

2012 Presidential Campaign Blog

Ron Paul 2012 Presidential Campaign Announcement Speech Transcript, May 13, 2011, Exeter, NH #ronpaul

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Exeter, New Hampshire

Thank you very much, thank you, thank you. Thank you, thank you very much. We're on a schedule you know so. But that was very nice and Jim I certainly want to thank you. I am very pleased to call Jim senator. That is great. And Chris thank you for your efforts and I want to acknowledge all my special guests behind me, thank you very much for attending and thank you all for coming, I am so delighted to see you involved in our revolution. (Applause)

I have one update about the revolution. The revolution is spreading and the momentum is building. (Applause) Our time has come. It's been around for a long time, but the momentum is here today, not because of what I have done—I happen to have been in an important place and energized some, but it is necessary that the grassroots people understand what the issues are. A generation of people need to know, and I am delighted that the young people are with us in this revolutionary spirit that we have. (Applause)

But a lot of other work has been done. It's been the intellectual work. I am convinced that a nation does not change just for partisan political reasons. What has to happen is there has to be an intellectual revolution to energize people and get people to understand the problems from economic and political terms as well as foreign policy. That is what has been happening now for quite a few decades. There's quite a bit of difference about attitudes about economics and foreign policy today than there was in 1976 when I was first elected. There's a big difference, and it involves a lot of work from a lot of people. And now that so many people in this country have come to understand that government so far in its pretense that it can take care of us from cradle to grave and police the world, it is so evident to this growing number of people that government isn't the solution—government really has created the problems. (Applause)

And what our opponents so often we like to do is say oh, you people don't even want any government. But you know in our society with our Constitution there is a role for government. But the Constitution wasn't written explicitly not to restrain your behavior and your life and the way you spend your money, it was written to restrain the federal government. (Applause)

But because of the educational effort and the work that so many have done, but also the strong evidence that there is a failure out there, especially since we saw what happened with the housing bubble—and that was a predictable event—that the housing bubble would burst. It did as the Austrian free market economists had predicted. And because of all this they have come together and people are now listening to this revolutionary spirit that is spreading across this country. (Applause)

It's great that I am able to announce in this state, a very special state, because there is so high respect for the spirit of liberty here, so I am very, very pleased that I am once again able to say that I am a candidate for the presidency in the Republican Party primary. (Extended Applause)

There are many who would like to belittle this effort, but let me tell you, there is an old saying, three's the charm. (Applause)

The conditions have certainly changed, even from four years ago. When I think back of the first year that I came up here, it must have been like end of '06, '07, the atmosphere was a lot different. There was an '06 election, an '08 election, and it did not make all of us who believe in liberty all that happy. But boy I'll tell you what. There has been a significant change. The people have awoken and they have sent a message, elected a lot of new people to your state legislature, and I'll tell you what. I am convinced that the spirit of liberty is alive and well in New Hampshire. (Applause)

You know there's a lot of talk about what you should seek in a president, and I'm not one that is prone to talk about I do this, I will do this, but I can talk generically what I think a president should be able to do and should do. One thing the American people want, and I agree with them, they want a strong president. There is no doubt about that. But the question you should ask, where should those strengths be directed? Should the strength of the president be directed toward building the TSA and homeland security and policing the world? [Audience: No!] No, the strength and the character of the individual should be directed toward standing up for freedom, standing up for liberty and restraining government. That's where the strength should be. (Applause)

There's been a lot of challenges already today and yesterday and this last week because of certain positions. I find one very fascinating and something other candidates may well desert. And that has to do with the drug issue, because it is so symbolic of understanding what liberty is all about. When you think of my position—my position is that you have a right of freedom of choice with your bodies. That I believe is a basic principle of liberty. What does that mean? If you have civil liberties and a right to your life and a right to your property? Well it means that you can make very, very important choices. And for most of these most Americans agree with it. They say yes, the most important thing in my personal life is that I and my family and others, we make our decisions about our spiritual life and about our salvation, which cannot be done by government and we have to provide the maximum amount of freedom for individuals to make those decisions so the government should always butt out of our spiritual lives. (Applause)

Also, intellectually, we're fairly good at that—the political correctness movement has tried to undermine it—but basically most Americans believe in the First Amendment and say that we have a right to talk about controversial issues. As I have often said, the First Amendment wasn't written for us to be able to talk about the weather. (Applause) It's written so that we can discuss controversial issues and actually read very controversial and very dangerous literature, especially the literature that promotes big government and welfarism and socialism and all the mess. So we recognize that to be the case, but all of the sudden people have lost respect for liberty, the understanding of liberty, and we have conceded way too much to the government to decide what we put into our own bodies. If we can control what goes into our spiritual life, what goes into our intellectual life, why should we concede to the government that they decide everything that we do with our own bodies? (Applause)

I take a strict, a strict constitutional position, and the government has very little authority to get involved in our economic or our personal lives. So that excludes the federal government from being involved if and when we become strict constitutionalists. The federal government shouldn't be involved. But that does not prohibit the states from doing some of the things that they do. Even though we might disagree with it at the national level under the national law and the Constitution states have more prerogatives and more choices.

