



CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF THE PRESIDENCY

*Declaration on Civility and
Inclusive Leadership*



*National Committee to Unite a
Divided America*

Declaration on Civility and Inclusive Leadership

MARCH 2005

The coming years will demand greatness from our nation's leaders and our citizens as we navigate through a time of great domestic and international opportunities as well as challenges that threaten our security and long-term prosperity. The difficulty of this task is magnified by our country's political divisions, for today we are too much a house divided. Yet, if we unite to achieve our common goals, we surely will write a great chapter in America's history.

Civility and inclusive leadership offer proven means of bridging political divisions and forging national unity and commitment. Such national resolve and unity of purpose are essential for marshalling the best talent, regardless of party affiliation, and developing a strategic consensus on the way forward.

Civility does not require citizens to give up cherished beliefs or "water down" their convictions. Rather, it requires respect, listening, and dialogue when interacting with those who hold differing viewpoints. Indeed, civility and inclusive leadership have often been exercised in the American experience as a means of moving to higher, common ground and developing more creative approaches to realize shared aspirations.

Accordingly, the National Committee to Unite a Divided America strongly urges America's leaders to draw strength and wisdom from our nation's greatest achievements arising from inclusiveness and civility.

Preamble

Challenges

WHEREAS, overseas, our nation's wartime challenges include:

- ❖ The continuing war against terrorism worldwide,
- ❖ Continued violence and instability in Afghanistan and Iraq,
- ❖ The extended deployment of our Armed Forces, National Guard, and Reserves,
- ❖ Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and
- ❖ The prevalence of anti-Americanism around the world,

WHEREAS, at home, our challenges include:

- ❖ Defense of the homeland,
- ❖ Runaway healthcare costs and inequities in health insurance,
- ❖ Retirement of the baby-boom generation and the potential insolvency of Medicare and Social Security,
- ❖ Rising federal budget and trade deficits, with an over-reliance on foreign creditors,
- ❖ Threats to our energy security, especially heavy dependence on foreign oil supplies, and
- ❖ Weaknesses in our public education system and often unnecessary barriers to qualified foreign students, which undermine American competitiveness and hinder the timely development of human capital,

From Challenges to Opportunities-

WHEREAS, we also have extraordinary opportunities, such as the historic elections in Iraq in January 2005 and the ensuing openings for democracy elsewhere in the Middle East, to advance the cause of liberty abroad,

WHEREAS, to face these challenges successfully and capitalize on new opportunities, the nation must come together in the spirit of civility and shared commitment to marshal the best minds across political divides, actions that in the past have enabled Americans to realize some of our nation's greatest accomplishments, as exemplified by:

- ❖ The Constitutional Convention, during which President George Washington guided leaders of distinct and often opposing beliefs to find common ground in order to accomplish the near impossible — the creation of a new nation,
- ❖ The mobilization of American science and industry during World War II, made possible by the inclusive leadership of President Franklin Roosevelt, who brought Republicans into his Cabinet, appointed his rival, Wendell Willkie, as envoy, and selected independent-minded Vannevar Bush to marshal American science and research to the cause,
- ❖ The development of a long-term strategy to prevail in the Cold War under President Harry Truman, who engaged Republicans to create domestic consensus for the Marshall Plan, the Berlin airlift, and the creation of NATO,
- ❖ President John F. Kennedy's mobilization of American science and technology, along with the nation's collective will, to energize the space program and, in less than a decade, put a man on the moon, and
- ❖ The heroic sacrifices of first responders and volunteers across the nation on September 11th, along with America's exceptional resilience in the days afterwards, nurtured by President George W. Bush's call for tolerance and unity across religious faiths and political affiliations,

WHEREAS, American global leadership has been most effective when based on the principles of civility and inclusive leadership abroad, as demonstrated by:

- ❖ The creation and performance, under strong U.S. leadership (often indirect), of the North Atlantic Council, NATO's highest governing body, which has maintained a commitment to civility and respect for all views within the alliance, practices that allowed the Western democracies to maintain the unity of purpose needed to prevail in the Cold War,
- ❖ The peaceful transition from Cold War divisions to a predominantly united and free Europe, made possible in large measure by the inclusive leadership of Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush, who engaged allies and erstwhile adversaries to help bring Eastern Europe into the democratic fold,
- ❖ President George H. W. Bush's creation of a broad-based international coalition of 35 nations from across the world to drive Saddam Hussein's forces out of Kuwait during the 1990-1991 Gulf War,
- ❖ President Bill Clinton's success in building and maintaining support within NATO for the 1999 intervention in Kosovo to halt the mass expulsion and killing of ethnic Albanians by the regime of Slobodan Milosevic, and
- ❖ The marshalling of resources to assist victims of the December 2004 tsunami disaster in the Indian Ocean, an enormous task enhanced by President George W. Bush's decisions (1) to send the Secretary Powell-Governor Bush mission to the region and (2) to task former Presidents George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton with mobilizing America's unparalleled network of private charities to assist in the disaster relief effort,

WHEREAS America's private and non-profit sectors, through independent initiatives and government-sponsored commissions, are indispensable for marshalling diverse expertise across ideological lines and for exploring innovative, sometimes contrarian, ideas,

AND RECALLING THAT, in the absence of strong leadership to forge unity of purpose, national disunity, as America experienced in the decades preceding the Civil War and during the Vietnam War, has led to some of the nation's greatest tragedies, for as President Lincoln said, "A house divided against itself cannot stand,"

