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Warren Harding, “Return to Normalcy” Speech, 14 May 1920

There isn’t anything the matter with world civilization, except that humanity is viewing it through a vision impaired in a cataclysmal war. Poise has been disturbed, and nerves have been racked, and fever has rendered men irrational; sometimes there have been draughts upon the dangerous cup of barbarity, and men have wandered far from safe paths, but the human procession still marches in the right direction.

America’s present need is not heroics, but healing; not nostrums, but normalcy; not revolution, but restoration; not agitation, but adjustment; not surgery, but serenity; not the dramatic, but the dispassionate; not experiment, but equipoise; not submergence in internationality, but sustainment in triumphant nationality.

It is one thing to battle successfully against world domination by military autocracy, because the infinite God never intended such a program, but it is quite another thing to revise human nature and suspend the fundamental laws of life and all of life’s acquirements…

This republic has its ample tasks. If we put an end to false economics which lure humanity to utter chaos, ours will be the commanding example of world leadership today. If we can prove a representative popular government under which a citizenship seeks what it may do for the government rather than what the government may do for individuals, we shall do more to make democracy safe for the world than all armed conflict ever recorded.

The world needs to be reminded that all human ills are not curable by legislation, and that quantity of statutory enactment and excess of government offer no substitute for quality of citizenship.

The problems of maintained civilization are not to be solved by a transfer of responsibility from citizenship to government, and no eminent page in history was ever drafted by the standards of mediocrity. More, no government is worthy of the name which is directed by influence on the one hand, or moved by intimidation on the other…

My best judgment of America’s needs is to steady down, to get squarely on our feet, to make sure of the right path. Let’s get out of the fevered delirium of war, with the hallucination that all the money in the world is to be made in the madness of war and the wildness of its aftermath. Let us stop to consider that tranquillity at home is more precious than peace abroad, and that both our good fortune and our eminence are dependent on the normal forward stride of all the American people. …

Herbert Hoover, “Rugged Individualism” Speech, 22 October 1928

…Before I enter upon that discussion of principles I wish to lay before you the proof of progress under Republican rule. In doing this I do not need to review its seventy years of constructive history. That history shows that the Republican party has ever been a party of progress. It has reflected the spirit of the American people. We are a progressive people. Our history of 150 years in the greatest epic of human progress. Tonight to demonstrate the constructive character of our Party, I need only briefly picture the advance of fundamental progress during the past seven and a half years since we took over the Government amidst the ruin of war…

The slogan of progress is changing from the full dinner pail to the full garage. Our people have more to eat, better things to wear, and better homes. We have even gained in elbow room in
our homes… We have increased the security of his job to every man and woman. We have
decreased the fear of old age, the fear of poverty, the fear of unemployment and these are fears
which have always been amongst the greatest calamities of human kind…

It detracts nothing from the character and energy of the American people, it minimizes in
no degree the quality of their accomplishments to say that the policies of the Republican Party
have played a large part in the building of this progress of these last seven and one-half years…

It is sufficient to remind you of the restoration of employment to the millions who walked
your streets in idleness to remind you of the creation of the budget system; the reduction of six
billions of national debt which gave the impulse of that vast sum returned to industry and
commerce; the four sequent reductions of taxes and thereby the lift to the living of every family;
the enactment of an adequate protective tariff and immigration laws which have raised and
safeguarded our wages from floods of goods or labor from foreign countries; the creation of
credit facilities and many aids to agriculture; the building up of foreign trade; the care of
veterans, the development of aviation, of radio, of our inland waterways, our highways; the
expansion of scientific research, of welfare activities, safer highways, safer mines, outdoor
recreation, in better homes, in public health and the care of children. Nor do I need remind you
that Government today deals with an economic and social system vastly more intricate and
delicately adjusted than ever before. It now must be kept in perfect tune if we would not, through
dislocation, have a breakdown in employment and in standards of living of our people. The
Government has come to more and more touch this delicate web at a thousand points. Yearly the
relations of Government to national prosperity becomes more and more intimate. It has only by
keen large vision and cooperation by the Government that stability in business and stability in
employment has been maintained during this past seven and a half years. Never has there been a
period when the Federal Government has given such aid and impulse to the progress of our
people, not alone to economic progress but to development of those agencies which make for
moral and spiritual progress.

