



Written by [Christian Gomez](#) on August 22, 2011

Ron Paul as an Anti-communist Cold Warrior

Republican presidential hopeful Ron Paul is most distinguishable, on the debate stage alongside fellow GOP contenders, for his opposition to the U.S. wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, and now Libya. The Texas Congressman advocates the withdrawal of U.S. troops from not only Afghanistan and Iraq, but also elsewhere in the world, such as Germany, Japan, and South Korea.



Rep. Paul has also distinguished himself from other candidates in his consistent statements and beliefs. Unlike most other candidates, he has not flip-flopped — saying now what he has been saying for decades.

Once considered as one of 12 potential leaders of the conservative movement after the age of Reagan, according to the March 1983 issue of *Conservative Digest* magazine, Ron Paul is now regarded as the [Godfather of the Tea Party movement](#). Still, despite his popularity on the right, and among libertarians, independents, as well as disenfranchised Democrats, Paul is attacked by many due to his foreign policy stance.

The attacks come not from the Left, but rather from fellow Republicans. The insinuation is that he is weak on defense because he supposedly supports Iran's quest to build a nuclear weapon. Congressman Alan West (R-Fla.) recently came out against Paul, saying:

Let me be very honest. When I was listening to the debate Thursday night and a certain candidate for president stood there and said he didn't see any problem with Iran getting a nuclear device because everybody else has one — I have to tell you, that's not the kind of guy you need to be sitting at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

Websites from RedState.com to TrevorLoudon.com create an image that Paul is "[Al Qaeda's Favorite Member of Congress](#)" or that he is the [pro-Russia/Communist candidate](#). When he is not being ignored by the media his detractors take potshots at him, attempting to create a distorted image of Paul as a supporter of [totalitarianism and Communism](#).

More recently a small series of articles have been posted online insinuating that Ron Paul is being backed by Russia and that his election is what Russia and the communists want. Those reading such articles might well come to the same conclusions if they have not dug deeper into Paul's record.

First elected to Congress in 1976, serving a partial term until 1977, and again from 1979 to 1985, Ron Paul represented the then-22nd Congressional District of Texas. At the time, the United States was faced by the Cold War threat of Communism and the Soviet Union — a totalitarian state that represented the complete opposite of Paul's libertarian beliefs. Paul was no friend of communism or the USSR — and his record during his tenure in office at the time vindicates his credentials as an anti-communist.

Before Ron Paul's days as a Cold Warrior are examined, it is first necessary to define and distinguish



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the ideology of communism versus the ideology of liberty, as advocated by Paul.

What is Communism?

Communism is an inherently collectivist ideology which centers on the breakdown of capitalism and the breakup of society into two main collective classes of people — described as the working class and the capitalist class (i.e. the *proletariat* and *bourgeoisie*).

Ignoring human nature's desire to better oneself and aspire for a better standard and wage of living, communism calls for the creation of a "classless" or "equal" society by which the natural human condition is suppressed by the state as it controls the total means of production (i.e. farms and factories). The state ownership of the means of production is also commonly referred to as socialism.

Although some communists claim their aim is the eventual "withering away of the state," as Karl Marx wrote in his [Communist Manifesto](#) (1848), its application first requires that the state be used as the primary tool to control all aspects of human interaction (i.e., life and economics) in order to remove any remnants of "social injustice" or inequality — essentially eradicating those things that distinguish individuals from one another and make people unique. This is to be done by force, resulting in a compulsory state of apparent equality.

Once total or absolute equality, or "social justice," is achieved, the state can then begin to deconstruct itself and cease to be, theoretically leaving behind a society of equal people living in a "people's paradise" or "utopia."

The major fallacy of this belief is that it relies on the state changing human nature, which in reality and in historical application can only be attempted by coercion, repression, and tyranny.

