

Presidential Candidate Questionnaire

Completed as part of the process of becoming formally recognized by the Green Party of the United States as a 2008 presidential candidate

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Contact Information:

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General Campaign Information:

I meet the legal qualifications for the office of President of the United States. I was born July 19, 1962 in Madang, New Guinea to parents who were and are citizens of the United States. I am a natural-born citizen. I have been a U.S. resident since 1973 (i.e. more than 14 years).

My candidacy is currently on file with the Federal Elections Commission (FEC) with my Principal Committee having the name "Mesplay for President." I filed for the 2004 election and I have kept this filing open and current. I am focusing more on raising funds and starting earlier, this time around.

I am a Green Party member and have been so since 1995 in California.

I am not a member of any other political party.

The manner in which I will seek ballot lines in states lacking Green Party ballot status is yet to be determined. I would like to help as many states receive and retain Green Party ballot status as possible. Particularly during the General Election it may be necessary for me to run as a write-in candidate or to find other creative ways to garner electoral support. I am seriously looking into Unity 08 bipartisan efforts (a 527 Committee) to obtain an online presence as an alternative-party Presidential candidate, declaring my Green affiliation. I have already subscribed as a delegate.

Currently, I spend over 20 hours a week campaigning: an hour a day on e-mail and extensive time over my three-day weekends researching, writing articles, contacting people and learning to manage my campaign. I work a 4 X 10-hour shift for the County of San Diego as an Air Quality Inspector, which frees-up my Mondays. In order for me to more actively campaign I require administrative and financial support. I plan to become more active as the campaign grows. For example, once sufficient funds are available to reimburse me (via the new category of "Candidate Pay") I can legally and transparently replace my income to an increasing degree. The next step in this plan would be to take Fridays or Tuesdays off work, once I am guaranteed to not lose income by campaigning. Although my employer is flexible regarding "time off" I anticipate that as I approach 20-hour work weeks at work it will be necessary for me to strongly consider taking off a block of time (up to six months at a time) in order to campaign full time and to not be distracted by my inspector duties. I am considering fund-raising strategies for on-going support that will facilitate phasing in more time to actively campaign.

I am able and willing to travel, now and throughout the campaign.

The Green Party represents the only viable political alternative to the mess that we have. Initially, I was drawn to the Green Party by the stated values: social justice and nonviolence, in addition to the expected concerns over environmental protection. I grew up with rain-forest dwellers and I spent time learning about people such as my Native American ancestors who are displaced and dispossessed under the boot-heel of "progress." I know that scientific and technological solutions are meaningless absent the human element, absent recognition of the harm that abuses of power can bring. The Green Party has credibility with voters in that we shun corporate contributions and we present solutions to a wide range of societal problems: everything from "peak oil" and pollution to recognition of the real harm that war brings. By running as a Green Party presidential candidate I help make things better by advocating solutions to our political system and by calling for re-evaluation of our wasteful, short-sighted way of life. I have experience as a presidential candidate, as a California delegate to the national party, as a member of the county council and I am qualified to represent the Green Party as a candidate and as president.

Helping to secure and retain state ballot lines for the Green Party is an important function for a presidential candidate. As the electoral arm of the environmental and justice movements we become more effective with each Green elected to public office. Recognizing the unlikelihood of winning "higher ticket" races before a strong base of support is built, presidential candidates serve by inspiring people to run as Greens and to vote Green, think green and live green. I am willing to work with others to focus on identifying and getting "key" states into the Green fold. Apart from being a candidate and a spokesperson, I currently have limited personal resources that I can bring to bear to assist with ballot access drives. It is my intent to help inspire

disenfranchised voters and non-voters, including but not limited to women, Native peoples and People of Color and of Hispanic heritage, to turn toward Green Party organizing efforts as we work to address and remedy social ills. Ballot access is extremely important.

I am committed to the Ten Key Values of the Green Party and I view them as questions that we must ask of ourselves and others in an on-going process of improvement.

