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Why Ron Paul's Answer Terrifies Them

by Jacob G. Hornberger

In one short answer to a moderator's question in the South Carolina debate in which Republican presidential candidate Ron Paul suggested that U.S. foreign policy motivated the 9/11 terrorists, Paul produced an earthquake that is shaking the Republican establishment.

The chairman of the Michigan Republican Party proposed banning Paul from future debates. Besieged by adverse public reaction, however, he quickly backed down.

FoxNews commentator John Gibson and columnist Michelle Malkin somehow reached the warped conclusion that Paul was suggesting that U.S. officials had committed the 9/11 attacks. After bloggers pointed out the inherent contradiction between that claim and Paul's point that foreign terrorists motivated by U.S. foreign policy had committed the attacks, Malkin quickly issued a retraction.

Other members of the Republican establishment suggested that Paul was "blaming America" for the 9/11 attacks. That's because they think that the federal government *is* America. In actuality, as our American ancestors understood, the federal government and the country are composed of two separate and distinct groups of people — those within the federal government and those within the private sector, a point reflected in the Bill of Rights, which expressly protects the country from the federal government.

What's going on here? Why the enormous, almost panicky, overreaction to what is a rather simple point about U.S. foreign policy? Why the attempts to suppress, distort, and misrepresent? What are they so scared of?

The answer is very simple: The Republican establishment knows that if the American people conclude that Ron Paul is right, the jig is up with respect to the big-government, pro-empire, interventionist foreign policy that Republicans (and many Democrats) have supported for many years.

Paul's point is a straightforward one: U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East generated the anger that motivated the 9/11 terrorists. If he had had more time, Paul undoubtedly would have pointed out the U.S. policies in the Middle East that made people so angry: (1) the U.S.

government's [ardent support of Saddam Hussein](#) and the [furnishing of biological and chemical weapons](#) of mass destruction to him; (2) the more than 10 years of [brutal sanctions](#) against Iraq, which contributed to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi children; (3) UN Ambassador Madeleine Albright's infamous statement to *Sixty Minutes* that the deaths of half a million Iraqi children from the sanctions had been "[worth it](#)"; (4) the stationing of U.S. troops on Islamic holy lands, knowing the adverse impact such action would have on Muslims; (5) the "no-fly zones," which were never authorized by either the UN or the U.S. Congress and which killed still more Iraqis, [including 13-year-old Omran Harbi Jawair](#), whose head was shot off by a U.S. missile while he was tending his sheep in 2000; (6) and the long-time, unconditional financial and military aid provided the Israeli government.

Thus, by invading Iraq the U.S. government was simply engaging in the same course of interventionist conduct that had produced prior acts of terrorism against the United States (not only the 9/11 attacks but the 1993 attack on the World Trade Center, the 1998 terrorist attacks on U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, and the 2000 terrorist attack on the USS *Cole*). As Paul stated in the debate and as [U.S. intelligence agencies now confirm](#), the 2003 invasion of Iraq, which has killed and maimed countless more Iraqis, has been a dream-come-true for Osama bin Laden's recruiters.

The 9/11 terrorist attacks also generated the "war on terror," which in turn has given us ever-increasing budgets for the military-industrial complex, out-of-control federal spending that debauches the currency, omnipotent power to the CIA, an endless stream of color-coded fear-mongering, warrantless monitoring of telephone calls and emails, torture, kidnapping and rendition, secret overseas prison camps, indefinite detention, cancellation of habeas corpus, military tribunals, "enemy combatants," and ever-increasing infringements on civil liberty.

If the U.S. government's foreign policy of interventionism is, in fact, the root cause of terrorism against the United States, as Congressman Paul contends, there is an obvious solution to the problem: End the U.S. government's role as international policeman, invader, intervener, interloper, provider, and sanctioner. Foreign terrorism against Americans would disappear along with the need for a "war on terror." Civil liberties that were suspended could be restored. A sense of balance and harmony could return to our lives.

Ending interventionism, terrorism, and the "war on terror" would also mean that the era of big government in foreign affairs could be brought to an end. No wonder the Republican establishment is so terrified of Ron Paul's foreign-policy message.

Mr. Hornberger is founder and president of The Future of Freedom Foundation. He, along with Ron Paul, FoxNews Senior Judicial Analyst Andrew Napolitano, and 21 other speakers will be speaking at FFF's June 1-4 conference "Restoring the Republic: Foreign Policy and Civil Liberties" in Reston, Virginia (www.fff.org/conference2007/index.htm).

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