

ADOPTION OF A "PEACE PLANK" -- A STRATEGY TO PREVENT NUCLEAR WAR

Testimony before the Platform Committee  
of the Democratic National Convention  
April 9, 1984

by

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The most significant problem facing the next President of the United States is the threat of nuclear war. All other issues involving political and economic justice pale beside it. After all, if we blow ourselves up -- either by design or by accident -- nothing else would matter. It is, therefore, nothing less than suicidal to ignore the nuclear menace. And since we created and continue the menace, we have the capacity to liberate ourselves from it.

The Democratic Party ought to be the party of peace -- that once and for all time puts an end to the nuclear threat. I come here today to urge the Democratic Party to adopt this as its central goal during the next Democratic Administration.

Specifically, I urge the Platform Committee to adopt Senator Alan Cranston's proposed "peace plank" as a necessary and practical guideline. Although Alan Cranston is no longer a candidate for President, his principal message has won the day -- voters across the land support a nuclear freeze, and the remaining Democratic candidates have become forceful advocates of ending the nuclear arms race. Therefore, it is not only sound policy for the Democratic Party to adopt the peace plank, but it is also good politics.

The peace plank which I today urge the Party to adopt includes the following seven points:

(1) The new Democratic President will adopt a policy of No-First-

Use of nuclear weapons.

(2) The new Democratic President will immediately halt the testing and deployment of nuclear warheads, as well as other strategic and theater delivery systems -- and will maintain this halt as long as the Soviet Union does the same.

(3) The new Democratic President will also immediately halt the testing and deployment of all weapons in space, including anti-satellite weapons -- and will maintain this halt as long as the Soviet Union does the same.

(4) The new Democratic President will arrange to meet promptly with the leader of the Soviet Union to initiate sustained negotiations to freeze and reverse the nuclear arms race.

(5) The new Democratic President will vigorously pursue with the Soviet Union a permanent, verifiable and comprehensive ban on the production and deployment of all nuclear weapons, and a ban on the production of all fissionable materials used for such weapons.

(6) The new Democratic President will develop with the Soviet Union a schedule for mutual and verifiable reductions in their stockpiles of nuclear warheads and delivery systems.

(7) And, finally, the new Democratic President will undertake with the Soviet Union renewed efforts to halt the proliferation of all nuclear weapons.

I urge the Platform Committee to adopt this plank. We must wage a campaign for peace this year; we owe it to the men and women who struggled for hundreds of years to create and sustain our democracy; and we owe it to our children who deserve to inherit a world free from the threat of annihilation.

We must wage a campaign for peace this year to expose the fact that behind Ronald Reagan's benign countenance are policies which have brought us closer and closer to war.

And we must wage a campaign for peace this year as if our very lives depended upon it -- because, in fact, they do.