Jobs and Income

Every person who wants to work has a right to a job—a job which pays a living wage and offers opportunities for advancement. Those who cannot work—the elderly, the disabled, single parents with small children—should receive enough income to afford them the basic necessities and allow them to live with dignity.

I. Charge private industry with job creation and job training

- Require companies which reap a large profit to hire and train the unemployed.
- Require companies which receive contracts from the government to hire and train the unemployed, and—if they are engaged in projects in low and moderate income communities—to hire first from the community.
- Require companies which make workers "obsolete" through technological change and automation to retrain these workers in new, employable skills at company expense.
- Require private industry to use the technology which creates the most jobs and uses natural resources most efficiently.

II. Charge government and big business with the final responsibility for full employment.

- Create a national youth entitlement program which guarantees a part time job and skill training to any youth who remains in school.
- Establish a community jobs corps in every low and moderate income neighborhood.
- Require all government funded projects based in local communities to give preference in hiring to residents of those communities.
- Mandate that all government funded job training be in trades which currently offer opportunities for employment, and are likely to offer employment opportunities in five years as well.
- Insure that public employment isn't "make-work" in character; mobilize youth and the unemployed to do the work that needs to be done in America, such as rehabilitating housing, repairing the railbeds, providing public transportation for the elderly, cleaning up the environment, dispensing health care as paramedics, and providing day care for the children of working parents.

III. Provide an adequate income to every American.

- Guarantee a *minimum annual family income* at a figure equivalent to the current Bureau of Labor Statistics "medium living standard".
- Extend minimum wage coverage to *all* wage-earners and peg increases in it to the cost of living.
- Reform public benefits programs (social security, welfare, disability, etc.) by:
  - a. Allowing more outside earnings as an incentive to work.
  - b. Preventing increased income payments from being erased by automatic increases in public housing rent, Medicare premiums, and food stamp payments.
  - c. Providing automatic increases pegged to the cost of living.
- Make pensions transferable from job to job.
- Establish national standards for disability under workmen's compensation.
- Base unemployment payments on the size of the unemployed worker's family.

IV. Establish the fundamental rights of workers, to include:

- The right to a job which does not endanger health or safety.
- The right to a job which is accessible from home.
- The right to a job which does not require overtime work as a condition of employment.
- The right to company-financed daycare for the workers' children.
- The right to a fair grievance procedure.
- Most fundamentally, the *right to organize,* which is to be promoted by:
  - a. Extending National Labor Relations Act protection to *all* workers.
  - b. Streamlining the union election and certification process.
  - c. Restricting the use of anti-strike injunctions by the courts.
  - d. Providing stiff penalties—back wages times five—for employers who fire or demote workers for their organizing activities.

Rural Issues

I. Preserve the family farm

- Restrict agricultural tax breaks to family farmers only.
- Redesign the agricultural price support programs to weight them in favor of small and medium-sized farms, and to enable farmers to earn a *parity of income* with non-farm wage earners in this country's median income bracket.
- Enforce provisions of the 1902 Federal Reclamation Act which limit the amount of federally irrigated land a single person or farm corporation can own.
- Protect family farmers from crippling property tax burdens through mechanisms such as circuit breakers, land trusts, and agricultural tax districts.
- Shelter small family farms from the full brunt of inheritance taxes by granting deferrals or partial exemptions to the heirs as long as they continue to work the farm.
- Set up public land pools through which states can acquire abandoned, foreclosed, or tax delinquent farm property and lease it or sell it at below market price to families entering farming.
- Establish special credit programs offering "Lifeline interest rates" for purchase of land and equipment by families entering farming.
- Create a "family farm extension service" to provide research and technical assistance to small farmers and part-time farmers, using retired farmers as extension agents.
- Levy a punitive tax on short-term speculation in agricultural land.

II. Break monopoly control of the food industry

- Prohibit investor-owned, non-farm corporations and non-resident alien corporations from owning agricultural land.
- Use anti-trust action to break up the monopoly control of agricultural marketing and commodity storage by the large "middleman" corporations, and empower federal and state