THE WILSON 2008 CAMPAIGN: VISION AND ACTION

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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to living humans.
If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could then better judge what to do, and how to do it.

–Abraham Lincoln

Be the change you wish to see in the world.

–Mohandas Gandhi
ABSTRACT OF THE PROJECT

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This two-part paper is one product of an ongoing project to bring specific solutions to fundamental problems of US government into the national discussion. Part I of the paper contends that the failure to come to substantial agreement in the federal approach to countless major problems, ranging from global warming to the size and allocation of budget expenditures, has its roots in a more fundamental problems: the lack of an adequate federal information dissemination and analysis system that provides transparency into government activities and a forum for public communication between people and their elected representatives. In an increasingly complex world, the extent to which such a suitable system does not exist is the extent to which the federal government has become a relatively unaccountable command-and-control government. Outlines of the solution to that problem, dubbed the Free Marketplace of Ideas (FMI), as well as the solutions to several other anti-democratic government structures and practices are provided. It is also argued that even if these problems did not exist, it would remain the duty of a democratic republic to provide such a system.

Part II is essentially a chronicle of my first attempt to bring these solutions into the national discussion and offer them to the public as a candidate for President of the United States of America during the 2008 election. The Wilson 2008 Campaign was a partial prototype of the FMI and an attempt to run the most transparent campaign ever. Among other transparency innovations, it attempted to build a complete administration in public before the election so that voters could base their decisions on complete information about the composition of the proposed government. Among other lessons, the campaign experience showed how the FMI would benefit our democracy by providing candidates with the tools to bypass commercial media and communicate directly with all voters—eliminating the problem of fragmented audiences, the need and justification for massive campaign spending, and beginning to level out the playing field for competing ideas.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE U.S. FEDERAL GOVERNMENT?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>OPERATING PRINCIPLES OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>THE GENERAL FUNCTIONS OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>CONFUSIONS, INADEQUACIES, FAILURES, AND PERVERSIONS OF JUSTICE AND OPERATING PRINCIPLES, AND THEIR FIXES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Onward to New York City, to Cambridge, Massachusetts and back to Washington..........................................................113
The Diamondback Interview................................................................................................................114
More Media Attention.....................................................................................................................120
Building a Campaign Team Part II ..........................................................................................120
Article on the United Nations ....................................................................................................127
The Wilson 2008 Campaign National Road Trip .................................................................128
Couchsurfing, Camping, Moteling, Hoteling, etc.................................................................129
Road Trip Reflections .................................................................................................................131

9 CONCLUSION TO PART II .............................................................................................................133

APPENDICES

REFERENCES ............................................................................................................................................140

A THE VOTERGUIDE.ORG: E.THEPEOPLE ................................................................................142
B PROJECT VOTE SMART: POLITICAL COURAGE TEST .....................................................150
C HOW THE UN PROTECTS AMERICAN SOVEREIGNTY .................................................164
D LETTER TO SUPPORTERS ........................................................................................................169
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. The “TaxTrackr.” ...........................................................53
Figure 2. Campaign website page explaining why I was running. ......................69
Figure 3. Website page posting of campaign platform........................................71
Figure 4. Campaign website page showing the progress on the Administration 2008 aspect of the campaign ..................................................77
Figure 5. Website page listing campaign team openings, and other ways to help. .......82
Figure 6. Web page showing Wilson 2008 TV on Ustream ..................................84
Figure 7. The Wilson for President blog .............................................................85
Figure 8. Reproduction of Web page that allowed online donations to the campaign. ........89
Figure 9. Website page contributors would receive in confirmation of a contribution. ....90
Figure 10. Website page showing the total budget of the campaign. ......................91
Figure 11. Website blog showing original announcement of candidacy .....................94
Figure 12. Statement of candidacy ......................................................................95
Figure 13. Statement of organization ..................................................................96
Figure 14. Wilson 2008 Campaign bumper stickers ............................................97
Figure 15. Business cards ..................................................................................98
Figure 16. Press release announcing candidacy ....................................................99
Figure 17. Media contact list .............................................................................100
Figure 18. Website page allowing people to subscribe to campaign communications. ......101
Figure 19. The Freedom Pledge .........................................................................102
Figure 20. Press release announcing the signing of the Freedom Pledge ....................103
Figure 21. Irregular Times, August 20, 2007 ..........................................................106
Figure 22. Irregular Times, September 17, 2007 ....................................................107
Figure 23. Unity08 official signature form ............................................................110
Figure 24. First TV Station showing first campaign sign ........................................111
Figure 25. Improved campaign podium sign ......................................................112
Figure 26. Screen shot of recorded interview with The Diamondback ....................115
Figure 27. The Diamondback article ................................................................116
Figure 28. *Irregular Times*, Oct 3, 2007.................................................................121
Figure 29. *Irregular Times*, August 20, 2007.........................................................122
Figure 30. The Couchmap.......................................................................................130
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In 2007, I ran in the 2008 election for President of the United States of America. I decided to do so mainly because there were no other candidates advocating the programs and policy changes that I believe are crucial to the health of our democratic republic and, not unrelatedly, of our planet. Part I (Chapters 1 to 6) of this paper discusses the federal programs and policy changes I advocated and continue to advocate, along with the underlying problems they are meant to address. Part II (Chapters 7 to 9) tells the story of the resulting campaign.

Before the specific underlying problems, programs, and policy changes are discussed in Chapter 5, Chapters 2 through 4 provide a foundation for understanding why government is both a partial cause of and a necessary tool for solving these problems. I begin with this foundation because it is the basis from which my policy solutions flow. Understanding this foundation should illuminate the necessity and propriety of the solutions. Without a foundation, a reader may not have the vantage point necessary for a fair assessment of the solutions.

Chapters 2 and 3 provide what I consider to be the proper role and operating principles of government—in other words, these chapters provide a broad framework for understanding what government is and how it is most effectively operated. The claims made in those chapters are not intended to be controversial, and are based more on systems thinking than normative values. Chapter 4 makes a slightly more normative—but almost universally accepted—claim about the proper general functions of government in order to show, in Chapter 5, how specific government functions (or the lack thereof) flow (or should flow) from the general functions.

What these early chapters should make clear is that there is nothing revolutionary in this paper. I believe in democracy. As dysfunctional as the US government may seem today, a revolution in the near future would, from my perspective, almost certainly lead to
something much worse. To not be self-governed, much less to live under a government that does not exist through my consent, sounds to me like tyranny.

As the paper will show, the current political dysfunction is not a problem of our basic form of government, but with corruptions of its basic form, and with improper execution of its functions. If, as many loudly argue today, Americans are no longer “free,” it is because of the abuse and misuse of government, not government itself. The Constitution is a capable framework for republican democracy, and all that is needed to fix US government is the focused will of the people—the will that the Constitution is designed to serve. The Constitution provides us with the power and means to go wherever we collectively want to go, and includes the power to amend it when it is necessary to achieve unforeseen goals. A revolution that would overturn our democratically established government is not a reasonable choice. We can create the government we want through incremental change as the Founders of the United States envisioned, and, if we have the will, we can do it relatively quickly and painlessly in ways that mesh with our national culture.

Thus, a revolution in thought is not even necessary. Everything advocated here is in the spirit of traditional American values and the constitutional framework. Yet this essay is not an expression of constitutional fundamentalism. To imagine the Founders would have bound the 21st century rigidly to an 18th century understanding of justice would be as absurd as to believe they were omniscient enough to foresee the challenges of the 21st century—and contradicts the basic humility about the future expressed in the *Federalist Papers*. The wisdom of the Founders was not superhuman foresight, but an understanding of their own limitations. They purposely designed a living document to empower future generations with the flexibility to adapt it to their needs. To the extent that the Founders’ intent can be divined, it should not be cast aside, but it should also not be forgotten that part of the Founders’ intent from the very start was to unshackle the future from the past.² In the ever-changing, unpredictable system of human culture and its evolving demands of justice, a government must adapt or it will eventually collapse, even if it can temporarily delay the inevitable through violence and intimidation.

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Although I reject the mystical fundamentalism of constitutional originalism, the solutions and paths forward I propose here are based on what I consider to be conservative principles of limited government and personal freedom. If some solutions may not seem “conservative” according to today’s partisans on the right, I would strongly suggest that sometime in the last 30 years the word has become detached from its referent in reality and basis in reason. One purpose of this paper is to liberate the word “conservative” from the reactionaries and partisans who now incorrectly claim to embody it.

I refer to my own collection of connected political beliefs expressed in this paper as a political “vision” in order to distinguish it from a political “ideology.” Ideologies are rigid things that are barriers to reason, understanding, and creative problem-solving. That a 12-year-old armed with an ideology can provide well-worn but never proven answers to complex political questions is enough in itself to prove an ideology false. No ideology is a match for the complexity of the world. Thus, I believe that reason should guide government action to the greatest extent possible. By laying some ground rules while avoiding the temptation to create an ideological algorithm for providing easy answers based on a reductive worldview, this vision aims to create a public space (both literally and figuratively) for reasonable collective decision making.

Nevertheless, because certain political positions are widely contested value judgments, and thus deeply and intrinsically ideological—such as the point at which human life begins—I do not believe that all answers can be found in reason, and do not believe there will ever be panacea for political conflict. So while the goal of this essay is not to be controversial, there are normative judgments even in my earliest premises with which some may disagree. However, I try to keep these value judgments as unencumbered by ideology as possible. For example, an underlying value judgment of my vision is that human life has infinite value, but I do not take a stand on when human life begins. One can take any position with respect to when human life begins and still agree with entire approach to government expressed in this vision. On the other hand, if one believes that human life can properly be bought and sold, then one would not agree with most of the arguments made here.

