

**The original documents are located in Box 39, folder “Platforms, Comparison of Republican and Democratic” of the Ron Nessen Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

### **Copyright Notice**

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Ron Nessen donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

10/7/76

TO: RON NESSEN

FROM: FRED SLIGHT

For your information

## COMPARISON OF THE REPUBLICAN & DEMOCRAT PLATFORMS

Following is a short comparison of the Republican and Democrat Platforms in several main issue areas. Only main points and provisions have been outlined. If you have any questions, please contact the Issues Research Division at x6660.

## AGRICULTURE

The Republican Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to agriculture

- opposition to government-controlled grain reserves and OSHA restrictions;
- improvement of the grain inspection system;
- free access by farmers to the world market;
- imports to be equal in quality to domestic products;
- legislation to prevent work stoppages during critical harvest periods;
- emergency crop insurance in the event of a natural disaster;
- increase in estate tax exemption for farms;
- expansion of agricultural research programs;
- assurance of adequate energy supplies to farmers;
- support of farmer cooperatives including rural electric and telephone cooperatives, and the Capper Volstead Act;
- prevention of non-farmer corporations and tax-loss farming from unfairly competing against the family farm;
- exemption of farmers from Army Corps of Engineers environmental regulation

The Democrat Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to agriculture;

- full implementation and funding of the Rural Development Act of 1972;
- provision of adequate health facilities, community facilities, housing, transportation, and educational opportunities for rural America;
- increase of farm estate tax exemptions;
- adequate levels of insured and guaranteed loans for electrification and telephone facilities;
- parity income assurance based on production costs plus a reasonable profit;
- maintenance of foreign markets, but with restrictions on grain sales to foreign purchasers;
- use of food and fiber production as a component of foreign policy, but not at the expense of the farmer;
- conversion of food surpluses into industrial purposes;
- support of the Capper Volstead Act;
- support of farmer cooperatives and bargaining associations;
- correction of illegal concentrations and price manipulations of farm equipment;
- improvement of credit to farmers, particularly the young;
- elimination of tax shelter farming;
- assurance of equal quality of imported and exported products to domestic products.

## CONGRESS

The Republican Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to the Congress:

- a legislative policy to obtain a balanced federal budget and reduced tax rates;
- enactment of President Ford's "Agenda for Government Reform Act" in order to re-examine and reform all federal regulatory activities;
- reform of Congress itself to correct past abuses of power and increase Congressional effectiveness;
- repeal of legislation which permits automatic increases in salaries of Members of Congress and their staffs without a floor vote;
- elimination of proxy voting in Congress;
- full disclosure of a Member of Congress' financial interests;
- reform and revision of the committee system;
- improvement of lobby disclosure laws;
- quarterly publication of all names, titles, and salaries of all Congressional employees;
- elimination of unnecessary federal agencies and programs.

The Democrat Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to the Congress:

- reform of Congress by adopting zero-based budgeting, reorganization timetables, and sunset laws;
- increased Congressional agency oversight and program evaluation;
- legislation audits of Congress by the General Accounting Office;
- overhaul of the Civil Service laws;
- revision of the Hatch Act to allow federal employees involvement in partisan political activity;
- full public financial disclosure by major public officials;
- reform of lobby legislation;
- public financing of presidential and congressional elections on a matching basis;
- openness throughout government.

## CONSUMER AFFAIRS

The Republican Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to consumer affairs:

- enforcement of anti-trust laws to enable consumers to obtain a fair price in the market place;
- reduction in the extensive growth of laws and regulations governing production processes and conditions and standards for consumer products.
- protection of the American citizen's right to privacy.

The Democrat Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to consumer affairs:

- creation of an independent Consumer Protection Agency;
- full implementation of the Freedom of Information Act;
- opportunity for the consumer to obtain direct redress of grievances through direct government intervention;
- encouragement for the formation of consumer groups and cooperatives;
- lower costs for professional services through the increased use of para-professionals;
- federal standards for state no-fault insurance programs;
- encouragement for higher product standards, honest advertising and labeling of products, and requirements for disclosure of essential consumer information;
- low-cost redress of consumer complaints;
- improvement of small claims courts, informal dispute settlement mechanisms, and consumer class actions;
- safety requirements of consumer products and toys.