My current base of support is varied and scattered. Among people who are active with party-building I have developed a reputation for running as a positive and principled candidate. Perhaps most notably in my last run I earned recognition for being a lone candidate saying we need to mount serious challenges to the powers that be and not run “democrat-safe” campaigns or half-hearted campaigns intent on losing and in effect endorsing non-Greens. Especially at this nascent stage in our development we Greens need to run campaigns that inspire others to believe that a change to our top-down, corruption-driven, nonrepresentational type of government is possible.

My fundraising ability is growing. I am currently at a rather early organizational stage of my campaign. I agree to not accept contributions from corporations or from unions and I promise to abide by established campaign finance policies such as those enforced by the FEC. I prefer to accept low-level, ongoing monthly contributions from many supporters rather than larger, infrequent contributions from fewer people who may expect a return of favors. If you are reading this and can afford a contribution of \$1 a month to “Mesplay for President” it will make a difference.

I ran for U.S. Senate in 2006 in a primary race contested among Green Party candidates in California. I have not held elective office, other than duties on the local Green Party of San Diego County Council. I briefly entered the race for Mayor of San Diego before embarking on a senatorial bid. I have not held elected office. I am currently a delegate from California serving on the Green National Committee and I am an elected member of the Green Party County Council in San Diego, California.

There is much room for growth for the Green Party without converting people who are currently registered with a political party. A political space awaits that is equal to either the Democratic or Republican party in number. My strategy is to focus on matters such as emergency preparedness which affect all people, hence making an appeal to all-comers. We Greens make the compelling argument that our leaders and our political institutions offer poor governance and negligible guidance on matters of urgent security. Considering Katrina, Iraq, lack of a comprehensive national energy policy and gross deficit spending, the argument that our nation lacks leadership is not a difficult argument to make. My campaign is in part a protest and a call for the youth to get involved, to bring in those people who are not yet registered to vote. I prefer offering not just citizens but our leadership viable options, and in this regard our “third” party serves in the typical historic capacity of placing pressure on the powers that be to recognize the need for meaningful change. I believe in an all-out non-apologetic run, despite Democratic Party protestations and manipulations. My goal is to receive the Green Party Nomination and to do what I can to improve my country in the process of seriously running for president.

Issues:

Election Reform, Instant Runoff Voting and Public Financing

Electoral reform is a key topic with me. Our political system is in need of reformation to improve representation of we-the-people and to ensure that voting is a trustworthy process. In particular, a good way to ensure that everyone’s vote counts is to require paper ballots with electronic verification as back-up, rather than “the other way around” in which there is insufficient paper back-up to questionable electronic voting. Public financing of campaigns and debates helps ensure that candidates are effective at more than fund-raising. The current “money grab” method of running for public office is offset, somewhat, through cost-effective methods of grass-roots campaigning and exposure using electronic media. Televised debates are all but off-limits to independent candidates which would provide much needed exposure, to the public, of real candidates in real parties, really running. Every ballot-qualified candidate has already undergone a selective process and should be admitted into debates publicized for Democratic and Republican candidates. In addition to increasing the level of public funding for all party candidates it would be useful to require media to provide “free of charge” debate coverage to all party candidates, lest public funding be used to, in effect, subsidize the corporate media. Proportional representation would be an improvement to our “winner take all” system of campaigns and governance and would promote greater diversity within our elected bodies. Instant Runoff Voting is a method whereby in races where there is to be one “winner” the candidate with the most “broadband” support can be identified through an iterative process. IRV saves money in that a candidate with majority support can be determined short of an expensive follow-up election. Also, IRV allows people to vote their choice in addition to voting to block a less worthy candidate and it is a good way to encourage people to vote their conscience and support alternative candidates since some portion of their ranked choice is counted.

