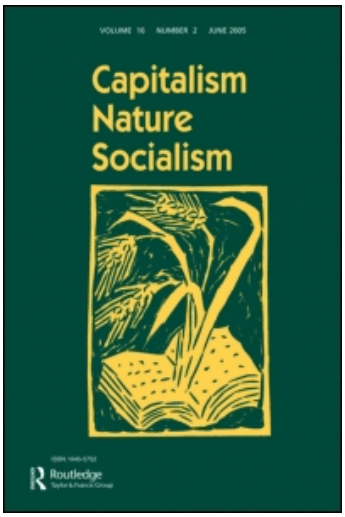

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The Green Work Alliance *

By Roger Keil

Nick De Carlo, President of Local 1967 of the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW), representing workers in the McDonnell-Douglas plant close to Toronto's international airport, and Stan Gray, long-time labour activist, expert on workplace health issues and a Greenpeace staff member until the summer of 1993,[1] have been the driving forces in organizing the Green Work Alliance. Founded in the fall of 1991, the Green Work Alliance brought together people who believed that their activism had to be connected to a new political project which could effectively integrate some of the different and contradictory—often even antagonistic—strands of popular movement concern in the current era.

In discussing the origins of the GWA, Nick De Carlo identifies three crucial points. First, there was the closing of the Caterpillar plant, a local agricultural machinery producer, which called for an innovative response on the part of the labour movement. Second, conflicts and grievances around health and safety, long-term risk and disability had long been issues for the CAW and other unions. Third, a group of Japanese workers who had visited the Toronto area had shown examples

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[1]In a recent labour dispute, Stan Gray and two other staff members were laid off from Greenpeace. Gray and his co-workers at the Toronto office of the environmental organization had organized a Staff Association to protect their interests. Gray was fired, and, in the winter of 1994, he represented the union in negotiations in front of the Ontario Labour Relations Board.

of how alternative product designs could benefit the community.[2] From the latter group and from the example of the Lucas Aerospace workers in the UK, the GWA drew inspiration in developing an agenda around socially useful production and co-operative ownership.

The concrete project at hand was the demand for the reopening of the Caterpillar plant as a site for green production. Various production models, technologies and products, as well as ownership and financing alternatives were discussed. Yet, it soon became clear that those who had formed the Green Work Alliance were on to something much more comprehensive. The opening of the plant with environmentally friendly production was considered only one — albeit a central — element of a larger project. A "greenbelt not a rustbelt" was to emerge out of the region's battered economy. While the search for an environmentally friendly product was central in the initial stages of the discussions in the group, something much larger than replacing agricultural and construction machines with energy-efficient light bulbs was imagined.

The Caterpillar plant project served as a model and focus for the development of the GWA's policies. The reopening of the plant in the current slash and burn-economy would be a significant success in itself for the labour movement. Moreover, the existing skill levels of the Caterpillar employees and other recently fired workers could be maintained if product development were tailored to their capacities. On the one hand, this was seen as a means of resisting the current trend toward large-scale deskilling of the industrial workforce, and as a way of linking job growth to the existing supply of labour power; on the other hand, it would be a reasonable alternative to abstract retraining schemes.[3] Environmentally friendly production would offer a chance to combine production of goods with better use value and maintenance of workers' skill levels. In effect, it would also allow workers to retain some autonomy over the use of their knowledge and to put this knowledge to work in the environmental field.

In addition, the reopened plant could make a meaningful contribution to strengthening the position of the regional economy in

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[2]Nick De Carlo, "Introduction" (address delivered at "Democracy, Jobs and the Environment" Conference, October 2, 1992, Toronto).

[3]An example of what should not happen was the story of those highly trained electronics workers in the old Soviet Union who had produced SS 20-missiles and who are now producing baby strollers. While the ethical and use values of the baby strollers far exceeded those of the arms products, the production of the more useful product unfortunately came with a sharp decline in the skills employed by the workers who built it.

the world economy. Rather than giving in to the abstract logic of globalization, a regionally based, strictly use-value oriented production project would attempt to operate in a global economic environment without undermining its own position as part of the regional economy. At the same time, the GWA agreed that, for the Caterpillar plant, no product should be considered whose production in Brampton would result in job loss somewhere else. Specifically, this meant that regional demands should guide the search for new jobs. This would entail the opportunity to address the needs of the population in the region. The model case that was discussed in this context envisioned a reopened Caterpillar plant as the site for the production of energy efficient windows. This would tie in with a project in Springdale, north of Brampton, where housing for 70,000 people is planned. The specificity and novelty of such a project would also be a safeguard against creating jobs here that had actually been cut elsewhere.