Tyrants, once in absolute power, never cede away their power (this too is human nature). In communism's state of "transition" from capitalism to anarchy, when the state accumulates total power, there still exist two classes — the masses and the ruling elites (i.e. the ruling Communist Party Politburo). No mechanism exists to check or coerce the equality of this new ruling oligarchy. This is why, no matter how well intentioned the agitators of communist revolution maybe (and in most cases, the "well-intentioned" communists are in the lower ranks, dominated by an elite clique of malintentioned conspirators), their system of government has always led to, continues to lead to, and will always lead to total tyranny by the state - i.e. statism. Hence, actually communism is statism - the total control by the state.

Ron Paul's Ideology

Communism is the antithesis of individual liberty, the latter of which Ron Paul has championed his entire career in public office. In his book [The Revolution: A Manifesto](#) (2008), he elaborates his belief on personal freedom:

Freedom means not only that our economic activity ought to be free and voluntary, but that government should stay out of personal affairs as well. In fact, freedom means that we understand liberty as an indivisible whole. Economic freedom and personal liberty are not divisible.

Whereas modern "liberals" advocate government intervention in the market, modern "conservatives" advocate government intervention in social matters, and communists advocate government intervention in or control of both. Ron Paul, on the other hand, advocates that there be no government intervention in either the economy or personal affairs.

Paul is by no means an anarchist; he is rather a constitutionalist — believing in the basic rule of law



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where government exists primarily to protect one's rights, which are inherent and derived from our Creator. He believes that we are entitled only to that which we are born with — our life, liberty, and the pursuit to happiness.

Government's role is not to grant rights or to collect from one to disperse to another, but rather to protect one's God-given rights to his or her own personhood and property. Government does this by creating laws that protect one's life and private property from other violators.

These laws are administrated by elected federal and state representatives (i.e., a republic) and enforced by local law enforcement, closest to the people, and also a national military to protect the land from foreign aggression. This is why Article I Section 8 of the Constitution, which delegates specific powers to the Congress, pertains mostly to military or national defense affairs.

Governments are not instructed to protect people from themselves but rather from others that would violate their individual personhood or property. This is the ideology of Ron Paul. By the very nature of these Lockean beliefs, Paul is an ideological anti-statist, anti-collectivist, and henceforth anti-communist candidate, rare qualities among GOP presidential candidates.

Ron Paul on Communism

In regard to communism, Ron Paul stated the following in his book [Liberty Defined: 50 Essential Issues That Affect Our Freedom](#) (2011):

Communism was based on the belief that only the party established the truth, and it was not rigid; it changed according to political priorities. Without a belief that truth exists apart from what government says it is, peace, prosperity, and progress are impossible.

Considering these anti-collectivist/ anti-communist tendencies and considering also that Ron Paul served in Congress from 1976-77 and 1979 to 1985, it is worth exploring how he handled the menace of the Soviet Union and international communism during the Cold War. We can begin by examining Paul's position on foreign aid to the Soviet Union.

Ron Paul on Foreign Aid to the Soviet Union

Ron Paul has always maintained a consistent opposition to *all* foreign aid, but especially to the communist states such as the Soviet Union. At a time when the American people were told by the government that the Soviet Union and Communism represented the greatest threat to the world and free people, that same government (the U.S. government) was propping up that very same threat of communism via the Export-Import Bank.

In a 1980 issue of "The Ron Paul Report," Congressman Paul gives the example of the "largest truck plant in world, on the Kama River in the U.S.S.R.," which, as he stated, "produced many of the trucks and armored vehicles used in the [Soviet] invasion of Afghanistan..."

Paul went on to explain that the plant was "built at the expense of the American people." According to Paul, "The Nixon Administration ruled the project to be in our national interest, and the government's Export Import Bank loaned the Soviets \$154 million at an average interest rate of 6.5%, with the first payment not due for 10 years."

"The rest of the \$342 million financing, loaned at market rates by a syndicate headed by the Chase Manhattan Bank," Paul elaborated, "was insured by the taxpayer through another government agency, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation."