In short, I believe reason should always take precedence over ideology where possible in government problem-solving, but I recognize that this belief is itself an ideology. The difference in accepting the precedence of reason over other ideological approaches is
that reason provides an open process for finding solutions (it does not put an inherent limit on possible actions based on the limited imagination of ideologues), whereas the typical political ideology is a simplistic algorithm for giving a limited number of easy answers to problems that are far more complex than any ideology can properly diagnose. It should also be recognized that there may be many more unstated premises than stated ones in this paper, for example, those that flow from being a member of an assortment of cultures, traditions, and ways of thinking, particularly Western, Judeo-Christian, and Enlightenment. Even if one does not concur with one or all of my premises, I hope to demonstrate that most of my arguments and recommendations can stand on their own given a range of premises.

Before moving on to the next chapter to begin outlining my political vision, I want to quickly restate a few things in order to ensure there is no confusion that the purpose of this essay is to provide a concrete description of an ideal form of government. It is not. I am not attempting to construct a new government from the ground up and a strategy for achieving a concrete expression of it in practice. This is not a revolutionary manifesto. There are at least two reasons to avoid such an approach. The first reason is that, as already mentioned, I believe the basic form of our democratic republic is perfectly capable of being adapted to our current needs. Although I believe many significant public policy changes are necessary for the sake of justice in the United States, the history of 20th-century political revolutions and nation-building attempts convinces me that making a complete break with the Constitution would as likely as not lead to considerable violence and killing, and a worse state of affairs than that which existed before the upheavals. Incremental change has been very successful for the United States and other countries so far, and incremental change need not mean slow change.

Secondly, I believe that the moment an ideology becomes identifiable is the moment it becomes moribund. A model of government based on a fixed ideology about what society should be is a recipe for conflict and leads to failure of the government. Society is an open system that evolves regardless of our conservative instincts, particularly in response to technological advances. From the first known tools that allowed us to cut animal hides, to the impending developments in genetic engineering, nanotechnology, and artificial intelligence, extending human capacities alters how we organize ourselves in society, and ideological cults follow—from reactionary to radical—in their efforts to make sense of the historical
moment. These ideologies are always myopic and therefore false and dangerous. As the cases of the Soviet Union and now the United States show, stale ideologies coupled with anti-democratic and dysfunctional executive and legislative branches are capable of being greatly destructive not only to government credibility but to the relationship of a nation’s people with the rest of the world.

An internal stock of good intentions, good will, and tradition continue to buffer the US government against system collapse, but, as this paper will show, our government has been captured by external systems and special interest organizations that have no place in a democracy. If we do not change our course and work toward solutions, the anti-democratic path we are on will only become further entrenched and erode our institutional capacity for self-government—infantilizing most, and radicalizing others. This paper shows that it is possible and practical to put in place more democratic decision-making systems that would make government more efficient and responsive, and would return us to a more constructive and just path.

Thus, as I describe a framework for making choices about government’s role and proper functions, the aim is not to outline a utopian end result, but to show how government can be fixed to provide an effective means for figuring out where we want to go, and for helping get us there. My preference to achieve this goal is incremental change—to make conservative progress in a way that fits reasonably with the culture of the United States of America.
CHAPTER 2

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE U.S. FEDERAL GOVERNMENT?

GOVERNMENT IS A TOOL

Of the many questions this essay poses, that posed in this chapter’s title is the simplest to answer because of how “role” will be defined here. Role is not meant in the sense of government’s function in society, or what it specifically does, which is discussed in Chapter 3. What is meant, putting the question more metaphorically, is “What is government?” My answer, also somewhat metaphorical, is that government is a tool.

THE TOOL METAPHOR

The mark of a moderate man is freedom from his own ideas. –Lao-Tzu

In applying the tool metaphor to government, it is important to understand that it is only a metaphor, and is not intended to be a rigid equivalence. It is an apt metaphor for most purposes, however, as it is specific but can apply to many different incarnations from a twig an ape uses for gathering ants to a modern jetliner used for transporting goods and people.

The point is that the tool metaphor should not be considered an absolute truth that excludes other ways of understanding government, such as understanding it as a system. In fact, systems thinking provides a basis for much of my thinking about government, and will be made explicit in later chapters, but it is helpful to begin with the tool metaphor because it is simple to grasp and versatile. In this manner, it can be an accurate and helpful way to see government.

The tool metaphor may also avoid some confusion at this early stage because a tool is usually human-made to serve humanity, while systems exist in nature independent of humanity. Thus, the tool metaphor more naturally couples itself with the idea of serving

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2 This concept of “role” here is my own and not to be confused with Ralph Linton’s archeological concept.
humanity, whereas there are many major systems, such as solar or weather systems, which occur without human intervention and could be viewed as being in competition with humanity. The association with serving humanity is very much intended.

On the other hand, the tool metaphor may be misleading if it limits one’s thinking about the capacities of government. The term “tool” may immediately bring to mind simple tools, such as a hammer or saw. But the tool of government is more complicated in its many functions, so it is important to have a more expansive concept of a tool when thinking about the tool of government. The government tool is more analogous to a piece of machinery that serves ongoing purposes, such as an air-conditioning system. While a hammer serves a momentary purpose and is put away when that end has been achieved, a government, like an air conditioner, must be established and left in place to continue to function in the background to maintain certain desirable conditions. A hammer can be thought of as a means to an end; a government is more of a means to strive towards an ideal point that, being contested and fluid, will most likely never be fully achieved.

The air-conditioner analogy is adequate but also may be misleading in a different way. Government does not simply function in two dimensions based on predetermined goals—such as, if it is too hot, make it cooler; if it is too cold, make it warmer. Government operates in every conceivable dimension, and its responses are only limited by politics, resources, and the laws of physics. Moreover, unlike a machine that can be turned on and mostly left alone to do its job, the tool of government is not self-sustaining, but exists only through the ongoing efforts of its users. Indeed, government only functions through the ongoing intentional actions of its people, and cannot, once built, be placed on autopilot.

As a tool, government is an extension of humanity; it is not a self-sustaining entity that can control humanity. Technology (tools) such as government can enhance some people’s ability to control other people, but if the US government is functioning properly, this can only be done with the consent of the Executive Branch, a majority in the Legislative Branch, and the Judicial Branch, or, alternatively, with the consent of a supermajority in the Legislative Branch and the Judicial Branch. There are often-heard refrains from both the

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3 For more on this concept of “extensions of humanity,” see Edward Hall, Beyond Culture (New York: Anchor Books, 1989).
right and the left that ignore this distinction. Ronald Reagan’s quote, “government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem,” seems to imply that it is not the way people are using the tool that is the problem, but the tool itself. But if the right believes the tool is the problem, then in order to be consistent it would need to believe, for example, the left-wing refrain that guns kill people, as if guns had nervous systems of their own. Taking this view to the extreme leads, ironically, to right-wing ideologies, such as anarcho-primitivism, which advocate the destruction of industrial civilization, violently if necessary, as if industrial civilization were not a human creation but built itself through its own will with the aid of its human-tools. Yet, most on the right believe that taking away the right to bear arms is the first step on the road to tyranny.

There is something strange and yet central about the tool concept in the today’s partisan battles. Each partisan’s stated concept of “tool” contains the same hypocrisy, and each calls it out in the other’s rhetoric, but does not remove it from their own rhetoric. Each side is clearly right when they see a tool, be it government or gun, as an extension of humanity, and are clearly wrong when they ascribe intent to these tools. Both sides wage absurd fights against inanimate objects and not the fundamental problems that animate the objects’ misuse. No doubt each side also knows deep down that these rhetorical devices are not precise expressions of what they believe. Is it too idealistic to believe that each side will abandon their mutual hypocrisy and focus on real issues? I do not think so or I would not bother to participate politically. In my experience in life and on the campaign, most people have good intentions and have changed their perspectives when they were given good reason in a respectful discussion in which it was clear that I too would change my perspective if given good reason. Keeping in mind that government is a tool should change perspectives, alter rhetoric, and make debate more productive.

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4 This will always be true despite the dubious predictions of some futurists, such as Ray Kurzweil, that computers will achieve consciousness in the future. So long as government is democratic, its actions will be determined by humans.

5 For a variety of causes—especially ideology—other people are at least temporarily unable to yield to reason, which is why the chief aim of this project is to increase political participation. Political ideologues tend be more politically active than non-ideologues, and so increasing participation (in a republican democracy with functional checks against the potential tyranny of the majority) increases the sway of reason over ideology.
Finally, what is especially good about the tool metaphor is that it makes it evident that even the word “government” can be misleading when applied to a democracy. Government comes from the ancient Greek word, κυβερνάω (kubernaō), meaning “I steer, drive, guide, pilot.” While this is not necessarily inaccurate, it might give the impression that it is the government that is in control and not the citizens. Since democracy is collective self-governance, the citizens of a democracy should see themselves as the pilot/government, and understand that that which we call “government” is actually that which is piloted. Like a pilot steers an airplane, so the citizens must steer the government. A better term than government would be the “public policy tool,” but being a bit unwieldy, this essay will mostly stick to “government” for the sake of simplicity.

