

A Letter from Ben Novak, Founder of Americans in Europe for Ron Paul, to Paulites Everywhere

Dear Paulites:

For some time I have been pondering two questions: First, why is Ron Paul working so hard to collect delegates to the Republican convention when John McCain already has it all sewed up? Second, if Paul doesn't have a chance at the nomination, why does he look so happy and confident? Then it occurred to me: perhaps he has a strategy to win it after all. So, I thought about it a long time, and realized that he could indeed win it. So I decided to buck up your spirits by telling you how he is going to do it.

How Ron Paul Is Going to Win

A. The Strategic Foundation

Much despair seems to have come over Ron Paul supporters because of the disappointing results of the primaries. But I suggest that this despair results from a mis-estimation of both the character and genius of our candidate. For, Ron Paul intends to win this campaign, and has brilliantly planned every move in it to arrive at this point: victory is only one short step away. All it requires is that the delegates to the Republican convention consider the dilemma facing their party as the September convention approaches.

Their thinking will begin with the polls, which show John McCain's support growing weaker day by day. Although McCain has the advantage of being the presumptive Republican candidate while the Democratic candidates are still tearing each other apart, both Clinton's and Obama's numbers have begun to rise above McCain's. If this continues through the summer, delegates will begin to consider the following five reasons why:

First, McCain's position on the war is gradually sinking in. Two-thirds of the voters oppose the war and want to get out. McCain not only wants to continue it, but to expand it into Iran, and not only expand it, but to have it go on endlessly. McCain has joked in public about changing the words of a popular hit song by the Beach Boys from "Bar Bar Bar Barbara Ann" to "bomb bomb bomb bomb Iran,"¹ and speaks with approval of keeping American troops in Iraq for not only "a hundred years," but "a thousand years" and even speaks of "a million years."²

¹ To see a clip of the first speech in which McCain jokes about this song, see You Tube "*John McCain Thinks War is a Joke*" at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hAzBxFai01I&feature=related>; and for a second speech in which McCain sings the same song, see You Tube, "*McCain laughs, sings bomb Iran*" at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9rNqxn0ynO0&feature=related>. To hear the tune of the song with McCain's spin, and how the Democrats and media will see You Tube *John McCain Thinks War is A Joke - "Bomb Bomb Bomb Iran"* at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=67ANtTZpCmE&feature=related>.

² To watch McCain speaking of staying in Iraq for a hundred years, see You Tube: *McCain: 100 years in Iraq "would be fine with me"* at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VFknKVjuyNk&feature=related>; and then of speaking on ABC News of "a thousand" and even "a million years," see You Tube: *Breaking: McCain Ups the Ante to One Million* at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eivkAjyN_tQ&feature=user.

Delegates will soon begin to think about what this means for the fall campaign. As soon as they do, however, nightmares may replace their dreams of victory. They will have visions of Democrats playing the tape of McCain's little jig on "bomb bomb bomb bomb Iran," to the tune of "Bar Bar Bar Barbara Ann" over and over again, until that tune together with McCain's words are singing in the head of every voter in the country. They will then flood the country with ads featuring McCain's comment about staying in Iraq for "a hundred, "a thousand," and even "a million" years," until McCain is not only identified as the "war candidate," but the "candidate of endless war." McCain has given the Democrats the opportunity to focus their whole campaign on his mad love of war. Every older Republican will remind every younger one of the "little-girl-picking-flowers-with-a-mushroom-cloud-rising-behind-her" television spot that the Democrats used to devastate the Barry Goldwater campaign in 1964.

Second, as America heads into recession voters rate their fears about the economy even higher than their concerns about war. But McCain will be unable to take advantage of this because he is weak on pocketbook issues. He has little knowledge or background in economics, fiscal policy, trade, job creation, etc. Anything he proposes now will sound political. Either Clinton or Obama will crush him in the debates on these issues. In the end, McCain has no other issue than war.

