

Ron Paul's FREEDOM REPORT

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Ron Paul's *TEXAS STRAIGHT TALK*

July 3, 2006

A New Declaration

On the fourth day of July, in 1776, a small group of men, representing 13 colonies in the far-off Americas, boldly told the most powerful nation on earth that they were free.

They declared, in terms that still are radical today, that all men are created equal, and endowed with certain inalienable rights that government neither grants nor can take away.

In the *Declaration of Independence*, the Founding Fathers sought to demonstrate to the world that they were rejecting a tyrannical king. They listed the “injuries and usurpations” that contain the philosophical basis for our **Constitution and Bill of Rights**.

One point of consternation to our Founding Fathers was that the king had been “imposing Taxes on us without our Consent.” But 230 years later, taxation *with* representation has not worked out much better.

Indeed, one has to wonder how Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin would react to the current state of affairs. After all, they were outraged by mere import tariffs of a few pennies on the dollar. **Today, the average American pays roughly 50 percent of their income in direct and indirect taxes.**

In fact, most Texans will not start working for themselves for another week. Texans, like most Americans, work from January until early July just to pay their federal income taxes, state and local taxes, and the enormous costs of regulation. Only about half the year is spent working to pay for food, clothing, shelter, or education.

It is easy to simply blame faceless bureaucrats and politicians for our current state of affairs, and they do bear much of the blame. But blame also rests with those who

expect Washington DC to solve every problem under the sun. **If the public demanded that Congress abide by the Constitution and pass only constitutional spending bills, politicians would have no choice but to respond.**

Everybody seems to agree that government waste is rampant and spending should be cut — but not when it comes to *their* communities or pet projects. So Members of Congress have every incentive to support spending bills and adopt a go-along, get-along attitude. This leads to the famous compromises, but the bill eventually comes due on April 15th.

Our basic problem is that we have lost sight of the simple premise that guided the actions of our Founding Fathers. That premise? **The government that governs least is the government that governs best.**

When we cut the size of government, our taxes will fall. When we reduce the power of the federal bureaucracy, the cost of government will plummet. And when we firmly fix our eyes, undistracted, on the principles of liberty, Americans truly will be free. That should be our new declaration.

Ron Paul's *TEXAS STRAIGHT TALK*

June 26, 2006

The Worldwide Gun Control Movement

The United Nations is holding a conference beginning this week in New York that ironically coincides with our national 4th of July holiday. It's ironic because those attending the conference want to do away with one of our most fundamental constitutional freedoms — the right to bear arms.

The stated goal of the conference is to eliminate trading in small arms, but the real goal is to advance a worldwide gun control movement that ultimately supercedes national laws, including our own **2nd Amendment**. Many UN

observers believe the conference will set the stage in coming years for an international gun-control treaty.

Fortunately, U.S. gun owners have responded with an avalanche of letters to the American delegation to the conference, asking that none of our tax dollars be used to further UN anti-gun proposals. But we cannot discount the growing power of international law, whether through the UN, the World Trade Organization, or the NAFTA and CAFTA treaties. Gun rights advocates must understand that the forces behind *globalism* are hostile toward our **Constitution** and national sovereignty in general. Our **2nd Amendment** means nothing to UN officials.

Domestically, the gun-control movement has lost momentum in recent years. The Democratic Party has been conspicuously silent on the issue in recent elections because they know it's a political loser. In the midst of declining public support for new gun laws, more and more states have adopted concealed-carry programs. The September 11th terrorist attacks and last summer's hurricanes only made matters worse for gun-control proponents, as millions of Americans were starkly reminded that we cannot rely on government to protect us from criminals.

So it makes sense that perhaps the biggest threat to gun rights in America today comes not from domestic lawmakers, but **from abroad**.

For more than a decade, the United Nations has waged a campaign to undermine Second Amendment rights in America. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has called on members of the Security Council to address the "easy availability" of small arms and light weapons, by which he means all privately owned firearms. In response, the Security Council released a report calling for a comprehensive program of worldwide gun control, a report that admonishes the U.S. and praises the restrictive gun laws of Red China and France!

It's no surprise that UN officials dislike what they view as our gun culture. After all, these are the people who placed a huge anti-gun statue on American soil at UN headquarters in New York. The statue depicts a pistol with the barrel tied into a knot, a not-too-subtle message aimed squarely at the U.S.

They believe in global government, and armed people could stand in the way of their goals. They certainly don't care about our **Constitution** or the **Second Amendment**. But the conflict between the UN position on private ownership of firearms and our **Second Amendment** cannot be reconciled. How can we as a nation justify our membership in an organization that is actively hostile to one of our most fundamental constitutional rights? What if the UN decided that free speech was too inflammatory and should be restricted? Would we discard the **First Amendment** to comply with the UN agenda?