But if we looked at education as an example, the Constitution gives no authority for the federal government to run our educational systems and they shouldn't be doing that; it should be a state matter. (Applause)

But at the state and federal level what we should be guaranteeing is the protection of freedom of choice. We should always be aware of the fact that it is very important that individuals who want to opt out—whether it's opting out of ObamaCare or opting out of the educational system—we have to protect the right of individuals to home school and go to private schools as well. (Applause)

Now this freedom of choice should lead to other choices about what we put into our bodies. For instance, your right to take things into your body, such as nutritional substances, should never be regulated by the federal government and absolutely never regulated by the United Nations. (Applause)

And I don't know what's so bad about getting the federal government out of the business of regulating unpasteurized milk. Now that's a real radical step. (Applause)

But why should we be so intimidated if they want to use the issue of somebody using hard drugs as the reason that we have to give up all our freedoms, it's wrong. It's better to defend the position that says you do have freedom of choice what you do with your body, but you also have to have responsibility for what you do, and if you do harm to yourself, you can't go crawling to the government to penalize your neighbor to take care of you. (Applause)

I see this position of the government controlling all those decisions as detrimental to progress in medicine. So often there are alternative treatments for cancer and other diseases that are not approved for years and years and years because we have to have the FDA, which is controlled too often by other drug companies, deciding when and what we can do. We as individuals, making decisions with our own physician, ought to decide about all alternative care as long as people are up front and tell you the truth and tell you the risk and can't defraud you. (Applause)

So in all that I just explained about personal choices, in everything I've done in politics, I've never introduced a bill in Washington, DC to emphasize heroin. So they take all of what I said and turn it around and say, he would legalize heroin. Well you know the plain truth is is that heroin at one time in our history was legalized and there was essentially no abuse of it, and it's only in our recent history. And there was a long time in our history that marijuana was legalized. I happen to have a personal real disgust with the abuse of drugs, but it's all drugs, those that are considered illegal, and I think physicians prescribe way too much medications, get too many people addicted. (Applause)

Now the line that caught a little bit of attention down in South Carolina was when this came up and they wanted to paint me as this monster about heroin, I didn't get a chance to say well I've never mentioned that word. I talk about liberty and freedom. But the interpretation is correct that I do want people to make choices. So in my less than 30 seconds left to make my point, I said alright, if it would happen to become legal, how many of you would all of the sudden be using heroin, you'd all become heroin addicts? No. People make decisions and they make good decisions for the most part. But what I don't like is when government makes the decisions and it violates the principles of liberty, it's a blanket decision, it affects us in everything that we do to the point where you don't even know if you're allowed to drink the milk that you can buy from your neighbor farmer. (Applause)

So when they challenge you and want to paint a negative picture, stick to your guns, defend liberty, defend the free choices, defend our Constitution, defend states' rights. Regulations if they're necessary, as they are. On alcohol, there's a few regulations in this state in alcohol, so it's different in different states, but at least there are different states that handle this and children are generally protected. In alcohol, you know the kids in high school today can get hold of marijuana easier than they can get hold of alcohol. So it's not like you just turn it loose and dump it out there in the streets and the kids—

But ultimately even that doesn't solve the problem. What really solves the problem is good family relationships, families that teach their kids what's right and wrong. (Applause)

Now because of my understanding of the Constitution and economic and moral policy, I have taken a position for as long as I can remember, since I've been in Congress, since 1976, so it's nothing new. And that is that I don't like the federal agencies breathing down our neck and regulating our property even under the guise of they're there to take care of us and help us.