But in addition to this great record of contributions of the Republican Party to progress,
there has been a further fundamental contribution — a contribution perhaps more important than
all the others — and that is the resistance of the Republican Party to every attempt to inject the
Government into business in competition with its citizens.

After the war, when the Republican Party assumed administration of the country, we
were faced with the problem of determination of the very nature of our national life. Over 150
years we have builded up a form of self-government and we had builded up a social system
which is peculiarly our own. It differs fundamentally from all others in the world. It is the
American system. It is just as definite and positive a political and social system as has ever been
developed on earth. It is founded upon the conception that self-government can be preserved
only by decentralization of Government in the State and by fixing local responsibility; but further
than this, it is founded upon the social conception that only through ordered liberty, freedom and
equal opportunity to the individual will his initiative and enterprise drive the march of progress.

During the war we necessarily turned to the Government to solve every difficult
economic problem — the Government having absorbed every energy of our people to war there
was no other solution. For the preservation of the State the Government became a centralized
despotism which undertook responsibilities, assumed powers, exercised rights, and took over the
business of citizens. To large degree we regimented our whole people temporarily into a
socialistic state. However justified it was in time of war if continued in peace time it would
destroy not only our system but progress and freedom in our own country and throughout the
world. When the war closed the most vital of all issues was whether Governments should continue war ownership and operation of many instrumentalities of production and distribution. We were challenged with the choice of the American system "rugged individualism" or the choice of a European system of diametrically opposed doctrines — doctrines of paternalism and state socialism. The acceptance of these ideas meant the destruction of self-government through centralization of government; it meant the undermining of initiative and enterprise upon which our people have grown to unparalleled greatness.

The Democratic administration cooperated with the Republican Party to demobilize many of her activities and the Republican Party from the beginning of its period of power resolutely turned its face away from these ideas and these war practices, back to our fundamental conception of the state and the rights and responsibilities of the individual. Thereby it restored confidence and hope in the American people, it freed and stimulated enterprise, it restored the Government to its position as an umpire instead of a player in the economic game. For these reasons the American people have gone forward in progress while the rest of the world is halting and some countries have even gone backwards. If anyone will study the causes which retarded recuperation of Europe, he will find much of it due to the stifling of private initiative on one hand, and overloading of the Government with business on the other.

I regret, however, to say that there has been revived in this campaign a proposal which would be a long step to the abandonment of our American system, to turn to the idea of government in business. Because we are faced with difficulty and doubt over certain national problems which we are faced — that is prohibition, farm relief and electrical power — our opponents propose that we must to some degree thrust government into these businesses and in effect adopt state socialism as a solution…

Bureaucracy is ever desirous of spreading its influence and its power. You cannot give to a government the mastery of the daily working life of a people without at the same time giving it mastery of the peoples’ souls and thoughts. Every expansion of government means that government in order to protect itself from political consequences of its errors and wrongs is driven onward and onward without peace to greater and greater control of the country’s press and platform. Free speech does not live many hours after free industry and free commerce die.

It is false liberalism that interprets itself into the Government operation of business. The bureaucratization of our country would poison the very roots of liberalism that is free speech, free assembly, free press, political equality and equality of opportunity. It is the road, not to more liberty, but to less liberty. Liberalism should be found not striving to spread bureaucracy, but striving to set bounds to it. True liberalism seeks freedom first in the confident belief that without freedom the pursuit of all other blessings and benefits is vain. That belief is the foundation of all American progress, political as well as economic…

One of the great problems of government is to determine to what extent the Government itself shall interfere with commerce and industry and how much it shall leave to individual exertion. It is just as important that business keep out of government as that government keep out of business. No system is perfect. We have had abuses in the conduct of business that every good citizen resents. But I insist that the results show our system better than any other and retains the essentials of freedom…

One test of our economic and social system is its capacity to cure its own abuses. New abuses and new relationships to the public interest will occur as long as we continue to progress. If we are to be wholly dependent upon government to cure every evil we shall by this very method have created an enlarged and deadening abuse through the extension of bureaucracy and
the clumsy and incapable handling of delicate economic forces. And much abuse has been and can be cured by inspiration and cooperation, rather than by regulation of the government…

Franklin D. Roosevelt, Commonwealth Club Address, 23 September 1932

…I want to speak not of politics but of government. I want to speak not of parties, but of universal principles. They are not political, except in that larger sense in which a great American once expressed a definition of politics, that nothing in all of human life is foreign to the science of politics…

The issue of government has always been whether individual men and women will have to serve some system of government or economics, or whether a system of government and economics exists to serve individual men and women. This question has persistently dominated the discussion of government for many generations. On questions relating to these things men have differed, and for time immemorial it is probable that honest men will continue to differ.

