

Democratic Platform - 1996

A Summary

Introduction

Democrats stand for an America that gives all Americans the chance to achieve their dreams and fulfill their God given talents. Today, Democrats want to renew America's "most basic bargain" - opportunity for and responsibility from every American.

The three watchwords are Opportunity, Responsibility, Community. These are the values that make America strong.

Today, America is moving forward with a proud record of the last four years under a Democratic president. Now America must move to a new century with a smaller, more effective, efficient and less bureaucratic government. The people want a government that is for them not against them. They want a course that is reasonable and realistic - moderate, achievable, common-sensical.

Opportunity

America has been defined by a single ideal - opportunity for all who will take responsibility for it. The Democratic Party will ensure that the American Dream of opportunity is within reach of all the people.

Economic growth.- In the four years of Bill Clinton's presidency, 10 million new jobs have been created, America is again the leading manufacturer of automobiles, inflation and unemployment are the lowest in three decades, 4.4 million more Americans own their own home and a record number of new businesses have been started.

The Republicans ignored the economic interests of ordinary Americans over the 12 previous years. Bill Clinton fought to put America's house in order to allow the private sector to prosper. The Democratic Party has tapped the global economy by open and fair trade and has invested in the infrastructure of America's economy - people, roads, bridges and highways.

In the last four years Democrats cut the deficit in the next four it will balance the budget, make sure all families can count on good health care and a secure retirement and expand educational opportunities.

Balancing the Budget.- The Democratic 1993 economic plan cut spending by a quarter trillion dollars in five years. Bill Clinton is the first President to cut the deficit four year in a row since the Civil War.

Now the Democrats will balance the budget by 2002. It will cut wasteful programmes but preserve Medicare and Medicaid and protect Social Security. There will be savings in Medicare and Medicaid but without reduced quality or benefits. Schools should be run by teachers and principals not by Washington. The Democrats are committed to reform of environmental regulations whilst preserving the environment. Working people should not be taxed into poverty. The Democrats believe in putting families first, not taking away programs from them as the Republican would do.

Tax relief for working families and small businesses.- The Democrats cut taxes for 40 million Americans by expanding the earned Income Tax Credit, the Republicans want to cut that credit. The Democrats insist that tax cuts be paid for in order to balance the budget. The Democrats will give middle-class families a \$500 tax cut for children. They will guarantee the cost of the first two years of college. They will expand the use and scope of Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs). They want to cut taxes for the self-employed and self-insured to make health care more affordable.

Technology.- The Democrats have fought to maintain vital investments in science and technology. They favour a permanent research and development tax credit. Bill Clinton signed the telecommunications bill. They want to re-invent the national laboratories and revitalise America's space programme which will support the space station.

Creating jobs through trade.- During the last four years, Bill Clinton has signed over 200 trade agreements. The Democrats have signed agreements to lower trade barriers including at least 20 agreements with Japan. American exports to Japan affected by those agreements have increased by 85 per cent. During the next four years the Democrats will insist on fair rules at home and abroad. Opening new markets requires standards for the protection of children, workers, public safety and the environment.

Education.- President Clinton and the Democrats have spared no effort to improve American education against the intention of the Republicans to cut funds.

Strengthening Public Schools.- The Democrats increased funding for Head Start to expand early education for those who need it. They passed Goals 2000 to set high standards. They restructured federal programmes to give teachers and schools more flexibility to meet those standards. They expanded teacher education.

In the next four years, the Democrats will ensure that every child will read by third grade. Pupils will be required to reach a certain competency before promotion or graduation. Teachers should meet high standards and be rewarded for the good work they do. Schools should be held accountable for results. Public schools should allow choice but not to private schools. Charter schools should be held to the highest standards of accountability and access. Children with disabilities should continue to get a quality education.

Teaching Values in Schools.- The Democrats applaud the efforts of the Clinton Administration to promote character education in America's schools.

Safe Schools and Healthy Students.- The Democrats have worked hard to keep schools safe from crime and drugs and to keep students healthy. They stopped the Republicans from cutting off aid to these children. Now the schools need good quality facilities, where the pupils can learn. Also, Now is the time to set standards of behaviour and discipline for pupils to follow.

Technology in the Classroom.- The Democrats want to bring the 21st Century into every classroom. They believe that computers are powerful tools to help pupils read, write and learn mathematics better. They have engaged in a partnership with the private sector and state and local governments to wire every school for the Internet.

Preparing Students for Jobs.- The Democrats passed 'school-to-work' so that students can learn the skills to get and keep high wage jobs. They will continue to work with the communities and private sector in this area.

Higher Education for all Americans.- The Democrats want to make sure that every American has the opportunity to go to college. Their goal is to make the 13th and 14th years of education as universal as the first twelve. In the last four years, the Clinton Administration has reformed the student loan programme. Pell grants have been expanded for needy students. Finally, the President's national service programme has helped 45,000 Americans earn money for college by helping their communities.

Tax Cuts for College.- The Democrats want to expand work-study to one million students by the year 2000. They want Americans to use their IRAs for college costs without penalty. They want to provide \$1000 scholarships to the top 5 per cent of pupils from 'every high school'. They want to make families have a \$10,000 tax deduction for college costs. They want to create a \$1,500 tax cut for every high school pupil who goes to community college, continuing it in a second year if the students maintain a B average.

Economic Security for American Families in the 21st Century.- The Democrats accept that one job for life is a thing of the past. They want to provide workers with better training to help them get better and new jobs, secure health care and safe pensions.

