

Ron Paul's FREEDOM REPORT

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Ron Paul's TEXAS STRAIGHT TALK

July 2, 2007

Recapturing the Spirit of Independence

This week Americans will gather around the grill, attend parades and watch fireworks displays, all in the celebration of the signing of our Declaration of Independence. At the same time, we will have thousands of bureaucrats, troops and agents stationed in countries across the globe being paid by American tax dollars.

On the anniversary of our declaring our own independence from the British, it is certainly appropriate that we reflect on the nature and spirit of independent nationhood. While our founding fathers were individual men in a historically unique situation, they posited that the principles upon which they rested our national independence were timeless.

If we truly honor the men who brought about Independence Day, we would do well to spend at least as much time reflecting on the Declaration of Independence, and the principles upon which it is based, as we spend at the cookouts, parades, and fireworks displays. With the trend toward globalism that has been with us for the past century, we should be specifically thoughtful about how our celebration of independence can be made consistent with the policies that have been advocated by the American government—as well as many of the nation's elite—or what we used to call the Eastern Establishment.

Only the safeguards and limitations that are enshrined in a constitutionally-limited republic can prohibit a nation from lurching toward empire.

I believe there is no way to square our nation's traditions and reverence for independence with the globalist policies these elites are currently pursuing. The American concept of independent nationhood inscribed in our Declaration cannot be maintained if we are going to pursue a policy that undermines the independence of other nations. National independence is an idea, and the erosion of the independence of other nations only serves to erode that idea.

At the same time, if we allow the erosion of that idea, by ignoring it in certain instances, we will be contributing to its erosion in all times and nations, even our own. In this way our nation's independence is linked with the independence of all nations. The sooner we realize this truth, and enact a foreign policy that is consistent with it, the sooner we will be able to recapture the spirit of independence.

In addition, as our founding fathers understood, the idea of national independence is inseparable from that of constitutional republicanism. Only the safeguards and limitations that are enshrined in a constitutionally-limited republic can prohibit a nation from lurching toward empire. Recognizing these same protections is also the very best way to eliminate the need for civil wars and the violence of civil strife.

Moreover, this constitutional republicanism is essential to protecting the individual rights and self-determination that is at the heart of our Declaration. As we celebrate the 231st anniversary of our nation's birth, I hope every person who reads or hears this will take the time to go back and read the Declaration of Independence. Only by recapturing the spirit of independence can we ensure our government never resembles the one from which the American States declared their separation.

**Ron Paul's
TEXAS STRAIGHT TALK**

June 18, 2007

Earmark Victory May Be A Hollow One

Last week's big battle on the House floor over earmarks in the annual appropriations bills was won by Republicans, who succeeded in getting the Democratic leadership to agree to clearly identify each earmark in the future. While this is certainly a victory for more transparency and openness in the spending process, and as such should be applauded, I am concerned that this may not necessarily be a victory for those of us who want a smaller federal government.

Though much attention is focused on the notorious abuses of earmarking, and there are plenty of examples, in fact even if all earmarks were eliminated we would not necessarily save a single penny in the federal budget. Because earmarks are funded from spending levels that have been determined before a single earmark is agreed to, with or without earmarks the spending levels remain the same. Eliminating earmarks designated by Members of Congress would simply transfer the funding decision process to federal bureaucrats rather than elected representatives. In an already flawed system, earmarks can at least allow residents of congressional districts to have a greater role in allocating federal funds—their tax dollars—than if the money is allocated behind locked doors by bureaucrats. So we can be critical of the abuses in the current system but we shouldn't lose sight of how some reforms may not actually make the system much better.

The real problem, and one that was unfortunately not addressed in last week's earmark dispute, is the size of the federal government and the amount of money we are spending in these appropriations bills. Even cutting a few thousand or even a million dollars from a multi-hundred billion dollar appropriation bill will not really shrink the size of government.

So there is a danger that small-government conservatives will look at this small victory for transparency and forget the much larger and more difficult battle of returning the United States government to spending levels more in line with its constitutional functions. Without taking a serious look at the actual total spending in these appropriations bills, we will miss the real threat to our economic security. Failed government agencies like FEMA will still get tens of billions of dollars

to mismanage when the next disaster strikes. Corrupt foreign governments will still be lavishly funded with dollars taken from working Americans to prop up their regimes. The United Nations will still receive its generous annual tribute taken from the American taxpayer. Americans will still be forced to pay for elaborate military bases to protect borders overseas while our own borders remain porous and unguarded. These are the real issues we must address when we look at reforming our yearly spending extravaganza called the appropriations season.