I support increases to the Federal Minimum Wage and State and Municipal wages to be in line with allowing a person to earn a living. In concert with what may be experienced as an unfunded mandate by business it would be helpful to link Living Wage

increases with opportunities for businesses to otherwise decrease their operating cost. As part of a Living Wage “package,” employees and employers might become part-owners in municipal, green-based power generation, with funds legislated to be set aside for such security-enhancing and (long term) cost-cutting development. A living wage is more likely to pass and become a federal standard if it is linked to a program to create an immediately recognized “win-win” situation for labor and management, with all parties becoming vested owners.

The death penalty is immoral. We do not teach that killing is wrong by killing people convicted of killing. The death penalty belongs in our barbaric past.

I support the decriminalization of marijuana and other controlled substances provided similar effort is given to fund treatment centers for those who become addicted. Cross-border drug trafficking is extremely difficult and expensive to stop. A better use of money wasted on the “war on drugs” would be in education campaigns aimed at providing accurate information to lower the demand for drugs. Also, demand for drugs (including pharmaceuticals) is likely to drop as people are supported in developing healthier more livable communities and reconnecting with family, friends and a meaningful sense of place.

We can have better health care for all by supporting single-payer universal health care. Our current for-profit medical system leaves tens of millions of people uninsured. One way to fund improvements in locally-available care (i.e. health clinics) would be to gradually transform military spending toward the National Guard, and to task the Guard with preparing communities, medically, to be prepared in the face of disaster. I also support the recognition of alternative or complementary medicine for the cost-effective medical solutions that are available outside the heavily-lobbying medical establishment. Whatever plan or plans come into being, it would be particularly advantageous and useful to have as distributed a network of providers as possible: to reach rural areas and neglected urban areas.

I am pro-choice. As a party espousing non-violence and recognizing that, at some level, abortion represents an act of violence and possible poor planning, I believe in placing emphasis on prevention. Women need to be supported in having access to family planning and in having medical and legal support and increased options in removing themselves from abusive relationships. Barrier methods of contraception, such as condoms, additionally provide protection against disease propagation. I would not like to see Roe-vs.-Wade over-turned.

I am in favor of stem cell research for the benefit that it can provide. In early 2001 I helped care for an elderly lady suffering from Parkinson’s (for three months), so I know first-hand how important it is to come up with cures. As with other medical matters I believe that health care is a basic human right. I would not like to see the fruits of stem cell research turned into just another profit-driven niche within the current medical industry.

Global Warming, or Global Climate Change (G.C.C.), is the single defining public health and safety issue of our time. I expect that at least a third of all life on this planet will vanish within my lifetime, even if we act accordingly. If we merely continue on our present course I would say that two-thirds of all life will soon vanish. The solutions are not that difficult, other than the threat perceived by the standard energy companies. When we live more consciously we eat lower on the food web (decreasing our farm footprint) and purchase more locally-grown produce (decreasing transportation costs and our carbon footprint). Livable communities, in which people work without commuting long distances, become survival centers when they are designed to be as self-sufficient as possible. Through the design of energy-efficient structures architects will play a key role in helping us to lower our energy bills and to meet environmental and human-based challenges. States like California, being a top-ranked global economy (eighth or so, worldwide) will lead the way in “re-tooling” our society to lessen emissions of carbon dioxide and to generally reduce our footprint on the earth. I work in the field of air pollution. Due to passage of Assembly Bill 32 I anticipate taking on a new role regulating carbon dioxide emissions as part of my inspector duties, within the not-too-distant future. This topic is one of my key campaign issues. In addition to considering heat-trapping gases in the atmosphere there is merit in understanding better how clouds form around condensation nuclei. Clouds are a “wild card” in climate models.

A national energy policy placing emphasis on domestically sourced renewable energy is needed. Conservation efforts to cut our high level of wasteful energy use are important, rather than having too much emphasis placed on how to rapidly expand generation. I am opposed to nuclear-power-and-weapons. The production of electricity is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. A by-product of coal-fired power plants is mercury, which pollutes fish and other foods consumed. Conservation, wind and photovoltaic and other forms of solar and biomass must be advanced, bearing in mind that diversity of energy methods makes good sense. Our political system has traditionally been weighted toward centralized industries and toward subsidy of favored, homogenized yet scientifically suspect industries (e.g. petroleum, nuclear and now agribusiness-friendly corn-based ethanol). As industries begin viewing waste streams as “product” streams having value, and as buildings are created using an energy-knowledgeable systems approach we will cut demand. What is not widely discussed is that our “throw-away” way of life is a big part of the problem. Educating people to become more conscious consumers is important for its energy implications.