**WHAT KIND OF TOOL IS THE US GOVERNMENT?**

With this conceptual framework in mind, what remains is to make a claim about the kind of tool government is—particularly the US federal government, which is the focus of this essay (and is mainly what is meant when by the word “government” here, though the reader can feel free to generalize the word to apply to all governments when context allows). For the purposes of this essay, the US government is a tool for locating and collectively debating issues of national concern, for collectively developing policy responses that fall under its jurisdiction, and for implementing these policies.

As the definition indicates, the US government-tool has a very extensive capacity. It is not inherently limited, meaning that there is no function to which it cannot be adapted, though it is limited by collective choice (both with a written constitution and by the priorities of its operators) to the performance of certain functions, which are discussed in Chapters 4 and 5. The tool has the capacity to accept new instruments, like oversight committees, as needed (one might think of them as attachments), as well as to shed them if they become obsolete. The government is a tool that was designed to address real occurrences, whether or not those occurrences have been previously imagined.

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6 What falls into the categories of “national” and “jurisdiction” are continuously contested and negotiated by citizens and other entities, such as states and even the Judicial Branch of the U.S. government, and so I do not attempt to define these terms. The point here is that government is a tool the use of which must be confined within boundaries determined by the decisions of people. Boundaries of use are not inherent to the tool itself.
Because of its extensive role, it may be more helpful to compare government to a modern jet airliner (that cannot be put on autopilot) than to a hammer or even an air-conditioner. In order to function with any effectiveness, it must be equipped to respond to whichever function it serves. When it is highly complex, as it is currently, it must include instruments to measure current conditions, make predictions of future conditions, and record past performance in order to learn from it and address sub-optimal performance of its operators or processes.

In this way of seeing government, it should be understood that, like any tool, the tool of government has no inherent moral value. It is not good or bad; it is simply an entity that can serve a positive or negative function chosen by its operators. As discussed above, the operators and not the tool itself bear the responsibility of the consequences of its use.

To repeat for emphasis: For the purposes of the this paper, as well as for better thinking about government in general, it is helpful to think of government as a tool—more specifically, a tool for locating and collectively debating issues of national concern, for collectively developing policy responses that fall under its jurisdiction, and for implementing these policies.
A great civilization is not conquered from without until it has destroyed itself from within.

–Will Durant

All tools have principles of operation that become clear to the perceptive operator. In reflection upon what appears to be going wrong with the US government as a tool, what has gone wrong with other governments, as well as the effects of certain uses of government upon public opinion about government, I have derived four operating principles of government. Outlined below, these principles are not exclusive of additional principles, nor do they follow in any particular order, but are numbered as a way to refer to them concisely later on. As these are principles for the use of a tool, they should be understood as mechanical principles, not moral principles. However, whether or not an operator chooses to follow these principles is a reflection of his or her values (or lack thereof).

**OPERATING PRINCIPLE 1: GOVERNMENT ACTION MUST NOT BE REVOLUTIONARY**

A government is not meant to be revolutionary or self-destructive. A government is meant to function in a way that does not overturn its essence or attempt a wholesale substitution of cultural values with revolutionary values. Culture should change government, not the other way around. Even if only an untested structural change to government is desired, it is shortsighted to destroy a tool that is still useful, particularly when a better tool has not yet been proven in practice. Moreover, governmental change must be incremental, though this does not necessarily imply it must be slow. In the case of the US government, which is built upon a system of rules, there is nothing to prevent us from adapting our tool to our current society. So long as the tool remains functional, and has not been irreversibly captured by coup, all we need to do in order to achieve very different results is amend the rules. Ideally, amendments should have longevity by way of being well-adapted to the future,
and not put barriers in the way of other adaptations that may be better or enhance its ability to cope with the future. This first principle essentially asserts that there is no benefit to destroying the tool, and no reason not to keep it in the ready, even when it seems unnecessary, in case it should be needed again.

**OPERATING PRINCIPLE 2: THERE SHOULD BE SUBSTANTIAL AGREEMENT AMONG CITIZENS REGARDING GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONS**

Functions, as discussed in detail in the next section, are the tasks that government performs, in the same sense that one function an airliner might perform could be the taking of 100 people from one part of the country to another. The functions of government must be substantially agreed upon for reasons similar to the reasons airliner functions must be agreed upon, though the analogy is not perfect. The analogy works in the sense that the pilots serve the passengers and disagreement among and between passengers and pilots would be so obviously absurd it requires no explanation. Where would the airplane go if the pilots did not even agree upon the course? Where the analogy does not work is in the fact that if an airliner function is not agreed upon, there is an easy solution that ensures that conflict does not arise: cancel the trip. People can choose not to board an airliner. But there is no similar solution in government. Everybody has to go along for the ride, even if a large number of the passengers disapprove. This difference shows how important substantial agreement is, and how inevitable it is that there will always be some level of serious dissatisfaction with government.

It may seem overly optimistic to hope for politicians to follow this principle in this time when they clearly put party above government and country, but many organizations adhere to norms such as this in the name of institutional preservation because members recognize that respect of the organization is crucial to its and society’s overall health. It may also seem overly idealistic for the reason that there are organizations—particularly large media conglomerates—that specialize in dividing the public in order to ensure ineffective government. This is a fair criticism, but this operating principle makes sense assuming a well-informed public, which is the main goal of this project. It will be much harder to use such deceptive methods when we have a healthy government with a functional public information dissemination and analysis system (discussed in Chapter 5).
Even so, this operating principle obviously gives the upper hand to those who want to limit the role of government even if they are a minority, but it is reasonable to put the onus on the advocates of a function because if there is substantial resistance, it is more likely members will fail to perform the function properly. This also jibes with the Constitution, which is designed to give a certain amount of power to minorities. There will always be disagreements as to the functions of government; but if substantial disagreement persists, we should refrain from using the tool for that function.

Finally, what is meant by “substantial” should remain vague, but it seems reasonable to put this threshold at about two-thirds of the population\(^7\) for most functions since a simple majority’s agreement can be polarizing and lead to instability as different administrations add and repeal contested functions. A way to deal with resistance to large programs is to enact incremental policies that go in the desired direction of the majority, but do not cross the boundary of unacceptability by the opposition.\(^8\) This would have the added advantage of making legislation more transparent by keeping it short and focused, and making potential costs and benefits more apparent. Again, a functional public information dissemination and analysis system should make conflicts around functions rarer as public servants begin to be driven more by what makes sense rather than by ideology.

**OPERATING PRINCIPLE 3: GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT WORK INTERNALLY AGAINST ITSELF**

This principle asserts that once a function is established, government administrators should commit in good faith to performing that function as intended and not work to make it fail. This might be called the “good faith v. sore loser” principle. A famous example of government failing to follow this principle occurred when President Andrew Jackson, in reference to a Supreme Court decision he opposed, was alleged to have said, “John Marshall has made his decision, now let him enforce it!”\(^9\) An ongoing failure to follow this principle is

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\(^7\) Not to be confused with two-thirds of Congress, although ideally Congress would agree with the population.


known as “regulatory capture.” The prototypical example of regulatory capture is the case of the Interstate Commerce Commission. In response to public demand, this regulatory agency was established in the United States in 1887 to attempt to curtail abuses of railroad companies, but from the very start with Grover Cleveland, presidents peopled the commission with boards that were ideologically opposed to the commission’s purpose.10 As a consequence, the agency, as well as the boards of just about every other regulatory body that makes the news today, from the EPA, to the FCC, to the FDA, to the NRC, to the SEC, are filled with industry insiders whose allegiance is more to their past and future industry employers than to the public interest those bodies were allegedly established to protect.

The likelihood that government operators follow this principle may correlate with how well they adhere to Principle 2, refraining from establishing a government function until there is substantial agreement. When substantial agreement exists, government will be less likely to work against itself, but sore losers may still attempt to disrupt the function if the institutional culture allows it. Still, even if a government function is controversial, such as many are today, government operators have a duty to put the function into practice and make a good faith effort to make it successful. This is of vital importance because in order to make good policy in the future, it is necessary to know what works and what does not work based upon an accurate assessment of the function as intended, and not based upon the incompetence or malfeasance of the operators.

Government can also operate against itself unintentionally in other ways. Numerous examples of this will be described in detail in Chapter 5.

**Operating Principle 4: Operators Should Be Qualified to Use the Government-Tool**

Given the vision of government just stated, and given the importance of its operators, it should be clear that operators must be qualified to use the government-tool. To be qualified to use it is not a matter of achieving some minimum level of competency, but an ongoing process of learning and civic engagement. As a tool, directed by republican democracy, for locating and collectively debating issues of national concern, for collectively developing

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policy responses that fall under its jurisdiction, and for implementing these policies—much is required of the operators. While most people are not government operators most of the time, everybody who votes is an operator when they are voting. Thus, one of the greatest demands on the operators, including those whose only operation is to vote, is that they access and digest a large amount of information about the current state of the world and about the operations of the government itself. Because this information is essential to qualifying operators to use the tool, and because, as stated many times in the *Federalist Papers*, government must have all the powers necessary to fulfill its obligations,¹¹ this operating principle demands that government to create an instrument to facilitate this process. I advocate the building of a new instrument to serve this principle, which I call the Free Marketplace of Ideas, in Chapter 5.

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¹¹ See for example, James Madison, “Federalist #44,” in Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and John Madison, *The Federalist Papers* (Project Gutenberg Etext, 1992), Kindle edition, location 3956-7. (“No axiom is more clearly established in law or in reason than wherever the end is required, the means are authorized; wherever a general power to do a thing is given, every particular power for doing it is included.”)
CHAPTER 4
THE GENERAL FUNCTIONS OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT

This chapter does not describe the current specific functions of the US government, but describes what I believe are the proper functions of government given widely accepted American beliefs about government, in conjunction with the principles outlined in Chapter 3. I base these functions on “widely accepted American beliefs about government” because of Principle 2, which states that there must be substantial agreement regarding the functions of government.

