

Why did I spend \$85,000 to support Presidential Candidate Ron Paul? Because I care about my family and your family.

Recently, I placed a full-page ad in *USA Today* supporting the presidential candidacy of Congressman Ron Paul. Why? Because I believe **Ron Paul is different** from every other individual who carries the title “politician.” In fact, he is a medical doctor by training and has delivered 4,000 babies. After medicine he entered politics, and he is a true public servant... a *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, type of guy. No political lobbyists or vested interests will support him—but I will—and you should too.

Given the troubling developments in our world, I believe that as a nation we face a very important choice. We need to make a decision as to what we want America to represent, and to become. History will record the outcome of our decision. If we make the wrong choice, more innocent people will die, and history will not be kind. As I say to my closest friends, I do not want to have to explain to my children that I stood silent as others destroyed this country.

The America that I grew up in believed in the rule of law, not the rule of men.

The America that I grew up in believed in telling the truth. The America that I grew up in believed in following Judeo-Christian values, and yet made room for those of different faiths and backgrounds. The America I grew up in had a religious flavor, but we were wary of those who wore their religion on their sleeves. The America that I grew up in believed in the golden rule: treat people the way we would like them to treat us. The America that I grew up in believed that you did not lie, cheat or steal. The America that I grew up in believed in the inherent goodness of most men, but recognized that evil exists.

Nevertheless, the America that I grew up in did not believe in an eye for an eye, or retribution. It believed in protecting oneself from evil, but in the process of doing so we were cautioned not to become what we were protecting against.

In short, the America that I grew up in was a place where one could be proud of one's country, and thankful to the men and women who had sacrificed so much in the past to give us this heritage.

I wake up today as a 50 year old husband and father, and I wonder where that America has gone. I see a President who ignores the U.S. Constitution by issuing “signing statements” that have the effect of law. He replaced a President who blatantly lied to the American public. Admittedly, the lie was about something that was none of the public's business. However, when a country's President is a liar, it lowers that country's level of discourse and makes lying seem acceptable. It is not. Think about it. Are these the best leaders this Country can produce? I see that second President's wife running for President and now claiming she will end the war. Of course, she initially voted for the war, and recently voted for a resolution against Iran that makes another war more likely. Do Americans really believe she will act in our best interests given all the money she has received from lobbyists and the military industrial complex? Will she end the war as she now has begun claiming in her political advertisements? Or is this just a tactic to gain anti-war votes now that her closest rival is breathing down her neck? Is this new position just another hard to believe statement, like the story she told us about how she traded “cattle futures” so successfully?

I see the U.S. involved in an aggressive, undeclared war against a country that did not represent a threat to us in any way. We were led into this war using false and inaccurate information. **In my opinion, we are far less safe now than we were before we invaded Iraq.** This war has increased the number of emotionally charged enemies who conspire to attack us.

Ron Paul voted against invading Iraq. He was a lonely voice speaking in the House against military involvement in Iraq long before the first Congressional vote.

Rather than attack an entire nation, he introduced legislation to convince Congress and our President to strategically target the terrorists responsible for 9/11.

The current Administration has failed to capture and eliminate the criminals who perpetrated this crime against us. Those responsible are still at large, our borders are wide open, and our troops are spread thin all over the globe.

We need a leader who will protect us with a strong national defense and keep us out of foreign entanglements that in the end create more enemies than friends. We need a President who will put the national security of the American people, and the safety of our troops first.

To date, this war has lasted longer than World War II, and between 100,000 and 1,000,000 innocent people have died. These figures are between 30 and 300 times the number of people killed on 9/11/2001. Do two wrongs make a right? Furthermore, the majority of the 9/11 hijackers were Saudis. Not Iraqis. We are allies with Saudi Arabia and yet Saudi Arabia is far from being a democracy. Yet we were told we went to war to create a democracy in Iraq and set an example for the Middle East.

The hypocrisy is staggering. The mistakes that were made are enormous. Why anyone believes one thing that is said by the people who led us into this war is a mystery to me.

“We will be greeted as liberators.” Wrong. “Oil revenues will pay the cost.” Wrong. “A secular democracy will emerge and be an inspiration for other countries.” Wrong. The list of misjudgments goes on and on.

