherent generalised statements~~ **work in progress**. Brown is smart enough to know that the Greens can only ~~suffer~~ **benefit** from ~~having intelligible or specific policies on the record~~ **throwing up new solutions and working them through with their members**. They seek to embody a sentiment of ~~rage~~ **noble idealism** and ~~frustration~~ **a fair go ethic**, rather than to ~~advance real policies~~ **revert to the politics of greed, paranoia and planetary pillage**. Their few specific commitments, such as legalising cannabis and **facing up to the dangers of widespread uncontrolled** ecstasy **abuse**, get them into periodic trouble **from hysterical hacks**.

Nonetheless, if you ~~wade~~ **read** through ~~the verbal molasses of~~ their **thoughtful** policies, **developed from the grass roots level up**, you can work out where they're coming from. Their foreign policies are certainly as ~~silly~~ **progressive** as their economic and social policies.

For example, they assert that Australia should force the Indonesian Government to bring all "war criminals in its ranks" to justice by withholding military co-operation, which ~~wildly overestimates~~ **rightly underpins** the importance **attached to human rights by** ~~of the~~ Australian military.

There are several pages of policy on Israel and Palestine without one mention of the word terrorism, although suicide bombings are condemned along with Israeli government actions **(What's the problem? The occupiers have heavy weapons, guided missiles, US support, nuclear back-up; the Palestinians have their hatred,**

their bombs & their bodies. Both sides engage in terror, even if one side calls it targeted assassinations and collective punishment. All ~~Most~~ of the concessions demanded of course are from Israel, **the occupiers**, and the Greens support imposing international sanctions on Israel to enforce these concessions, **as do the majority of members of the UN Security Council, whose numerous resolutions condemning Israel - over 60 since 1993 - have been routinely defeated by US veto.**

The international economic stuff is quite ~~seriously-loopy~~ **challenging**, calling for the abolition of the World Trade Organisation, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, unless impossible reforms are enacted, because these organisations "are major, all-powerful engines of globalisation that peddle a specific brand of market-obsessed globalisation which is destroying many economies, particularly those of poor countries". **The reforms are only "impossible" because the US has the power to veto any changes which threaten its total control. (See *The Age of Consent*, by George Monbiot).**

The population policy clearly implies ~~there should be many fewer Australians that we should all consume less of our land's scarce resources~~, and the immigration policy is ~~against skilled immigrants, humanitarian-focused, favouring saying the program should be family reunion and refugees~~ **s-based**. As to refugees, the Greens believe that anyone who arrives without a visa should be assumed to be an asylum-seeker and all asylum-seekers should be **housed in open reception centres for** ~~released into the community after~~ an absolute maximum of 14 days. **While admittedly provocative**, this would ~~lead to floods of people arriving~~ **help turn Australia into a model international citizen and a beacon of civilised policy.**

Indeed, under Green ~~madness~~ **reforms**, we ~~could abolish the Immigration Department because anyone could fly here from anywhere and just stay, acquiring instant welfare benefits in the bargain~~ **would be esteemed by our neighbours and develop better trade, cultural and diplomatic links around the world. (Compare this with the refugee bashing of Murdoch's media. In July 2003, 'The Sun' (UK) went frontpage with: SWAN BAKE! Asylum seekers steal the Queen's birds for barbecues.' A lie.)**

Several ~~semi-random~~ examples **picked out to advance my case** demonstrate the ~~pure-moon-juice~~ quality of Green policies. Australia is to be prohibited from exporting military equipment. ~~Presumably~~ **T**he same prohibition **would not** apply ~~ies~~ to ~~all~~ other countries, **because it's how America and Britain generate rivers of gold**, so the only military equipment we could possess would be the stuff we ~~make-ourselves~~ **could afford**. Perhaps Aussie soldiers could ride into battle on the sheep's back, **ho, ho**.

The Greens ~~want to establish a~~ **seek to promote global democracy with a** "directly elected people's assembly" to act as a house of review at the UN. Of course, holding **global** elections in North Korea, Syria or even China, might be a bit ~~tricky~~ **complicated, but as it's not a threat to national governments, this visionary thinking is a worthwhile part of the process of eventually giving all citizens a voice in the affairs of the UN**.

The Greens would ~~end~~ **modify** the US alliance by banning the passage of nuclear-powered ships through our waters. On ~~domestic economic policy~~ **the super rich** they would impose death duties, raise ~~every form of some~~ **taxes they mention**, but simultaneously ~~ensure~~ **strive for** full employment while cutting **compulsory unpaid** working hours ~~but not pay~~. All ~~this self-contradictory nonsense~~ **these paradigm busting concepts is- are** literally an insult to ~~our intelligence~~ **my robber baron mind-set** and, worse, a ~~degradation of our politics~~ **threat to the kind of unfettered casino capitalism which widens the gap between wealth and poverty, further enriches my master and reduces the diversity of both the eco system and independent media. As for the "degradation of politics", it was this virus which spurred the creation of the Greens in the first place, at a time when the major parties were choosing to ignore the degradation of the environment. These days, Governments do so at their peril. And ours. The Greens were ahead of their time back then, just as they are today. In the future it will not be the Greens who are seen as loopy, but their attackers.**