

Ron Paul's FREEDOM REPORT

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*Dr. Paul addresses the
U.S. House of Representatives*

3000 American Deaths in Iraq

Mr. Speaker, Saddam Hussein is Dead. So are Three Thousand Americans.

The regime in Iraq has been changed. Yet victory has not been declared: not only does the war go on, it's about to escalate. Obviously the turmoil in Iraq is worse than ever, and most Americans no longer are willing to tolerate the costs, both human and economic, associated with this war.

We have been in Iraq for 45 months. Many more Americans have been killed in Iraq than were killed in the first 45 months of our war in Vietnam. I was in the U.S. Air Force in 1965, and I remember well when President Johnson announced a troop surge in Vietnam to hasten victory. That war went on for another decade, and by the time we finally got out, 60,000 Americans had died. God knows we should have gotten out ten years earlier. "Troop surge" meant serious escalation.

The election is over and Americans have spoken. Enough is enough! They want the war ended and our troops brought home. But the opposite likely will occur, with bipartisan support. Up to 50,000 more troops will be sent. The goal no longer is to win, but simply to secure Baghdad! So much has been spent with so little to show for it.

Who possibly benefits from escalating chaos in Iraq? Neoconservatives unabashedly have written about how chaos presents opportunities for promoting their goals. Certainly Osama bin Laden has benefited from the turmoil in Iraq, as have the Iranian Shiites who now are better positioned to take control of southern Iraq.

Yes, Saddam Hussein is dead, and only the Sunnis mourn. The Shiites and Kurds celebrate his death, as do the Iranians, and especially bin Laden — all enemies of Saddam Hussein. We have performed a tremendous service for both bin Laden and Ahmadinejad, and it will cost us plenty. The violent reaction to our complicity in the execution of Saddam Hussein is yet to come.

Three thousand American military personnel are dead, more than 22,000 are wounded, and tens of thousands will be psychologically traumatized by their tours of duty in Iraq. Little concern is given to the hundreds of thousands of Iraqi civilians killed in this war. We've spent \$400 billion so far, with no end in sight.

This is money we don't have. It is all borrowed from countries like China, that increasingly succeed in the global economy, while we drain wealth from our citizens through heavy taxation and insidious inflation. Our manufacturing base is now nearly extinct.

Where the additional U.S. troops in Iraq will come from is anybody's guess. But surely they won't be redeployed from Japan, Korea, or Europe. We at least must pretend that our bankrupt empire is intact. But then again, the Soviet empire appeared intact in 1988.

Some Members of Congress, intent on equitably distributing the suffering among all Americans, want to bring back the draft. Administration officials vehemently deny making any concrete plans for a draft. But why should we believe this? Look what happened when so many believed the reasons given for our preemptive invasion of Iraq.

Selective Service officials admit running a check of their lists of available young men. If the draft is reinstated, we probably will include young women as well to serve the god of "equality." Conscription is slavery, plain and simple. And it was made illegal under the 13th amendment, which prohibits involuntary servitude. One may well be killed as a military draftee,

which makes conscription a very dangerous kind of enslavement.

Instead of testing the efficacy of the Selective Service System and sending more troops off to a war we're losing, we ought to revive our love of liberty. We should repeal the Selective Service Act. A free society should never depend on compulsory conscription to defend itself.

We get into trouble by not following the precepts of liberty or obeying the rule of law. Preemptive, undeclared wars fought under false pretenses are a road to disaster. If a full declaration of war by Congress had been demanded as the Constitution requires, this war never would have been fought. If we did not create credit out of thin air as the Constitution prohibits, we never would have convinced taxpayers to support this war directly from their pockets. How long this financial charade can go on is difficult to judge, but when the end comes it will not go unnoticed by any American.

**Ron Paul's
TEXAS STRAIGHT TALK**

January 15, 2007

Escalation in the Middle East

While the president's announcement that an additional 20,000 troops would be sent to Iraq dominated the headlines last week, the real story was the president's sharp rhetoric towards Iran and Syria. And recent moves by the administration only serve to confirm the likelihood of a wider conflict in the Middle East.