The first strategy of the Alliance was directed at putting public pressure on provincial politicians in order to make them recognize the need for job creation through worker initiated green production, and at building a broadly based social movement around this demand. Between December 1991 and May 1992, three increasingly successful demonstrations drew social and political activists from a variety of areas — labour unions, anti-poverty groups, peace groups, environmentalists. Speakers for these groups called for an end to the destruction of jobs in Ontario's economic heartland, making links between the deteriorating state of the economy and the environment. They argued that government rhetoric about empty coffers flew in the face of huge subsidies to nuclear power plant operators, and they pointed out how the dismal state of the welfare state provided little hope for those thrown out of their jobs.

Members of the Green Work Alliance preferred this complex approach to the atomization of single issue activism. Most of them, it seemed, were convinced that only a comprehensive perspective, tying together the seemingly unconnected threads of various political discourses, would be capable of successfully addressing the problems that many people in Toronto had been experiencing since the onset of the recession in the late 1980s. For example, one of the members of the Alliance, the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty, issued a statement that outlined this organization's interest in a green jobs agenda. This statement concludes:

> Whole communities of working people, not just those in immediate bargaining units, have a stake in the jobs that are today being destroyed by the Corporate Agenda. The Green

> Jobs Coalition is advancing demands around not just any jobs, but those that pay decent wages and that are unionized, jobs that support and sustain the environment, jobs that will contribute to the communities the workers live in.[4]

The coalition went on to discuss these issues in regular meetings, among themselves and with other actors in the community. Various schemes of organization and ownership ranging from the demand for a crown corporation as an umbrella institution for green work, to cooperative workers' ownership of the production facilities were contemplated.

At a conference in October 1992 with participants from all over North America, including Eric Mann, from the Los Angeles-based Labour/Community Strategy Centre, as the keynote speaker, the Green Work Alliance invited other groups to share their experiences, ideas and concerns. After a reassessment of the political strategy of the GWA, the job creation/technology discussions were refocused around getting public funding, either from existing or new programs directed at upgrading the environment. It had become obvious that the fledgling organization had reached a point where demonstrations and activism were not automatically going to increase its support base in the community. More serious organizing efforts, both in Brampton and in the inner city, would be needed to maintain the momentum the GWA had gained in its early organizing phase. In terms of product and technology research, the GWA first concentrated on a recent proposal by Toronto city councillors Maxwell and Tabuns to retrofit the city's homes under a public subsidy plan which would both create jobs and save energy.

In the fall of 1993, a core group of GWA activists entered discussions around a lengthy status report and position paper drafted by Stan Gray.[5] This document was mainly intended to produce a GWA policy statement, to launch an environmental resource centre, and to increase research on the Brampton-Mississauga area. Out of these discussions, a Jobs-Ontario Community Action Proposal was developed and submitted to the Ontario Ministry of Economic Development and Trade in January 1994.[6] In coordination with workers from a provincial

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[4]Ontario Coalition Against Poverty, Statement, 1992.

[5]Stan Gray, "Green Work Alliance: Proposal for Discussion" (unpublished ms., Brampton, Ontario, 1993).

[6]Robert Davis, Stan Gray and Brian Milani, *Jobs Ontario Community Action Proposal* (Brampton, Ont., 1994).

government special task force (such as the recently hired Robin Murray[7]), the Alliance now hopes to gain seed money for a variety of projects: developing a community profile; establishing an information/resource centre; creating a Green Community Development Corporation, and eventually establishing an Environmental Services Training Centre; and launching a Retrofit Delivery Enterprise. In addition to developing these projects, the organization deepened its relationships with the labour movement, particularly the Carpenters Union.

The more recent developments, while apparently more pragmatic than earlier activities of the GWA should not be interpreted as a move away from mass movement building tactics toward the development of proposals for government agencies and programs. Rather, they can be read as switch: instead of concentrating on the demand to reopen a plant to produce an as of yet unspecified product — as in the Caterpillar case — the GWA now seeks to define and create the demand and to then work back towards the actual production of goods and services.

