

## FOREWORD

by Newt Gingrich

*Former Speaker of the House of Representatives*

In our ever-changing, challenging, and dangerous world, the need for the right ideas to solve the most pressing problems that face America has taken on a new urgency. I have been known to offer a few suggestions myself, as in my latest book, *Winning the Future: A 21st Century Contract with America*. But it will take many ideas to succeed in meeting our challenges.

In the 1960s, *The Economist* wrote, it seemed as if universities would establish a “monopoly over the life of the mind,” providing policies for politicians and ideas for journalists. But the university became a tower of politically correct babble, and governments led by Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher looked to The Heritage Foundation in the United States and the Institute of Economic Affairs in Britain rather than Harvard or Oxford for advice. Both leaders praised the indispensable counsel of these respective institutions. I can personally attest to the effective, farsighted public policy analysis of The Heritage Foundation.

As a young congressman, I attended Heritage events at which I learned from renowned experts how to reduce government spending and strengthen our military. In 1990, when I was House Republican whip, I told a Heritage audience of young conservatives that America faced “a turning point in its history,” and I listed five goals for a national agenda, including a growing economy, physical safety for all citizens, and replacement of the bureaucratic state—all areas in which Heritage had proposed sound and innovative policies. One week after the historic 1994 elections, when Republicans captured the U.S. House of Representatives for the first time in forty years, I gave my first major address as the future House Speaker at the President’s Club meeting of The Heritage Foundation. It seemed appropriate since Heritage had had so much to do with the provisions of the Contract with America. Because of its great impact in developing the Contract with America, I said, “Heritage is without question the most wide-reaching conservative organization in the country in the war of ideas, and one which has had a tremendous impact not just in Washington, but literally across the planet.”

And now, this book, *Getting America Right*, continues the invaluable work The Heritage Foundation has been doing since 1973. The book demands readers’ attention for three reasons. First, because its recommendations are based on the research and analysis of a world-class public policy organization that has been on the leading edge of the most important initiatives—arguing for the development of a missile defense system, pointing out the serious flaws in President Clinton’s health care reform, providing the economic rationale for welfare reform, documenting the benefits to the United States of the North American Free Trade Agreement, and much more.

Second, because *Getting America Right* is written by two experts in the business of solving seemingly intractable problems— Ed Feulner, the president of The Heritage Foundation, and Doug Wilson, longtime management

consultant and chairman of Townhall.com, the leading conservative news and opinion website in America. Dr. Feulner's key role in the world of public policy is suggested by this comment of a friendly competitor, Ed Crane, president of the libertarian Cato Institute: "Ed Feulner is a great entrepreneur of ideas and deserves accolades."

Third, because *Getting America Right* examines every government action or policy through a unique prism of six questions:

- "Is it the government's business?" Washington, the authors say, should do only those things that cannot be handled better by a state, a community, or an individual.
- "Does this measure promote self-reliance?" Too many government programs punish individual initiative and condemn their clients to " permanent dependency."
- "Is it responsible?" *Getting America Right* suggests several ways to reintroduce responsibility, especially fiscal responsibility, in Washington.
- "Does it make us more prosperous?" The authors argue that because of excessive government regulation, too high taxes, and trade barriers, America is losing the economic freedom that is the wellspring of our national prosperity.
- "Does it make us safer?" *Getting America Right* insists, and I agree, that there must be a seriousness in Washington about the perils we face at home and abroad and a commitment to the kind of strength, courage, and resolution exhibited by Ronald Reagan in leading us to victory in the cold war.
- "Does it unify us?" Government, say the authors, should serve to bind us together, not to exaggerate our differences and divide us. After all, our national motto is *E pluribus unum*, not *E pluribus pluribus*.

"If we the people start demanding answers to these six questions," declare the authors of *Getting America Right*, "government will have no choice but to take the right course—one that is consistent with our cherished national principles." The time for us to act is now. The blueprint for our action—yours and mine—is contained within the pages of this remarkable book, one of the most important to be published in this or any other year.