So we need to focus on the longer term and more difficult task of reducing the total size of the federal budget and the federal government and to return government to its constitutional functions. We should not confuse this welcome victory for transparency in the earmarking process with a victory in our long-term goal of this reduction in government taxing and spending.

**Ron Paul's
TEXAS STRAIGHT TALK**

May 14, 2007

Security, Washington-Style

Congress voted this past week to authorize nearly \$40 billion for the Homeland Security Department, but the result will likely continue to be more bureaucracy and less security for Americans.

Five years into this new Department, Congress still cannot agree on how to handle the mega-bureaucracy it created, which means there has been no effective oversight of the Department. While Congress remains in disarray over how to fund and oversee the Department, we can only wonder whether we are more vulnerable than we were before Homeland Security was created.

I was opposed to the creation of a new Homeland Security Department from the beginning. Only in Washington would anyone call the creation of an additional layer of bureaucracy on top of already bloated bureaucracies "streamlining." Only in Washington would anyone believe that a bigger, more centralized federal government means more efficiency.

When Congress voted to create the Homeland Security Department, I strongly urged that—at the least—FEMA and the Coast Guard should remain independent entities outside the Department. Our Coast Guard has an important mission—to protect us from external threats—and in my view it is dangerous to experiment with re-arranging the

deck chairs when the United States is vulnerable to attack. As I said at the time, “the Coast Guard and its mission are very important to the Texas Gulf Coast, and I don’t want that mission relegated to the back burner in a huge bureaucracy.”

Likewise with FEMA. At the time of the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, I wrote “we risk seeing FEMA become less responsive as part of DHS. FEMA needs to be a flexible, locally focused, hands-on agency that helps people quickly after a disaster.” Unfortunately and tragically, we all know very well what happened in 2005 with Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. We know that FEMA’s handling of the disaster did in many cases more harm than good. FEMA was so disorganized and incompetent in its management of the 2005 hurricanes that one can only wonder how much the internal disarray in the Department of Homeland Security may have contributed to that mismanagement.

Folding responsibility for defending our land borders into the Department of Homeland Security was also a bad idea, as we have come to see. The test is simple: We just ask ourselves whether our immigration enforcement has gotten better or worse since functions were transferred into this super bureaucracy. Are our borders being more effectively defended against those who would enter our country illegally? I don’t think so.

Are we better off with an enormous conglomerate of government agencies that purports to keep us safe? Certainly we are spending more money and getting less for it with the Department of Homeland Security. Perhaps now that the rush to expand government in response to the attacks of 9/11 is over, we can take a good look at what is working, what is making us safer, and what is not. If so, we will likely conclude that the Department of Homeland Security is too costly, too bloated, and too bureaucratic. Hopefully then we will refocus our efforts on an approach that doesn’t see more federal bureaucracy in Washington as the best way to secure the rest of the nation.

**Ron Paul’s
TEXAS STRAIGHT TALK**

June 11, 2007

Amnesty Opponents Are Not Un-American

Although action in the United States Senate this week has slowed passage of the amnesty bill, it is not yet dead as President Bush remains committed to this approach.

That is why the President recently suggested that those of us who oppose amnesty for illegal immigrants are unpatriotic. Those of us who strongly oppose the new immigration reform bill before the Senate “don’t want to do what’s right for America,” the President said.

I reject that assessment as unfair and inaccurate.

Supporters of the amnesty bill like to claim that border protection is their first priority. But if enforcement of our borders is the highest priority, certainly a much shorter bill could have been written. Even better, why not enforce existing laws? According to our Constitution, Congress makes the laws that the executive branch is to enforce. The rush to pass this new law seems to obfuscate this simple fact. There are plenty of laws already in place, so it seems sensible to largely solve this problem without new laws.

To make matters worse, as I wrote in a recent column, some 120 of our best trained border guards are going to be sent to Iraq to help them with border enforcement! In addition, National Guard troops participating in Operation Jump Start on the Mexican border are scheduled to also be sent to Iraq and Afghanistan.

