

Quality, affordable health care

The American health care system costs too much and does not work. . . .

My health care plan is simple in concept but revolutionary in scope. . . . The main elements include:

- **National spending caps.** The cost of health care must not be allowed to rise faster than the average American's income. I will scrap the Health Care Financing Administration and replace it with a health standards board—made up of consumers, providers, business, labor, and government—that will establish annual health budget targets and outline a core benefits package. . . .

- **Universal coverage.** Affordable, quality health care will be a right, not a privilege. Under my plan, employers and employees will either purchase private insurance or opt to buy into a high-quality public program. Every American not covered by an employer will receive the core benefits program set by the health standards board.

- **Managed care networks.** Consumers will be able to select from among a variety of local health networks, made up of insurers, hospitals, clinics, and doctors. The networks will receive a fixed amount of money for each consumer, giving them the necessary incentive to control costs.

A revolution in government

. . . I will take the following steps: . . .

- **Cuts in administrative waste.** I will require federal managers and workers to achieve 3% across-the-board administrative savings in every federal agency.

- **Cut wasteful government spending programs.** To get rid of spending programs that no longer serve their purpose, I will eliminate taxpayer subsidies for narrow special interests, reform defense procurement and foreign aid, and slash boondoggle projects.

- **Line item veto.** To eliminate pork-barrel projects and cut government waste, I will ask Congress to give me the line item veto. . . .

'Equity in sacrifice'

From former Texas Rep. Barbara Jordan's keynote speech to the Democratic Convention on July 13:

The idea that America today will be better tomorrow has become destabilized. It has become destabilized because of the recession and the sluggishness of the economy. Jobs lost have become permanent unemployment rather than cyclical unemployment. Public policymakers are held in low regard. Mistrust abounds.

In this kind of environment, is it understandable that

change would become the watchword of this time. What is the catalyst which will bring about the change we are all talking about? I say that catalyst is the Democratic Party and our nominee for President.

We are not strangers to change. Twenty years ago we changed the whole tone of the nation after Watergate abuses. We did that, 20 years ago. We know how to change. We have been the instrument of change in the past. We know what needs to be done. We know how to do it. We know that we can impact policies which affect education, human rights, civil rights, economic and social opportunity, and the environment. These are policies which are embedded in the soul of the Democratic Party. And embedded in our soul. They will not disappear easily.

We as a party will do nothing to erode our essence. We will not. But there are some things which ought to change. We need to change them. But the fact that we are going to change things, should not cause any apprehension in our minds, because the Democratic Party is alive and well. It is alive and well. We will change in order to satisfy the present, in order to satisfy the future, but we will not die. We will change, but we will not die.

From what to what? Why not change from a party with a reputation of "tax and spend" to one with a reputation of investment and growth? Change. Change. A growth economy is a must. We can grow the economy and sustain an improved environment at the same time. . . . Change. We can change the direction of America's economic engine and become competitive again. We can make that change and become proud of the country that we are. . . .

We must change that deleterious environment of the '80s, that environment which was characterized by greed and hatred and selfishness and mega-mergers and debt overhang, change it to what? Change that environment of the '80s to an environment which is characterized by a devotion to the public interest, public service, tolerance, and love.

We must frankly acknowledge our complicity in the creation of the unconscionable budget deficit—acknowledge our complicity—and recognize, painful though it may be, that in order to seriously address the budget deficit, we must address the question of entitlements also. That's not easy. That's not easy. But we have to do it. We have to do it because the idea of justice between generations, that idea mandates that the baby boomers—that's our ticket—are entitled to a secure future. They are.

However, if we are going to ask those who receive benefits to sacrifice, there must be equity in sacrifice. Equity in sacrifice. That idea says that we will sacrifice for growth, but that everybody must join in the sacrifice, not just a few. Equity in sacrifice means that all will sacrifice equally. Equally. Equally. That is, the person who is retired on a fixed income, the day laborer, the corporate executive, the college professor, the member of Congress—all must sacrifice for equity. . . .