Were the civilian Iraqis killed by our preemptive war just “collateral damage”? Has anyone taken the time to look at their pictures on the Web? Does ignoring them make their deaths less real? **I wonder how their relatives and friends feel about the United States? I wonder if they are more or less likely to become terrorists as a result of the actions of this Administration.** I see a country that has violated the Geneva Conventions. I see a country that has violated the Christian Doctrine of Just War. I see a country that has started a war that is illegal under international law. I see a country that has completely changed since President Eisenhower said, “*Preventive war was an invention of Hitler. Frankly, I would not listen to anyone who seriously talked about such a thing*”. I see a flock of Presidential candidates, most of whom voted for this war and many of whom believe “all options should be on the table” in dealing with Iran. For those who are not current on this subject, that language is code for: we should be prepared to attack Iran with conventional or nuclear weapons.

Think about that for a moment. Leaders in this Country are actually talking about using a nuclear weapon preemptively against a country that has not attacked us. Are they insane?

I hear Neocon pundits calling for the beginning of World War III. I see a country that has suspended *habeas corpus*. I see a country that has stripped its citizens of the constitutional protections against an overreaching government. I see a country that has sanctioned “rendition” which is just another term for the kidnapping of anyone, anywhere, throughout the world, and spiriting them off to a remote location where they can be subject to “enhanced interrogation techniques,” which we are told are not torture. Another lie. I see a country that has engaged in torture. **One leading presidential candidate wants to “double Guantanamo”** and thinks his sons' campaigning for him is equivalent to serving in the military. Of course, that candidate got a deferment to avoid serving in Vietnam. Other candidates for the highest office in this land are not any better. **I see a war hero candidate who sings “bomb Iran” to the tune of The Beach Boy's song, Barbara Ann. How can he make light of killing people? Joking**

about bombing a foreign country and killing innocent people is a disgrace. However, at least that candidate is a veteran. Most of the other top advocates of war have never fought in one. Worse yet, they sought and obtained deferments when others were fighting. You cannot make this stuff up. The irony is incredible. If, as I believe, you reap what you sow, then the ultimate payback for these injustices will be staggering.

I see a Country that thinks that it owns and controls the world. I believe this is ethically wrong and politically stupid.

Furthermore, we cannot afford it, so even attempting to run the world is self-defeating. I see a country that thinks it should have bases in the Middle East for the next fifty years. I see a country building an embassy the size of the Vatican in Iraq. I see a country where the dominant political group, the Neocons, believe the world is a dark and evil place. I believe the people who feel this way are projecting their own views onto the rest of the world.

I wonder if America has lost its sense of what is right and what is wrong. Out of malfeasance, fear, ignorance, or incompetence, we have implemented the wrong policies and taken the wrong course. Since this is true, then effectively the terrorists are winning. God surely has a great sense of humor. Irony abounds.

The Federal Government we have today does NOT represent me. I further believe it does not represent a majority of Americans.

As citizens, each and every one of us is somewhat responsible for the actions of our government. **In fact, the Constitution states that we are the government.** It has been said that all it takes for evil to flourish is for good people to do nothing. So, has America lost its soul? Yes or no? I would submit that while the current U.S. Administration and the vast majority of the Senate and Congress have lost their souls, the American people have not. Nearly 70% of the American population is against this war, and yet the war goes on. The vast majority of the American people want peace. People know what is right, yet the government does the wrong thing. How can this be? We are supposed to be a government OF, FOR and BY the People. Are we? What do you think? Does our government really represent the American people? Do you think the U.S. government should kill innocent Iraqis or Iranians to make us safer? Would you advocate killing a man who lives down the street just because you think he might do you harm in the future, even though he has done nothing to you yet? I would not, and I believe most Americans would not.

The huge disconnect between what a majority of this country wants and what our government is doing is the elephant in the room that no one will discuss.

We need a President who is intelligent enough to recognize, and honest enough to admit, that the resentment and hatred directed towards America are the unintended consequences of decades of maintaining a foreign policy of interference and occupation. They don't “hate us because we're free”. They hate us because we're there, or because we are aiding their enemies. We have great power and military superiority and we should use these abilities to protect ourselves. With these powers come enormous responsi-

bilities. We are a Constitutional Republic, not an empire. I believe there is a power higher than my government and that the Founders drew upon this power when they drafted the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution. “We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal.” That reads “All men.” Not “all Americans.” The Founders believed, as do I, that All men have God-given rights. Governments are made to protect these rights, not destroy them.

If it sounds like I am angry, that is right.

I am angry that my money becomes worth less every year because the Federal Reserve can print money out of thin air. I am angry that the U.S. Government inflation statistics are a lie, thanks to Bill Clinton's changing of the CPI calculation. I am angry that this change and the Federal Reserve have put the economy on a roller coaster leading to boom and bust cycles that benefit financiers at the expense of the middle class, retirees and the poor. I am angry that Wall Street titans and speculators have been rewarded while savers and honest labor have been punished. I am angry that honesty is considered quaint and naive by the political classes. I am angry at the arrogance of those who hold power in Washington, DC. I am angry that the actions of some men in my country have taken away the moral high ground that the U.S. used to occupy. I am angry that my tax dollars are used for weapons rather than for peaceful purposes. I do not want the blood of innocents on my hands.

