

Posted by Joan Russow
Tuesday, 28 July 2020 09:27 -

1998 THE GREEN PARTY OF CANADA — THE POLITICAL CONSCIENCE OF CANADA

from the archives

By Joan Russow PhD

I was interested in Edward Greenspan's and Jeff Sallot's article on "Pragmatic McDonough nudges NDP to Centre" in the September 21, 1998 Globe and Mail. In the article she is quoted as saying "protesting isn't enough, what you need to do is be part of finding the solution"... "...We want to be a political party. We don't want to be a political conscience"

The NDP has been perceived improperly as the political conscience of Canada, and has not sufficiently protested against the destruction of the environment through the production of toxic, hazardous and atomic wastes; against the destruction of forests and watersheds, against the arrests of citizens for protecting land including agricultural land, forest land, and land of first nations; against the maintaining of car-dependency and promotion of the fossil fuel industry; against the Canadian contribution to the development of nuclear arms through the mining of uranium; against the excessive Canadian military spending and development of arms industry; against genetically engineered foods and crops and agri-business etc..

Mr. Justice Selwyn Romilly of the B.C. Supreme Court of B.C. referred to the Green party of B.C. as the "conscience of British Columbia; The Green Party of Canada would be proud to be

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known as the "political conscience" of Canada. Before real and substantive change can occur there must be "protests" to eliminate the practices and activities that have been instrumental in preventing solutions.

Solutions will only arise when we have moved away from the vested economic interest politics to the politics of public trust. The politics of public trust undertakes:

(i) . to Promote and fully guarantee respect for human rights including

labour rights, health rights, and social justice;

(ii) . to Enable socially equitable and environmentally sound employment;

(iii). to Achieve a state of peace, justice and security;

(iv). to Create a global structure that respects the rule of law; and

(v). to Ensure the preservation and protection of the environment, reduce

the ecological footprint and move away from the current model of

over-consumptive development

We must protest the violation of civil and political rights by all levels of government in Canada including the rights of those protesting not only at APEC but also in Clayoquot Sound, Slocan Valley, Gustafson Lake, Iperwash, Oka, Temagami so that never again will citizens be arrested

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for resisting environmentally unsound practices or violations of First Nations rights.

We must protest the continued production and sale of CANDU reactors, the mining of uranium, and the dependence on fossil fuels so that solutions can be found in developing environmental sound energy systems.

We must protest the continued allocation of about \$10 billion in the military budget so that solutions can be found in disarmament and conflict prevention initiatives

We must protest against and call for the banning of Genetically engineered food and crops and transfer the money and subsidies into developing solutions in unadulterated food and organic farming.

We must protest the devolution of power to the corporations and the promotion of corporate competitiveness so that solutions can be found through transferring of deferred taxes and corporate subsidies into ensuring the right to food, right to universal health care and preventive medicine, the right to shelter, right to work in socially equitable and environmentally sound employment, and the right to corporate-free post secondary education

We must protest the transfer to other states of Canadian produced substances and activities that contribute to environmental degradation or that cause harm to human health so that Canada can contribute not deter from solutions outside of Canada.

For too long Canada has supported practices that are harmful to human health and the environment. in the name of job creation. Rather than supporting the industries that provide socially equitable and environmentally sound employment, Governments in Canada including the NDP have tolerated, condoned, facilitated and perpetuated the cycle of error. which has resulted in and will continue to result in years of corporate/government negligence.

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