

PROGRAMME OF PRINCIPLES

Approved by the Party Conference on 11-13 June 1993

This programme of principles sets out the values and ideals on the basis of which the National Coalition Party builds its view of a better world. The principles are meant as guidelines, and critical and open discussion of values and ideals must go on within the party. In this way the National Coalition Party will continue to serve as a society-developing citizens' party in the future as well.

WE WANT TO CHANGE THE WORLD

Human individuals are part of and dependent on nature. Our values, goals and activities affect the life opportunities and welfare of the entire planet, nature and other people. We must be aware of our responsibility. Our values and choices change the world.

Humanity's greatest challenges are how to solve environmental questions and the growing population problem, how to promote peace and welfare and its more balanced distribution all over the world, how to develop democracy and how to ensure individual freedom.

The National Coalition Party, as a future-oriented citizens' party, has as its fundamental values the securing of the conditions for life, individual freedom and responsibility, spiritual growth, equality and security, pluralistic democracy and a market economy operating on people's and nature's terms.

The importance of securing the conditions for life

We value life, which has developed over billions of years, in all its forms. We want to preserve nature and natural resources for future generations in all their diversity and in such a way that the basic conditions for life will not be weakened. The National Coalition Party considers securing the conditions for life its most important value.

Our goals: individual freedom, responsibility and spiritual growth

Individual freedom and social and economic security help create the preconditions for the unlimited advance of spiritual development. Spiritual growth increases individuals' possibilities to fulfil themselves, to live a full life and to improve the quality of life. It provides capabilities to bear responsibility for oneself and one's deeds as well as for other people and the development of society. Each man and

woman must be able to determine his or her own goals and objectives for spiritual growth.

Promoting equality and security

Each person is equally valuable. No one should be discriminated against because of age, sex, disability, language, conviction, nationality, race, place of residence or other factors. The differences between people are an asset; they should never be a reason to trample on the rights of anyone. Ensuring individual freedom requires equality. Striving for equality, or the creation of equal opportunities, is the key social goal of the National Coalition Party. In order to promote equality society must guarantee citizens' basic material and spiritual security.

Support for pluralistic democracy

Democracy is the best way to decide common matters from the viewpoint of individual freedom and equality. Openness, honesty, and respect and consideration for the opinions of others are the foundation of democracy. Supporting pluralism means encouraging the expression of competing views and recognizing their value. Individual freedom and equality can be achieved only in a pluralistic and democratic society in which women and men are assured equal opportunities to participate. Critical and open discussion should be promoted for this reason.

Building a market economy on nature's and people's terms

The economy is a tool to produce welfare and divide its fruits. It must work efficiently within the limit of nature's welfare and ensuring people's basic security. The market economy must operate in an ecologically sustainable and socially just manner, under democratic control. When social objectives are taken into consideration, markets can operate efficiently and freely on the basis of supply and demand.

International cooperation on a Finnish basis

The National Coalition Party's point of departure is Finland's independence. Increased interaction and interdependence between nations are the means whereby all the people in the world can be ensured the basic conditions for life and opportunities for qualitative growth and participation in the future. In international politics, independent Finland must be active and take initiatives. In this activity the same principles should be observed as at the national level.

1. INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY

The National Coalition Party bases its policies on people as conscious and creative individuals who are seeking what is good according to their own concepts. The individual is always a member of and dependent on a community. The limits to individual freedom are set by other people's rights and the welfare of nature. In order to ensure these a democratic community must have the right to limit the individual's freedoms, but no more than is indispensable.

Life is a constant process of making choices. In their choices individuals must also have the freedom to come up with new and creative solutions independently of others. This ability to be different signifies a fresh and versatile human community which encourages creativity.

Freedom always includes responsibility. Each person must be encouraged to make independent decisions, to take responsibility for his or her decisions, to treat other people as equals and to exercise his or her rights. The National Coalition Party values Nordic democracy, the principles of humanism and Christian ethics.

Individuals also bear responsibility for the development of the community. This takes place through political choices and through people's entire way of life. We have a duty to live as we believe is right according to our values and expect others to live.

Every person must have the broadest possible freedom of choice regarding his or her own way of life. Genuine individuality for everyone can only come about if people are ensured cultural, social and economic opportunities to choose their way of life. Government should not interfere in individuals' decisions regarding their own lives unless these involve destroying nature or infringing on the rights and freedoms of other people.

Sex roles are a limiting factor when women and men make their choices regarding the way they want to live. In order to achieve individuality, restricting role expectations should be dismantled. We can develop equality by favouring those in a weaker position.