The current immigration “debate” is driven by the fear of outsiders generated by successful terrorist techniques. I live in California, not far from Mexico. Undocumented immigrants are being “scape-goated” for failure of our economic system to provide jobs for everyone. Mexico is an important trading partner. A focus on community-based economics, such as local scrip, is necessary to ensure that people are able to contribute to society and to be supported in meeting their basic needs. Local solutions are best. Illegal aliens are in actuality economic refugees. In California migrant workers have traditionally been a vital part of agribusiness, yet they are not recognized in any official manner with integrity. The money wasted on building fences and walls and patrols would be better spent being invested directly in cross-border micro-economic “Grameen-Bank type” localized projects generating trade and good will. Both from the right and the left immigration issues are not being dealt with effectively. Although I sympathize with the drive to provide amnesty to those who are here without papers I can’t help but wonder about the wisdom of such a move as it provides a “carrot” for people to risk their lives traversing yet more difficult passages into this country (and dying in the desert). Amnesty would best be concurrent with an official immigration policy that is consistently within reach of all strata of non-U.S. citizens. I met the president of MAPA (the Mexican American Political Association), Nativo Lopez, and I follow this organization’s “take” on what is really going on.

Civil Rights laws provide protection for those classes and segments of society that are traditionally dispossessed. I believe in aggressive prosecution of hate crimes and in improved public education in matters respecting the natural human diversity that is within our country. During a presentation to a high school audience, some years ago, I listened to other party candidates try to describe their party stance toward minorities, people of color, those with disabilities. I summed up the Green Party stance as being a belief in the equality of all people.

Economic Corporate Globalization is an insidious problem. Not only can companies with offshore banking or foreign charters get off without paying their fair share of taxes, but exporting jobs abroad by “outsourcing” can be harmful to businesses and industries here at home. Through their manipulation of elections (for example, by funding the Democratic and Republican parties) multi-national companies are set up to, in effect, be governments of their own. The difficulty is that governments cannot counterbalance exploitation and protect the rights of, say, indigenous people when they are beholden to corporate interests. Of particular damage is the legal fiction that a corporation is a person. By being incorrectly granted “super-person” legal status corporations are not held accountable to the extent that they more properly would be. Local measures restricting the influence of outside businesses in changing local environments, against the wishes of residents, help to keep unchecked development at bay.

International trade agreements (NAFTA, CAFTA, WTO) need to be re-formulated “to protect the labor, human rights, economy, environment and domestic industry of recipient nations”(ref: G.P.U.S. Platform Summary, 2004). Restructuring the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) “to end the debts of recipient nations...and to guarantee the rights of the citizens of the nations receiving investment” would be an improvement, as would be strengthening labor’s right to organize. Here at home, Taft-Hartley needs to be repealed.

Our nation’s Foreign Policy is haphazard, ill informed and misdirected. Reliance on violence and upon intimidation is a mistake as it breeds ill will. The recent National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) indicates that our presence in Iraq is acting to destabilize the region. I recall hearing Ralph Nader comment, on national news during the last presidential race, that our military intervention in Iraq is “acting as a magnet” to draw in insurgents from surrounding countries. The current situation bears out this analysis. Peace begins at home. The Green Party is the party of Peace in that we have long recognized that improvements in our nation’s destructive fire-power are not nearly as important to progress as improvements to diplomacy. We are a nation that has been quick to go to war. This is costly on many fronts.