The Meaning of Alliance: A Window on the Future of Work and Nature

While not entirely intended by those who came up with it, the name Green Work Alliance is programmatic in a variety of ways. *Green* and *Work* signify fairly obvious things. They contain a host of contradictions like "jobs vs. the environment," yet they also contain something larger: a political program of sorts. The aim is to merge the ecological and the labour political traditions, or green and red, if you will, in a new coalition. *Alliance,* on the one hand, has the innocent ring of practical coalition building on the strategic or tactical level of a social movement. On the other hand, it has a very profound meaning which cuts to the core of the environmental problematic. The German philosopher Ernst Bloch wrote in the early 1940s:

> Nature in its final manifestation, like history in its final manifestation, lies at the horizon of the future. The more common technique [Bloch uses the word *Allianztechnik* in the original. — R.K.] is attainable instead of one that is external — one that is mediated with the coproductivity of nature — the more we can be sure that the frozen powers of a frozen nature will again be emancipated. Nature is not something that can be consigned to the past. Rather it is the construction-site

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[7]Wayne Roberts, "Downsizing by design," *NOW-Magazine,* March 10-16, 1994, pp. 14-15, 20.

> that has not been cleared, the building tools that have not yet been attained in an adequate form for the human house that itself does not yet exist in an adequate form. The ability of problem-laden natural subjectivity to participate in the construction of this house is the objective-utopian correlate of the human-utopian fantasy in concrete terms.[8]

The alliance of human and nonhuman nature mediated by the production process of both nature and society, if seen as an alliance in the technical, political and philosophical sense, can be a common rather than an adversarial project.[9] In providing a nucleus of such an alliance technique, the GWA could become a powerful agent in the regional and local economy, and in the policy process. In order to appreciate this possibility and to understand its significance, certain other factors have to be taken into account.

The articulation of traditional or new working class politics with identity politics or the politics of place (O'Connor's terms) takes many forms. When these politics interconnect with ecological politics, there are even more interfaces. Two major trends can be differentiated: discussions *inside* the unions on environmental policy; and the emergence of *new coalitions* of labour with communities. In the praxis of the Green Work Alliance, both strands can be discerned.

Union Environmental Policy

The crisis of Fordism has forced the labour unions to rethink their strategies on a variety of counts. Receding membership numbers, loss of the social contract implicit in the Fordist labour arrangement, and changes in the mass production system have caused unions to clarify their position inside the framework of capitalist production. Two members of both the Green Work Alliance and the Carpenters Union, Brian Milani and Gilles Arsenault, have summarized this development as follows:

> The labour movement has always represented the worker as 'cog in the machine.' It has been mainly oppositional in

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[8]Quoted in Murray Bookchin, *The Ecology of Freedom: The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy,* revised edition (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1991), p. 34.

[9]On articulated ecological politics beyond representation which would be in line with such an interpretation of Bloch's Allianztechnik see Donna Haraway, "The Promises of Monsters: A Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/d Others," in Lawrence Grossberg *et al* (eds.), *Cultural Studies* (New York and London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 295-337.

> strategy. And it has been preoccupied with the (more equal) *distribution* of society's wealth. Today, if it is to survive as a progressive force, it must question the *nature and content* of this wealth, and not just its distribution. It must begin to influence the direction of investment. It must go beyond the point of production to consider the community and environment. And it must decentralize and facilitate deeper forms of direct democracy and worker community control (rather than simply use of the state).[10]

Changes are apparent. At the leadership level, North American unions have started to engage in joint labour-management committees on the environment and have demonstrated greater interest in the issues than ever before. A January 1994 weekend conference organized by the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), called "Organizing for Environmental Change," drew 250 activists. A strong commitment from CLC president Bob White to environmental change served as a backdrop to the event (which, by one account however, hardly went beyond trading traditional labour-environment antagonisms[11]). White has been quoted as saying:

> We have to be part of the discussion on *whether* to produce, to decide whether production enriches or impoverishes our environment. We have to be part of the decision of *what* to produce — cars or buses, guns or butter. We have to be part of the design of *how* to produce — so that the production process harms neither workers nor communities.[12]

At the grass-roots level "militant trade unionists are going beyond their leadership to forge local coalitions with environment groups, advocate for 'green' issues and set the agenda for change."[13] Most of these initiatives — even when they have a coalitionist flavour to them[14] — really are about internal union strategy. The most important

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[10]Brian Milani and Gilles Arsenault, "Labour, Ecology and Community" (discussion paper, Toronto, n.d.).

[11]Wayne Roberts, "Labour eyeing eco issues to forge new alliances," *NOW-Magazine,* January 27-February 2, 1994, p. 15.

