



Ron Paul Answers Your Questions

Guest: Ron Paul

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Ron Paul is a former 12-term congressman from Texas.

WOODS: I have solicited some questions from the audience as I did last time, and I've got some juicy ones for you. The first one, of course, has to do with current events. In one respect, I think you've been completely vindicated in the Iraq situation, warning of what was going to happen. It would break up into three places, which isn't inherently so bad, but if you want stability, which is what the neocons said they wanted, that might not be the path to do it. And you would unleash the crazies, which indeed seems to have happened.

On the other hand, I am seeing even on your Facebook page, even people on the Ron Paul Institute Facebook page, saying yeah, Ron may have been right in the past about nonintervention, but right now these people are just so god-awful, we've got to intervene. We've just got to. You can't be an ideologue about this. Now is the time for intervention. What's been your response to that?

PAUL: Well, if it was a good idea to stay out there and nothing went well, it's a good idea to leave, so I stick to the basic principle of non-intervention that we should leave, and that things won't necessarily get worse because of that because our presence has always made things that much worse by being there. So I think the moral argument remains, the constitutional argument remains. We don't have the constitutional authority. There's no declaration of war, and we don't have a practical argument on our side, but we have an emotional argument because it's terrible what we're seeing. But my suggestion is, why are we so selective? There's a few people suffering in Gaza. There's a few people needing some help in Ukraine. There's a humanitarian need there, but we're inhibiting that, and we actually indirectly participate in what's going on in Gaza. So it's very selective. So I think the humanitarian argument is just a front for other policy. I think our government's probably more interested and more concerned about not having another Benghazi and having our embassy there overrun or our State Department. And also, we never left completely. We always had troops there. And I believe there was always a plan to go back in if necessary. So this is—I think it's sort of a defensive mechanism right now, and I think what drives them probably is oil as much as anything and the

neocon philosophy of, yeah, we can still remake the Middle East. They never give up, and they are still at it. So I think the moral argument—they want to grab the moral high ground and say we have to go in, but if our policy has contributed to this, I think that it might be a good idea just to leave, as we should.

WOODS: What about the moral argument that some quasi noninterventionists have advanced, which is that the neocons, we all admit, did this, they are responsible for this, there was no chance of the Islamic state having any victories pre-2003, absolutely none; they did it. That means we have a moral responsibility to fix what our government broke.

PAUL: We do in some ways have a moral responsibility, but not you and I, who didn't commit it. Our government officials did. So I think if they feel strongly about that, I would suggest that they volunteer and offer their services to the Red Cross. I would like to see John McCain and Bill Kristol drive the trucks all through there and deliver the food and do whatever is necessary, because they should make amends for making these serious mistakes and helping to create this problem. Because it's been our policies that provided these weapons. I don't know why they don't see this. And all we want to do is more of that? We are sending more weapons in? What makes them think that it's going to be used for good purposes? And of course, who knows, there may be some profits made in this. There may be some war profiteers who sort of liked this idea of perpetual need for weapons, and perpetual profits—no big wars, no world wars; we'll just have perpetual war and always seeking perpetual peace on their terms. Yeah, they want stability, but it's the kind so stability that they want and dictate as long as they are in charge. If you can stabilize Iran with a shah and a dictator that we install, that's different, but if it happens to be one that are sort of provoked by our presence there, they are not so much for stability there because if they were for stability, Saddam Hussein actually treated Christians a lot better and had a lot more stable organization and really was a bulwark against these radicals. There were no al Qaeda in Iraq, and yet, of course, we went to war because we were told there'd be weapons of mass destruction and al Qaeda there and obviously not. So I think the sooner the American people wake up, and I believe they are, to not swallowing the whole lie—but there's no doubt about it: the propagandists are pretty smart, and they know how to convert people and change their beliefs. They're doing that right now, just as they did leading up, even way back in 1990, '91 to the first Persian Gulf War. So it's the same old story, but hopefully the side that's seeking the real truth of this wins out in the end, but it's a tough battle because emotionalism is the tool that they use rather effectively.

WOODS: All right, let's switch gears. Suppose on a scale of 1 to 10, with one being not important at all and 10 being indispensably important, you had to rank the role of politics in advancing liberty. Where would you put that on that scale?

PAUL: Well, pretty low down. It's a measurement. It's a measurement [inaudible]. I think the only real thing that counts is what the leadership in the intellectual community is advocating. So for 100 years or so they've advocated authoritarianism, big government, big banks, central banking, and they won the day. They took over the universities, all the movie industry, and all

the TVs and radios, and government officials, and that is what has to change. But politics are important because it's a reflection of what's going on, and that's where I think we're starting to see things. I would hope, if you have the right kind of people in Washington, and we have several, and they can participate in changing people's minds, but most of the time the politicians I knew in the political system were puppets. They just follow whatever the community, whatever the intellectual community is insisting on and the prevailing attitude that's accepted by the people. I think you can even see that in the Supreme Court. You know, Supreme Courts are not the judges of the Old Testament making some decent judges and judgments. They go with what the people are thinking and saying. So the political atmosphere I put them down pretty low. I think this subject sort of comes up with these "are we living in a libertarian age," you know? Is this the libertarian moment? And the only thing they look at is the politics of it.

