

1992 Democratic Party Platform

July 13, 1992

A New Covenant with the American People

Preamble

Two hundred summers ago, this Democratic Party was founded by the man whose burning pen fired the spirit of the American Revolution—who once argued we should overthrow our own government every 20 years to renew our freedom and keep pace with a changing world. In 1992, the party Thomas Jefferson founded invokes his spirit of revolution anew.

Our land reverberates with a battle cry of frustration that emanates from America's very soul—from the families in our bedrock neighborhoods, from the unsung, workaday heroes of the world's greatest democracy and economy. America is on the wrong track. The American people are hurting. The American Dream of expanding opportunity has faded. Middle class families are working hard, playing by the rules, but still falling behind. Poverty has exploded. Our people are torn by divisions.

The last 12 years have been a nightmare of Republican irresponsibility and neglect. America's leadership is indifferent at home and uncertain in the world. Republican mismanagement has disarmed government as an instrument to make our economy work and support the people's most basic values, needs and hopes. The Republicans brought America a false and fragile prosperity based on borrowing, not income, and so will leave behind a mountain of public debt and a backbreaking annual burden in interest. It is wrong to borrow to spend on ourselves, leaving our children to pay our debts.

We hear the anguish and the anger of the American people. We know it is directed not just at the Republican administrations that have had power, but at government itself.

Their anger is justified. We can no longer afford business as usual—neither the policies of the last 12 years of tax breaks for the rich, mismanagement, lack of leadership and cuts in services for the middle class and the poor, nor the adoption of new programs and new spending without new thinking. It is time to listen to the grass roots of America, time to renew the spirit of citizen activism that has always been the touchstone of a free and democratic society.

Therefore we call for a revolution in government—to take power away from entrenched bureaucracies and narrow interests in Washington and put it back in the hands of ordinary people. We vow to make government more decentralized, more flexible, and more accountable—to reform public institutions and replace public officials who aren't leading with ones who will.

The Revolution of 1992 is about restoring America's economic greatness. We need to rebuild America by abandoning the something-for-nothing ethic of the last decade and putting people first for a change. Only a thriving economy, a strong manufacturing base, and growth in creative new enterprise can generate the resources to meet the nation's pressing human and social needs. An expanding, entrepreneurial economy of high-skill, high-wage jobs is the most important family policy, urban policy, labor policy, minority policy and foreign policy America can have.

The Revolution of 1992 is about putting government back on the side of working men and women—to help those who work hard, pay their bills, play by the rules, don't lobby for tax breaks, do their best to give their kids a good education and to keep them away from drugs, who want a safe neighborhood for their families, the security of decent, productive jobs for themselves, and a dignified life for their parents.

The Revolution of 1992 is about a radical change in the way government operates—not the Republican proposition that government has no role, nor the old notion that there's a program for every problem, but a shift to a more efficient, flexible and results-oriented government that improves services, expands choices, and empowers citizens and communities to change our country from the bottom up. We believe in an activist government, but it must work in a different, more responsive way.

The Revolution of 1992 is about facing up to tough choices. There is no relief for America's frustration in the politics of diversion and evasion, of false choices or of no choices at all. Instead of everyone in Washington blaming one another for inaction, we will act decisively—and ask to be held accountable if we don't.

Above all the Revolution of 1992 is about restoring the basic American values that built this country and will always make it great: personal responsibility, individual liberty, tolerance, faith, family and hard work. We offer the American people not only new ideas, a new course, and a new President, but a return to the enduring principles that set our nation apart: the promise of opportunity, the strength of community, the dignity of work, and a decent life for senior citizens.

To make this revolution, we seek a New Covenant to repair the damaged bond between the American people and their government, that will expand opportunity, insist upon greater individual responsibility in return, restore community, and ensure national security in a profoundly new era.

We welcome the close scrutiny of the American people, including Americans who may have thought the Democratic Party had forgotten its way, as well as all who know us as the champions of those who have been denied a chance. With this platform we take our case for change to the American people.

I. Opportunity

Our Party's first priority is opportunity—broad-based, non-inflationary economic growth and the opportunity that flows from it. Democrats in 1992 hold nothing more important for America than an economy that offers growth and jobs for all.

President Bush, with no interest in domestic policy, has given America the slowest economic growth, the slowest income growth, and the slowest jobs growth since the Great Depression. And the American people know the long Bush recession reflects not just a business cycle, but a long-term slide, so that even in a fragile recovery we're sinking. The ballooning Bush deficits hijacked capital from productive investments. Savings and loan sharks enriched themselves at their country's expense. The stock market tripled, but average incomes stalled, and poverty claimed more of our children.

We reject both the do-nothing government of the last twelve years and the big government theory that says we can hamstring business and tax and spend our way to prosperity. Instead we offer a third way. Just as we have always viewed working men and women as the bedrock of our economy, we honor business as a noble endeavor, and vow to create a far better climate for

firms and independent contractors of all sizes that empower their workers, revolutionize their workplaces, respect the environment, and serve their communities well.

