

A Progressive Plan

(Towards a Progressive Majority in the Democratic Party)

Many members of the Progressive Caucus of the California Democratic Party (CDP) understand that more Caucus members and other Progressives must be elected as Delegates to the Democratic State Central Committee (DSCC) at the upcoming Assembly District (AD) Caucus elections and the next County Central Committee (CCC) elections. Progressives must be elected as Executive Board Representatives in particular from both of these bodies. Progressives must be elected to the Democratic National Committee (DNC) from California, which Executive Board Representatives will do in 2008, as officers of the CDP itself, which DSCC delegates will do in 2008 and as CCC members, which will happen in 2008 as well.

To this end, the Progressive Caucus calls upon Progressives throughout California to assist us in collecting Party election information, making it easily understood and widely distributed. As the vital first step in this process be aware that anyone wanting to vote or run for delegate to the DSCC, from the January 2007 AD Caucus elections, **MUST REGISTER AS A DEMOCRAT BEFORE OCTOBER 23rd**. Following that, we need your help in gathering information about the AD Caucus elections to be held the 2nd weekend in January. We need details about who is calling them, their contact information and where they will be held. That information is due by December 1st to the CDP. As soon as we have this information, either from the Party or by our own efforts, we will then publish the information and distribute it statewide.

As a starting point for organizing this action, the Progressive Caucus proposes the following Plan to move towards a Progressive Majority in the CDP. With this information in hand the Progressive Movement will be empowered to gain voting majorities at every level of the California Democratic Party. With the election of Progressives as representatives and officers in the various levels of the CDP apparatus we will increase our power, implement Progressive policies and elect Progressive candidates in California and then across the nation.

Why a Progressive Plan?

Vast numbers of Democrats, past and present, have lost confidence in the Party leadership and direction. The Progressive Caucus of the California Democratic Party, in coalition with the broader Progressive community, intends to rectify this situation. Herein, we offer a Progressive Plan to accomplish just that.

Before we lay out the plan let us examine the Democratic Party as it now stands, why it should be and how it can be transformed. John Zogby noted in a recent column in the Huffington Post, (August 6, 2006), that discontented Democrats, now the majority of the Party, are in a mood to demand bold ideas and a return to principled leadership after the DLC led corporate crony policies of the last 20 years which have been a stupendous flop at the polls:

"...the Democrats will have a tough time convincing (Americans) that they are ready to take back control of Congress without offering any clarity on the Iraq War.

Let's just look at the numbers from my [July 21] national poll. Overall, only 36% of likely voters told us that they agree that the war in Iraq has been "worth the loss of American lives", while 57% disagree. But the partisan splits are more revealing: only 16% of the Democrats polled said the war has been worth while 82% disagree and only 26% of Independents agree the war has been worth it while 72% disagree. On the Republican side, 64% said the war has been worth it, while 23% disagree. The war has been the principal cause of the nation's polarization in the past three years. The polling evidence shows the degree to which Iraq has become a Republican war. And these latest numbers are also noteworthy in that they show that about one in four Republicans have now pretty much given up on the war.

All of which is to suggest that Democratic candidates will now probably be emboldened to take a stronger stance against the war. If principle doesn't win the day, at least the polling numbers are pretty clear what their base wants. Indeed, the polling numbers were pretty clear what Democrats and Independents wanted in 2004 - and the fact that they didn't receive the opposition to the war they were looking for from their standard-bearers is the main reason that they lost both the Presidency and did not pick up seats in either house of Congress."

Finding Our Progressive Voice

In the years following 2004 Progressives began mobilizing inside the Democratic Party. We achieved some notable successes including "Out of Iraq" resolutions across the nation. However, even with our rising strength, including the outcome of the Lamont-Lieberman Senate race in Connecticut, the Progressive Movement shouldn't be throwing confetti. Progressives lost most of the races they entered in the recent primaries. We were out-maneuvered by the entrenched political machine. We still don't have enough seats at the table of Democratic Party leadership to put the Party to work for our candidates. We have our work cut out for us.

