

## Rudy Giuliani - A Political Profile

It's as simple as this: If you liked the Bush administration, you'll love Rudy Giuliani! And there's nothing that the Republican voters like better than no change. First, they got Ronald Reagan back in 1980. They liked him so much, they asked for seconds. Then when they couldn't have Reagan any more, they appointed his Vice President. The senior Vice President was only able to rule one term, before the Democrats ousted him and the Republicans had to grit their teeth and bear with a Democrat for eight years. Then they had a new hope: The son of the Vice President of their favorite President ran for office. They voted him in, and liked him so much, they asked for seconds.

Now they're running out of Reagan surrogates. So they are searching for the next best thing. While Giuliani didn't have an official ceremony where he was presented with a sword and knighted by Reagan in front of a Skull 'n' Bones altar or anything, Giuliani is certainly doing his best to act like he's the next Republican in the line. He has certainly rubbed elbows with George Bush, Jr. He has marched boldly into political battle, with a 9/11 sword and an Iraq War shield, with an accompanying minstrel band singing of his mighty deeds in cleaning up New York City.

With that kind of setting, what kind of President is he going to make? It should be noted that Giuliani is unique among the Presidential front-runners, in that the highest office he has held is City Mayor. However, he has served that time presiding over the city of New York, which cannot by any means be regarded as a city in the regular sense. Being Mayor of New York for seven years has got to be about as challenging as being Governor of someplace like, say, Oregon, for the same length of time.

Nevertheless, he suffers in comparison to other candidates, almost unfairly so, because his experience as Mayor reflects smaller, civic duties which do not map well to the job of running an entire country. He has been a working lawyer for 19 years, more than double the time as Mayor, and furthermore was a prosecuting attorney for much of that time. Granted, he brought down both white-collar crooks and the Mafia, which qualifies as the best job any prosecuting attorney anywhere can do. But even this deprived him of the kind of experience that former lawyers such as John Edwards had, since even Edwards' cases had more of civil rights and liberties attached to them. Putting crooks in jail is a fine deed, but there's more to running a country.

Rather than look at his past record, exemplary as it is, we can focus on his campaign promises. He has made a list of "twelve commitments", the full text of which is available on his website. Briefly, the bullet points are protection

from terrorists, secure borders, restore fiscal discipline, cut taxes, make Washington accountable, energy independence, better health-care access, be pro-life, be tough on crime, safe communities, school choice, and more American involvement with the global economy.

These are certainly impressive goals, and meeting them would keep the best of us busy. But on the other hand, they aren't that radical. Most candidates would pledge to do these things, with the exception of the pro-life one. It sounds like somebody took a default campaign promise template and read it off.

To his credit, he has demonstrated that he has plans in place for meeting some of these goals. For instance, the health care goal has behind it the plan that proposes a tax deduction - not a tax credit, which would benefit everyone - of up to \$15,000 for families and up to \$7,500 for individuals who purchase private individual health insurance policies. In the case of a tax deduction, you must owe that much in taxes in order to derive any benefit - and then, even the simplest treatment can cost many times that amount.

His sole role in national defense thus far has been his decisive actions in the aftermath of 9/11. And indeed, he revealed himself as a strategic problem-solver during a crisis, and handled the response much better than, say, the Federal government did with FEMA and hurricane Katrina. However, it is also a point that any Mayor in any city would have done much the same thing.

Nevertheless, Rudy Giuliani has a lot going for him on the campaign trail so far. He's polling at the top for his party, his campaign contributions are at or near the top for the Republican ticket, and he has won the endorsements of Steve Forbes, Tommy Thompson, Rick Perry, and Pat Robertson. If this were only a Republican election, he'd be home free. But he's polling either tied or below the Democratic front-runners in overall bipartisan polls, indicating that the Republicans may want to think twice about sending a Mayor to compete with a couple of Senators.

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