



Responsibilities and Rights

Video Surveillance Safeguards

(Originally passed – Spring Conference 1995)

Conference resolves that GPEX and the Association of Green Councillors call upon the Home Office to put in place the following safeguards before the installation of video surveillance equipment.

- a) To carry out prior consultation with local communities to ensure that this major change in civil liberties is approved and supported by the majority of users.
- b) To create a Video Data Protection Act outlining:
 - (i) storage of records and duplication;
 - (ii) the authorities holding these records and the maximum time before all copies are destroyed;
 - (iii) appropriate measures are installed to prevent video editing occurring;
 - (iv) the nature of the offence of passing on video data to unauthorised bodies.
- c) Once in place it is the statutory duty of the authority to maintain its equipment correctly.

Support for Non-Violent Direct Action

(Originally passed – Spring 1996 Conference)

Noting the distorted and unrepresentative results of 'The First Past The Post' Election system in Britain, which has led in particular in the last four General Elections, to a majority Government being formed with only about one-third of the

electorate voting for it, in each of these elections, and that this undemocratic system has contributed to the alienation, self-disenfranchisement, and utter despair, felt by large sections of The British Population.

Further noting the resultant devastating costs in human, environmental and social terms, of the legislation and policies enacted by this unrepresentative, minority supported, four term Government - we, The Green Party, unequivocally support the use of Non Violent Direct Action (NVDA), to pressure for change in the electoral system in Britain, with the British People being given a choice via referendum, on the type of electoral system to be used.

Terrorism Bill

(Originally passed – Spring 2000 Conference)

The Green Party of England & Wales condemns the Terrorism Bill introduced by the current government.

We believe that the Bill:

- a) Redefines 'terrorism' in a way that is unnecessary and contrary to common understanding of the word;
- b) Gives unacceptably wide powers to the police and judiciary, in terms of 'stop and search', refusal of bail, and the definition of specific 'cordoned areas' within which further draconian powers apply;
- c) may prevent support from Britain for the legitimate struggles for freedom and justice of people suffering

under oppressive regimes in other countries.

We also condemn the process by which the government has forced this Bill through parliament with only limited time for consultation, and the supine attitude of the mainstream parties to this Bill.

Regulation of Investigatory Powers Bill (RIP Bill)

(Originally passed – Spring 2000 Conference)

This conference calls upon the Green Party of England & Wales to campaign against the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (RIP) Bill currently progressing through parliament.

The Bill is part of an international effort, initiated by the FBI, to limit the use of the Internet for social campaigning (the Internet was instrumental in preventing the passage of the Multilateral Agreement on Investment in 1998).

The RIP Bill will allow the police and other agencies of the state to intercept emails, which they can pass on to others around the world. This will endanger activists in countries where opposition to the government is punishable by torture, imprisonment and death.

Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Equality - Failure of Government to Honour Commitments

(Originally passed – Autumn 2000 Conference)

This Conference deplors the failure of the Labour Government to honour its pledges to the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LGB) community. This includes a still unequal age of consent and the institutional homophobia of Section 28 (the law which makes councils discriminate against homosexuality).

We call on the government to introduce immediate legislation to equalise the age of consent and repeal Section 28

NACAB/NCC Campaign for Consumer Bill

(Originally passed – Autumn 2000 Conference)

The Green Party seeks a society that is both ecologically sustainable and socially just.

Green Party Conference therefore strongly endorses the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux and National Consumer Council campaign for a Consumer Bill to be included in this Autumn's Queen's Speech.

Conference notes the campaign's concern that inefficient and outdated legislation fails to protect vulnerable people from unscrupulous traders, oppressive debt collection practices and homeworking scams that don't deliver. We also note that although a million complaints a year are made to the Office of Fair Trading around 85 million instances of dissatisfaction go unreported and thousands of vulnerable people a year fall victim to these unscrupulous practices.

*Conference deplors the failure of the Government so far to keep the promise to introduce legislative reform, made in its 1999 White Paper 'Modern Markets: Confident Consumers'.

*Conference calls on the Government to introduce a Consumer Bill in the Queen's Speech.

*Conference Calls on the Autumn Conferences of political parties to add their support to this campaign.

*Conference pledges that the Green Party will (if a Consumer Bill is introduced) use its access to parliamentary process to do what it can to ensure desperately needed legislation to protect the vulnerable is enacted.

Miss World in Nigeria

(Originally passed – Autumn 2002 Conference)

The Green Party calls upon all contestants, sponsors, media and viewers to boycott the Miss World contest due to take place this November in Abuja, the capital of Nigeria. We believe that it is not appropriate to hold this contest in Nigeria at this time and request that the organisers withdraw from holding the event in Nigeria this year.

In some parts of Nigeria there have been appalling human rights abuses. This is currently highlighted by the case of Amina Lawal, who has been sentenced to death for having a child out of wedlock.

We condemn the Nigerian courts for their increasing use of executions, floggings and amputations, which are repeated violations of Nigeria's commitments in international human rights law.