In order to base the proper functions of government upon widely accepted American beliefs about government, it is necessary to use so-called conservative values as a foundation because to advocate a more expansive list of government functions would sharply reduce the number of people who would be in agreement. There are at least two general functions for which so-called conservatives regularly express support:

- Government has the responsibility for national security.
- Government is responsible for establishing and maintaining justice within its jurisdiction.

These two functions are the foundation, then, since these are supported by the vast majority of the population from the right to the left of the political spectrum. There may be other points of agreement about the proper functions of government, but my vision of government flows only from agreement with these two general functions. To say that the so-called liberals on the far left support these functions is not to claim they support only these functions, but that they support at least these functions, and so they can serve as a foundation of agreement between the two extremes as well as among those who consider themselves moderate or independent. I describe them as “general” functions because these are wider categories in which more specific functions are categorized. For example, maintaining a standing army is currently a subcategory of the national security function, and the Emancipation Proclamation fell under the second general category of establishing justice.
There may be some functions that do not fall neatly into one or the other category, but they should not fall outside of those two categories. Foreign policy, for example, can be placed under both national security and establishing justice since both responsibilities must be considered in the formulation of foreign policy.

**NATIONAL SECURITY: NATIONAL PROTECTION FROM PHYSICAL HARM OR THREAT**

Whoever can see through all fear will always be safe.

–Lao-Tzu

The functions through which government works for national security should be decided upon through the democratic process, and there is nearly universal agreement (among so-called liberals and so-called conservatives) that the national government has the primary responsibility for national security. Since security can be a vague term, national security is defined within this essay as *protection from harm from forces deriving from international and interstate sources that cause physical harm to people and/or property*. This definition draws two major boundaries: the usual national jurisdictional limits, which should be relatively uncontroversial; and the requirement that the harm be physical.

What may be controversial in this definition is that protection is provided against “physical harm”—not so much that it excludes psychological harm, but that it does not discriminate based on the source of physical harm within the federal jurisdiction. In other words, most people will agree that national security includes protection from foreign military attack, which would likely cause clear and immediate physical damage, but there may be less agreement that the federal government has the authority to protect us from physical damage caused by other international and interstate sources. Sources could include pollution, poisons, unsafe foods, toxic products and threats to the ecological balance that threaten all life including human life. Because these inflict harm over the long term and can come from indeterminate sources, or from countless individual choices, many may believe that government protection from these harms is improper.

For example, an elitist political ideology, known generally as neoliberalism, asserts that markets are essentially democracies and, thus, when harms are derived from market externalities or result from a choice that “consumers” (the neoliberal conceptualization of citizens) make freely, then those harms are acceptable. Justice and security have no say when
it comes to markets. For example, if people buy products that pollute the environment, such as fossil fuels, the government cannot regulate those products in the interest of public health because the public has already weighed the risk to public health and decided that the benefit was worth the risk to public health.

This is an extremely problematic and harmful point of view. The flaw in this argument is the assumption that individuals weigh the benefit of their consumer choice against real risks to public health. Even if one believes this dubious claim, it seems more likely that the calculation is that they and their loved ones are unlikely to contract a fatal disease as a result of each of their choices. However, the collection of millions of these choices will certainly result in human deaths and other forms of environmental destruction. If one knew that these deaths would be those of loved ones rather than a strangers, would one make the same choice? It is doubtful. Moreover, it is absurd to claim there is justice in a system that allows consumers to make life or death choices for strangers. This utilitarian idea of acceptable harms is not based upon justice but upon the illusion that spreading the blame reduces the culpability, which is not an acceptable criminal defense. If a million people conspired to rob a bank, rather than ten, it may be less practical to prosecute them, but it would not make it any less of a crime.

If one agrees that there is a need to protect against or at least attempt to mitigate harms from sources such as those mentioned above, and that markets do not adequately take externalities into account, then one must also conclude that a national political entity with authority stretching across state borders is the only kind of entity that can adequately address harms that may originate from cross-border sources. These harms are as real as a foreign military attack and cannot be effectively addressed by local governments working independently. Denying that the federal government should serve this function is akin to denying these harms exist, or, at best, claiming that these are harms we can do nothing about and must accept without recourse. Thankfully, this is not the politically dominant attitude and government does have the function of addressing these harms, however inadequately that may be at the moment.

On the other hand, if as a society we agree that certain harms to people are acceptable, because they do harm people, that agreement must still be achieved through government before that ability to harm is released to the market. There are some who
advocate that solutions to these harms can be best addressed by the market (including those who believe the solution lies in commodifying every atom of the air, sea, and soil) even these solutions (which I later rule out as being unjust in Chapter 5) would require a national authority to enforce and could not even be achieved without a global agreement, and so are impractical to put into action for both practical and cultural reasons.

In short, it should be clear that there is a balance between physical safety and risk that needs to be struck in government action, and this balance must not based on a system external to government that allows people to choose to risk other people’s lives by spreading the culpability thinly across a large population of consumers. Consumers have no inherent right to make choices for citizens. Whatever that balance is, it is determined by citizens, not consumers. An extreme solution emphasizes protection so much that it builds a national straitjacket and padded cell. On the other end is complete federal abrogation of this function whereby stupid or malicious acts can cause great harm to the innocent many. Culture will always play a role at the edges of our consideration of the functions of government, but the main consideration must be justice, which is the subject to which we now turn.

**Justice**

Where government is concerned, security is like the shell around the egg: vital but self-evidently subservient to the higher goal. The reason for being of our government tool-system, according to its founding documents, its basic form (a democratic republic\(^{12}\)), and a key theme of the entire history of Western Civilization, is to establish Justice.\(^{13}\) James Madison said, in *Federalist* No. 51, “Justice is the end of government. It is the end of civil society. It ever has been and ever will be pursued until it be obtained, or until liberty be lost in the pursuit.”\(^{14}\) The Preamble to the Constitution explicitly claims a justice function, along with several others, including to “insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common

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defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity.” It is my opinion that these seemingly distinct functions are all subcategories of national security and justice. Promoting welfare, for example, includes measures taken to protect people from bodily harm, and measures taken to mitigate social problems that have unjust consequences. The American Revolutionary War was, in the minds of its leaders, a fight for justice. For the US government to place any function above justice, including even security, would be to go against its founding principles.

Being such an immense topic, only a basic concept of justice will be sketched in this section, and the remainder of the essay will build on this foundation. To be clear, this will not be a theory of justice, but more of a statement of foundational values. Many philosophers, from Aristotle to Kant, claimed to have worked out an objective theory of justice, but clearly this remains one of the perennial questions of philosophy. Kant claimed to have based his theory entirely on reason, but the fact is his entire theory is built upon the foundation of an assertion—his belief in the infinite value of every human being. I actually share this belief, but I recognize it as a belief and not an incontestable fact. As much as possible, I build my framework with reason, and keep value judgments to a minimum, but it is clear to me that a theory of justice cannot be founded upon reason. It must be founded upon value choices, and built with reason. The foundation I build upon here are values that the Founders clearly held to be the basis of the government they established, and are values I believe most Americans share—the values of equality and fairness.

**ORIGINAL EQUALITY, ESTABLISHED AND MAINTAINED THROUGH FAIRNESS**

One of the key premises underlying the establishment of the United States, earlier made explicit in the Declaration of Independence, is that all people are created equal.\(^\text{15}\) This ideal, which implicitly includes an ideal of fair treatment of individuals according to their basic equality, must be included in an American concept of justice that is true to its founding. One may notice that the Declaration does not state that people remain equal after their

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\(^\text{15}\) Declaration of Independence ¶ 2 (U.S. 1776). (“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. —That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.”)
creation, nor explain in what sense people are created equal. But it is clear, from the founders’ classical education, their Declaration of Independence, and the Preamble to the Constitution, that fairness has always been a policy pursued by the justice function of the US government. The prevailing beliefs about who deserves legal equality have changed over time, but it is telling that the pursuit of legal equality and equality of opportunity has led to the expansion of the right to vote to previously excluded peoples. Two centuries’ worth of social progress toward greater fairness, in such ways as expanding the franchise, and other civil and human rights has been the logical outcome of this founding ethos.

With the importance of the individual established as a keystone of American government, it follows that in its function of enforcing justice, it must protect individual human rights. Without this concept, government is not necessarily mandated to protect individual human rights. The US government could just as easily have been established with a utilitarian concept of justice, where individual rights are subservient to the idea of maximizing pleasure and minimizing pain for the greatest number of people. Fortunately, the United States was established before the utilitarian phase of thinking swept through Western nations, and our classically educated founders based America’s concept of justice on the belief that each individual holds an equal value in law. Utilitarian reasoning can be used to justify the pollution of our environment and the resulting deaths based on the pleasure people derive from polluting products. Personally, I agree with Kant that the value of every individual is infinite, and no person has the right to make unilateral choices that impinge

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17 Declaration of Independence ¶ 30 (U.S. 1776). (“In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.”)

18 That many states prevent felons from voting is an ongoing injustice because many felonies can be seen as political in nature. Preventing felons from voting thus denies felons the opportunity to vote against politicians who, perhaps cynically, support the classification of certain acts as felonies.

