

Summary

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mom's draft 3/1/71

The Democratic Front pledges itself, if given a n opportunity, to give effect to the following programme of action:

I NATIONAL UNITY AND SECURITY

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- 1) The current threats to the unity and security of the country which come from within and without have to be firmly repelled. No quarter should be given to extra-territorial loyalties or interference by others in the country's affairs. Totalitarian parties committed to the destruction of the plurality of political parties and of a democratic polity including the independent judiciary cannot claim and enjoy democratic rights in an unfettered manner.

II DEFENCE OF THE CONSTITUTION AND FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES

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- 2) The liberties of Indian territory under the illegal occupation of China and Pakistan should be one of the key objectives of India's defence policy. Our defence forces have to be strengthened and given greater mobility by adequate Reserve Force of which ex-servicemen will form the core.
 - 3) Our international relations have to be placed on a footing of genuine non-alignment in place of the present one-sided policies. Each issue should be examined as it arises on its merits and the present drift to satellitism should end. Normal and friendly relations between India and Pakistan are essential in the interest and security of the entire sub-continent and good neighbourly relations need to be developed. But such an approach has to be reciprocal and on the basis of mutuality. Appeasement is no way of solving such a problem.

- 4) A stable democracy must inevitably be based on the sanctity of the Constitution which must not be lightly tampered with. This calls for unqualified acceptance of the important role assigned to our Judiciary by the Constitution and an equally unqualified guarantee of the maintenance of the Fundamental Rights enshrined in the Constitution. While the Democratic Front recognises the values of the federal principles in the Constitution and its zealour of the rights and autonomy of the States it feels that there is no reason why a strong Centre should mean weak States or strong States need mean weakness at the Centre. There is need for additional strength to govern at both the Union and State levels, each within their respective spheres. The front does not envisage any need for amendment of the Constitution on this issue. There is need, however, to invoke Article 263 of the Constitution and set up an Inter-State Council to advise the President in this regard so that several State tensions may be relieved.
- 5) In a country such as India which has wide variety of ethnic origins, religions and languages, the treatment of Minorities and Backward Classes assumes great and considerable importance. There should be complete equality ~~as~~ between citizens irrespective of their birth, religions, ethnic origin or caste and all forms of discrimination including untouchability should be removed. The guarantees provided in the Constitution for the protection of religion, language and culture of all such groups should be respected and enforced. There is need for ^{special} ~~such~~ measures to be taken for the uplift of the poorer and more backward sections of the people and the prompt redress of their grievances should be the responsibility of the Government.
- 6) Equality of opportunity and education is a principle which should not only be accepted but worked out in every legitimate and equitable manner. The provision of adequate employment facilities in government services is another urgent task that has yet to be adequately fulfilled.

- 7) A Commission on Civil Rights should be set up which will look into and help correct discrimination against any section of the people in education, employment, economic activities and ensure effective assertion of equality of opportunity in economic and social life.
- 8) The Front will fight every form of communalism. It pledges itself to strive actively to foster in all sections of the people including the minorities a sense of security and of full participation in the national life. The development of Urdu should be encouraged.
- 9) To check communal disturbances all those who are engaged in the administration of law and order should be made personally answerable for not taking preventive measures in time and not dealing effectively with breaches of communal peace.

III MAINTENANCE OF LAW AND ORDER

- 10) There has been an unfortunate abdication of law and order. The lives and liberties of the people have to be protected by effective enforcement of law and order. No quarter should be given to manifestations of violence from whatever quarter they may come.

IV ECONOMIC POLICIES

- 11) The damage done to the economy by mistaken policies and bad planning has to be undone, and the Front would approach the task of expanding the economy with a pragmatic outlook and a sense of urgency.
- 12) The starting point of our economy must, as Mahatma Gandhi used to stress, be Employment. The Front stands for the right to work of every citizen. The creation of adequate employment opportunities is linked inescapably with the growth of the economy as a whole.
- 13) The expansion of the Indian economy, whether in agriculture, trade or industry, can only be achieved if Government policies provide incentives for hard work and enterprises which are at present lacking. Among the factors that will provide such incentives are a stable

currency, reasonable direct and indirect taxes and reducing the mass of red tape in which all economic activity is enmeshed. The ~~needs~~ needs of production and of social justice alike call for remuneration to be linked with productivity.