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This Paul opposed, as it benefited the Soviets at the expense of the American taxpayer. “The Export-Import Bank’s funds come from the U.S. Treasury, and the outlays cause our taxes and inflation rates to go up,” Paul said, adding, “The Soviets get the goods. The big banks and companies get the profits. And the taxpayer gets the bill.”

Paul summed up this policy as “simply a transfer payment from the average American to the well-to-do, with a bonus for our enemies.”

Ron Paul on SALT II (Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty)

In addition to criticizing the policies of President Nixon, Paul also censured the administration of President Jimmy Carter for its support of the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty, also known as SALT II.

In the October 1979 issue of his “Freedom Report,” Paul criticized U.S. arms reduction agreements with the Soviets:

Over the past twelve years — years of almost constant disarmament negotiations — the Soviet Union has outspent us on military offense and defense by 35% to 40%. This, the greatest military build-up in the history of the world, has led to rough equivalency between the USSR and the USA at best, and, at worst, clear inferiority for America.

Paul condemned the SALT II agreement, saying of it that “this would probably lead to permanent US weakness and the make the Soviet Union the undisputed military superpower in the world.” He continued, “It would be profoundly destabilizing; and far from promoting peace, it would endanger it.”

Paul’s report explained that “President Carter said we would agree to build no heavy ICBMs if the Soviets would only construct 150. The Soviets said no, they wanted 308 to our zero. We ‘compromised’ at 308, under the leadership of Paul Warnke, head SALT negotiator and George McGovern’s 1972 defense advisor.”

These 308 heavy ICMBs (intercontinental ballistic missiles) were referred to the Soviets as SS-18 missiles, each of which, according to Paul, “is six to seven times as powerful as our best missile.”

Paul also outlined the danger of SALT II and why he opposed it in Congress:

Under SALT, our missiles are allowed three Multiple Independently Targeted Re-Entry Vehicles (MIRVs). This means each missile can carry three nuclear warheads capable of hitting separate targets. SALT gives the Soviets permission to have 10 MIRVs on each SS-18. (SS-18s have been tested with 14 warheads, and many of our military experts believe they are capable of carrying 16.) Under the terms of the treaty, this one aspect of the Soviet warmaking machine can deliver 3,080 giant nuclear warheads, each with the destructive power of one million tons of TNT. These MIRVs equal 181,000 Hiroshima-size bombs.

Unlike many on the Left, and those both sympathetic and apologetic to the aggressions committed by the Soviet Union and international Communism, Ron Paul was a clear opponent of arms reduction agreements that benefited the Soviet Union and the communist world. He challenged the establishment, whether it was the President of his own party, Richard Nixon, or President Jimmy Carter of the Democratic Party, every time they sought to make treaties to bolster the Soviet war-machine and industry at the expense of American taxpayer dollars and national security.

Ron Paul on Nuclear Freeze and the Soviet Union

In addition to standing against SALT, Ron Paul was equally opposed to the nuclear freeze initiative.



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During the height of the Cold War socialist radicals, anarchists, and other leftist extremists heavily promoted the idea that the United States and its Western allies should adopt a nuclear freeze initiative that would have placed a halt on the production and deployment of U.S. strategic nuclear forces.

In a reply letter, dated June 20, 1983, to a Mrs. Elizabeth Hey, a constituent of his 22nd Congressional District, Paul stated: "I voted against the nuclear freeze resolution when it was approved by the House of Representatives on Wednesday, May 4 [1983]."

Paul went on to briefly outline his opposition to the nuclear freeze bill, stating: "The resolution calls for an immediate, mutual, and verifiable freeze. The Soviets, however, have not stated their willingness to freeze nuclear stockpiles." He continued,

My primary objection to a nuclear freeze treaty with the Soviet Union is that I am unwilling to trust the freedom and independence of the United States to the promises of the Soviet ruling elite. The Soviets have broken almost every treaty they have ever signed, once it was no longer to their advantage to abide by its terms.