The president stated last week, "Succeeding in Iraq also requires defending its territorial integrity and stabilizing the region in the face of the extremist challenge. This begins with addressing Iran and Syria." He also announced the deployment of an additional aircraft carrier battle group to the Persian Gulf, and the deployment of Patriot air missile defense systems to countries in the Middle East. Meanwhile, U.S. troops stormed the Iranian consulate in Iraq and detained several Iranian diplomats. Taken together, the message was clear: the administration intends to move the U.S. closer to a dangerous and ill-advised conflict with Iran.

As I said last week on the House floor, speculation

in Washington focuses on when, not if, either Israel or the U.S. will bomb Iran — possibly with nuclear weapons. The accusation sounds very familiar: namely, that Iran possesses weapons of mass destruction. Iran has never been found in violation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and our own Central Intelligence Agency says Iran is more than ten years away from producing any kind of nuclear weapon. Yet we are told we must act immediately while we still can!

This all sounds very familiar, but many of my colleagues don't seem to have learned much from the invasion of Iraq. House Democrats strongly criticized the Iraq troop surge after the president's announcement, but then praised the president's confrontational words condemning Iran. Many of those opposing a troop surge

are not calling for a withdrawal of our troops from the Middle East, but rather for "redeployment." Redeployment to where? Iran?

We need to return to reality when it comes to our Middle East policy. We need to reject the increasingly shrill rhetoric coming from the same voices who urged the president to invade Iraq.

The truth is that Iran, like Iraq, is a third-world nation without a significant military. Nothing in history hints that she is likely to invade a neighboring country, let alone America or Israel. I am concerned, however, that a contrived Gulf of Tonkin-type incident may occur to gain popular support for an attack on Iran.

The best approach to Iran, and Syria for that matter, is to heed the advice of the Iraq Study Group Report, which states:

"... the United States should engage directly with Iran and Syria in order to try to obtain their commitment to constructive policies toward Iraq and other regional issues. In engaging with Syria and Iran, the United States should consider incentives, as well as disincentives, in seeking constructive results."

In coming weeks, I plan to introduce legislation that urges the administration to heed the advice of the Iraq Study Group. Dialogue and discussion should replace inflammatory rhetoric and confrontation in our Middle East policy if we truly seek to defeat violent extremism and terrorism.

*Preemptive,
undeclared
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**Ron Paul's
TEXAS STRAIGHT TALK**

January 8, 2007

Totalization Is a Bad Idea

Through a Freedom of Information Act Request, a private group recently obtained a copy of a 2004 agreement between the United States and Mexico that will allow hundreds of thousands of noncitizens to receive Social Security benefits.

The agreement creates a so-called “totalization” plan between the two nations. Totalization is nothing new. The first such agreements were made in the late 1970s between the United States and several foreign governments simply to make sure American citizens living abroad did not suffer from double taxation with respect to Social Security taxes. From there, however, totalization agreements have become vehicles for noncitizens to become eligible for U.S. Social Security benefits. The new agreement with Mexico would make an estimated 160,000 Mexican citizens eligible in the next five years.

Ultimately, the bill for Mexicans working legally in the U.S. could reach one billion dollars by 2050, when the estimated Mexican beneficiaries could reach 300,000. Worse still, an estimated five million Mexicans working *illegally* in the United States could be eligible for the program. According to press reports, a provision in the Social Security Act allows illegal immigrants to receive Social Security benefits if the United States and another country have a totalization agreement.

It's important to note that Congress, like the American people, heretofore had not seen this totalization agreement. This decision to expand our single largest entitlement program was made with no input from the legislative branch of government. If the president signs it, Congress will have to affirmatively act to override him and, in essence, veto the agreement. This is the opposite of how it's supposed to work.

There are obvious reasons to oppose a Social Security totalization agreement with Mexico. First, our Social Security system already faces trillions of dollars in future shortages as the Baby Boomer generation

retires and fewer young workers pay into the system. Adding hundreds of thousand of noncitizens to the Social Security rolls can only hasten the day of reckoning.

