



ADA TODAY

*A Newsletter for Liberal Activists
from Americans for Democratic Action*

“TIME FOR A NEW DAY”

Adapted from remarks before the ADA’s 2006 Conference

By Bill Dauster

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(These remarks do not necessarily reflect the views of the Finance Committee or any of its Members)

Ambrose Bierce defined a “day” as “a period of twenty-four hours, mostly misspent.” Bierce could well have been speaking of an average day in the administration of President George W. Bush.

For every day of the Bush Administration, the Government has racked up \$1.4 billion more in federal debt. So far, Bush has put every man, woman, and child in America \$10,000 further in debt. For every day of this Administration, the debt that America owes to foreigners has increased by nearly 2/3 of a billion dollars.

The Republicans have had their day. It’s time for a change.

Democrats would restore pay-as-you go discipline for new spending and tax cuts alike. Those rules helped to balance the budget in the 1900s. Under a Democratic majority, they could do so again.

What has the Republican majority spent our money on? Four out of the five pieces of legislation that had the largest effect on the budget during the days of the Bush Administration were tax breaks. These tax breaks gave millionaire households tax cuts averaging more than \$100,000 in 2005 but gave middle-income households tax cuts averaging only little more than \$1,000.

Democrats would extend the \$1,000 child tax credit, which gives tax relief to all taxpayers. Democrats would extend relief from the marriage penalty and focus tax cuts on working families. Democrats would expand the Earned Income Tax Credit, which helps working families making up to about \$34,000 a year. Democrats would not make it our constant obsession to lavish tax breaks on those who don’t need them.

During Bush’s first term, after adjusting for inflation, the income of a typical household declined by more than \$1,600. Real earnings at the top of the income distribution rose 4 percent while the real household income of the poorest fifth fell nearly 8 percent. Wages have been shortchanged, as corporate profits have creamed off more than twice the share of total corporate sector income growth than in the past.

The inflation-adjusted dollar value of the minimum wage has reached its lowest level since 1955. People who work full-time in America should not have to live in poverty. Democrats would fight for laws that protect workers’ rights to organize, both here and abroad. If we do not want American wages to fall to Third World levels, then America needs to work to improve the lot of workers, throughout the world.

For every day of the Bush Administration, the economy has created fewer than 1,400 jobs and fewer than 1,000 private sector jobs. That’s the smallest number of jobs during any administration since Herbert Hoover’s. And that’s less job creation that we need to keep up with the growth in population. For every day of this Administration, the economy has lost 1,600 manufacturing jobs.

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In recession, Democrats would enact Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation promptly, and not abandon it prematurely as did the Bush Administration. Democrats would put in place policies that deal with the kinds of structural dislocation that can occur in today's economy, such as Trade Adjustment Assistance for service workers who lose their jobs because of foreign competition. And Democrats would focus on the policies most likely to generate job-creating stimulus right away, instead of sticking to a tax cut agenda that simply rewards the rich and adds to the long-run deficit.



For every day of Bush's first term, 3,700 more Americans—955 of them children—fell into poverty. The increase in the poverty rate was second only to that of George H.W. Bush as the worst of any administration.

Democrats would provide more quality child care so that mothers can get to work and know that their children are safe and learning. Democrats would expand the ability of states to use education and training to assist welfare recipients. Democrats would work for teen pregnancy prevention. Democrats would work to help the most troubled families, such as those with substance abuse or mental health problems.

Democrats would work for an economy where opportunity grows for all Americans. Democrats would change the welfare debate to be about reducing poverty and ending child poverty, in this generation.

During the Bush Administration, the average premium for family health insurance rose 71 percent. Americans now pay nearly twice as much per person for health care as the citizens of any other country in the world.

The average American woman can expect to live to age 79. The average Japanese woman can expect to live 5 years longer. People can expect to live longer in Canada, France, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, and Britain. Each of those countries spends less per person on health than we do.

For every day of Bush's first term, 4,100 more Americans joined the ranks of those struggling without health insurance and more than 7,500 people lost employer-provided health insurance.

In infant mortality, America ranks 26th out of the 30 industrialized countries that make up the OECD. Infants are 3 times more likely to die in America than in Iceland, more than twice as likely to die than in Japan, Finland, or the Czech Republic. America's poor ranking is largely due to racial disparities. Our health care system is failing African Americans and Native Americans, and every day, babies are dying.