19 Obviously, they did not practice what they preached or follow the logic of their claim to include women and slaves, and subsequent governments have failed to live up to this ideal, but the stated ideal has given support to later equal rights movements and promotes a culture of respect for equal rights and a society that provides equal opportunity to its people.
upon another person’s infinite value for utilitarian reasons. An act that impinges upon another person’s infinite value should in most cases not be allowed without consent of the person concerned, and there is no reason at all to abide a system that rewards some people for harming others without the consent of those who are harmed.

Though this basic premise of American justice is universally taught in the American public education system and widely accepted, many people ignore or come to different conclusions about its implications. Thus, there are clear wrongs currently being perpetuated by the US government that need to be addressed in this analysis of the government’s justice function. The following chapter will highlight these injustices, which will add clarity to this concept.
CHAPTER 5

CONFUSIONS, INADEQUACIES, FAILURES, AND PERVERSIONS OF JUSTICE AND OPERATING PRINCIPLES, AND THEIR FIXES

Let any one who doubts, carefully contemplate that now almost complete legal combination—piece of machinery so to speak—compounded of the Nebraska doctrine, and the Dred Scott decision. Let him consider not only what work the machinery is adapted to do, and how well adapted; but also, let him study the history of its construction, and trace, if he can, or rather fail, if he can, to trace the evidence of design and concert of action, among its chief architects, from the beginning.

—Abraham Lincoln

Having sketched a basic framework for a justice-based and well-functioning government, this chapter will point out the inadequacies, failures, and perversions of justice and operating principles of the current US government that should be among the highest priority for the federal government to remedy.20 Because government action is authorized, guided, and limited by regulations, and there seems to be a great deal of confusion and misinformation about regulations, this chapter will begin with a short discussion of what regulations are, and what their place is in life.

WHAT ARE REGULATIONS?

While the United States has now endured about four decades of deregulatory fervor with mixed results, it seems clear that the fervor often comes from, at best, a misunderstanding of what regulations are. “Regulation” is just a fancy word for “rule,” and rules are an unavoidable fact of life and of nature itself. From the laws of thermodynamics, to traffic laws, to language, to manners, to games, to the Ten Commandments, to anarchism—each of these examples are rules or are based on rules, written or unwritten. The US Constitution is a set of regulations. In other words, The US Constitution is the rulebook of

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20 These are only what I consider to be highest priority. For a more complete list, see the Wilson 2008 Campaign platform, Figure 3 in Chapter 8.
the US government. Even if they do not know it, fans of the US Constitution are fans of a set of regulations, or at least of the benefits of certain regulations.

Certainly, there are and have been regulations that most Americans today would consider evil—from particular customs of other cultures, to the legality of slavery, to the racist and murderous laws of the Third Reich. But it should be noted that most regulations are, on balance, constructive and just. The vast majority of regulations are simply conventions, such as the written rules of the road, that society has created specifically to prevent the kinds of disputes and disasters that the lack of these rules would spawn.

Regardless of whether particular regulations strike one as good or bad, it is also a misunderstanding to assume that the removal of government regulations leads to the absence of any regulation. On the contrary, the abolition of democratically determined government regulations simply clears the way for more primitive systems of regulation. That such rules may be unwritten does not mean they do not exist. Deregulation—the abolition of government regulations—replaces collectively determined rules, which are ideally based on a combination of justice and pragmatism, with anything from rules based on cultural norms to rules based on brute force. In a deregulated world, rules become far more momentary and situational, as in the rule the mugger establishes with, “Your money or your life.” The fact that these more primitive rules may be transitory or not written (as opposed to those established in written law until revoked) does not mean they do not exist or exert powerful pressures. Rules are omnipresent in life. For another example, if we remove democratically determined financial regulations, we do not gain a market without rules, but a market based on a different set of rules. What those rules may be can be debated by economists, but that economies are the concrete expression of rules is as apparent as the existence of a price. A product always has a price, and a price is a reflection of the rules under which a product is produced.

With this in mind, it can be stated that Western democratic governments are a vast improvement over the more primitive rulemaking systems from which they evolved. Democracies create explicit rules that can be changed through legal, non-violent, political action. Although democratically determined regulations may sometimes be misguided, at least they can be weighed, debated and changed by everybody concerned rather than imposed by those who might happen to have the power to impose a rule.
A consequence of making rules explicit in writing, however, is that they become easier targets for opponents of the rules. Their explicitness makes it easy for those who would benefit from the lack of government regulation to frame the debate as one of “freedom” versus government intrusion. Thus, instead of a debate being about the cost and benefit of a particular regulation, those who fear some loss of benefit from regulation can frame the debate in purely ideological terms to influence well-meaning people who value freedom yet may have little understanding of the implications of a lack of regulation.

This is not an argument for overriding de facto rules with government regulations. Regulations should always balance the benefit of an expansion of government jurisdiction against its cost and practicality. And the consideration of cost does not simply refer to markets, as when a new regulation may sacrifice some market efficiency; a cost may also be a loss of personal responsibility, such as when a government agency claims the power to make a drug illegal and punish those who choose to use it, which leads to a black market and a host of serious related problems.

It may be helpful at this point to start thinking about government and its regulations as a system, in addition to thinking of it as a tool. In order to get a better grasp of what consequences may follow government actions, we must view government as a system that is interconnected and sometimes contained within countless other systems such as society, culture, political ideologies, the environment, religions, civil society, and other governments. Systems can be understood as collections of related things and processes that constitute a whole.21

There are many types of systems, and different systems produce different results. For example, systems can be composed of countless internal processes that come and go but together result in a kind of equilibrium, such as a virgin ecosystem. Systems can also grow ever larger until they exhaust whatever resource allows them to grow, like a market for oil. The grammar of any system is its rules, and what a system produces is directly tied to those rules. Modifying those rules/regulations can lead to very different results, and, because systems are often nonlinear, outcomes can often be very hard to predict and lead to

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unintended consequences that impact people and the environment in profound, even unjust, ways.

Regulations and the consequences of regulation changes are very evident today in their global economic and justice outcomes. I will discuss economic regulation in some detail in a later section in order to show how it is always directly related to justice outcomes. But I want to warm up first with a more straightforward injustice that resulted from *Santa Clara v. Southern Pacific*.

**SANTA CLARA V. SOUTHERN PACIFIC: PERVERSION OF JUSTICE AS EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS**

Despite the many advances in human equality and fairness under US law, from the Fourteenth Amendment to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, there continue to be stalls and setbacks. On the bright side, today’s injustices seem to be more the consequence of the fact that most people are unaware of their existence rather directly complicit in their existence. One long-standing and major injustice, of which the larger culture is beginning to become aware, is known as “corporate personhood”—a doctrine allegedly established by the Supreme Court—whereby corporations are considered equivalent to legal persons under the law. This is absurd on its face, but there exists a combination of nationwide ignorance, apathy and something like judicial “groupthink” or failure in critical thinking that has helped to harden this injustice into accepted reality.

This ongoing train wreck began when the court reporter published his summary of the findings of *Santa Clara v. Southern Pacific*,22 which asserted that the court believed the Fourteenth Amendment gave corporations equal protection, though they had made no statement or ruling to that effect in the decision.23 This editorializing by the court reporter, even if the majority agreed—and there is no solid evidence that a majority did—does not establish law or precedent. Because the court did not address the Fourteenth Amendment question there was, in fact, no specific establishment of corporate personhood in *Santa Clara*.

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23 The syllabus to the decision stated only that Justice Waite did not "wish to hear argument on the question whether the provision in the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which forbids a State to deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws, applies to these corporations. We are all of the opinion that it does." *Santa Clara*, 396.
Yet subsequent court cases have assumed the existence of corporate personhood and it has thus become hardened into accepted reality. This is a serious injustice that must be corrected. It seems almost patronizing and wasteful to take any more time and space to explain this obvious perversion of justice to adult readers, but I will spell it out for the sake of thoroughness and any youth who happen to be reading: Corporations are not human beings and not worthy of any rights that cause any dilution of human rights or dignity. Corporations are organizations that can mimic and even improve upon what a person may be able accomplish individually, but there is no reason to make therefore the leap that a corporation should be accorded personhood, just as there is no reason to accord legal personhood to a Little League baseball team, a book club or a machine that can do something humans may or may not be able to do individually.24 When kids play on monkey bars, the monkey bars are not accorded personhood. When a person drives a car, a car is not accorded personhood. While people and not cogs perform the functions of a corporation, this does not imply that a corporation is a person.

A corporation, like a government, is simply a tool, but its primary purpose is very different from government. Due to another Supreme Court decision that has not been overturned, Dodge v. Ford Motor Company, publicly traded corporations can and regularly do claim that their highest duty is to maximize shareholder profits.25 As Santa Clara and Buckley v. Valeo (the subject of the next section) show, this legal theory, known as “shareholder primacy,” is used as an excuse for corporate action that is directly opposed to the goals of a government that exists to establish justice. Because corporate charters are granted by state governments, and the resulting corporate entity adheres not to justice but to shareholder primacy, the shareholder primary precedent can even be considered an infraction of Operating Principle 3 in that government has created an entity that it must actively

24 I focus on corporations in this essay because law mostly concerns corporations, but this is not meant to exclude any business form, or other kinds of organizations, from unions to environmental advocates to book clubs. All of these organizations take their cues from each other and from corporate law. Other than “corporate personhood” most of what applies to corporations applies to other non-human entities as well.