On the matter of “Middle East Policy, including Iraq, Iran and Israel”: The war in Iraq is the result of an admitted mistake: poor intelligence. Even if there were weapons of mass destruction these were not nuclear devices capable of being used within ten years or so, “post-liberation.” Iraqis are fleeing their country as a result of the ongoing violence. Diplomatic solutions are necessary to end the conflict, together with an understanding that economic and cultural factors must be addressed. The monetary cost of the war is in excess of 400 billion dollars. The cost to our national prestige is incalculable. While I do not question the commitment of our troops to fulfill their duty I certainly do question the competence of our Commander in Chief in starting this war for no good reason. I do not have a simple solution to ending this war. If we do pull out soon, which is the right thing to do, there may be escalations in killing. We find ourselves in the midst of a civil war that our country helped ignite, so we do bear some responsibility in seeking peaceful solutions. Iran is not the threat our blustering presidential administration would like us to believe it is. For Israel and Palestine to find peace they will have to agree that they are all descendents of Abraham and they must work to find common ground. Perhaps environmental collapse will provide the “common enemy” capable of uniting these people, especially as water becomes more scarce. For our part as a nation, we would do well to transform military aid into economic and social development for Palestinians and Israelis.

The current two-party system would work better if the two parties were sufficiently distinct during other than election years. The Green Party serves as the only viable alternative to our current system. We aren’t just working to get candidates elected; we are endeavoring to change our political system for the better. Some changes that are moving in from the horizon are Instant

Runoff Voting (I.R.V.), rejection of corporate contributions to candidates and to political parties, publicly funded campaigns and a focus on local communities over corporate globalization. We believe in good governance and in the removal of money as an influence in decision-making, especially when those decisions impact public security, health and the pursuit of happiness. Ideally, we would have active civic participation by the populace. Short of direct democracy some form of proportional representation or at least fairer representation would be a “plus.” It is all but illegal to participate in politics in this country as something other than a Democrat or a Republican, so high are the barriers to ongoing ballot access and to open political debate and so specious is the coverage by the media of important issues. The Green Party asks important questions about how we can together meet the future in our current national culture of expedience, violence, fear, waste, greed and overall unjust, exclusionary and short-sighted behavior.

Background on Issues:

On the matter of Foreign Policy and Peace I have encountered criticisms of the Green Party as not having much of a foreign policy because we believe in problem-solving through diplomacy rather than through armed force and physical conflict. In actuality, the Green Party has a strong Foreign Policy in that we respect diversity and we recognize the importance of ensuring vibrant local economies and healthy and healthful physical environments as a deterrent to disenfranchisement, displacement and desperation. I recently met Wangari Maathai, founder of the Green Belt Movement and recipient of the 2004 Nobel Prize for Peace. I volunteered for the Green Belt Movement at a recent E.S.R.I. conference in San Diego so that I could hear her speak the “keynote” address. It may seem odd that the simple act of planting trees is so important, especially against the high-tech back-drop of modern weapons. She laughed as she said that the enemy was not so much soldiers, but desertification. Trees factor into environmental preservation by keeping land from washing away, they help slow the down-flow of water and hold a reservoir capacity for the land and they provide available resources such as ready firewood, food and other products...not to mention beauty and wildlife. I am quite comfortable discussing foreign policy and peace. I grew up with “primitive” people in Papua New Guinea and I have an appreciation for the diversity of humanity that is perhaps lacking or foreign in mainstream candidates to public office. When I told Wangari Maathai what I was up to she signed my book, “To a Fellow Green.”

I work as a regulator for a governmental agency on environmental matters. As an inspector for the San Diego Air Pollution Control District (A.P.C.D.) I enforce local, state and federal rules regarding compliance with air quality regulations. The A.P.C.D. is the local enforcement arm of the E.P.A., under the California Air Resources Board (C.A.R.B.) and within the County government under the Land Use and Environment Group. Global Climate Change is affected by air pollution, and the Supreme Court recently ruled that Carbon Dioxide is an air pollutant to be recognized and addressed under the Clean Air Act. Energy policy is of vital importance to reducing “greenhouse gases” as it is the byproducts of combustion (such as from internal combustion engines and coal-fired power plants) that contribute to global warming. I am knowledgeable in these areas and I am very comfortable with the more technical aspects of such discussion.