The UN claims to serve human freedom and dignity,

but gun control often serves as a gateway to tyranny. Tyrants from Hitler to Mao to Stalin have sought to disarm their own citizens, for the simple reason that unarmed people are easier to control. Our Founders, having just expelled the British army, knew that the right to bear arms serves as the guardian of every other right. This is the principle so often ignored by both sides in the gun-control debate. Only armed citizens can resist tyrannical government.

Ron Paul's *TEXAS STRAIGHT TALK*

July 24, 2006

IRS Threatens Political Speech

Five years ago, I wrote about threats made by the Internal Revenue Service against conservative churches for supposedly engaging in politicking. Today, the IRS is again *attempting to chill free speech*, sending notices to more than 15,000 non-profit organizations — including churches — regarding its new crackdown on political activity.

But what exactly constitutes political activity? What if a member of the clergy urges his congregation to work toward creating a pro-life culture, when an upcoming election features a pro-life candidate? What if a minister admonishes churchgoers that homosexuality is sinful, when an initiative banning gay marriage is on an upcoming ballot? Where exactly do we draw the line, and when does the IRS begin to violate the **First Amendment's** guarantee of free exercise of religion?

I agree with my colleague Walter Jones of North Carolina that the political views of any particular church or its members are none of the government's business. Congressman Jones introduced legislation that addresses this very serious issue of IRS harassment of churches engaging in conservative political activity. This bill is badly needed to end the IRS practice of threatening certain politically disfavored faiths with loss of their tax-exempt status, while ignoring the very open and public political activities of other churches. While some well-known leftist preachers routinely advocate socialism from the pulpit, many conservative Christian and Jewish congregations cannot present their political beliefs without risking scrutiny from the tax collector.

The supposed motivation behind the ban on political participation by churches is the need to maintain a rigid separation between church and state. However, the First Amendment simply prohibits the federal government from passing laws that establish religion or prohibit the free exercise of religion. There certainly is no mention of

any “separation of church and state,” yet lawmakers and judges continually assert this mythical doctrine.

The result is court rulings and laws that separate citizens from their religious beliefs in all public settings, in clear violation of the free exercise clause. Our Founders never envisioned a *rigidly secular public society*, where people must nonsensically disregard their deeply held beliefs in all matters of government and politics. They certainly never imagined that the federal government would actively work to chill the political activities of some churches.

Speech is speech, regardless of the setting. There is no legal distinction between religious expression and political expression; both are equally protected by the First Amendment. Religious believers do not drop their political opinions at the door of their place of worship, nor do they disregard their faith at the ballot box. Religious morality will always inform the voting choices of Americans of all faiths.

The political left, however, seeks to impose the viewpoint that public life must be secular, and that government cannot reflect morality derived from faith. Many Democrats, not all, are threatened by strong religious institutions because they want an ever-growing federal government to serve as the unchallenged authority in our society. So the real motivation behind the insistence on a separation of church and state is not based on respect for the First Amendment, but rather on a desire to diminish the influence of religious conservatives at the ballot box.

The Constitution’s guarantee of religious freedom must not depend on the whims of IRS bureaucrats. Religious institutions cannot freely preach their beliefs if they must fear that the government will accuse them of “politics.” We cannot allow churches to be silenced any more than we can allow political dissent in general to be silenced. Free societies always have strong, independent institutions that are not afraid to challenge and criticize the government.

TUESDAY, MARCH 28, 2006

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

Making the World Safe for Christianity

The top Neo-Con of the Twentieth Century was Woodrow Wilson. His supposed idealism, symbolized in the slogan “Make the world safe for democracy,” resulted in untold destruction and death across the world for many decades. His deceit and manipulation of the pre-war intelligence from Europe dragged America into an unnecessary conflict that cost the world and us dearly. Without the disastrous Versailles Treaty, World War II could have been averted — and the rise to power of Communists

around the world might have been halted.

We seem to never learn from our past mistakes. Today’s neo-cons are as idealistically misled and aggressive in remaking the Middle East as the Wilsonian do-gooders. Even given the horrendous costs of the Iraq War and the unintended consequences that plague us today, the neo-cons are eager to expand their regime change policy to Iran by force.

The obvious shortcomings of our regime change and occupation of Afghanistan are now readily apparent. The Taliban was ousted from power, but they have regrouped and threaten the delicate stability that now exists in that country. Opium drug production is once again a major operation, with drugs lords controlling a huge area of the country outside Kabul. And now the real nature of the government we created has been revealed in the case of Abdul Rahman, the Muslim who faced a possible death sentence from the Karzai administration for converting to Christianity. Even now that Mr. Rahman is free due to Western pressure, his life remains in danger.

