

COMMON SENSE

FOR A

NEW CENTURY



addressed to the

CITIZENS

of

AMERICA

by

GOV. HOWARD DEAN, M.D.

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www.DeanForAmerica.com

“We have it in our power to begin the world over again.”

Thomas Paine

OVER TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO, Thomas Paine wrote a pamphlet that would light the fire that forged our nation. He called it “Common Sense.” Passed from hand to hand, patriot to patriot, it was a call to action for those Americans who believed their government had to change. It spelled out the values of a new republic. And King George III—who had forgotten his own people in favor of special interests—was replaced by a government of, by and for the people. America was born.

Like those early patriots, we face a growing threat to our liberty and justice in America today. Thomas Jefferson and James Madison spoke of the fear that economic power would one day seize political power.

That fear is now being realized—under the Bush administration, pharmaceutical companies draft our Medicare laws. Oil executives sit in the Vice President’s office and write energy bills. A majority of the reconstruction contracts in Iraq goes to corporations headed by campaign contributors to the president.

In the last six years, despite massive corporate scandals and the crash of the NASDAQ, the financial services industry managed to find almost \$168 million to influence the political process. A pharmaceutical and health products industry that can’t afford to sell our seniors cheaper prescription drugs did manage to find \$60 million to influence our elections. And the national debt has exploded to the point where it will cost the median American family \$26,000—because the president ran up the largest deficit in the history of our country in order to pass \$3 trillion worth of tax cuts tilted toward his campaign contributors.

In the matter of war and peace, there was virtually no debate by either party before the invasion of Iraq. The Bush administration uses fear to rally people to its causes. Our nation, once looked to as a beacon of hope from around the globe, now is looked at with suspicion and distrust.

Most alarming, our political process is in crisis, as the majority of Americans turns away from the most fundamental duty of citizenship—voting.

America is better than this. The time has come once again to take our country back. This pamphlet, like Thomas Paine’s, is a declaration of values and a call to action for a new generation of American patriots --
COMMON SENSE FOR A NEW CENTURY.

1

WHERE WE ARE

“Are the special privilege boys going to run the country,
or are the people going to run it?”

Harry Truman

Our country is on the wrong track, and the reason is clear: our government is no longer serving the interests of the people.

The takeover of our politics by what Truman called the “special privilege boys” has been a decades-long process, but it has culminated with the Bush administration. Our executive branch has become a private club for large corporate interests.

Increasingly, large multinational companies write the rules of our economy in Washington, DC for their own profit, while the American people are left to compete for lower wages.

Meanwhile, the executive branch has been consolidating more and more power for itself, running roughshod over the checks and balances our founders established. In October of 2002, our Congress abdicated their power and responsibility to declare war. The political process failed, and now we are paying the price.

The Patriot Act takes away too many rights from ordinary Americans—rights we had come to expect. Nor should John Ashcroft be allowed to detain American citizens without charge and without legal representation.

We are losing our role as a world leader. John Fitzgerald Kennedy said, “The United States, as the world knows, will never start a war.” But President Bush has made that truth a lie. This president has implemented a foreign policy characterized by dominance, arrogance and intimidation. His brand of diplomacy has driven a deep wedge into the alliances and the security organizations we established to safeguard our freedoms and our safety.

The problem is simple: those at the top are gathering more and more power for themselves, and taking more and more power away from everyone else.

But it doesn’t have to be this way. Theodore Roosevelt said it best, “Every special interest is entitled to justice full, fair and complete....but not one is entitled to a vote in Congress, to a voice on the bench or to representation in any public office.”

2

WHERE WE HAVE COME FROM

“Laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind.”

Thomas Jefferson

Our history has been the story of change. The struggle to live up to our founding ideals—justice and equality—has been an ongoing one. When we have seen injustice and inequality in our institutions and our laws, the American people have risen time and again to challenge them.

When the majority of Americans awoke to the injustice of slavery, our citizens decided that no moral future existed for a Republic that allowed the ownership of our fellow human beings.

And once slavery had been abolished, the country went on to guarantee the rights of women.

As America developed its industrial potential, the work of many began to yield vast riches for the few. Industrial barons began to dominate the economic and political systems, subjugating the interests of the people to their own narrow benefit.

The people again rose to the challenge with the birth of the modern labor movement. They fought to put government back on the side of the people, and passed laws to allow the government to deliver a series of landmark reforms, including child labor laws, the forty-hour work week, worker safety laws, and the minimum wage. These measures brought new meaning to the concept of equality—an equality of opportunity.

Later that century, the people came together to fight against racial segregation, joining the Freedom Ride to bring down the barriers to voting, participating in countless demonstrations to protest injustice, and gathering for the March on Washington to hear the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. dream of a day when “the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slaveowners will be able to sit down together at a table of brotherhood.”

And now we enter a new era. After a few decades of relative peace and prosperity, we are beginning to see that our system is once again out of balance, and the interests of the people are not being served. It should not be this way; as Thomas Jefferson said, “Public offices were [not] made for private convenience.”

Our path for the future is clear: it is the path that generations before us have taken. It is to change America the only way it can be changed—through the people.

