

Green Party presidential candidate Jill Stein selects academic Butch Ware as running mate

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At an online livestreamed event on X/Twitter August 16, Green Party presidential candidate Dr. Jill Stein announced that her running mate will be Rudolph “Butch” Ware III, an associate professor in the Department of History at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Shortly after the announcement, the Green Party officially nominated both Jill Stein and Butch Ware as its candidates in the 2024 US presidential election.

The nomination of Stein and Ware, a professor of “African History, African-American History, and Islamic Intellectual History” and a practicing Muslim, has been hailed as “historic” by layers of the upper middle class and pseudo left immersed in identity politics.

A typical response from a Green Party supporter was, “I’m voting for the only presidential ticket that includes a Jew and a Muslim who will stop funding genocide.”

Following the livestream announcement, Stein wrote on X/Twitter, “This is truly a historic ticket bringing together a Jewish woman and Black Muslim man against genocide, endless war, climate collapse, and rampant injustice, and *for* an economy that works for working people, a livable future for our children, and an America and a world that works for all of us.”

The upper-middle-class left employs skin color and other aspects of personal identity to disguise the real issues of political program emerging from their class position. Parties and candidates must be judged on the basis of the class interests they represent, as demonstrated by their political program and history.

Recent American history, in Democratic Party administrations in particular, have been full of such examples: the first black president, who ordered drone missile assassinations, including of American citizens; the first woman presidential candidate of a major party, who bayed for war with nuclear-armed Russia; and now the first African-American and Asian-American woman to be nominated by a major party, a firm supporter of Israeli genocide in Gaza and the US-NATO war against Russia in Ukraine, which risks the destruction of the planet.

And that is to say nothing of the African American, female or gay corporate CEOs, mayors, governors, police chiefs and other wielders of authority and power on behalf of the capitalist

billionaires, who are just as deadly enemies of the working class as their white, male or straight counterparts.

Professor Ware is described loosely as an “activist,” an epithet employed by a range of middle-class pseudo-left and “progressive” political figures, generally aligned with the Democratic Party. He has no history of significant involvement in any social struggles. In listing Ware’s qualifications, Jill Stein wrote on X, “His personal experience overcoming systemic injustice, his deep knowledge of history and people’s movements, and his commitment to building a sustainable, just, peaceful world make Butch the ideal candidate.”

What is clear is that Ware has spent the last several decades deeply immersed in the world of academia at several elite American universities, long the ideological center of anti-Marxist postmodernism and irrationalism. Ware earned his Ph.D. in history in 2004 from the University of Pennsylvania, and taught at Northwestern University and the University of Michigan before his current position at UC Santa Barbara. According to his online UCSB profile, Ware’s research and teaching focuses on “Islamic thought, anti-slavery movements in West Africa and the African Diaspora, and the broader intersection of Race, Religion, and Revolutionary Thought.”

Typical of this social layer, Ware rejects a class-based analysis of social and political development. In a video posted recently on social media, he states, “[Democratic Party politicians] are not your friends. And if you are an independent, proud black voice that even attempts to speak up for liberation they will humiliate you and make sure that you are cast out of the corridors of power. And if you don’t believe me, ask Jamaal Bowman and ask Cori Bush.”

Bowman and Bush, members of the pseudo-left “Squad” in the House of Representatives and the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), were both defeated in primary elections by established Democratic Party opponents who were heavily funded by the Zionist American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). Far from being “independent” voices of social justice and peace, Bowman and Bush, despite voicing milquetoast criticism of the ongoing US-backed Israeli genocide in Gaza, are loyal Democratic Party politicians who have supported the party’s central priorities of escalating imperialist war abroad and attacks on the living standards of the

working class domestically.

In an X/Twitter post from August 19, Ware further demonstrates his postmodern, subjective, irrational approach to politics and social development. He wrote, “Donald Trump has been scared of men like me every day of his life. Misogynistic Racial Supremacism always flows from a deep wellspring of insecurity and inadequacy in the recesses of the psyche. Someone please be so kind as to sound those out for him, and then explain them.” According to Ware, the threat of fascist dictatorship is to be understood as a result of the racist psyche of insecure “white” men, not as a symptom of the deepening crisis of the prevailing social-economic system, of capitalism.