## CRIME

The Republican Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to crime:

- local government responsibility for law enforcement;
- continuation of federal help to the states through the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration;
- mandatory and automatic sentences for crimes committed with a lethal weapon;
- death penalty imposed for certain crimes at the discretion of each state;
- the right of citizens to keep and bear firearms;
- international co-operation for cutting off the supply of illegal drugs;
- federal bloc grants and aid in order to help prevent and correct juvenile delinquency;
- prison reform.

The Democrat Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to crime:

- local and federal responsibility for law enforcement;
- improvement in the punishment and rehabilitation systems;
- international co-operation for cutting off the supply of illegal drugs;
- aid to drug abusers through medical assistance and rehabilitation;
- curtailment of the availability of handguns;
- federal and state efforts in strengthening gun control laws.



## DEFENSE

The Republican Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to defense:

- dedication to a superior national defense;
- sustained growth in the defense budget;
- cost effective programs and maximum value;
- promotion of the procurement of the B-1 to replace the aging B-52;
- continuation of military growth, while relaxing nuclear tension;
- continuation of naval supremacy and shipbuilding as a high priority;
- substantial economy in weapons systems;
- elimination of 1% kicker;
- security assistance programs to our allies to strengthen their efforts at self defense.

The Democratic Platform calls for the following proposals with regard to defense:

- dedication to a credible deterrent and parity;
- reduction of present federal defense spending by \$5-7 billion;
- cost effective programs;
- delay in the B-1 procurement;
- continuation of the reduction of tension with parity or survivability;
- continuation of naval supremacy;
- reduction of exotic and overcomplicated systems of procurement;
- congressional oversight of intelligence agencies.

## ECONOMY

The Republican Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to the economy:

- business, expansion to provide needed employment;
- importance of savings;
- steady growth without inflation;
- opposition to wage and price controls;
- opposition to expansion of the money supply and credit;
- opposition to federally funded public employment;
- encouragement of jobs in the private sector;
- maintenance of tax cuts with decreased federal spending;
- opposition to the Humphrey-Hawkins full employment legislation.

The Democrat Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to the economy:

- dedication to the reduction of adult unemployment;
- annual targeting for the economy;
- a more flexible Federal Reserve;
- anti-recessional grants to cities and local governments;
- expansion of CETA and vocational training for youth and minorities;
- encouragement of the passage of the Humphrey-Hawkins full employment legislation;
- tax deductions along with increased federal spending.

## EDUCATION

The Republican Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to education:

- minimum bureaucratic control by consolidating federal categorical grant programs into block grants and turning the funds over to the states;
- opposition of forced busing to achieve school racial balance;
- elimination of the root causes of segregated schools;
- a constitutional amendment to allow local communities to conduct non-sectarian prayers in their public schools if they wish to do so;
- elimination of government interference in the management of colleges and universities;
- continuation of special federal support for vocational education;
- consideration of tax credits for parents making elementary and secondary school tuition payments;
- financial aid for needy individuals with more realistic eligibility guidelines for student aid.

The Democrat Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to education:

- increased federal funds and federal control of education;
- expansion of federal support to education of the handicapped, bilingual education, vocational and early childhood education;
- federally financed day care centers;
- state based equalizations to relieve the property taxpayer and to avoid the inequities in the existing finance system for educational costs;
- continuation of support of the essential purpose of school desegregation;
- increased federal aid to extend post-secondary opportunities for students from low- and middle-income families;
- provision by the federal government of educational payments to all higher education institutions to help cover per-student costs.

## ELECTION REFORM

The Republican Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to election reform:

- opposition to a uniform national primary, but supportive of a group of voluntary regional primaries;
- opposition to a national postcard voter registration.

The Democrat Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to election reform:

- public financing of congressional campaigns;
- national postcard voter registration.

