

Green Party of Utah Meets with Chair of Czech Green Party

by Deanna Taylor, Co-Coordinator, Green Party of Utah, www.gput.org

Members of the GPUT met with Jan Beránek, Chair of the Czech Republic Green Party in March. Discussion centered on the comparing U.S. GP's with the Czech GP. The Czech GP consists of its National Council; "Congress"; and 40 regents. The Czech GP receives a much larger percentage from its government for party operation than parties here in the U.S.

The Czech Republic, as in many other countries, uses proportional voting is the method for public elections - something that only a few municipalities and organizations here in the U.S. use in their elections.

Since April 2003, Beránek has been working as chairperson of the Green Party of the Czech Republic, organizing its transformation into an effective and solid political party based on a progressive program of environmental, human rights, culture, education and global issues.

"The push for better democratic culture, for wider public involvement and building up active citizenship has been equally important for my work as concrete environmental issues", says Beránek. "In attempts to solve individual problems, I found that systematic work must emphasize organizing public campaigns – educate public, activate citizens, inform media, arrange expertise, meet and negotiate with other players, build various alliances, take legal steps, lobby decision makers. And that in order to do that effectively, a space for all kinds of citizen democratic involvement needs to be ever guarded, enlarged and cultivated."

"Grassroots initiatives and self-organized social movements have a long history and tradition in USA: be it Martin Luther King's emancipation movement in 1950s, peace and anti-nuclear movement in 1970s and 1980s, or environmental and globalization movement in 1990s. Their spirit, culture and techniques have been stimulating inspiration to many active citizens around the world."

Beránek has agreed to review the research done by the Sage Greens Local of the GPUT in preparation for a case to be presented to the United Nations charging George W. Bush with war crimes. Beránek indicated that the Czech Republic Green Party would likely also sign on to the case along with other Green Party signatories.