25 “A business corporation is organized and carried on primarily for the profit of the stockholders. The powers of the directors are to be employed for that end.” Dodge v. Ford Motor Company, 204 Mich. 459, 170 N.W. 668 (1919). The decision established “shareholder primacy” and still is the leading legal precedent on corporate purpose, and the go-to public relations excuse for virtually all behavior that may appear to most as simple greed.
regulate and conduct oversight of in order to attempt to ensure it acts justly. But government has nowhere near the resources necessary to do so, and even if it did, it would be an incredibly inefficient use of taxpayer funds when a simple rule change could eliminate the legal rationalization for hurting some people in order to profit others.

With wealth creation as its primary purpose, laws that put boundaries on behaviors, such as a prohibition against dumping waste into rivers, have an effect on the amount of wealth a corporation can create. If a corporation has a legal mandate to do everything it can to create wealth for their owners, it follows that it will also do everything it can to change any laws that prevent it from making more money. And, of course, there will always be a strong incentive to break these laws so long as they do exist. When a corporation has all the rights of people in the political process, so much the more has it the power to make and amend laws that benefit it. Furthermore, a corporation has far greater resources than individuals and is theoretically immortal, and so can exert disproportionate power over an unlimited duration in its mandate to consider only self-interest. Is this the kind of entity we humans want to cede our political power to? To do so has been a choice and not a constitutional mandate as has been claimed. We can choose another rule.

This is about thinking logically about the big picture of society, and is not in the least bit anti-corporation. The point is only pro-human. Corporations serve valuable functions in society and there is no reason to eliminate them or treat them unfairly. The point is, as government creations, they should primarily serve the public interest, or at least not work directly against the public interest. Wealth creation can be one permitted purpose granted in a corporate charter, but it must not be the primary purpose, as the *Dodge v. Ford* precedent is currently used to justify. It remains a clear injustice, if not insanity, to give inanimate entities the most sacred rights and privileges of real human beings, while at the same time absolving it of many individual responsibilities, such as financial liability. There is no reason corporations can simply have *some* rights and not other rights, as has always been the case,\(^\text{27}\)

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\(^{26}\) Except a vote which would be numerically insignificant anyway.

\(^{27}\) Notwithstanding the *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, 558 U.S. 08-205 (2010), which used the logic of corporate personhood to further expand the power of organizations to influence elections and thus dilute the influence of humans over their own government. Corporations cannot yet vote in elections.
despite the Santa Clara decision.\textsuperscript{28} Indeed, there is only one right I find improperly granted to corporations: the right to participate in the political sphere, which properly belongs only to living, human individuals. Americans should not have to accept the disproportionate influence of corporations in the electoral process that has come to us through the corporate personhood ideology as well as the money-speech equivalency (explained in the next section) while corporate managers justify unjust action under the legal cover of shareholder primacy.

Action in the political sphere belongs to human beings, and political actions by corporations can only be justified by equating corporations with persons. Once one recognizes that corporations are not persons, their perceived right to participate in political action evaporates. There are several additional arguments (beyond the fact that corporations are not persons) that prove the unfairness of this perceived right.

The first argument is that political action by corporations compounds the political influence of corporate leaders. This is a violation of justice as fairness. The extent to which corporations can act in the political sphere is the extent to which ordinary citizens are deprived of political influence, in the sense that corporate participation dilutes the influence of real people. For example, if society was composed of four people and no corporations, each person would exert 25% influence, but if a corporation with human rights were added, each individual person would now exert only 20% influence, and since the corporation’s CEO is included in the count of those four people, that person now exerts an influence of 40% (with 20% as an individual and 20% as the leader of the corporation). Granted, this is an oversimplification of how influence works, and a corporation does not have a vote, but “influence” here and elsewhere in this essay should be understood as a voice in the debate.

The American ideal of equality and fairness demands that one person’s power to influence the political process not exceed another person’s for structural reasons, but only through the power of his or her ideas. If a person can lobby the government individually, as well as through a corporation, that person has two avenues of influence compared to the average citizen’s single avenue of influence. Furthermore, it is common for people at the highest socioeconomic levels to hold seats on the board of directors of several organizations,

\textsuperscript{28} Santa Clara has always been selectively applied—as evidenced by the fact that Citizens United, an organization, needed to sue to win the right to pay for political ads made independently of candidate campaigns.
multiplying their influence by the number of boards on which they sit. This is a very basic injustice against the constitutional ideal of equality. Although equality is an ideal that does not exist in real life, it is a pursuit we must not actively hinder with structural barriers that favor special interests.

Another unfairness engendered by allowing corporate political action is the potential immortality of corporations. Since corporations are not inherently limited by mortality in the way humans are, they have the ability to maintain a perpetual program of focused political influence to their advantage that a mortal individual cannot. If we think of politics as sharing many qualities of games, immortality is equivalent to giving corporations a colossal head start. It is like a game of Monopoly in which one person starts with 30 percent of the property and an unlimited supply of money. Just as few would agree to play a game of Monopoly against this advantage, our system is also unfair. The granting of political rights to corporations, which can then use those rights and vast resources to maintain their own advantages, is not a foundation for a vibrant society, much less of a fair economic system. A fair economic system includes open competition among competitors of relatively similar advantages. The current system is one in which advantages are maintained and used to gather further advantages—which is nearly the exact opposite of competition.

Finally, the vast personnel and financial resources of corporations, combined with the specious conflation of money with speech (described next) gives corporations greater structural influence than any individual human. Corporations are, according to (bad) legal precedent are primarily wealth creation machines, while humans have an unlimited sphere of integration with the world and so should not be also forced to compete financially with a device specifically designed to financially outperform the individual. This unfairness, however, would not be quite so important if there were not another profound injustice institutionalized in United States law: the equivalence of money with speech. These unjust rulings combine to form a powerful machinery of injustice.

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29 While it is often claimed that money does not sway elections, this is a matter of justice, not effect. Attempted murder is still a crime. Nevertheless, if it were a question of effect, the claim begs the question: Why do organizations spend money on advertising for anything, much less on political activities? If it does not have an effect, why waste any money on it?
The next great injustice in American politics—in many ways an even more absurd idea than corporate personhood—is the legal equivalence of money with speech, allegedly instituted in law by the *Buckley v. Valeo* decision.\(^{30}\) Taken literally, this would be more absurd than corporate personhood because while it makes sense for corporations to have some rights equivalent to persons, there is no justice at all in considering money equivalent to speech.

The *Buckley* decision deals with the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971, which regulated federal campaign spending and contributions. As the act was wide-ranging, the decision was very long and complicated, upholding some limits and rejecting others. The gory details of what was rejected and sustained are not as important to this section as is the Court’s reasoning. The Court rejected certain spending limits as unconstitutional limits on expression, and upheld certain limits as justified by “substantial government interests.”\(^{31}\)

I will begin with the constitutional question. The Court’s rejection of certain spending limits in its decision is the source of the popular, though somewhat mistaken, idea that money is speech. The court did not actually claim that money was speech. They did, however, declare that limiting spending was equivalent to limiting speech. But this was a faulty ruling precisely because it equated the dissemination and amplification of speech with the true act of speech.\(^{32}\)

To explain: money can be used to encourage people to speak, to disseminate speech, or to amplify speech; but while speech has meaning, money has no meaning. What is useful about money is exactly its meaninglessness—it can be exchanged for anything that money can buy because it has no inherent meaning. It can mean a sandwich, a book, a car, or a car wash. It is an empty medium that merely allows the efficient exchange of unlike goods and

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\(^{31}\) Ibid., 1, 3.

\(^{32}\) The *Citizens United* decision of 2010 makes the same conflation of money with speech, and it goes even farther in substituting its judgment for that of the legislature, not recognizing the compelling interest it found to regulate the timing of “electioneering communications” of corporations. The bright side is that the absurdity of the ruling is so blatant that knowledge of this injustice is beginning to spread more widely.
services. Money is nothing more than a placeholder. The ruling was faulty because we do not have a constitutionally protected right to spend money on whatever we want. In most states, for example, it is illegal to exchange money for sex. Bribing public officials is also a crime. Spending can be limited in the public interest, as long as doing so does not conflict with constitutional rights. Do we have a constitutional right to spend money to disseminate and amplify speech? No. Freedom of speech is protected by the Constitution, but the Constitution does not demand a right of dissemination and amplification. Government can limit spending if it deems it to be a substantial government interest.

This leaves the “substantial government interest” question. While limiting spending money is not limiting speech, spending money still cannot be limited without a substantial government interest. What, then, determines a substantial government interest? The Court in fact upheld certain contribution limits contained within the Federal Election Act based on their estimation that government has an interest in preventing the “reality or appearance of improper influence stemming from the dependence of candidates on large campaign contributions.” In other words, the Court recognized that campaign contributions could be regulated due to their corrupting potential, and thus the Federal Election Act, which passed with a supermajority in 1974, expressed a compelling government interest, which could only be rejected if unconstitutional. But since, as shown above, First Amendment issues were not at stake, the Court unjustly overstepped its jurisdiction in this case by substituting its own judgment for that of the Legislature. The Court should have deferred to the Legislature entirely in this matter.

The result of this ruling was anti-democratic. The problem the act was intended to remedy was a public space dominated by the speech of those humans and entities that are able to afford and/or provide for its dissemination, such as the very wealthy, media entities, or corporations. The ruling did not simply favor the rich over the poor; it favored non-humans over humans. In the language of economics, this guaranteed that the marketplace of

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33 *Buckley*, 1,3. The passage continues: “the ceilings imposed accordingly serve the basic governmental interest in safeguarding the integrity of the electoral process without directly impinging upon the rights of individual citizens and candidates to engage in political debate and discussion.”

