

Green Sprouts, Rootlets, Runners and Rhizomes: The Growing Ecology Movement in Europe

by John Ely

"The eighties have been called the 'last chance decade.' Unless current trends in the arms race, resource depletion, food distribution and environmental destruction are reversed, it will probably be too late to avoid national and global catastrophes of unimaginable horror. The Chinese word for 'crisis' consists of two parts: 'danger' and 'opportunity.' We know the danger, let us now recognise the opportunity and, together, claim the future."

--Richard Oldfield and David Taylor in their article,
"Green Breakthrough?" *Undercurrents*, November 1982

The last few years (certainly no earlier than the mid-1970s) have seen the emergence in the developed world of an exciting new constellation of movements for radical social change. In various languages they are known as Greens, and they are identified with the unifying theme of ecology. This is ecological not merely in the scientific sense but rather in the broad social context that presents a critique of many of the most basic aspects of modernized industrial nation-states. These new Green movements are of profound import; they are quite literally the most substantial expression of liberatory values and liberatory potential to have developed in the industrialized world since the collapse of the revolutionary socialist movements in the early part of the twentieth century.

The scope of these new Green movements is very easy to misjudge. It is important to note that in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG)--where **Die Grünen** represent the largest and most articulate of the new Greens-- there were five times as many demonstrations in 1982 as there were in any given year in Germany during the 1960s. In less than four years, since **Die Grünen** first began achieving electoral successes, they have grown from a loose electoral list of anti-nuclear, peace and citizens' action groups into a political party that almost did, and may very well yet, hold the balance of political power in several regions and at several levels in West Germany.

Since their first appearance in the 1979 European-wide elections, **Die Grünen** have not only increased their percentage of the vote and built up considerable representation in West Germany's local and state parliaments, but they have also become inseparable from a strong grassroots movement involved in many extraparlimentary campaigns and in initiating alternative social and economic enterprises. This movement underpinning is crucial to **Die Grünen**; it constitutes not only a growing counterculture and an increasingly successful alternative economy, but also an entire subsociety.

The West German Greens are far from an isolated development, however. Green matter is beginning to seed and take root in virtually every nation in Western Europe. What is remarkable about these developments is the degree of similarity and community in the basic principles, goals, and kinds of organization among these various Green movements.

Foremost is their plurality, or more accurately, their diversity. This is **not** a pluralism in the usual liberal sense of divergent--even conflicting--interests, but a plurality which involves entities with a logical and organic relationship amongst them. They are thus unlike modern western socialist movements, which perceive themselves as one class only in distinct conflict with one particular other class. The Green movements integrate different kinds of groups and individuals, with various identities and

interests, none of which are reducible to economic terms or their relations to the means of production. This includes, perhaps most importantly, the various citizens' action groups that have been active in local communities throughout Western Europe.

These groups very closely resemble the citizens' action groups in this country, such as the various PIRGs (Public Interest Research Groups), Mass Fair Share, and ACORN (Arkansas Community Organization for Reform Now). They organize around local issues and seek maximum participation of their members. As Claus Offe observes in a recent article on "political culture," about half of the West Germans believe that "citizens' initiatives" are meaningful and are prepared to take part in them. These citizens' action groups have a great tendency to overlap with other segments of the new movements. Though many community groups are made up of concerned--but not particularly countercultural--citizens, many young radicals are also involved. As Offe observes, "more young people than ever believe in the significance and successfulness of political participation." Here, anti-nuclear action groups also play crucial roles. Far from the Federal Government's "atmosphere of professional administration, a political culture based on communal households, nursery schools, street festivals, economic self-help and self-organization developed, all with a considerable range and radical democratic, ecological and socialist goals."¹ In sum, crucial to the new Green movements is a net of democratically organized groups of various kinds from animal liberationists to feminist consciousness-raising groups, affinity groups organized to do civil disobedience, and appropriate technology collectives.

Besides this typical formation as a pluralist network, there are four principles which the new Green movements share. First of all, they attempt to be decentralized and nonhierarchical networks whose basic mode of decision-making is the democracy of directly participating individuals. The basic groups stay small enough so that everyone helps with ideas, management, and executive decisions. Rotation, recall, and mandate are used in larger groups. The organizations' central bodies, such as **Die Grünen's** federal office in Bonn or the main office of European Nuclear Disarma-

ment (END), are really little more than communication centers. Within the smaller groups, decision making by consensus is as common as voting, and many perceive this as an even more radical, utopian form of democracy.