We call upon the supreme court of Nigeria to allow the appeal of Amina Lawal and failing that for the Nigerian president to intervene to save this woman and also for the president to bring the various courts of Nigeria into line with the international commitments on human rights.

Children are Unbeatable

(Originally passed – Autumn 2003 Conference)

Conference notes that:

- Hitting children is wrong and the law should say so.
- The international and domestic pressure for law reform is now overwhelming.
- Equal protection for children is a human rights obligation, not an optional extra.
- Changing the law to protect children from being hit is a key child protection concern.
- Reform works and does not punish parents as has been demonstrated abroad, notably in Sweden,
- Government should plan for reform at the earliest opportunity by investigating the progress made in other countries.
- The current law dates back to 1860 and has no place in a modern and fair society.

Conference notes that it is both wrong and impracticable to seek to define acceptable forms of corporal punishment of children. Such an exercise is unjust. Hitting children is a lesson in bad behaviour.

The GPEW is committed to non-violence. Removing the defence of "reasonable chastisement" and thus giving children in their homes and in all other settings equal protection under the law on assault is the only just, moral and safe way to clarify the law. While technically this would criminalise any assault of a child, trivial assaults, like trivial assaults between adults, would not be prosecuted. There already exist adequate means to prevent unwarranted or unhelpful prosecutions. It would on the other hand ease prosecution in serious cases. It would eliminate the current dangerous confusion over what is acceptable and provide a clear basis for child protection.

There is ample evidence from other countries to show that full legal reform, coupled with the promotion of effective means of positive discipline, works rapidly to reduce reliance on corporal punishment and reduces the need for prosecutions and other formal interventions in families. Using positive forms of discipline reduces stress and improves relationships between children, their parents and other carers

Conference therefore instructs GPEX to affiliate GPEW to the **Children are Unbeatable** alliance.

ID Cards

(Originally passed – Autumn 2003 Conference)

Conference:

- notes the proposals being developed to introduce an ID card with biometrics for the UK;
 - believes that the proposals are a waste of public resources;
 - believes that they will not be effective in tackling organised crime, people-smuggling or terrorism,
 - believes that proposals for such cards to be compulsory, with potential stop and inspect powers for the authorities, have worrying civil liberties
 - notes that the Welsh language has not been fully taken into account;
 - strongly proposes that the plans be abandoned forthwith;
 - will encourage peaceful non-cooperation on a group and individual basis to compulsory ID cards
- Conference instructs GPEX to publicise the Party's views on this matter.

Civil Contingencies Bill

(Originally passed – Spring 2004 Conference)

Conference notes the government has proposed a Civil Contingencies Bill that is currently going through the Commons and which goes beyond the Terrorism Act.

Conference further notes that if passed this bill will allow authorities to greatly encroach upon civil liberties such as freedom of movement, the right to trial by jury and will allow draconian measures such as requisition of property.

Conference notes the Bill is anti-democratic and unnecessary.

Conference instructs GPEX to publicise these views and to call upon the government to abandon the Bill.

Unite Against Fascism

(Originally passed – Spring 2004 Conference)

Conference notes:

1. The Unite Against Fascism national campaign was launched on 25th February 2004 by community leaders, celebrities, trade unionists, and cross-party politicians, including the Green Party's Jean Lambert MEP.
2. Unite Against Fascism is a new broad national campaign formed to defeat the extreme right, uniting trade unions, anti-racists, anti-fascists, MPs, MEPs, faith groups and all those opposed to the extreme right.
3. That the extreme right intends to attract votes on the basis of racism, Islamophobia and the vilification of refugees and asylum seekers.
4. The government's failure to take on the extreme right, in particular:
 - a. by not addressing the racist language and assumptions in sections of the popular press;
 - b. in its draconian Asylum and Immigration Bill currently going through Parliament

Conference therefore:

1. Endorses and reiterates the party executive's decision to affiliate to Unite Against Fascism and welcomes Jean's contribution in raising the Green Party's profile in this important movement.
2. Encourages local Green Parties to get involved with the initiative, to circulate Unite Against Fascism materials and encourage the take up of individual membership.
3. Instructs the External Communications Coordinator to publicise the party's views on this.

The right to breastfeed

(Originally passed – Autumn 2004 Conference)

Conference notes the Breastfeeding Bill introduced to the Scottish Parliament on 23 September 2004 with the full support of Scottish Green Party MSPs.

The Green Party of England & Wales asserts that mothers who choose to breastfeed must have the right to do so; and children who are breastfed must be entitled to their feed when they need it, which will often be when they are in a public place. In both cases, as the Scottish Breastfeeding Bill asserts, any public place suitable for a baby to be should be deemed suitable for that baby to be breastfed.

Conference calls on the home secretary to introduce legislation to acknowledge this right in law in England & Wales.

Conference instructs the national executive to make the case for this legislation to the home secretary, and to publicise the party's views on this subject.