

■ DIGITAL JOURNAL

Op-Ed: Will Tony Bennett Endorse Ron Paul?

By [Brian Anderson](#)

Feb 14, 2012 - 18 hours ago in [Politics](#)

Born in New York, I've for years held strong affinity for Frank Sinatra-like singers. His old-school voice surrounded by a mysterious aura of connections to the Italian mafia—certainly a rare value unfound in other performers.

Unfortunately my attraction to limited government ideals began to outweigh my initial admiration of the man's style.

It's difficult to ignore Sinatra's New Deal politics. To libertarians, Franklin D. Roosevelt symbolizes every terrible merging of the corporate-government sphere in the 20th century. Luckily I found the perfect solution to the origins of my progressivism-fueled woes.

His name is Tony Bennett, and, though there isn't any confirmation, he sure sounds a lot like a Ron Paulian.

As you may already realize, Ron Paul fans are interesting individuals. When we see even one bumper sticker in support of the Texan congressman's campaign, we beep the horn, cheer out the window, and fist-pump until we get home. Meeting people with similar political beliefs is like seeing a shooting star for the first time. So you can imagine the glee with which we received Tony Bennett's comments on the US government's foreign policy last year.

Bennett [explained](#) that his experience in World War II created a life-long desire for peace.

“The first time I saw a dead German, that’s when I became a pacifist,” he said. “The Germans were frightened. We were frightened. Nobody wanted to kill anybody when we were on the line…”

George Orwell [echoed](#) these thoughts a few years before Bennett was drafted: As I write, highly civilized human beings are flying overhead, trying to kill me. They do not feel any enmity against me as an individual, nor I against them. They are ‘only doing their duty,’ as the saying goes. Most of them, I have no doubt, are kind-hearted law-abiding men who would never dream of committing murder in private life. On the other hand, if one of them succeeds in blowing me to pieces with a well-placed bomb, he will never sleep any the worse for it. He is serving his country, which has the power to absolve him from evil.

The musician’s anti-war sentiments are not only enveloped by an ethical foundation but also by one of logic. When the interviewer asked Bennett about his opinion on current warfare in the post-9/11 world, he answered, “Are we the terrorists or are they the terrorists? Two wrongs don’t make a right. [...] They flew the plane in, but we caused it because we were bombing them, and they told us to stop.”

The remarks spurred great debate in the media, denounced as unpatriotic by people ignorant of the most widely-accepted reason for terrorist attacks on American soil. The Central Intelligence Agency, Osama bin Laden, Anwar al-Awlaki, and many others directly involved in war on terror—indeed, by ‘many others,’ I’m referring to nearly everyone involved—have admitted that US intervention in foreign countries is the number-one recruitment tool used by these terrorist groups.

It was refreshing to see a new sane voice appear in the crowd. But that had been back in September 2011, so I’d forgotten about it for the most part. Then earlier this week I was even further surprised.

In relation to Whitney Houston’s recent death—and to the potentially drug-related deaths amongst other various celebrities—Bennett stood up at [the pre-Grammy party](#) last Saturday and stated, “I’d like to have every gentleman and lady in this room commit themselves to get our government to legalize drugs. So you can get them from a doctor, not just some gangsters that sell it under the table.”

Deemed inappropriate by a few and insane by a few more, Bennett is 100% correct. The Cato Institute released detailed research by *Salon* columnist [Glenn Greenwald](#) on Portugal’s experiment in decriminalizing drugs, a policy which drastically reduced drug abuse within the country.

Greenwald easily [explains](#) the phenomenon: “By freeing its citizens from the fear of prosecution and imprisonment for drug usage, Portugal has dramatically improved its ability to encourage drug addicts to avail themselves of treatment.” *Forbes* backed up this statement last year with a [report](#) that, ten years into Portugal’s decriminalization policy, drug abuse has decreased by an astounding 50 percent.

Conversely, alcohol consumption increased during [alcohol prohibition](#) in the United States! So, even if you want fewer people to do drugs, legalization has proven to act in your great favor. Neither inappropriate nor insane, Bennett’s opinion is well-informed.

There’s only one thing left to say—Tony, my friend, you should come out in favor of Ron Paul’s campaign. Not that you need any kind of boost in record sales, but it certainly worked for [Kelly Clarkson](#). Or you can at least come out to [PorcFest](#) in June. We’ll sit around eating cookies with bits of bacon inside, talking about gold and silver, making references to Ron Swanson, and whatever else people think libertarians do for fun.

I guarantee you that, if you hold up a Ron Paul sign one day soon, the grassroots will hold you up, too.