The problem of unemployment has to be tackled by a *of India*
 14) ~~The front is committed to a massive work programme.~~ The resources needed for such a programme have to be accorded priority in the national budget. For the educated unemployed a separate Corporation will be set up which will help similar State bodies to reorient skills of young people and provide them with financial and technical assistance to set them up in self employment in industry, trade and transport. In both these programmes of rural works and for the educated unemployed 25% of the allocations will be used in a manner whereby the beneficiaries will be those belonging to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other poorer sections of the society. A Department of Economic Opportunities will be added to the Government of India with a budget of its own of Rs. 1000 crores over a five year period.

provision of drinking water, drainage and housing

15) A programme of providing house-sites and rural housing, and of village roads to open up the countryside would be one of the best methods of providing massive employment.

16) Inflationary policies and rising prices have eaten into meagre ~~living~~ ^{the} meagre living standard of the poor and middle classes particularly those with fixed income. Inflation is a major enemy of social justice. All such policies should be abandoned and a stable currency established.

17) Agriculture is and will continue to be India's basic industry and deserves to be given an appropriate priority. Peasant proprietorship and family farming have proved to be the most productive and socially desirable form of cultivating the land and nothing should be done to weaken this system on which our entire rural life is based. At the same time land reforms should be speedily completed and implemented and

tenants and share croppers have to be assured of security of tenure and fixed and fair rents. Landless labourers should be guaranteed a minimum wage and given an assurance that they will share in the fruits of more intensive farming and will be gainfully employed throughout the year.)

✓ 18) Facilities for the insurance of crop and cattle should be provided to our farmers.

19) The efficient functioning of trade and industry depend on the market mechanism being allowed to work smoothly. Where controls are not capable of immediate abolition the administration of all permits and licenses should be entrusted to autonomous boards of economists and experts at both Union and State levels.

20) Imparting of efficiency to government enterprises in order to make them adequately productive and profitable is an urgent task. The government enterprises must have autonomy and ^{be} free from political interference.

✓ 21) Monopoly has to be combatted. The only real cure for monopoly is encouragement and restoration of competition. Where monopoly conditions cannot be avoided a reasonable amount of regulation becomes necessary.

V EDUCATION

✓ 22) + It is necessary to improve the quality of education at all levels, give a vocational bias to higher education and make university education more meaningful than it is today.

VI HEALTH

✓ 23) The essential needs of healthy nourishment to all children and infants have to be provided.

✓ 24) The provision of clean drinking water within five years from now must be given the highest priority.

✓ 25) X Every thing should be done to advance measures of family planning and population control.

VII LABOUR

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- 26) A good day's wage should reward a good day's work. A rise in wage should be linked with increasing productivity otherwise it becomes inflationary and illusory. There should be increasing association of employees with management as ^apart of the Gandhian concept of partnership. Various forms of creating employees' shares in enterprise should be promoted.
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- 27) The Front pledges itself to the maintenance of collective bargaining and the right to strike as part of a free society. While limitations on the right to strike are legitimate in the case of members of the civil services and employees of public utility they should be accompanied by machinery for the reference of disputes between Government and its employees to compulsory arbitration and the award of the arbitrator should be binding on all parties subject only to the control of ~~Parliament~~ Parliament.

VIII ROOTING OUT CORRUPTION

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- 28) The immediate implementation at the Central and State level of the decision to have Lokpal and Lok Ayukta should be effected in order to ensure clean administration to remove injustice and partiality in administration. These independent authorities should be free from any kind of political interference.

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