34 A partial dissent to *Buckley* by Justice Byron White correctly asserted that the court had no business meddling in legislative reasoning on this subject, as the Legislative Branch has more expertise in this matter.
ideas would be distorted by well-funded special interests. The court prevented the legislature from addressing, even as inadequately as the Act did, the injustice of disproportionate influence of the well-funded over individuals in U.S. politics.

The great majority of people in the United States cannot even approach the contribution limits currently instituted in campaign finance law, opting instead to focus on food, clothing, and shelter. Most Americans know their ideas will not get an equal opportunity to be heard, which can lead to cynicism. This is unfair and destructive of a culture based on equality. Could this be just in some larger sense? I cannot see how. Free speech is a sacred right of all Americans, but limiting money is not limiting speech. Limiting money only levels the playing field in order to give the best ideas the best chance to rise to the surface and benefit society.

One might argue that the fact that every adult U.S. citizen (except convicted felons) having the right to vote makes up for the inequity within the marketplace of ideas. While all votes are counted equally, a vote reflects consideration of potentially complex ideas disseminated through speech, and so a vote cannot be considered compensation for one’s lack of equal voice, nor is such a vote likely to be well-informed. Moreover, to the extent that a vote is considered a statement, it usually comes far after the action or actions to which it refers, and it is vague in that it comes with no explanation as to what actions or hopes it is speaking for or against. Votes as we count them today share a similarity to money in that they can mean almost anything. Partisans claim vote counts mean this or that, but this is disingenuous when it suggests that it means more than the election of a particular person. Only the voter knows what his or her vote means.

What would be the consequences of limiting spending in elections? It is my belief that in the absence of money, and with a free marketplace of ideas (meaning all ideas can be disseminated and accessed by the public, which is a problem I will address shortly), the ideas that are best able to motivate people to get off their couches and advocate and vote will be the most successful. Based on the founding principle of equality, every person’s speech would be given equal opportunity in the marketplace of ideas. The corporate CEOs and board members and stockholders will still be able to participate freely, but simply without the added advantage of an immortal organization with considerable resources behind them to compound their voices. Certainly, some people will have more social capital than others, and
thus on a social level some speech will be heeded and considered more than others, but it
does not stand to reason from the standpoint of equality that we should compound these
advantages with the megaphone (and censorship) that spending money can provide.

Limiting money in politics is in the best interest of a democracy based on the political
equality of individuals, but in some ways this has been impractical until recently. As a large
republic, issues of national importance have had to be filtered and disseminated through mass
media. Today, however, we have the mechanisms for achieving a free marketplace of ideas at
a national level—a public space designed to allow all citizens to participate freely, and to
allow their ideas to compete based on their merits—and so it is incumbent upon the
government, based on its justice function, to create this marketplace of ideas and begin to
remedy the disproportionate influence of money in politics.

**THE NATIONAL FREE MARKETPLACE OF IDEAS**

The uncontested premise of *Buckley* is that the government has a substantial interest
in leveling the playing field in the marketplace of ideas so that corrupting influences such as
money and the threat of violence do not mute the political voices of individuals. This is a
compelling interest not only because equality among people demands that the ideas of people
have an equal opportunity to be part of the political conversation, but also because when
more ideas are available to the public, more ideas can be debated and honed by more people,
which makes it more likely that better policy solutions will emerge and be agreed upon by
more people.

The means to provide a free and fair marketplace of ideas is available today and the
government has a duty to provide it. Democracy demands it, even republican democracy
demands it, since the people are expected to express their informed decisions through their
elected representatives. The following is my proposal of how it can be done:

The US government, which helped create the Internet, can set up a national Internet-
based information dissemination and analysis system which will both provide extensive
information about the activities of government and allow users to discuss these activities and
offer their own views, alternatives, and solutions. Just as on sites like Amazon.com, people
can rate ideas and solutions. Multiple ratings can be avoided by giving each citizen only one
user account, associated with his or her social security number.
The federal discussion board will be about federal issues, but could be filtered by users to include only selected political constituencies so as to focus discussions toward specific representatives. Representatives will also be able to participate and should participate in the discussion. All discussion can include audio, video, and other forms of media.

Universal broadband access and net neutrality then become civil rights and clearly must be guaranteed by the United States in order to guarantee equal political status. To give some people a structural information and participation disadvantage over others is anti-democratic and therefore unfair.

Although this system could easily be set up as a national voting system whereby people could vote in elections via the Internet, I believe this would be misguided and potentially dangerous. It would be impossible to provide transparency in a voting system that is entirely computer based. There must be physical evidence and a practical way to count each vote to verify the accuracy of the vote count. This applies to the systems already in use today, which have been implicated in many cases of voting irregularities. Analog voting systems, which provide instant and easily verifiable evidence of each vote, must be maintained in order to prevent fraudulent elections. Computer voting would make voting easier and probably more widespread than it is today, but there are other ways to make voting easier. My preference would be to establish a two-day federal voting holiday, with the election falling on the second day. The holiday will apply to all United States residents except grade-school teachers, who will spend the first day educating the students about democracy, elections and current issues, if desired, and take the students on a field trip on the second day to witness the voting process as they do it themselves.

Along the same lines, a non-partisan analog network—local community forums and voting systems—that mirror this Internet-based system in physical form at public locations, must also be set up so that in case of a system failure, people will have a local backup system. Such a system should already exist as a way to ensure democratic continuity in a case of governmental abuse of power that might take advantage of the social fragmentation of modern society. A network of functional communities would, among a great many benefits, prevent a corrupt government from taking advantage of system failures, natural disasters, or public protests to declare martial law (a power claimed against the public by the
Bush Administration in the so-called Bush Doctrine\textsuperscript{35}). The analog voting systems mentioned above would be maintained at these locations. These locations could easily be combined with local governments’ arrangements without impinging upon their jurisdictions; but they would be dedicated (paid for by the federal government) and not used for other community purposes, so that people can visit at any time to participate in the public discussion. The possibility that people may not use it must not be considered an excuse to co-opt the space for another use. Its non-use should be conspicuous.

Although using the system for official votes would be misguided, the system could be used to conduct scientifically valid public opinion polls. There will be fraud, just as there is now voter fraud, but it will be limited, and a small price to pay compared to the benefit. In order to keep fraud at a minimum, security must be openly monitored and enforced by security teams that will, themselves, be monitored. Security must be completely transparent. People can choose to participate openly or anonymously as they wish, but the one-person-one-account system will help prevent gaming of the system.

In addition to this national discussion board, every political candidate will have separate constituent forums, and have their own Internet TV channels.\textsuperscript{36} Though these can be used for electioneering, their primary use will be to broadcast any meetings they have with lobbyists, paid or otherwise. (Lobbyists have no right to privacy in their communications with public servants.) There is no limit to how many channels can be set up, and, again, a rating system can be used to narrow down the field of candidates one chooses to view—but if one wishes, one could delve deeply into the entire stable of candidates. Thus, with this central location where any candidate can get out his or her complete message and with universal access already provided, candidates will arise organically, by draft movements, and there will be no need to spend great amounts of money on advertising. Public service

\textsuperscript{35} George W. Bush, \textit{The National Strategy for Homeland Security} (Washington, D.C.:White House, 2007), 3. (“Indeed, certain non-terrorist events that reach catastrophic levels can have significant implications for homeland security. The resulting national consequences and possible cascading effects from these events might present potential or perceived vulnerabilities that could be exploited, possibly eroding citizens’ confidence in our Nation’s government and ultimately increasing our vulnerability to attack. This Strategy therefore recognizes that effective preparation for catastrophic natural disasters and man-made disasters, while not homeland security per se, can nevertheless increase the security of the Homeland.”)

\textsuperscript{36} For a commercial version of how these channels might look, see http://www.ustream.tv. The channel I set up is located at http://www.ustream.tv/channel/wilson-2008-tv.
messages on commercial channels could remind people when an election is coming, and thus there would be no reason left not to forbid politicians and organizations from spending money on television advertising—the level playing field, the free marketplace of ideas, will exist. If political advertising continued to be allowed, at least candidates would have a national media outlet of their own in a well-known location to get their message out. If the collective political will or judicial ideology continues to impose the money/speech equivalency injustice, money would nevertheless become less important as people come to use the marketplace of ideas for their political education.

Either way, whether political advertising spending is banned or made less relevant, paid lobbying should be banned. The same logic that shows that limiting money is not limiting speech—the fact that money only helps disseminate and amplify speech—proves that paid lobbying can and should be banned, as this multiplies and magnifies influence with a level of resources that is not available to the majority of people. Paid lobbying by non-human entities adds insult to injury, and is a perversion of justice as equality. This is not to say a business cannot have a person employed to keep abreast of any issues that will affect the business. Perhaps they should, but the job must simply be to inform the employees so that those who are concerned may lobby the government on their own time. The political researcher or any other employee must not be required to lobby for his employer, as such a requirement would be paying somebody to influence the political process. The entities’ interests may be represented by individuals on a voluntary basis, but to give the entity itself a direct voice in politics is to dilute human rights.

The fact that a non-human entity’s bidding may be done by humans does not alter the reality that the entity is non-human. It is akin to giving political rights to a computer. Like computers, organizations may exhibit something that might be called intelligence, but they exist for a specific purpose and, unlike humans, are not ends in themselves. As such, they cannot have anything like the sphere of concerns—moral and otherwise—that weigh upon a human and comprise the reason-for-being of government. To allow paid lobbying for non-human entities is, to create a meaning-destroying system. Government exists to address human concerns; otherwise society is no more than a machine that pursues meaningless ends.
ILL-INFORMED CITIZENRY: FAILURE OF OPERATING PRINCIPLE 4

If you don’t trust the people, you make them untrustworthy.

