



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on January 5, 2012

The Ron Paul Conundrum: Progressives Face a Crucial Decision

Over 26,000 Republicans participating in that party's Iowa Caucus voted for Ron Paul. According to data breaking down entrance polls conducted by Edison Research, Ron Paul won 43 percent of independents who voted in Tuesday's caucus.

Conversely, however, he garnered only 14 percent of those describing themselves as "Republicans." This seems a substantial obstacle to the Texas Congressman's eventual nomination as he is running as a Republican.

A [story posted on ronpaul2012.com](#) insisted that despite the third-place finish, Ron Paul was "the candidate for real change" and the only alternative to the Establishment's man — Mitt Romney.



There is no doubt that Ron Paul has little in common with winner-by-a-nose, Mitt Romney. The former Governor of Massachusetts has a history of promoting the individual mandate concept with regard to state-run health care and of being hawkish on the use of American military forces in [Iran](#), [Syria](#), and [Libya](#). All of these policies are anathema to the concept of limited government espoused by Paul and held so dear by his legions of constitutionalist supporters.

The unique coalition of Americans from across the political spectrum has some calling Paul's candidacy the source of "political confusion." As the story goes, many who side with Dr. Paul on the non-interventionist argument can't bring themselves to pull the lever for him when push comes to shove.

On many core issues, those typically labeled "liberals" actually line up behind Paul: ending war, cutting off corporate welfare, and challenging the grip of elites on the monetary supply (40 percent of those identifying themselves as "moderates" or "liberals" voted for Paul in Iowa). Of course, many of these people would be loathe to come out and endorse Paul for President as they fear the repercussions from those sitting on the same pew in the church of progressivism.

No matter how the [mainstream media bend over backwards to paint Paul as irrelevant](#) and promote Mitt Romney as the only alternative to Barack Obama, Ron Paul's ability to raise money and attract endorsements from those of varied political hues belies that hypothesis.

As a [recent Salon.com article](#) declared:

Whatever else one wants to say, it is indisputably true that Ron Paul is the only political figure with any sort of a national platform — certainly the only major presidential candidate in either party — who advocates policy views on issues that liberals and progressives have long flamboyantly claimed are both compelling and crucial.



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There is more than a bit of a “to be or not to be” sentiment among those occupying the left wing of the American political spectrum when it comes to openly promoting Paul for President.

Barack Obama is their man, but he has consistently disappointed them on so many key, definitive decisions: the closing of the Guantanamo Bay prison and the quick end to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, for starters. The indictment against the President is set forth ably in the Salon piece:

He has slaughtered civilians — Muslim children by the dozens — not once or twice, but continuously in numerous nations with drones, cluster bombs and other forms of attack. He has sought to overturn a global ban on cluster bombs. He has institutionalized the power of Presidents — in secret and with no checks — to target American citizens for assassination-by-CIA, far from any battlefield. He has waged an unprecedented war against whistleblowers, the protection of which was once a liberal shibboleth. He rendered permanently irrelevant the War Powers Resolution, a crown jewel in the list of post-Vietnam liberal accomplishments, and thus enshrined the power of Presidents to wage war even in the face of a Congressional vote against it. His obsession with secrecy is so extreme that it has become darkly laughable in its manifestations, and he even worked to amend the Freedom of Information Act (another crown jewel of liberal legislative successes) when compliance became inconvenient.

He has entrenched for a generation the once-reviled, once-radical Bush/Cheney Terrorism powers of indefinite detention, military commissions, and the state secret privilege as a weapon to immunize political leaders from the rule of law. He has shielded Bush era criminals from every last form of accountability. He has vigorously prosecuted the cruel and supremely racist War on Drugs, including those parts he vowed during the campaign to relinquish — a war which devastates minority communities and encages and converts into felons huge numbers of minority youth for no good reason. He has empowered thieving bankers through the Wall Street bailout, Fed secrecy, efforts to shield mortgage defrauders from prosecution, and the appointment of an endless roster of former Goldman, Sachs executives and lobbyists. He’s brought the nation to a full-on Cold War and a covert hot war with Iran, on the brink of far greater hostilities. He has made the U.S. as subservient as ever to the destructive agenda of the right-wing Israeli government. His support for some of the Arab world’s most repressive regimes is as strong as ever.

Despite the weight of the evidence against the conformity of Barack Obama with their basic principles, many influential liberals run for cover when someone points out the fact that a Republican candidate — Ron Paul — seems to hew more faithfully and more consistently to their articles of faith than does the current occupant of the White House.

Is President Obama’s use of unmanned drones to target and assassinate “enemies of the state” consistent with the notion of liberalism? Is the recent [signing by the President](#) of a law granting him absolute power to pursue and detain indefinitely Americans suspected of committing or conspiring to commit acts threatening to the homeland something of which those who voted for him in 2008 will point to with pride?

Ron Paul is faithful to the Constitution and no one could rationally argue that if he had been elected in 2008 he would have behaved in like manner to Barack Obama. True to his principles, President Ron Paul would shutter Guantanamo, require strict adherence to the enumerated powers of the presidency (no fiats masquerading as signing statements), and he would steadfastly refuse to ratify any act of Congress passed in contravention of our founding charter.



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Why, then, are there those who will not campaign for Ron Paul knowing as they surely do that he most closely mirrors their own view of foreign and domestic affairs?

As the new teacher explains to his students in the fine film "History Boys," while taking them on a tour of monuments erected to the memory of fallen soldiers, "The purpose of these statues isn't 'lest we forget,' it's 'lest we remember.'"

Or, as the author of the Salon piece explains it:

Progressives like to think of themselves as the faction that stands for peace, opposes wars, believes in due process and civil liberties, distrusts the military-industrial complex, supports candidates who are devoted to individual rights, transparency and economic equality. All of these facts... negate that desired self-perception. These facts demonstrate that the leader progressives have empowered and will empower again has worked in direct opposition to those values and engaged in conduct that is nothing short of horrific. So there is an eagerness to avoid hearing about them, to pretend they don't exist. And there's a corresponding hostility toward those who point them out, who insist that they not be ignored.

If Ron Paul is to be judged by views expressed in newsletters published by him twenty years ago, fairness demands that his unblemished record of boldly and unapologetically fighting for life and liberty be placed in the counterbalance.



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