We believe in free enterprise and the power of market forces. But economic growth will not come without a national economic strategy to invest in people. For twelve years our country has had no economic vision, leadership or strategy. It is time to put our people and our country first.

Investing In America

The only way to lay the foundation for renewed American prosperity is to spur both public and private investment. We must strive to close both the budget deficit and the investment gap. Our major competitors invest far more than we do in roads, bridges, and the information networks and technologies of the future. We will rebuild America by investing more in transportation, environmental technologies, defense conversion, and a national information network.

To begin making our economy grow, the President and Congress should agree that savings from defense must be reinvested productively at home, including research, education and training, and other productive investments. This will sharply increase the meager nine percent of the national budget now devoted to the future. We will create a "future budget" for investments that make us richer, to be kept separate from those parts of the budget that pay for the past and present. For the private sector, instead of a sweeping capital gains windfall to the wealthy and those who speculate, we will create an investment tax credit and a capital gains reduction for patient investors in emerging technologies and new businesses.

Support for Innovation

We will take back the advantage now ceded to Japan and Germany, which invest in new technologies at higher rates than the U.S. and have the growth to show for it. We will make the R&D tax credit permanent, double basic research in the key technologies for our future, and create a civilian research agency to fast-forward their development.

The Deficit

Addressing the deficit requires fair and shared sacrifice of all Americans for the common good. In 12 Republican years a national debt that took 200 years to accumulate has been quadrupled. Rising interest on that debt now swallows one tax dollar in seven. In place of the Republican supply-side disaster, the Democratic investment, economic conversion and growth strategy will generate more revenues from a growing economy. We must also tackle spending, by putting everything on the table; eliminate nonproductive programs; achieve defense savings; reform entitlement programs to control soaring health care costs; cut federal administrative costs by 3 percent annually for four years; limit increases in the "present budget" to the rate of growth in the average American's paycheck; apply a strict "pay as you go" rule to new non-investment spending; and make the rich pay their fair share in taxes. These choices will be made while protecting senior citizens and without further victimizing the poor. This deficit reduction effort will encourage private savings, eliminate the budget deficit over time, and permit fiscal policies that can restore America's economic health.

Defense Conversion

Our economy needs both the people and the funds released from defense at the Cold War's end. We will help the stalwarts of that struggle—the men and women who served in our armed forces and who work in our defense industries—make the most of a new era. We will provide early notice of program changes to give communities, businesses and workers enough time to plan. We will honor and support our veterans. Departing military personnel, defense workers, and defense support personnel will have access to job retraining, continuing education, placement and relocation assistance, early retirement benefits for military personnel, and incentives to enter teaching, law enforcement and other vital civilian fields. Redirected national laboratories and a new civilian research agency will put defense scientists, engineers and technicians to work in critical civilian technologies. Small business defense firms will have technical assistance and transition grants and loans to help convert to civilian markets, and defense dependent communities will have similar aid in planning and implementing conversion. We will strongly support our civilian space program, particularly environmental missions.

The Cities

Only a robust economy will revitalize our cities. It is in all Americans' interest that the cities once again be places where hard-working families can put down roots and find good jobs, quality health care, affordable housing, and decent schools. Democrats will create a new partnership to rebuild America's cities after 12 years of Republican neglect. This partnership with the mayors will include consideration of the seven economic growth initiatives set forth by our nation's mayors. We will create jobs by investing significant resources to put people back to work, beginning with a summer jobs initiative and training programs for inner-city youth. We support a stronger community development program and targeted fiscal assistance to cities that need it most. A national public works investment and infrastructure program will provide jobs and strengthen our cities, suburbs, rural communities and country. We will encourage the flow of investment to inner city development and housing through targeted enterprise zones and incentives for private and public pension funds to invest in urban and rural projects. While cracking down on redlining and housing discrimination, we also support and will enforce a revitalized Community Reinvestment Act that challenges banks to lend to entrepreneurs and development projects; a national network of Community Development Banks to invest in urban and rural small businesses; and microenterprise lending for poor people seeking self-employment as an alternative to welfare.

Agriculture and the Rural Community

All Americans, producers and consumers alike, benefit when our food and fiber are produced by hundreds of thousands of family farmers receiving fair prices for their products. The abundance of our nation's food and fiber system should not be taken for granted. The revolution that lifted America to the forefront of world agriculture was achieved through a unique partnership of public and private interests. The inattention and hostility that has characterized Republican food, agricultural and rural development policies of the past twelve years have caused a crisis in rural America. The cost of Republican farm policy has been staggering and its total failure is demonstrated by the record number of rural bankruptcies.

A sufficient and sustainable agricultural economy can be achieved through fiscally responsible programs. It is time to reestablish the private/public partnership to ensure that family farmers get a fair return for their labor and investment, so that consumers receive safe and nutritious foods, and that needed investments are made in basic research, education, rural business development, market development and infrastructure to sustain rural communities.