2. SPIRITUAL GROWTH IMPROVES THE QUALITY OF LIFE

The National Coalition Party wants to create proper conditions for spiritual growth and creativity. Every person is the best expert when it comes to his or her own spiritual growth. We want everyone to have individual preconditions to develop himself or herself by offering equal opportunities for a pluralistic cultural

environment. Spiritual growth includes the rejection of selfishness and attempts to oppress others. In so acting one has the right to expect others' approval.

People should have the opportunity to continue learning and studying and to the training of one's choice at the most suitable stage of life. The structures, contents and dimensions of education should be determined primarily according to individuals' choices. The economic basis of continued spiritual growth must be strengthened.

Education should be based on pluralism, initiative, individuality, social interaction and criticality. Education should provide not only the ability to acquire and utilize knowledge, but also the bases for forming one's own values and world view. Instruction should acknowledge and make clear the values on which it is based.

Education is the foundation which gives rise to new currents and achievements and adaptations in art and science. "Intellectual capital" is an asset which grows as one uses it. Spiritual growth, unlike material growth, is unlimited. The National Coalition Party's goal is to keep on raising the level of education and spiritual growth. Individuals' spiritual growth should be encouraged throughout life.

The task of science is to create new knowledge and in this way develop society. Science should be free and independent. It should also be open to criticism and influences. Society's task is to arrange the proper conditions for research and higher education. The future is created with the help of science and technology. In engaging in and utilizing science and technology, it is essential to respect and promote humanity and the preservation of nature.

A pluralistic cultural approach requires that the expression of competing views be encouraged in all fields of cultural life. Arts and sciences are part of humanity's common, indivisible cultural heritage, which should be protected. Culture should be promoted through creativity and by recognizing the value of different views.

The Finnish way of life includes rich cultural currents, which are developing and diversifying as dealings with others increase. A pluralistic tradition based on new interaction is being created on this foundation. Linguistic and national minorities should have the possibility to preserve and develop their own cultures.

For the National Coalition Party patriotism is joy and pride in national achievements, confidence and faith in the future.

3. PEOPLE DEVELOP AS PART OF A COMMUNITY

As a member of a group and community, the individual's personality grows. Membership may have a limiting effect on freedom, but at the same time it increases security and opportunities for development. This development and preservation of human interaction is influenced a great deal by how equally people treat one another. As social and independent members of communities, people must be recognized as equal. Each person's human value must be inviolable.

The individual's growth is influenced significantly by human relations in different stages of life and the different communities they form. Close human relations, the home and the family in its different forms play a key role in the development of the individual's emotional life. From the viewpoint of childhood and youth, the individual's relations with those around him or her are important and their development in a manner which supports the individual's personality and spiritual growth should be strengthened.

Work is the making of one's own active contribution. It creates welfare for society and provides many other values in addition to income. Work is part of life and its content and is an important factor influencing the development of personality. It is the individual's interaction with other people and nature.

Working life should be developed in a flexible direction which supports the individual, his or her gifts and interests. Structures and management cultures which oppress people should be abolished. Possibilities to influence decisions regarding work should be increased and responsibility for the results of work should be expanded.

Many problems between people and communities are due to a lack of discussion and poor awareness of the goals, motives and operating environment of others. Interaction and dealings with one another help to eliminate prejudice towards other cultures and their representatives. The National Coalition Party supports international thinking and broad interaction between citizens.

4. AN ECONOMY ON PEOPLE'S AND NATURE'S TERMS

The National Coalition Party wants to develop a market economy which is based on individuals' resourcefulness, enterprise and private property and recognizes responsibility for nature and people. An eco-social market economy should work under democratic control in an ecologically sustainable and socially just manner. In the market economy each person should be provided opportunities to improve his or her welfare through creativity and hard work. Attention must be given at the same time to individuals' basic security.

The market economy is also the most efficient way to achieve the effective utilization of limited resources at the individual level. In the opinion of the National Coalition Party, the central principles of the market economy are decentralized decision making, competition, private ownership and enterprise. The decentralization of decision making on the market should be assured with the help of transparency and legislation.

The market economy offers positive opportunities and freedoms. At the same time it is a demanding operating environment for individuals because of the risks involved. Taking care of social security is an essential part of the eco-social market economy.

A market economy bearing responsibility for the environment

In a market economy it is possible to include the price of using the environment and natural resources in products. In this way the economy in itself strives to conserve natural resources and protect natural values. Now people have in many cases exploited natural resources and the opportunities offered by the environment above a sustainable level. This has made possible a high standard of living materially for a small part of humanity. At the same time, however, we have rapidly reduced nature's and the human community's possibilities in the future.

In all significant administrative and economic decision making, environmental effects must be comprehensively evaluated before decisions are made. This is important both to anticipate changes in nature and to reduce problems and also to include environmental costs in economic activity.