[12]Quoted in *Ibid.,* p. 15.

[13]Leslie Papp, "It's Rust or Renaissance: Union Militants Turn Green," *The Toronto Star,* November 17, 1992, p. A17.

[14]Adkin cites a number of initiatives since the early 1970s that have brought labour and environmental researchers and activists together at conferences, most of them concerned with the jobs vs. environment issue.

aspect of this strategy is the notion of "rust or renaissance" — the whole question of union survival. Nick De Carlo accordingly told the *Toronto Star:* "Labour has no choice but to develop alternate strategies if it's going to survive."[15]

Concern about the future of the union movement, however, has not been the only factor prompting labour leaders and grassroots activists to direct their strategy towards green issues. Another important building block for new initiatives has been the traditional health and safety work performed in union locals across North America. That "workers are always the biggest victims of environmental damage" is a conviction that activists in the union movement, who have been dealing with workplace toxins, nuclear power and other health and safety risks, have long sought to make public. In fact, anger at the "public insensitivity to the abuse of life and limb in the workplace," an insensitivity that is often apparent in even the most critical environmental organizations, has long been a source of mistrust between the labour and environmental movements.[16] Stan Gray cites the general public indifference to the documented existence of a cancer belt in and around the steel industry in north Hamilton in the 1970s as an example. "This was a major environmental disaster. But it attracted less attention in Canada than potential toxic risks to owls and seals. Nobody rang the alarm bells over the Hamilton cancers, except the steelworkers and their local union. And those who live and die in north Hamilton. Environmentalism is a working-class issue."[17]

Unions in North America have also launched campaigns linking workers' concerns to environmental issues. Two of these are of particular note: the United Farm Workers' efforts to make poisoning of farm labourers through pesticides a widely known issue; and the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers International Union's attempts to develop a Superfund for Workers.[18] Based on the example of the post-World War II GI Bill, which supported more than 13 million ex-soldiers in the US, the proposed Superfund for Workers would,

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"Counter-Hegemony and Environmental Politics in Canada," in William K. Carroll (ed.), *Organizing Dissent: Contemporary Social Movements in Theory and Practice* (Toronto: Garamond Press, 1992), p. 146f.

[15]Papp, *op. cit.*

[16]Stan Gray, "Double Exposure: The Environment as a Workers' Issue," *Our Times*, June, 1992, p. 27.

[17]*Ibid. p.* 28.

[18]See Thomas Greven, "Economic Conversion: A Strategy that Will Build the Labour Movement," *Labour Notes* 164 (November 1992).

> guarantee workers who lose their jobs due to any environmental regulation or incident their full wages and benefits until a comparable job can be found... The Superfund for Workers should also provide full tuition and fees — in addition to wages and benefits — to every environmentally — displaced worker who wants to further his or her education.[19]

In the case of the Green Work Alliance, these internal union strategies played a significant role in its development. One of the initial reasons for creating the organization was the need to find an innovative response to plant closings and job loss, a common concern within the labour movement as a whole. Equally, health and safety issues were prominent concerns of the CAW local (1967) that was central to the Alliance.[20] Yet another development that had evolved out of the labour tradition offered itself as a possible element in an environmental strategy. The movement for conversion of military jobs to non-military jobs was a ready model for a similar demand to convert polluting industries into environmentally friendly production.[21] Examples of such conversion in Europe (England, France, Germany) hinted at the coincidence of moving out of polluting industries into "green work" with worker control over plants and co-operative businesses.[22]

New coalitions for the labour movement: new challenges for the environmental movement

In a variety of sectors (auto, garment, farm labour, food etc.), North American labour unions have started to abandon their traditional job- and wage-related focus in favour of a social unionism of sorts. Pressured by the union busting politics of conservative governments, unions have attempted to find new allies and new themes around which to organize in order to counter the attempt to erase labour from the

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[19]Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers International Union, "Understanding the Conflict between Jobs and the Environment" (OCAW Discussion Paper, Denver, Colorado, n.d.).