Rewarding Work.- The Democrats believe the minimum wage should 'be a wage you can live on'.

Health Care.- The Democrats passed the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill, which requires coverage for people with pre-existing health conditions and the ability to take health care to another job. They expanded the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) programme and led an effort to immunise children.

The Clinton Administration has shortened the time for new drugs to be approved and put AIDS research as a top priority. The Democrats have paid special attention to women's health issues by increasing spending 65 per cent on breast cancer research. They fought to keep Medicaid an entitlement in welfare reform. In 1993, the Democrats extended the Medicare Trust fund into the 21st Century. They have increased the flexibility for the states to run Medicaid and given Medicare recipients more choices and greater benefits. They cracked down on waste and fraud in the Medicare programmes, saving about \$15 billion.

In the next four years the Democrats want to help people to pay for health care when unemployed and looking for a job. They support the expansion of coverage for home care, hospice, adult day-care and community-based services. Finally they want to give mental health coverage the same status as physical health.

Retirement.- President Clinton has worked hard to fix the federal pension insurance system and require companies fund their retirement plans fully. The democrats want to make sure that people can take their pensions with them from job to job. Also, they want to secure Social Security for future generations.

Training.- The Democrats want a G.I. bill for workers to transform the confusing federal training programmes that now exist into a simple job training skill grant that goes directly to unemployed workers.

Standing up for Working Americans.- The Democrats have been helping dislocated workers and reformulating the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to protect worker safety. They are committed to the improvement of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to protect the travelling public.

Promoting Economic Growth and Opportunity for all Americans.- The President has transformed the Small Business Administration (SBA) to get rid of burdensome paperwork. He has more than doubled the number of loans to small businesses, nearly tripled loans to minority businesses and quadrupled loans to women owned businesses.

Responsibility

Fighting Crime.- President Clinton is putting more police officers on the street and tougher penalties on the law books. Crime rates are finally coming down.

Community Policing.- The Crime bill will put 100,000 police officers on the street where they can be most effective. The Democrats encourage the community to help the police by joining their neighbourhood watches.

Protecting our Children, our Neighbourhoods, and our Police from Criminals with Guns.- President Clinton made the Brady bill the law of the land. Now 60,000 felons, fugitives and stalkers have been stopped from buying guns. He also led the fight to outlaw 19 types of deadly assault weapons.

Tough Punishment.- President Clinton made three-strikes-you're-out the laws of the land. The Democrats established the death penalty for nearly 60 violent crimes. They provided nearly \$8 billion to the states for building new prison space.

Fighting Youth Violence and Preventing Youth Crime.- The Democrats made it a federal crime for any person under 18 to possess a handgun, except with adult supervision. President Clinton ordered states to impose a zero tolerance for guns in schools. The Democrats have established boot camps for non-violent offenders. They support school uniforms to promote discipline and respect and community based curfews. Also, they support the enforcement of truancy laws.

The President signed a law modelled after Megan's law in New Jersey to report to the community when a sex offender is released into their community. The Democrats require every state to compile a registry of sex offenders.

Battling Illegal Drugs.- The Crime bill established the death penalty for drug kingpins. The President signed a directive requiring drug testing for anyone arrested for a federal crime. The Democrats established drug courts which require drug treatment or jail. They have launched Operation Safe Home to protect the law-abiding residents of public housing.

Ending Domestic Violence.- The Violence Against Women (1994) Act was passed to help law enforcement understand this problem and bring help more effectively. The Democrats support the President's call for a Constitutional Amendment to protect the rights of victims.

Immigration.- The Democrats support the President's initiative to speed up the citizenship process for legal immigrants eligible to become citizens. But our borders must be protected. The Democrats have increased the border patrol by over 40 per cent. Just since January 1995, the Clinton Administration has arrested more than 1,700 criminal aliens who have returned to the United States after having been deported.

Welfare Reform.- President Clinton has dramatically transformed the welfare system. He has freed 43 states from federal rules and regulations so they can reform their welfare systems. Today, there are 1.8 million fewer people on welfare. Thanks to the Democrats the new welfare bill will include child care and health benefits that will make the transition to work easier for welfare recipients.

Child Support.- The Clinton Administration has made a determined effort to crack down on those who evade their parental responsibilities. It has collected a record \$11 billion in 1995, a 40 per cent increase over 1992. The Democrats want to deny drivers licences and other professional licences to deadbeat parents.

Teen Pregnancy.- The President has expanded support for community based programmes to teach abstinence and demand responsibility. The Democrats want the prosecutors to enforce the statutory rape laws because it is known that many of the teen pregnancies are caused by men in their twenties and beyond.

Choice.- The Democrats stand behind the right of every women's right to choose whether or not to have an abortion regardless of income. They believe it is a fundamental constitutional right.

Reinventing Government.- In the last four years, the National Performance Review led by Vice President Gore has cut the federal government by almost 240,000 positions. The federal government is eliminating 16,000 pages of the federal register. The President fought for and signed a law making unfunded mandates on state and local government more difficult. He signed also landmark legislation giving the president the line-item veto which will provide a powerful tool to cut wasteful spending from bills passed by Congress.

Political Reform.- President Clinton implemented the toughest ethics code on executive officials ever, shortly after taking office. The Democrats passed the Motor Voter Law to allow people to vote more easily. In the next four years the Democrats want to curtail the influence of political action committees by reforming the campaign finance laws. The Democrats want fair political representation for all the people and that means giving the District of Columbia statehood.

