



Written by [Christian Gomez](#) on August 8, 2023

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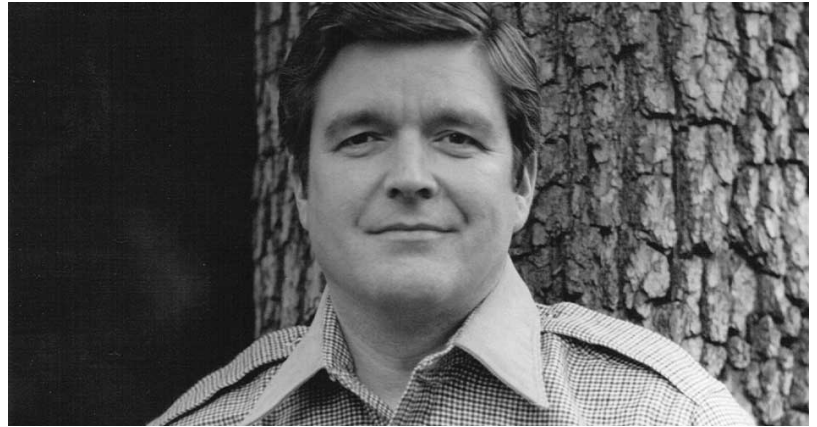
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## Larry's Legacy

*"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge"*

— Hosea 4:6, KJV

In this passage of Scripture from the Old Testament, the prophet Hosea was lamenting the fact that because the nation of Israel had forsaken knowledge, it now faced captivity and rejection from the Lord. This was Larry McDonald's favorite passage from the Bible, according to both his youngest son, Larry McDonald, Jr., and his former campaign manager, Don Vice. He would often insert and quote it in his speeches that identified the cause and solution to America's declining condition. Like the prophet Hosea, McDonald lamented America's decline as the result of what he also saw as a lack of knowledge — a lack of knowledge about the severity of the threat of communism and a lack of knowledge of the principles outlined in the Constitution. To save America, McDonald believed that education was the key.



Courtesy of Don Vice

While en route to South Korea aboard commercial Korean Air Lines Flight 007 in 1983, Georgia Congressman Larry McDonald and 268 others were lost at sea, when a Soviet MiG-23 "Flogger" and three Soviet Su-15 "Flagon" fighters intercepted and shot down the plane over Sakhalin Island, in the Sea of Japan. He was a practicing urologist, a five-term member of Congress possessing a consistent constitutionalist voting record, an active member of The John Birch Society who eventually became its chairman, the chairman of Western Goals Foundation, an ardent anti-communist, and a stalwart defender of the Constitution.

## Education and Medical Practice

Lawrence Patton McDonald was born on April 1, 1935, in Atlanta, Georgia, to parents Dr. Harold P. McDonald, Sr., and Callie Patton McDonald, who was a cousin of General George S. Patton. McDonald was only 10 years old when George S. Patton died shortly following a car collision in Germany in 1945. McDonald became fascinated with his deceased relative at an early age, learning everything he could about him from family members, and buying and reading books about him. Before the tragedy of KAL 007, McDonald was said to own every book ever written about or by General Patton. He loved to read, a



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trait that he most likely picked up from his mother, who also enjoyed reading. Although Larry was not a speed reader, he was able to retain almost everything that he did read and often recited quotations from his reading in his speeches, such as quotes from Patton and Bible verses, such as Isaiah 5:13 and Hosea 4:6.

In the McDonald household, the dinner table would often take the form of a debate, and it was there where a young Larry McDonald learned how to debate from his father, Harold McDonald. Larry was never a rowdy or loud child; if anything he was more soft-spoken, always very cool and collected. This was a trait that he would carry throughout his life.

At an early age, Larry McDonald set out to follow in the footsteps of his father and grandfather, both of whom were physicians in Georgia. His father opened the renowned McDonald Urology Clinic in Atlanta. Larry McDonald graduated second in his class from Darlington School in Rome, Georgia. In 1953, he graduated and completed his pre-medical training from Davidson College and was then accepted into Emory Medical School, just prior to his 18th birthday. Upon graduating from Emory in 1957, Larry McDonald became the second-youngest physician in Georgia state history at the age of 22. His father beat him by a couple of months, having been the youngest physician in the state's history.

After graduation, McDonald joined the U.S. Navy, serving four years' active duty as a physician and flight surgeon. During this time, he interned at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, and served as a Navy flight surgeon, stationed in Reykjavik, Iceland. By the time he completed his four years of active duty, he had advanced to the rank of lieutenant commander. He continued in the Naval Reserves, and eventually rose to the rank of captain.

