Dole Learned Something During The Primaries

August 29, 1996 by Phyllis Schlafly

Bob Dole's acceptance speech in San Diego proved that, contrary to the old adage, you can teach an old dog new tricks. He showed that he learned something from his defeat in the New Hampshire primary.

Here's what Dole said: "We must commit ourselves to a trade policy that does not suppress pay and threaten American jobs. By any measure the trade policy of the Clinton Administration has been a disaster; trade deficits are skyrocketing, and middle-income families are paying the price."

Continuing, Dole added: "My Administration will fully enforce our trade laws, negotiate effective trade agreements, and not let our national sovereignty be infringed by the World Trade Organization or any other international body."

The jobs/trade issue was the heart of Pat Buchanan's candidacy and why he became the upset New Hampshire winner. Upon hearing New Hampshire's primary election returns, Dole admitted that he didn't realize jobs and trade policy would be the big issue.

Now he does, so New Hampshire was a useful learning experience. Some pundits have been whining that the presidential primary system is a waste of resources. It isn't. It enables Washington officials to get outside the Beltway and find out what is going on in the real world.

The jobs/trade issue is fundamental to the Republican slogan "Restoring the American Dream." It can be a winning issue for Republicans, and Dole's new promises should be fulfilled by a Republican Administration.

The crux of this issue is whether U.S. policy should give preference to American workers and their jobs over non-American workers and their jobs. Buchanan's pro-American answer to this question brought him three million votes, and Dole would be smart to try to win over those votes.

Buchanan came out with his economic plan over a year ago. It called for allowing the free market to

create more and better jobs for Americans by two changes in the tax code: increasing the death tax exemption tenfold in order to stop the forced sale of family farms and family businesses, and increasing the income tax exemption on small businesses to a level that would make it profitable to hire more American workers.

The revenue loss would be made up by a tariff of 20 percent on imports from China and 10 percent on imports from Japan. Even Jude Wanniski, Jack Kemp's economic adviser, gave guarded approval to Buchanan's ingenious plan.

Buchanan's plan resonated strongly with the voters, but he only had limited funds to spend in only a few states. Ross Perot, who makes jobs and trade one of his top three issues, is just starting to spend his $30 million in federal funds, plus millions more in soft money.

The Republican Platform clearly endorses a pro-American trade policy. It added "and fair" to the call for "free and fair trade."

The Platform shows that the grassroots understand that the explosion in our trade deficit to an all-time high, including the $35 billion trade deficit with China alone, is "siphoning American wealth into the hands of foreigners."

The Platform criticizes Bill Clinton's "hollow agreements" for subsidizing competition with U.S. industries and financing socialism in less developed countries. It accurately states that those agreements discriminate against U.S. industries and agriculture.

The Platform promises that "Republicans will not allow the World Trade Organization to undermine United States sovereignty." The Platform tactfully overlooks the fact that Bob Dole voted for the WTO, and we hope he is rethinking his position on that, too.

The Republican Platform calls for setting "immigration at manageable levels" and for ensuring that our immigration laws "reflect America's national interest." The Platform favors California's Proposition 187 to deny taxpayer benefits to illegal aliens, an initiative that passed in 1994 with over a 60 percent majority, including majorities in all ethnic groups.

The Republican Platform literally heaped scorn on the words of Clinton's Rhodes scholar buddy, Strobe Talbott, who predicted in Time Magazine that "nationhood as we know it will be obsolete; all states will recognize a single global authority." Talbott is expected to be Secretary of State if Clinton is reelected.

The Platform promise that "Republicans will not subordinate United States sovereignty to any international authority" and emphatically opposes allowing the United Nations to impose any global taxes. The Platform assures us that Republicans will not allow any international organizations to "infringe upon either the sovereignty of the United States or the earnings of the American taxpayer."

The American sovereignty issues don't play very well with the internationalist crowd or the media elite. But they are guaranteed applause lines for candidates who use them in the highways and byways of America because grassroots Americans care about American sovereignty and want a President whose policies are designed to favor Americans over foreigners.