

Why I Voted for Matt

by Starhawk

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I voted yesterday for Matt Gonzalez. I voted early, because I'll be away during the election, but I hope those of you who will be here will consider not only voting, but helping to get out the vote. I know there is already a strong campaign among progressives to register voters, and I was delighted to see friends of mine wearing "Anarchists for Matt Gonzalez" buttons.

As you know, I usually stay out of electoral politics. But I can't bear the thought of San Francisco falling into the control of Newsome, a man who has come to power on the backs of the homeless, who represents the most cynical workings of the political machine. I think Gonzalez still has a chance, however slim, and a victory right now would be important on many levels.

Progressive movements and ideas arise out of real communities. All the internet organizing and virtual spokescouncils in the world can't replace a real community of people who actually run into each other at the grocery store and meet face to face. We need ground to stand on, turf, real places where we struggle with day to day issues with those who share some of our values.

San Francisco has always been one of those places—an island of liberating, progressive vision, a magnet for artists and revolutionaries, poets and writers and dancers, free thinkers and all those exploring the edges from political insurrection to sexual liberation. But San Francisco also has another side: the city of old money and new dot-com wealth, of backroom deals and payoffs and machine politics.

I've live here for twenty-eight years, and I've seen artists and writers and youth priced out of her neighborhoods. Young families can no longer afford to raise kids here. Ordinary working people can no longer afford to live here. I don't think the vibrancy of this city can survive under one more mayor in the pocket of developers, who serves corporate interests over people. And if we lose San Francisco as a progressive heart, we lose a major center of cutting edge thinking and political practice.

A victory for Gonzalez would also have important repercussions for the national elections. It would say to the cynical, pandering Democrats that all the deal making in the world cannot prevail against an aroused public. It would put the progressive vote on the map. It would give us a Green mayor

of a major city.

Hallinan is also on the ballot—and he's been a good friend to activists, consistently declining to prosecute protestors. He deserves to be re-elected, and a strong progressive turnout would also help him.

So please vote on December 9—get your friends to vote, volunteer if you can to help get out the vote. Let's turn the tide here in San Francisco!

-- *Starhawk*