A corollary to this articulation of generalized participatory democracy is an everyday sort of communism. Collective forms are developed voluntarily, by aggregation. Self-managed alternative workshops, food and agricultural cooperatives--which do everything from making sourdough bread with medieval recipes to fixing automobile transmissions--form a distinct part of the Green subsociety. Unlike the major tradition of socialism



„Ich fürchte, Holger geht schweren Zeiten entgegen...“

Social Democratic leaders Vogel and Brandt look on at Boerner, the SPD minister of the Hessian government, where he is attempting to form a coalition government with the Greens. Says Vogel, "I'm afraid Holger has run up against hard times..."

through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the emphasis is not so much on production as it is on democracy.² Working together on community projects or in opposition to a nuclear waste dump brings into play a sense of community which is ultimately incompatible with gross disparities of wealth. The articulation of participatory democratic bodies as the primary locus of political action brings with it a sense of dignity and equality which will not tolerate economic inequality. Elites of all kinds have a tendency to gravitate away from such participatory bodies simply because their existence as elites is brought into question by these intrinsically nonelitist forms of human interaction.

The third principle common to most Green movements is an adherence to the tenet of nonviolence as a basic principle of political action. Such an emphasis reflects the wide overlap between the peace movements and the Greens. It also highlights a basic understanding of violence itself as a transgression of a political/democratic process that is based both on open communication and on a recognition of the intrinsic, organic relationship between ends and means in the realm of substantive rationality.

Finally, the fourth principle is the most explicitly "green." This is the understanding that life as a whole, and not just human life, is a part of our world. If Green movements criticize violence, it is understood that violence can be done to many things besides human beings; the affirmation of life is the affirmation of all life. Greens seek not only to rationally manage nature, but also to bring communication, ethics, and care into our experience of and interplay with the living world in which we make our homes. They stress the importance of biological diversity as a value in itself. The planting of trees in urban areas not only livens up the dead urban uniformity, but also gives the tree the opportunity to express its own urge and desire to grow.

This belief in the importance of empathy and care as centrally important moments in judgment and political life is probably best expressed by the Green member of parliament who got up in the Baden-Württemberg state parliament and said that he was the parliamentary representative of all of Germany's toads.

(As with most other things the Greens do, this parliamentary action was complemented by an extremely active, radical, and creative series of direct actions in the Berlin area that freed animals from experimentation and damaged the laboratories in which they were being held.)

Although these principles may seem self-evident, it is important to recognize their novelty in terms of the history of past leftist movements, in which they remained secondary concerns or theoretical derivatives of other, more fundamental, historical and social forces.



Green Developments Elsewhere in Europe

Though the Federal Republic of Germany's **Die Grünen** are by far the most successful of the new Green formations (and the most amply described in the U.S. press), they are most definitely part of a European-wide phenomenon. Literally, Greens only make up a proportion of this new development, the other proportion being made up of the "radical" parties, such as the Dutch **Politieke Partij Radikalen (PPR)** and the Italian **Partito Radicale (PR)**. Both of these groups are developing the same directions and modes of action as the West German Greens. Both are strongly critical of industrialization, bureaucracy, and mass society; both definitively reject the generalized, quantitatively measured increase in the forces of production known as economic "growth"; and both have built their movements around opposition to nuclear weapons and power stations, militarism, and the overconsumption of resources. Both are actively fomenting for human rights, third world development and self-reliance, socially useful and enjoyable work for all people, and a halt to ecological destruction.

Politieke Party Radikalen

The Dutch Radical Party is a New Left offspring now in somewhat of a slump after a period of greater strength during the period 1973-77, when they had 8 deputies in a 150-seat parliament and 2 ministers in the government. The 1982 election was a low point, however, and the party is now on an upswing.

The key issue presently in Dutch radical politics revolves around PPR's relations to the other two radical left parties, the Pacifist-Socialists and the Communists. The Pacifist-Socialists are an older party similar in many ways to the tiny American Socialist Party. The Communists, perhaps characteristic of Dutch politics, are a strange mixture of old hard-line elements and new alternative movement elements, especially feminism. Right now the three parties are voting mostly as a block, with three seats each for the Communists and Pacifist-Socialists and two for PPR.

