

The Company Ron Paul Keeps; Meet Alex Jones.

December 26, 2011 Monday

James Kirchick, The Weekly Standard

The Republican Jewish Coalition announced this month that congressman Ron Paul would not be among the six guests invited to participate in its Republican Presidential Candidates Forum. “He’s just so far outside of the mainstream of the Republican party and this organization,” said Matt Brooks, executive director of the RJC, adding that the group “rejects his misguided and extreme views.”



He didn’t pay attention to newsletters that earned his family millions?

Paul’s exclusion caused an uproar, with critics alleging that his stand on Israel had earned the RJC’s ire; an absolutist libertarian, Paul opposes foreign aid to all countries, including the Jewish state. “This seems to me more of an attempt to draw boundaries around acceptable policy discourse than any active concern that President Dr. Ron Paul would be actively anti-Israel or anti-Semitic,” wrote *Reason* editor Matt Welch. Chris McGreal of the *Guardian* reported that Paul “was barred because of his views on Israel.” Even Seth

Lipsky, editor of the *New York Sun* and a valiant defender of Israel (and friend and mentor of this writer), opined, “The whole idea of an organization of Jewish Republicans worrying about the mainstream strikes me as a bit contradictory.”

While Paul’s views on Israel certainly place him outside the American, never mind Republican, mainstream, there is an even more elementary reason the RJC was right to exclude him from its event. It is Paul’s lucrative and decades-long promotion of bigotry and conspiracy theories, for which he has yet to account fully, and his continuing espousal of extremist views, that should make him unwelcome at any respectable forum, not only those hosted by Jewish organizations.

In January 2008, the *New Republic* ran my story reporting the contents of monthly newsletters that Paul published throughout the 1980s and 1990s. While a handful of controversial passages from these bulletins had been quoted previously, I was able to track down nearly the entire archive, scattered between the University of Kansas and the Wisconsin Historical Society (both of which housed the newsletters in collections of extreme right-wing American political literature). Though particular articles rarely carried a byline, the vast majority were written in the first person, while the title of the newsletter, in its various iterations, always featured Paul’s name: *Ron Paul’s Freedom Report*, the *Ron Paul Political Report*, the *Ron Paul Survival Report*, and the *Ron Paul Investment Letter*. What I found was unpleasant.

“Order was only restored in L.A. when it came time for the blacks to pick up their welfare checks,” read a typical article from the June 1992 “Special Issue on Racial Terrorism,” a supplement to the *Ron Paul Political Report*. Racial apocalypse was the most persistent theme of the newsletters; a 1990 issue warned of “The Coming Race War,” and an article the following year about disturbances in the Adams Morgan neighborhood of Washington, D.C., was entitled “Animals Take Over the D.C. Zoo.” Paul alleged that Martin Luther King Jr., “the world-class philanderer who beat up his paramours,” had also “seduced underage girls and boys.” The man who would later proclaim King a “hero” attacked Ronald Reagan for signing legislation creating the federal holiday in his name, complaining, “We can thank him for our annual Hate Whitey Day.”

No conspiracy theory was too outlandish for Paul’s endorsement. One newsletter reported on the heretofore unknown phenomenon of “Needlin’,” in which “gangs of black girls between the ages of 12 and 14” roamed the streets of New York and injected white women with possibly HIV-infected syringes. Another newsletter warned that “the AIDS patient” should not be allowed to eat in restaurants because “AIDS can be transmitted by saliva,” a strange claim for a physician to make.

Paul gave credence to the theory, later shown to have been the product of a Soviet disinformation effort, that AIDS had been created in a U.S. government laboratory at Fort Detrick, Maryland. Three months before far-right extremists killed 168 Americans in Oklahoma City, Paul’s newsletter praised the “1,500 local militias now training to defend liberty” as “one of the most encouraging developments in America.” And he offered

specific advice to antigovernment militia members, such as, “Keep the group size down,” “Keep quiet and you’re harder to find,” “Leave no clues,” “Avoid the phone as much as possible,” and “Don’t fire unless fired upon, but if they mean to have a war, let it begin here.”

If the above were not enough to place Paul beyond the pale for the RJC, what the congressman had to say about Jews and Israel would probably be a deal-breaker. No foreign country was mentioned in the newsletters more often than Israel. A 1987 newsletter termed it “an aggressive, national socialist state,” and another missive, on the subject of the 1993 World Trade Center attack, concluded, “Whether it was a setup by the Israeli Mossad, as a Jewish friend of mine suspects, or was truly a retaliation by the Islamic fundamentalists, matters little.” In 1990, the newsletter cast aspersions on the “tens of thousands of well-placed friends of Israel in all countries who are willing to wok [sic] for the Mossad in their area of expertise.”