So for this reason I have opposed the federal government's insurance programs because they cause moral hazard. And the one that they quizzed me on today was the insurances that take care of everybody in the midst of a natural disaster. Well natural disasters are very, very bad and they're very, very damaging, and I believe that they can be taken care of without the federal government going further into debt, but through this system of liberty and separate governments and state government because the point was about flood insurance. I live on, very near the Gulf Coast; I used to have a house right on the beach. Now you can't buy private insurance because it's dangerous there and it's too expensive. So what happens? They have to tax you in North Carolina so I can have a beach house in Texas, and then the house gets blown down and the taxpayers pay. But, they want to turn that into saying, oh, you don't care about the people suffering from a natural disaster. Well you know free markets economics and law really helps us sort these problems out. If you want to build a house on the beach and you love it, yes, buy insurance. Oh. Can't buy insurance. Well that's giving you a very important economic lesson. It's saying it's dangerous to live on the beach. (Applause) But the people that don't live on the beach shouldn't have to pay for those of us who take the risk and live there and get a guarantee from the government.

In other ways, our society and our country's been great. We have been very generous when people really get hurt. Not only in this country we go to help people, but around the world. I mean when there are earthquakes and other things we

as a people have been very, very generous.

I'll tell you what. That's going to end because our economic policies in this country is destroying our wealth. We're not going to have any money hardly to take care of ourselves let alone help the world. (Applause)

I am convinced that you think things through you can figure out how the free market and sound economic policy and sound morality and the Constitution will help us. Does that mean no government? No. The government should be providing a sound currency; they should enforce contracts. They should not be destroying your property rights; they should be protecting your property rights. (Applause) And obviously one of the most important property rights that we should always defend is the right to own a weapon to defend our self. (Applause)

Other questions that have come up this week has to do with foreign policy, and it should be expected because I am so radical that I want to go back to the Constitution and have a foreign policy which is a pro-American foreign policy and not do the things that we're not authorized to do. But because the status quo, including many Republicans in the past has drifted over to the assumption that we have to be the policeman of the world. Now I don't think the American people ever fully endorsed that idea. Because even in recent history, our candidate in the year 2000, he ran on a humble foreign policy, not going into nation building and of course that is what I'm running on, but let me tell you: I believe it and we should do it. (Applause)

A lot of people would like to label us who believe in that: oh, you're a bunch of isolationists. Well I'll tell you what, if you believe in freedom of choice, you believe in trading with other people, believing that you have the right to buy goods from anybody you want. It's your money. Why can't you buy the cheap goods? And so you don't have to be an isolationist, it just means that we stay out of the internal affairs and all the conflicts and the civil wars and the religious civil wars especially going on in the Middle East. I don't believe we have to be involved in that. I think we make more enemies for it and it is bringing us down financially, and therefore we need to reassess it and have a new foreign policy. (Applause)

You know it gets a little trickier, because when bad policy brings bad events to ourselves, such as what happened on 9/11, it's very difficult to say oh you know if we wouldn't have had that foreign policy that we had, we wouldn't be under such attack. That you cannot handle that easily because we have been attacked, there are limits. No matter how many mistakes we make in the past when a country's attacked a president and a country and the Congress should respond. So for that reason, I did respond by voting for the authority in 2001 to go after the individuals involved and responsible and go and get the Al Qaeda and gave that authority. But what happened was the authority was abused. Matter of fact it was abused and ignored. The authority to go after bin Laden was ignored at Tora Bora. bin Laden was allowed to get off the hook and escape. At the same time, oh we didn't worry about it too much; we decided well maybe they're Al Qaeda. Or at least they said there is Al Qaeda, and there are nuclear weapons aimed at us, so we have to go in and fight this war in Iraq.

So what did we end up with? Ten years. Ten years of thousands of our people being killed, tens of thousands having been wounded with serious injuries. Believe me, there's information coming out now that the Persian Gulf War Syndrome with the first Persian Gulf War, which took them a long time to acknowledge, is going to have massive number of people with those conditions coming back. Head injuries. We have a big, big problem on our hands. And that's a cost. Trillions of dollars, thousands of lives, casualties that we have and to go after a group of people who deserved to be gone after, but the cost, as far as I'm concerned was way too high. (Applause)

Though I supported that authority, I had deep reservations with fear that it would be misused and therefore I was looking around for another option, and that is when I reviewed what I've learned about the Constitution and they have a provision in the Constitution that maybe we can have a narrow defined war. Since we can't declare war against a government when it's a band of criminals that are attacking us, that is when they provided the principle of a letter of marque and reprisal. And that is target the enemy, go after them, and get them. Now the good example of how this might work is what Ross Perot did. When he had some of his employees taken into hostage in Iran, he didn't go to the federal government and say go in, attack and declare war. What he did, he got some special forces retiree, he got his people in there, he went in and got them out and brought them out. (Applause)

Now if this principle had been ingrained in our system and we had used it, we could have well paid \$500 million or a

billion dollars to capture the individuals that were responsible, and yet of course we didn't do that. That would have been cheap compared to the trillions of dollars that we're involved in now.