The final word belongs to no man; yet we can still believe in change and in progress. Democracy, as a dear old friend of mine in Indiana, Meredith Nicholson, has called it, is a quest, a never ending seeking for better things, and in the seeking for these things and the striving for them, there are many roads to follow. But, if we map the course of these roads, we find that there are only two general directions…

The American Revolution was a turning point in it. After the Revolution the struggle continued and shaped itself in the public life of the country. There were those who because they had seen the confusion which attended the years of war for American independence surrendered to the belief that popular government was essentially dangerous and essentially unworkable. They were honest people, my friends, and we cannot deny that their experience had warranted some measure of fear. The most brilliant, honest and able exponent of this point of view was Hamilton. He was too impatient of slow—moving methods. Fundamentally he believed that the safety of the republic lay in the autocratic strength of its government, that the destiny of individuals was to serve that government, and that fundamentally a great and strong group of central institutions, guided by a small group of able and public spirited citizens, could best direct all government.

But Mr. Jefferson, in the summer of 1776, after drafting the Declaration of Independence turned his mind to the same problem and took a different view. He did not deceive himself with outward forms. Government to him was a means to an end, not an end in itself; it might be either a refuge and a help or a threat and a danger, depending on the circumstances. We find him carefully analyzing the society for which he was to organize a government. "We have no paupers. The great mass of our population is of laborers, our rich who cannot live without labor, either manual or professional, being few and of moderate wealth. Most of the laboring class possess property, cultivate their own lands, have families and from the demand for their labor, are enabled to exact from the rich and the competent such prices as enable them to feed abundantly, clothe above mere decency, to labor moderately and raise their families…"

You are familiar with the great political duel which followed; and how Hamilton, and his friends, building toward a dominant centralized power were at length defeated in the great election of 1800, by Mr. Jefferson’s party. Out of that duel came the two parties, Republican and Democratic, as we know them today…
It was in the middle of the nineteenth century that a new force was released and a new dream created. The force was what is called the industrial revolution, the advance of steam and machinery and the rise of the forerunners of the modern industrial plant…This history of the last half century is accordingly in large measure a history of a group of financial Titans, whose methods were not scrutinized with too much care, and who were honored in proportion as they produced the results, irrespective of the means they used. The financiers who pushed the railroads to the Pacific were always ruthless, often wasteful, and frequently corrupt; but they did build railroads, and we have them today…

Clearly, all this calls for a re-appraisal of values. A mere builder of more industrial plants, a creator of more railroad systems, an organizer of more corporations, is as likely to be a danger as a help. The day of the great promoter or the financial Titan, to whom we granted everything if only he would build, or develop, is over. Our task now is not discovery, or exploitation of natural resources, or necessarily producing more goods. It is the soberer, less dramatic business of administering resources and plants already in hand, of seeking to reestablish foreign markets for our surplus production, of meeting the problem of under consumption, of adjusting production to consumption, of distributing wealth and products more equitably, of adapting existing economic organizations to the service of the people. The day of enlightened administration has come…

As I see it, the task of government in its relation to business is to assist the development of an economic declaration of rights, an economic constitutional order. This is the common task of statesman and businessman. It is the minimum requirement of a more permanently safe order of things…

Every man has a right to life; and this means that he has also a right to make a comfortable living. He may by sloth or crime decline to exercise that right; but it may not be denied him…

Every man has a right to his own property, which means a right to be assured, to the fullest extent attainable, in the safety of his savings…If, in accord with this principle, we must restrict the operations of the speculator, the manipulator, even the financier, I believe we must accept the restriction as needful, not to hamper individualism but to protect it.