Workers' Rights

Our workplaces must be revolutionized to make them more flexible and productive. We will reform the job safety laws to empower workers with greater rights and to hold employers accountable for dangers on the job. We will act against sexual harassment in the workplace. We will honor the work ethic—by expanding the earned income tax credit so no one with children at home who works full-time is still in poverty; by fighting on the side of family farmers to ensure they get a fair price for their hard work; by working to sustain rural communities; by making work more valuable than welfare; and by supporting the right of workers to organize and bargain collectively without fear of intimidation or permanent replacement during labor disputes.

Lifelong Learning

A competitive American economy requires the global market's best educated, best trained, most flexible work force. It's not enough to spend more on our schools; we must insist on results. We oppose the Bush Administration's efforts to bankrupt the public school system—the bedrock of democracy—through private school vouchers. To help children reach school ready to learn, we will expand child health and nutrition programs and extend Head Start to all eligible children, and guarantee all children access to quality, affordable child care. We deplore the savage inequalities among public schools across the land, and believe every child deserves an equal chance to a world class education. Reallocating resources toward this goal must be a priority. We support education reforms such as site-based decision-making and public school choice, with strong protections against discrimination. We support the goal of a 90 percent graduation rate, and programs to end dropouts. We will invest in educational technology, and establish world-class standards in math, science and other core subjects and support effective tests of progress to meet them. In areas where there are no registered apprenticeship programs, we will adopt a national apprenticeship-style program to ease the transition from school to work for non-college bound students so they can acquire skills that lead to high-wage jobs. In the new economy, opportunity will depend on lifelong learning. We will support the goal of literacy for all Americans. We will ask firms to invest in the training of all workers, not just corporate management.

A Domestic GI Bill

Over the past twelve years skyrocketing costs and declining middle class incomes have placed higher education out of reach for millions of Americans. It is time to revolutionize the way student loan programs are run. We will make college affordable to all students who are qualified to attend, regardless of family income. A Domestic G.I. Bill will enable all Americans to borrow money for college, so long as they are willing to pay it back as a percentage of their income over time or through national service addressing unmet community needs.

Affordable Health Care

All Americans should have universal access to quality, affordable health care—not as a privilege, but as a right. That requires tough controls on health costs, which are rising at two to three times the rate of inflation, terrorizing American families and businesses and depriving millions of the care they need. We will enact a uniquely American reform of the health care system to control costs and make health care affordable; ensure quality and choice of health care providers; cover all Americans regardless of preexisting conditions; squeeze out waste, bureaucracy and abuse; improve primary and preventive care including child immunization and prevention of diseases like Tuberculosis now becoming rampant in our cities; provide expanded

education on the relationship between diet and health; expand access to mental health treatment services; provide a safety net through support of public hospitals; provide for the full range of reproductive choice—education, counseling, access to contraceptives, and the right to a safe, legal abortion; expand medical research; and provide more long term care, including home health care. We will make ending the epidemic in breast cancer a major priority, and expand research on breast, cervical and ovarian cancer, infertility, reproductive health services and other special health needs of women. We must be united in declaring war on AIDS and HIV disease, implement the recommendations of the National Commission on AIDS and fully fund the Ryan White Care Act; provide targeted and honest prevention campaigns; combat HIV-related discrimination; make drug treatment available for all addicts who seek it; guarantee access to quality care; expand clinical trials for treatments and vaccines; and speed up the FDA drug approval process.

Fairness

Growth and equity work in tandem. People should share in society's common costs according to their ability to pay. In the last decade, mounting payroll and other taxes have fallen disproportionately on the middle class. We will relieve the tax burden on middle class Americans by forcing the rich to pay their fair share. We will provide long-overdue tax relief to families with children. To broaden opportunity, we will support fair lending practices.

Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Development

We reject the Republican myth that energy efficiency and environmental protection are enemies of economic growth. We will make our economy more efficient, by using less energy, reducing our dependence on foreign oil, and producing less solid and toxic waste. We will adopt a coordinated transportation policy, with a strong commitment to mass transit; encourage efficient alternative-fueled vehicles; increase our reliance on clean natural gas; promote clean coal technology; invest in R&D on renewable energy sources; strengthen efforts to prevent air and water pollution; support incentives for domestic oil and gas operations; and push for revenue-neutral incentives that reward conservation, prevent pollution and encourage recycling.

Civil and Equal Rights

We don't have an American to waste. Democrats will continue to lead the fight to ensure that no Americans suffer discrimination or deprivation of rights on the basis of race, gender, language, national origin, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, or other characteristics irrelevant to ability. We support the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment; affirmative action; stronger protection of voting rights for racial and ethnic minorities, including language access to voting; and continued resistance to discriminatory English-only pressure groups. We will reverse the Bush Administration's assault on civil rights enforcement, and instead work to rebuild and vigorously use machinery for civil rights enforcement; support comparable remedies for women; aggressively prosecute hate crimes; strengthen legal services for the poor; deal with other nations in such a way that Americans of any origin do not become scapegoats or victims of foreign policy disputes; provide civil rights protection for gay men and lesbians and an end to Defense Department discrimination; respect Native American culture and our treaty commitments; require the United States Government to recognize its trustee obligations to the inhabitants of Hawaii generally, and to Native Hawaiians in particular; and fully enforce the Americans with Disability Act to enable people with disabilities to achieve independence and function at their highest possible level.

