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Democratic Leadership Council (DLC)

► Staff Bios

Bio | DLC | January 31, 2001

AI From

Founder & CEO, Democratic Leadership Council

AI From is founder and chief executive officer of the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC), a dynamic idea action center of the "Third Way" governing philosophy that is reshaping progressive politics in the United States and around the globe. He is also chairman of the Third Way Foundation and publisher of the DLC's flagship bi-monthly magazine, *Blueprint: Ideas for a New Century*.



As a founder of the DLC -- birthplace of the New Democrat movement and the Third Way in America -- and its companion think tank, the Progressive Policy Institute (PPI), From leads a national movement that since the mid-1980s has provided both the action agenda and the ideas for New Democrats to successfully challenge the conventional political wisdom in America and, in the process, redefine the center of the Democratic Party.

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President Bill Clinton, in his speech to the 1998 DLC Annual Conference, said, "[New Democrat ideas] are reviving center-left political parties throughout the industrialized world as people everywhere struggle to put a human face on the global economy. Today, less than 15 years after we started, the ideas pushed by the DLC are literally sweeping the world."

In April 1999, From hosted and moderated an historic conference, "The Third Way: Progressive Governance for the 21st Century," which brought together five of the world's most prominent leaders of Third Way governments -- including U.S. President Bill Clinton, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, Dutch Prime Minister Wim Kok, and Italian Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema -- and highlighted the new power and common values of center-left reform movements on both sides of the Atlantic.

A veteran Capitol Hill and White House aide, From helped form the DLC in 1985. Under his leadership, the organization has become the leading source of policy innovation within the Democratic Party. From played a prominent role in the 1992 election of President Bill Clinton, who campaigned as a New Democrat, prompting USA Today to write, "The ideas at the crux of the Clinton candidacy were largely drafted by the DLC." From was also Clinton's domestic policy advisor during the 1992 presidential transition.

In early 1990, the DLC issued its New Orleans Declaration, a bold agenda for the 1990s which included national service, tax benefits for the working poor, public school choice, a ROTC-styled police corps, pro-growth fiscal policy, greater workplace democracy, and youth apprenticeship programs. In 1991, at its National Convention in Cleveland, the DLC adopted its New American Choice -- a set of resolutions that set forth a new credo for Democrats, weaving together the themes of opportunity, responsibility, and community, which were to become the defining themes of The Third Way.

Many of the ideas advocated by DLC and PPI over the past decade have since been acted upon at both federal and state levels, including work-based welfare reform, national service, charter schools, community policing, and an expanded earned income tax credit. Other major initiatives -- such as Medicare and Social Security reforms, and educational standards and accountability proposals -- are under consideration in Congress and state legislatures.



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Today, DLC membership has risen from a few dozen to thousands of citizen activists and elected officials, including some of the nation's most respected lawmakers. From's writings have appeared in the editorial pages of the nation's major newspapers. He writes a regular column in *Blueprint: Ideas for a New Century*.

A member of the Board of Directors for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce National Chamber Foundation, From was appointed by President Clinton to the U.S. Naval Academy Board of Visitors in 1999. He is also co-chair of the Charter Schools Development Corporation and a member of the board of the American Council on Germany.

Before founding the DLC, From was executive director of the House Democratic Caucus from 1981 to 1985. For two years B 1979 and 1980 B he was deputy advisor on inflation to President Jimmy Carter and from 1971 to 1979, he directed the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Intergovernmental Relations, chaired by Senator Edmund S. Muskie.

Born May 31, 1943, in South Bend, Indiana, From earned a Master's degree in journalism from Northwestern University and was editor of the Daily Northwestern. He is a charter member of the Medill School of Journalism's Hall of Achievement. From lives in Annapolis, Maryland, with his wife, Ginger. He has two daughters, Mary Virginia Rouse who resides in Exton, Pa., with her husband Mark; and Sarah, a recent graduate of Vassar College.

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