

## Ron Paul Speech at Fundraiser in Austin May 19th

Thank you. [applause] Thank you very much. [applause] Thank you. Thank you very much. This is a bit overwhelming, believe me. [applause]. You know, a few months ago, matter of fact, somebody this evening told me that last summer, he suggested I do this, and I was very, very reluctant, and I hinted in no way that I was planning to do it, nor did I really want to do it. And a few months after that, then others came to me, and they kept talking about it. The truth is I had been very, very reluctant, and I... it wasn't that I was reluctant about our message, because I think our message is powerful. [applause] But I really wasn't sure whether I was the right person to do it, and eventually I said, "Yes, I will, we'll see, and we'll find out if there's anybody out there."

I think of the people who believe in true freedom the way I think of the Remnant. And, evidently, you know, they say the Remnant was out there, and nobody could count the, and they didn't know where they were, and you can't find them, but the Remnant will find you, it will find us. So it looks to me like the Remnant is large and growing. [applause]

You know, isn't it strange, let's for a minute assume, and it shouldn't be too great of an assumption, that I defend the Constitution more so than the rest of the pack. [applause] But isn't it interesting, also, that the establishment figures the one who most defends the Constitution has to be eliminated from the debate. What's going on in this country? [crowd boos]

You know, I'm not going to ask, but I do know that there are a few people in here who are not traditional Republicans. Some call themselves Independent, some call themselves Libertarian, some call themselves, even Democrats, there may be some Democrats in here. [applause] Now, the art of politics is to bring people together, it's not to be divisive. When you're running for an office, if you're overly pure in the sense of, you have to agree A B C D... You see, you have to bring coalitions together, there's no doubt about it.

And there are several groups of people that make up an electorate that I think are important this time. I think at the top of the list of the people who are looking for leadership in this country today are dealing with the complications from a very, very flawed foreign policy. [applause] And, if we look at what happened in the election last year, I think the message was loud and strong, that they're sick and tired of the consequences of the foreign policy that we have, and they're looking for something new and different.

And, quite frankly, although the Democrats have politically benefited from that disenchantment with the Republican leadership on foreign policy, quite frankly, I don't see anybody on the Democratic side that really has answered the call to come around and have a different foreign policy because it looks to me like it's more of the same thing. [applause]

I think that issue brings a lot of people together. All the various political factors will come together. And right now, it looks like probably about 70% of the country is now looking for a different policy especially in the Middle East, and re-adjust that. On economic policy, if you ask almost 100% of Americans whether they believe in the free enterprise system, most Americans believe in the free enterprise system. Too often, though, what happens is, "yes, I believe in free enterprise for everybody else, but I like special privileges for myself." So, to really believe in free enterprise, you have to believe in market competition for everybody, and nobody gets subsidies. [applause]

A lot of times they think subsidies and welfare goes to poor people. Now there's some welfare that goes to poor people, but sometimes I think they're crumbs. The real big welfare in the system that we have goes to the military-industrial complex and the big banks, that's where it goes. [applause] But the market economy should bring the people together, especially when it's realized that the system that we have today is ripping off the middle class and the poor. They're the ones who suffer from the inflation and the regulations and all the government interference. So that, to me, is an issue that brings people together.

One person once told me, not too long ago, I think it was said on television, they said, "Well, you ought to run as a Democrat." And I said, "Well, why should I run as a Democrat, I'm the most conservative

member of the Congress." [applause] So, they get twisted up. They don't know how to label those of us who believe in liberty. Because liberty is really pervasive. It's beneficial to everybody, it's not beneficial to special groups. So, if you can vote for, you know, less money... Now there are some very well-known liberal individuals in this country who are coming out and supporting our campaign. Which is very interesting, you may say, well liberals don't like, they like big spending and all. But why would they be coming out and endorsing our campaign now? Quite frankly, because of foreign policy, and attacking special interests for the rich, and the benefits of... this is a tremendously powerful message.

And there's another element that should bring people together. And this is the concept of personal, individual liberty. [applause] Personal liberty is not a special interest. It's the only special interest that really counts. See, I don't like to think of rights as being group rights. Not to offend anybody, but I don't see things like "women's rights" and "minority rights" and all this, I just don't think that's plausible. Rights are given to individuals. I personally happen to believe they come from our creator. [applause]

Which means, then, that your life is your own, and you have your own responsibility. I mean, you have your life is your own, and you have your own responsibility. I mean, you have responsibility of what's going to happen for eternity's sake, so you ought to have responsibility for what you're going to do here on Earth as well.

So personal liberty means tolerance as well, because what your neighbor might do, might be different than what you do. And you might not like what they do. But if your neighbor or your friends do things that you don't approve of, but they don't affect you, they don't hurt you, if they don't use force on you, they should be permitted to do this. [applause] Your job is to take responsibility, and our job is to take responsibility for ourselves to improve our well-being and to improve and work with excellence, and that's what freedom is all about.