Recent polls, however, are suggesting that these parties could get upwards of 10 percent of the vote if they federated as a Dutch Green party. Right now, this is the direction in which they are heading.

Partito Radicale

Partito Radicale, the Italian radical party, is an interesting anomaly. Originally springing not from traditional socialism but from radical liberalism, it gained its real strength with the advent of the New Left, serving as a parliamentary representative for the various small groups which emerged at that time. It has acted predominantly as a lobby group for individual left issues rather than programmatically, and it has had several successes out of proportion to its small four to eight percent presence in the Italian senate. Their most striking successes have been in reproductive rights, where they have clearly been the important organizing force in stopping key national referendums.

Partito Radicale innovated many democratization approaches later taken up by Greens--such as rotation of positions and the distribution of campaign funds to related but not directly affiliated

groups (for instance, their well-known network of radical radio stations). **PR** also has an international membership and consciously seeks the passage of legislation which could easily be implemented in other European nations. Like the Green and other radical parties which followed it, **PR** does not refer to nationality in its name. Unlike the "Italian Communist Party" or the "German Social Democratic Party," the Italian radicals are just "Radical Party" and the West German Green Party is just "the Greens."



Partito Radicale's symbolic protest politics have also been emulated. For example, they officially boycotted the recent national elections to protest the utter corruption of Italian electoral politics. They published a list of candidates anyway, for those people who felt they had to vote. Their main reason was to put Antonio Negri's name at the top. Negri, a radical philosopher closely associated with the **Autonomia** movement, had been in jail without trial for several years. Protesting this hole in the legal system used frequently on political prisoners, Negri's election to the senate, which carries with it parliamentary immunity, was a great symbolic success for **PR**.

But **Partito Radicale** is in some ways a much more traditional party than the Greens, most notably in the self-acknowledged charismatic leadership of Marco Panella, whose oratorical abilities and passionate activism--such as a 50-day hunger strike prior to a recent election--is respected but not accepted by most of the activists in the West German Greens. The relative absence of civil society in Italy (the political parties operate the country by reaching down vertically into virtually everything) has meant that citizens' actions and local

organizing have been relatively unsuccessful. In fact, PR's stated policy is not to participate in local electoral politics because of the corruption involved and the hegemony of the large parties in this realm. Recently, new **Liste Verdi** ("green lists") have had some successes, like **Die Grünen**, in areas where nuclear power plants and other great projects are being constructed.

Newer Green Parties Form in the North

Although the Green parties in the North are younger than those in the South, they are more numerous. They have had regular contact with each other since 1979 when four of them, **Die Grünen**, **Mouvement d'Ecologie Politique** (France), **Agalev** (Belgium), and the Ecology Party (Britain) had candidates in the European elections. Since then, they have held several European coordinating conferences in which several more newly formed parties, such as the **Miljöpartiet** (Sweden) and the Ecology Party of Ireland have participated, as well as the Austrian radical Green party known as the Alternative List. Like **Die Grünen** in the FRG, these Greens have had important electoral successes in municipal and regional councils.

The two Belgian parties, **Agalev** and **Ecolo**, contested the local council elections on October 10, 1982. They won 120 seats in 69 of the 162 councils they stood for. Their demands included: a popular referendum on fundamental issues; more power in the hands of parish and "quartier" councils; council control of intercommunity electricity, gas, and water supply companies; and no political favoritism in local government employment. In three councils, Greens now hold the balance of power and are discussing coalitions--but only if all their basic demands are met. These local developments accompany electoral success in the federal parliament, where the two parties combined now have 9 Greens in the national parliament: 5 in the 106-seat senate and 4 in the 212-seat house of representatives.

An interesting development in Belgium is the convergence of the two parties, which originally developed in linguistically distinct regions: **Agalev** in the Flemish-speaking and **Ecolo** in the French-speaking areas. This cooperation is particularly notable because chauvin-

istic politics in multi-ethnic Belgium has been a serious problem in the past.