Creating a Progressive Democratic Party

This political struggle is for "power", **political power** - the ability to persuade the voters and implement policy. It is a struggle between those who don't have it, those who do and the career politicians, electeds, appointeds and big donors who control it. Rather than being dispirited by the current state of affairs we should be motivated. It defines who we are and who we aren't, how we need to organize and what's at stake if we don't.

So, where do we go from here? We strategize, energize and organize the Progressive Movement. We take the Progressive Movement from outside of the Democratic Party into the Democratic Party. We form a coalition of all of the

Progressive Movement's diverse national entities outside of the Party. We inform this coalition as to the why, where and how of our Progressive Plan for becoming the Progressive Majority inside the Democratic Party and together we make it happen.

Our hope is that many of those now arrayed against us will come to understand our principled positions and join us in reinvigorating the Liberal Ideal they once stood for, thereby, propelling the Democratic Party forward and enhancing the Party's social relevancy to the majority of working and middle class Americans. There is no justifiable neutral position in this epic search for the soul of the Democratic Party. The vote to adopt a neutral position on Clean Money Campaign Financing by the California Democratic Party was the center of contention at the most recent Executive Board meeting of the CDP this past August. Support for Clean Money, (Proposition 89), was defeated by a coalition of Democrats whose power to choose candidates and influence the party would be threatened by the passage of the proposition. This group included some union leaders (not rank & file members), electeds, consultants and big donors. They may think that this fight is over but their action to crush Clean Money has only provided all voters, no matter their partisan bias, the proof of its value and the impetus for making it happen.

We have been working on a broad outline of this Progressive Plan for the last year. We offer it here to all Progressive citizens working together to move the Democratic Party forward into the 21st Century. We believe that this can only be accomplished when Progressives are a voting majority at every level of the Democratic Party. Therefore, we are focusing our efforts on electing delegates to the State Central Committee, its Executive Board and the County Central Committees. If you read either your county's Democratic Party by-laws or the State Democratic Party by-laws they are clear as to when the delegates are elected. However, what is not clear, with regard to the Assembly District Caucus elections for delegates to the State Central Committee, is how many in total are elected, where they are elected in each particular AD, how and when names are put in nomination and the contact information for the person calling the meeting. Other than the fact that registered Democrats in primary elections elect delegates for County Central Committee, little information is known by the general public about the process or its importance in Party operations. Further, none of the processes at any level for becoming an appointed delegate are readily available nor is there a standard for appointment. This creates a situation where elected officials and leadership can control the outcome of Party votes by the number of appointed delegates regardless of the will of even an overwhelming majority of the Party membership.

A Progressive Call to Action

The Progressive Caucus calls upon Progressives throughout California to assist us in collecting Party election information, making it easily understood and widely distributed. With this information in hand the Progressive Movement will be empowered to gain voting majorities at every level of the Democratic Party.

Deteriorating living standards for working and middle class citizens, along with the outrageous appropriation of wealth and political power by the entrenched ruling elite have been the driving force behind our demand for change. However, the emotions of the last decade that propelled all of us to speak up and show up cannot create the changes we had hoped for by themselves. We must engage in the hard work of political organizing and working with others more effectively to achieve political gains within the Democratic Party. Our successes during the movements for Civil Rights, Against the Vietnam War and for Gender Equality were never translated into an ongoing political process and structure that would insure a Progressive American body politic. This cleared the way for the DLC, Neo-Liberals and moderate to conservative Democrats, to subvert the soul of the Democratic Party. We cannot afford to make the same mistake this time. We must move Progressive politics from the margin of the Democratic Party to the core of Party policy and action. With that in mind, we offer the following Plan.

Introduction to the Progressive Plan outline...

The first page of this outline lays out the basic elements of the Plan...

- A singular **goal** agreed upon by consensus
- An overarching **strategy** to achieve that goal
- A cohesive set of **tactics** to implement the strategy

That is followed by a brief explanation of the goal and an analysis of the current makeup of the Party. Next, a graphic shows the old paradigm of political power versus the new. The open exchange of ideas, available on the Internet, is inverting the "Pyramid of Power". Citizens are reclaiming, "the consent of the governed".