Third, to win this election, Republicans must overcome the unpopularity of President Bush, whose ratings are now the lowest of any president since polling began. Democrats are already painting McCain as "Bush's third term," and McCain has done nothing to dispel this. Rather, he has prominently sought and obtained Bush's endorsement. Soon Republican delegates will have to face the question: What possible reason can be given to voters for extending for a third term the most unpopular presidency they have ever known? McCain offers nothing but a continuation and expansion of Bush's war policies.

Fourth, instead of wooing the Republican conservative base, McCain has made his "maverick" reputation the hallmark of his campaign. But, how does one build a base of trust and consistent loyalty on a confessed maverick—except under threat of war? With McCain, there is no other basis for unity but war.

Finally, McCain has few charismatic qualities, He has few dedicated followers and personally excites little enthusiasm. His sole claims to leadership are his prisoner-of-war-hero-status and expertise at war. Thus he has no choice but to focus this election on his strongest points: war and more war. If Republican party workers intend to make up for their candidate's enthusiasm deficiency, they will have to become very excited about war.

Considering these factors, it is very likely that before summer is out, every Republican delegate will be sick in the stomach at the very thought of what a McCain campaign will do to the Republican party. John McCain will be seen as the losing-est Republican candidate since Bob Dole or Barry Goldwater, maybe even Alf Landon. Judging by the results the Pennsylvania primary and the Minnesota, Missouri, and Nevada delegate selection meetings, such thinking appears to have already begun.

B. "But, Isn't It a Done Deal?"

But so what? What does all this have to do with Ron Paul's campaign strategy? Doesn't McCain already have enough delegates pledged to win the nomination? Isn't it too late to be thinking about all this? Isn't the whole thing a "done deal"?

No, it is not a “done deal,” not by a long shot. By the time you finish reading this, I think you will agree that Ron Paul’s strategy is the most brilliant since Harry Truman whistle-stopped his way to the biggest political upset in American history. So, let me describe how it will play out.

C. The Convention

The most exciting event to look forward to is the Republican convention. There will be huge platform fights about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the proposed attack on Iran, reducing our commitments to defend other nations, and reducing our military presence overseas. Then there are the domestic issues: paring down the federal government, following the Constitution, ending deficit spending, rescuing the economy—all fought over conservative principles upon which the GOP was once based. In these initial skirmishes, the McCain forces will probably win, but the result will be that McCain will be perceived as less and less of a conservative, and less and less of a Republican. Fewer and fewer Red-State delegates will be looking forward to having him in their districts after the convention.

Then comes the chance they have been waiting for to show their displeasure. When Ron Paul's name is placed in nomination there will be one of the biggest floor demonstrations and outbreaks of spontaneous enthusiasm in the history of political conventions. When Ron Paul speaks pandemonium will break out. It will be far more exciting than the Republican convention of 1978 when Reagan almost won; more exciting for television viewers than the riots at 1968 Democratic convention; indeed, it will surpass the Democratic convention of 1948 with its fights over civil rights and the Dixiecrats walking out.

But the Ron Paul supporters will not walk out. Instead, Ron Paul will be asked to endorse McCain, which he will refuse as he has already refused because of the war. The party must then and there face the stark choice between nominating the “war candidate,” or choosing another nominee—all under the glare of the biggest television audience in history.

The key to all this is not the simply the war, but continuing war, expanding war, endless war. That will rivet television viewers around the world. For *this* will be the overriding issue at the convention. Cameras will focus on the faces of Republican delegates as they agonizingly come to realize that the image John McCain as the “Candidate of Endless War” will not only define the coming election, but will also define the image of the Republican party around the globe for a long time to come.

A Brief Glance at the Past

Such a future does not look rosy if one considers history. In the middle of the first half of the nineteenth century, the Whigs were one of the two major political parties in the United States, capturing the presidency several times. In 1852 the Whigs nominated General Winfield Scott, a war hero whose stance looked to the electorate as inevitably leading to war. Scott decisively lost election and the Whig party never recovered. Its next convention in 1856 was so small and dispirited the party simply disappeared. Abe Lincoln was a Whig, but he learned the lesson: never become a war candidate. He left the Whigs to join the nascent Republican party, but although he subsequently became a war

president, his stance in the campaign was not “war, war, war,” but “save the Union.” John McCain looks destined to be the Republican party’s Winfield Scott.