But which group of people should this bring together? I say, "I don't want to recognize your personal life." And you say, "What does that mean," I don't want to tell you what you can eat, smoke, and drink, and whatever you want to do? [applause] Now the question is, is this going to offend the conservative Christian Right? It should not, and it's something that I've worked on for many many years in the Congressional district, is to believe in individual liberty, not put on sanctions and not pretend I can regulate your personal, moral life... and have that appeal to the Christian Right. I happen to believe all life is sacred, so therefore I don't believe that small little fetuses can be dropped away without concern about it. [applause] But this idea of personal liberty which might allow individuals to do things that others might not approve of is also exactly the liberty that we need to practice our religion and keep the government off our backs. [applause]

Back to concern about the idea of running for the presidency. Today, the conventional wisdom is that we have to have a President to "run things" [crowd boos]. What I'd like to be is a president that doesn't even have a goal of running your life, running the economy, or running the world. [load applause] I want to use all my strength and my conviction and my effort to restrain anybody who uses force illegally, that people not be allowed to try to run other people's lives. And that will take a lot of doing, because a lot of people have become dependent on the government.

Another issue that I deal with &mdash; and now this is the real-world politics, because we might in a group like this agree, you know, "We don't need the welfare, we don't need this, leave us alone, and it would all be better," and quite frankly I think it would be &mdash; but we live in the real world, where we have taught generations after generations to be totally dependent on the government. So realistically, you can't just shut off every government health program and whatever for the elderly.

But, there's a very practical answer for this. Overseas, now, to run the American Empire, if you add up the DOD budget, if you add up the State Department budget, if you add up what it would cost to bring the military, to take care of the veterans, and on and on, do you know that it is nearing trillion dollars a year to operate overseas, while ignoring our borders? [crowd boos]

So why not we do this? If it's at one trillion dollars, lets say that we could have a true national defense for, say, 700 billion dollars, I mean, save 700, spend 300 on defense, save 700, put a lot of that to the deficit, bring it home, deal with our borders, and make sure that the people that are very dependent, take care of them until we can wean them off. [applause]

I believe that almost every single problem that we're facing today has come about because we haven't been a stickler for the rule of law. We haven't followed the Constitution, and that's where we ought to begin. And the fact that the problems have been created by the lack of respect for the Constitution, the answers can be found there. They can be found there on foreign policy, on economic policy, property rights, personal liberties, all these things, monetary policy. Can you imagine how great a nation we'd have, if we didn't have the Federal Reserve system printing all this money? [applause]

And, it goes without saying that when we have the proper sized government, and governments function in the proper manner, we certainly wouldn't need the IRS or the 16th Amendment. [applause] Government has a role to play, but it should be minimal. The sole purpose of political activity, as far as I'm concerned, should be protection of individual liberty. [applause]

I think what's happened in this country is we've lost respect for the rule of law, that we've lost respect and confidence in how liberty works. We're always frightened that if the government doesn't provide this safety net, there's gonna be more poverty, no housing, and all the things that happened over the last several decades. But this is not necessary. It is so unnecessary. Freedom works! We've lost that confidence where we know and understand that it will work. But there is one admonition that John Adams gave, and he said, "For freedom really to work, you have to have a moral society."

So, we can come down very hard on our government, and I do -- all 3 branches of the government -- but quite frankly, even our candidacy here, if we're successful, it still requires an endorsement from the people. And that's where I have been reluctant. I did not know where the numbers would be. I did not know whether the money would be there. I did not understand the Internet, but I have been educated in the last few weeks. [applause]

And we do know that truth wins out in the end, but I didn't know that there we so many so ready to receive the truth about what's going on. But it truly gives me hope, and that's what we need.

We have lived, and been blessed to live, in a country that has been really great. We are fortunate that we had the founders that we did, that understood what personal liberty was all about. They even understood what habeas corpus meant. [applause] And unfortunately, we moved into this era where they're endorsing torture and getting rid of habeas corpus, warrantless searches, national ID cards, and I think the American people are catching on. You know, the national ID card was voted on overwhelmingly, but now, do you know &mdash; I bet you do &mdash; that a lot of states are now condemning it and won't participate, they're waking up, people are waking up. [applause]

You know, I don't know how this'll end. That is the truth. I could come up here and say, "I absolutely know how it's gonna turn out." I don't know, you don't know, but I do know that the message is good. The message of liberty is good. We live in a great country. We need to fall back on the traditions of our Constitution, and the traditions of America. We will do well. But I am quite confident now that the numbers are a lot larger than I ever believed. [applause] I think we're moving in the right direction. [applause]

Although very, very reluctant at the beginning, and you know, in some ways, I think that not being overly eager to be President is not necessarily bad, because I think, too often, they're overly eager and they shouldn't be there. But all I can tell you is it's moving faster and more furiously than I ever dreamed. I do promise that I will continue to deliver the message. I will continue to be as consistent as possible, and I will continue to stay in there as long as our numbers keep growing. Thank you very much.