WOODS: Right.

PAUL: And the politics is merely of a reflection of it. I think there are great strides with this libertarian movement, and that's quite a bit different than looking to the politicians.

WOODS: I agree with you that politics follows the ideas rather than the other way around, and I also agree with you that you can't get rid of politics entirely as an avenue. Because when I think about American history, I think about Andrew Jackson getting rid of the Second Bank of the United States—I don't see how you would have done that in the absence of politics, in the absence of electing Andrew Jackson and having him do that. I don't see how the people could have just done that on their own. Now on the other hand, if we hadn't had the government, we wouldn't have had a Second Bank to start with. So half the time the issue is trying to undo the first problem that they did in the first place.

I'd like you tell people about this new venture of yours, the expansion of the Ron Paul Channel into voicesofliberty.com. Can you tell people what Voices of Liberty is all about?

PAUL: Well, that's exactly what it is: an expansion. When I was approached as I was leaving Congress to set up the Ron Paul Channel, I was excited about that, and we've done that for more than a year and a half, and we've had a lot of great guests on there, and you've been on, and it's going very well, and we're reaching a lot of people, but we're not really reaching what we have to do, and that's why I wanted to expand it, and you have joined us. You have your segment on there. You can post. I just think it's still in the early stages, but I think the chances of this working are very good. Jeff Deist with the Mises Institute will be participating, and Paul-Martin [Foss], who knows the monetary issue, and of course Daniel McAdams, great on foreign policy, and others will be joining us, and we're very excited about this. So it won't be just me talking all the time. I hope they still are interested, but I think there's a lot of like-minded people, and of course, even in the ranks of people who declare themselves libertarians there's different flavors. Most people know pretty much what my flavor is, and we understand this. So I think in a world where ideas can be competitive, and we can set some standards for

nonintervention and be as consistent as possible, I think we can learn from each other. But of course, we want a lot of listeners to come to the channel through the Voices of Liberty to find these answers and find a lot of discussions. I think technology is actually offering a lot. So we're going to be improving that constantly, and the interaction is going to improve as well with our viewers.

WOODS: I think voicesofliberty.com is a very important contribution that you're making. You mentioned Paul-Martin and Daniel. On my show a couple of weeks ago I had World War I week—a week's worth of programs on World War I and the legacy because we're 100 years on. And then this week with you on, and I had Daniel McAdams of the Ron Paul Institute, who did foreign policy work for you in your office, and then I had Paul-Martin Foss, who did monetary policy work for you—he's got his own institute now—then I had Steve Bierfeldt, who worked for you in Nevada, and then I've got Norm Singleton coming on on Friday. It's Ron Paul week on the show, I'm happy to say, and so I think that's one of your legacies: you've now launched this new generation of people who are moving your message forward, who worked with you personally, so this won't just fizzle out. It has legs now.

PAUL: The one thing that I sort of lamented about my time in Washington was I had a lot of employees and a lot of associations, and a lot of interns, but I never kept a record. I know there's a lot of them, they'd be there six months or a year, a couple of years, and they have gone off and written books, and have done things, but that's just a personal thing. It's so unnecessary, because what we want to do is plant seeds, and they spread, and you never do know where these messages go, and who knows what it is, so you couldn't keep really track of what they've done, but I imagine there are a lot of people out there spreading our message.

WOODS: Well, I know that's not what matters. You're right that the ideas are what matters. But still I want to see that diagram of the Ron Paul empire. I want to see it. All right, so let's go—

PAUL: Just don't call it—don't call it an empire.

WOODS: (laughs) Yeah, I know, as soon as I said that, I knew that was a mistake. All right, okay, so but I do want to ask you this. I am sure of course as a physician you've thought an awful lot about this. There are a lot of physicians who say that the government has so interfered with the doctor-patient relationship, and there is so much bureaucracy now, that if they hadn't already been in the field, they are not sure they would have entered medicine if they knew it was going to be like this. If you could imagine yourself a young man deciding whether or not to go to medical school in 2014, would your decision have been any different?