Security, Freedom and Peace

President Clinton and Vice President Gore have seized the opportunities after the Cold War. Today, not a single Russian missile points at our children. With the START agreement, two thirds of both American and Russian nuclear arsenals will be cut.

Today in the Middle East there are real agreements for peace and in Northern Ireland a 17 month cease fire. North Korean has frozen its nuclear programme, opened it to international inspection and scheduled it for dismantling.

NATO is keeping the peace in Bosnia and as a result of American leadership is preparing to welcome new members from central Europe. American diplomacy is helping to further peace in the previous Yugoslavia. Haiti is on the path to democracy, the dictatorships have gone. South Africa has a national unity government, after a 1994

election which America strongly supported.

The Clinton Administration has strengthened trading groups around the world, such as Summit of the Americas and APEC.

Strengthening our Security.- The Democrats are committed to reducing the threat of weapons of mass destruction and meeting new challenges to security such as terrorism, international crime and drug trafficking.

Strengthening our Military.- President Clinton has increased America's defence spending plans three years in a row - almost \$50 billion - for readiness, modernisation and quality of life improvements. The Democrats will continue to work to ensure that the men and women in American uniforms "receive adequate pay and support, including: childcare, education, housing, access to quality health care for themselves and their families, and protection against sexual harassment".

The Democrats will reverse a downturn in defence procurement with a 40 per cent real increase in weapons modernisation by 2001.

Reducing the Threat of Weapons of Mass Destruction.- President Clinton has pursued the most far reaching arms control and non proliferation agenda in American history. He secured ratification of START II, he convinced three former Soviet Union republics to give up their nuclear weapons on the break up of the old Soviet Union, he secured the unconditional and indefinite extension of the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty and he acted to freeze the North Korea nuclear programme.

The Democrats support a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the immediate ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention. They are committed to a strong and balanced National Missile Defence (NMD) programme. The Administration is spending \$3 billion per year on six different systems to protect the soldiers from short and medium range missiles in the field. The Administration is preparing for a defence against a rogue state launching long range missiles by the year 2003.

Meeting New Challenges.- The Clinton Administration has mounted the most aggressive effort in American history to combat terrorism, drug trafficking and international crime. It captured and prosecuted the perpetrators of the World Trade Center bombing. The Democrats held a terrorism summit at Sharm el-Sheik and made anti-terrorism the centrepiece of the 1996 G-7 meeting. They have imposed strong sanctions on states that sponsor terrorism - Iran, Iraq, Libya and Sudan.

Promoting Peace and Democracy.- The Democrats believe in a community of free, democratic and peaceful nations in Europe and the former Soviet Union. The Clinton Administration has fostered support both economic and political for the newly emerging

democracies.

The Clinton Administration made a new security pact with Japan, co-operated closely with South Korea toward the goal of a peaceful reunion, made sure that China does not imperil the security of the region. The Democrats support a steady engagement of China to encourage a stable, secure, open and prosperous China. The Democrats strongly support a continued troop presence in East Asia.

Middle East.-President Clinton has overseen a remarkable achievement in the Middle East; Israeli-Palestinian accords, Israeli-Jordan peace agreement, new regional security and economic summits. The Democrats are committed to continuing the peace process. They believe that the United States should help maintain Israel's qualitative edge. They believe that Jerusalem should remain the undivided capital of Israel open to all faiths.

Latin America and the Caribbean.- The Clinton Administration has forged a historic partnership with Latin American countries as exemplified in the Summit of the Americas in 1994. Today, every country in the region is a democracy, except for Cuba. President Clinton took bold steps to bolster the Mexican economy when it neared crisis. He has worked to bolster internal and border conflicts in the Hemisphere and joined others in the region to combat drug trafficking.

Africa.- The Clinton Administration championed South Africa's democratic transition. It helped speed the return of democracy to Nigeria, helped save countless lives in Somalia, Rwanda and elsewhere.

Promoting Democracy.- The Democrats support all those who seek to strengthen civil rights and accountable government throughout the world. The Democrats support the McBride principles of equal access to regional employment opportunity in Northern Ireland. They are committed to the human rights of the Jewish people and other minorities in the countries of the former Soviet Union. They support continued funding for the National Endowment for Democracy, Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, the Asia Pacific Network and Radio Marti.

Resources for Democracy.- The Democrats are committed to ensure adequate funding for American foreign policy objectives.

Community

Standing up for Parents.- President Clinton enacted the Family and Medical Leave Act. It has been reported that 12 million workers have taken advantage of that Act since its passage in 1993. The Democrats believe the next step is to let workers take unpaid leave and choose flex time in order to "do their job as parents", such as attend parent-teacher conferences and take a child to the doctor.

Responsible Entertainment.- President Clinton has led the fight to give parents control over what their children see on television. Because of his leadership, Congress passed a law requiring a V-chip in all new television which will allow parents to block violent programmes when they activate it.

The Democrats believe in the public support for the arts, including the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). President Clinton has restored the Consumer Product Safety Commission as an "effective guardian of children and families in and around their homes".

Tobacco.- President Clinton understands that the nation has a responsibility to protect our children's future by cracking down on their use of cigarettes. He has proposed measures that will cut off cigarette access to minors and will curb advertising by the tobacco companies that are designed to appeal to children.

Encouraging Private Sector Investment and Community Based Solutions.- The Democrats have launched a comprehensive strategy to restore economic growth to our nation's distressed neighbourhoods. They created 105 empowerment zones and enterprise communities. Thousands of businesses have moved into or expanded their operations in these areas. Now the Democrats want to expand on this programme to give more support to the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund.