Back to the Present

By the time the platform fights are over the choice before the delegates at the Republican convention will be stark: Either go ahead and nominate McCain—though this will mean electoral defeat and the disappearance of the party—or scuttle McCain.

But, can McCain be scuttled? It seems impossible, since he has more than enough pledged delegates to win the nomination. But it can be easily done. All that is necessary is for a few hundred of McCain’s pledged delegates simply to “call in sick” on the day of balloting. That will be enough to deny him the nomination on the first ballot and open the convention.

Is it likely? It depends on whether or not the delegates begin to sense the electoral and party disaster looming head. If, for example, Romney and Huckabee grasp what a McCain candidacy will mean to the party, their juices will flow. They will have to decide whether to continue supporting McCain, “call in sick,” or join the fray. Acting either idealistically to save the party (for each imagines himself a future candidate), or selfishly to win the nomination for themselves this time, they may not only hold onto their pledged delegates, but canvas for more, at the same time spreading the idea that McCain can be stopped by encouraging McCain delegates to stay in their rooms on balloting day. For, if McCain fails on the first ballot, all pledged delegates—even McCain’s—are released from their pledges and can vote for whomever they want.

If this scenario plays out, by the end of the first ballot the convention will suddenly be wide open. Whom then will it choose? There will be four hats in the ring. McCain’s of course will still be there, plus Romney, Huckabee, and Paul. After the first ballot the convention will deadlock, none of the candidates appearing strong enough to clinch the nomination. Delegates will be arguing among themselves: If McCain can’t win because of his war position, neither can Romney or Huckabee, because each of them is as committed to the war as McCain—Huckabee even more so. Neither can change his position without losing his last shred of credibility.

More importantly, however, if either Romney or Huckabee emerges from a convention that denies the nomination to the man who won most of the primaries, it will look like the worst case of political manipulation since, well...

Another Glance at the Past

...the Whigs denied the nomination to their own sitting president, Millard Fillmore (who had assumed the presidency upon the death of Whig president Zachary Taylor). in order to nominate Winfield Scott. Fillmore had wanted peace and continued negotiation between North and South in order to avoid war, while the convention wanted a stronger position. Thus they rejected the candidate with the best claim to the nomination: their own sitting president. This plus the fact that Scott was a Southerner whose election would likely bring war doomed the party.

Back to the Present Again

This will be what the Republicans want to avoid in 2008. But do they have any other choice? Fortunately, they do, for that is precisely what Ron Paul has all the while foreseen, carefully positioning himself to save the party and win the election. Is this possible? Would the party ever turn to Ron Paul to save it? Consider the following factors in relation to how Ron Paul is positioned, and decide for yourself.

D. How Ron Paul Has Positioned Himself to Save the Party and Win the Election

First, whether McCain, Romney, or Huckabee is the Republican nominee, the Democrat candidate will get the anti-war vote. Only Ron Paul can effectively counter this, for he is the only candidate who is genuinely opposed to the war. Both Clinton and Obama are beholden to the war lobbies and dare not offend them, though they are allowed to indulge in peace-sounding speeches—so long as their backers are confident that they will toe the line once in office. But when confronted by Paul, neither Clinton will be able to continue speaking out of both sides of their mouths. Only Ron Paul can effectively make this an issue, catch them both up, and win the anti-war vote of both Right and Left.