[20]"In 1987 [Nick De Carlo] led a nine-day health and safety walkout at McDonnell-Douglas. More than 2,000 workers took part in the protests after provincial inspectors found about 200 health and safety violations at the Malton aircraft plant," Papp, *op. cit.*

[21]cf. Greven, *op. cit.*

[22]Ludwig Bußmann (ed.), *Neue Arbeitsplätze für alte Standorte* (Düsseldorf: WI-Verlag, 1986).

political landscape.[23] The environmental movement is one area in which labour has been looking for allies, both to build single-issue coalitions and to launch even broader campaigns. In some cases, powerful alliances have already been forged between labour and community activists, perhaps the most developed one in North America being the Labour/Community Strategy Centre in Los Angeles. Among other things, the Centre fought the implementation of the Air Quality Management Plan in the Los Angeles South Coast Basin, proposed by a business-oriented local Air Quality Management District in 1989.[24]

The involvement of various labour and non-labour groups in the Green Work Alliance necessitates the development of a common agenda for unified action. The difficulties implicit in this development can best be understood within the framework developed by those who have theorized "postmodern" politics and "new social movements."[25] In this literature it is argued that political activity cannot be read off from objective class positions. Rather, political identity and agency (as well as coalitions of agents) have to be produced through discursive struggle. The process of political articulation is contingent and open; "identities and 'interests' do not have a prediscursive existence, nor do they derive their unity from a single economic logic."[26] Taken seriously, this new understanding of politics as a discursive process has two major consequences for a coalition like the GWA.

First, such a process does not allow for add-on type coalition building tactics that connect predetermined, disparate interests into a loose alliance. It demands a process through which these interests, themselves, will be defined. Labour unions, then, cannot expect to ally themselves with environmental organizations believing that their assumed interests will remain unchanged in the process. The same is true for environmental organizations. The issue is further complicated

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[23]Boy Lüthje and Christoph Scherrer, *Jenseits des Sozialpakts: Neue Unternehmensstrategien Gewerkschaften und Arbeitskämpfe in den USA* (Münster: Verlag Westfälisches Dampfboot, 1993); William Greider, "Don't Count Labour Out," *Utne Reader,* March/April, 1992, pp. 78-84; Michael Maccoby, "The New Unionism," *Utne Reader* March/April 1992, pp. 85-87.

[24]Eric Mann, *L.A.'s Lethal Air* (Los Angeles: Labor/Community Strategy Center, 1991); Robin Bloch and Roger Keil "Restructuring and Popular Alternatives in Los Angeles," *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism,* 6, 1991.

[25]Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialism Strategy* (London: Verso, 1985); Carroll (ed.), *op. cit.*

[26]Eduardo Canel, "New Social Movement Theory and Resource Mobilization: The Need for Integration," in Carroll (ed.), *ibid., p.* 30.

by the presence of feminist, anti-poverty and other activists, and academics as well as artists, who bring their own agendas to the coalition building process. The task ahead is particularly hard because forging the labour-environmental alliance means breaking new ground. Second, a closer reading of coalition building tactics would suggest that one way to understand the dynamics involved is to look at the differing relative distances of the alliance's members to the environmental and labour poles of the discourse. Table 1 shows a schematic representation of the ideal types of this discourse.[27]

Table 1: Initial Orientations of Coalition Members

Middle class environmentalism	Working class environmentalism
protection of eternal nature, conservation, animals	protection of workers and communities; workplace health
lifestyle and way of life; discourse of difference	need, discourse of the social
market place orientation	public intervention preferred
individualism and universalism	communalism; solidarity at the workplace; economic class consciousness
communities often detached from places of work (including agricultural, manufacturing and office); suburban orientation in consumption patterns	communities often closer to workplaces and polluting sources

Any of the policies addressed by the Green Work Alliance have had, and will have, to take into account the manifestations of these ideal-typical splits. One discussion in which this phenomenon was most apparent came during the initial debate in the GWA about the position

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[27]Further research is needed to substantiate this schema. It also seems worthwhile to explore how the class base of environmentalism translates into the protest-reform dilemma of the environmental movement as posed by Wally Seccombe, "Democracy and Ecology: Envisioning a Transition to a Green Economy," in Gregory Albo, David Langille, and Leo Panitch (eds.), *A Different Kind of State? Popular Power and Democratic Administration* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 103. It would, indeed, be interesting to know more about how Nimby-ism and reformism relate to class issues.

of the organization relative to the state and the market place.[28] Those closer to the traditional labour movement favoured strong state intervention and pondered the idea of lobbying for a crown corporation to act as an umbrella organization for green work in Ontario. Others closer to the middle class environmental movement suggested a form of organization more in step with market demand. These ideological differences, then, were very much expressed in the materiality of the fledgling coalition.[29]

New jobs, better cities: The role of the environmentalist labour movement in building better communities