As Marc Dubrulle reports: "Of all political forces in Belgium, only the ecology parties of Flanders, **Agalev**, and of Wallonia and Brussels, **Ecolo**, have clearly stated that the only way to avoid nationalism, totalitarianism and centralism is the creation of more than two or three regions starting from scratch." Dubrulle suggests that this may be a very successful approach. "For many Belgians," he argues, who are "fed up with the tensions between the two cultural communities and with the centralism of Brussels, such democratic schemes of regionalization have enormous appeal. Future elections may indicate support from a large number of voters and reinforce the position of the Greens in the national parliament and provincial councils."³

In Finland, the Greens have one seat in the national parliament. In April of 1983, the Swiss Green Party also won seats for the first time in the regional legislature of Zurich, the country's most populous canton. It already has one seat in the federal parliament in Bern.

The Greening of Poland

Green politics have not only been a Western European phenomenon; there are signs of an ecological awareness in Eastern Europe as well. As Rudolph Bahro constantly observes, the East Germans are watching the growth of **Die Grünen** with great interest on television. And East German youth, though most notably concerned with peace issues, are rapidly articulating a countercultural "alternative scene" very closely resembling its counterpart in the West. In Poland, there has been an Ecology Club (**Polski Klub Ecologiczny--PKE**) since 1980, founded by a group of shop stewards, journalists, doctors, and academics in Crakow. Though it is basically an environmental pressure group, it clearly recognizes the political nature of the problems, and has been crucial in catalyzing Solidarity to make the first substantial linkages between Poland's very serious ecological problems and its misguided political, economic, and industrial policies in the postwar era.⁴

What is so interesting about the new

Polish developments is the manner in which they parallel the Western situation, both in terms of the grass-roots nature of the advocates of environmental care and the carelessness and disinterest of the centralized state-managerial apparatus. In Poland, as in East Germany, where the increased stench from the automobiles with no emission regulations is immediately noticeable after passing "checkpoint Charlie," environmental degradation is a serious problem. Though the result of bureaucratic incompetence rather than the deliberate carelessness of profit-interested corporations, the effect is the same. Just as in the West, an individual problem (in Poland it was the Skawina Aluminum Smelting Plant) became first a focus of environmental problems, then a symbol of Poland's "ecological crisis" and of the direct lines between that crisis and the failures of Polish planners.

Skawina was the beginning of Polish ecological activism. Starting here, **PKE** has worked just like citizens' action groups in the West, organizing in local areas against particular industries, collecting petitions, attracting publicity, holding meetings and lectures, sponsoring reports prepared by experts, and making persistent appeals to the local and central authorities. The **PKE** is unique, as Rafal Serafin reports, "in that many of its activists are also Union activists, and its support and success lie not in academic institutions or in 'middle-class' concern . . . but in the active involvement of working people . . ." It is because of this involvement that **PKE** has been very successful in getting Solidarity to add environmental issues to its programs.

Nevertheless, as Serafin points out, "the idea that man is separate from Nature--an idea firmly entrenched in Marxist ideology--remains part and parcel of the new values and attitudes which have become widespread in Poland." As a result, the attitude of separation from nature is "reflected in Solidarity's own **Programme**: Resolution 16, for example, talks of protecting 'Man's environment' rather than protecting 'the natural environment' or even 'Nature'." Nature is thus viewed by Solidarity in much the same terms as it is by the present socialist state--as a commodity to be used for "man's" ends. The difference, however, is that Solidarity sees man's exploitation of nature being tempered by

a new moral code: it is that moral code--rather than science and technology--which the union sees as the means of bringing about the changes it seeks in Polish society. Nonetheless, the notion that nature has ethical content in and of itself--including a bioethics--still has a long way to go before it is accepted.

This should not overshadow the fact, however, that an ecological movement of substance exists in Poland, and that it has clearly drawn political connections with citizens' action and participatory democracy groups. It is putting forth a critique of centralization, bureaucracy, and the blind embracement of modernization so characteristic of Marxist-Leninism.

Green Politics in England and France

In France and England, though distinct ecological movements have existed for a longer time than in many other European nations, they have not been as successful in recent years. This is mostly because of the electoral structure which, as in the U.S., elects people by individual campaign rather than through a percentage list of candidates. Hence small parties are always excluded by virtue of the fact that they can field only a small percentage of the vote.

