



0' x 8' PT.  
FROM TOP OF  
TIE BEAM TO  
BOTTOM OF  
ROOF DECK

2  
A9

# BLUEPRINT FOR TOMORROW

## EN-ROUTE TO A REPUBLICAN REVOLUTION

STUDIO  
W.C.  
12'-0" GLS. WOOD  
18'-0"  
GAMES ROOM  
14'-1/2" X 30" AT  
ACCESS HATCH

BY MICHAEL STEELE

0' x 8' PT.  
FROM TOP OF  
TIE BEAM TO  
BOTTOM OF  
ROOF DECK

1  
A9

### CHAPTER ONE

### DEFINING OUR OWN FUTURE

HALL  
TUB /  
SHOWER  
BATH  
STUDY

# DEFINING OUR OWN FUTURE

## 1. LOOKING FORWARD WITH PURPOSE

The results of the last two elections and the all-too-natural tendency to find fault have left many Republican activists discouraged and some even disengaged. Every week brings new scathing examinations in gruesome post-mortem detail. Others prefer to ignore the past altogether claiming they're interested only in forging a brighter tomorrow.

I'm convinced both approaches are insufficient by themselves. We certainly cannot change what's past. But we must learn from it, make the significant course corrections required, and move forward with vigor and new purpose to win the future.

In this first installment of my suggested Blueprint for Tomorrow, I hope you'll notice something missing. I am trying to avoid the use of any words that start with "re" ... words like renewal, rebuild, recharge, re-this and re-that. I'm convinced we should not re-anything. Instead, we must stand proudly for the timeless principles our Party has always stood for when we stood at our best. We should state our case boldly and unapologetically. And, when it comes to updating our technology and tactics, we should start anew.

If you are as convinced as I am that it's time we molded the Republican Party into a transformative political movement based on timeless Republican principles, then I hope you'll join me. It will take us all working and discovering together, but I know that in defeat we also meet opportunity. If we'll seize the chance, nothing can stop us.

My Blueprint for the future is based on these key points.

- Our brand is badly tarnished.
- Our principles remain true, valid, and relevant to America's future.
- Our strategy has not worked.
- Our technology and tactics are badly outdated.
- Our fundraising in 2008 was good, not great.
- We must lead with integrity.
- Take control of our future in the redistricting process.

## 2. CASTING A CLEAR REPUBLICAN BRAND

Less than two decades ago, Americans knew very well where Republicans stood. We were the Party of competent management. We were best equipped to guide our economy to prosperity ... to champion both private ethics and public

morality ... to stand squarely for fiscal restraint, smaller government and national strength.

Democrats, on the other hand, were the Party of bigger government, higher taxes, and more waste. Sure, people knew the Democrats could be counted on to help the disadvantaged, expand public education, and increase access to health care. But they also knew those policies came at a high cost to the economy generally and the wallets of taxpayers personally.

Today, everything has changed. Most people don't really associate the Republican Party with any positive agenda. In fact, survey research shows that we fail the confidence test on nearly every issue.

Unbelievably, it's Barack Obama who convinced voters that he would cut taxes for the middle-class, fix our failing economy, extract us from the war in Iraq, and helm the administration of government more competently.

Mostly, we have ourselves to blame. Within a few short years of gaining control of Congress, we started acting more like Democrats — increasing the size, scope and cost of government beyond all reason — betraying not only the principles in which our most loyal voters believed, but the same principles which most independent and swing voters shared.

We squandered the trust of voters with a stunning display of spending and government growth that might have made a Democrat blush.

Public opinion polling is very clear on this point, it can best be summed up by these results from a recent national survey by Gallup:

- 34% say they have a favorable view of the Republican Party, 61% have an unfavorable view.
- 55% say they have a favorable view of the Democrat Party, 39% have an unfavorable view.

Just as troubling, a majority of voters view our party as more closely tied to the corruption in Washington and the greed on Wall Street than to the interests of Main Street.