This implication is, briefly, that the responsible heads of finance and industry instead of acting each for himself, must work together to achieve the common end. They must, where necessary, sacrifice this or that private advantage; and in reciprocal self—denial must seek a general advantage. It is here that formal government —— political government, if you choose, comes in. Whenever in the pursuit of this objective the lone wolf, the unethical competitor, the reckless promoter, the Ishmael or Insull whose hand is against every man’s, declines to join in achieving an end recognized as being for the public welfare, and threatens to drag the industry back to a state of anarchy, the government may properly be asked to apply restraint. Likewise, should the group ever use its collective power contrary to the public welfare, the government must be swift to enter and protect the public interest…

Faith in America, faith in our tradition of personal responsibilities, faith in our institutions, faith in ourselves demands that we recognize the new terms of the old social contract. We shall fulfill them, as we fulfilled the obligation of the apparent Utopia which Jefferson imagined for us in 1776, and which Jefferson, Roosevelt and Wilson sought to bring to realization. We must do so, lest a rising tide of misery engendered by our common failure, engulf us all. But failure is not an American habit; and in the strength of great hope we must all shoulder our common load.
1932 Republican Party Platform

We, the representatives of the Republican Party, in convention assembled, renew our pledge to the principles and traditions of our party and dedicate it anew to the service of the nation…

Leadership. For nearly three years the world has endured an economic depression of unparalleled extent and severity. The patience and courage of our people have been severely tested, but their faith in themselves, in their institutions and in their future remains unshaken. When victory comes, as it will, this generation will hand on to the next a great heritage unimpaired…

The President has recently supplemented his original program to provide for distress, to stimulate the revival of business and employment, and to improve the agricultural situation, he recommended extending the authority of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to enable it:

(a) To make loans to political subdivisions of public bodies or private corporations for the purpose of starting construction of income-producing or self-liquidating projects which will at once increase employment;

(b) To make loans upon security of agricultural commodities so as to insure the carrying of normal stocks of those commodities, and thus stabilize their loan value and price levels:

(c) To make loans to the Federal Farm Board to enable extension of loans to farm co-operatives and loans for export of agricultural commodities to quarters unable to purchase them;

(d) To loan up to $300,000,000 to such States as are unable to meet the calls made on them by their citizens for distress relief.

The President's program contemplates an attack on a broad front, with far-reaching objectives, but entailing no danger to the budget. The Democratic program, on the other hand, contemplates a heavy expenditure of public funds, a budget unbalanced on a large scale, with a doubtful attainment of at best a strictly limited objective.

We strongly endorse the President's program.

Unemployment and Relief. True to American traditions and principles of government, the administration has regarded the relief problem as one of State and local responsibility. The work of local agencies, public and private has been coordinated and enlarged on a nation-wide scale under the leadership of the President…

Public Economy. Constructive plans for financial stabilization cannot be completely organized until our national, State and municipal governments not only balance their budgets but curtail their current expenses as well to a level which can be steadily and economically maintained for some years to come.

We urge prompt and drastic reduction of public expenditure and resistance to every appropriation not demonstrably necessary to the performance of government, national or local…

Banks and the Banking System. The efficient functioning of our economic machinery depends in no small measure on the aid rendered to trade and industry by our banking system. There is need of revising the banking laws so as to place our banking structure on a sounder basis generally for all concerned, and for the better protection of the depositing public there should be more stringent supervision and broader powers vested in the supervising authorities. We advocate such a revision…

Agriculture…In 1928 the Republican Party pledged further measures in aid of agriculture, principally tariff protection for agricultural products and the creation of a Federal
Farm Board "clothed with the necessary power to promote the establishment of a farm marketing system of farmer-owned and controlled stabilization corporations…"

The Republican Party has also aided the American farmer by relief of the sufferers in the drought-stricken areas, through loans for rehabilitation and through road building to provide employment, by the development of the inland waterway system, by the perishable product act, by the strengthening of the extension system, and by the appropriation of $125,000,000 to recapitalize the Federal land banks and enable them to extend time to worthy borrowers…

**Tariff and the Marketing Act.** The party pledges itself to make such revision of tariff schedules as economic changes require to maintain the parity of protection to agriculture with other industry…

The time has come for a reconsideration of our tax systems, Federal State and local, with a view to developing a better coordination, reducing duplication and relieving unjust burdens. The Republican Party pledges itself to this end…

**Wages and Work.** We believe in the principle of high wages. We favor the principle of the shorter working week and shorter work day with its application to government as well as to private employment, as rapidly and as constructively as conditions will warrant. We favor legislation designed to stimulate, encourage and assist in home building…

**Labor.** Collective bargaining by responsible representatives of employers and employes of their own choice, without the interference of any one, is recognized and approved…

**Transportation.** The promotion of agriculture, commerce and industry requires coordination of transportation by rail, highway, air and water. All should be subjected to appropriate and constructive regulation…

**Inland Waterways.** The Republican Party recognizes that low cost transportation for bulk commodities will enable industry to develop in the midst of agriculture in the Mississippi Valley, thereby creating a home market for farm products in that section. With a view to aiding agriculture in the middle west the present administration has pushed forward as rapidly as possible the improvement of the Mississippi waterway system, and we favor the continued vigorous prosecution of these works to the end that agriculture and industry in that great area may enjoy the benefits of these improvements at the earliest possible date.