PAUL: Probably not. I think I still would have gone realizing they're—back then I was even aware of the problems, but they kept moving along. No, I probably would have. We have five children and three are MDs, and I never discouraged them at all, but I never pushed them either. But I never said medicine is going to be bad. I think if you are well motivated, you should have a caring soul of other people when they are ill where you might be able to help them. Governments get in your way, but it isn't total. As a matter of fact, there's always going to be a

need for so-called private medical care, even under the worst of circumstances. So I think you have to have a desire, an understanding, and liking for science. I think you have to have an interest in trying to help people who are sick. And I think in those cases I would do it. But I've said in the past that one of the reasons that it sort of got my interest about doctors had to do with, believe it or not, with foreign policy, and that would still exist because that was—I remember World War II and obviously Korea, and I remember so many people that went off and didn't come back. There were war movies that I hated because there was a lot of killing and shooting, and it was so unappealing that I said, you know what? I can't do that. I am not—I will probably be drafted, and I will probably be asked to carry a gun, and they can't make me do it if I am a doctor. And that sort of sealed it. That's what I needed to do. And lo and behold I was drafted as a physician during the Cuban crisis. So I definitely would do it, and it depends on the individual, but the other answer to this, Tom, is: where do you go? Where do you go to avoid the government? What do you have to do? Do you have to join the government to run your business? And that's essentially what you have to do. You have to capitulate. So one way or the other, so if you look at some of the regulations on business people, it's pretty onerous. So unfortunately it's the principle of intervention by government that is the problem, and I think that even as a physician, that gives you a little more opportunity to be able to participate in trying to change the whole system.

WOODS: You have a lot of admirers out there who are interested in politics. And yet you have other admirers who the last thing in the world they want to do is be involved in politics. Do you have any specific suggestions? I know that everybody should do what makes them happy, but is there anything that you have seen, especially since you have left Congress, that's non-political, doesn't involve electing anybody to office, but that really seems to be helping to change ideas? What sorts of things can these kids do that don't necessarily involve electing people to office?

PAUL: Well, I think the most important thing, and I repeat this so often. All of us, especially young people, who become interested—there has to be a lot of self-education. And it's pretty easy today to find the education and the material that you need. In the 1950s that was not the case, and that's why I always praise Leonard Read for having made so much available to me. So I would think self-education, and then be creative. Everybody has different talents. I would hope that what I did in medicine was worthwhile, and I was still able to do that with studying and trying to spread ideas on economics. But it's what people's desires are, and there's so many opportunities. You write a lot of books, and you do a lot of other things, so you take and you use your talents as well, and people have to use their talents. Some people love politics.

As a matter of fact, there are more that I have been associated that likes politics than pure education because I have found out that over the years it's easier to get people excited about a race and send money for political reasons than it is, okay, I want to send—would you send me some money because I'd like to go and travel to California and talk to a university group? If I were doing it for politics, that would be different, but just pure education is a little more difficult. So there is so much out there, and they are so creative. I meet people continuously

who start their own web pages, and they have their own organization, and they have ways of spreading these ideas. And how many people now in the libertarian movement are talented when it comes to making movies and different things like this. I think there's a world of opportunities out there, and I think the libertarian movement is making good use of it, and I think that's one of the biggest reasons I lean toward a lot of optimism. But the other reason I'm an optimist is the evidence is clear: they've messed up, and history shows it. It isn't just the last 100 years, but it's thousands of years of these experiments with big government. And I like it—the fact now that big governments around the world are shrinking in effectiveness. Just look at the way we're shrinking in effectiveness. I hope that continues to happen and that we have smaller units of government. That's why I would like to see two Ukraines, and three Iraqs, and that's the movement I would like to see.

WOODS: Ron I know we're just about out of time, but what kind of host would I be if I weren't fishing for a scoop? Is there any project you're working on? Any new books—obviously you don't have to tell us anything you don't want to tell us or reveal—that you can reveal for the first time here on the Tom Woods Show.

PAUL: Well, I don't have anything brand new because it's been leaked out a little bit, but I always hesitate to say it because I never like to say I have this thing ready, and it's going to be out in two months, and then what if it isn't ready? I don't write as fast as you do. If you say you're going to have something ready in a month, you will. So I am pretty slow and tedious, but I've working for a while on a lot of what we've just been talking about, but mainly oriented toward the war issue—why I am so strongly antiwar.

WOODS: Wow!

PAUL: Talking about—and why I remember World War II. For instance, there was a family, and they had nine kids. The oldest was a son. And he didn't come back. All deaths are terrible, but that had to be a horrible thing. The schoolteacher that didn't come back. I remember one statement that I use in my speeches but will be in the book is that my family was German, of German extraction, and I remember we were taught, and I was 10 when the war was over—to pray for our cousins and our relatives in Germany that they could survive the war. But we had two cousins that were in the war—bombing them, and they got captured, and they were German prisoners. So here we are. We have these—one feeling bomb them, and we're praying that we don't get killed. And I was disturbed by this, and my grandmother tried to reassure me. She was very close to the German community. She says the people don't want the war. It's the governments that want the war. And I thought, well, as the days and the years went on, I got to thinking that is actually right. People get talked into it, and I am going to work hard to try to talk people out of these wars.