Helping People Afford Safe, Secure Housing.- The percentage of people owning their own homes has increased faster than it has in thirty years. President Clinton took executive action to make it easier for working and middle class home buyers to get a mortgage loan. President Clinton made the low income housing tax credit permanent, making it easier for families to get housing.

Agriculture and the Rural Community.- The Democrats support changes to the farm bill that would improve the safety net for farmers. They have revolutionised meat inspection and set a new standard for consumer protection in the food industry.

Protecting our Environment.- The Democrats have fought the reduction in spending on the environment. They reformed the Superfund programme. In each of the last two years, nearly as many toxic dumps have been cleaned up as were cleaned up in the previous decade. They dramatically strengthened the Communities Right to Know law, cut toxic air pollution from chemical plants by 90 per cent and have cleaned up hundreds of nuclear weapons sites.

Now the Democrats want to make it easier for businesses to clean up the environment. The Democrats will ask them to find any way to clean up their sites, even if cheaper or more efficient than government regulations, and then go ahead "as long as you do it

right". The Democrats are committed to preserving the national parks and wildlife refuges. The President has made a historic agreement with the automakers to produce cars up to three times more fuel efficient. The Democrats will seek strong international agreements to reduce greenhouse gases further. They are committed to the planet's biodiversity, repairing the depleted ozone layer and working with other nations to stabilise the population growth.

Fighting Discrimination and Protecting Civil Rights.- The Democrats believe everyone should learn English but oppose divisive efforts such as English only laws. The President is strongly committed to the continued implementation of the Governance and Self-Determination (1994) Act where tribal governments will have a larger measure of control over federal moneys on their reservations.

The Democrats has always supported the Equal Rights Amendment and are vigorously committed to enforcing the Americans with Disabilities Act. They support the Employment Non Discrimination Act to end discrimination against homosexuals and lesbians. President Clinton is leading the way to reform affirmative action so that it works, it is improved and promotes opportunity "but does not accidentally hold others back in the process".

Religious Freedom.- The President fought for and signed the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. The Democrats will support the religious rights of our children - of all Americans - whenever threatened.

Republican Platform - 1996

A Summary

Introduction

As a people, Americans share a common dream and common goals:-

- A strong America that protects its citizens and champions their democratic ideals throughout the world
- An America with a vibrant and growing economy that improves the standard of living for all
- An America with a smaller, more effective and less intrusive government that trusts its people to decide what is best for them
- An America whose people feel safe and secure in their homes, on their streets and in their communities
- An America where our children receive the best education in the world and learn the values like decency and responsibility that made this country great, and
- An America with the compassion to care for those who cannot care for themselves.

Principles

1. Because the American dream includes the promise of liberty, the Republicans believe that more and secure jobs, home ownership, personal security and an education designed for the next century are the means to achieve this liberty for each American.
2. Because a dynamic and growing economy is the best way to create more and better jobs, with greater security on the workplace, the Republicans believe in lower taxes within a simpler tax system, in tandem with fair and open trade and a balanced federal budget.
3. Because wasteful government spending and over-regulation, fueled by higher taxes, are the greatest obstacles to job creation and economic growth, the Republicans believe in a Balanced Budget Amendment to the Constitution and a common sense approach to government rules and red tape.
4. Because the Republicans recognise its obligation to foster hope and opportunity for those unable to care for themselves, they believe in welfare reform that eliminates waste, fraud and abuse; requires work from those who are capable; limits time on public assistance; discourages illegitimacy; and reduces the burden on the taxpayers.
5. Because all Americans have the right to be safe in their homes, on their streets and in their communities, the Republicans believe in tough law enforcement, especially against juvenile crime and the drug traffic, with stiff penalties, no loopholes and judges who respect the rights of law-abiding Americans.

6. Because institutions like the family are the backbone of a healthy society, the Republicans believe government must support the rights of the family; and recognising within the Party's own ranks different approaches toward its common goal, the Republicans reaffirm respect for the sanctity of human life.
7. Because American children need and are entitled to the best education in the world, the Republicans believe in parental involvement and family choice in schooling, teacher authority and accountability, more control to local school boards, and emphasis upon the basics of learning in safe classrooms.
8. Because older Americans have built its past and direct us Americans, in wisdom and experience, toward the future, the Republicans believe they must meet the nation's commitments to them by preserving and protecting Medicare and Social Security.
9. Because a good society rests on an ethical foundation, the Republicans believe families, communities and religious institutions can best teach the American values of honesty, responsibility for hard work, compassion and mutual respect.
10. Because the country's greatest strength is its people, not its government, the Republicans believe today's government is too large and intrusive and does too many things the people could do better for themselves.
11. Because the Republicans trust their fellow Americans, rather than centralised government, the Republicans believe the people, acting through their State and local elected officials, should have control over programmes like education and welfare - thereby pushing power away from official Washington and returning it to the people in their communities and states.
12. Because the Republicans view the careful development of the country's natural resources as stewardship of creation, they believe property rights must be honoured in the nation's efforts to restore, protect and enhance the environment for the generations to come.
13. Because the people are all one in America, the Republicans oppose discrimination. They believe in the equality of all people before the law and that individuals should be judged by their ability rather than their race, creed or disability.
14. Because this is a difficult and dangerous world, the Republicans believe that peace can be assured only through strength, that a strong national defence is necessary to protect America at home and secure its interests abroad, and that they must restore leadership and character to the presidency as the best way to restore America's leadership and credibility throughout the world.