In France, which is as big a vendor of nuclear power stations (its customers include South Korea, Iran, and South Africa) as it is of conventional weaponry, the Green movement started primarily as an anti-nuclear movement. As with **Die Grünen**, which also comes predominantly from the anti-nuclear movement, the French **Mouvement d'Ecologie Politique** has its roots in an extra-parliamentary formation of direct action groups which dates from the early 1970s. Like **Die Grünen**, **MEP** put forth an alternative to a nuclear-powered future favoring decentralization of political power as well as energy production and worker self-management. They advocate "ecological communities" which would feature planned growth, public transportation and bicycles, windmills and solar collectors, recycling and integrated agriculture, as well as truly democratic neighborhood-based government. Unlike the West German Greens, however, **les verts** took to the polls quite early,

fielding a presidential candidate in 1974 who got 1.3 percent of the vote. In local elections in 1976 and 1977, they got between 7 and 30 percent of the vote in a number of municipalities. In Malville, home of the nuclear power station that has been the site of the largest anti-nuclear demonstrations in France, they elected candidates with 60 percent of the vote.

The recent reform of election laws may give **les verts** their first electoral victories. Instead of the high scoring party forming the whole town council, it will now form half, with the other half split among all parties in proportion to votes. As Deborah MacKenzie theorizes in the *New Scientist*, this will probably do very little for the Greens since the rules guarantee one party a clear majority.⁶ On the other hand, she also points out that "there is a real question of municipal power, now that socialist 'decentralisation' has set up regional councils. When Paris approved a nuclear plant near the town of Golfech in 1981 and Golfech refused, the Socialist- (read, Paris-) dominated regional council overturned the refusal."

The British Ecology Party, though equally stymied by British electoral laws, shows many interesting parallels which are instructive to the situation for Green possibilities in the U.S. The recent expansion of the peace movement in Britain has also brought the Green idea into the limelight, which presents more possibilities for a real breakthrough than many folks might have predicted two years ago.

The Ecology Party has been around now for ten years. It started, like the U.S. Citizens' Party, not as extra-parliamentary opposition, but as a purely electoral party, and it has remained so since. The split between the electoral sector and the actual movement--in which many people believe that changes can only be won by direct action and protest--has hurt the party's performance at the polls. In past elections, it has averaged only about 2 percent of the vote. In the last elections, they fielded only 1.6 percent of the vote. Despite a few good results in local elections--they hold a seat in Cornwall and in a modest assortment of district and parish councils--their vote has not held up



"The Greens into Parliament" from
Die Grünen: Sinn voll Arbeiten
Solidarisch Leben, Bonn

well. The Ecology Party is being targeted by legislation intended to marginalize it even further. Recently, the House of Commons Select Committee on Home Affairs in the British Parliament recommended passing an increase from £150 to £1,000 in parliamentary election deposits. Tactics such as these are only some of numerous ways the large corporate parties try to marginalize new political formations. Without a system of proportional representation such as that in West Germany, there is no hope of making major electoral inroads. "Until you can get our election system changed to proportional representation, a British Green Party would be banging its head on a brick wall," according to Des Wilson, one of the present chairs of the British Friends of the Earth, which has over 20,000 members and is one of the largest extra-parliamentary ecological action groups in England.

Recently connections have been made between the peace and the ecology move-

ments. The women who formed the Greenham Common peace camp, which has caught the eye of the entire world, organized themselves as a group called Women for Life on Earth. They took their name from the American group, which is explicitly an ecologically based group seeking to make direct connections between the universal male monopolization of violence and militarism and an exploitative attitude towards nonhuman nature that is intrinsic to the structure and ideology of "developed" Western industrial nations. The numerous creative direct actions of the women at Greenham Common have likewise consistently made the ecological-peace connection under the general theme of a respect and affirmation of all life through nonviolence. This initiative has spread to numerous segments of the mainstream British peace movement, which has resulted in the creation of a sizeable caucus known as Green CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament) and the reinvigoration and redirection of much of the radical environmentalists, such as Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace, towards a more explicit integration of peace politics.