This is just a sample of the hateful and conspiratorial nonsense that Paul promoted for decades under his own name. His response to the revelations was nothing short of unbelievable. “The quotations in the *New Republic* article are not mine and do not represent what I believe or have ever believed,” he said. “When I was out of Congress and practicing medicine full-time, a newsletter was published under my name that I did not edit. Several writers contributed to the product. For over a decade, I have publicly taken moral responsibility for not paying closer attention to what went out under my name.” In an interview with CNN’s Wolf Blitzer two days after the article appeared, Paul waved away accusations of racism by saying that he was “gaining ground with the blacks” and “getting more votes right now and more support from the blacks.”

Yet a subsequent report by *Reason* found that Ron Paul & Associates, the defunct company that published the newsletters and which counted Paul and his wife as officers, reported an income of nearly \$1 million in 1993 alone. If this figure is reliable, Paul must have earned multiple millions of dollars over the two decades plus of the newsletters’ existence. It is incredible that he had less than an active interest in what was being printed as part of a subscription newsletter enterprise that earned him and his family millions of dollars. Ed Crane, the president of the Cato Institute, said Paul told him that “his best source of congressional campaign donations was the mailing list for the *Spotlight*, the conspiracy-mongering, anti-Semitic tabloid run by the Holocaust denier Willis Carto.”

This sordid history would not bear repeating but for the fact that the media love to portray Paul as a truth-telling, antiwar Republican standing up to the “hawkish” conservative establishment. Otherwise, the newsletters, and Paul’s continued failure to name their author, would be mentioned in every story about him, and he would be relegated to the fringe where he belongs. But Paul has escaped the sort of media scrutiny that would bury other political figures. A December 15 profile of Paul in the *Washington Post*, for instance, affectionately described his love of gardening and *The Sound of Music* and judged that “world events have conspired to make him look increasingly on point”—all without any mention of the newsletter controversy. Though present at nearly every Republican debate, he has yet to be asked about the newsletters. Had Paul’s persona and

views changed significantly since 2008, this oversight might be understandable. But he continues to say and do things suggesting that, far from disowning the statements he has claimed “do not represent what I believe or have ever believed,” he still believes them.

In the four years since my article appeared, Paul has gone right on appearing regularly on the radio program of Alex Jones, the most popular conspiracy theorist in America (unless that distinction belongs to Paul himself). To understand Jones’s paranoid worldview, it helps to watch a recent documentary he produced, *Endgame: Blueprint for Global Enslavement*, which reveals the secret plot of George Pataki, David Rockefeller, and Queen Beatrix, among other luminaries, to exterminate humanity and transform themselves into “superhuman” computer hybrids able to “travel throughout the cosmos.” There is nothing Jones believes the American government isn’t capable of, from “[encouraging] homosexuality with chemicals so that people don’t have children” to blowing up the Space Shuttle Columbia, a “textbook psychological warfare operation.”

In a March 2009 interview, Paul entertained Jones’s claim that NORTHCOM, the U.S. military’s combatant command for North America, is “taking over” the country. “The average member of Congress probably isn’t a participant in the grand conspiracy,” Paul reassured the fevered host, essentially acknowledging that such a conspiracy exists. “We need to take out the CIA.” On Paul’s latest appearance on the Jones show, just last week, he called allegations that Iran had attempted to assassinate the Saudi ambassador to the United States a “propaganda stunt” of the Obama administration. In a January 2010 speech, Paul announced, “There’s been a coup, have you heard? It’s the CIA coup” against the American government. “They’re in businesses, in drug businesses,” the congressman added.

Likewise, Paul’s insistence that America should be a “friend” of Israel is belied by public statements like one from a November 22 GOP debate: “Why do we have this automatic commitment that we’re going to send our kids and send our money endlessly to Israel?” This is an echo of Pat Buchanan’s 1990 claim that if the United States went to war against Saddam Hussein it would be on behalf of Israel, and that “kids with names like McAllister, Murphy, Gonzales, and Leroy Brown” would be the ones doing the fighting and dying. The assertion that American soldiers are risking their lives to protect Israel and not the United States is as false today as it was two decades ago.

Last, Paul continues to be the favorite candidate of those who believe that the United States either orchestrated the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, or allowed them to happen in order to create the pretext for wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. It’s not hard to understand why. In a December 9 speech to supporters in Iowa, Paul had this to say: “Just think of what happened after 9/11. Immediately before there was any assessment there was glee in the administration because now we can invade Iraq.”

Paul’s more mainstream supporters have always explained away his popularity with 9/11 “Truthers” as an unfortunate consequence of his altruistic, if at times naïve, libertarian ethos: The man just loves freedom so much that he’s loath to turn away backers who may

think differently from him. To anyone who bothers to look into Ron Paul's record, that claim is simply not credible.

James Kirchick is a fellow with the Foundation for Defense of Democracies and a contributing editor to the New Republic.