

The plot to take over the Green Party and other delusions of the Canadian middle class

By Stephen James Kerr , 5th September 2020

The campaign by a group of so-called 'eco-socialists' to take over the Green Party of Canada by nominating allegedly 'socialist' candidates to the party's leadership race is a bankrupt exercise in middle class political delusion.

Three candidates are running for the leadership as 'socialists': Toronto class-action lawyer [Dimitri Lascaris](#), Montreal law graduate [Meryem Haddad](#) and [Dr. Amita Kuttner](#), an accomplished astrophysicist.

The campaign has captured the limited imaginations of those who accept that merely identifying oneself as a 'socialist' makes one a socialist. The affair poses in stark terms the political disorientation and bankrupt perspective of Canada's pseudo-left.

The words 'working class' 'socialism' and 'capitalism' appear nowhere in Dr. Kuttner's policy statement. Neither do they appear in the brief policy statement of Meryem Haddad. Lascaris, refers to capitalism a couple of times in his more extensive platform papers. The term 'class struggle' appears exactly nowhere. In his 'socialist' economic platform, the

word socialism is marked by its absence.

WHAT SETS YOU APART FROM OTHER POLITICIANS?

“ TO BE HONEST,
EVERYTHING.

**I'M A
WOMAN
OF COLOUR.
I'M 32 YEARS OLD.
I'M A LESBIAN.
I'M AN IMMIGRANT.
I'M A SOCIALIST.**

**EVERYTHING ABOUT ME IS
DIFFERENT.**

**MERYAM
HADDAD 2020**

What does appear is a great deal of left-sounding rhetoric, couched in policy sound bites. But is it socialism? Lascaris' 'worker's rights' platform is revealing in that regard. Witness the following, [frankly astonishing passage](#):

“We have come a long way from the wage slavery and subjection to employer whim of the early Industrial Revolution. Today, we expect workers to have a shared relationship with management. It is the combination of management and workers that will determine the success and sustainability of Canadian firms.”

Have we in fact come a 'long way from wage slavery'? Today's wage slaves slaving away for the super-profits of Amazon,

Apple and many other firms would beg to differ! No, it's no longer the wage slavery of the 'early industrial revolution' but rather the wage slavery of the twenty first century. What exactly is a 'shared relationship' between workers and management? It means nothing. Lascaris the 'socialist' is here openly advocating not socialism – *a new society where the working class is the ruling class* – but rather its opposite – a cease fire in the class struggle, for “the success and sustainability of Canadian firms.” How can a 'socialist' advocate a cross-class alliance between workers and management to boost capitalist profits and not be laughed off the stage? Lascaris' effrontery is the measure of the political degeneration of the Canadian middle class. He can get away with it because his audience knows nothing better.



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LASCARIS**
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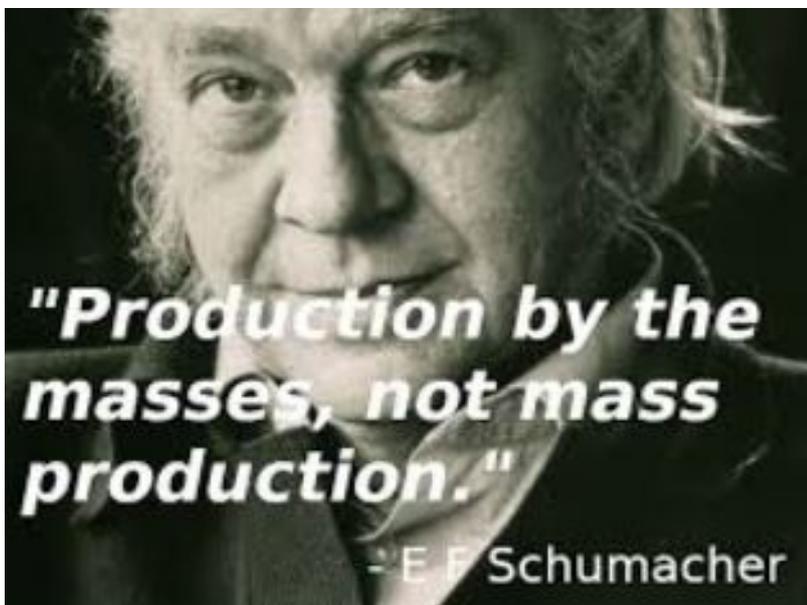
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CONFRONT INJUSTICE
UNITE PROGRESSIVES**



What is the Green Party of Canada?