The response of the Ecology Party to these developments, as well as to the great advantage the West German Greens made of the rapidly growing peace movement (largely because of their strong anti-missile, anti-NATO position combined with a clear and vocal rejection of official, Communist "Peace" politics) has been quite interesting. The Ecology Party originally started as a purely electoral party; its original platform was essentially a depoliticized "environmentalist" one based on the famous **Limits to Growth** study.⁷ The Ecology Party's present co-chair, Jonathon Porritt, has been to Germany to study **Die Grünen's** campaigning techniques and shared a platform with Petra Kelly at a recent Friends of the Earth conference. Porritt says, "We have learnt a great deal from the Greens and we will be fighting the next election in a very different style of campaign."⁸ The Ecology Party has adopted **Die Grünen's** sunflower burst emblem, but the symbolic change marks equally important substantive changes: the party is now swinging toward a holistic and radical social ecology which involves a more wide-ranging critique of industrial society.

A more holistic concern with all the interconnected problems of Western indus-

trial states is being accompanied by a critique of the entire trajectory of Enlightenment rationalism which Western capitalist and Marxist socioeconomic systems are based upon and by a recognition that it is not just a fixing up of environmental problems with the same kinds of means-end rationality that is called for. As Maurice Ash wrote in a paper for a newly forming British Green Alliance, what is needed is an entire "paradigm shift" or transformation of world view. Not only is this a strident critique of "nature" viewed as "other," as "resources" for scientific-technological progress, but it is also a call for a politics of meaning and community which finds ethical meaning and groundwork in the direction of life's development. This involves both a reinterpretation of the cosmos in which humanity develops a "participatory consciousness" with a natural process directed toward the articulation of life, but also the reworking of community networks--what Ash calls "re-discovering the polis"--in which such a consciousness can have meaning. It is also imperative, according to Ash, to "live with nature. . . . If we think we can remain the lords and masters of Nature, then the nuclear bind assuredly has us by the tail. . . . However, to speak of living again with Nature is to imply a radically different relationship to it."⁹

Given similar electoral representation and a very similar constellation of groups, albeit without an historically important labor party, the circumstances under which a broadly supported, radical Green movement could form in England are very similar to the conditions that would support such a movement in the U.S. The Citizens' Party and perhaps even parts of the Democratic Socialists (particularly the newly formed communitarian caucus) could form the electoral wing. The concentration would remain on local action and citizens' action groups, the anarchist-pacifist left, the anti-nuclear groups, and radical environmentalists; even perhaps some elements of the sectarian Marxist left could become involved in the formation of some sort of "list."¹⁰ The task of developing a coherent movement consisting of a true plurality of elements--and yet with an actual identity such as **Die Grünen**--and of uniting the electoral and movement wings must become a priority for the democratic, ecological, socialist, and anarchist elements.

The New Women's Party in Iceland

In this round-up of Green movements throughout Europe, there is one final development which, though small in scale, is very interesting. In the Icelandic elections of April 1983, Europe's oldest parliament became the first in the history of the modern West to see a women's party gain representation. The **Kvennaframbodid** (Women's List) polled 5.5 percent of the vote nationwide to win three seats in the six-party legislature, though it only entered candidates in three of the nation's eight voting districts.¹¹ Iceland, like many of the Scandinavian countries, has very liberal legislation around most of the issues on which feminists in other areas are still working, such as abortion. The Women's List therefore finds itself more concerned with community issues of enlarging the private sphere, democratizing it, and enfranchising men in the caretaking process. As Solrun Gisladdottir, a **Kvennaframbodid** member of the Reykjavik city council, tells it, "the hermetic privacy of family life" is perhaps the central issue. "There are no group houses," she says, "although there are many single mothers. They ought to get together." Also, as in West Germany, violence against wives is seen as a major--and unrecognized--problem in Iceland.

Sum Up: European-Wide Unity

The Green phenomenon is indeed a pan-European phenomenon. (It is important to note that Greens are not limited to Europe, though this is where they are strongest. There are various kinds of Green activities happening elsewhere in the world, as well, particularly in Australia and Tasmania.) Not only is it a European-wide development, but it is organizationally self-conscious of this situation. As we already noted, international Green conferences have in fact been crucial in the constitution of Green movements in specific countries. In the same vein, it was in European-wide elections that many Greens, most notably the FRG's **Die Grünen**, had their first substantial electoral showing. Finally, the various Green parties have had quite important international gatherings. A total of

5,000 people attended the European Green gathering in July/August 1982. Separate events of international character, such as **Die Grünen's** "Nuremberg Tribunal Against Nuclear Weapons," have also been very successful, involving people from all over the world. The Green-peace connection is also being articulated by international peace organizations, which are becoming increasingly important in recasting the whole shape of European politics: European Nuclear Disarmament, at its second annual conference in West Berlin during May 1983, raised the issue of environmental degradation, nuclear waste, and the possibility of an ecological future vision as one of its six key issues to articulate, along with such items as nuclear-free zones; civil disobedience in the upcoming deployment; the dissolution of the Warsaw and NATO pacts; civil liberties and open communication; and a reunited, neutral, and disarmed Germany.

