

Ron Paul's FREEDOM REPORT

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

**We Just Marched In
(So We Can Just March Out)**

All the reasons given to justify a preemptive strike against Iraq were wrong. Congress and the American people were misled.

Support for the war came from various special interests that had agitated for an invasion of Iraq since 1998. The Iraq Liberation Act, passed by Congress and signed into law by President Clinton, stated that getting rid of Saddam Hussein was official U.S. policy. This policy was carried out in 2003.

Congress failed miserably in meeting its crucial obligations as the branch of government charged with deciding whether to declare war. It wrongly and unconstitutionally transferred this power to the president, and the president did not hesitate to use it.

Although it is clear there was no cause for war, we just marched in. Our leaders deceived themselves and the public with assurances that the war was righteous and would be over quickly. Their justifications were false, and they failed to grasp even basic facts about the chaotic political and religious history of the region.

Congress bears the greater blame for this fiasco. It reneged on its responsibility to declare or not declare war. It transferred this decision-making power to the executive branch, and gave open sanction to anything the president did. In fact the Founders diligently tried to prevent the executive from possessing this power, granting it to Congress alone in Article 1 Section 8 of

the Constitution.

Today just about everyone acknowledges the war has gone badly, and 70% of the American people want it to end. Our national defense is weakened, the financial costs continue to drain us, our allies have deserted us, and our enemies are multiplying—not to mention the tragic toll of death and injury suffered by American forces.

Iraq is a mess, and we urgently need a new direction—but our leaders offer only hand wringing and platitudes. They have no clear-cut ideas to end the suffering and war. Even the most ardent war hawks cannot begin to define victory in Iraq.

As an Air Force officer serving from 1963-1968, I heard the same agonizing pleas from the American people. These pleas were met with the same excuses about why we could not change a deeply flawed policy and rethink the war in Vietnam. That bloody conflict, also undeclared and unconstitutional, seems to have taught us little despite the horrific costs.

Once again, though everyone now accepts that the original justifications for invading Iraq were not legitimate, we are given excuses for not leaving. We flaunt our power by building permanent military bases and an enormous billion-dollar embassy, yet claim we have no plans to stay in Iraq permanently. Assurances that our presence in Iraq has nothing to do with oil are not believed in the Middle East.

The argument for staying—to prevent civil war and bring stability to the region—logically falls on deaf ears.

If the justifications for war were wrong,

If the war is going badly,

If we can't afford the costs, both human and economic,

If civil war and chaos have resulted from our occupation,

If the reasons for staying are no more credible than the reasons for going,

THEN.....

Why the dilemma? The American people have spoken, and continue to speak out, against this war. So why not end it? How do we end it? Why not exactly the way we went in? We just marched in, and we can just march out.

More good things may come of it than anyone can imagine. Consider our relationship with Vietnam, now our friendly trading partner. Certainly we are doing better with her than when we tried to impose our will by force. It is time to march out of Iraq and march home.

THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 2007

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

The Scandal at Walter Reed

The scandal at Walter Reed is not an isolated incident. It is directly related to our foreign policy of interventionism.

There is a pressing need to reassess our now widely accepted role as the world's lone superpower. If we don't, we are destined to reduce our nation to something far less powerful.

It has always been politically popular for politicians to promise they will keep us out of foreign wars, especially before World War I. That hasn't changed, even though many in Washington today don't understand it.

Likewise it has been popular to advocate ending prolonged and painful conflicts like the wars in Korea and Vietnam, and now Iraq.

In 2000, it was quite popular to condemn nation building and reject the policy of policing the world, in the wake of our involvement in Kosovo and Somalia. We were promised a more humble foreign policy.

Nobody wins elections by promising to take us to war. But once elected, many politicians greatly exaggerate the threat posed by a potential enemy—and the people too often carelessly accept the dubious reasons given to justify wars. Opposition arises only when the true costs are felt here at home.

A foreign policy of interventionism costs so much money that we're forced to close military bases in the U.S., even as we're building them overseas. Interventionism is never good fiscal policy.

Interventionism symbolizes an attitude of looking outward, toward empire, while diminishing the importance of maintaining a constitutional republic.

We close bases here at home—some want to close Walter Reed—while building bases in Arab and Muslim countries like Saudi Arabia. We worry about foreign borders while ignoring our own. We build permanent outposts in Muslim holy lands, occupy territory, and prop up puppet governments. This motivates suicide terrorism against us.

Our policies naturally lead to resentment, which in turn leads to prolonged wars and increased casualties. We spend billions in Iraq, while bases like Walter Reed fall into disrepair. This undermines our ability to care for the thousands of wounded soldiers we should have anticipated, despite the rosy predictions that we would be greeted as liberators in Iraq.

Now comes the outrage.

Now Congress holds hearings.

Now comes the wringing of hands. Yes, better late than never.

Clean it up, paint the walls, make Walter Reed look neat and tidy! But this won't solve our problems. We must someday look critically at the shortcomings of our foreign policy, a policy that needlessly and foolishly intervenes in places where we have no business being. Voters spoke very clearly in November: they want the war to end. Yet Congress has taken no steps to defund or end a war it never should have condoned in the first place.

On the contrary, Congress plans to spend another \$100 billion or more in an upcoming Iraq funding bill—more even than the administration has requested. The 2007 military budget, \$700 billion, apparently is not enough. And it's all done under the slogan of "supporting the troops," even as our policy guarantees more Americans will die and Walter Reed will continue to receive casualties.

Every problem Congress and the administration create requires more money to fix. The mantra remains the same: spend more money we don't have, borrow from the Chinese, or just print it.

This policy of interventionism is folly, and it cannot continue forever. It will end, either because we wake up or because we go broke.