I have addressed Domestic Policy issues in a dozen presidential debates and panel discussions with other candidates during the 2004 election cycle. I am rather well versed in matters related to how we can improve our justice, health care, energy policy and economic security here at home.

References:

I include as references attesting to my expected ability as a presidential candidate the following members of the California Delegation to the Green National Committee: Mike Feinstein, Peggy Koteen and Drew Johnson (Alternate Delegate). I have the voiced encouragement and support of fellow Green Party County Council members in San Diego.

Background (in substitution for C.V.):

Born and raised in Papua New Guinea (first ten years; born July 19, 1962) to Lutheran Missionary parents. Home-schooled the first three years. Grew up in a rain-forest with the same stone-age people studied by Jared Diamond (then an ornithologist). Jared is a family friend. I later entered the sciences because of Jared and other scientists like him who would visit our remote station. I grew up without television or a telephone for the first ten years. My main languages are English and Neomelanesian.

I have studied Western and non-Western medicine, earning a Ph.D. in Biomedical Engineering from Northwestern University (specialty: limb prosthetics and amputee functionality). I have also informally studied Feldenkrais and Reiki and other energy methods of healing. I graduated Valedictorian from Mira Mesa High School in 1980. My undergrad degree in Engineering is from Harvey Mudd College, Claremont, CA. After graduate school I suffered through a long period of unemployment as I worked to develop a funded position for myself at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Long Beach, CA, before moving to La Mesa and teaching math in the Grossmont Union High School District. I began working as an Air Quality Inspector at the Air Pollution Control District, San Diego, in 2001 (current job). My experiences substitute teaching

and being an environmental regulator taught me to "think on my feet" in challenging situations. I am committed to affecting change to and through the political process.

Political volunteer work:

California delegate to the Green National Committee (G.N.C.), December 2004 to present. We submit and vote on measures related to party function and advocacy.

Member of the Green Party County Council of San Diego, California, June 2006 to present.

Green Party candidate to the U.S. Senate, California primary, 2006.

Green Party U.S. presidential candidate, 2004 primaries. Running again in the 2008 race. Participated in 12 presidential debates and panel discussions, including at the Institute of Politics, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, January 2004. Collected signatures, helping to get David Cobb, myself and the Green Party on the ballot in Rhode Island in 2004.

Highlight was the presidential nominating convention in Milwaukee WI. Before the final round of nominating I was one of three remaining presidential candidates. In the second round I "won" all the delegates from Massachusetts. David Cobb received the nomination. Ralph Nader focused on working outside the Green Party. On national television I said the Green Party is not a single-issue party, but if it were, that issue would be Global Climate Change.

Elected Treasurer of the Green Party County Council, San Diego, 1996-1997

Co-chair of the Communications Committee, Green Party County Council, San Diego, 1996-1997

Registered Green since 1995. Participated in numerous state meetings as a delegate, including nominating Ralph Nader in 1996

Currently member of Environment California and strong advocate of alternative energy legislation.

Non-political Advocacy:

Former president of Turtle Island Institute (T.I.I.), the non-profit 501 (c)(3) based in San Diego, 1996-2002

Our co-founders, Manny Aguilar and Marguerite Hampton presented "Hands Across the Border: Operation Life-Save" to a high-ranking governmental official of Mexico. The trans-national plan of developing in a sustainable manner and cutting the draw of immigration was received favorably but not funded.

A long-standing goal of T.I.I. is to develop Community Learning and Information Centers (CLICS) through which information related to survival and to sustainable living can be disseminated and shared by a global audience.

Volunteered with Habitat for Humanity while in Chicago and helped build homes.

Interested in Native American issues and representation (Blackfoot ancestry) and interested in seeing Treaties honored.