The railroads constitute the backbone of our transportation system and perform an essential service for the country. The railroad industry is our largest employer of labor and the greatest consumer of goods…

**Highways.** The Federal policy to cooperate with the States in the building of roads was thoroughly established when the Federal highway act of 1921 was adopted under a Republican Congress. Each year since that time appropriations have been made which have greatly increased the economic value of highway transportation and helped to raise the standards and opportunities of rural life. We pledge our support to the continuation of this policy in accordance with our needs and resources…

**Welfare Work and Children.** The children of our nation, our future citizens, have had the most solicitous thought of our President. Child welfare and protection has been a major effort of this administration. The organization of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection is regarded as one of the outstanding accomplishments of this administration…

**Democratic Failure.** The vagaries of the present Democratic House of Representatives offer characteristic and appalling proof of the existing incapacity of that party for leadership in a national crisis. Individualism running amuck has displaced party discipline and has trampled
under foot party leadership. A bewildered electorate has viewed the spectacle with profound
dismay and deep misgivings.

Goaded to desperation by their confessed failure, the party leaders have resorted to "pork
barrel" legislation to obtain a unity of action which could not otherwise be achieved…

**Party Government.** The delays and differences which recently hampered efforts to
obtain legislation imperatively demanded by prevailing critical conditions strikingly illustrate the
menace to self-government brought about by the weakening of party ties and party fealty.

Experience has demonstrated that coherent political parties are indispensable agencies for
the prompt and effective operation of the functions of our government under the Constitution.

Only by united party action can consistent, well-planned and wholesome legislative
programs be enacted. We believe that the majority of the Congressmen elected in the name of a
party have the right and duty to determine the general policies of that party requiring
Congressional action, and that Congressmen belonging to that party are, in general, bound to
adhere to such policies. Any other course inevitably makes of Congress a body of detached
deleagtes which, instead of representing the collective wisdom of our people, become the
confused voices of a heterogeneous group of unrelated local prejudices.

We believe that the time has come when Senators and Representatives of the United
States should be impressed with the inflexible truth that their first concern should be the welfare
of the United States and the well-being of all of its people, and that stubborn pride of individual
opinion is not a virtue, but an obstacle to the orderly and successful achievement of the objects of
representative government.

Only by cooperation can self-government succeed. Without it election under a party aegis
becomes a false pretense.

We earnestly request that Republicans throughout the Union demand that their
representatives in the Congress pledge themselves to these principles, to the end that the
insidious influences of party disintegration may not undermine the very foundations of the
Republic…

**1932 Democratic Party Platform**

In this time of unprecedented economic and social distress the Democratic Party declares
its conviction that the chief causes of this condition were the disastrous policies pursued by our
government since the World War, of economic isolation, fostering the merger of competitive
businesses into monopolies and encouraging the indefensible expansion and contraction of credit
for private profit at the expense of the public…

The only hope for improving present conditions, restoring employment, affording
permanent relief to the people, and bringing the nation back to the proud position of domestic
happiness and of financial, industrial, agricultural and commercial leadership in the world lies in
a drastic change in economic governmental policies.

We believe that a party platform is a covenant with the people to have [sic] faithfully kept
by the party when entrusted with power, and that the people are entitled to know in plain words
the terms of the contract to which they are asked to subscribe. We hereby declare this to be the
platform of the Democratic Party:

…We advocate an immediate and drastic reduction of governmental expenditures by
abolishing useless commissions and offices, consolidating departments and bureaus, and
eliminating extravagance to accomplish a saving of not less than twenty-five per cent in the cost
of the Federal Government. And we call upon the Democratic Party in the states to make a zealous effort to achieve a proportionate result.

    We favor maintenance of the national credit by a federal budget annually balanced on the basis of accurate executive estimates within revenues, raised by a system of taxation levied on the principle of ability to pay…

    We advocate the extension of federal credit to the states to provide unemployment relief wherever the diminishing resources of the states makes it impossible for them to provide for the needy; expansion of the federal program of necessary and useful construction effected [sic] with a public interest, such as adequate flood control and waterways.

