



Written by [Jack Kerwick, Ph.D.](#) on April 17, 2012

The Successes of Ron Paul's Campaign

In all likelihood, Ron Paul will not get his party's presidential nomination. It is all but certain that the prize will go to that candidate — Massachusetts liberal Mitt Romney — for whom the GOP leadership and its surrogates in the so-called "conservative" media have been rooting the entire time.

Yet it is doubtful that it is primarily the presidency on which Congressman Paul has had his sights. Unlike his rivals, from the outset Paul has been interested first and foremost in gaining an ever broader hearing for his ideas. While his supporters are doubtless disappointed that their man will not be President, they would be well served to consider that from Paul's campaign, liberty lovers have reaped — and continue to reap — much fruit.



There is no shortage of politicians who do *not* pay lip service to the United States Constitution. In fact, there are very few Americans, whether politicians or otherwise, who do not allude to the Constitution when it serves their purposes to do so. But it is not at all difficult to recognize this rhetorical grandstanding for what it is.

In the case of Ron Paul, things are otherwise. He is a rare find among contemporary national figures in that, whether one agrees with his reading of the Constitution or not, it is obvious to all that Paul has actually *read* this hallowed document. Moreover, it is just as obvious that he actually *believes* in it.

And this is what makes all of the difference.

The Constitution, with its innumerable "checks and balances," was intended to safeguard our liberty. The Constitution codifies into law the decentralization of power and authority to which Americans had grown accustomed before America achieved its independence.

Of all of the presidential contestants, no one was more eligible to remind the American voter that the key to the liberty that we enjoy is the Constitution. And no one was better positioned to call to their attention the state of neglect to which this hallowed document has been relegated by *both* major political parties.

This is one enormous benefit that we have gained from Paul's campaign.

Yet there are others.

The Texas Congressman is the incarnation of the Republican Party plank of "limited government," "individual liberty," "fiscal restraint," "national security," and all of the rest of the GOP boilerplate. There is no one among his colleagues in this race who comes remotely as close as Paul to embodying these ideas. In glaring contrast to his fellow Republicans, Paul talks the talk *and* walks the walk, and he does so even *when he is not running for an election*.



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In short, Paul's very presence effortlessly exposes the inconsistencies and outright hypocrisies of his own party.

It isn't just his fellow politicians, though, upon whom he sheds light.

Self-styled "conservatives" in the so-called "alternative media" have labored long and hard crafting a particular image of themselves. Paul's candidacy has revealed that image for the house of straw that it is.

In other words, given their unconscionable treatment of Paul, talk radio hosts and Fox News personalities who have depicted themselves as "independent minded 'conservatives' " and the like have betrayed their role as Republican Party chatterboxes. The "conservative values" that they routinely espouse are a smokescreen under the cover of which they advance the GOP in its struggle to either regain or preserve its power.

This is quite an achievement in its own right.

Faux conservatives are perhaps as large, if not larger, a threat to American liberty as are their leftist counterparts. The reason for this is simple: The leftist has put us on notice as to who he is and what he plans to do. The faux conservative, on the other hand, is no friend to constitutional liberty, but he would have us believe that he is.

It isn't necessarily that the faux conservative sets out to deceive the rest of us as to his true intentions; chances are better than not that if he deceives anyone, it is himself. Yet his true intentions aside, the fact of the matter remains that in effect, the faux conservative imperils liberty to at least as great an extent as does the leftist.

Paul's campaign has heightened awareness of the dubious character of "the conservative media."

There is a third benefit to Paul's campaign.

Paul has made it clear that "the conservative movement" or the Republican Party or whatever name we choose to give it is not nearly as monolithic as its most visible and vocal champions would have us think. Furthermore, Paul exposes the fissures with which it is riddled, for he gives expression to a "libertarian" strain that it has not yet succeeded in extracting from itself.

Fourthly, Paul has done something that no Republican since Reagan, if then, has managed to do: he has not only reached large numbers of American youth; he has *energized* them. Few people, including Paul supporters, have grasped the significance of this.

The proponents of Big Government have to do very little to appeal to people — especially when those people are young people. After all, the bigger the government, the more power its custodians possess to distribute goodies. People of all ages find the promise of something for nothing difficult to resist. Yet when those people are barely beyond adolescence, it becomes virtually impossible not to embrace it. The old truism, "Nothing is free," is a truism because it is, well, true. But this is readily ignored. It is ignored because while present goodies do indeed come at a cost, when that cost is the *gradual* loss of something as intangible as freedom, the desire for immediate gratification is likely to prevail. And considering that the time horizons of the young are far narrower than those of any other age set, it is almost a foregone conclusion that the young will not only welcome Big Government; they will assume that any political-moral philosophy that denies Big Government is impoverished.

Yes, it is *almost* a foregone conclusion that the young will embrace Big Government.



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Ron Paul's campaign has shown what can happen when someone who truly believes in and understands liberty takes the time to explain it to the young. This is no mean feat. Paul does not draw youthful voters to his campaign by promising to pay for their medical insurance or their college tuition. He does not pledge to extend their unemployment benefits, and the assertions of his critics to the contrary notwithstanding, nor does he attract them by promising to legalize drugs.

Through a style all his own, Paul wins over young adults by doing nothing more or less than treat them as adults.

And this means simply and solely that he commits to allowing them to live as *free* men and women.

The verdict is clear: Ron Paul has executed what may perhaps be among the most successful campaigns of all time.



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