From 1961 to 1963, he went back to Atlanta to do two years of residency in general surgery. He then moved to Ann Arbor, Michigan, where he did a three-year residency in urology at the University of Michigan. It was at this time that McDonald made his first run for public office, the Ann Arbor City Council. Although his views were more conservative than those of most Republicans, he ran as a Democrat but lost. When his three-year urology residency was completed, he returned to Atlanta to work with his father and older brother as a junior member at the McDonald Urology Clinic.

## **"Destroyed for Lack of Knowledge"**

In addition to his passion for medicine, Larry McDonald became deeply concerned about communism. He did not awaken to the threat of communism until his tour as a Navy flight surgeon in Reykjavik. In 1985, his older brother, Harold McDonald, Jr., recounted to *The New American* magazine the eye-opening experience:

He went to the commanding officer in Iceland when he thought the U.S. Embassy appeared to be doing things advantageous to the communists, who were very influential in the country. He was told something that rang in his ears: "You don't understand the big picture." He began to think, "Maybe I do."

He came back from Iceland after discharging his Naval Reserve active duty obligations and began reading political history and books on foreign policy, sometimes two or three a week. He also looked around for anyone else concerned about communism, and the only organization he found trying to do anything was The John Birch Society. Larry believed in saving the country from communism as strongly as a missionary to Africa in the 19th



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century believed in saving the souls of the people.

McDonald's desire to help inform others about the threat of communism and how to stop it led him to join The John Birch Society in 1963. In 1967, he became the youngest member elevated to the National Council of The John Birch Society. In March 1983, shortly before his ill-fated flight, McDonald became chairman of The John Birch Society. From the time he became a member, he was a popular lecturer for the society. He gave numerous speeches and presentations, covering such topics as the economics of inflation, fiat currency, and high taxes; the history of America's Founding Fathers and the Constitution; the rise of Bolshevism in Russia and the subsequent spread of international communism; and the elitist globalist agenda of the Council on Foreign Relations and the Trilateral Commission.

Through his local leadership as a speaker and organizer within The John Birch Society and its chapters in Cobb County, Georgia, McDonald worked toward building an informed electorate.

## **Dr. McDonald Goes to Washington**

On February 8, 1972, Larry McDonald announced that he would run for the House of Representatives, challenging six-term incumbent Rep. John W. Davis in the Democratic primary. McDonald chose his good friend Don Vice as his campaign manager. The race was close, but in the end Congressman Davis won and eventually went on to defeat Republican candidate Charles Sherrill in the general election. Although McDonald lost, he still managed to get 48 percent of the total votes in the primary, winning a majority of the counties. This was an incredible achievement for McDonald, who as a political novice was able to attain almost half of the total votes in the primary against a long-standing incumbent. This feat would not have been possible without the tireless efforts of Larry McDonald to build an informed electorate throughout the 7th Congressional District.

Most of the residents in the district (307,000 of 460,000) live in the five counties McDonald won. This was a strong indication that he could win the Democratic primary and sweep a victory in the general election. Two years later, again with Don Vice as his campaign manager, that is precisely what happened. Doctor McDonald became Congressman McDonald.

In the summer of 1975, a young man named David Chandler had the opportunity to work as an intern in Larry McDonald's congressional office in Washington, D.C. "When he [McDonald] came into the room, you could tell something was different. He had a presence about him," said Chandler about Larry McDonald. During his six-week summer internship, he had the additional privilege of living with McDonald for three weeks. As a result he got a firsthand account of the type of man McDonald was in Congress. "He was totally no nonsense. He knew who the players were, he knew who the leftists were, and he spent his time in the office from early in the morning to late at night," Chandler said.

**Telling the truth:** In 1976, Larry McDonald authored a 180-page book entitled *We Hold These Truths* that detailed how the Constitution was formed, its meaning, and how it should be applied with regard to the various issues facing the country. (Courtesy of Don Vice)



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Larry McDonald continued to give speeches in his home state of Georgia, in venues throughout the country, and on the floor of the House of Representatives, in order to educate and better inform both the electorate and his colleagues in Congress. After completing his first two-year term in the House, *People* magazine asked him his reason for running for Congress. "I see myself as something of a fireman out of necessity," McDonald said. "You become one when your house is burning. That's why I'm in Congress." The house was burning because of a lack of knowledge, and the only way to put out the fire before the people became destroyed was through building an informed electorate; this remained his primary objective while in office.

