

George McGovern

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Dear Friend:

At Miami Beach in early July, the most open Democratic National Convention in history brought us to the threshold of a new era in American life and government.

Now, if you and thousands of others like you will give me your heart and your hand, we can step across the threshold together.

We can move forward to restore the reverence for life and concern for each other that have been the true source of America's greatness.

Our "people's campaign" for the Democratic presidential nomination was considered a hopeless cause when we began.

But hundreds of thousands of you rallied to the cause of rededication to the American dream.

You worked and you gave to an unprecedented degree. You helped me prevail against overwhelming odds.

Now we face the even greater challenge of defeating Richard Nixon and everything he stands for.

Once again, the voices of defeat and skepticism are saying that we can't win, just as they did when the primaries began. Once again they are sadly mistaken.

We shall win because we must win.

Something is wrong with our beloved country, and it must be set right.

In having stubbornly pursued an unpopular, unjustified war in Vietnam for nearly ten years, we have wasted our strength, hardened our hearts, disillusioned our youth, and neglected our needs.

Our vitality and confidence as a great people are undergoing the most serious threat since the Great Depression of 40 years ago.

In June of last year, a national survey on the hopes and fears of the American people showed that 47% thought it likely there would be "a real breakdown in this country."

"Traditional optimism about the nation's steady progress has faltered," the authors of the survey concluded. "The average American feels that the United States has slid backwards in the past five years."

President Nixon made the fatal mistake back in 1969 of deciding to try to cure inflation with the traditional Republican medicine of unemployment. It was called "cooling off the economy." The result has been both heavy unemployment and continued inflation.

Even though we are supposed to be the richest country in the world, 6 percent of those in the labor market can't find work. Vietnam veterans and Ph.D. physicists are tramping the streets with dispossessed farmers and Black youngsters looking for jobs. In predominantly Black cities like Newark, the unemployment rate ranges as high as 30%.

Nearly 14 million of our people are clinging to life on welfare benefits below the poverty level.

Dope addiction and street crime are spreading like creeping rot -- and the Nixon Administration is simply not living up to its promises to deal with them.

Our personal freedoms guaranteed by the Bill of Rights are being undermined by government wiretapping, intimidation of television and newspaper journalists, F.B.I. spying at legitimate political gatherings.

Our inner cities are dying. Entire neighborhoods, devastated by riots of neglected people and abandoned by absentee landlords, look almost like city blocks bombed and burned out by war.

Our streams and lakes are being choked to death by industrial waste and raw sewage. Even the life-giving air we breathe is threatened by the pollutants from belching smokestacks and automobile exhaust pipes.

We have the technological skills to end pollution. But it will be enormously costly -- and we are told that our country simply can't afford it. It has been estimated that cleaning up our waters alone could cost \$316 billion by 1985.

But there is never any question about our being able to afford more nuclear war gadgetry. The Pentagon generals are not satisfied with our military capability to destroy every Russian and Chinese target 10 times over by several thousand nuclear warheads and 3 separate delivery systems. They want up to \$47 billion more for a fleet of new B-1 bombers, up to \$11 billion more for a space shuttle, up to \$100 billion more for a new fleet of ULMS nuclear submarines.

And, in the words of the popular song of the 1930's, "the rich get richer, the poor get poorer." Through oil depletion allowances and other tax loopholes for the favored few, many wealthy individuals and corporations pay no taxes at all each year.

But the middle and lower income groups suffer progressive income taxation in reverse. Through sales taxes, school taxes, and other crushing burdens, they are forced to pay more than their fair share of the cost of government.

We can't go on this way. The people's confidence in their government and themselves is at stake.

There is a deep national craving for new leadership, free from the mistakes of the past, free to lead us out of the quicksand of Vietnam, the despair of the cities, the despoiling and decay of the countryside.

We need leadership, too, that will tell the truth and restore trust in government. The Credibility Gap in Washington has become a chasm.

I want to provide that leadership in the White House. And with your help, I am confident I can win the right to do so.

My surprise victories in the presidential primaries were made financially possible by a great outpouring of mostly small donations from more than 150,000 contributors. Now we want to finance our election campaign the same way.

In my acceptance speech at the Miami Convention, I said:

"Let the opposition collect their \$10 million in secret money from the privileged few. Let

us find one million ordinary Americans who will contribute an average of \$25 each to this campaign -- a million-member club with members who will not expect special favors for themselves but a better land for us all."

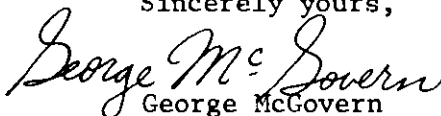
To achieve this, we have established the McGovern Million-Member Club. Our goal is one million concerned citizens who will give to make possible a victory over Richard Nixon in November.

It doesn't matter whether you can give only \$5 or can afford \$1,000. The important thing is that all those reached by our appeals -- Democrats, Independents, and disappointed Republicans -- respond appropriately according to their means and the depth of their concern.

By thus backing a campaign which belongs to the people, you can elect a President who will be responsible to the people and not to vested interests.

Won't you join us in this great endeavor? This 1972 campaign can be a watershed in American history, and this is your opportunity to play a meaningful part in it.

Sincerely yours,


George McGovern

P.S. After President Jackson was elected as a "people's candidate" in 1828, he threw open the doors of the White House on Inauguration Day and let the people come in.

Inspired by his example, I wish it were possible to invite everyone who gives to my campaign to come to a People's Dinner Party at the White House after my inauguration next January.

Obviously, inviting a million people would be impossible. But we will have a People's Dinner Party anyway, and the invitation list will be made up by selecting 250 names at random from our total list of contributors. I hope you will be one of them.

G.S.M.