Environmental costs must be made visible and effective. This must be achieved in such a way that environmental protection is made attractive and pollution expensive by adding to the costs of products and activities a price equivalent to their environmental detriments. Individuals' desire and ability to act in a way which conserves the environment will make environmental protection effective. In order to achieve environmental goals, informational, administrative and economic means should be used, such as taxes based on environmental damage or rewards based on achieved savings. In every situation economic guidance cannot operate effectively, however, in which case administrative regulations must be relied on. These principles should also be followed internationally.

The determination of ownership of land and natural resources and the pricing of different types of damage are important for nature's tolerance and compensation questions so that benefits and detriments can be focused properly and their size can be determined. This requires the pricing of environmental damage in money terms.

The purpose of taxation is to finance public services. The basis of income taxation should be people's ability to participate in covering common costs. Taxes should be collected in such a way that motivation to work is increased and the load on the environment is decreased. For this reason the focus of taxation should be shifted from income to consumption. A shift should also be made to taxation on the exploitation of natural resources, in which the National Coalition Party believes that the "causer must pay" principle should be applied.

Social security for everyone

Individuals' changing life situations and the proper functioning of society require comprehensive social security. Maintaining a social safety net is our ethical duty. It increases security, the willingness to take risks, and interest in work and enterprise. Each person should strive to take care of his or her own welfare as far as possible.

The National Coalition Party defends the development of basic and earnings-related security as an essential part of guaranteeing individuals' ableness, public health, equal opportunities and economic activity. Basic security should cover the most common social and individual life situations in which people require society's assistance. These include sickness, unemployment, studies, old age, childhood, work disability, parenthood, handicaps, the death of a guardian and care work in the home. Each person must bear a reasonable share of the burden for earnings-related welfare, which also requires lowering income taxation. Basic security is important stabilizing and assisting force for everyone. Earnings-related security should remain statutory in the future, since it is for many people the primary guarantee of social security economically.

In health and welfare services emphasis should be placed on quality and individual choices. These can be achieved best through competition between public and private services and by increasing the citizens' society's own supply of services. Basic services in the field of health and welfare must be available to everyone. Users must bear responsibility for financing services on the one hand and have the right to choose services on the other.

Finnish society's structural unemployment problems will be difficult to overcome. The main responsibility for employment lies with an economic policy which encourages enterprise and work. Employment should be supported through labour, education and social-policy means. Improving employment requires flexibility in working life and measures to increase demand for labour.

The basis of regional policy should be to strengthen the characteristic features of different regions of the country. Society should ensure possibilities for regional development in accordance with local features and preconditions. Enterprise and

the availability of services should be increased in those areas which are clearly in a weaker position compared with the rest of the country. The preconditions for preserving rural areas and nature and for practising related industries should be strengthened. Sustainable agriculture and forest-based industries have a key significance in preserving the vitality of rural areas.

5. JUST DEVELOPMENT WORLDWIDE

Expanding possibilities to choose should also be considered the basic principle in international activities. We apply the political principles we approve to dealings between nations around the world. In international politics it is necessary to focus on the means which can be used to ensure the basic preconditions of life, opportunities for spiritual growth and equal participation for all people regardless of what nation they are citizens of.

As a result of states' practically unlimited right to self-determination, it has often been impossible to solve conflicts between states, nations and people peacefully. Traditional international politics based on dealings between states has not been able to meet key challenges for the future of humanity, such as uncontrolled population growth, hunger, poverty, the destruction of the environment, the arms race, wars, infringements of human rights, the problem of refugees and illiteracy. These problems, which are interconnected, require a new kind of international security approach which is based on increasing interdependence and dealings instead of armed aggression or threats of such aggression.

With interdependence increasing, the operating principles of international communities will become more and more important. Cooperation will in the future be more clearly between citizens and on the basis of ideologies and no longer simply between nations. No one can solve problems simply by promoting selfish national interests.

It is necessary to create a more efficient and just international cooperation system with which to resolve international conflicts peacefully and in a way which binds independent states. The international community bears key responsibility for eliminating the causes of violence and preventing conflicts. For this reason the position of the United Nations should be strengthened and its structure should be reformed.

Development is the increasing of both spiritual and material welfare, and problems related to development cannot be solved with thinking based on material growth alone. Development should be seen as a cultural whole. In order to be sustainable it must be in harmony with the vitality of the ecosystem.

Development cooperation is bilateral interaction which also provides stimulus to change western development thinking towards a more sustainable eco-social economy. Finland should support the solution of problems where they arise or in nearby areas. As a member of the international community, Finland must also be ready to bear responsibility for the results of problems such as refugees at the national level.

International trade and the international economy should be based on the principles of the eco-social market economy. In order to increase interaction and justice, the goal should be freer world trade, which should include systems to prevent social and ecological speculation. Eliminating economic barriers and repairing the structures of international trade will in most cases improve the position of the developing countries better than traditional development cooperation.