His life as a congressman and a rising figure in The John Birch Society was one of long hours and hard work, leaving him with very little time for himself. "He was busy all the time," recalled Don Vice, who also served as McDonald's district manager in Georgia. "He lived with his family; he was working for the cause so to speak. He also found some time to be an avid outdoorsman." McDonald always kept his fishing gear in the car as he traveled with Vice through the north Georgia district. "He loved to hunt and fish, especially fly fishing," said Vice. "Often he would see a small stream or creek and he would urge me to pull over so he could just spend 10 or 15 minutes fishing, in his suit, [while we were] on our way to a political meeting or campaign event."

McDonald squeezed in short fishing breaks, spent time with his wife and children, or went to his mother's house for some of her delicious homemade fried chicken whenever he could, because working vigorously toward building an informed electorate was a monumental task.

## **Principled and Consistent Statesman**

One of the major subjects that McDonald believed the American people lacked knowledge about was the Federal Reserve. In his book *We Hold These Truths*, published in 1976, McDonald wrote:

At first, the Federal Reserve paper money had to be backed by gold, amounting to twenty-five percent of its face value. With the Gold Reserve Act of 1934, Franklin D. Roosevelt took the United States off the Gold Standard and confiscated all monetary gold in the country, exchanging gold certificates for it. From then until 1968, the twenty-five percent backing of Federal Reserve paper money was in gold certificates. In 1968, Lyndon Johnson removed the gold-certificate reserve requirement. Later, Richard Nixon devalued gold.



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Because of these and other complex manipulations, not many people now understand how the Federal Reserve System works.

According to McDonald, the most adverse changes to the U.S. economy and government occurred when the Federal Reserve was created, during the administration of President Woodrow Wilson (1913-1921). McDonald wrote:

Without the Federal Reserve System creating elastic currency, without the Sixteenth Amendment giving government limitless power to take the currency away from the people; and without the Seventeenth Amendment eliminating state-government influence in the U.S. Senate, the federal government might not have taken us into the European war in 1917, or all the wars since.

While campaigning for his second term, President Woodrow Wilson promised to keep us out of the war. After reelection, he promised that he would save the world for democracy by getting into the war. Both promises were deliberate deceptions.

At 180 pages, *We Hold These Truths* is a concise, informative, and easy-to-read book detailing the formation of the Constitution, what it says and means, and the issues facing the country.

"I must have become somewhat cynical about Congress, because never, in my happiest daydream, did I ever imagine a Member of the United States Congress writing a book like this one," wrote Dan Smoot in the book's introduction. Dan Smoot, who passed away in 2003, was an FBI agent and renowned conservative commentator. He is most remembered for *The Dan Smoot Report*, which he published from the 1950s to early '70s, which detailed communist infiltration and subversion within the U.S. government.

"You will not find one sacred cow being protected in this book. Congressman Larry McDonald indicts everyone and everything that gets in the way of a constitutional principle."

In 1978, McDonald introduced H.R. 12781, a bill that would have required the comptroller general of the United States to annually audit the amount of gold held by the United States and report those findings to Congress on the first day of each fiscal year. Unfortunately this bill did not receive any cosponsors, but this did not deter him. He continued to sponsor and cosponsor an array of sound money bills, many of which were introduced by his good friend, Republican Representative Ron Paul of Texas. As was the case with most of Ron Paul's bills at the time, Larry McDonald was usually the only cosponsor for Paul's financial and monetary bills, such as the Sound Money Act of 1979. Ron Paul would have likely cosponsored H.R. 12781, but he was temporarily not in office in 1978.

Before voting on any bill, Rep. McDonald always asked himself the following three questions: (1) Is it constitutional? (2) Do we need it? and (3) Can we afford it? Given this very strict set of voting parameters, Larry McDonald voted against the majority of bills. Based on how he voted and because he was a physician, Congressman McDonald earned the nickname "Dr. No," as did Congressman Paul.

In an interview for the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Ron Paul said of Larry McDonald, "He was the most principled man in Congress." McDonald's principled stand was reflected in his voting record. Year after year, Larry McDonald scored perfect 100-percent ratings in the "Conservative Index" published by *The*





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*Review of the News* magazine, which was a forerunner of *The New American* magazine's current "[Freedom Index](#)." In addition to his consistent constitutional credentials in *The Review of the News*, McDonald also scored remarkably high in other scorecards. In 1982, for instance, McDonald scored perfect 100-percent ratings from the American Conservative Union, Americans for Constitutional Action, Christian Voice, National Alliance of Senior Citizens, National Conservative Political Action Committee, National Chamber of Commerce, and the National Federation of Independent Business.