Debate over how we right the ship has become daily sport for pundits and prognosticators. They seem to divide into two main camps, those who say we need to return to our core principles and those who claim we need to modernize to meet today's reality.

To my way of thinking, we must do both. And quickly.

Moderates in our party, and liberal elements outside it, have tried to steer this debate toward the suggestion that we need to change our core views, desert our convictions and give up our conservative philosophy. This is nonsense. The country did not become liberal on November 4th. In fact, just the reverse is true.

A post election survey by OnMessage, Inc. reports that solid majorities of

voters line up with the conservative position on energy, defense, tax cuts, spending, and health care.

Another poll conducted by the Tarrance Group immediately after the election found that 69% of Americans consider themselves conservative on fiscal issues like taxes and government spending. And a majority (53%) of the electorate considers itself to be conservative on social issues — 34% say very conservative.

### 3. DEFINING A TRANSFORMATIVE STRATEGY

The problem isn't that Americans are less conservative, but that the Republican Party's credibility as the reliably conservative choice is in shreds.

We must win back our credibility with a new purpose and vision for the future of our nation ... a message based on the time-honored, conservative principles we Republicans stand for ... faith, freedom, personal responsibility, respect for life — born and unborn — and a commitment to economic growth.

I'm perfectly aware there are those who say it isn't the job of the National Committee to promote policy or formulate messages.

I couldn't disagree more. The RNC cannot afford to take a back seat on message and strategy while we wait for elected officials and think tanks to lead the way. That's proven itself a failed model.

Instead, we must become a hothouse of conservative policy innovation. Yes, we are ultimately responsible for winning elections, but we will not do so without painting a compelling vision for America's future.

Members of Congress, Legislatores and especially Governors will be our strong partners in this effort.

We must do a lot better job of collaborating and coordinating with center-right think tanks, grassroots organizations, and online networks. And we must work more closely with the conservative media — print, cable, radio and web.

If we are to regain the mantle of competence and innovation we lost in recent years, we must do so by becoming the party of ideas.

And we must promote those ideas aggressively, fully prepared to compete for every vote, in every election, for every office, in every state. That's right — every vote, every election, every office, every state.

Don't get me wrong, I know it won't be easy. I was chairman of a county party where President Bush got 19%. I realize we will win some and lose some. But we must compete for all votes at all times. If we truly believe that our ideas are the best ideas for the future of America, and for all Americans, we must make our stand everywhere, bold in our ideals and ready to lead America forward.

#### 4. UPGRADING OUR TACTICS

We need a complete overhaul of our tactical efforts as a party. Now is the time to evaluate everything we do in campaigns ... learn from our mistakes ... and perfect the techniques that will win future elections.

To be sure, some of the tactical advances made by the Obama campaign were made possible by their resource advantage. But the reverse is also true. The Obama campaign's ability to amass superior resources was in part made possible by their tactical innovations.

Obama raised more than \$300 million in donations under \$200 — almost all of it online. Largely by use of networking technology, Obama built a ground force of some one million election-day volunteers — and that doesn't count the help he got from union halls and environmentalists. Obama's campaign compiled an email list totaling millions of names.

We will not be competitive, much less victorious, just by doing the same things a little better, or trying a little harder. In fact, for many of us trying harder is not possible unless we somehow find a way to create more hours in the day, something I have tried and failed to do many times.

Many good friends refer to me as a technology geek. I take it as a compliment. More to the point, it's a key qualification for our next chairman.

We can't be satisfied by catching up. We must learn to be better. We must assemble the best and brightest minds, get to work, and win the technology battle.

#### 5. LEADING WITH INTEGRITY

In addition to losing credibility as the reliable representatives of conservative principles, we Republicans are increasingly seen as challenged on issues of ethics and morality.