Page two is a cursory analysis of the elected and appointed members of both the government and the California Democratic Party at every level. These members all have voting privileges. In the Democratic Party, appointed members have if not a majority at least an equal number of votes. That is how the elected members, especially the leadership who do most of the appointing, maintain their power. The Party with a voting majority in each level of the government, local, state and federal, controls the floor of each body of the government and thereby the vote and the outcome of each vote. The wing of the Party in power that has the majority of the voting members in the Party at each level controls the floor of each body of the Party and thereby the vote, the outcome of the vote and the direction of the Party as well as the government. To effect change in America we must control the vote in one political Party and make that Party the majority party in the government.

Page three starts with a brief outline of the upcoming electoral calendar both in the Democratic Party and in general elections. In order to move America in a Progressive direction we must first have a Democratic victory at the polls in November and take back the Federal legislature. However, that won't do us much good unless we follow it with a Progressive majority elected to the Democratic State Central Committee, which happens in January 2007 in each Assembly District caucus.

It is critical that every citizen who wishes to participate in that process as either a voting member of the Assembly District caucus or who wants to run for delegate to the DSCC from those Assembly District caucuses ***MUST REGISTER AS A DEMOCRAT FOR THIS NOVEMBER ELECTION: BEFORE OCTOBER 23rd.*** We have included a proposed coalition meeting of the Progressive Movement in 2007. This would probably be most effective in the fall of 2007 and include representation of all of the Progressive Caucuses in each state's Democratic Party plus representative's of the major national Progressive organizations. No electeds will be allowed to campaign there and no celebrities invited to opine. We should concentrate on group inter-working and refining the Plan as to strategy and tactics. To be effective this meeting should be less talk and more walk.

Finally under tactics we have assembled what we know about the make-up of the various governing bodies of the CDP. As you can see the appointed members control the balance of power. So, we need precise information as to the how, when and where of becoming the electeds so we can then do the appointing and achieve a Progressive Majority of voting members in the Democratic Party.

Following this explanation is the outline of the Progressive Plan: a starting document. We encourage everyone's input and participation. However, time is of the essence. These electoral cycles are ongoing and we need to be prepared for each one and then the next and the next. This process of creating a Progressive Liberal Democratic Party and America will not be easy. It will span at least a decade. Liberals, who we believe are the new center in the Democratic Party, are our natural allies in this endeavor. DLC-Moderates are our opposition but in the spirit of "recycling", which we embrace, we should leave an open door for them to join us when they come home to their principles. We are often asked, "Who is a Progressive?" We offer this guideline: A Democrat is any citizen who votes for Democratic Party candidates. A Liberal is any citizen who believes in the Liberal Ideal as espoused by Americans for over two centuries (e.g. favoring proposals for reform, open to new ideas for progress, and tolerant of the ideas and behavior of others; broad-minded). A Progressive is any citizen who is actively promoting the Liberal Ideal in the political process. However, before action can commence a Progressive must have an understanding of the historical analysis of the prevailing social construct and socio-economic reality as it relates to those who are systematically disenfranchised. With that shared view the Progressive Movement can unite Progressive citizens to create a coalition that brings transformative political policy back into the Democratic Party.

The Progressive Caucus Platform, 2006

The Progressive Caucus of the California Democratic Party has formulated four policy areas to concentrate on at this time. They are in brief:

- 1 – **Out of Iraq**
 - Immediate withdrawal and renunciation of preemptive war
- 2 – **Universal Healthcare**
 - Single-payer healthcare for all Americans
- 3 – **Election Integrity**
 - Election Protection (count every vote as cast)
 - Clean Money (full public financing of campaigns)
- 4 – **Poverty**
 - Eliminate its causes
 - Alleviate its affects

If you agree that these are priority policy issues among the many serious issues of the day then you are a Liberal. If you are actively working to make them happen then you are a Progressive.

Even we though we all may differ as to the nuance of our solutions to these and other problems facing society we must overcome our personal investment in our own ideas and create a consensus that is put into action. We must join with our natural allies, Liberal Democrats, and even though we may know many Democrats who are right wing or cooperating with Republicans and Establishment power brokers we must remain inclusive and welcome them back to their principles as well. As we sweep the DLC cabal from office and the Democratic Party we should leave open the possibility of growth for every Democrat. Our Progressive Plan begins in California, proceeds to every state in the union, and culminates in a Progressive Democratic National Committee. Join with us. Your democracy depends on your participation.

