

Ah! You are such a throwback to the Weadon time when the C-word was not a curse and

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liberals held the high ground. I'm not sure that

A Better Deal for the American People

At the 1948 Democratic Convention, Hubert H. Humphrey in a now famous speech on Civil Rights firmly asserted that the time had arrived for ...the Democratic Party to get out of the shadow of states' rights and to walk forthrightly into the bright sunshine of human rights. He further asserted that ...People -- People -- human beings -- should be the main issue of the 20th century.

Humphrey understood that centuries of racism and injustice had made it impossible for African Americans to reach their potential as human beings. The wisdom he imparted that day however is applicable not only to racial inequality but economic inequality as well. Racism is still very much a part of the American landscape, but due largely to the eight years of neglect by the Bush administration economic inequality in our nation has increased to the point where millions of our nation's citizens can no longer ever hope to grab a piece of the American Dream.

This destruction of the our nation's middle class has taken place despite undeniable evidence that in the past our nation has thrived when we have taken the time and the effort to bring hope and opportunity to ALL of our citizens. At these critical moments in the past the American people rose up and demanded more from their leaders than the status quo. In the 1930's our nation cheered FDR's call for a "New Deal." In the 1940's Harry Truman's delivered the "Fair Deal" to help America deal with the challenges of the post war world.

The efforts to implement these bold and innovative initiatives always took place amidst the cries of plutocrats and reactionaries who ranted and raved that these calls for economic fairness would put our country on "the road to serfdom." In fact in each case the opposite occurred. Productivity soared, hopes were lifted, and in time these innovative initiatives would play a critical role in the development of a vibrant middle class.

But sadly and regrettably the egalitarian and magnanimous spirit of those times is a distant memory. For this reason, the first priority of a John Edwards administration will be to once again shuffle the economic deck to give the American People a "Better Deal." The Better Deal will enshrine not only political rights but also seek to enact a second Bill of Rights that unlike the first will go beyond the political to the economic and material aspects of life.

This idea is not new, distinguished scholars such as Cass Sunstein and others have called for a Second Bill of Rights for decades. No one until now has had the courage and commitment to implement these challenging but imperative initiatives. Through the auspices of the "Better Deal" the Edward's campaign is ready to once again lead the American people into the sunshine not only of equal rights but also of equal economic opportunity.

What are these initiatives? The enemies of the middle class will call them socialistic; the half-wit morons who inhabit conservative talk radio will go further and call them communist plots. But in reality, these initiatives are basic steps to ensure the human dignity of each and every one of us.

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The "Better Deal" an Edwards's presidency will give the American people will be dedicated to ensuring:

- The right to a useful and remunerative job in the industries or shops or farms or mines of the Nation.
 - * The right to earn enough to provide adequate food and clothing and recreation.
 - * The right of every farmer to raise and sell his products at a return which will give him and his family a decent living.
 - * The right of every businessman, large and small, to trade in an atmosphere of freedom from unfair competition and domination by monopolies at home or abroad.
 - * The right of every family to a decent home.
 - * The right to adequate medical care and the opportunity to achieve and enjoy good health.
 - * The right to adequate protection from the economic fears of old age, sickness, accident, and unemployment.
 - * The right to a good education.

How is
Edwards
to pay
for this
Better
Deal?

The tenets of the "Better Deal" are not new, they are not the product of the modern age but rather lie at the very heart of what it means to be an American. Years before Humphrey challenged the American people to give justice to all of our nation's citizens Andrew Jackson exhorted our country to "*measure the health of our society not at its apex, but at its base. Not with the numbers that come out of Wall Street, but with the living conditions that exist on Main Street.*"

Thus the Better Deal is not a product of a socialist or collectivist past but a simple step on the road to the fulfillment of America's destiny. It is a fact that countless nations throughout the world with far less resources than we have already provided these rights to their citizens. We should do likewise. It will demand sacrifice from each and every one of us, but in the end America will be a much better place when all of our citizens have the opportunity to reach their potential.

Senator Humphrey concluded his 1948 speech by noting that the United States to his mind was the last best hope on earth. I agree. It was true then, and it is true today, but it will not be true for future generations of Americans unless we choose leaders that have the courage, guts and determination to make it so. Vote Edwards; vote a "Better Deal" for America!