As individuals, Americans are great people. **If 70% of us are opposed to the war, then there is still hope.** Of course the mainstream media, and the vested industrial and political interests would have us all believe that we cannot make a difference. They dictate to us that we should have to choose between the two war mongering candidates that they serve up to us. They determine who the two front runners are, and we are discouraged from looking elsewhere. They work to insure that no other candidate stands a chance. But this time I think they are in for a surprise. I would submit that the outcome of this election is not so clear. The establishment dam has sprung a leak which is small now, but it is growing. The word is spreading.

The lines could not be more clearly drawn.

Ron Paul's message is clear and righteous and true. It resonates with people. When you hear it you say, “that's right, that's what I believe”.

This is why his popularity is rising faster than any other candidate. Yet, the media still ignore him and treat him poorly. It is beautiful irony that every attack on him only brings him more attention as intelligent Americans wonder, “who is this guy that everyone keeps attacking ... I wonder if there is a reason?” They say he cannot win. I strongly disagree. First, I think he will be our next President. Second, I think he has won already because he has inspired hundreds of thousands across the country to fight to restore everything that is good, right and true about America. **He has won by putting forth the message of a limited constitutional government dedicated to freedom—and people like what they hear.** The message is spreading like an uncontrollable wildfire. It cannot be stopped. History will record the Ron Paul Freedom Movement as a seminal event in U.S. politics. If you want to see what the future of U.S. politics will look like, this is it.

It is an honor to support this man, Ron Paul. We should be so lucky as to have him for our President.

Having said that, we could all help history along a little bit by supporting the Ron Paul campaign. My favorite movie is, *It's A Wonderful Life*. To me, the message of that movie is that we all make a difference. Individually, none of us have the power of the Neocons and the political classes, but collectively, if we self-organize

and unite, we have them greatly outnumbered. They are terrified, and they should be. The growth in this movement is amazing. We can and will win this struggle. I ran the *USA Today* Advertisement because I wanted to plant a seed and make a difference. WE ALL MAKE A DIFFERENCE. Every conversation, every person enlightened, every email, every effort; it all counts.

What a beautiful thing. The trend is changing and it is fun to watch the old guard struggle as their fortress crumbles.

So what can you do?

Join our effort to elect Ron Paul as the next President of the United States. Spread the word that we have an opportunity to elect an honest statesman with an impeccable record of voting in line with our Constitution. **Vote for peace. Vote for freedom. Vote for OUR national security.**

Each contribution represents another American who has said, “enough is enough.”

Donate to his campaign! Every contribution helps. \$10 is not too little. Think about it. What is freedom worth? I would submit that it is priceless. On December 16th, our collective voices were heard when grassroots supporters for Ron Paul succeeded in organizing the largest one-day fundraiser in political history. Over 58,000 ordinary Americans spoke with their wallets by donating more than 6 million dollars to the Ron Paul campaign in a single day. Together, *We the People* are proving to be a force not to be ignored.

If you care about the future of this country, I know that Ron Paul will not let you down. If you care about our troops, then you must vote for Ron Paul. He will bring them home to defend America instead of someone else's country.

Ron Paul has received more donations from active military personnel than any other candidate. Why do you think that is? Have you heard about it from the mainstream media? I suspect not.

Fellow Americans, this is it... a once in a lifetime opportunity. We may never see a candidate with more integrity and a better message or track record.

Has our country ever been so far off track? Our Founding Fathers pledged their lives, fortunes and sacred honors in order to establish this Nation. Perhaps we have taken for granted the risks they took and the sacrifices they made. But we are being called. We are being tested.

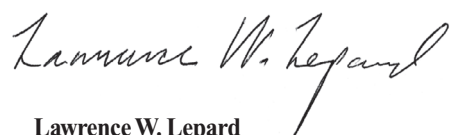
So what are you going to do? Are you going to be a Loyalist or a Patriot?

Americans are brave people. I believe that together we can set this country back on the right track and that America will experience a renaissance of Peace, Freedom and Prosperity if we elect Ron Paul as our next President.

The danger to our Constitutional Republic is real. We must act now!

Remember, each one of us makes a difference. **Please vote for Ron Paul in your state's Republican Primary and encourage your friends and neighbors to do the same.**

Sincerely,



Lawrence W. Lepard

a concerned American citizen