Not only do I see some of that as a conflict in not doing well, every time we occupy a country, every time we kill a civilian. And it continues. When we lob these bombs into Pakistan, civilians get killed too. They get angry at us. What would we do if that happened? They say there's maybe Taliban in there; we have to go and get them. The Taliban is not the Al Qaeda. The Taliban are a group of people who are very determined that they don't want any foreign occupation. That's their religious and political belief. And we joined them when they were so annoyed with the Soviets occupying Afghanistan, but we were on the side of those who said no occupation. So it shouldn't be so unusual for us to come to the conclusion that if we're involved over there that they wouldn't turn on us, and that certainly is what happened.

But if you want to demonstrate the futility of our foreign policy, just think about Pakistan. We're lobbing bombs into Pakistan, innocent people are getting killed, maybe a Taliban member is killed whose only argument is that he wants his country back, and at the same time we give them billions of dollars. I mean we give them money. I used to say that you know our problem in this country is we have only two foreign policies. One, if they do what we tell them, we give them money. If they don't do what we tell them, we bomb them. In this case, we're doing both. So there is a lot of room for a sensible, common sense foreign policy, and it goes back to the Constitution.

But not only is this a detriment to us militarily and for our national security, it's a great detriment to us economically. You can't ignore these dollars that we're spending. Besides, I see politically, the real opportunity is cut hundreds of billions of dollars out of the military-industrial complex that doesn't help our national defense. (Applause) And then we don't have to take this politically unpopular stand that many have on our side and say what we need to do is cut medical care for the children. I mean that's not a good point to make; it's more difficult. I think all the programs should be cut. I don't vote for them because they're unconstitutional, but I still think emphasizing big cuts overseas you could alleviate some of these problems in a political way that would be more, more acceptable.

But this is going to be worked out in Congress. Today they're trying to figure out whether we should raise the national debt, and they're arguing once again if we don't—like if we didn't come to the rescue and bail out all the rich guys in '08 it would be a depression. Sure there would have been a depression for Wall Street, but the depression was dumped on the people instead. (Applause)

So instead of making the correct economic policy changes like lower taxes, less regulations, a sound currency, property rights and paying off the debt, a few things like that, what did we do? We've had all these problems from too much spending and too much taxing and too much regulation, too much borrowing, too much printing press money, so oh yeah we're in trouble now, the bubble has burst so we really have to pump harder. I mean we have to put more money in, spend more money, borrow more money, tax more money, regulate more and print more money. And guess what? We're not out of the recession. We're still in recession, and it's going to get worse.

This foreign policy is related because it's a significant amount of our spending, and the printing of money is an important thing. There's a lot of, there's going to be a lot of talk about inflation because inflation is here. But it's very important that we define inflation the way free market economists do. Inflation is when they print money and increase the money supply. The consequence of inflating a monetary system will be higher prices, unpredictable where the money goes and when it happens and to what degree because there's a lot of elements built in, but inevitably when you devalue the currency the prices will go up, and we're at the beginning of a big siege on inflation.

They say that we have to vote you know for the debt increase—by the way, I'm not going to vote for the debt increase. (Applause)

Their argument is it would be a disaster if we defaulted. Well it is a disaster if we defaulted, but we're in the midst of a default. We've done it before. We've done it from the beginning of our history. We defaulted with the Continental dollar. We defaulted with the greenbacks in the civil war period. We defaulted in the 1930s when the American people were denied their gold from their gold bonds that they held, and the gold was confiscated from us. Then in 1971 our promise to all foreign holders of dollars, could repatriate their dollars for gold, we just closed, went in and said we're broke; we can't

do it any more. So we default constantly. Now they're talking about defaulting that there won't be enough cash.

That's not the default to worry about. The default is on you, because the default is they're going to print the money, the national debt will probably be raised, they're going to continue to print the money which means that they're going to devalue your dollar and they're defaulting on you. Because if you have a savings account or a Treasury bill, if you have a thousand dollars in it this year—and right now prices are going up closer to 10-percent a year so in one year you could lose a hundred dollars out of a thousand. And when it gets going, it's going to be a lot worse than that. That is a default, but they don't count it that way. They don't count it that way; that is just price adjustment. As a matter of fact it's a deliberate policy of the Federal Reserve to depreciate the currency. That's what their business is. That is why our dollar since 1913 has lost 98-percent of its value. That's dishonest, it's immoral, it's unconstitutional and the reason why we ought to get rid of the Federal Reserve. [Audience chants "End the Fed"]