## ENERGY

The Republican Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to energy:

- expansion of energy supply and improve energy efficiency so as to reduce dependence on foreign sources;
- promotion of exploration and development of domestic gas, oil, coal, and uranium and expansion of research and development in the use of solar, geo-thermal, co-generation, solid waste, wind, water, and other sources of energy;
- provision of adequate capital for research and development investment;
- elimination of price controls on oil and newly discovered supplies of natural gas;
- acceleration in the development of oil shale reserves, Alaskan petroleum, and the leasing of the outer Continental Shelf while protecting the environment to the fullest possible extent;
- greater mining and use of coal;
- promotion of development and use of already proven safe processes of generating nuclear energy.

The Democrat Platform sets forth the following proposals in regard to energy:

- development of alternative energy sources and encouragement of cooperation among the industrialized countries toward that end;
- reduction of energy consumption;
- limitation of dangers inherent in international atomic energy development;
- subsidization of multi-national nuclear facilities;
- conversion to international control of non-weapons fissionable material.

## ENVIRONMENT

The Republican Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to the environment:

- local government control of establishment and application of air quality standards;
- local government control of land use planning;
- development of more efficient and additional use of American waters;
- broader use of resource recovery and recycling processes through government de-regulation;
- conservation of national resources;
- solutions for pollution problems by federal scientific and technological research and development;
- proper development of energy sources and natural resources;
- protection and enhancement of recreational and scenic areas.

The Democrat Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to the environment:

- land and ocean use planning;
- protection of natural resources;
- federal budget increases for environmental research and development with the public sector.
- encouragement to the technological community to produce better pollution control equipment.

## FOREIGN POLICY

The Republican Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to foreign policy

- realistic, and principled policy to meet the nation's needs;
- a strong and effective program of diplomacy;
- peace, through defense strength;
- opposition to communist intervention with regard to third world struggles;
- full NATO defense posture with economic cooperation with all pro-western governments;
- expansion of relations with China, as well as the trade balance;
- preservation of peace and stability in the Middle East;
- continuation of improving relations with Arab oil exporting nations to avert boycotts;
- continuation of support for allies in Asia and the Pacific Basin;
- relations with the Soviet Union only through mutual respect of strength and ideologies;
- the continued achievement of self-determination of the people of Central and Eastern Europe;
- the evolution of self-determination of all people in Africa and stabilization through the Organization of African Unity;
- opposition to the eligibility of Cuban for entrance into the Organization of American States;
- continuation of expanding economic trade with Americas;
- protection of U.S. security by any treaty with Panama.

The Democrat Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to foreign policy:

- moral diplomacy consistent with American values;
- the release of all political prisoners;
- opposition to aid to the anti-communist third world force in Angola;
- full NATO defense posture with full economic cooperation with all pro-western governments;
- steady and improved relations with China;
- a lasting peace in the Middle East;
- opposition to boycotts of any kind;
- dedication to remaining a Pacific power yet reduction and phasing out of our military presence in Korea;
- peaceful resolution of Taiwan's future in order to normalize relations with the People's Republic of China;
- opposition to the continued Soviet dominance of many Eastern European countries;
- the continuation of U.S. - Soviet trade, but opposition to concessionary credits;
- opposition to the minority government of South Africa and Rhodesia, support of the repeal of the Byrd Amendment and efforts to normalize relations with Angola;
- normalization of relations with Cuba;
- recommendation of a settlement of a treaty with Panama.



## HEALTH

The Republican Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to health:

- opposition to compulsory national health insurance;
- opposition to compulsory health insurance which would increase federal government spending by more than \$70 billion in its first full year;
- continuation and improvement of the present health delivery and insurance system;
- reduction of federal control and intrusion in health matters;
- establishment of federal health programs as a single grant to each state;
- opposition to any legislation which sanctions ending the life of any patient.

The Democrat Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to health:

- need for a comprehensive health insurance system with universal and mandatory coverage financed by a combination of employer-employee shared payroll taxes and general tax revenues;
- increased federal spending and control;
- a more responsive consumer-oriented system of health care delivery.

## HOUSING

The Republican Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to housing:

- rational urban strategy which would promote the revitalization of the "sense of community" through the private section;
- assistance to cities and counties through bloc grant programs;
- encouragement of capital formation;
- promotion of growth and stability in central cities through financial institutions;
- reduction of direct federal role in housing programs;
- reduction of interest on home mortgages;
- opposition to discrimination in housing;
- incentives for development of low and moderate income housing plus the rehabilitation of existing housing stock.