As the Socialist Equality Party in the United States wrote in its main resolution adopted by the Eighth Congress of the SEP (US), “The fundamental objective causes of the turn of the ruling class toward fascism and dictatorship are: 1) the escalating global imperialist war; and 2) the extreme growth of social inequality.”

The working class faces a growing threat of an all-out nuclear third world war provoked by US imperialism and its allies, unending mass death and infection from Covid-19 and the threat of new pandemics, environmental degradation, unprecedented social inequality, mass layoffs, ruthless exploitation and the turn by the ruling class to authoritarian forms of rule. The Stein-Ware ticket and the Green Party are attempting to keep opposition among workers and youth contained within the framework of bourgeois politics, and block the emergence of a genuinely independent movement of the working class against the profit system.

The Stein-Ware campaign platform accepts the permanence of the capitalism, seeking to sow illusions in the possibility of reforming this decaying socio-economic system. The words “working class,” “capitalist class,” “capitalism,” “imperialism,” “revolution,” “socialism,” are nowhere to be found in the platform. Instead, entire sections are dedicated to the maintenance of national borders and identity-based issues, particularly upper-middle-class demands for “racial” reparations, which is aimed at enriching a small privileged section of the population and dividing the working class.

The Green Party is a nationalist, pro-capitalist party. In class terms, it is a party of the upper-middle class hostile to the working class and the development of an independent socialist movement against the capitalist profit system. It has for decades operated as a pressure group oriented toward the Democratic Party. During elections, the Greens have consistently corralled votes for Democratic candidates, arguing that their presence pressures Democrats to take more “progressive” political positions.

This is evident today in Stein’s appeals to the Biden administration at one antiwar protest after another to reverse its support of the Israeli genocide of the Palestinians in Gaza, and the Green Party’s support for the subordination of the working class to the corporatist trade union bureaucracy: the labor police

force of wealthy bureaucrats employed by the ruling class to discipline workers under conditions of escalating imperialist war abroad.

Workers and young people must have no illusions in the Green Party and draw the critical political lessons from the experience of the working class internationally. Wherever the Greens have come to power, they have quickly abandoned their “principles” and worked hand-in-hand with the various bourgeois parties to defend the interests of the corporate and financial oligarchy.

In 2020, the Austrian Greens entered into a coalition government with the right-wing Austrian People’s Party, adopting the policies of the far-right Freedom Party, including attacks on immigrants. In New Zealand, Australia and numerous other countries, the Greens have backed the homicidal pandemic policy of profits over lives.

The experience of the Greens in Germany serves as the worst expression of the outcome of the nationalist, pro-capitalist politics of the Green Party. From 1998 to 2005, the Green Party, in power for the first time, oversaw the first German combat mission since the Second World War, in the NATO war in Serbia, while assisting the Socialist Democrats in carrying out the most sweeping attack on welfare programs in Germany in the post-war period.

For nearly 30 years, the Greens have been competing for the title of most pro-war party in Germany, supporting the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, the war against Russia in Ukraine and the Gaza genocide, all while scapegoating immigrants and refugees fleeing these wars and supporting the government’s austerity policies.

Critical lessons must be drawn from these experiences. Were Stein and Ware or any other Green Party politicians to come to power in the US, despite their pacifist and “leftist” phraseology, their nationalist and pro-capitalist outlook would compel them to defend the interests of American imperialism.

Workers and youth interested in ending the genocide in Gaza and broader threat of a nuclear third world war, stamping out the threat of fascism, defending basic democratic rights and reversing the destruction of the environment—which threatens the very existence of humanity through evermore devastating pandemics and rising temperatures—must be armed with a revolutionary socialist, a Trotskyist, political perspective that is aimed at uniting the international working class in a mass movement against the source of social inequality, genocide, war, climate crisis and fascism: the capitalist system.



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