Second, neither Clinton nor Obama will be able to deal with Paul on the issues or in the debates. Compared to them, Paul is the only candidate of real change, and he will make both Clinton and Obama look like the biggest defenders of the status quo since Herbert Hoover. Paul will have all the initiative, and they will be completely flustered. Paul will raise issues of war and empire, economics and deficits, debt and trade, jobs and the Federal Reserve and currency devaluation, taxes and spending, and most of all the meaning of the Constitution—from a perspective that neither Clinton nor Obama is prepared in the least to deal with. Voters will get the drift—Paul is the only one talking about real change, which is what voters have been hollering for most! None of the slogans Clinton and Obama have used all their lives will work against Paul; he can make both of them look as shallow, mendacious, and uninformed as they really are.

Third, compared to any Democratic candidate, Ron Paul is trusted, with both a public and personal life that is morally untouchable and exemplary. Thus Paul, and only Paul, can truly energize the vast distrust felt toward Clinton and Obama—and politicians in general. Not since Abe Lincoln or Dwight Eisenhower have the voters seen such a candidate—and both of these amply demonstrate the powerful attraction of such integrity. Ron Paul will shine like the sun compared to the lunar mendaciousness of Clinton or Obama.

Fourth, besides the war and the economy, Paul has created a whole other set of other issues that will not only make his opponents cringe, but provide perfect sound bites. Voters will be asked, for example: "Will you vote for the Democrats—or for the Constitution?" "Are you for preserving your jobs—or NAFTA?" "Are you for manipulation of the currency—or against the Federal Reserve?" "Should America follow the advice of the Founders—or keep up our entangling alliances?" "Can Americans afford the cost of policing the world?" "Does invading other countries really make us safer?" These issues can energize almost the entire Republican base, and will put Paul's Democrat opponent on the defensive from Day One. Imagine Clinton or Obama trying to defend the IRS or the Federal Reserve, or explaining the Constitution. They will become laughing stocks, and Republicans will not have had such a good time since Ronald Reagan asked "Where's the beef?"

Finally, when Ron Paul emerges from the marginalization and obscurity to which the mainstream media have consigned him up until now, he will assume the mantle of an American hero—the little guy who was always put down, but kept fighting, and to whom his party finally turned in its direst need. He alone fits the classic American image of Valley Forge: George Washington emerging from two solid years of defeats to win a stunning victory over the British at Trenton, thereby saving the American Revolution. Even though, or because, Ron Paul lost all the primaries, he will be seen as the new “Honest Abe,” who rose from losing every election until he was finally called to the presidency. Ron Paul as “Benjy Engie”—or the “Little Engine that could.”

E. The Bottom Line

Eventually, the most sincere Republican delegates will realize that, on the one hand, if any one of their other candidates is nominated, the GOP will come out of this election—win or lose—united only on, and identified only with, one issue: war. This will spell not only electoral defeat, but the doom of the Republican party. On the other hand, the delegates can realize that this fate is not pre-ordained; they have a choice. And that choice is to nominate Ron Paul, the only candidate who can:

- save the Republican party;
- get the war issue off its back;
- take the wind out of his opponent’s sails;
- put both his opponents and the media on the defensive;.
- show up the shallowness and mendaciousness of his Democrat opponents;
- offer real change;
- take the initiative by presenting new and exciting issues for which his opponents are unprepared;
- surprise the media and leave the “talking heads” speechless;
- give the “Grand Old Party” both a principled and exciting base from which to face the future;
- bring a new dynamic to the 2008 election year; and
- make Republicans once again feel proud to be Republicans.

F. The Genius of Ron Paul’s Strategy

The true genius of Ron Paul will be seen in how this strategy works out, because Ron Paul is guaranteed to win either way. On the one hand, if the Republican party wakes up to the disaster it is facing, it will have no choice but to nominate him. On the other hand, if the GOP does not nominate Paul, the party will crack up after November, after which Paulites will easily take it over. Perhaps they will have to change its name, but in the end, there will only be two political forces in America: Ron Paul *versus* the Democrats.

And so, my fellow Americans in Europe for Ron Paul, and all other Paulites everywhere, fear not, and do not wallow in despair or dismay. Re-brighten your eyes, refill your hearts with confidence, and redouble your efforts. Thanks to Ron Paul’s strategy, the future is ours