Paul also made public his opposition to the freeze two months before, in the April 1983 issue of his "Freedom Report," in which he stated:

The argument for a nuclear freeze is based on a misconception about the Soviet Union. This view holds that the leaders of the Soviet Union are motivated by the same values as we — the desire for peace. ... In reality, the Soviet Union is a totalitarian country ruled by a ruthless elite. The value of individual human life is nothing to the Soviet leaders.

"The American people want peace and freedom; the Soviets desire world conquest," Paul stated as he went on to further criticize the Soviet Union for its numerous treaty violations:

The Soviet rulers are willing to sign treaties only when they advance their plans for conquest. The Soviets have violated SALT I and other treaties at least 27 times. The use of chemical weapons in Afghanistan is only the latest in the long series of treaty violations. *I am unwilling to trust the security of the U.S. to the promises of the Soviet Union.* [Emphasis added.]

Although Paul has never been an advocate of increasing the U.S. nuclear stockpile, he did rightfully oppose attempts, such as the "nuclear freeze" initiative," to formally sign an agreement with the Soviet Union that would have legally bound and prohibited the United States from building such weapons if the need should arise.

Committed then to a sound fiscal policy in the defense budget, as he still advocates today, Paul finished by making a call for less needless weaponry but rather shifting the focus of defense spending to what is, or was, actually needed to defend the U.S. homeland.

"The time has come to stop building more tanks and more nuclear bombs, to stop insisting that our reluctant allies take them, and to start building a defense against a missile attack," Paul concluded.

Ron Paul on Missile Defense

Recognizing the nuclear missile threat posed by the Soviet Union, Ron Paul, as did also his friend and fellow anti-Communist colleague [Rep. Larry McDonald](#) (D-Ga.), supported President Ronald Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), or "star wars" missile defense.

The purpose of SDI, as Reagan stated in his famous televised speech from the Oval Office on March 23, 1983, was "rendering these nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete."



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In an article entitled “Space Warfare” in the December 1, 1983 issue of *Congressman Ron Paul Reports*, Paul addressed those opposed to SDI; Paul wrote:

Earlier this year, when President Reagan announced plans to develop a space defense system, critics said he was opening a new horrifying era in the arms race: the militarization of space. Such a system, they said, would be “provocative,” forcing the Soviets to build their own “Star Wars” weaponry.

Paul went on to state that, “Nothing could be more misleading,” noting the hypocrisy of the Soviet Union:

Despite the barrage of propaganda from the Kremlin — propaganda that has been scandalously effective at influencing public opinion in the West — space has already been “militarized.” And it is the Soviets that have been the “militarizers.”

Paul concluded his article by paraphrasing and giving the last word to General Daniel O. Graham, “father of the High Frontier space defense concept and former head of the Defense Intelligence Agency....” Paul wrote:

In the event of a nuclear attack by the Soviets, General Graham reminds his critics, you’d better believe there will be weapons in space. They’ll be flying right at us. And it is this that those who seek a real defense capability are trying to prevent.

Ron Paul continued to maintain his support for SDI as far late as 1988, when during a [televised interview](#), while running as the Libertarian Party presidential candidate, he was asked, “What about Star Wars/SDI?” Paul replied:

I think that it’s worth doing research on SDI, but I would take the money out of the money we spend overseas. Seventy percent of our military money is spent overseas subsidizing rich allies that should be spent on the defense of this country, such as SDI.

Ron Paul observed that a space-based missile defense such as SDI likely would be a far more effective way of deterring a Soviet missile attack than having to be the policeman of the world with U.S. troops and bases in over 150 countries.

Rather than having to maintain an empire overseas, the United States could still protect and even deter the possibility of Soviet nuclear aggression by the development and deployment of a U.S. missile defense system in space — and this was the position held by Ron Paul.

