



Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on December 24, 2011

## Ron Paul and the Racist Newsletters

And what was the final, terrible advice the Paul newsletter had given?

"Don't fire unless fired upon, but if they mean to have a war, let it begin here."

Of course, this is the exact language on the monument at Lexington Green where American militia men fired the "shot heard 'round the world" in 1775. Oddly enough, Kirchick seemed oblivious to the context, concluding that Paul's advice in this instance should "place Paul beyond the pale."



One might wonder: What relevance do the rhetoric and principles of the American revolution have to a neoconservative? The American War for Independence was a war against a globalist hegemon, and there's little doubt that today's neocons would have sided with the British crown in a modern replay of the conflict, right down to criticizing the terrorist insurgents for [complaining](#) against the national government "for depriving us in many cases, of the benefit of trial by jury."

For Kirchick, though, it was just another paycheck on research he'd already copied. It was a two-fer. He'd written [nearly the same article back in January 2008](#) for *The New Republic*, itself little more than a *SparkNotes*-style reverse-engineering of the actual research done by the Austin-based [Texas Monthly](#) back in 1996.

The Ron Paul newsletter controversy reemerged on the political scene just two weeks before the Iowa presidential caucuses, on the same time schedule as it had arrived during the 2008 cycle. The "news" was not new, nor was the press coverage coincidental. It was timed by neoconservative opponents of Paul's foreign policy with a view to tank his political fortunes. This time Paul stands as the Iowa frontrunner, earning 28 percent to second place Newt Gingrich at 25 percent (within the margin of error for [the most recent KCRG/Gazette/ISU poll](#)).

The controversy involves a genuine lapse in judgment by Congressman Paul, though one distorted and exaggerated by some of his establishment political opponents. Beginning in 1984 (as his first stint in Congress drew to a close) and continuing until his return to Congress in 1997, Dr. Paul started a series of newsletters and went back to his obstetrics practice. The newsletters were named *Ron Paul's Political Report*, *Ron Paul's Freedom Report*, the *Ron Paul Survival Report*, and the *Ron Paul Investment Letter*. Some were biweekly, while others were monthly. Paul also hired a half-dozen people to write the newsletters under his name, and in the process one or more of those ghostwriters slipped in a handful of overtly racist remarks, [including](#) the following statements from different newsletter editions:

I think we can safely assume that 95 percent of the black males in that city are semi-criminal or entirely criminal.

We are constantly told that it is evil to be afraid of black men, it is hardly irrational.



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Order was only restored in L.A. when it came time for the blacks to pick up their welfare checks. The newsletters also had a number of other phrases that — taken out of context — would appear racist or outside of the political mainstream. For example, the newsletters contained a [couple of critical statements about Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.](#) Dr. Paul denied writing or even reading the above lines before they were brought to his attention, claiming he had focused upon his medical practice and study of monetary issues during the time period. "They were never my words," he said in 2001, though he [acknowledged](#), "I had some moral responsibility for them."

The reemergence of the newsletters, and insistent questions about them by a CNN reporter, led to a widely reported [walk-out](#) by Rep. Paul from a CNN interview December 22. Paul supporters have reported that the phrases — which did appear in newsletters bearing Paul's name — had little connection with either the tone or substance of Paul's remarks on race — either in public and private — before, during, or since the newsletters were published. Moreover, Paul supporters have noted that he has long called Martin Luther King a political "hero" and stressed that he voted to create Martin Luther King Day as a federal holiday (while fellow GOP presidential candidate Newt Gingrich voted against the resolution) in a [1979 congressional vote](#).

The newsletter controversy has generated a wave of revulsion from establishment political sources that have long opposed just about all of Paul's limited-government political principles. *Time* magazine's Joe Klein [opined](#): "They are replete with hateful filth. They disqualify him from the presidency." (Actually, the genuinely offensive material is limited to less than a handful of remarks. That hardly qualifies as "filled.") Likewise, the neoconservative *National Review's* Rich Lowery derisively [wrote](#) December 20 that "the newsletters ... would be disqualifying for anyone else."

But the newsletter controversy only demonstrates that Paul exercised poor management over employees' statements in a relatively minor part of his career (he focused upon his medical practice during this time period), a managerial mistake he hasn't repeated in the 15 years since he returned to Congress. It's a genuine negative for Paul, but it's a small negative. No one in Washington is willing to call Paul a racist, and few have questioned his honesty on the newsletter issue (though *Time's* Klein did).

The only real issue to be determined is whether the issue has political legs. The political establishment is pining for a new set of revelations, or a damning new video, but have been left empty-handed thus far. This hasn't stopped establishment people from trying. *USA Today* ran with a [headline](#) alleging Paul "story changes" on the issue since 1996, but all the story revealed is that Paul had said in 2001 that he didn't admit in 1996 that he hadn't written the newsletters on the advice of campaign staffers.

The *Weekly Standard's* blog promoted a [post](#) of "a video [that] has emerged of Paul promoting the newsletters," a headline that implied Paul was more involved in the day-to-day business of the newsletters than he had claimed. But the transcript of the video demonstrated that Paul had little interest in the kind of social and racial issues surrounding the offensive remarks. In fact, [it reinforced the idea Paul has advanced since 2001](#), that he had focused upon monetary policy when he wasn't delivering babies or caring for his five children:

It covered a lot about what was going on in Washington, and financial events, and especially some of the monetary events. Since I had been especially interested in monetary policy, had been on the banking committee, and still very interested in, in that subject, that this newsletter dealt with it. This had to do with the value of the dollar, the pros and cons of the gold standard, and of course



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the disadvantages of all the high taxes and spending that our government seems to continue to do.

The leftist *Huffington Post* promoted [another video](#), but again, Ron Paul only talks about money issues in that video as well.

It remains to be seen, but the Paul newsletter scandal may have broken at a good time for Paul's presidential campaign. It broke during Christmas week, when voters were otherwise occupied, and it seems to be a political one-off. Nothing new has been discovered since the 1996 *Texas Monthly* stories, and it would take just the kind of "story changes" *USA Today* promised but didn't deliver in order to become a truly dangerous scandal for Rep. Paul. If the issue is rehashed after the holidays without any real news, then the bias of the liberal media will be all the more apparent to voters.

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