Building a Better America

Improving the Standard of Living.- The Republicans believe that the standard of living can be best improved by cutting the near-record tax burden on Americans, reducing government spending and its size, whilst balancing the budget, creating jobs, using the benefits of science, technology and innovations to improve both people's lives and

American competitiveness in the global economy, dramatically increasing the number of families able to own their own home and unleashing the competitiveness and will to win of individual Americans on the world trade scene with free but fair trade.

Tax Relief for Economic Growth.- Family incomes averaged 1.7 per cent growth during the expansion after 1981. They have failed to grow under President Clinton. Since 1990, they have lost ground. Anaemic economic growth is the culprit. Currently at about 2.4 per cent per annum, this growth rate is below the 3.2 per cent of the previous 10 years and 3.9 per cent between 1983 and 1989. The republicans propose to help families by applying a 15 per cent across the board tax cut to marginal rates. This represents the total tax increase since President Clinton took office. Also, the Republicans will give families a \$500 per child tax credit to make up for the loss of value of the personal exemption in the tax code since 1950. Finally they propose to cut the capital gains tax rate by half. This will be the first step in a complete overhaul of the tax system. The Republicans intend to make the tax code simpler, fairer and flatter.

Balancing the Budget and Reducing Spending.- Raising taxes is the wrong way to balance the federal budget. The Republicans passed the Balanced Budget Amendment in the House of Representatives but the Democrats in the Senate were able to block its passage by one vote. Budget deficits and high taxes are the two halves of the vise that squeezes the middle class. A balanced budget and lower taxes go hand in hand. The Republicans in Congress cut spending in excess of \$53 billion over the last two years. A Republican president will veto added spending.

Creating Jobs for Americans.- Fundamentally jobs are created in the private sector. Small business is the powerhouse of job creation. They generate 75 per cent of all new job growth and 55 per cent of America's gross domestic product. The Republicans will allow small businesses to deduct the cost of their health care costs, restore the fair home office deduction (so important for start up businesses), assure that no one who inherits a small business or farm has to sell it to pay inheritance taxes, make the IRS stop its harassment of independent contractors, enact both legal reform and product liability legislation to shield small businesses and protect jobs from the threat of unfair litigation, and transfer from the public sector services that can be provided by the private sector more efficiently and more cost effectively.

Science, Technology and Innovation in the 21st Century.- The Republicans support the private sector funding of applied-research. Government must foster research through the tax code. Senator Dole led the Congress to pass the Telecommunications Act (1996) to promote open and free competition in the communications marketplace.

Homeownership.- Homeownership is central to the American dream. The Republicans believe that mortgage interest should be deductible from the income tax. They believe also in transforming public housing into private housing. Eliminating the Department of

Housing and Urban Development (HUD) will be a final step in that process. HUD's core responsibilities will be handed to the states. Civil rights will remain at the federal level but in an appropriate agency with enforcement at the Department of Justice.

Promoting Trade and International Prosperity.- The Republicans support free and fair trade. They believe in implementing the North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA) vigorously. Foreign aid, whether bilateral or through the World Bank or other international financial institutions, must promote market reforms, limit regulation and encourage free trade.

Changing Washington From the Ground Up

Most basic is the Republican commitment to the Constitution's Tenth Amendment which states: The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the People. For more than half a century that solemn compact has been scorned by the liberal Democrats and the judicial activism of the judges they have appointed. The Republicans will restore the force of the Tenth Amendment and thus renew the trust and respect which hold a free society together. The Republicans began that pledge with the Unfunded Mandates law in 1995. A first step to restoring the balance between the federal and state governments will be in the elimination of federal Departments of Commerce, Housing and Urban Development, Education and Energy and the elimination, defunding or privatisation of agencies which are obsolete, redundant, of limited value, or too regional in focus.

A Citizen's Congress.- When the voters elected a Republican Congress in 1994, for the first time in forty years, the new leaders found a Capitol Hill an institution steeped in corruption and contemptuous of reform. The Republicans set about to change all that. They applied all laws to Congress, so that those who make the rules will have to live by them; they slashed congressional spending and cut back staff on Capitol Hill; they ordered an unprecedented audit of the House of Representatives, showing a devastating exposure of forty years of Democrat mismanagement; they streamlined legislative procedures by limiting the number of committees and subcommittees; they imposed term limits for House committee chairman and leadership positions; they abolished proxy voting in House committees; they brought to a vote to require a constitutional amendment on term limits for members of Congress.

Cleaning Up Government.- In 1992, Bill Clinton promised 'the most ethical Administration in the history of the Republic'. Instead, his Administration has been rife with scandal. The Republicans intend to restore integrity and honour to government. They propose to revoke pension rights of public officials who have been convicted of crimes; strengthen citizen privacy laws and reform the FBI to guard against the politicisation of law enforcement that has happened under the Clinton Administration; refuse to allow special interest groups to block innovative solutions for the poor or to

block workplace or legal reforms that would help all Americans; and recruit for public service, at all levels, men and women of integrity and high ethical standards. They will end welfare for lobbyists, where the federal government gives away billions of dollars in grants to them. They will establish 'truth in testimony', which will require organisations testifying before Congress to tell how much money they receive from Congress or their activities.

Honest Budgets and Real Numbers.- The cornerstone of a clear, simple and accountable budget is the Balanced Budget Amendment.

