Clinton Will Never End Big Government

February 8, 1996 by Phyllis Schlafly

In his State of the Union speech, President Clinton announced the unconditional surrender of liberalism to conservatism. "The era of big government is over. We know big government does not have all the answers. There is not a program for every problem."

That's the essence of the difference between conservatives and liberals. But having tossed those throwaway lines to get cheers from Republicans, Clinton went on to advocate a laundry list of liberal spending programs.

Clinton is still trying to get the Federal Government to take over the health care industry and require what is called "guaranteed issue." That's the counterproductive policy New York State tried a couple of years ago, which caused health insurance rates to rise so much that 400,000 people were forced to give up their health insurance.

Guaranteed issue of medical insurance is like requiring insurance companies to insure houses after they are already on fire and like requiring auto insurance companies to sign up drunk drivers. If the law guarantees issue of health insurance coverage, people will just wait until they get sick to buy coverage.

Clinton called for "community partnerships with local police forces to catch criminals and to prevent crime" and for "the F.B.I. and other investigative agencies" to prosecute gangs. Those are not federal functions and we don't want a federal police force.

Clinton said "we must end the deadly scourge of domestic violence." Of course, the "we" in that directive means the Federal Government, which has no constitutional authority whatsoever to stick its nose into quarrels and fights within the home. Is Clinton going to claim that domestic violence is interstate commerce?

To most people, ending big government starts with getting the feds out of the public school classroom, but Clinton wants to take us in exactly the opposite direction. He said that "every classroom in America must be connected to the information superhighway, with computers, good software and well-trained teachers."

That's a good idea, but the trouble is, he is asking the federal taxpayers to pay for a "technology initiative" to form a "national partnership." This means the federal bureaucrats will control the keyboards and the data base of the "partnership," and be able to control and direct classroom curricula.

Clinton went all out for local schools "to adopt national standards" and to hold them accountable for conforming to his "Goals 2000 initiative." The joker in what is called "national standards" is that they are really "national opinions." The federally funded United States History standards were so discredited that the Senate denounced them by a vote of 99 to 1.

Clinton called for a vast new expansion of federal spending to send more young people to college through his national service program, to give $1,000 to each high school graduate in the top five percent, to further expand the student loan program, and to fund a new program for community colleges called a "GI Bill for America's Workers."

Clinton called for more taxpayer spending for so-called "drug education," even though the General Accounting Office and other impartial investigations have reported that there isn't a shred of evidence that the $2 billion of federal funds we've already spent have done anything to reduce drug abuse.

Clinton said that all schools should teach "character education: good values and good citizenship." We've come a long way, haven't we, since the 1992 Democratic National Convention in New York City when Clinton said, "I'm fed up with politicians teaching us about family values." Now, he sounds like Dan Quayle.

The whole idea of the federal politicians and bureaucrats teaching "character" to schoolchildren is ludicrous. How many of them have already exited Washington under a cloud because of a lack of character?

And he wants schools to be able to require students to wear uniforms! Is he trying to be our Big Mother Government?

When Bob Dole criticized the movies last year, the liberals and the media waxed indignant, charging that it was just political pandering. Now Clinton has used his State of the Union message to tell Hollywood and the television networks what kind of entertainment to provide.

Clinton is deep into "family values" now, urging couples to "stay together" rather than divorce, and telling fathers to love and care for their children and to pay child support. Those are not proper functions of the Federal Government.

Clinton called for a tax credit for working families with children. He's trying to coopt the "crown jewel" of the Republican Contract With America, but it's the same provision that he denounced as "tax cuts for the rich" when he vetoed the Balanced Budget Act.

One of the most dishonest parts of his speech was his "challenge" to Republicans to send him a welfare reform bill and "I will sign it." The fact is that the Congress did send him a pretty good compromise welfare reform bill and Clinton already vetoed it.

Republicans have won the war of ideas, but the slippery, skillful liberals are still very much in control of government, the taxpayers' money, the educational system, and the media. Republicans had better develop a new game plan soon.