Now there's a lot of reasons why we shouldn't have a central bank. It isn't authorized in the Constitution. It devalues the currency; that's immoral. It's bad economic policy. But the one issue that really is dangerous to our cause of liberty is that it allows the expansion of government. If we did not have a Fed to buy the debt—that is a moral hazard provided to the Congress. We don't have to be responsible because ultimately the Federal Reserve will keep the interest rates from going up even when we can't tax and can't borrow, the Federal Reserve will print the money and keep interest rates low. So it's always there to do that. And then that facilitates the growth of government, whether it's the growth of government to fight wars that we shouldn't be in or providing a cradle-to-grave entitlement system. So the Fed is a culprit and we have to address that. We cannot solve our problems without looking at the monetary issue. (Applause)

The great thing about what has happened in the last four years is all of the sudden the Federal Reserve and monetary policy has become an issue out on the table. That is a great victory and I thank so many of you who have helped. But we did not get our "Audit the Fed" bill passed—although we did get it passed in the House, but it wasn't passed in the Senate—but a lot has happened. We got a partial audit and some court cases have been beneficial. We are getting more information. And it's astounding. As much as I've anticipated it would be very, very bad, but more than a third of these trillions of dollars that they have pumped in to help out their friends, a third of it went to overseas banks. Not to the American who's losing their mortgages. One bank got bailed out and guess who was one-third owner? Gadaffi was one third owner in the bank, and we went over and bailed them out.

So this is the reason that we should direct our interest to the preservation of liberty, to the people in this country and taking care of ourselves. Be prosperous, set a good example and others will want to emulate us. We cannot spread our goodness with a gun, and using a gun violates our goodness. (Applause)

Liberty should be our cause. I believe for myself all political activity is for the promotion of liberty with a deep conviction that liberty and freedom is not perfect. It will not solve all our problems, but it will do more good than all the government intervention in the world.

A lot of times terms are thrown around. Conservative, libertarian, liberal and all. I like the word intervention. I don't like to have a government that is an intervener, that government doesn't come in and tell you what to do with your life; they don't tell you what to do with your money, and we don't tell other countries what to do with their problems either.

That is the—In many ways, I believe a good president would work in the direction of saying that I want to do less. But I want to firmly and courageously stand up to those who want to do more. They use an authoritarian approach, and when they do, everything that they do it undermines your personal liberty. So it undermines everything that was good and great about America. We were never a perfect nation. We don't have a perfect document, but I'll tell you what. We had the best. We were the most prosperous ever. And there's still a lot of spirit left in this country.

So we are now in a struggle; we are in a struggle against those who are saying, and they're angry, we want more; don't cut our benefits. To our group who are saying, we've had enough; what we want is we want our freedom back. (Applause)

The reason I work so hard for personal liberty is a very important reason. It's for myself, it's for my family, my friends, my neighbors and our country. Because I believe if we did have our liberties we would have more prosperity. It is truly a humanitarian argument, because the other side, they do not produce. But more importantly, I think a free society offers

tremendous opportunities. It really releases us. Gives us the time and the wealth to release more creative energies. And it's in these creative energies—Then we can deal with our problems, whether it's our personal habits, whether it has to do with our economic conditions and helping other people or whether its dealing with other countries. We will have, have the wealth. And with this effort, then we can work on our own imperfections to improve ourselves, to work on becoming more virtuous and more compassionate and this is the society that I want to live in. So regardless, and from the very beginning it was regardless of what happens, the goal is a very important goal.

And I am so pleased to see what's happening in the country, not only the interest in the Federal Reserve and the foreign policy but the interest and the understanding of liberty. And where I go the numbers are growing. And where I really get excited is when I go to the university and talk to the young people. They understand. They understand what they're getting, and they understand that something different has to be done. And they also understand that whether they're in high school or college the burden will be falling on them. No matter what happens in the next election, this cannot be changed immediately. It can only be changed—one individual can't do it—it can only be changed if the people endorse the changes and our representatives, they get sent to our legislatures, understand it, and do it. And that is where I think we're making great progress. When I first started, I had difficulties in the 1950s even finding the literature. I had an inclination to study and read, but it took a long time. There was no Internet; the books were hard to find. Today it is so great to use the Internet to find out what's going on. More think tanks than ever before. And also, if I need a book now, I can get it in about five, ten seconds off Amazon and off the Internet and it's in my house the next day. So big things are happening and we have to take that and use it. Use it for a just cause and that just cause is promoting the greatness of America and promoting individual liberty in our country. Thank you very much. (Applause)

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