Interventionism always leads to unanticipated consequences and blowback, like:

- A weakened, demoralized military
- Exploding deficits

- Billions of dollars wasted
- Increased inflation
- Less economic growth
- An unstable currency
- Painful stock market corrections
- Political demagoguery
- Lingering anger at home, and
- Confusion about who is to blame.

These elements combine to create an environment that inevitably undermines personal liberty. Virtually all American wars have led to diminished civil liberties at home.

Most of our mistakes can be laid at the doorstep of our failure to follow the Constitution.

That Constitution, if we so desire, can provide needed guidance and a roadmap to restore our liberties and change our foreign policy. This is critical if we truly seek peace and prosperity.

**Ron Paul's
TEXAS STRAIGHT TALK**

May 7, 2007

**Unconstitutional Legislation
Threatens Freedoms**

Last week, the House of Representatives acted with disdain for the Constitution and individual liberty by passing HR 1592, a bill creating new federal programs to combat so-called “hate crimes.” The legislation defines a hate crime as an act of violence committed against an individual because of the victim’s race, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability. Federal hate crime laws violate the Tenth Amendment’s limitations on federal power. Hate crime laws may also violate the First Amendment guaranteed freedom of speech and religion by criminalizing speech federal bureaucrats define as “hateful.”

There is no evidence that local governments are failing to apprehend and prosecute criminals motivated by prejudice, in comparison to the apprehension and conviction rates of other crimes. Therefore, new hate crime laws will not significantly reduce crime. Instead of increasing the effectiveness of law enforcement, hate

crime laws undermine equal justice under the law by requiring law enforcement and judicial system officers to give priority to investigating and prosecuting hate crimes. Of course, all decent people should condemn criminal acts motivated by prejudice. But why should an assault victim be treated by the legal system as a second-class citizen because his assailant was motivated by greed instead of hate?

HR 1592, like all hate crime laws, imposes a longer sentence on a criminal motivated by hate than on someone who commits the same crime with a different

motivation. Increasing sentences because of motivation goes beyond criminalizing acts; it makes it a crime to think certain thoughts. Criminalizing even the vilest hateful thoughts—as opposed to willful criminal acts—is inconsistent with a free society.

HR 1592 could lead to federal censorship of religious or political speech on the grounds that the speech incites hate. Hate crime laws have been used to silence free speech and even the free exercise of religion. For example, a Pennsylvania hate crime law has been used to prosecute peaceful religious demonstrators on the grounds that their public Bible readings could incite violence. One of HR 1592’s supporters admitted that this legislation could allow the government to silence a preacher if one of the preacher’s

parishioners commits a hate crime. More evidence that hate crime laws lead to censorship came recently when one member of Congress suggested that the Federal Communications Commission ban hate speech from the airwaves.

Hate crime laws not only violate the First Amendment, they also violate the Tenth Amendment. Under the United States Constitution, there are only three federal crimes: piracy, treason, and counterfeiting. All other criminal matters are left to the individual states. Any federal legislation dealing with criminal matters not related to these three issues usurps state authority over criminal law and takes a step toward turning the states into mere administrative units of the federal government.

Because federal hate crime laws criminalize thoughts, they are incompatible with a free society. Fortunately, President Bush has pledged to veto HR 1592. Of course, I would vote to uphold the president’s veto.

Most of our mistakes can be laid at the doorstep of our failure to follow the Constitution.

**Ron Paul's
TEXAS STRAIGHT TALK**

April 23, 2007

Security and Liberty

The senseless and horrific killings last week on the campus of Virginia Tech University reinforced an uneasy feeling many Americans experienced after September 11th: namely, that government cannot protect us. No matter how many laws we pass, no matter how many police or federal agents we put on the streets, a determined individual or group still can cause great harm. Perhaps the only good that can come from these terrible killings is a reinforced understanding that we as individuals are responsible for our safety and the safety of our families.

Although Virginia does allow individuals to carry concealed weapons if they first obtain a permit, college campuses within the state are specifically exempted. Virginia Tech, like all Virginia colleges, is therefore a gun-free zone, at least for private individuals. And as we witnessed, it didn't matter how many guns the police had. Only private individuals on the scene could have prevented or lessened this tragedy. Prohibiting guns on campus made the Virginia Tech students less safe, not more.

The Virginia Tech tragedy may not lead directly to more gun control, but I fear it will lead to more *people control*. Thanks to our media and many government officials, Americans have become conditioned to view the state as our protector and the solution to every problem. Whenever something terrible happens, especially when it becomes a national news story, people reflexively demand that government *do something*. This impulse almost always leads to bad laws and the loss of liberty. It is completely at odds with the best American traditions of self-reliance and rugged individualism.

Do we really want to live in a world of police checkpoints, surveillance cameras, and metal detectors? Do we really believe government can provide total security? Do we want to involuntarily commit every disaffected, disturbed, or alienated person who fantasizes about violence? Or can we accept that liberty is more important than the illusion of state-provided security?

I fear that Congress will use this terrible event to push for more government mandated mental health

programs. The therapeutic nanny state only encourages individuals to view themselves as victims, and reject personal responsibility for their actions. Certainly there are legitimate organic mental illnesses, but it is the role of doctors and families, not the government, to diagnose and treat such illnesses.

Freedom is not defined by safety. Freedom is defined by the ability of citizens to live without government interference. Government cannot create a world without risks, nor would we really wish to live in such a fictional place. Only a totalitarian society would even claim absolute safety as a worthy ideal, because it would require total state control over its citizens' lives. Liberty has meaning only if we still believe in it when terrible things happen and a false government security blanket beckons.

If you make a donation of \$50 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.