Regional integration is positive development since it creates good preconditions for political and economic stability in the entire area. In order to avoid confrontations between regions, the worldwide cooperation system must be developed at the same time.

European integration will increase economic and political stability in Europe. In the future Finland must strive in the process of integration to increase openness, deepen pluralistic democracy and promote the rights of the individual. In the name of democracy it is important to increase the significance of parliamentary procedure in issues regarding European integration.

Independent Finland must continue to work actively and take initiatives in international politics. Globally this takes place in different organizations of the United Nations. It is vitally important for Finland to engage actively in dealings with neighbouring areas, to strengthen cooperation in the Baltic area and in arctic areas and to increase interaction in Europe. Nordic cooperation should be further strengthened.

In the international community it is important for Finland to work actively and consistently in international political situations on behalf of peaceful solutions. The ultimate goal should be the dismantling of weapons systems. The use of armed force must in every situation be regarded as an extreme last-moment solution. Finland should maintain a credible defence ability and will in line with its security environment.

6. GENUINE DEMOCRACY

Supporting the existence of competing ideas and opportunities to influence society are among the guiding principles of the National Coalition Party. This concept of

pluralistic democracy separates it from most other ideologies. Democracy also includes the powers of society's members, which are given expression in participation, representation and supervision.

Conflicts should be resolved without violence and in a democratic manner. On the one hand every individual and community has the right to defend its existence and vital interests. Democratic decision making is a way to regulate and arbitrate differences in values and interests. In this way it is possible to ensure the position of the weaker members of the community, each individual's minimum benefits and a basic level of freedom of choice. Value conflicts cannot be resolved but should be represented in the exercise of social power according to the support they receive.

Citizens' basic rights should be set out in broad form in the constitution. Our basic rights include the right of nature to a multifaceted existence. The implementation of rights in practice should be monitored. Citizens are entitled to have infringements of basic rights dealt with in court.

Political decision making is always based on values and judgments. In order to make decisions we also need information and expertise, and for this reason it is important to ensure the availability of research data from different sources. Democratic decisions cannot be based on facts alone. Democracy is harmed by faith in a single alternative in each situation and over-emphasis on the significance of expert information.

The centralization of power and infringements of democratic procedure are a constant problem in politics. Male and female role expectations also continue to limit equal participation in the exercise of power. The exercise of power is demanding and can lead to abuses. We should protect ourselves against this by emphasizing decision makers' personal responsibility and simplifying administrative structures. Each individual should also bear moral responsibility for his or her solutions as a member of the group.

Democratic decision making based on openness, honesty and pluralism is the best way to resolve the conflicting aspirations of society's members. Criticism and public discussion are part of decision making. Pluralism and the right to differing opinions require free information which is independent of those exercising power.

Finnish democracy, which is based on local decision making in municipalities and organizations, depends on citizens' strong demand for democracy and related expectations. Citizens' confidence in public power and the exercising of this power can be strengthened by developing the forms and content of decision making. Democracy should be renewed and given a genuine form. At best genuine democracy is decision making and activity on an equal basis in which citizens commit themselves to common goals.

Real decentralization of power is the shifting of decision-making authority to the people themselves. Hierarchies should be lowered and people's direct participation possibilities should be improved. This can take place by developing new forms of democracy such as user and customer democracy.

In addition to representative decision-making bodies, the exercisers of power in society include interest organizations, the media, economic life, experts and civic organizations. In the opinion of the National Coalition Party, representative decision-making systems are the primary exercisers of power. People's views are relayed through other channels besides the representative system. The birth of new forms of influencing others should be encouraged when old channels do not work in the way people desire.

Research, education, new technology and civic activity improve citizens' possibility to influence matters and increase democracy. This process should be strengthened and encouraged by supporting civic activity.

In our present differentiated society an important form of interaction and the exercise of power is each person's way of life. It is positive if one can also influence the achievement of social goals through one's own way of life.

A Finnish ideological party

As an actor of democracy, the National Coalition Party extends the principles of democracy to its own activities. The National Coalition Party must constantly renew itself into an open and discussing civic movement. Each member is a decision maker and each supporter is entitled to present his or her views.

The National Coalition Party's ideology has been competition between social reformism, conservatism and liberalism. The National Coalition Party is a political party with a living ideology which is committed to the values and principles it supports but is not a party of short-term interests.

In the cross-currents of social reformism, conservatism and liberalism has been born a vigorous ideological life. In its history the National Coalition Party has striven to bring together different spheres of society around the themes of respect for law, the ensuring of individual rights and the enhancing of national identity. Today the National Coalition Party is an ideological party which invites everyone to build a tolerant society in which the individual's right to act and develop is combined with responsibility for other people and responsibility for preserving nature.