Commonwealths and Territories

We recognize the existing status of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the strong economic relationship between the people of Puerto Rico and the United States. We pledge to support the right of the people of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico to choose freely, and in concert with the U.S. Congress, their relationship with the United States, either as an enhanced commonwealth, a state or an independent nation. We support fair participation for Puerto Rico in federal programs. We pledge to the people of American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Virgin Islands just and fair treatment under federal policies, assisting their economic and social development. We respect their right and that of the people of Palau to decide freely their future relationship with the United States and to be consulted on issues and policies that directly affect them.

II. Responsibility

Sixty years ago, Franklin Roosevelt gave hope to a nation mired in the Great Depression. While government should promise every American the opportunity to get ahead, it was the people's responsibility, he said, to make the most of that opportunity: "Faith in America demands that we recognize the new terms of the old social contract. In the strength of great hope we must all shoulder our common load."

For twelve years, the Republicans have expected too little of our public institutions and placed too little faith in our people. We offer a new social contract based neither on callous, do-nothing Republican neglect, nor on an outdated faith in programs as the solution to every problem. We favor a third way beyond the old approaches—to put government back on the side of citizens who play by the rules. We believe that by what it says and how it conducts its business, government must once again make responsibility an instrument of national purpose. Our future as a nation depends upon the daily assumption of personal responsibility by millions of Americans from all walks of life—for the religious faiths they follow, the ethics they practice, the values they instill, and the pride they take in their work.

Strengthening The Family

Governments don't raise children, people do. People who bring children into this world have a responsibility to care for them and give them values, motivation and discipline. Children should not have children. We need a national crackdown on deadbeat parents, an effective system of child support enforcement nationwide, and a systematic effort to establish paternity for every child. We must also make it easier for parents to build strong families through pay equity. Family and medical leave will ensure that workers don't have to choose between family and work. We support a family preservation program to reduce child and spousal abuse by providing preventive services and foster care to families in crisis. We favor ensuring quality and affordable child care opportunities for working parents, and a fair and healthy start for every child, including essential pre-natal and well baby care. We support the needs of our senior citizens for productive and healthy lives, including hunger prevention, income adequacy, transportation access and abuse prevention.

Welfare Reform

Welfare should be a second chance, not a way of life. We want to break the cycle of welfare by adhering to two simple principles: no one who is able to work can stay on welfare forever, and no one who works should live in poverty. We will continue to help those who cannot help themselves. We will offer people on welfare a new social contract. We'll invest in education and job training, and provide the child care and health care they need to go to work and achieve long-term self-sufficiency. We will give them the help they need to make the transition from welfare to work, and require people who can work to go to work within two years in available jobs either in the private sector or in community service to meet unmet needs. This will restore the covenant that welfare was meant to be: a promise of temporary help for people who have fallen on hard times.

Choice

Democrats stand behind the right of every woman to choose, consistent with *Roe v. Wade*, regardless of ability to pay, and support a national law to protect that right.

It is a fundamental constitutional liberty that individual Americans—not government—can best take responsibility for making the most difficult and intensely personal decisions regarding reproduction. The goal of our nation must be to make abortion less necessary, not more difficult or more dangerous. We pledge to support contraceptive research, family planning, comprehensive family life education, and policies that support healthy childbearing and enable parents to care most effectively for their children.

Making Schools Work

Education is a cooperative enterprise that can only succeed if everyone accepts and exercises personal responsibility. Students must stay in school and do their best; parents must get involved in their children's education; teachers must attain, maintain, and demonstrate classroom competency; school administrators must enforce discipline and high standards of educational attainment; governments must end the inequalities that create educational ghettos among school districts and provide equal educational opportunity for all; and ensure that teachers' pay measures up to their decisive role in children's lives; and the American people should recognize education as the core of our economy, democracy and society. Labor-Management Responsibilities.

The private sector is the engine of our economy and the main source of national wealth. But it is not enough for those in the private sector just to make as much money as they can. The most irresponsible people in all of the 1980s were those at the top of the ladder: the inside traders, quick buck artists, and S&L kingpins who looked out for themselves and not for the country. America's corporate leaders have a responsibility to invest in their country. CEOs, who pay themselves 100 times what they pay the average worker, shouldn't get big raises unrelated to performance. If a company wants to overpay its executives and underinvest in the future or transfer jobs overseas, it shouldn't get special treatment and tax breaks from the Treasury. Managers must work with employees to make the workplace safer, more satisfying and more efficient.

