

Mean, Green, Fighting Machine? The truth behind America's Green Party

Political races, for the longest time, have been mainly dominated by two main parties: The Democratic Party and the Republican Party. Although these two have been a major presence in the White House for the better part of a century, which can easily be seen through the outcome of the recent election, more parties are continuing to emerge in hopes to gain control of the White House and make their attempt at stabilizing the country. One of those parties, the Green Party, believes that they are the ones with the answers to all the questions and can be the middle ground that will win over the American public and provide the United States of America with national stability and prosperity on many different levels.

For those that don't know what the Green Party is/stands for, it was formed in 2001 after starting as a smaller version, the Association of State Green Parties, in 1996. The party is heavily concentrated around 10 Key Values, among those are Grassroots Democracy, Social Justice, Non-Violence, Personal/Global Responsibility, and 6 others, which act as some sort of guidelines for the party. The driving force that connects all of these values, and a major theme of the setup of the party, or in other words a thesis, is a call to reform the parts of modern government that favors the wealthy and big businesses. In the section of their platform titled "A Call to Action", there were multiple references to a need to "fundamentally change our society's broken political system." This "broken political system" that they refer to is the current state of the American political system brought about by the Democrats and the Republicans (2).

An interesting plank of the Green Party's platform to be analyzed is the one that lays out their proposed plan to mend the laws on Immigration and the issues that stem from it. Going along with the thesis of the entire platform, the thesis of this particular section on immigration states that immigration should be handled with the thought of social justice and agreement with surrounding nations in mind, rather than stifling the hopes of immigrants at finding a prosperous change in their lives. A qualifier of this thesis still stands that these ideas can only be put into place after the safety and security of the nation as a whole have been secured.

In the introductory paragraph of Chapter 2: Social Justice, section J. Immigration, the Green Party outlines what they believe is wrong with the current treatment of immigration while also distancing themselves from any control over the current situation. It is stated, "Laws to oppress immigrants have been proposed in the Congress... Politicians have stirred up anti-immigrant sentiment among sections of the U.S. population." (36). Through the use of third person speech, they are able to distance themselves from the problems they are presenting to their audience, displaying their own credibility(ethos). They want to convey the wrong-doings of the parties in power, and draw the audience in to their system of laws that could bring about better outcomes. Moving forward from the introduction they also bring up issues of Global Responsibility, Respect for Diversity, and Social Justice (some of the 10 Key Values).

In defense of their proposed strategy for an improvement in the immigration laws, they call upon the social injustices that plague the nation today. In support of their thesis, they reference the exploitation of immigrant workers in the U.S. that do not have full legal

status yet. This distaste with the unjust treatment of immigrant workers shows how they have an overarching value of the human dignity that thrives in the foundations of the campaign. By aiming to extinguish this inhumanity with more fair treatment by means of legal paths to citizenship for immigrant workers, their main argument of a government overhaul is further emphasized. In doing this, and knowing that there will be objections because of the need for national safety and security due to recent events of terrorism that reign fear on the American people, the platform acknowledges that “Countries do have a right to know the identity of persons seeking to enter. They also have the right to limit who can come in to protect public safety” (Platform 2014...United States, 36). Using this rebuttal to an argument for public safety of the nation, the party is then able to prove that although a large portion of the platform is focused on equal opportunities, the safety of the nation is thought of in advance when making these types of decisions that can have long term impacts. This rebuttal also includes the rhetorical element of pathos because the audience, being the American public, is very focused on the safety and security of the nation. Knowing this the Green Party is able to appeal to the audience by revealing that they, too, value the safety of the audience and the nation as a whole.

The Green Party also uses this platform in other ways to prove to the audience that its values align with theirs and that there is a distinct plan that accompanies those values, a means of showing how the values will be supported. In Sub-Section 1. Policy Reform, under section J. Immigration, the party references their beliefs in social justice and a respect for human dignity with the following policies: “All persons fleeing political, racial, religious, or other types of persecution must be welcomed and given permanent resident status [...] Permanent residency should not be denied based on political views, racial or

national origin, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, disability, or any other arbitrary basis.” (37). As a warrant for the party, the values of human dignity and social justice are emphasized in this section through the detailed stances in the policy that serve as the backing for the warrant. The party believes in defending each and every human’s right to freedom and asylum by using the United States, the land of the free, as that place of asylum. Along with that, the party also depicts its ability to look past discriminating factors in their acceptance of people entering the country. They believe in a truly just society where equality and acceptance trump (ha-ha) all.

When looking back at the larger idea of the platform, and the goals they are trying to accomplish through the 10 Key Values and the ‘Call to Action’, the Immigration plank further develops the thesis of the larger platform in its values of human dignity, social justice, and human rights, among other values. The argument is clear in its ideas, creating a sound structure that transfers itself throughout each plank, giving the audience a clear view into the mindset of the party and how it will influence the country if it is voted into office. On top of having a transparent campaign, the party also anticipates how one might disagree with their ideology or attempt to break it down. Through this anticipation, the party is able to expand on parts of their campaign that they otherwise might not need to mention, giving them a better chance of reaching those people who were otherwise unwavering in their political opinion.

With the President-Elect Donald Trump set to take office in 2017, the plans on Immigration thought out by the Green Party do not stand a chance of being followed up on. The immigration platform has been one of the driving forces of the Trump campaign, seen

with his passion for building a wall to keep immigrants from Mexico out. The Green Party must work hard to be recognized by a larger portion of the American public by the time the next election rolls around in 2020, so they can implement their own plans on the country's political system.

In my personal opinion, the Green party has an impressive stance on immigration, but if I could tweak it I would leave less room for amnesty and systems of that nature because I do believe that every individual should have a fair chance at becoming a U.S. citizen, but those who have already attempted to do so illegally should not have it as easy.

Works Cited

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