



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on December 5, 2011

Paul Keeps His Honor, Rejects Trump's Debate Invitation

The timing for the debate appeared to be perfect, coming just a week before the Iowa caucuses. Ruddy no doubt was counting on the debate to increase Newsmax's influence among its conservative supporters, hoping to build on its already-significant Web traffic. Invitations went out to the Republican presidential candidates on Friday afternoon.

It didn't take Ron Paul's campaign chairman, Jesse Benton, long to respond. On Saturday morning, he issued [the following statement](#):



The Ron Paul 2012 Presidential Campaign Committee rejects the selection of Donald Trump as moderator for the Republican presidential debate to be held on December 27th in Iowa.

We have conferred with our Iowa campaign chairman Drew Ivers and vice-chairmen David Fischer and A.J. Spiker who are all RPI State Central Committee Members, and they concur with this decision.

The selection of a reality television personality to host a presidential debate that voters nationwide will be watching is beneath the office of the Presidency and flies in the face of that office's history and dignity. Mr. Trump's participation as moderator will distract from questions and answers concerning important issues such as the national economy, crushing federal government debt, the role of the federal government, foreign policy, and the like. To be sure, Mr. Trump's participation will contribute to an unwanted circus-like atmosphere.

Mr. Trump's selection is also wildly inappropriate because of his record of toying with the serious decision of whether to compete for our nation's highest office, a decision he appeared to make frivolously. The short-lived elevation of Mr. Trump's stature as a candidate put him on the radar of many organizations and we recall that last spring he was invited to keynote the Republican Party of Iowa's annual Reagan Dinner, yet at the last minute he left RPI holding the bag by canceling. In turn, RPI canceled its biggest fundraising gala of the year and suffered embarrassment and in addition RPI was required to engage in refunding measures. Our candidate will not even consider participating in the late-December debate until Mr. Trump publicly apologizes to Iowa party leaders and rectifies in full the situation.

Therefore our candidate Ron Paul, the champion of the Constitution, has advised he will not attend.

Within hours Trump [responded](#):

As I said in the past and will reiterate again, Ron Paul has a zero chance of winning either the



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nomination or the Presidency.

My poll numbers were substantially higher than any of his poll numbers, at any time, and when I decided not to run, due to the equal time provisions concerning my hit show *The Apprentice*, I was leading the Republican field....

Few people take Ron Paul seriously and many of his views and presentation make him a clown-like candidate. I am glad he and Jon Huntsman, who has inconsequential poll numbers or a chance of winning, will not be attending the debate and wasting the time of the viewers who are trying very hard to make a very important decision.

And then, Trump added:

Why is a person who has built a more than 7 billion dollar net worth, with more than 270 million dollars in cash ... not the right person to lead this country out of economic chaos or at least to moderate a debate. I would like to see how Ron Paul would fair [sic] in the world of big business.

Benton spelled out how a reconciliation might be arranged between the two camps:

If Trump wants to be taken seriously by Republicans, he needs to quit *Celebrity Apprentice* and apologize to the Iowa GOP [for canceling at the last minute and costing the party thousands of dollars]. If he gets his act together, President Paul might consider getting his advice on fixing our country's financial situation. We understand [that the] Donald has a lot of experience with bankruptcy.

This was too much for Trump, who asked his legal advisor and "[pit bull](#)," Michael D. Cohen, to respond to Benton. Cohen sports the moniker "pit bull" because, as Cohen told ABC News, "It means that if somebody does something Mr. Trump doesn't like, I do everything in my power to resolve it to Mr. Trump's benefit." He added: "If you do something wrong, I'm going to come at you, grab you by the neck and I'm not going to let you go until I'm finished."

Cohen's retort accused Paul of being "willing to lie" in order to make a point. He said, "By making such an absurd comment, Mr. Paul is either very jealous of Mr. Trump, stupid, or a combination of both. People who are worth 7 billion dollars, with little or no debt and 270 million in cash do not go bankrupt." But then Cohen added that Trump did use "the laws of the country on a few companies that he owned ... to his benefit."

This writer, in an earlier [article](#), documented that Trump has a history of stiffing his creditors on a regular basis to the tune of millions and sometimes billions of dollars. He is so skilled at the maneuver that, after four separate bankruptcies since 1991, he had the [audacity](#) to tell George Stephanopoulos on ABC News:

I've used the laws of this country to pare debt.... We'll have the company. We'll throw it into a chapter [7 bankruptcy]. We'll negotiate with the banks. We'll make a fantastic deal. You know, it's like on "The Apprentice." It's not personal. It's just business.

Paul not only sees clearly that steering a wide berth around the likes of Trump will serve his campaign well, it will also preserve his honor. [When asked](#) about the matter on CNN's State of the Union on Sunday morning, Paul said, "He probably doesn't like my position on the Federal Reserve. It may be, deep down, philosophic ... and his personality that doesn't like to be challenged."

His response has resonated [surprisingly well with others](#) in the mainstream media who are looking at his rejection as giving his campaign an unexpected shot in the arm.



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Not that he needs it. His campaign is already resonating well with the people who matter the most: the voters in Iowa who [according to a recent poll](#) rank Paul ahead of Mitt Romney and second only to Newt Gingrich.

Photo of Ron Paul: AP Images

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