The discussion about possible work processes and products that would fit the definition of green work revealed both the enormous challenges and the transformative potential of an environmentalism that is concerned about the nature of work. Stan Gray, one of the organizers describes one of the plans discussed: "[The GWA's] aim is to force the re-opening of closed plants to produce goods such as solar water heaters, energy efficient appliances and industrial motors. These green products could be distributed at bargain prices to consumers, because the energy they would save would avoid the need to build new power plants at great expense to the public purse.''[30] One focus of internal debate was the place-boundedness of the projected production. Regional housing development, it was assumed, was an ideal field of activity for green work. Newly built housing could be provided with environmentally friendly and energy saving technologies; equally, existing housing could be retrofitted to meet better energy standards and to stop water waste. Both production and construction employment could be created through such plans. In addition, one could also imagine the construction of entirely new urban/suburban structures in Southern Ontario, reflecting a desire to leave the crisis-ridden Fordist urban arrangement behind.

The way cities are built, dramatically reflects the ravenous depletion of the environment in Fordism. Functional zoning of housing

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[28]The Coalition for Green Economic Recovery, a downtown Toronto group of researchers, consultants and activists with general political aims similar to those of the GWA, seems to be forwarding more of a marketplace oriented approach.

[29]At the time of this writing the discussion about organization lingers on while the demand for a crown corporation seems to have been replaced by more locally/municipally oriented strategies where the same splits occur except on a smaller scale.

[30]Gray, "Double Exposure," *op. cit.*, p. 30.

and work, the subsumption of everything urban under the logic of the automobile, mass produced sprawl in the "burbs," unsustainable office towers in the urban cores as well as in the city's commercial periphery, with all their attendant high energy use are features of today's cities that are highly problematic from the point of view of ecology. (See Table 2.) The crisis of this arrangement, moreover, is profoundly entangled with the crisis of the environment. Both crises present a number of options for critical intervention.[31]

Table 2: Fordist Urban Environments

Suburbs	Inner cities
social cohesion and uniformity prevalent in most traditional suburbs; conservative worldviews and place/property based politics	high quality of urban life and concentration of "social ills" like poverty and unemployment create contradictory environment; higher incidence of progressive and liberal worldviews; politics place-based but not necessarily property-based
low density; automobiles a must with high co2-emissions due to long commutes into other suburbs or the urban core	high density; built environment overpowering; problems of congestion in the urban core, many automobiles concentrated downtown
single family homes	multi-storey apartment buildings more prevalent (also on urban periphery)
"nature" domesticated in backyard lawn culture	little greenspace; parks
sprawl with little care for agricultural land, wild patches and forests	

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[31] Alain Lipietz, "A Regulationist Approach to the Future of Urban Ecology," *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism*, 11 [3/3] (September 1992), pp. 101-11; *idem,* "The Regulation Approach and Capitalist Crisis: An Alternative Compromise for the 1990s," in Mick Dunford and Grigoris Kafkalas (eds.), *Cities and Regions in the New Europe: The Global-Local Interplay and Spatial Development Strategies* (London: Bellhaven Press, 1992); *idem, Towards a New Economic Order: Postfordism, Ecology and Democracy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1992); Bloch and Keil, "Restructuring and Popular Alternatives in Los Angeles," *op. cit.*

Any attempt to revitalize the regional economy by introducing concepts of green production must take into account the contradictions of this spatial arrangement. "A green belt, not a rust belt," one of the demands of the GWA, then, can also be understood as part of the debate on the restructuring of living arrangements in Southern Ontario. The discussions inside the GWA pointed to the need to get involved in "regional planning from below." Both the traditional labour tactics and the traditional environmental practices have not fully covered this demand.

Milani and Arsenault summarize this issue:

> The key is for labour to be active in defining development goals. This means not simply opposing Free Trade, but creating bioregional economies. To do this we need to be creating our own autonomous forms of finance — People's Banks and credit unions, and pension funds which invest in the enterprises that sustain community and environmental regeneration. We have no need to attract external capital for anything. Workers indirectly own — through their savings and pension funds — all of the capital necessary for creating a conserver economy. We also have great power as consumers — to support regenerative economic activity.[32]

Co-operative housing, auto-free developments and more could be the outcome of green work initiatives. The result would, indeed, be different from replacing agricultural machines with energy efficient light bulbs.

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[32]Milani and Arsenault, "Labour, Ecology and Community," *op. cit.*