The Soviet Union was not the only world power seeking to impose Communism on the rest of the world. In addition to the Soviet menace, Ron Paul stood his ground against other communist states such as those in East Asia.

Ron Paul on Communist China

In 1982, Paul strongly condemned the Reagan administration when it decided to extend credit to the People’s Republic of China, via the Export-Import Bank, estimated at \$68,425,000. “It is outrageous that the American taxpayers are being forced to subsidize Communist China while domestic programs like Social Security are in jeopardy,” stated Paul at the time.

The following year, in a letter from the Paul’s congressional office dated March 11, 1983, he expressed his strong opposition to one of the Reagan administration’s foreign aid bills — S.637, introduced by Senator Charles H. Percy (R-Ill.) — which would have amended the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. Paul



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quoted the following provision of S.637, which stated:

The FAA is amended to remove the People's Republic of China and Tibet (which is administered as part of China) from the category of countries to which assistance is prohibited. As a result of this amendment, the People's Republic of China would not be considered a "communist-bloc" country...

Paul blasted this proposal in the letter: "The contention that the People's Republic of China is no longer Communist is ludicrous. There has been no fundamental change in the government in Communist China. It is still a totalitarian, repressive, and collectivist regime."

"The determination that the People's Republic of China is non-communist should be an affront to freedom-loving Americans," Paul added.

Consistent with his free-market principles and opposition to foreign aid, Paul criticized the Reagan administration's State Department for its aid to Communist China:

Communist China has already received over \$125 million in loans and credit since 1981. This includes a \$68 million credit through the Export-Import Bank to be used to buy steel making equipment. The Administration claimed that this credit was "in the national interest." It was certainly in someone's national interest, but I doubt that it was ours. It is indefensible to be pouring \$68 million into the Chinese steel industry when the U.S. steel industry is in such terrible economic straits.

Paul went on to asses the threat of Communist China, identifying China's ties with the Soviet Union and its territorial ambitions for conquering Taiwan. Paul concluded the letter with the following statement:

There is a saying among Communists that goes something like this: If the Communists were going to hang capitalists, the capitalists would sell them the rope. This is only a half-truth. Nowadays, we'd just give them the rope, "in the national interest."

Ron Paul and Barry Goldwater on Korea

In a 1980 issue of *The Ron Paul Report*, Paul quotes Senator Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz.), who said of South Korea that we should "reassess our military presence" there. Paul continued:

If North Korea decided to take advantage of the domestic turmoil [in South Korea], and invaded, said Senator Goldwater, our 41,000 troops would take the brunt of the attack. Our men are well-armed and well-trained, said the Senator, but they would not be able to stand off a probable North Korean-Red Chinese human flood.

Paul went on to criticize foreign aid, believing in the sovereignty of the South Korean people and military to deal with any threat to their security:

... South Korea's 620,000-man army, and well-equipped air force and navy, ought to be able to defend the country. We have sent them many billions in military and economic aid.

Ron Paul's reassessment and eventual call for withdraw of U.S. forces from South Korea was consistent with the views of Senator Goldwater, whose anti-Communist credentials were well known at the time. Paul, like Goldwater, recognized the risk and danger to U.S. national defense by maintaining a permanent presence in South Korea.

Even today, when South Korea is a wealthier and freer country than it was in 1980 — maintaining one of the world's most advanced military forces, more than capable of taking on the outdated Soviet-era



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military arsenal of North Korea — it still does not require a U.S. military presence there, which is why Paul continues to advocate the withdrawal of U.S. forces from the peninsula.

Conclusion

Despite the distortions and false imagery presented in certain web outlets, the record of Ron Paul is clear as to where he stood on Communism and the Soviet menace of the Cold War. Assertions to the contrary represent inaccurate history and distort the record of the Texas Congressman, who has always unwaveringly championed the cause of individual liberty — since his early days in office as both defender of the Constitution and cold warrior.



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