

# *Republican Party Platform, 1936*

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*Not all Americans supported the New Deal. In fact, millions of Americans reviled Franklin D. Roosevelt and his policies. The Republican Party Platform of 1936 outlined the essentials of conservative complaints about the New Deal. The campaign that year was filled with bitter, often personal, denunciations of Roosevelt. But the overwhelming Democratic landslide in both the presidential race and in the Congress amounted to a strong vote of confidence in the President's policies.*

SOURCE: Proceedings, 21st Republican National Convention.

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America is in peril. The welfare of American men and women and the future of our youth are at stake. We dedicate ourselves to the preservation of their political liberty, their individual opportunity and their character as free citizens, which today for the first time are threatened by Government itself.

For three long years the New Deal Administration has dishonored American traditions and flagrantly betrayed the pledges upon which the Democratic Party sought and received public support.

The powers of Congress have been usurped by the President.  
The integrity and authority of the Supreme Court have been flouted.  
The rights and liberties of American citizens have been violated.  
Regulated monopoly has displaced free enterprise.  
The New Deal Administration constantly seeks to usurp the rights reserved to the States and to the people.  
It has insisted on the passage of laws contrary to the Constitution.  
It has intimidated witnesses and interfered with the right of petition.  
It has dishonored our country by repudiating its most sacred obligations.  
It has been guilty of frightful waste and extravagance, using public funds for partisan political purposes.  
It has promoted investigations to harass and intimidate American citizens, at the same time denying investigations into its own improper expenditures.  
It has created a vast multitude of new offices, filled them with its favorites, set up a centralized bureaucracy, and sent out warms of inspectors to harass our people.  
It had bred fear and hesitation in commerce and industry, thus discouraging new enterprises, preventing  
employment and prolonging the depression.  
It secretly has made tariff agreements with our foreign competitors, flooding our markets with foreign commodities.  
It has coerced and intimidated voters by withholding relief from those opposing its tyrannical policies.  
It has destroyed the morale of many of our people and made them dependent upon Government.  
Appeals to passion and class prejudice have replaced reason and tolerance.

*To a free people* these actions are insufferable. This campaign cannot be waged on the traditional differences between the Republican and Democratic parties. The responsibility of this election transcends all previous political divisions. We invite all

Americans, irrespective of party, to join us in defense of American institutions.

## **CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT AND FREE ENTERPRISE**

### ***WE PLEDGE OURSELVES:***

1. To maintain the American system of constitutional and local self government, and to resist all attempts to impair the authority of the Supreme Court of the United States, the final protector of the rights of our citizens against the arbitrary encroachments of the legislative and executive branches of Government. There can be no individual liberty without an independent judiciary.
2. To preserve the American system of free enterprise, private competition, and equality of opportunity, and to seek its constant betterment in the interests of all.

### ***REEMPLOYMENT***

The only permanent solution of the unemployment problem is the absorption of the unemployed by industry and agriculture. To that end, we advocate:

- Removal of restrictions on production.
- Abandonment of all New Deal policies that raise production costs, increase the cost of living, and thereby restrict buying, reduce volume and prevent reemployment.
- Encouragement instead of hindrance to legitimate business.
- Withdrawal of Government from competition with private payrolls.
- Elimination of unnecessary and hampering regulations.
- Adoption of such policies as will furnish a chance for individual enterprise, industrial expansion, and the restoration of jobs.

### ***RELIEF***

The necessities of life must be provided for the needy, and hope must be restored pending recovery. The administration of relief is a major failure of the New Deal. It has been faithless to those who most deserve our sympathy. To end confusion, partisanship, waste and incompetence,

### ***WE PLEDGE:***

1. The return of responsibility for relief administration to non-political local agencies familiar with community problems.
2. Federal grants-in-aid to the States and Territories while the need exists, upon compliance with these conditions: (a) a fair proportion of the total relief burden to be provided from the revenues of States and local governments; (b) all engaged in relief administration to be selected on the basis of merit and fitness; (c) adequate provision to be made for the encouragement of those persons who are trying to become self-supporting.
3. Undertaking of Federal public works only on their merits and separate from the administration of relief.

4. A prompt determination of the facts concerning relief and unemployment.

### *Security*

Real security will be possible only when our productive capacity is sufficient to furnish a decent standard of living for all American families and to provide a surplus for future needs and contingencies. For the attainment of that ultimate objective, we look to the energy, self-reliance and character of our people, and to our system of free enterprise.

Society has an obligation to promote the security of the people, by affording some measure of protection against involuntary unemployment and dependency in old age. The New Deal policies, while purporting to provide social security, have, in fact, endangered it.