    We advocate the spread of employment by a substantial reduction in the hours of labor, the encouragement of the shorter week by applying that principle in government service; we advocate advance planning of public works…

    Extension and development of the Farm co-operative movement and effective control of crop surpluses so that our farmers may have the full benefit of the domestic market…

    Continuous publicity of political contributions and expenditures; strengthening of the Corrupt Practices Act and severe penalties for misappropriation of campaign funds…

    We condemn the improper and excessive use of money in political activities.

    We condemn paid lobbies of special interests to influence members of Congress and other public servants by personal contact…

    And in conclusion, to accomplish these purposes and to recover economic liberty, we pledge the nominees of this convention the best efforts of a great Party whose founder announced the doctrine which guides us now in the hour of our country's need: equal rights to all; special privilege to none.

    **Franklin D. Roosevelt, State of the Union Address 11 January 1944**

    This Nation in the past two years has become an active partner in the world’s greatest war against human slavery.

    We have joined with like-minded people in order to defend ourselves in a world that has been gravely threatened with gangster rule.

    But I do not think that any of us Americans can be content with mere survival. Sacrifices that we and our allies are making impose upon us all a sacred obligation to see to it that out of this war we and our children will gain something better than mere survival.

    We are united in determination that this war shall not be followed by another interim which leads to new disaster- that we shall not repeat the tragic errors of ostrich isolationism— that we shall not repeat the excesses of the wild twenties when this Nation went for a joy ride on a roller coaster which ended in a tragic crash…

    The best interests of each Nation, large and small, demand that all freedom-loving Nations shall join together in a just and durable system of peace. In the present world situation, evidenced by the actions of Germany, Italy, and Japan, unquestioned military control over disturbers of the peace is as necessary among Nations as it is among citizens in a community. And an equally basic essential to peace is a decent standard of living for all individual men and women and children in all Nations. Freedom from fear is eternally linked with freedom from want…
The overwhelming majority of our people have met the demands of this war with magnificent courage and understanding. They have accepted inconveniences; they have accepted hardships; they have accepted tragic sacrifices. And they are ready and eager to make whatever further contributions are needed to win the war as quickly as possible- if only they are given the chance to know what is required of them.

However, while the majority goes on about its great work without complaint, a noisy minority maintains an uproar of demands for special favors for special groups. There are pests who swarm through the lobbies of the Congress and the cocktail bars of Washington, representing these special groups as opposed to the basic interests of the Nation as a whole. They have come to look upon the war primarily as a chance to make profits for themselves at the expense of their neighbors- profits in money or in terms of political or social preferment…

If ever there was a time to subordinate individual or group selfishness to the national good, that time is now. Disunity at home—bickerings, self-seeking partisanship, stoppages of work, inflation, business as usual, politics as usual, luxury as usual these are the influences which can undermine the morale of the brave men ready to die at the front for us here…

Therefore, in order to concentrate all our energies and resources on winning the war, and to maintain a fair and stable economy at home, I recommend that the Congress adopt:

(1) A realistic tax law—which will tax all unreasonable profits, both individual and corporate…

(3) A cost of food law—which will enable the Government (a) to place a reasonable floor under the prices the farmer may expect for his production; and (b) to place a ceiling on the prices a consumer will have to pay for the food he buys.

It is my conviction that the American people will welcome this win-the-war measure which is based on the eternally just principle of "fair for one, fair for all…" Great power must be used for great purposes.

It is our duty now to begin to lay the plans and determine the strategy for the winning of a lasting peace and the establishment of an American standard of living higher than ever before known. We cannot be content, no matter how high that general standard of living may be, if some fraction of our people—whether it be one-third or one-fifth or one-tenth- is ill-fed, ill-clothed, ill housed, and insecure.

This Republic had its beginning, and grew to its present strength, under the protection of certain inalienable political rights—among them the right of free speech, free press, free worship, trial by jury, freedom from unreasonable searches and seizures. They were our rights to life and liberty.

As our Nation has grown in size and stature, however—as our industrial economy expanded—these political rights proved inadequate to assure us equality in the pursuit of happiness.

We have come to a clear realization of the fact that true individual freedom cannot exist without economic security and independence. "Necessitous men are not free men." People who are hungry and out of a job are the stuff of which dictatorships are made.