Our bombs and guns haven’t changed the fact that the new puppet Afghan government still follows Sharia law. The same loyalty to Sharia exists in Iraq, where we’re trying so hard to stabilize things. And all this is done in the name of spreading democracy.

The sad fact is that even under the despicable rule of Saddam Hussein, Christians were safer in Iraq than they are today. Saddam Hussein’s foreign minister was a practicing Christian. Today thousands of Christians have fled Iraq following our occupation, to countries like Jordan and Syria. Those Christians who have remained in Iraq fear for their lives every day. That should tell us something about the shortcomings of a policy that presumes to make the world safe for democracy.

The Muslim world is not fooled by our talk about spreading democracy and values. The evidence is too overwhelming that we do not hesitate to support dictators and install puppet governments when it serves our interests. When democratic elections result in the elevation of a leader or party not to our liking, we do not hesitate for a minute to undermine that government. This hypocrisy is rarely recognized by the American people. It’s much more comfortable to believe in slogans, to believe that we’re defending our goodness and spreading true liberty. We accept this and believe strongly in the cause, strongly enough to sacrifice many of our sons and daughters, and *stupendous* amounts of money, to spread our ideals through force.

Pointing out the lack of success is taboo. It seems of little concern to many Members of Congress that we lack both the moral right and constitutional authority to impose our will on other nations.

The toughest task is analyzing what we do from their perspective. We should try harder to place ourselves in the shoes of those who live in the Arab countries where our efforts

currently are concentrated. We are outraged by a Muslim country that would even consider the death penalty for a Christian convert. But many Muslims see all that we do as a reflection of Western Christianity, which to them includes Europe and America. They see everything in terms of religion.

When our bombs and sanctions kill hundreds of thousands of their citizens, they see it as an attack on their religion by Christians. To them our actions represent a crusade to change their culture and their political systems. They do not see us as having noble intentions. Cynicism and realism tell them we're involved in the Middle East to secure the oil we need.

Our occupation and influence in the holy lands of the Middle East will always be suspect. This includes all the countries of the Arabian Peninsula, Iran, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Naively believing otherwise will guarantee continuing hostilities in Iraq. Our meddling will remain an incitement for radicals to strike us here at home in future terrorist attacks. All the intelligence gathering in the world will serve little purpose if we don't come to understand exactly why they hate us — despite the good intentions that many Americans hold dear.

FRIDAY, MARCH 3, 2006

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

Statement on the “Sunlight Rule”

Mr. Speaker, Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis famously said, “Sunlight is the best disinfectant.” In order to shine sunlight on the practices of the House of Representatives, and thus restore public trust and integrity to this institution, I am introducing the “Sunlight Rule.” This measure amends House rules to ensure Members have adequate time to study a bill before being asked to vote on it. One of the chief causes of increasing public cynicism is the way major pieces of legislation are brought to the Floor without Members having an opportunity to read the bills. This is particularly a problem with the Appropriations Committee conference reports, which are often rushed to the Floor of the House in late-night sessions at the end of the year. For example, just this past December, the House voted on the fiscal year 2006 Defense Appropriations conference report at approximately four a.m.— *just four hours after the report was filed*. Yet the report contained language dealing with avian flu, including controversial language regarding immunity liability for vaccine manufacturers that was added in the House-Senate conference on the bill. Considering legislation on important issues in this manner is a dereliction of our duty as the

people's elected representatives.

My proposed rule requires that no piece of legislation, including conference reports, can be brought before the House of Representatives unless it has been available to Members and staff, both in print and electronic versions, for at least ten days. My bill also requires that a manager's amendment making substantive changes to a bill be available in both printed and electronic forms at least 72 hours before a vote. While manager's amendments usually are reserved for technical changes, oftentimes manager's amendments contain substantive additions to bills in the form of pork. Members should be made aware of such changes before being asked to vote on a bill.

The Sunlight Rule provides the American people the opportunity to be involved in enforcing congressional rules by allowing citizens to move for censure of any Representative who votes for a bill brought to the Floor in violation of this act. The Sunlight Rule can never be waived by the Rules Committee or House leadership. If an attempt is made to bring a bill to the Floor in violation of this rule, any Member can raise a point of order requiring the bill to be immediately pulled from the House calendar.

Mr. Speaker, the practice of rushing bills to the Floor before individual Members have a chance to study them contributes to public distrust of Congress. Voting on bills before Members read them makes a mockery of representative government and cheats voters who sent us here to make informed decisions on public policy. Adopting the Sunlight Rule is one of the most important changes to House rules this Congress could make to restore public trust and help preserve the integrity of this institution. I hope my colleagues will support this change to House rules.

[The Sunlight Rule, H.Res. 709, was introduced on March 2, 2006 and referred to the House Committee on Rules.]

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.