Furthermore, trans-European solidarity, and especially solidarity with the peoples of the third world, are a crucial part of the Green programs and demonstrations. In fact, the problem of the third world and the sympathy felt for its impoverishment was the most important reason for the mass defection of left Social Democrats to **Die Grünen** in the last West German elections. The radical daily **Die Tageszeitung** (which has all but become the dominant daily forum, as opposed to official organ, of the Greens) raised over three million Deutschmarks to send to the Salvadoran rebels. All in all, the Greens are showing a phenomenal international concern and solidarity characteristic of the socialist movements in their golden age. While the various communist movements today are concerned with distinguishing themselves from each other, the Greens are aggregating, developing an exciting international consciousness while concerning themselves with the issues of rooted community life and participatory democracy in a manner in which socialism, with scattered exceptions, never managed.

Addendum

(Because of the time lapse between the submission of this article and its publication, the author agreed to add the following update on Green developments in Europe.)

Recent developments among the various and sundry "Green," "radical," and "alternative" lists and parties in Europe have demonstrated considerable success and expansion in many areas, while showing no notable setbacks anywhere.

The most obvious growth has still been centered in the Federal Republic of Germany. There **Die Grünen** has demonstrated a continuously increasing electoral success. State-wide elections in the historically conservative, Christian Democratic ruled Baden-Württemberg saw the Green vote rise to 8 percent from 5.3 percent in March 1984. This was followed by the elections for the European parliament in June, where the FRG **Die Grünen** scored an incredible 8 percent in the Federal-wide elections (compared with 5.6 percent in March 1983), while the liberal, free-market oriented Free Democratic Party (FDP) dropped below the 5 percent necessary for representation.

These results suggested what has been confirmed by the most recent West German vote in October: the future of West German governments, at least on the state level, will be cast in terms of "red-green" coalitions between the Greens and the Social Democratic Party (SPD). October results in the most populous and most industrialized state of North Rhine-Westphalia gave the Greens 8.6 percent compared with the less than 2 percent they received in the last state elections five years ago. Again, the FDP was eliminated, and the Christian Democrats dropped more than four points to 42.2 percent, setting the stage for another "red-green" coalition following the one already in place in the state of Hesse. Further, it suggested a resurgence of the left in general (that is, the Greens and the SPD) after the dismal showing of the Social Democrats in the March 1983 elections. They lost badly during those elections after dropping their coalition with the FDP, dissolving a decade-long "social-liberal" coalition. The stage is now set for the creation of "red-green" coalitions in almost all but the two southernmost, conservative states of Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria in the state-wide elections coming up this year.

Though the Greens in West Germany have been given more power than they ever expected, there is no strong evidence of a process of hierarchization or oligarchization within the party, nor of any

substantial decline in the extraparliamentary, "basis" movements which form their life blood. Indeed the largest environmental demonstration in the history of the Federal Republic (conservatively estimated at 20,000 participants) occurred recently in the Bavarian city of Munich to protest the terrifyingly rapid extinction of the forests in West Germany and throughout central Europe. The decline of these forests (disappearing fish and amphibian populations, and tree damage upwards of 78 percent for some species with nearly 20 percent of the Bavarian forests "severely damaged or dead" 12) has combined with two other factors to cause increasing support for the Greens.

First, there is an increasing tension between the West German citizenry and NATO. In a demonstration this fall, for example, the Hessian government publicly accused an American general in charge of NATO exercises in the Fulda Gap region of advocating state repression against protesters, which would contravene the West German constitution or "Basic Law." Secondly, there is the "Flick scandal," involving huge bribes to leading members of the present government and all the major parties **except** the Greens by the Federal Republic's largest corporation. Acceptance of bribes for government tax exemptions and other corruptions has already brought down the FDP Minister of Economics and the CDU speaker of the Federal Parliament. Now suspicious fingers are being pointed at Chancellor Kohl as well, whom, **Le Monde** has reported, received around 500,000 DM from Flick during the mid-1970s for as of yet unaccounted reasons. It is not inconceivable that the entire government could fall over this issue.