This legislation purports to crack down hard at our borders, but as we have learned time and time again, you cannot address enforcement until you address incentives. That is why you cannot have border security with an amnesty program in place: the incentive of amnesty undermines any crack-down on border protection and in fact just makes work for our Border Patrol all the more difficult. Incentives in place to those who would come to the United States illegally will remain in place if this legislation is passed. Illegal immigrants will still receive federal assistance and free medical care and their children will still gain automatic citizenship after this bill is passed. We need to face the fact that securing our borders means more than legislation or fences, or even more Border Patrol. It means removing incentives for people to come to the U.S. illegally in the first place. That is why I will once again introduce an amendment to the Constitution to end birthright citizenship this coming week.

Although the “reform” of immigration in the amnesty bill is enough to cause alarm, other highly troubling provisions are tucked away that will serve to undermine our sovereignty and weaken our civil liberties. According to the most recent version of the Senate bill, the Misnamed Security and Prosperity Partnership for North America is to be “accelerated.” It seems ironic that a project aiming to actually weaken US borders with Mexico and Canada would be added into a bill that purports to toughen border controls.

Also, this bill will bring us closer to a national ID card, which without a doubt runs counter to American values and history and will punish American citizens without doing much to counter those who would come here illegally.

I strongly disagree with the president that opposing this legislation is unpatriotic. I believe we have an obligation to reject any legislation that promises amnesty to those here illegally, and that undermines the sovereignty and privacy of American citizens.

**Ron Paul's
TEXAS STRAIGHT TALK**

June 4, 2007

The Price of Delaying the Inevitable in Iraq

Good intentions frequently lead to unintended bad consequences. Tough choices, doing what is right, often leads to unanticipated good results.

The growing demand by the American people for us to leave Iraq prompts the naysayers to predict disaster in the Middle East if we do. Of course, these merchants of fear are the same ones who predicted that invading and occupying Iraq would be a slam dunk operation; that we would be welcomed as liberators, and oil revenues would pay for the operation with minimal loss of American lives.

All of this hyperbole came while ignoring the precise warnings by our intelligence community of the great difficulties that would lie ahead. The chaos that this preemptive, undeclared war has created in Iraq has allowed the Al Qaida to establish a foothold in Iraq and the strategic interests of Iran to be served.

The unintended consequences have been numerous. A well-intended but flawed policy that ignored credible warnings of how things could go awry has produced conditions that have led to a war dominated by procrastination, without victory or resolution in sight.

Those who want a total military victory, which no one has yet defined, don't have the troops, the money, the equipment or the support of a large majority of the American people to do so.

Those in Congress who have heard the cry of the electorate to end the war refuse to do so out of fear. The demagogues will challenge their patriotism and support of the troops so nothing happens except more of the same. The result is continued stalemate with the current policy and the daily sacrifice of American lives.

This wait-and-see attitude in Washington, and the promised reassessment of events in Iraq later on, strongly motivates the insurgents to accelerate the killing of Americans in order to influence the decision coming in three months. In contrast, a clear decision to leave would prompt a wait-and-see attitude in Iraq, a de facto cease fire, in anticipation of our leaving, the perfect time for the Iraqi factions to hold their fire on each other and on our troops and just possibly begin talking with each other.

Most Americans do not anticipate a military victory in Iraq, yet the Washington politicians remain frozen in their unwillingness to change our policy there, fearful of the dire predictions that conditions can only get worse when we leave. They refuse to admit that the condition of foreign occupation is the key ingredient that unleashed the civil war now raging in Iraq and serves as a recruitment device for Al Qaida.

It's time for a change in our foreign policy.

If you make a donation of \$25 or more to help FREE reach more people with its message of liberty, Congressman Paul would like to reward your generosity by sending you a copy of his new book, *A Foreign Policy of Freedom*.

Nothing in this publication is intended to aid or hinder the passage of legislation before Congress.

About the F.R.E.E. Foundation

The Foundation for Rational Economics and Education, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt public foundation dedicated to individual liberty and free-market economics. It was founded by Congressman Ron Paul of Texas and publishes his Freedom Report. For more information, or to make a tax-deductible donation write: F.R.E.E., Inc., P.O. Box 1776, Lake Jackson, Texas 77566, or call 979-265-3034.