Democrats would encourage better prenatal care. Democrats would fight to improve the Indian Health Service. Democrats would achieve cost savings by allowing the government to negotiate lower drug prices. Democrats would eliminate wasteful subsidies in the prescription drug program. Democrats would invest in stem cell and other medical research to fight the scourge of disease. Democrats would fight to broaden coverage. Democrats would expand Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program to cover more Americans. And. Democrats would work to allow the near-elderly to buy into Medicare.

During the Bush Administration, the price of a gallon of gas has almost doubled and America's dependence on foreign oil increased from 53 percent to 60 even as Vice President Cheney formulated energy policy in cozy closed-door meetings with oil company executives.

Democrats would work for lower gas prices and increase energy independence while cracking down on price gouging. Democrats would eliminate billions in subsidies for oil and gas companies. Democrats would work to develop American alternatives such as biofuels and wind energy. Democrats would promote conservation and energy-efficient technology. It's time for the government to fight for the people, not the oil companies.

During the Bush Administration, Republicans pushed for privatizing Social Security and Medicare. They sought to cut benefits that have helped to keep America's seniors out of poverty and live their retirement in dignity. They sought to change our most successful expression of social insurance from a system where all are in this together to a system where everyone is on their own.

The Bush Administration's ambition to privatize Social Security has not gone away. The Chairman of the House Ways and Means Social Security Subcommittee said Congress should make Social Security overhaul its top priority next year. The Wall Street Journal reported that the White House Chief of Staff "is trying to lay the groundwork for a renewed effort to reform Social Security and Medicare."

Democrats would fight privatization of Social Security and Medicare and would protect the Social Security benefits that working Americans have earned.

Every day of Republican rule means more poverty, higher health care costs, and more without health coverage. Let us work for a change with courage and hope. Let us join together to bring on a new day.



Reuther/Chavez Awardee
Fred Azcarate

Harvard lecturer Richard Parker and ADA Executive Committee Chair Allen Kukovich discuss John Kenneth Galbraith



Rep. Lynn Woolsey (D-CA) was joined by ADA President Emeritus Jim Jontz and Rep. Diane Watson (D-CA)



Eleanor Clift honors Helen Thomas as ADA's Winn Newman awardee



Above, ADA summer interns enjoy a moment with Al Franken

Left, Al Franken presents the Labor Award to AFTRA President John Connolly



2006 ADA CONVENTION

The 2006 ADA Conference and Convention was held June 22-25 at Gallaudet University in Washington, DC. Delegates and conferees began the festivities with a presentation and conversation with Harvard University lecturer Richard Parker. Parker and ADA Executive Committee Chair Allen Kukovich discussed the philosophy and vision of ADA founder John Kenneth Galbraith and how that vision applies now and for the future.

Friday's events included panel discussions and workshops. Talk of policy and politics gave way to the ADA Awards banquet. Emcee Cheryl Kagan guided ADAers through the evening that featured commentator Al Franken presenting AFTRA President John Connolly with the ADA Labor award, Newsweek's Eleanor Clift honoring legendary journalist Helen Thomas with the Winn Newman Lifetime Achievement award, and Jobs With Justice director Fred Azcarate as the Reuther/Chavez awardee.

Saturday and Sunday, delegates hammered out ADA's policy positions and formed a statement of goals and principles for us to act on this coming year. The ADA Action Agenda for 2006 can be found online at www.adaction.org.

ADA's 60th Anniversary Convention will be held June 21-24, 2007 at Gallaudet University in Washington, DC. Mark your calendars and plan to attend!

WORKING FAMILIES WIN

A project of Americans for Democratic Action and the ADA Ed Fund

Working Families Win (WFW) is about changing the economy by helping people connect the dots between what's happening in Washington, and what's happening to our own families, neighbors, and communities



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN WASHINGTON D.C. IS COSTING WORKING FAMILIES...

American families are being pressed by the skyrocketing costs of energy and gasoline. The wages of many workers are declining compared to the cost of living, and good-paying jobs get harder to find. Families are struggling to pay health care and education costs, retirement security is being eroded, and more people are in debt.

Under this Congress, working people, the middle class, and the American dream itself are at risk.

OUR ECONOMY SHOULD WORK FOR ALL OF US...