Second, Social Security never was intended to serve as an individual foreign aid program for noncitizens abroad. Remember, there is no real Social Security trust fund, and the distinction between income taxes and payroll taxes is entirely artificial. The Social Security contributions made by noncitizens are spent immediately as general revenues. So while it's unfortunate that some are forced to pay into a system from which they might never receive a penny, the same can be said of younger American citizens. If noncitizens wish to obtain Social

Security benefits, or any other U.S. government entitlements, they should seek to become U.S. citizens.

Also, totalization agreements allow noncitizens to qualify for Social Security benefits by working in the U.S. as little as 18 months. A Mexican citizen could work here for only a year and a half, return to Mexico, and retire with full U.S. benefits. This is grossly unfair to Americans who must work more quarters even to qualify for benefits — especially younger people who face the possibility that there may be nothing left when it is their turn to retire.

Those in favor of sending U.S. Social Security benefits to Mexican citizens argue that crushing poverty in Mexico demands some form of U.S. assistance to that country's aged. While poverty in

Mexico truly is deplorable and saddening, the fact remains that Congress has no constitutional authority to enact what is essentially another foreign aid program.

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**Ron Paul's
TEXAS STRAIGHT TALK**

October 16, 2006

Taxes, Spending, and Debt Are the Real Issues

In Washington we hear a lot of talk about tax cuts, but the rhetoric does not always match the reality. For most Americans, taxes remain too complex and too high. After the tumult of the upcoming midterm election, it is imperative that Congress gets back to basics and addresses our terrible tax system.

Lower taxes benefit all Americans by increasing economic growth and encouraging wealth creation. I'm in favor of cutting *everybody's* taxes — rich, poor, and otherwise. Whether a tax cut reduces a single mother's payroll taxes by forty dollars a month, or allows a business owner to save thousands in capital gains and hire more employees, the net effect is beneficial. Both either spend, save, or invest the extra dollars, which helps all of us more than if those dollars were sent to the black hole known as the federal Treasury.

Many conservatives have touted the Fair Tax proposal as an issue in the upcoming election. A pure consumption tax like the Fair Tax would be better than the current system only if we truly did away with the income tax by repealing the 16th Amendment. Otherwise, we could end up with both the income tax and a national sales tax. A consumption tax also provides more transparency and less complexity. But the real issue is *total spending by government*, not tax reform. In other words, why change the tax structure if spending stays the same? Once we accept that the federal government needs \$2.7 trillion from us — and more each year — the only question left is from whom it will be collected. Until the federal government is held to its proper constitutionally limited functions, tax reform will remain a mirage.

I apply a very simple test to any proposal to overhaul the tax code: Does it reduce or eliminate an existing tax? If not, then it amounts to nothing more than a political shell game that pits taxpayers against each other in a lobbying scramble to make sure the other guy pays. True tax reform is as simple as cutting or eliminating taxes. No studies, panels, committees, or hearings are needed. When reform proposals seem complicated, they almost certainly don't cut taxes. Congress should simply focus on cutting existing taxes and reducing spending, instead of complicated overhauls of the system.

The question to ask yourself is this: What would I do with the money withheld from my paycheck each month? The answer is simple: you would spend, save, or invest the money, all of which do more for the economy and society than sending it to Washington. Thanks to the deception of income tax withholding, however, some people actually look forward to tax time

and a much-anticipated refund. Imagine how quickly Americans would demand lower taxes and spending if they had to write the federal government a check each month!

Until the federal government is held to its proper constitutionally limited functions, tax reform will remain a mirage.

Tax relief is important, but members of Congress need to back up tax cuts with spending cuts—and they need to vote NO on every wasteful appropriations bill until we start over with the federal budget. True fiscal conservatism combines both low taxes and low spending.

Cutting spending would not be hard if Congress simply showed the political will to tackle the problem. I'm not talking about cutting the *rate* at which government spending grows, but cutting the actual amount of money spent by the federal government in a single year.

If federal spending grows at 5% rather than 7% one year, that's hardly a great achievement on the part of Congress. The current federal budget of around \$2.7 trillion could be cut to \$2.5 trillion quite easily. The vast majority of Americans

would not even notice. But we must begin chipping away at the federal budget if we hope to address the underlying problem of government debt.

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

About the F.R.E.E. Foundation

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