Although elected as a Democrat, McDonald voted against his party 90 percent of the time, according to the September 3, 1983 issue of *Congressional Quarterly*. He even voted against the standard traditional party-line vote for Democrat Tip O'Neill of Massachusetts for speaker of the House. McDonald was not concerned about party labels, rather his voting criteria was based solely on the Constitution. However, when asked by *People* magazine if he would remain a Democrat, he responded, "I am a historic Democrat, but if Thomas Jefferson were alive today I doubt if he would be a Democrat."

With each passing year, McDonald's effort to educate his fellow congressmen in the House was gaining momentum. On June 28, 1979, McDonald introduced H.R. 4665, a bill to make appropriations for the purchase of silver for stockpiling under the Strategic and Critical Materials Stockpiling Act. This bill garnered the cosponsorship of a wide range of representatives, including Dick Cheney of Wyoming, Newt Gingrich of Georgia, Barry Goldwater, Jr. of California, and Ron Paul of Texas. With a total of 70 cosponsors, the bill unfortunately did not pass, but it demonstrated the wide range of influence that McDonald had across the aisle during his congressional tenure.

On foreign policy, McDonald was a strong advocate of American withdrawal from the United Nations. At the time his plane was shot down in 1983, he had introduced H.R. 865, the United Nations Termination Act, which called for the withdrawal of the United States from the United Nations and the UN from U.S. soil. The bill's only cosponsor that year was Ron Paul. On September 14, 1983, shortly after KAL 007 was shot down, Congressman Paul reintroduced the bill as H.R. 3891, also entitled the United Nations Termination Act, in honor of Larry McDonald's bill. In McDonald's absence, Paul continued to champion the cause of building an informed electorate and advocating American withdrawal from the United Nations. Beginning in 1983, Ron Paul reintroduced McDonald's old bill every year he was in office. Readers may recognize it by its more recent name: the American Sovereignty Restoration Act, which is now sponsored by Congressman Paul Broun of Georgia.

## Informing the Electorate

On the foreign policy front, the biggest issue Americans lacked knowledge about, McDonald believed, was in the area of communism. Larry McDonald saw no greater threat to the security of the United States, the Constitution, and the liberties it protected than that of international communism and the newly emerging threat of international terrorism. Based on his endless research exposing the matter, Congressman McDonald believed that both international communism and terrorism were being directed out of Moscow by the KGB and the Politburo of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

In response to this threat, Larry McDonald established the Western Goals Foundation, a nongovernmental intelligence organization that conducted extensive research and published reports, as well as produced documentaries about the Soviet financial backing and transfer of arms to communist parties, Marxist guerrillas, and terrorist groups throughout the world. In an interview for the documentary *No Place to Hide*, produced by Western Goals in 1982, McDonald said, "Yes we are at war



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— very definitely, we have been at war; it's an economic war, it's a war of subversion, it's a war of espionage, it's a war of ideas, it's a war of terrorism and it's a war of infiltration."

A part of Moscow's quest for world domination was the instituting of internal Soviet subversion in the United States. To combat this, Congressman McDonald devoted much of his legislative career to fully reinstating the House Committee on Internal Security, the Senate Sub-Committee on Internal Security, the Attorney General's List of Subversive Organizations, the Internal Security Division of the Justice Department, the Subversive Activities Control Board, and the intelligence units of local police departments. Congressman McDonald would also often reveal the names of known communist front organizations and their members into the *Congressional Record*. He exposed the activities and Soviet linkages of many groups operating in the United States, such as the Black Panther Party; Communist Party USA; FALN, the Puerto Rican Marxist terror group; Socialist Workers Party; Students for a Democratic Society; and the Weather Underground.

The purpose of much of Larry McDonald's anti-communist work in Congress and the Western Goals Foundation was to inform the American people and his fellow congressmen about the very real and active threat that communism posed to liberty. Communism represented the total loss of all individual freedom and the subjugation of the people under a totalitarian police state. This appalled Larry McDonald, and was of great concern to most liberty-minded constitutional conservatives throughout the Cold War. If the American people lacked knowledge about communism, then they would surely be destroyed by the communists, McDonald believed; thus he devoted himself to informing the electorate about the severity of this threat. Not surprisingly, as Larry McDonald's influence gained strength in Congress and throughout the world through the Western Goals Foundation, he became an archenemy of the communists, including the Soviets.

It was while he was en route to a meeting in Seoul, South Korea, to deliver a speech about South Korean and U.S. cooperation in the struggle against Soviet-led international communism that his flight was intercepted and shot down by Soviet fighters over the Sea of Japan, near Sakhalin Island. In his life, Larry McDonald was recognized for his commitment to advancing and protecting the principles and ideals of liberty outlined in the Constitution; and in his memory neither he nor the knowledge he sought to have others know should be forgotten or rejected.



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