Workers must also accept added responsibilities in the new economy. In return for an increased voice and a greater stake in the success of their enterprises, workers should be prepared to join in cooperative efforts to increase productivity, flexibility and quality. Government's neutrality between labor and management cannot mean neutrality about the collective bargaining process, which has been purposely crippled by Republican administrations. Our economic growth depends on processes,

including collective bargaining, that permit labor and management to work together on their common interests, even as they work out their conflicts.

Responsibility for the Environment

For ourselves and future generations, we must protect our environment. We will protect our old growth forests, preserve critical habitats, provide a genuine "no net loss" policy on wetlands, reduce our dependence on toxic chemicals, conserve the critical resources of soil, water and air, oppose new offshore oil drilling and mineral exploration and production in our nation's many environmentally critical areas, and address ocean pollution by reducing oil and toxic waste spills at sea. We believe America's youth can serve its country well through a civilian conservation corps. To protect the public health, we will clean up the environmental horrors at federal facilities, insist that private polluters clean up their toxic and hazardous wastes, and vigorously prosecute environmental criminals. We will oppose Republican efforts to gut the Clean Air Act in the guise of competitiveness.

We will reduce the volume of solid waste and encourage the use of recycled materials while discouraging excess packaging. To avoid the mistakes of the past, we will actively support energy- efficiency, recycling, and pollution prevention strategies.

Responsible Government

Democrats in 1992 intend to lead a revolution in government, challenging it to act responsibly and be accountable, starting with the hardest and most urgent problems of the deficit and economic growth. Rather than throw money at obsolete programs, we will eliminate unnecessary layers of management, cut administrative costs, give people more choices in the service they get, and empower them to make those choices. To foster greater responsibility in government at every level, we support giving greater flexibility to our cities, counties and states in achieving Federal mandates and carrying out existing programs.

Responsible Officials

All branches of government must live by the laws the rest of us obey, determine their pay in an open manner that builds public trust, and eliminate special privileges. People in public office need to be accessible to the people they represent. It's time to reform the campaign finance system, to get big money out of our politics and let the people back in. We must limit overall campaign spending and limit the disproportionate and excessive role of PACs. We need new voter registration laws that expand the electorate, such as universal same-day registration, along with full political rights and protections for public employees and new regulations to ensure that the airwaves truly help citizens make informed choices among candidates and policies. And we need fair political representation for all sectors of our country—including the District of Columbia, which deserves and must get statehood status.

III. Restoring Community

The success of democracy in America depends substantially on the strength of our community institutions: families and neighborhoods, public schools, religious institutions, charitable organizations, civic groups and other voluntary organizations. In these social networks, the values and character of our citizens are formed, as we learn the habits and skills of self-government, and acquire an understanding of our common rights and responsibilities as citizens.

Twelve years of Republican rule have undermined the spirit of mutual dependence and obligation that binds us together. Republican leaders have urged Americans to turn inward, to pursue private interests without regard to public responsibilities. By playing racial, ethnic and gender-based politics they have divided us against each other, created an atmosphere of blame, denial and fear, and undone the hard-fought battles for equality and fairness.

Our communities form a vital "third sector" that lies between government and the marketplace. The wisdom, energy and resources required to solve our problems are not concentrated in Washington, but can be found throughout our communities, including America's non-profit sector, which has grown rapidly over the last decade. Government's best role is to enable people and communities to solve their own problems.

America's special genius has been to forge a community of shared values from people of remarkable and diverse backgrounds. As the party of inclusion, we take special pride in our country's emergence as the world's largest and most successful multiethnic, multiracial republic. We condemn antisemitism, racism, homophobia, bigotry and negative stereotyping of all kinds. We must help all Americans understand the diversity of our cultural heritage. But it is also essential that we preserve and pass on to our children the common elements that hold this mosaic together as we work to make our country a land of freedom and opportunity for all.

Both Republican neglect and traditional spending programs have proven unequal to these challenges. Democrats will pursue a new course that stresses work, family and individual responsibility, and that empowers Americans to liberate themselves from poverty and dependence. We pledge to bolster the institutions of civil society and place a new emphasis on civic enterprises that seek solutions to our nation's problems. Through common, cooperative efforts we can rebuild our communities and transform our nation.

Combatting Crime and Drugs

Crime is a relentless danger to our communities. Over the last decade, crime has swept through our country at an alarming rate. During the 1980s, more than 200,000 Americans were murdered, four times the number who died in Vietnam. Violent crimes rose by more than 16 percent since 1988 and nearly doubled since 1975. In our country today, a murder is committed every 25 minutes, a rape every six minutes, a burglary every 10 seconds. The pervasive fear of crime disfigures our public life and diminishes our freedom.

None suffer more than the poor: an explosive mixture of blighted prospects, drugs and exotic weaponry has turned many of our inner city communities into combat zones. As a result, crime is not only a symptom but also a major cause of the worsening poverty and demoralization that afflicts inner city communities.

To empower America's communities, Democrats pledge to restore government as the upholder of basic law and order for crime-ravaged communities. The simplest and most direct way to restore order in our cities is to put more police on the streets.