In our day these economic truths have become accepted as self-evident. We have accepted, so to speak, a second Bill of Rights under which a new basis of security and prosperity can be established for all regardless of station, race, or creed.

Among these are:

The right to a useful and remunerative job in the industries or shops or farms or mines of the Nation;
The right to earn enough to provide adequate food and clothing and recreation;
The right of every farmer to raise and sell his products at a return which will give him and his family a decent living;
The right of every businessman, large and small, to trade in an atmosphere of freedom from unfair competition and domination by monopolies at home or abroad;
The right of every family to a decent home;
The right to adequate medical care and the opportunity to achieve and enjoy good health;
The right to adequate protection from the economic fears of old age, sickness, accident, and unemployment;
The right to a good education.

All of these rights spell security. And after this war is won we must be prepared to move forward, in the implementation of these rights, to new goals of human happiness and well-being. America’s own rightful place in the world depends in large part upon how fully these and similar rights have been carried into practice for our citizens. For unless there is security here at home there cannot be lasting peace in the world.

One of the great American industrialists of our day—a man who has rendered yeoman service to his country in this crisis-recently emphasized the grave dangers of "rightist reaction" in this Nation. All clear-thinking businessmen share his concern. Indeed, if such reaction should develop—if history were to repeat itself and we were to return to the so-called "normalcy" of the 1920’s—then it is certain that even though we shall have conquered our enemies on the battlefields abroad, we shall have yielded to the spirit of Fascism here at home.

I ask the Congress to explore the means for implementing this economic bill of rights- for it is definitely the responsibility of the Congress so to do. Many of these problems are already before committees of the Congress in the form of proposed legislation. I shall from time to time communicate with the Congress with respect to these and further proposals. In the event that no adequate program of progress is evolved, I am certain that the Nation will be conscious of the fact...

1944 Republican Party Platform

1944 Republican Party Platform

Introduction. The tragedy of the war is upon our country as we meet to consider the problems of government and our people...

Domestic Policy. We shall devote ourselves to re-establishing liberty at home.

We shall adopt a program to put men to work in peace industry as promptly as possible and with special attention to those who have made sacrifice by serving in the armed forces. We shall take government out of competition with private industry and terminate rationing, price fixing and all other emergency powers. We shall promote the fullest stable employment through private enterprise.

The measures we propose shall avoid federalization of government activities, to the end that our States, schools and cities shall be freed; shall avoid delegation of legislative and judicial power to administrative agencies, to the end that the people's representatives in Congress shall be independent and in full control of legislative policy; and shall avoid, subject to war necessities, detailed regulation of farmers, workers, businessmen and consumers, to the end that the individual shall be free. The remedies we propose shall be based on intelligent cooperation.
between the Federal Government, the States and local government and the initiative of civic groups—not on the panacea of Federal cash.

Four more years of New Deal policy would centralize all power in the President, and would daily subject every act of every citizen to regulation by his henchmen; and this country could remain a Republic only in name. No problem exists which cannot be solved by American methods. We have no need of either the communistic or the fascist technique…

**Security.** Our goal is to prevent hardship and poverty in America. That goal is attainable by reason of the productive ability of free American labor, industry and agriculture, if supplemented by a system of social security on sound principles.

We pledge our support of the following:
1. Extension of the existing old-age insurance and unemployment insurance systems to all employees not already covered…
3. A careful study of Federal-State programs for maternal and child health, dependent children, and assistance to the blind, with a view to strengthening these programs.
4. The continuation of these and other programs relating to health, and the stimulation by Federal aid of State plans to make medical and hospital service available to those in need without disturbing doctor-patient relationships or socializing medicine.
5. The stimulation of State and local plans to provide decent low-cost housing properly financed by the Federal Housing Administration, or otherwise, when such housing cannot be supplied or financed by private sources.

**Labor.** The Republican Party is the historical champion of free labor. Under Republican administrations American manufacturing developed, and American workers attained the most progressive standards of living of any workers in the world. Now the Nation owes those workers a debt of gratitude for their magnificent productive effort in support of the war.

Regardless of the professed friendship of the New Deal for the workingman, the fact remains that under the New Deal American economic life is being destroyed.

