



REPUBLICAN RULE IN 2005: Misguided Priorities, Incompetence, and Corruption

Republican rule this year has been marked by misguided priorities, incompetence and corruption. Republicans have lead our country in the wrong direction while making costly mistakes, neglecting their responsibilities and allowing corruption to infest the nation's capital and affect the people's business. Democrats believe by this time next year, Americans will reject more of the same and vote for a change.

MISGUIDED PRIORITIES

"[R]emember this: When it came to tax relief, House Republicans' top priority was the richest of the rich." – *Charlotte Observer Editorial*, 12/6/05

"Once the House votes on the spending [cuts] plan, it expects to take up a \$57 billion tax bill that would extend for two years the cuts in capital gains and dividend taxes; more than half the benefits of that change would flow to those making more than \$1 million annually...Something is terribly wrong with these priorities." – *Washington Post Editorial*, 11/17/05

"In an NBC/Wall Street Journal poll, only 24 percent say Republicans represent their priorities." – *Christian Science Monitor*, 12/9/05

- **Budget and Tax Cuts:** Republicans put tax cuts for the wealthy few ahead of the rest of America. While they cut investment in our children and students, and slash assistance to seniors and the most vulnerable, the GOP fast-tracked tax cuts for the wealthy and made clear that protecting more than 17 million middle class families from the Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) was of secondary importance. While claiming their spending cuts will pay for Hurricane Katrina recovery, they cut the very programs that will help many victims. In reality, the Republican cuts do not pay for recovery, only partially cover the costs of the tax cuts and increase the deficit.
- **Social Security Privatization:** Republicans put their ideological and partisan agenda ahead of finding a bipartisan and workable solution to address the program's long-term solvency for the American people – resulting in no progress on this important issue.
- **Prescription Drug Bill:** Republicans enacted a \$700 billion (ten year) Medicare Rx drug bill that is confusing for seniors, is not cost effective for taxpayers, but favorable to HMOs and drug companies.
- **Energy:** Republicans enacted energy legislation that failed to help consumers by lowering gasoline or home heating prices and did nothing to lead our country toward energy independence, while continuing to give billions in taxpayer subsidies to big oil companies during a time of record profits.

INCOMPETENCE

"Our leadership has been distracted in this country. Some of the failures are shocking." – Former Republican Governor of New Jersey and Chair of the 9/11 Commission, Thomas Kean, announcing the Bush Administration's failing grades on protecting the nation from terrorist attacks. [Remarks, 12/5/05]

- **Iraq:** More than two and a half years after invading Iraq, President Bush has yet to articulate a clear plan for success there, as evidenced by the overwhelming bipartisan Senate vote demanding that he do so.
- **Osama Bin Laden:** The mastermind of the 9/11 attacks remains at large and in command of a global terrorist network aimed at the U.S. and our allies.
- **9/11 Reforms:** President Bush and Congressional Republicans received 5 "F's", 12 "D's", and 2 "Incompletes" from the 9/11 Commission for poor progress in terrorism prevention and readiness efforts.
- **Hurricane Katrina:** A culture of cronyism and incompetence was exposed in President Bush's totally inept response to Hurricane Katrina, which cost lives and money, and increased damage to the Gulf Coast.
- **Economy:** President Bush has presided over stagnant wage growth, increases in the number of Americans living in poverty and without health insurance, and a drop in median household income of \$1,670.
- **Deficit:** Republicans' incompetence and irresponsible policies have turned the projected \$5.6 trillion ten-year surplus that President Bush inherited from President Clinton into a projected ten-year deficit of nearly \$4 trillion.

CORRUPTION

"Frankly, it sickens me." – Former Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-GA), speaking about the House Republicans' wide-ranging ethics problems in the 109th Congress. [Salt Lake Tribune, 12/2/05]

- **Tom DeLay and Jack Abramoff:** Former GOP Leader Tom DeLay (TX) had to step down from his leadership post after being indicted for money laundering and will stand trial. His close associate, "super-lobbyist" Jack Abramoff, is enmeshed in a criminal investigation that includes DeLay and several House and Senate Republicans.
- **Duke Cunningham:** Senior House Republican Duke Cunningham (CA) resigned from Congress after pleading guilty to taking nearly \$2.4 million in bribes from defense contractors.
- **House Ethics Committee:** Due to Republicans' partisan shenanigans, the House Ethics Committee has effectively been non-existent the entire year. Republicans tried to impose unilateral rule changes on the bipartisan committee, in an effort to stymie non-partisan and thorough investigations of Members, including DeLay.
- **Senate Republican Leader Bill Frist:** Senator Frist is under Federal investigation for misuse of insider information in sale of stock in family's health care company.
- **The White House:** Former Chief of Staff to V.P. Cheney, Lewis "Scooter" Libby, was indicted for his role in the leaking of an undercover CIA agent's identity for political retaliation, while White House Deputy Chief of Staff Karl Rove may still be indicted. Former White House official David Safavian has been indicted for deals with Abramoff.
- **No Checks and Balances:** House Republicans have completely neglected their Constitutional oversight duties, failing to investigate important national security issues like the leaking of an undercover CIA agent's identity, allegations of abuse at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo, intelligence failures involving weapons of mass destruction and the war in Iraq, the loss of \$9 billion in Iraq reconstruction funds, and costly Halliburton contracts.