What is the Green Party of Canada? What is its history? To understand the folly of the 'eco-socialist' coup attempt, a short history lesson is required.

The Green Party has never, since its founding in 1983, been a working-class political party. It was founded by a group of middle class intellectuals and business people who were either complete strangers to the socialist tradition, or in reaction against it. These elements, who still dominate the Green Party's ideology, are more influenced by the idealist utopianism of E.F Schumacher than the historical materialism of Karl Marx. Former Green Party Elizabeth May first ran for the 'Small Party' inspired by Schumacher, who explicitly rejected Marxist economic thought in favour of a religious formulation based on his concept of an idealized 'human nature' which determined the forms of economic organization which should prevail. He looked backwards to small scale industry and craft production, essentially a reaction against industrialism and all of its socially progressive implications.



Schumacher's concept of 'Small is Beautiful' is central to Green Party ideology, which although it nods to such vague terms as 'social justice' undertakes no serious critique of capitalism. It embraces capitalism instead.

The Green Party platform declares that “Canada needs to support entrepreneurs” and small business who are “hampered by red tape.” They call for a new “Green venture capital fund” and to “hold taxation at no more than 9 percent.” What socialist could say no?

At its most absurd, green ideology imagines small-scale economic ‘alternatives’ to industrial capitalism based on an idyll where the class struggle has been papered over. The history of the Green Party on its official page hints at the ideological roots of this fantasy:

“The modern green movement started in Canada and around the world in the 1960s when the counter-culture movement launched the first mass rejection of consumer culture. Five decades later, the 60s values of peace, love and understanding have become the founding [Green Party values](#) of non-violence, social justice and ecological thinking. While the end of the 60s saw the decline of many grassroots movements, their life-affirming values didn’t go away. In the ’70s, the green movement re-emerged in isolated, small-scale enterprises such as health food stores, women’s and environmental groups, renewable energy programs and organic farms.”

Indeed, the 1960s saw a mass uprising by the working class all over the world. American workers rose up against the Vietnam War and against segregation. France, Portugal and other countries came close to socialist revolution, only to be betrayed by the nationalist policies of the Communist Parties and trade union bureaucracies. A brief overview of this history is beyond the scope of this article.

The defeat of these mass working class movements caused many in the middle class to reject socialist thought, which they

falsely conflated with Stalinism and its betrayals. From this they drew reactionary political conclusions. In their eyes, the working class was not capable of changing society, and so they adopted a political position combining extreme cynicism and pessimism with various shades of idealism. Their cynicism they directed at workers. Their idealism they projected onto capital.

For the agency of the working class, they substituted various other agencies, of the oppressed, of various identity groups, of third world liberation movements. These could liberate themselves, for themselves, without the need for a socialist revolution, under capitalism. And some decided that it wasn't even capitalism that was the problem with society at all, but rather decided to reject the industrial revolution itself. A simpler capitalism was what they sought. Not an end to exploitation, but exploitation at a lower rate. Not worker control of industry, but 'partnerships' between labour and management, leaving exploitation, and their source of income, safely intact. Not an end to injustice, but only as much injustice as they could stomach on a full stomach.

The Green Party arose precisely out of this rejection of socialist struggle, in favour of a retreat into personal issues, religiosity, hippie communes, and small business etc. Rather than struggle to overthrow capitalist social relations, the 'counterculture' and the green movement adapted themselves to those relations.