In the last two election cycles, we've lost more than 10 members of the House and 2 U.S. Senators who in some way suffered serious ethical lapses. And that doesn't count the probably half a dozen more we lost due to a general environment of suspicion against Republican ethics.

The RNC must lead by example to correct the perception we are ethically challenged.

I will personally chair an ethical review committee made up entirely of RNC members who will assure contracts are awarded on merit and meet the standards of best practices. And we will pass a tough new code of ethics that prohibits RNC staff and family members from benefitting financially beyond their salary.

## 6. WINNING THE BATTLE FOR FUNDRAISING

RNC fundraising in 2008 was very good. Congratulations are due all involved. As proof of the power of a compelling message, and messenger, Governor Palin's addition to the ticket boosted fundraising substantially.

Now, we are entering what has historically presented huge challenges to fundraising. Ours is the party out of power ... at the White House ... the Congress ... and most state houses. And we are headed toward mid-term elections.

But I'm convinced the fight for funds is one we can win. When I ran for the U.S. Senate in Maryland, one of the bluest of blue states, I was told we would not raise money. It's a message I needed to hear, and it's part of the reason I worked so hard to raise money. In all, we raised over 8 million dollars for my Senate campaign, more than any Republican challenger in 2006.

Again, while our fundraising must employ every strategy, every tactic, and every technology, it will only work if we become the party of ideas for the future of America.

## 7. CLAIMING THE FUTURE

We're about to take the first steps down a very different path — together. Our journey calls for nothing short of sweeping change in the attitude and image of our Party.

- We must never be afraid again to stand firm for our Republican ideals, resolved that our message of limited government, economic growth, personal liberty and commitment to life will appeal across a wide spectrum of the American electorate.
- Let's transform the way we communicate, organize and raise funds by leveraging technology and embracing innovation.
- We need to forge a new working relationship between the RNC and state and local parties that will deliver a unified message and assure an amplification of resources.
- Elections this year in Virginia and New Jersey offer Republicans a chance to demonstrate that we got the message and are on the way back. The RNC under a Steele Administration will be a full partner with the states in which elections will be held in 2009 to assist Republican candidates from the statehouse to the courthouse.
- I will insist on a tough new code of ethics for all RNC staff, consultants and vendors. Contracts will be awarded on merit, staff and their family will not benefit beyond their salaries, and we'll never pay more than what other clients pay for the same services.

- Let's identify, train, and support a new cadre of top-notch candidates and committed operatives who will carry our message in every congressional district and legislative district in this nation. But let's not stop there. We'll also recruit candidates who can cross the ethnic, gender, and demographic divides that too often separate our country and cause confusion about our Party.
- We must build and energize new volunteer networks. Without them, we lack the most important means of communicating our message — word-of-mouth and neighbor-to-neighbor.
- Redistricting will occur in most states in 2011. We need to prepare now if we're to take control of our own destiny and impact redistricting in each of the states.
- Let's strengthen the relationships and build the structures necessary to energize and grow our fundraising effort.

## **8. SEIZE THE MOMENT**

In 1976, Democrats were on a roll. They'd won the White House and extended their margins in both the House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. But it's important to remember that had there been no devastating loss in 1976, there would likely have been no victory for Ronald Reagan in 1980.

I'm convinced it's very nearly 1976 all over again. But with this difference ... this time the Democrats are more liberal, more committed and more angry than they have ever been. They are poised to implement an agenda of higher taxes, excessive spending, more government bureaucracy, and a fleecing of our personal freedoms.

The Democrats will over-reach. And when they do, our chance to strike a stark contrast will come. Shame on us if we're not ready.

So here we are in the wilderness again. Let's take a moment to consider where we are and where we're going. Let's plan and build for success. Then let's march to the cities and suburbs and rural communities across this nation and start a revolution.

I want to hear from each of you to understand what you've learned in your experiences, what you've seen work, and I hope you will consider thoughtfully the ways in which I believe we can transform the RNC to serve as the vehicle that will propel us to victory.