America's police are locked in an unequal struggle with crime: since 1951 the ratio of police officers to reported crimes has reversed, from three-to-one to one-to-three. We will create a Police Corps, in which participants would receive college aid in

return for several years of service after graduation in a state or local police department. As we shift people and resources from defense to the civilian economy, we will create new jobs in law enforcement for those leaving the military.

We will expand drug counselling and treatment for those who need it, intensify efforts to educate our children at the earliest ages to the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse, and curb demand from the street corner to the penthouse suite, so that the U.S., with five percent of the world's population, no longer consumes 50 percent of the world's illegal drugs.

Community Policing.

Neighborhoods and police should be partners in the war on crime. Democrats support more community policing, which uses foot patrols and storefront offices to make police officers visible fixtures in urban neighborhoods. We will combat street violence and emphasize building trust and solving the problems that breed crime.

Firearms.

It is time to shut down the weapons bazaars in our cities. We support a reasonable waiting period to permit background checks for purchases of handguns, as well as assault weapons controls to ban the possession, sale, importation and manufacture of the most deadly assault weapons. We do not support efforts to restrict weapons used for legitimate hunting and sporting purposes. We will work for swift and certain punishment of all people who violate the country's gun laws and for stronger sentences for criminals who use guns. We will also seek to shut down the black market for guns and impose severe penalties on people who sell guns to children.

Pursuing All Crime Aggressively.

In contrast to the Republican policy of leniency toward white collar crime—which breeds cynicism in poor communities about the impartiality of our justice system—Democrats will redouble efforts to ferret out and punish those who betray the public trust, rig financial markets, misuse their depositors' money or swindle their customers.

Further Initiatives.

Democrats also favor innovative sentencing and punishment options, including community service and boot camps for first time offenders; tougher penalties for rapists; victim-impact statements and restitution to ensure that crime victims will not be lost in the complexities of the criminal justice system; and initiatives to make our schools safe, including alternative schools for disruptive children.

Empowering The Poor and Expanding The Middle Class

We must further the new direction set in the Family Support Act of 1988, away from subsistence and dependence and toward work, family and personal initiative and responsibility. We advocate slower phasing out of Medicaid and other benefits to encourage work; special savings accounts to help low-income families build assets; fair lending; an indexed minimum wage; an

expanded Job Corps; and an end to welfare rules that encourage family breakup and penalize individual initiative, such as the \$1,000 limit on personal savings.

Immigration.

Our nation of immigrants has been invigorated repeatedly as new people, ideas and ways of life have become part of the American tapestry. Democrats support immigration policies that promote fairness, non-discrimination and family reunification, and that reflect our constitutional freedoms of speech, association and travel.

Housing.

Safe, secure housing is essential to the institutions of community and family. We support home ownership for working families and will honor that commitment through policies that encourage affordable mortgage credit. We must also confront homelessness by renovating, preserving and expanding the stock of affordable low-income housing. We support tenant management and ownership, so public housing residents can manage their own affairs and acquire property worth protecting.

National Service.

We will create new opportunities for citizens to serve each other, their communities and their country. By mobilizing hundreds of thousands of volunteers, national service will enhance the role of ordinary citizens in solving unresolved community problems.

The Arts

We believe in public support for the Arts, including a National Endowment for the Arts that is free from political manipulation and firmly rooted in the First Amendment's freedom of expression guarantee.

IV. Preserving Our National Security

During the past four years, we have seen the corrosive effect of foreign policies that are rooted in the past, divorced from our values, fearful of change and unable to meet its challenges. Under President Bush, crises have been managed, rather than prevented; dictators like Saddam Hussein have been wooed, rather than deterred; aggression by the Serbian regime against its neighbors in what was Yugoslavia has been met by American timidity rather than toughness; human rights abusers have been rewarded, not challenged; the environment has been neglected, not protected; and America's competitive edge in the global economy has been dulled, not honed. It is time for new American leadership that can meet the challenges of a changing world.

At the end of World War II, American strength had defeated tyranny and American ingenuity had overcome the Depression. Under President Truman, the United States led the world into a new era, redefining global security with bold approaches to tough challenges: containing communism with the NATO alliance and in Korea; building the peace through organizations such as the United Nations; and advancing global economic security through new multilateral institutions.

Nearly a half century later, we stand at another pivotal point in history. The collapse of communism does not mean the end of danger or threats to our interests. But it does pose an unprecedented opportunity to make our future more secure and prosperous. Once again, we must define a compelling vision for global leadership at the dawn of a new era.

Restructuring Our Military Forces

We have not seen the end of violence, aggression and the conflicts that can threaten American interests and our hopes for a more peaceful world. What the United States needs is not the Bush Administration's Cold War thinking on a smaller scale, but a comprehensive restructuring of the American military enterprise to meet the threats that remain.

Military Strength.