The Democrat Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to housing:

- direct federal subsidies and low interest loans to encourage construction of low to moderate income housing;
- expansion of direct federal subsidies to elderly;
- rehabilitation of existing housing;
- preservation and protection of historic landmarks;
- bloc grants at local levels;
- establishment of job creation measures;
- revitalization of Federal Housing Administration to stabilize new construction and existing housing markets;
- promotion and enforcement of equal opportunity;
- the sharing of mortgage lenders' investment risks between the public and the private sectors, by providing government backing.

## INDIANS

The Republican Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to Indians:

- continuation to uphold our responsibilities toward American Indians;
- reduction of federal dominance and pursuit of a joint effort to assist development of native-owned resources;
- encouragement for solutions to severe economic, health and educational problems of the Indians.

The Democrat Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to Indians:

- legal and moral trust responsibilities;
- continuation of treaty obligations;
- re-examination of federal laws concerning Indians;
- aid in the acquisition of citizenship by Resident Aliens.

## INTERNATIONAL ECONOMY

The Republican Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to international economy:

- maintenance of the vitality of domestic economy;
- strengthening of international trade and monetary systems;
- removal of economic barriers through vigorous representation of U.S. interests at the trade negotiations in Geneva, Switzerland;
- support of fair trade principles;
- continuous review of the Trade Act of 1974;
- international co-operation in the field of energy and support of an International Energy Agency;
- promotion of the economic growth of Less Developed Countries;
- opposition to the replacement of the free market mechanism by cartels, price-fixing, or commodity agreements;
- maintenance of being a dependable supplier of agricultural commodities.

The Democrat Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to international economy:

- restoration of domestic economy;
- creation of new markets overseas;
- reciprocal trade barrier reductions;
- promotion of higher labor standards in foreign countries;
- leadership over governments and multinationals that are actively influencing market forces;
- support of the International Monetary Fund;
- maintenance of a strong and competitive American merchant marine fleet;
- development of a national cargo policy;
- encouragement to multinationals to be more responsive;
- elimination of third party boycotts.

## MINORITIES

The Republican Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to minorities:

- vigorous enforcement of laws to assure equal treatment in employment practices;
- continuation of providing educational opportunities;
- increases of direct and guaranteed loans to minority businesses;
- equal opportunities for qualified minorities;
- opportunity for language proficiency in English to avert discrimination in all walks of life.

The Democrat Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to minorities:

- equal employment opportunities;
- equal opportunity regardless of race, or ethnic background;
- greater black participation with regard to government positions.

## REVENUE SHARING

The Republican Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to Revenue Sharing:

- continuation of revenue sharing programs without unwarranted federal restrictions and limitations;
- restoration of local taxation and spending;
- conversion of categorical grant programs into bloc grant programs.

The Democrat Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to Revenue Sharing

- reform of, federal grant programs;
- simplification of the grant process for both recipient governments and program administrators.

## SENIOR CITIZENS

The Republican Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to Senior Citizens:

- incentives to encourage families to care for their older members;
- abolition of arbitrary age levels for mandatory retirement;
- improvement of the Medicare program;
- increased attention for the elderly in home and out-patient care--adequate transportation, nutrition, day care and homemaker care as an alternative to costly institutional treatment.

The Democrat Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to Senior Citizens

- achievement of an adequate income level for the elderly;
- assurance of comprehensive and quality care for all Americans;
- employment programs for older Americans who wish to continue working;
- reduction in health costs paid by Senior Citizens;
- availability of Medicare to Americans abroad who are eligible for Social Security.

## SMALL BUSINESS

The Republican Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to small business:

- adequate financing by the Small Business Administration (SBA) to those credit worthy firms that cannot now obtain funds through conventional channels;
- inclusion by the SBA of the proper mix of loan programs to meet the needs of the many different types of firms that constitute the American small business community;
- provision for the SBA to serve as an aggressive advocate for small business and provide procurement, management and technological assistance;
- encouragement of investment in small business through more equitable tax treatment;
- relief from the overwhelming burden placed on small business by many regulatory bodies;
- liberalization of estate taxes to benefit the family business in the same manner as for the family farm.