The economy is growing, the stock market and corporate profits are at record highs, but most working people aren't benefiting from the nation's prosperity. Why are working families falling behind?

- √ Congress hasn't increase the minimum wage since 1997.
- √ Congress hasn't acted to make sure that every American has quality, affordable health care.
- √ Congress has refused to protect the rights of workers to organize and bargain collectively.
- √ Congress has approved trade deals like NAFTA and CAFTA that have made it easier for companies to move jobs to wherever wages are lowest and environmental protections are weakest.
- √ Congress has voted for enormous tax breaks for the richest CEO's, at the expense of families who need help paying for education and health care.

BUILDING A BETTER TOMORROW, TODAY

ADA and Working Families Win are laying the groundwork for a long-term grassroots educational and action oriented network. This broader vision will help working families succeed in Washington and at home for years and decades to come. Find out more at WWW.WORKINGFAMILIESWIN.ORG.

ELECTION SEASON IS HERE

Let's move our country forward by electing a liberal majority



**I Support Our Troops
Not Those Who Sent Them**

AMERICANS FOR DEMOCRATIC ACTION
1110 17th Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036



The 2006 elections are here and their importance cannot be understated. Control of Congress and our ultimate direction as a nation could depend on the outcome. Economic security, healthcare for all, a sane international policy and an end to the Iraqi quagmire could be realized with fresh Congressional leadership.

Please join ADA in vigorously supporting your local candidates of choice by volunteering your time, voice, and any other resources between now and November 7th. And please vote and make sure your friends and family vote too.

ADA-PAC has been supporting key federal candidates in an effort to elect a liberal majority this fall. A list of ADA-PAC endorsements can be found online at <http://www.adaction.org/adapac.htm> or by calling ADA-PAC at 202-785-5980. ASK ABOUT GETTING A BUMPER STICKER TOO. <http://adaction.org/ADAtroopsbumper.htm>

ADA MEMBER PROFILE: LEO GERARD

Leo Gerard, President of the United Steel Workers, has generously agreed to lead our efforts to solicit support for the Campaign for ADA from our friends in Labor and has made a major pledge to help lead the way.

ADA National Director, Amy Isaacs and ADA Board member and Campaign chair, David Yamada met with President Gerard during the 59th Annual Convention in Washington, DC to discuss the Campaign for ADA. The three discussed the main tenants of the Campaign – membership expansion, enhanced organizing and communications tools, exploring new sources of funding - and the goals achieved since its launch last year. President Gerard was particularly pleased to hear the Campaign was focusing on identifying new ADA members and had already recruited more than 1500. A third recruitment currently underway is estimated to bring another 500-800 new members into the ADA family.

Membership expansion is important to both ADA and Labor. Since our founding, when Walter Reuther and David Dubinsky joined Eleanor Roosevelt at the Willard Hotel in 1947, ADA has embraced the issues important to working families. The Campaign for a Fair Minimum Wage, placing Global Trade at the forefront of our 2004 election efforts and currently the Working Families Win project are just a few recent examples. President Gerard's support for the Campaign for ADA stems from his recognition that these crucial programs are greatly enhanced when ADA has a strong and vibrant membership.

In a statement President Gerard said, "Labor needs and welcomes ADA's unfailingly effective support on issues which affect the lives of workers, their families and their communities. We are proud to stand shoulder to shoulder, allied in action, in the fight for social and economic justice."



Eleanor Roosevelt goes over resolutions at an early ADA Convention



John Kenneth Galbraith condemns the Vietnam War in 1967



ADAers gather for the 59th Convention

Join ADA
for our
60th Anniversary
June 21-24, 2007
at Gallaudet
University

Mark your calendars and tell your friends.

ADA MOURNS CONSUMMATE ADAER, VIVA BAYLINSON

It is with deep sorrow that we announce the death of Viva Baylinson. For 54 years, Viva has been a part of ADA — as a young volunteer, chair of the Greater Washington chapter, member of the national board and executive committee and as ADA Banquet logistical coordinator without peer. Viva was in constant touch and was helping to prepare for our 60th anniversary next year. Just this past June, she worked out the seating for this year's banquet. She was a dear friend and will be sorely missed. Viva had just turned 80.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Americans for Democratic Action, 1625 K Street, NW, #210, Washington, DC 20006.



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