Resolution

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT WE, The National Committee to Unite a Divided America, urge the President of the United States and Members of Congress to:

- ❖ Increase civility and inclusive leadership, while welcoming constructive advice and debate, to strengthen national unity of purpose and spirit,

- ❖ Marshal the best minds in America, regardless of party affiliation, and

- ❖ Develop bipartisan consultative mechanisms in order to promote consensus building and to ensure strategic coherence and creativity in U.S. policy,

AND, TO ADDRESS OUR IMMEDIATE WARTIME CHALLENGES,
WE urge the President and the Congress to:

- ❖ Mobilize increased public support for the men and women of the Armed Forces, National Guard, and Reserves, as well as for their families and employers back home,
- ❖ Accelerate efforts to marshal the expertise of the scientific and business communities to secure the nation's vulnerable infrastructure from terrorist attack (an effort already advanced by the outreach of the Department of Homeland Security), and
- ❖ Increase efforts to rally Americans of all political persuasions to accept broader shared sacrifice in order to advance the common objectives of securing peace and security in Afghanistan and Iraq and of securing the American homeland from attack,

AND, TO REVITALIZE AMERICA'S ROLE AS AN INDISPENSABLE
GLOBAL LEADER, WE encourage the President and the Congress to:

- ❖ Build and expand international resolve and cooperation to de-legitimize terrorism, defeat determined insurgencies in Afghanistan and Iraq, and halt the spread of weapons of mass destruction,
- ❖ Fully exploit the diplomatic potential of Congress through the use of Congressional delegations overseas and joint parliamentary forums, such as the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, and
- ❖ Strengthen America's ability to communicate with and engage other societies by reinvigorating public diplomacy across all federal agencies that communicate to audiences abroad and by integrating private sector expertise into this endeavor,

AND, ADDITIONALLY, WE urge our national leaders to cooperate with and support the nation's independent and university-based research and policy institutes, which are at the forefront of efforts to mobilize America's creative talent across political viewpoints in order to develop innovative solutions to our nation's challenges,

AND, FURTHERMORE, AT THE STATE AND LOCAL LEVELS, WE

- ❖ Urge Governors, Mayors, State Legislators, and Local Government Officials to initiate and participate in efforts to pull together the creative talent of our local communities in order to advance our shared objectives, and

- ❖ Encourage our nation's educators to develop new ways of instilling the spirit of civility, cooperation, and shared sacrifice in our leaders of tomorrow, from primary school to the graduate level,

AND, FINALLY, WE remind our national leaders that they set the tone of our national discourse and set the example, for good or ill, which our young people will follow.

ABOVE ALL ELSE, at a time when the nation is at war and faces other vulnerabilities, the President, the Congress, and other national leaders must develop a strategic consensus for the way ahead and unite the American people in the spirit of civility and shared sacrifice, as was so evident immediately after the tragedy of September 11, 2001.

AS PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH STATED
IN HIS INAUGURAL ADDRESS IN 2000 -

“America, at its best, matches a
commitment to principle with a
concern for civility. A civil society
demands from each of us good will
and respect, fair dealing and
forgiveness. . . We must live up to
the calling we share. Civility is not
a tactic or a sentiment. It is the
determined choice of trust over
cynicism, of community over
chaos. And this commitment, if
we keep it, is a way to shared
accomplishment.”

FURTHERMORE, TO RECALL THE WORDS
OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN -

“The dogmas of the quiet past are
inadequate to the stormy present.
The occasion is piled high with
difficulty, and we must rise with
the occasion. As our case is new, so
we must think anew, and act anew.
. . . Fellow-citizens, we cannot
escape history.”



INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP: TSUNAMI RELIEF 2005

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THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF THE PRESIDENCY

First and foremost, the Center aims to strengthen Presidential leadership. The award-winning *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, now in its 35th year, is the premier academic journal on the Presidency. *Triumphs and Tragedies of the Modern Presidency: Seventy-Six Case Studies in Presidential Leadership*, prepared just prior to the 2000 Presidential election, provides historical examples of transformational Presidential leadership to White House and Congressional leaders, key agency officials and a growing number of college and university students.

The Center also seeks to improve government by better organizing for leadership. Programs address homeland security; increased investment in basic science research, innovation and public health systems; global economic stability; and better communicating America's values, heritage, institutions and beliefs globally.

Moreover, because the Office of the Presidency is maximized when the Executive and Congressional branches work together, the Center seeks to strengthen Executive-Legislative relations by promoting bipartisan cooperation among the branches of government and within Congress.

The National Committee to Unite a Divided America promotes a deeper understanding of how America has employed civility and inclusive leadership throughout history to overcome severe challenges and realize many of its greatest accomplishments. Using these lessons as a guide, the National Committee encourages our current national leaders to bridge political division and forge national unity of purpose as the nation navigates through a time of great challenges and opportunities.

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CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF THE PRESIDENCY

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The National Committee to Unite a Divided America wishes to express its appreciation to Phyllis d’Hoop, Project Director, Jeff Thomas, Research Fellow, and John Boyer, Research Assistant, for their work on CSP’s Initiative on Civility and Governance. The Committee would also like to thank Tom Kirlin, CSP’s Chief Operating Officer, as well as Robert Henderson, Mary O’Connor, Cora Mendoza, Wesley Cross and Tiffany Fountain for their assistance in this effort, especially in reaching out to the many individuals across America who signed the *Declaration*.

The Center for the Study of the Presidency thanks the more than 150 distinguished national leaders who joined in this endeavor.