This combination of uncritical idealism and political opportunism is the source of every moralizing campaign to 'Buy Local' or 'Shop Organic' and has a definite class character.

Caught between the capitalists and the industrial working class, two classes who are at war with one another, the middle class imagines there is some alternative to class conflict, between capitalism and revolutionary socialism, one that will allow them to hold fast to their illusions in peace and quiet, and most importantly – maintain their privileged lifestyle. But it's socialism, and Marxism which the Green Party and green ideology rejects most vehemently. It wants a small-scale capitalism where it can provide wise 'policy solutions' to the ruling class, and thus ascend to positions of influence within the bureaucracy and capitalist corporations. This is the limit of its ambitions. And they dare call it socialism!

Elizabeth May has stated many times that the Greens are 'not a left-wing party.' She is correct. It's an establishment, capitalist political party based on its ideology and the class composition of its membership.

And yet somehow, a group of self-styled 'eco-socialists' – with zero political or organizational connection to the working class – believe that their palace coup within a capitalist political party, founded upon the rejection of socialism, can achieve 'socialism'? One doesn't know where to begin.

The true role of “The Justice Greens

The coup plotters call themselves 'The Justice Greens' modelled after a similar caucus – the 'Justice Democrats' within the US Democratic Party, which is the world's oldest capitalist political party. This group includes Alexandra Ocasio Cortez, ([The political role of Alexandria Ocasio-](#)

[Cortez](#)) who passes herself off as a socialist with some success, largely because both the media and the public have been led to believe that 'socialism' means merely the adoption of a few progressive, social reforms by otherwise capitalist governments. Never mind the fact that such reforms as she promises are themselves a hopeless fraud.

The net effect of this political card trick is to keep the working class dragooned behind a capitalist political party, lured by empty promises that cannot possibly be kept. This was the effect of the totally fraudulent Bernie Sanders phenomenon, which only served to shepherd workers behind Biden and Hillary Clinton, both avowed enemies of socialism.

And indeed, the role of 'policy wonks to the ruling class' seems to be exactly the job for which the Justice Greens are applying – they come to *manage* workers, not to lead them.

In an [interview in The Canada Files](#) , Justice Green leader John Connor Kelly stated that "their long term objective of bringing in an eco-socialist leader is to create sustainable policies and provide ecological justice for communities of colour, Indigenous and low-income communities." Kelly also noted that "All these issues have the same root cause which is the economic system that we live in." Indeed they do. Yet an analysis of that economic system – capitalism – in its present development exposes the delusional notion that a Green Party or any other capitalist party could enact such reforms as the Justice Greens imagine.

StopEcocide
A Conversation About the Global Movement Calling for Legal Environmental Rights
with Jamie Hunter
Date: **August 31st**
Time: 5:00pm PDT/
8:00pm EDT

amitakuttner.ca

Authorized by James Hankle, Official Agent of Amita Kuttner's Green Party of Canada Leadership campaign

The poster features a purple header with the title 'StopEcocide' in white. Below it, a green banner contains the subtitle 'A Conversation About the Global Movement Calling for Legal Environmental Rights' and the guest name 'with Jamie Hunter'. To the right, a white speech bubble contains the event date and time. The central part of the poster shows two photos: one of a man in a black shirt against a landscape background, and one of a woman in a purple jacket and white beanie in a snowy setting. On the left, a hand holds a globe. At the bottom, there is a purple stylized tree logo and the website 'amitakuttner.ca'. A small text box at the bottom right states 'Authorized by James Hankle, Official Agent of Amita Kuttner's Green Party of Canada Leadership campaign'.

The capitalist system is based on the exploitation of wage labour by capital. As the only thing the worker has to sell in the market is his *labour power*, he sells this power as a commodity to the capitalist. Labour power is a commodity with a special character. In its consumption by the capitalist, new value is created, surplus value, which the capitalist appropriates as profits. Thus the labour of the working class is the source of all economic value, and of all capitalist profits. The special position of the working class in capitalist production is also the source of its immense social power, when it comes into conscious political activity. This is why socialists address themselves to the working class – because theirs is the only social agency on the planet powerful enough to bring about socialism, by collective action. Yet the Green ‘socialists’ nowhere address themselves to the working class, nor do the terms ‘working class’ or even ‘class’ appear in their campaign literature! They imagine ‘socialism’ to be their vague policy ideas, which they offer meekly to the capitalist ruling class as friendly advice.