Regulatory Reform.- President Clinton vetoed a comprehensive regulatory reform bill, passed by both Houses of Congress. The Republicans will require the bureaucracy to specify the cost of regulations on individuals and small businesses. A new regulatory budget will reveal the total cost of regulations on the American people. The republicans will target resources to the most serious risks to health, safety and the environment rather than politically inspired causes. They will require risk-based assessments by peer review groups based on sound science. They will require agencies to do cost-benefit analyses to their regulations.

Restoring Justice to the Courts.- Americans have lost faith in their judicial system. Some members of the federal judiciary "make up laws and invent new rights as they go along, arrogating to themselves powers King George III never dared to exercise". This attitude breaks the delicate balance between the states and the federal government. Judicial review has come to mean judicial supremacy. The separation of powers will be restored to its complete and unabridged meaning under a Republican president. The Republicans will ensure that a process is established that selects nominations for the federal judiciary that understand what it means to be faithful to the Constitution. The American Bar Association will no longer have the right to meddle with the process so as to advance its own and its allies agenda.

Litigation practices today mock the process of justice. They drain valuable resources away from productive Americans. The Republicans believe the proliferation of litigation hits the consumer with higher prices and cripples the practice of medicine. A Republican president would sign the law that President Clinton vetoed, reforming the legal system. The Republicans encourage the States to push for legal reform as well. In particular, the States should strengthen judicial sanctions for litigation that is without merit; apply the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organisations law (RICO) for criminal case and not extend it to civil cases; award punitive damages on a fair reasonable basis after clear proof of wrongdoing; restore limited liability to non profits against profit-seeking lawsuits so as to encourage those who want to volunteer; increase sanctions for the abuse of the discovery process; reform medical malpractice to reduce health care costs and keep doctors practising in critical areas (such as obstetrics); eliminate the use of "junk science" in the courtroom; eliminate joint and several liability in order to make sure that each

responsible party pays its "fair share"; and guard against lawsuits that are designed to curb First Amendment rights.

Individual Rights and Personal Safety

The Republicans are the party of the open door. They welcome everyone in, even those who hold differences of opinion with the leaders of the party. They are committed to resolving those differences in a spirit of civility, hope and mutual respect. They denounce all forms of hatred and bigotry, including that of the government and its agencies which regulate or ban religious symbols from the workplace. They assert the right of religious leaders to speak out on public issues.

The sole source of equal opportunity for all is equality before the law. The Republicans oppose all discrimination. They endorse the California Proposition 209, the California Civil Rights Initiative. The full exercise of legal rights depends upon opportunity, and economic growth is the key to such opportunity.

The Republicans believe in the fundamental right of the unborn child to life. They support a human life amendment to the Constitution. They support legislative and judicial protection against those who perform abortions. Nevertheless, they do not believe in punitive action against those women having an abortion. President Clinton vetoed the bill banning partial-birth abortions, a procedure denounced by the American Medical Association and rightly branded as four-fifths infanticide.

The Republicans reaffirm the promise of the Fifth Amendment not to have the government take private property without just compensation. They support the right to bear and keep arms.

A Sensible Immigration Policy.- As a nation of immigrants, the Republicans welcomes those who follow the nation's laws and come to America to seek a better life. The president's record does not match his rhetoric. He proposed a reduction in the nation's ability to police its borders, opposed the most successful border control programme in decades (Operation Hold the Line in Texas) and opposed Proposition 187 in California which 60 per cent of Californians supported. Unlike the President, the Republicans will stand with the American people to continue to revise the immigration laws to ensure that they reflect the national interest. This is particularly so with regard to illegal immigrants. The Republicans believe that many crimes of physical abuse should be grounds for deportation when committed by alien residents. They call for harsh penalties against those who smuggle in illegal aliens. They oppose the creation of a national identity card.

From Many, One.- The Republicans celebrate the nation's diversity. Nonetheless, they believe that the nation's common heritage should also be strengthened. First of the symbols of the nation is the flag. They support a constitutional amendment banning the

desecration of the flag. Secondly, they believe that English, the common language, provides a shared foundation for all who live and work in the United States and, in particular, who wish to take a full part in the public affairs of the nation. The Republicans support the official recognition of English as the official language of the United States. More important, they believe that all Americans should learn to speak foreign languages, it is essential for maintaining the nation's competitiveness in the world market. They believe, also, that it is very important to retain one's heritage in the home and cultural institutions.

Getting Tough on Crime.- Violent crime costs the nation \$500 billion per year. The future portends even worse. A generation of fatherless boys raises the prospect of soaring juvenile crime, even when one recognises the extraordinary effort of single parents. This situation is in part a legacy of liberalism. For too long, the democrats cared more about the rights of criminals than the safety of Americans. It is noteworthy that the President arbitrarily closed off Pennsylvania Avenue for his protection but has left the public unprotected against vicious criminals. The Republicans will restore that safety the Americans rely upon. As a symbol of that commitment, the Republican president will re-open Pennsylvania Avenue.

The Republicans will establish no frills prisons where prisoners are required to work productively instead of being in a place for rest and relaxation. They will reform the Supreme Court's fanciful exclusionary rule that has allowed criminals to get off on technicalities. Juvenile crime system has broken down. The Republicans will stress accountability at every stage in the system; from punishing the minor crimes appropriately before the defendants turn to larger offences to adult trials for juveniles that commit adult crimes. The Republicans encourage local governments to consider curfews as an effective tool in helping to reduce juvenile crime.