We propose a system of old age security....

We propose to encourage adoption by the States and Territories of honest and practical measures for meeting the problems of unemployment insurance.

The unemployment insurance and old age annuity sections of the present Social Security Act are unworkable and deny benefits to about two-thirds of our adult population, including professional men and women and all those engaged in agriculture and domestic service, and the self employed, while imposing heavy tax burdens upon all. The so-called reserve fund estimated at forty-seven billion dollars for old age insurance is no reserve at all, because the fund will contain nothing but the Government's promise to pay, while the taxes collected in the guise of premiums will be wasted by the Government in reckless and extravagant political schemes.

### *LABOR*

The welfare of labor rests upon increased production and the prevention of exploitation. We pledge ourselves to:

Protect the right of labor to organize and to bargain collectively through representatives of its own choosing without interference from any source.

Prevent governmental job holders from exercising autocratic powers over labor.

Support the adoption of State laws and interstate compacts to abolish sweatshops and child labor, and to protect women and children with respect to maximum hours, minimum wages and working conditions. We believe that this can be done within the Constitution as it now stands.

### *AGRICULTURE*

The farm problem is an economic and social, not a partisan problem, and we propose to treat it accordingly....

Our paramount object is to protect and foster the family type of farm, traditional in American life, and to promote policies which will bring about an adjustment of agriculture to meet the needs of domestic and foreign markets. As an emergency measure, during the agricultural depression, Federal benefit payments or grants-in-aid when administered within the means of the Federal Government are consistent with a balanced budget.

### *WE PROPOSE:*

1. To facilitate economical production and increased consumption on a basis of abundance instead of scarcity.
2. A national land-use program, including the acquisition of abandoned and non-productive farm lands by voluntary sale or lease, subject to approval of the legislative and executive branches of the States concerned, and the devotion of such land to appropriate public use, such as watershed protection and flood prevention, reforestation, recreation, and conservation of wild life.
3. That an agricultural policy be pursued for the protection and restoration of the land resources, designed to bring about such a balance between soil-building and soil-depleting crops as will permanently insure productivity, with reasonable benefits to cooperating farmers on family-type farms, but so regulated as to eliminate the New Deal's destructive policy towards the dairy and livestock industries.
4. To extend experimental aid to farmers developing new crops suited to our soil and climate....

### *REGULATION OF BUSINESS*

We recognize the existence of a field within which governmental regulation is desirable and salutary. The authority to regulate should be vested in an independent tribunal acting under clear and specific laws establishing definite standards. Their determinations on law and facts should be subject to review by the Courts. We favor Federal regulation, within the Constitution, of the marketing of securities to protect investors. We favor also Federal regulation of the interstate activities of public utilities....

### *GOVERNMENT FINANCE*

The New Deal Administration has been characterized by shameful waste and general financial irresponsibility. It has piled deficit upon deficit. It threatens national bankruptcy and the destruction through inflation of insurance policies and savings bank deposits.

### *WE PLEDGE OURSELVES TO:*

Stop the folly of uncontrolled spending.

Balance the budget—not by increasing taxes but by cutting expenditures, drastically and immediately.

Revise the Federal tax system and coordinate it with State and local tax systems.

Use the taxing power for raising revenue and not for punitive or political purposes.

### *MONEY AND BANKING*

We advocate a sound currency to be preserved at all hazards.

The first requisite to a sound and stable currency is a balanced budget.

We oppose further devaluation of the dollar.

We will restore to the Congress the authority lodged with it by the Constitution to coin money and regulate the value thereof

by repealing all the laws delegating this authority to the Executive.

We will cooperate with other countries toward stabilization of currencies as soon as we can do so with due regard for our national interests and as soon as other nations have sufficient stability to justify such action.

## ***CONCLUSION***

We assume the obligations and duties imposed upon Government by modern conditions. We affirm our unalterable conviction that, in the future as in the past, the fate of the nation will depend, not so much on the wisdom and power of Government, as on the character and virtue, self-reliance, industry and thrift of the people and on their willingness to meet the responsibilities essential to the preservation of a free society.

Finally, as our party affirmed in its first Platform in 1856: "Believing that the spirit of our institutions as well as the Constitution of our country guarantees liberty of conscience and equality of rights among our citizens, we oppose all legislation tending to impair them," and "we invite the affiliation and cooperation of the men of all parties, however differing from us in other respects, in support of the principles herein declared."

The acceptance of the nomination tendered by this Convention carries with it, as a matter of private honor and public faith, an undertaking by each candidate to be true to the principles and program herein set forth.