Subject: Re: Welcome to the Republican Party
Posted by FredT on Thu, 25 Sep 2008 15:36:58 GMT
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To me this would have been a good explanation of what the Republican and Democratic parties stood for immdeiately before and during the years of the "Great Society", but not now. It is greatly oversimplified Republican propaganda, just as so many of the Democrats' messages are half-truth propaganda designed to divide americans rather than to provide them a balanced view. During my early adult life both parties could be categorized as "centrist", with the Rebublicans leaning more toward the concervative side and the Democrats leaning more toward the populist side. There were moderate republicans and there were conservative Democrats. The Republican focus was on creating a politican and business environment that was friendly to individual initiative and business development. Under this scenario businesses, especially small businesses which employ most American workers, could prosper without the burdens of excess taxation, bureaucratic regulation, and labor union "featherbedding" that stifled productivity. Everybody, from the lowest paid worker to the highest paid executive, was able to keep more of the money they had worked so hard to earn. Some people did find themselves in a desperate financial situation, and there were few government sponsored safery nets, but the system was intended to encourage and reward individual responsibility, and for the most part it accomplished this very successfully. Many baby boomers, myself included, achieved great success in this environment.Then the Kennedy/Johnson Democrats gained power. The focus was shifted to governement regulation and the redistribution of wealth. During this period we saw the growth of civil rights legislation, environmental regulations, greater regulation of employment, OSHA, and massively expanded federal welfare programs of all types. This did result in some positive outcomes for the most needy, but only at a great cost to productive Americans. During this time I was experiencing my greatest earnings growth, and I found my taxes increasing exponentially to fund somebody else's laziness. And to add insult to injury we were seeing significant cost-of-living inflation related largely to the federal government's deficit spending. It was during this period that the Republicans very successfully exploited the segregation issue in the South to win over many formerly Democratic populist working class voters whose fear of integration trumped their hatred and distrust of the greedy "fat cat" businessmen whom they belived were exploiting them. I was converted to Republicanism during this period and have remained a registered Republican.Then we had the first Bush administration followed by the Clinton administration. Althought Bush Sr presented himself as a conservative, and Clinton was viewed as a liberal, both were in fact moderates who seemed able to work effectively with both sides. Who remembers that "Read my lips - no new taxes" Bush raised taxes, or that Clinton, working with a Republican congress, signed the welfare reform act? All those welfare moms had to go to work for McDonalds to make ends meet (no pun intended). How unfair:) Bush Sr was defeated by Clinton mostly because of one of the best decisions he made while in office, to get out of Iraq once we have accomplished our goal of driving them back across the Kuwait border. Clinton was a good leader except for two things: 1) They had to reinforce the floor of the oval office to support his enourmous ego, and 2) he couldn't keep his dick in his pants.Finally, W was elected, and I'm now ashamed to say I voted for him the first time around. The Republican party became the party of Neo-conservatives and Evangelican Christians. Federal regulatory agencies were neutered, and wherever there was a conflict between science and the bible, the bible won (intelligent design taught as science, stem cell research, etc.) Under Bush I we had Desert Storm, a well thoght out, morally justified, and honestly presented war. Uhder Bush II we got the Iraq war. Anybody see a difference?

Republicans became very close to big business interests, and when you combine this with lax oversight we got Enron, and now the big meltdown. What used to be more than 20 major oil companies is now three megagiants. Of course, the Democrats aren't entirely blameless either.So now we find outselves with our way of life threatened for the first time since the Great Depression by greedy people who flew just under the regulatory radar. We find ouselves in another year of a war we can't win, yet we dare not cut and run. The typical western european hates us, and their leaders must respond accordingly. We're inching toward another cold war with Russia. We have no viable energy policy. Our healthcare system is broken. What did I miss?So this election I'm supporing Obama as the lesser of two evils, simply because he is more likely to develop and implement an energy policy that makes some sense, at least in the long run with its greater foucs on non renewable supplies, he will get us out of Iraq sooner, he will at least attempt to fix the broken heathcare system instead of just talking about it, etc. But realistically, afer all the "bailout" money is spent neither candidate will have many good options.However, if McCain wins I'm cosoled that he will not be as incompetent as Bush and that he will have a more pragmatic, less ideologically driven approach to solving our problems. The things I like the most about McCain are the things that the neocons and the evangelicals dislike the most. Which, I suppose, explains why I so fear and dislike Palin so much as his VP candidate.What's needed for the future is neither of the current leading parties. I would change my alliegance in a heartbeat to a new "centrist" party whose members understand our heritage and our values, but vote for more pragmatic solutions rather than a blind alliegance to religious biases, conservative principles, liberal principles, etc. That's just my two cents.