The Republicans will propose a constitutional amendment for victim's rights, since the liberal jurists keep expanding the rights of the accused. Even though the federal government's role in the justice system is essential, most law enforcement must remain at the state and local level. The Republicans, therefore, support community policing: nothing inhibits crime like a local police officer in the neighbourhood. Prison inmates should not receive government entitlements. The Republicans support efforts to allow peace officers to assist their colleagues and protect their communities even when outside their jurisdictions, to the extent that state and local law allows such actions. They will amend the Fair Labour Standards Act to allow corrections officers to volunteer their time to assist local law enforcement, which Act now forbids them to do so.

Solving the Drug Crisis.- Drug use since the President has taken office has risen dramatically. The Republicans have seen how the Democrats have just ignored or wantonly refused to deal with the drug problem, either here at home or abroad. One of the worst decisions made by the President was to purge all the U.S. Attorneys' offices of

the dedicated and experienced prosecutors; federal drug prosecutions have dropped by 25 per cent. The Republicans would tackle the problem through emphasising prevention, interdiction, a tough international approach and a crack down on users. They would create a Deputy Commissioner for Drug Enforcement in the Customs Service and increase intelligence efforts against international drug traffickers.

Families and Society

Stronger Families.- The Republicans are the party of the family. Families foster the values that make a free society strong. The Republican rely on the home and its supporting institutions to instil honesty, self-discipline, mutual respect and other virtues that sustain democracy. The Republicans will support these values by supporting the family. Even though recognising a role for government in dealing with social ills, the Republicans look to mediating institutions - religious, community and other private groups - to take the lead in tackling these issues first. This is the clearest distinction between the Republicans and the Democrats.

Improving Education.- The American people know that there is something terribly wrong with the nation's educational system. The Democrats believe in the same old liberal dogma: more federal control. The Republicans know that more money is spent on education in the United States than any other country. They intend to create a renaissance in American education. It can only be achieved by returning the power back to the parents, teachers and local school boards.

The Republicans believe that the federal government has no constitutional authority to be involved in school curricula or to control jobs in the work place. They will abolish the Department of Education. They will repeal Goals 2000 and the School to Work Act of 1994. These have put federal controls and unfunded mandates on the states and local governments.

The Republicans know that there are many other issues that need to be corrected in education: abstinence teaching instead of condoms for high school pupils; a return to discipline; an emphasis on basics; phonics; computer technology; and rewarding dedicated teaching. Bob Dole has developed a federal pledge that all federal education policies will be guided by his Education Consumer's Warranty, which says that all American children should be able to: attend a safe school; be free from educational malpractice of bad schools, incompetent teachers, timid principals and intrusive bureaucracies; hold schools accountable for their performance; learn the basics through proven methods; learn the nation's history and values; attend a school free from federal intrusion; be confident that their high school diploma signifies a solid education; and count on being able to arrive as a freshman at college prepared to do university studies.

Improving America's Health Care.- Instead of 'Clintoncare', which was a prescription for

nationalising health care, the Republicans believe the following: health insurance should be portable from job to job; people should not be denied because of pre-existing health conditions; governments at all levels should crack down on fraud in Medicare and Medicaid; the malpractice system should be reformed to cut out 'defensive medicine' and to strip criminal penalties out of laws for making administrative and clerical mistakes; the setting up of individual Medical Savings Accounts; overhaul the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to get better products to market faster; change IRS rules restricting employer provided coverage; promote a private market for long term care; reduce paperwork through electronic billing; change anti-trust laws to let health care providers co-operate in holding down provider costs; avoid mandatory coverage which increase costs for consumers; allow risk pooling for multi-employer purchasing groups; remove regulatory barriers on managed care for those who choose it; permit families with incomes twice the poverty level to buy into Medicaid; promote rural health care through telecommunications and emergency air transport; and increase funding for community and migrant health centres.

Renewing Hope and Opportunity.- The President will sign very soon the Republicans bill to reform welfare. In Speaker Gingrich's words, the Republicans want replace the welfare state with the opportunity society for all. The current welfare system has spent \$5 trillion in the last thirty years and has been a catastrophic failure. The Republicans believe that the key to welfare reform is restoring personal responsibility and two-parent families. Because illegitimacy is one of the most serious causes of child poverty, they encourage the states to stop cash payments to single teens and set a family cap on payments for additional children.

The republicans believe also that welfare is only one side of the problem. The other is to provide hope and opportunity. Thus they want to enact the American Community Renewal Act. This initiative would establish over 100 renewal communities throughout the nation, where residents, businesses and investors would have unprecedented economic freedom and incentives to create prosperity. School choice would be an integral part of that concept.

Not everyone can make it on his own. Therefore, the Republicans look to government at every level to assist but also to private individuals and organisations which dollar for dollar do a better job than government. The Republicans want to encourage this behaviour and so will introduce a Charity Tax Credit.

Older Americans.- The Republicans have always opposed the earnings limit for older Americans receiving Social Security. The President vetoed the Republican lifting of the earnings limitation and their estate tax reform. The Republicans are committed to Social Security for older Americans. For the youth of today they want to expand the choices for retirement that it will have not determine how it will retire by government fiat.

A Cleaner, Safer, Healthier America

The Republicans are the "party of America's farmers, ranchers, foresters, and all who hold the earth in stewardship with the Creator. Republican leadership established the Land Grant College System under Abraham Lincoln, the National Park System under Ulysses Grant, the National Wildlife Refuge System under Teddy Roosevelt". The Republicans reject the failed approaches created by fear-mongering and centralised control. Those approaches will not serve the nation well in the 21st century. The Superfund programme is a classic example of those approaches. Of the \$30 billion spent on the programme over half has gone to administration and litigation costs. The States have been leaders in returning contaminated sites to productive use under the 'brownfields' programme. The programmes tailor the clean up to their expected future use.