The New Deal has usurped selfish and partisan control over the functions of Government agencies where labor relationships are concerned…

We condemn the conversion of administrative boards, ostensibly set up to settle industrial disputes, into instruments for putting into effect the financial and economic theories of the New Deal…

**Agriculture…** Abundant production is the best security against inflation. Governmental policies in war and in peace must be practical and efficient with freedom from regimentation by an impractical Washington bureaucracy in order to assure independence of operation and bountiful production, fair and equitable market prices for farm products, and a sound program for conservation and use of our soil and natural resources. Educational progress and the social and economic stability and well-being of the farm family must be a prime national purpose.

For the establishment of such a program we propose the following:
1. A Department of Agriculture under practical and experienced administration, free from regimentation and confusing government manipulation and control of farm programs…
5. Intensified research to discover new crops, and new and profitable uses for existing crops…
8. To make life more attractive on the family type farm through development of rural roads, sound extension of rural electrification service to the farm and elimination of basic evils of tenancy wherever they exist.
9. Serious study of and search for a sound program of crop insurance with emphasis upon establishing a self-supporting program.

10. A comprehensive program of soil, forest, water and wildlife conservation and development, and sound irrigation projects, administered as far as possible at State and regional levels.

**Business and Industry**...Small business is the basis of American enterprise. It must be preserved. If protected against discrimination and afforded equality of opportunity throughout the Nation, it will become the most potent factor in providing employment. It must also be aided by changes in taxation, by eliminating excessive and repressive regulation and government competition, by the enforcement of laws against monopoly and unfair competition, and by providing simpler and cheaper methods for obtaining venture capital necessary for growth and expansion...

**Bureaucracy.** The National Administration has become a sprawling, overlapping bureaucracy. It is undermined by executive abuse of power, confused lines of authority, duplication of effort, inadequate fiscal controls, loose personnel practices and an attitude of arrogance previously unknown in our history.

The times cry out for the restoration of harmony in government, for a balance of legislative and executive responsibility, for efficiency and economy, for priming and abolishing unnecessary agencies and personnel, for effective fiscal and personnel controls, and for an entirely new spirit in our Federal Government.

We pledge an administration wherein the President, acting in harmony with Congress, will effect these necessary reforms and raise the Federal service to a high level of efficiency and competence...

**Two-Term Limit for President.** We favor an amendment to the Constitution providing that no person shall be President of the United States for more than two terms of four years each.

**Equal Rights.** We favor submission by Congress to the States of an amendment to the Constitution providing for equal rights for men and women. We favor job opportunities in the postwar world open to men and women alike without discrimination in rate of pay because of sex...

**Conclusion.** The essential question at trial in this nation is whether men can organize together in a highly industrialized society, succeed, and still be free. That is the essential question at trial throughout the world today.

In this time of confusion and strife, when moral values are being crushed on every side, we pledge ourselves to uphold with all our strength the Bill of Rights, the Constitution and the law of the land. We so pledge ourselves that the American tradition may stand forever as the beacon light of civilization.

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**1944 Democratic Party Platform**

The Democratic Party stands on its record in peace and in war. To speed victory, establish and maintain peace, guarantee full employment and provide prosperity — this is its platform. We do not here detail scores of planks. We cite action.

Beginning March, 1933, the Democratic Administration took a series of actions which saved our system of free enterprise. It brought that system out of collapse and thereafter eliminated abuses which had imperiled it. It used the powers of government to provide
employment in industry and to save agriculture. It wrote a new Magna Carta for labor. It provided social security, including old age pensions, unemployment insurance, security for crippled and dependent children and the blind. It established employment offices. It provided federal bank deposit insurance, flood prevention, soil conservation, and prevented abuses in the security markets. It saved farms and homes from foreclosure, and secured profitable prices for farm products. It adopted an effective program of reclamation, hydro-electric power, and mineral development. It found the road to prosperity through production and employment.

We pledge the continuance and improvement of these programs…

We favor legislation assuring equal pay for equal work, regardless of sex. We recommend to Congress the submission of a Constitutional amendment on equal rights for women. We favor Federal aid to education administered by the states without interference by the Federal Government. We favor Federal legislation to assure stability of products, employment, distribution and prices in the bituminous coal industry, to create a proper balance between consumer, producer and mine worker…

We reassert our faith in competitive private enterprise, free from control by monopolies, cartels, or any arbitrary private or public authority. We assert that mankind believes in the Four Freedoms. We believe that the country which has the greatest measure of social justice is capable of the greatest achievements…