America is the world's strongest military power and we must remain so. A post-Cold War restructuring of American forces will produce substantial savings beyond those promised by the Bush Administration, but that restructuring must be achieved without undermining our ability to meet future threats to our security. A military structure for the 1990's and beyond must be built on four pillars: *First*, a survivable nuclear force to deter any conceivable threat, as we reduce our nuclear arsenals through arms control negotiations and other reciprocal action. *Second*, conventional forces shifted toward projecting power wherever our vital national interests are threatened. This means reducing the size of our forces in Europe, while meeting our obligations to NATO, and strengthening our rapid deployment capabilities to deal with new threats to our security posed by renegade dictators, terrorists, international drug traffickers, and the local armed conflicts that can threaten the peace of entire regions. *Third*, maintenance of the two qualities that make America's military the best in the world—the superiority of our military personnel and of our technology. These qualities are vital to shortening any conflict and saving American lives. *Fourth*, intelligence capabilities redirected to develop far more sophisticated, timely and accurate analyses of the economic and political conditions that can fuel new conflicts.

Use Of Force.

The United States must be prepared to use military force decisively when necessary to defend our vital interests. The burdens of collective security in a new era must be shared fairly, and we should encourage multilateral peacekeeping through the United Nations and other international efforts.

Preventing And Containing Conflict.

American policy must be focused on averting military threats as well as meeting them. To halt the spread of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, we must lead a renewed international effort to get tough with companies that peddle nuclear and chemical warfare technologies, strengthen the International Atomic Energy Agency, and enforce strong sanctions against governments that violate international restraints. A Comprehensive Test Ban would strengthen our ability to stop the spread of nuclear weapons to other countries, which may be our greatest future security threat. We must press for strong international limits on the dangerous and wasteful flow of conventional arms to troubled regions. A U.S. troop presence should be maintained in South Korea as long as North Korea presents a threat to South Korea.

Restoring America's Economic Leadership

The United States cannot be strong abroad if it is weak at home. Restoring America's global economic leadership must become a central element of our national security policies. The strength of nations, once defined in military terms, now is measured also by the skills of their workers, the imagination of their managers and the power of their technologies.

Either we develop and pursue a national plan for restoring our economy through a partnership of government, labor and business, or we slip behind the nations that are competing with us and growing. At stake are American jobs, our standard of living and the quality of life for ourselves and our children.

Economic strength—indeed our national security—is grounded on a healthy domestic economy. But we cannot be strong at home unless we are part of a vibrant and expanding global economy that recognizes human rights and seeks to improve the living standards of all the world's people. This is vital to achieving good quality, high paying jobs for Americans.

Trade.

Our government must work to expand trade, while insisting that the conduct of world trade is fair. It must fight to uphold American interests—promoting exports, expanding trade in agricultural and other products, opening markets in major product and service sectors with our principal competitors, and achieving reciprocal access. This should include renewed authority to use America's trading leverage against the most serious problems. The U.S. government also must firmly enforce U.S. laws against unfair trade.

Trade Agreements.

Multilateral trade agreements can advance our economic interests by expanding the global economy. Whether negotiating the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA) or completing the GATT negotiations, our government must assure that our legitimate concerns about environmental, health and safety, and labor standards are included. Those American workers whose jobs are affected must have the benefit of effective adjustment assistance.

Promoting Democracy

Brave men and women—like the hero who stood in front of a tank in Beijing and the leader who stood on a tank in Moscow—are putting their lives on the line for democracy around the world. But as the tide of democracy rose in the former Soviet Union and in China, in the Baltics and South Africa, only reluctantly did this Administration abandon the status quo and embrace the fight for freedom.

Support for democracy serves our ideals and our interests. A more democratic world is a world that is more peaceful and more stable. An American foreign policy of engagement for democracy must effectively address:

Emerging Democracies.

Helping to lead an international effort to assist the emerging—and still fragile—democracies in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union build democratic institutions in free market settings, demilitarize their societies and integrate their economies into the world trading system. Unlike the Bush Administration, which waited too long to recognize the new democratic governments in the Baltic countries and the nations of the former Soviet Union, we must act decisively with our European allies to support freedom, diminish ethnic tensions, and oppose aggression in the former communist countries, such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, which are struggling to make the transition from communism to democracy. As change sweeps through the Balkans, the United States must be sensitive to the concerns of Greece regarding the use of the name Macedonia. And in the post-Cold War era, our foreign assistance programs in Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America and elsewhere should be targeted at helping democracies rather than tyrants.

Democracy Corps.

Promoting democratic institutions by creating a Democracy Corps to send American volunteers to countries that seek legal, financial and political expertise to build democratic institutions, and support groups like the National Endowment for Democracy, the Asia Foundation, and others.

China Trade Terms.

Conditioning of favorable trade terms for China on respect for human rights in China and Tibet, greater market access for U.S. goods, and responsible conduct on weapons proliferation.

South Africa.

