

Take, for example, the planks on terrorism, which both excoriate President Clinton for coddling terrorists and pander to the GOP's Ruby Ridge wing: "To take away the liberty of the American people while fighting terrorism is repugnant to the history and character of our nation." How will the anti-big government Republicans fight terrorism while opposing things like taggants to trace bomb-powder? Establish a "blue ribbon" commission. Nothing scares killers like a panel of experts.

Elsewhere, the platform gets similarly caught between its enthusiasm for states' rights and its insistence that they do the right-wing thing. The GOP would "require the original sponsor of [any] proposed federal legislation to cite specific constitutional authority for the measure." Yet the platform cites no such authority for its own calls to nationalize product-liability law and to force legal reforms upon the states: "restore limited liability" to churches "to provide protection against profit-seeking lawsuits," "eliminate the use of junk science" by "opportunistic attorneys" and so on.

Along with scrapping the Education Department, the platform says plainly, "the federal government has no constitutional authority to be involved in the school curricula." But a few lines later comes a truly bizarre call for Napoleonic micromanagement: an exhortation to "requir[e] our public schools to dedicate one full day each year to studying the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution."

Why not a week? For when the Republicans get through with the Constitution, there'll be a lot more of it to study. A cursory count yields calls for six new amendments: to extend Fourteenth Amendment citizenship protections to the unborn; to deny them to the children of illegal immigrants born in the U.S.; to protect "victims' rights"; and, of course, to outlaw the various forms of mutilation and political adornment that might fall under the category of "desecration" of the American flag. Banning abortion and flag-burning are hardy perennials, and victims' rights, too, is becoming a familiar pander. The denial of birthright citizenship, however—a radical shift in our notion of Americanhood—demands vociferous rebuttal from all responsible quarters.

In its economic planks, the platform states, "Research and development is our commitment to the future." It then endorses "de-emphasizing the role of government"—that is, cutting spending—on R&D, which is what the GOP Congress proposed. The next paragraph praises a Dole-sponsored law that expanded federally funded research. The GOP sounds similarly confused on homeownership, which, it declares, "is not something government gives to the people, but rather something they can attain for themselves. . . ." Two sentences later, it reiterates support for the mortgage interest tax deduction, a subsidy the government provides to boost homeownership.

On foreign policy, the platform betrays open warfare between the party's neocons and its America-firsters. "We vigorously support restoring the promotion of democracy worldwide," the preamble announces. How? Not by using economic aid to reward poor countries for breaking with authoritarianism. That, the platform says, is "social welfare spending in the Third World." The multinational disarmament and election-monitoring efforts that have given birth to democracy in Mozambique, Cambodia and El Salvador meet with reproof, too. "Bill Clinton's peacekeeping operations and other global ventures" haven't had "any discernible benefit to U.S. national security." Of course not. Promoting democracy in impoverished corners of the globe isn't an

expression of American interests in any direct way, it's an expression of American beliefs. But the Buchanan wing of the party doesn't think that America should have moral concerns beyond its borders. So the platform's specific foreign policy planks render its preamble meaningless.

Bob Dole has, understandably, tried to bury this mishmash of confusion and dishonesty in the scripted moderation of San Diego. Still, if this is the best statement his party can offer about what it would do in office, what does it say about the policies he would pursue as president?

UKRAINE INDEPENDENCE

SPEECH OF

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 4, 1996

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 120, a resolution that recognizes the fifth anniversary of Ukraine's independence and applauds the efforts of the people of Ukraine to reform the political and economic system of that nation.

This has been a memorable year for the Ukrainian people. In April, we all recalled the 10th anniversary of the tragedy of Chernobyl. Ukraine is still feeling the effects of that disaster, but together we are making progress to assess the long-term effects of Chernobyl on the people, animals, and land in Ukraine.

Just over 2 months ago, President Kuchma and the Ukrainian Parliament ratified a new constitution for the nation. This historic action will ensure that Ukrainians enjoy all the freedoms that are guaranteed to people who live in a democracy, and will ensure that Ukraine remains on the path of reform of its political and economic system.

Most recently, in August, Ukrainians celebrated the fifth anniversary of their independence. Today, Ukraine is making great strides, and American support for the people of Ukraine has helped immensely.

Ukraine is one of Europe's largest, most vibrant nations. The government and people of Ukraine are making the transformation to a market economy, beginning to privatize state-owned enterprises, establishing the rule of law, and creating a positive environment for trade and investment.

Ukraine stands as a proud member of the community of nations by supporting efforts to stem proliferation of nuclear weapons, by ratifying the START-I Treaty, by representing the interests of the smaller states of the Commonwealth of Independent States, and by providing peacekeeping troops in the former Yugoslavia.

Mr. Speaker, as a Ukrainian-American, I am especially proud of the close ties our two nations have. Our two peoples have so much to share with each other. This weekend in Macomb County, MI, we will be celebrating the fifth anniversary of Ukraine's independence and its new constitution. We will also be exploring bilateral investment and trade opportunities in Ukraine with Ambassador Yuri Shcherbak. It will be my great honor during these events to receive the Shevchenko Freedom Award for contributions to Ukrainian statehood.

Mr. Speaker, we look forward to a future in which Ukraine and the United States will enjoy even closer ties.

JUSTICE WILL BE DONE

HON. JOHN T. MYERS

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 5, 1996

Mr. MYERS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, justice sometimes is slow in coming, but usually does prevail. This is the issue in the case involving "Baby Richard." This little boy, whose only offense was being born to a mother who did not want him, was taken from the only parents he ever knew who had legally adopted him at birth. Through the action of a judge and an attorney he was given to a father who did not know he existed at the time of his birth. He was promised that he could see his adoptive brother, but that has been denied to this little fellow.

The following article by Hevrdejs & Conklin, Inc. appeared September 3, 1996 in the Chicago Tribune.

[The Chicago Tribune, Tuesday, Sept. 3, 1996]

ATTORNEY'S LUCK RUNNING SHORT AFTER "BABY RICHARD" CASE

(By Hevrdejs & Conklin Inc.)

We know many readers were delighted when Illinois Supreme Court Justice James Heiple, who wrote the unpopular "Baby Richard" decision, subsequently got into an embarrassing traffic scrape with police. Now comes word Loren Heinemann, the lawyer who won custody of "Baby Richard" for Otakar Kirchner, (a decision upheld by Heiple), has filed for personal bankruptcy. According to the Chicago Daily Law Bulletin, Heinemann lists \$602,000 in liabilities. He also is defending himself in five unrelated cases of professional misconduct. Do we detect a "Baby Richard" curse at work here?

TRIBUTE TO GERTRUDE "GERT" R. TABER

HON. GEORGE P. RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 5, 1996

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I have the sad duty today to report to this House the death of a fellow elected official, Gertrude "Gert" R. Taber, from the fifth supervisorial district in my home county of Mariposa, CA. I had the privilege of serving with Gert on the Mariposa County Board of Supervisors, and of knowing Gert as the first lady of Mariposa since I was a young child.

Gert served on the board from November 1979 until her passing last week. She provided the citizens of Mariposa County with 17 years of dedicated service during a time of great change in California, and in Mariposa County. Adapting to change was a starting point for Gert, when she broke the barriers of the board of supervisors as the first woman supervisor in the then 125 year history of that board.

Gert had many accomplishments as a supervisor, mostly for modernizing Mariposa County's government by creating new administrative, personnel, data processing, community services, fire and other departments and