Now is the Time. This is the Place. We are the People.

Stand Up. Show Up. Speak Up.

Signed by:

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Progressive Plan - Progressive Voice - Progressive Action

Progressive Liberal Democrats must have the three essential elements of politics clearly defined for the Progressive Movement to make the transition from outside of the Democratic Party to inside. Those elements are:

- A singular **goal** agreed upon by consensus
- An overarching **strategy** to achieve that goal
- A cohesive set of **tactics** to implement the strategy

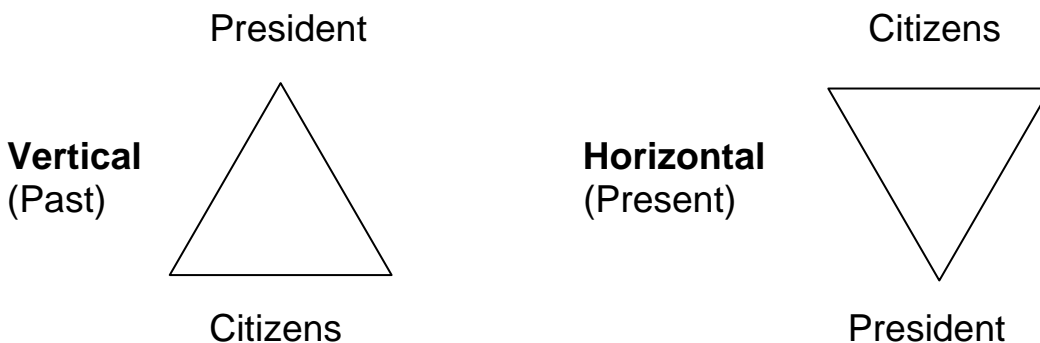
To form a majority in the Democratic Party, Progressive Democrats must align with the new center, Liberals, to wrest control of the Party from DLC Moderates who are the new Right Wing of the Democratic Party.

Progressive – Liberal – DLC Moderate

GOAL

In order to form a more perfect Union, Progressive and Liberal Democrats must *Strategize, Energize and Organize* the Democratic Party at every level. Only then will a Progressive Liberal Democratic government come into being in America.

Pyramid of Power



Political power rests in the citizens who are elected or appointed (selected) to seats in the leadership of political parties (i.e. voting members) and in citizens who are elected or appointed to official offices at the various levels of government.

Government	Elected	Appointed
Federal		
- Executive	X	X
- Legislative	X	
- Judicial		X
State		
- Executive	X	X
- Legislative	X	
- Judicial	X	X
County/Parrish		
- Executive	X	X
- Legislative	X	
- Judicial	X	X
City		
- Executive	X	X
- Legislative	X	X
- Judicial	X	X

Democratic Party	Elected	Appointed
DNC		
- Executive	X	X
- Legislative (members)	X	X
- Ex Officio (Superdelegates)		X
State (CDP)		
- Executive	X	X
- Legislative (Central Committee)	X	X
- Ex Officio (Superdelegates)		X
- Executive Board	X	X
County		
- Executive	X	X
- Legislative	X	X
- Ex Officio (Superdelegates)		X
City		
- Executive	X	X
- Legislative	X	X
- Ex Officio (Superdelegates)		X

STRATEGY

Timeline

- 2008 Nov. General Election
- 2008 Democratic Convention
- 2008 CDP Convention
- 2007 Progressive Movement Coalition Meeting
- 2007 CDP Convention
- **2007 Jan. AD Elections**
- **2006 Nov. General Election**

TACTICS

CDP – Democratic State Central Committee

- Approx. **2826** members
 - **960** (elected by ADs)
 - **933** (elected by CCCs)
 - **933** (includes nominees {& their appointees}, electeds {& their appointees}, State Party Officers {& their appointees}, DNC members)

County Central Committees

- Size differs with each County
 - Most elected from ADs?
 - Others serve ex officio (appointed)

CDP Executive Board

- Approx. **314** -?
 - **80** (elected by ADs)
 - **104** (elected by CCCs)
 - **35** Committee Chairs (appointed)
 - ?? Includes DNC, State Constitutional Officers, State Party Officers, Caucus Chairs