Maintenance of state and local sanctions against South Africa in support of an investment code of conduct, existing limits on deductibility of taxes paid to South Africa, and diplomatic pressure until there is an irreversible, full and fair accommodation with the black majority to create a democratic government with full rights for all its citizens. We deplore the continuing violence, especially in Boipatong Township, and are concerned about the collapse of the negotiations. The U.S. Government should consider reimposing Federal sanctions. The Democratic Party supports the creation of a South African/American Enterprise Fund that will provide a new interim government with public and private funds to assist in the development of democracy in South Africa.

Middle East Peace

Support for the peace process now underway in the Middle East, rooted in the tradition of the Camp David accords. Direct negotiations between Israel, her Arab neighbors and Palestinians, with no imposed solutions, are the only way to achieve enduring security for Israel and full peace for all parties in the region. The end of the Cold War does not alter America's deep interest in our long-standing special relationship with Israel, based on shared values, a mutual commitment to democracy, and a strategic alliance that benefits both nations. The United States must act effectively as an honest broker in the peace process. It must not, as has been the case with this Administration, encourage one side to believe that it will deliver unilateral

concessions from the other. Jerusalem is the capital of the state of Israel and should remain an undivided city accessible to people of all faiths.

Human Rights

Standing everywhere for the rights of individuals and respect for ethnic minorities against the repressive acts of governments—against torture, political imprisonment, and all attacks on civilized standards of human freedom. This is a proud tradition of the Democratic Party, which has stood for freedom in South Africa and continues to resist oppression in Cuba. Our nation should once again promote the principle of sanctuary for politically oppressed people everywhere, be they Haitian refugees, Soviet Jews seeking U.S. help in their successful absorption into Israeli society, or Vietnamese fleeing communism. Forcible return of anyone fleeing political repression is a betrayal of American values.

Human Needs

Support for the struggle against poverty and disease in the developing world, including the heartbreaking famine in Africa. We must not replace the East-West conflict with one between North and South, a growing divide between the industrialized and developing world. Our development programs must be reexamined and restructured to assure that their benefits truly help those most in need to help themselves. At stake are the lives of millions of human beings who live in hunger, uprooted from their homes, too often without hope. The United States should work to establish a specific plan and timetable for the elimination of world hunger.

Cyprus

A renewed commitment to achieve a Cyprus settlement pursuant to the United Nations resolutions. This goal must now be restored to the diplomatic agenda of the United States.

Northern Ireland

In light of America's historic ties to the people of Great Britain and Ireland, and consistent with our country's commitment to peace, democracy and human rights around the world, a more active United States role in promoting peace and political dialogue to bring an end to the violence and achieve a negotiated solution in Northern Ireland.

Preserving The Global Environment

As the threat of nuclear holocaust recedes, the future of the earth is challenged by gathering environmental crises. As governments around the world have sought the path to concerted action, the Bush Administration—despite its alleged foreign policy expertise—has been more of an obstacle to progress than a leader for change, practicing isolationism on an issue that affects us all. Democrats know we must act now to save the health of the earth, and the health of our children, for generations to come.

Addressing Global Warming.

The United States must become a leader, not an impediment, in the fight against global warming. We should join our European allies in agreeing to limit carbon dioxide emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2000.

Ozone Depletion.

The United States must be a world leader in finding replacements for CFCs and other ozone depleting substances.

Biodiversity.

We must work actively to protect the planet's biodiversity and preserve its forests. At the Rio Earth Summit, the Bush Administration's failure to negotiate a biodiversity treaty it could sign was an abdication of international leadership.

Developing Nations

We must fashion imaginative ways of engaging governments and business in the effort to encourage developing nations to preserve their environmental heritage.

Population Growth

Explosive population growth must be controlled by working closely with other industrialized and developing nations and private organizations to fund greater family planning efforts.

As a nation and as a people, we have entered into a new era. The Republican President and his advisors are rooted in Cold War precepts and cannot think or act anew. Through almost a half century of sacrifice, constancy and strength, the American people advanced democracy's triumph in the Cold War. Only new leadership that restores our nation's greatness at home can successfully draw upon these same strengths of the American people to lead the world into a new era of peace and freedom.

In recent years we have seen brave people abroad face down tanks, defy coups, and risk exodus by boat on the high seas for a chance at freedom and the kind of opportunities we call the American Dream. It is time for Americans to fight against the decline of those same opportunities here at home.

Americans know that, in the end, we will all rise or fall together. To make our society one again, Democrats will restore America's founding values of family, community and common purpose.

We believe in the American people. We will challenge all Americans to give something back to their country. And they will be enriched in return, for when individuals assume responsibility, they acquire dignity. When people go to work, they rediscover a pride that was lost. When absent parents pay child support, they restore a connection they and their children need. When students work harder, they discover they can learn as well as any on earth. When corporate managers put their workers and long-term success ahead of short-term gain, their companies do well and so do they. When the leaders we elect assume responsibility for America's problems, we will do what is right to move America forward together.

APP Note: The American Presidency Project used the first day of the national nominating convention as the "date" of this platform since the original document is undated.
