

The formation of Grass Roots this January was greeted, by many, with skepticism. Many people concerned with ecology, housing, or land use in general--who agreed with Grass Roots on specific issues--thought that the radicals in Grass Roots were merely picking an issue upon which they would build to a confrontation.

Grass Roots consists of many types of people, with different political perspectives. Nevertheless, most of the people in Grass Roots have been involved in local radical politics. A few were active in the leadership of the April Third Movement. As one of those Grass Roots members, I wish to respond to the popular skepticism.

~~LAND USE IS, IN MANY WAYS, JUST ANOTHER ISSUE.~~ The primary political message of Grass Roots is that ~~we~~^{one} cannot isolate the issues of ecology and environment. Many members of the American ruling ~~class~~ elite, from Nixon to Fitzer to the New York Times, have trumpeted ecology as the issue which will overcome the disunity caused by the war and urban (racial) problems. Indeed, many young people who were not long ago marching in the Moratorium, or beginning to attack institutional racism, seem to have forgotten about the war and racial oppression. I participated in the formation of Grass Roots because I considered it essential for people discovering the irrationality of the American environment to remember that there^{were} other issues too. The Grass Roots report on land use, "The Promised Land," tries to sketch out some of the relationships between the War, social injustice, and environmental decay.

Recently, many ecologists and conservationists have raised their voice against the policies of major corporations. Grass Roots radicals (see "The Promised Land") ~~have~~ go a step farther. We do not believe that the

are radical opportunist?

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problems of pollution and environment can be adequately solved as long as we live in a society governed by competition and the profit motive. We ask people to examine the roots of the ~~eco-disaster~~ ecological crisis. In our work we will attempt to focus public attention on the concentrations of power and wealth responsible for most of our problems.

Since primary responsibility for "eco-disaster" lies in the decisions of a powerful few, and because they are unwilling to sacrifice profit and position, I expect that a movement which concerns itself with Peninsula land use will lead to confrontation. ~~Conservative~~ Confrontations are not new in either the housing or conservation movements. ~~Many respectable people have sat down in front of bulldozers. The GOO Navy in Santa Barbara is perhaps the most unusual example of attempts at physical confrontation.~~ This is not to say that confrontation is the only method radicals are willing to use. According to our analysis, it will, at some point, be necessary.

But in a sense, the formation of Grass Roots was opportunist. Though many GR members have been involved in land use long before the current rage, Grass Roots probably would not have formed had there not been growing concern for the issues. The organization of Grass Roots was a response to a felt need of the community.