When our country goes wrong, it is our duty to set it right.

3

WHERE WE CAN GO

“Common sense is seeing things as they are; and doing things as they ought to be.”

Harriet Beecher Stowe

The American people have a capacity for great things. We must once again set ourselves on a course to achieve them—based on those values that have sustained America throughout the centuries:

✧ **Justice.** In a just America, money should not determine the limits of any American’s future, or deny any American the medical advancements that can save and sustain life. Health insurance, prescription drugs and higher education can be accessible and affordable for everyone.

✧ **Fairness.** Our tax burden today falls most heavily on hard work, while wealth is taxed less. We subsidize corporations that are polluting our environment or sending jobs overseas. But we can restore fairness to our tax code—rewarding hard work, ensuring that wealth pays its fair share, and penalizing waste.

Fairness also demands that we address the disparity between the incomes of women and the incomes of men. Closing the wage gap will benefit all Americans.

✧ **Progress.** Today, technologies exist that can form the foundation of our economy for the next century. We should invest aggressively in them, just as when our nation invested in railroads, rural electrification, and in public highways.

We can create a new energy economy, relying on sources that will never run out, including solar power, wind power, ethanol and biomass. Doing so will reduce our dependence on foreign oil and create new jobs for decades to come.

✧ **Moral Leadership in the World.** Harry S. Truman said, “The only expansion we are interested in is the expansion of human freedom and the wider enjoyment of the good things of the earth in all countries. The only prize we covet is the respect and good will of our fellow members of the family of nations. The only realm in which we aspire to eminence exists in the minds of men, where authority is exercised through the qualities of sincerity, compassion and right conduct.” That is the American role in the world that we can restore.

✧ **Self-Government.** We can reform our republic—restoring a democracy in which every person has a voice and our government works for the benefit of all the people.

✧ **Community.** We have an obligation to one another as Americans and as human beings. America will be stronger when we recognize that we are dependent on each other, responsible for each other, and connected to each other.

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How We Get There

“Let each person do his or her part. If one citizen is unwilling to participate, all of us are going to suffer. For the American idea, though it is shared by all of us, is realized in each one of us.”

Barbara Jordan

Only through the action of each of us, working together in common cause, can great change happen in America.

A year ago, the Dean campaign began as a traditional candidacy for the presidency. We hoped to talk about health care for all, and fiscal responsibility that would benefit everyone. But this campaign has grown above and beyond a discussion of the important issues that concern us. It has become a movement that is allowing the American people to reclaim their political process.

We are not funded by a few large corporate interests giving millions, but by millions of people giving a few dollars. We are relying on millions of Americans to get involved in this election by making phone calls, sending emails, writing letters, knocking on doors, and voting.

This movement offers the American people an opportunity to take back the White House, the Congress, our state legislatures, and our local governments. But this can only be done if you claim your responsibilities and your duties as a citizen.

No one is going to change America for you. You must participate to make it happen. **There are three things you can do right now to begin reclaiming our country:**

1 Join more than half a million Americans who have signed up for our cause by visiting www.deanforamerica.com or calling **1-866-Dean-4-US**.

2 Urge your friends to get involved. Ask them to find others to join us in our efforts. Pass this pamphlet along to your neighbors, friends, and coworkers. Only the full participation of the American people can restore our democracy.

3 Join the \$100 Revolution. This President is raising \$200 million from corporate interests in order to buy this election. But we can match the forces of the special interests by getting 2 million Americans to contribute \$100 each to our campaign. If you can't afford \$100, give \$10 and find nine people to do the same, or give \$25 and reach out to three others. Visit www.deanforamerica.com/revolution or call **1-866-Dean-4-US** today.

Our lives are busy and our burdens are many, but together we can revive our democracy. We must renew our commitment to better inform ourselves and others; to question our elected leaders; to conduct a dialogue with our neighbors; and to vote in each election.

To stand up when injustice is done. To protest when rights are jeopardized. To unite for the common good. To fight for what we know is right for our country.

We must do so because, in the words of Thomas Paine: “The sun never shined on a cause of greater worth.”

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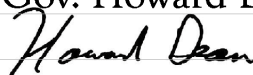
IT BEGINS TODAY

“The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman.”

Thomas Paine

If you are one of the millions who wish for the government to be taken from the hands of the powerful few and restored to the people; if you are one of the millions who wish for a future built upon justice, fairness, progress, and community; if you are one of the millions ready to declare, “America is better than this” – *then help build the greatest grassroots campaign of the modern era.*

- 1 **Make copies of this pamphlet -**
distribute it to everyone you know and leave it in public places for others to find.
- 2 **Get ten Americans to join our cause by signing their names below and on the back.**
- 3 **After the pamphlet is full, please mail it to the following address:**
Dean for America ∞ P.O. Box 1228 ∞ Burlington, VT ∞ 05402

Name: Gov. Howard Dean, M.D.
Signature: 
Email Address: commonsense@deanforamerica.com 1-866-DEAN-4-US
Address: P.O. Box 1228, Burlington, VT Zipcode: 05402

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