The Republicans propose to deal with environmental problems in a common sense approach "based on flexibility and consensus, that builds a better future on free enterprise, local control, sound science and technology development". They will: assure that the air and water is clean for future generations of Americans; assure that everyone has access to public outdoor recreation areas, whilst protecting the historic, environmentally significant wilderness and wetland areas and at the same time the rights of property owners; set reasonable standards for environmental improvement that incorporate flexibility, acknowledge geographical differences and create incentives for the development of new technologies; base all government environmental decisions on the best peer reviewed scientific evidence; achieve progress through incentives rather than compulsion and improve compliance by letting the States and localities play a greater role in setting and maintaining standards; and assure private property owners of due process to protect their rights and make environmental decisions in conjunction with those whose homes, businesses and communities are directly affected.

Securing Property Rights.- It is a basic tenet of the Republican party that the Fifth Amendment of the Constitution which secures just compensation for the taking of private property by the government will be honoured.

Improving Public Lands.- The Republicans believe in a thorough review of all federal lands and transferring to the States, or localities, all those lands that can be best managed by them, leaving intact all existing rights to the fruits of those lands. The Republicans maintain the traditional deference to the States over the allocation of water.

Power for Progress.- Today the Republican governors and the States are leading the way through deregulation of power supplies. The republicans support greater competition and a move toward a market-based approach. The Republicans want to eliminate the Department of Energy in order to show that the way to go is through

privatisation and a smaller federal government. They will delegate the management and collection of federal oil and gas royalties to the States, to reduce the administrative and bureaucratic involvement of the federal government.

Agriculture in the 21st Century.- First the Republicans will reduce the tax burden on America's farmers. Secondly, deficit spending by the federal government is "death by strangulation" for farmers. Farms are major users of capital, with over \$150 billion in current borrowing. The Republican balanced budget plan of last year would have saved farmers over \$15 billion in interests costs if President Clinton had not vetoed the bill. The Freedom to Farm bill the republicans put forward last year ends the command and control approach of the Clinton Administration. It permits experimentation with new crops, rotation of crops, the more efficient use of land so as to preserve even more land environmentally.

Restoring American World Leadership

The Atlantic Alliance and Europe.- The Republicans believe that America's relationship with Europe must be based on the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). They call for the expansion of NATO to include the countries of Central Europe which demonstrate the strongest commitment to the democratic ideals NATO was created for. That call is for immediate action.

Bosnia.- The Republicans support America's men and women in uniform who are serving in Bosnia and Herzegovina. They do not and did not support the misguided policy thinking that got the nation involved in the first place. The President subordinated the American people's views to the United Nations, by vetoing legislation passed by a bi-partisan Congress to lift the arms embargo.

Russia.-The Clinton Administration's acquiescence to Russia's intimidation of former soviet republics has led to a hardening of nationalist and undemocratic forces in Russia. The Republicans will consolidate the victory of the Cold War and put American interests first. They will expect Russia to respect the sovereignty and independence of her neighbours. They will not accept a Russian veto over NATO's enlargement.

Ireland.- The Republicans support the efforts for peace making in Northern Ireland which includes all who have renounced the use of violence.

Defending America Against Missile Attack.- The President refuses to tell the American people that they have no defence against long range missiles. He has systematically dismantled the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) of the previous Republican Administrations. The Republicans are committed to the protection of all Americans (including Alaska and Hawaii) from missile attack. They will deploy land based and sea based missile defences.

Rebuilding America's Strength.- The Republicans are committed to maintaining America as the world's pre-eminent power. The current Administration has destroyed America's readiness. The Republicans know that money is not the answer but the review of all aspects of the military, particularly research and development as well as procurement.

Protecting American Interests.- The Republicans laugh at the Clinton Administration view that soon "nationhood as we know it will be obsolete; all states will recognise a single global authority". It explains why the president vetoed the first restructuring of American diplomatic institutions for over half a century. The Republicans will not subordinate the United States sovereignty to any international authority. A Republican president will withdraw from Senate consideration any pending international conventions or treaties that erode the constitutional foundations of our Republic.

International Terrorism.- Terrorist states have made a comeback under the watch of the Clinton Administration. A Republican president will lead the world in isolating and punishing forcefully all state sponsors of terrorism.

Africa.- The Republicans support the U.S. aid programmes to Africa. The Clinton Administration's woeful intrusion in Somalia has led to inaction in Rwanda, Burundi, Sudan, Nigeria.

Asia.- The Republicans have watched how what was a rush to democracy has dissipated into conflict and repression. The republicans will keep the security agreement with Japan and the republic of Korea as the foundation for an American Role in the region. The Republicans re-affirm their commitment to the Republic of Taiwan's security under the Taiwan Relations Act.

The Middle East.- Radical states in the region have reminded the American people how important and strategic this region is. In particular, the American relationship with Israel is of utmost importance, as Israel is the only democratic and stable ally in the region. That is why the Republicans initiated pre-positioned military equipment in Israel, why the Republicans advocate continued co-operation on the Arrow Missile and Nautilus programmes, why the Republicans support full funding for aid to Israel even while applauding the country's commitment to economic self-sufficiency. The Republicans have endorsed that the Jerusalem is the undivided capital of Israel and a Republican administration would move the embassy there by 1999.

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