The Democrat Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to small business:

- strengthening of minority business programs, and an increase in minority opportunities for business ownership;
- support for similar programs and opportunities for women;
- federal contract and procurement opportunities in such areas as housing, transportation and energy in order to support efforts to increase the volume of minority and small business involvement;
- cooperation on the part of regulatory agencies and the regulated small business to see that federal regulations are met without applying a stranglehold on the small firm or farm and with less paperwork and red tape.



## TAX REFORM

The Republican Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to tax reform:

- tax policies and spending policies which are inseparable;
- tax credits for college tuition, post-secondary technical training, and child care expenses incurred by working parents;
- simplification of the existing tax system;
- capital recovery through new systems of accelerated depreciation, removal of the tax burden on equity financing, and elimination of double taxation of dividends;
- encouragement of stock ownership;
- personal income tax exemption raised to \$1,000 when balanced by expenditure reductions.

The Democrat Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to tax reform:

- increasing of taxes for higher income taxpayers;
- reduction of the use of tax shelters in such areas as oil and gas, tax-loss farming, real estate, and movies;
- a tax policy which provides incentives to small businesses toward greater capital formation;
- elimination of abuses in the tax treatment of income from foreign sources, particularly with respect to multi-national corporations;
- overhaul of federal estate and gift taxes;
- elimination of provisions that encourage uneconomic corporate mergers and acquisitions;
- elimination of tax inequities that adversely affect individuals on the basis of sex or marital status;
- elimination of expense account deductions;
- reversal of tax policies that have promoted deterioration of cities and regions;
- increasing of corporate taxes.

## TRANSPORTATION

The Republican Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to transportation:

- creation of a surface transportation bloc grant;
- provision of capital and operating subsidies for urban mass transit programs;
- elimination of federal control of airlines and motor carriers;
- completion of the Interstate Highway program;
- encouragement of research and development for safe, more fuel-efficient automobiles, airplanes, railroads, and urban transportation systems.

The Democrat Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to transportation:

- expansion of the powers of the state and local governments to use federal transportation funds for capital and/or operating expenses;
- completion of the Interstate Highway System, especially in rural areas;
- reorganization and revitalization of railroads;
- improvement of mass transit systems;
- balanced transportation services for all areas of the nation.

## VETERANS

The Republican Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to veterans:

- firm committment to maintaining and improving the Veterans Administration hospital system;
- continuation of providing for veterans at their death for burial in a national cemetary and the cost of transportation thereto;
- increased educational, job, and housing loan benefits to younger veterans;
- special honor and compensation to disabled veterans and survivors of the war dead.

The Democrat Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to veterans:

- improvement of management and health care delivery and adequate funding for the Veteran's Administration health care program;
- automatic cost of living increases in the veteran's pension and disability system;
- expansion of education assistance.

## WELFARE

The Republican Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to welfare:

- a systematic and complete overhaul of the welfare system;
- elimination of welfare fraud and prevention of it for the future;
- improvement of work requirements;
- provision of educational and vocational incentives to allow recipients to become self-supporting;
- better co-ordination of federal efforts with local and state social welfare agencies;
- strengthening of local and state administrative functions;
- opposition to federalizing the welfare system;
- opposition to the guaranteed annual income concept or any programs that reduce the incentive to work.

The Democrat Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to welfare:

- establishment of an income floor;
- phased reduction in the states' share of welfare costs;
- elimination of local governments' welfare costs;
- greater federal control of welfare system;
- replacement of existing inadequate and wasteful systems with a simplified system of income maintenance, substantially financed by the Federal government.

## WOMEN'S RIGHTS

The Republican Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to women's rights:

- endorsement of the principle of equal rights, equal opportunities, and equal status for women;
- reaffirmation of support for the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment;
- continuation of the public dialogue on abortion and support of the efforts of those who seek enactment of a constitutional amendment to restore protection of the right to life of unborn children;
- support of small business assistance for women;
- support of rape prevention;
- support of the elimination of discriminatory housing practices.

The Democrat Platform calls for the following proposals in regard to women's rights:

- ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment;
- elimination of discrimination against women in all federal programs.