If Green growth has been most phenomenal in the FRG, it has been substantial in the Netherlands as well, where a coalition has now been formed between the Radical Party (the PPR, a New Left originating party frequently called the "ecologists" by other parties in the past), the Pacifist Socialist Party (PSP, with a politics similar to that of the minute Socialist Party in the U.S.) and the Dutch Communists (a typically Dutch, unique mix of old-line orthodoxy and radical feminism). All these parties have been represented nationally in the past (the Communists with an especially well-known lesbian member of parliament), and their federation into the Dutch

"Greens" is a highly optimistic sign, signaling a politics of aggregation similar to that which was crucial to the formation of the West German Greens. According to polls, the combined federation will receive many more votes than the three parties have separately. The only problem has been conflicts between this new formation and a different, newly formed party also called The Greens, which is still quite small, but accuses the other parties of having only opportunistically called themselves "Green," without really being so.

If the situation in the Netherlands appears almost as optimistic as that in the FRG, the Italian **Partito Radicale** has seen a decline in its influence within the Italian left, though it has nonetheless managed to get its major agenda item--substantial increases in unqualified foreign aid to underdeveloped nations--instituted by the Italian government. However, its declining influence--attributed by many to its unwillingness to develop roots in the movements at local levels--has been countered by an increasing growth of **Liste Verdi** (Green Lists) at the local and civic levels, such as in the northern city of Trentino. Thus, though it is generally recognized that the center of gravity of the radical left and alternative movements has shifted from Italy in the 1970s to West Germany in the 1980s, this shift has not signaled an absolute decline in Italian alternative politics.

Footnotes

1. Claus Offe and Volker Gransow, "Political Culture and the Politics of the Social Democratic Government," **Telos**, #53 (Fall 1982).
2. In fact, "production," in the nineteenth-century sense of the word, makes up a small percentage of these "alternative" activities. As Joseph Huber notes in the introduction to **Stattbuch**, the 700-page Berlin alternative directory, there is a reigning mythos about the "new artisan" and "craftworker." The vast majority of projects and cooperatives are actually oriented toward service and communications, in which realms the dynamics and process of human community are not only a mode of management but also the product.
3. Marc Dubrulle, "Belgium, Federalization or Breakdown," **The Ecologist**, Vol. 13, No. 1 (1983).
4. Roland Clarke, "Europe's Green Parties," **Undercurrents**, #58 (February-March 1983).
5. Rafal Serafin, "The Greening of Poland," **The Ecologist**, Vol. 12, No. 4 (July/August 1982).
6. Deborah MacKenzie, "The Balance of Green Power in Europe," **New Scientist** (March 3, 1983).
7. **The Limits to Growth** was an elaborate computer-based extrapolation of population growth and resource limitations done at MIT by Donella Meadows, Dennis Meadows, and others in 1972 for the Club of Rome. The study argued, in a somewhat Malthusian fashion, that population and industrial production have been growing at a constant percentage rate; and that the absolute increase each year is becoming unmanageable since physical resources (particularly cultivable land and non-renewable minerals) and the earth's capacity to absorb pollution are limited. Its basic solution--that we must establish conscious limits to future growth rather than let nature establish them in a catastrophic fashion--received a great deal of political attention in the European ecology movement.
8. Jonathon Porritt, "An End to Growth?" **New Statesman** (March 11, 1983).
9. Maurice Ash, "Green Politics," **Resurgence** #82 (September-October 1980).
10. Admittedly the Maoists in this country are nowhere near as sophisticated or important as the "K" groups in the FRG, which dissolved and joined the Greens.
11. As Phil Hill reported for the **New York Guardian** (April 11, 1983): "The Women's List sees itself as the equivalent of such alternative forces in mainland Europe as the West German Greens. It has male members, but all its candidates for office are women. The List also puts out two local women's newspapers--the only ones in the country."
12. Richard Plochmann, "Air Pollution and the Dying Forests of Europe," **American Forests** (June 1984).