Nowhere do they mention the immense crisis of capitalism under

way at present. Nowhere do they address the crisis faced by the working class in the face of the ruling class response to the COVID19 pandemic – the back to work campaign and the campaign to force working class children into unsafe schools. Nowhere do they denounce imperialist war for what it is – the bloody child of nationalism and capitalism. Nowhere can one find an analysis or perspective document of any seriousness, only vague policy sound bites, floating above the maelstrom of current events as if in a dream.

Nowhere do the Green ‘socialists’ ask ‘Where will tomorrow’s capitalist profits come from?’ when they conjure their vague, imaginary reformist fantasies of happy life in some indefinite future powered by small business.

The financialization of the economy on central bank credit has grave implications for the working class under capitalism. Today’s sky-high stock valuations are a claim on the labour power of future generations of workers. Today’s trillions of dollars of speculative stock bets will be extracted from the working class by the hyper-exploitation of their labour, decades into the future. This is one reason why the bets are being waged in the first place. The only way these can be paid is by *increasing* the level of capitalist exploitation. If capital will be busy extracting super-profits from workers into the indefinite future to pay for today’s speculative binge, how will capital simultaneously create the happy valley imagined by the Green ‘socialists’? They haven’t imagined the question, let alone the answer.

We have reached a point where working people are now having to defend social and economic gains won 100 years previously. Global capitalism is not interested in the ‘progressive reforms’ touted by the Green ‘socialists.’ It is busy arming

right wing militias and far right political parties in the USA, in Germany, in Mexico, Chile, in Spain and Greece, in the Philippines, Brazil, Ukraine, Hungary, Sweden etc. The ruling class is turning not towards the next Bernie Sanders, but towards the next Augusto Pinochet. Who exactly do the Green policy wonks to the ruling class hope to advise?

This begs the question of the true political role of this group. The 'Justice Greens' are not an isolated phenomenon. They replicate, belatedly, a pattern of middle class political development that has been already played out, in Greece with the SYRIZA government, in Spain with PODEMOS, and in the UK during the Jeremy Corbyn experiment. The result each time has been a record of complete betrayal of all of their fine sounding promises. SYRIZA came to power based on promises to reject the austerity demanded by the EU. They spent their time in power implementing an even more brutal austerity regime than the one they were elected to reject. The result was mass demoralization and the growth of fascist influence in Greece. PODEMOS was launched on the back of the 2011 mass demonstrations, and is now a partner in the coalition government of Spain with the PSOE. It has rejected all of its early ideas, and now poses as a 'safe pair of hands' to manage Spanish capitalism, and repress Catalan nationalism. The political retreat of PODEMOS has coincided with the advance of the openly fascist VOX party. Likewise in Britain, the refusal of Corbyn to fight for his espoused principles in the face of attacks from the right led directly to the election of the most right wing government in British history under Boris Johnson, thanks to the confusion and demoralization engendered by his political capitulation.



The true role of the Green Party, and of the Justice Greens, whether they know it or not, is the containment of working-class political aspirations behind the façade of a capitalist political party, deferring those into the indefinite future, and the opening up of a political space, *not to the left, but to the right*, using the lever of empty promises and the disillusionment these ultimately create once betrayed.

The Greens cannot seriously imagine that the capitalist ruling class will take them or their reform ideas seriously.

The danger is that the working class will.

It is only through and open and robust discussion scientific socialism, ie Marxism has developed. Classconscious.org would like to play its role in developing such a culture again. We are attempting to foster debate by publishing articles that may not fully align with the position of our editorial collective.