– Lao-tzu

This national free marketplace of ideas (FMI) also helps resolve an increasing problem of our large and growing republic: the failure of Operating Principle 4. The principle that operators must know how to use the tool is being violated today probably more than ever. The particular operators who now seem incapable of using the tool properly are the people tasked with what any organization director would agree to be the most important function: that of selecting the right people to perform government functions. The people charged with this task are the voters.

Since the United States is a democratic republic, the most significant influence citizens have on the behavior of government is not directly based on their opinion of the particular issues the government may face, but on who the citizens elect to represent their interests. So the role of citizens is the most important in a democratic republic, and also the most difficult to do well, in a sense, because citizens do not have the luxury of choosing how to respond to each occurrence, but must instead choose a representative whom they believe will best respond to future issues and help create the future they envision.

Voters, in other words, are tasked with predicting the future. Thus, by its nature, a democratic republic makes gamblers of its citizens. This is a necessary evil in our large republic, but we must do everything we can to reduce the gamble, because the point of elections is not to gamble, but to provide us with the government operators we need to get us where we want to go with as little risk as possible. Elections are not meant to be entertainment; they are meant to equip the tool-system with the operators who will best serve us.

The means to reduce the gamble is to have well-informed citizens. Citizens should be well-informed about what the world might throw at the government and also be well-informed about the people who are or who propose to be public servants. Again, the citizens have the most difficult role in a democratic republic.

Being well-informed is not something that can be mandated, nor should it be. We cannot do much on the education side (nor should we, I believe—see my platform in Part II), except provide incentives to offer civics and media studies classes in grade school, but we
can improve our means of providing information. Information here refers to relevant and timely information.

If it is possible, cost effective, does not harm national security, or violate reasonable expectations of privacy, then government activities should be public. (An exception would be when previous attempts to mediate or negotiate political deals in public fail and there is a reasonable expectation that private mediation will succeed.) In our government, we are the bosses—our elected representatives and other public servants work for us. This is clear according to the Constitution, but I emphasize it because unnecessary secrecy—not just official classification, but de facto secrecy—violates this principle constantly at every level of government.

So, even before we know exactly what functions our government should serve, we know that one of its inherent functions as a democratic republic, based on Operating Principle 4, is to do whatever it can to provide the information citizens need to form a valid opinion about what our public servants should do, about who might best help get it done, and to then judge the performance of our public servants so as to hold them accountable at election time or earlier, if warranted.37

Considering what is possible, reasonable, and practical, current government transparency practices are inadequate to say the least. What has become possible with the advent of the Internet is a far greater use of video broadcasting of government operations which are relevant to citizens in the performance their function of choosing government operators at election time. Keeping this information hidden from the public is like hiding from the boss.

How would this work in practice? Just as all political candidates can establish their own TV channels in the FMI, all meetings and operations that pertain to the public interest and do not violate one of the conditions above can and should be required to establish a channel. This can be achieved with almost no expense relative to government standards,38 and channels can be turned on or off as needed.

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37 This is not to advocate something more like a parliamentary system wherein elections can be called at will. I believe the stability of our system is beneficial. Early termination can be achieved through the impeachment process, which is, in my opinion, correctly difficult.

38 At the scale that government will be establishing these connections, which will require only a small
Transparency is an essential part of a democratic republican government. Transparency is to government what an airliner’s gauges are to the airliner. A modern airliner without auto-pilot or accurate instruments to inform its pilots would not stay long aloft. For the electorate to be able to do the best possible job, they need to know what is relevant to their electoral decisions. Even if few people pay constant attention to what government is doing, those few who do can bring important items to the attention of a wider public through the FMI, or by journalists through commercial media, and knowing that this action is possible can be a check on bad behavior. Transparency must be built into government functions in order to provide citizens with the information they need to do their job even when other mass media outlets fail to provide it.

THE PROBLEM WITH POLITICAL PARTIES: FAILURE OF OPERATING PRINCIPLES 3 AND PERVERSION OF JUSTICE AS FAIRNESS

The Founders were not fans of parties or factions. Parties and factions are referred to variously in the Federalist Papers (10 and 51, for example) as “evils.” Washington warned against parties in his farewell address in 1796.39 The Founders did not, however, believe they could be eliminated; only mitigated. True to this perspective, they included several strategies in Constitution—such as separation of powers among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches; federalism; and indirect election of the president through an Electoral College40—which they hoped would check the power of parties. But the single ballot, simple plurality (winner-takes-all) voting system that was established strongly incentivized the creation of a two-party response. Almost from the beginning, people found advantage in forming the broadest possible coalitions in order to increase the chances of winning office for a

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39 George Washington, “Washington’s Farewell Address,” The Avalon Project, accessed November 6, 2011, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/washing.asp. (“The common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it.”)

40 Although the winner-take-all method most states use, which gives all Electoral College votes to whichever candidate wins the plurality of votes, favors a two-party response.
representative of their interests against the possibility of having no office at all. Madison, the author of *Federalist Papers* 10 and 51, formed the first coalition, now known as the Democratic-Republicans Party, to oppose the financial programs of Hamilton. This led, in turn, to the formation of a party of Hamilton supporters, which called themselves the *Federalists*.

Parties have played a positive role in some ways, such as maintaining a level of moderation necessary to bring together large numbers of voters under a single banner, but public servants retain their party allegiances in office, and consequently the two major parties have nested themselves within the government-tool itself. Due to the intrinsic behavior of permanent organizations, the two-party takeover of government tends to lower the quality of government legislation and function, and is downright destructive to the electoral process.

To explain, permanent political parties are bureaucracies and as such are primarily concerned with their own survival, growth, and advantage. One result of this is an increase in the likelihood that, in pursuit of partisan goals, party members will vote against or block legislation that they actually support. Party members may hope that in the longer term their party’s success will ultimately lead to the success of their policy preferences, but in the meantime, the primacy of public interest is thwarted. The public interest—the national interest—almost always plays second fiddle to the party’s interests.

Partisan loyalty also makes ineffective administration more likely when administrators are encouraged to perform poorly to ensure that programs promoted and established by the efforts of their opposing party fail. As mentioned in Chapter 3, this is an example of sore losing and a failure of Operating Principle 3. This is particularly insidious because it prevents us from knowing whether or not a policy would work if enacted correctly.

The latter practices may not be unconstitutional, but they are morally corrupt and the opposite of public service. What may be unconstitutional and unquestionably works directly against democracy and the founders’ clear intent is the partisan ballot access regulation that clearly favor parties—particularly the two major parties—over independents.

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42 There are borderline cases, as in the interpretation of certain acts as crimes, or in the setting of priorities when financial or personnel resources eliminates the performance of certain functions.
In California, for just one example, a person cannot be placed on the ballot as a presidential candidate unless he or she is the nominated candidate of a political party. While there have been successful challenges to some partisan ballot access abuses, it is not clear that a constitutional challenge to partisan access requirements would be ruled in favor of the plaintiff by the current court, but they should succeed on the same grounds *Santa Clara* should be overturned.

Just as corporations are not human and therefore have no valid right to participate directly as persons in US politics, political parties are not human and have no right to participate directly. While there is a constitutional right of association, and right to form organizations such as political parties, it does not follow that they can spend money to influence elections or insinuate themselves directly into government in the form of making choices about committee chairs and creating self-interested ballot requirements. There is also no reason that party membership cannot be temporarily suspended for elected representatives for the duration of their public service based on the fact that *party membership is a conflict of interest for a public servant*. Public servants represent the interests of all of the people, not of the parties.

Moreover, even to the extent that the some founders hoped parties in a large republic would check the values of other parties, they clearly did not believe parties should be a part of government as such, as this would negate one of the fundamental checks and balances the Constitution pioneered: the separation of powers. To have non-governmental organizations (parties) actually embodied by people in positions within government is essentially a coup. Government internal parties have taken power away from people, and delivered it on an ongoing basis to those who are willing to pay whatever dues their party requires (such as contributions, working for candidates, etc.), these payments being due before one can be empowered to serve directly the wider public interest (though only theoretically, since dues to party are never paid in full).

One hope of a partial remedy in absence of a court challenge is that the FMI will weaken the power of parties. People who are unhappy with the performance of both major parties will have feasible alternative candidates to choose from. Just as people use social networks to participate in political groups, the free marketplace of ideas can be designed to enable people to group together and form temporary coalitions around political beliefs. When
ballot access laws are eventually overhauled to remove the partisan duopoly and make political participation less esoteric, temporary coalitions can be organized around specific issues or platforms and promote candidates for office. Candidates can rise organically, based on the appeal of their ideas and platforms, rather than based on the backing of parties and financial resources. Candidates will not need to raise vast amounts of money to conduct a successful campaign, nor will there be a need for public financing, other than that required to maintain the FMI. Thus, even if judicial corruption upholds the right of the duopolistic organizational takeover of government at the expense of justice and individual primacy established by the Constitution, the FMI should help remedy institutionalized partisanship.

**Privatized Military and Prisons: Failure of Operating Principle 3**

Another failure of following Operating Principle 3, similar to the creation of the “shareholder primacy” doctrine, has been the government’s abjuration of national security functions that properly belong only to government. The privatization of the military, including the war weapons industry, encourages the development of profit-seeking organizations that profit most from insecurity and injustice. Running prisons for profit also creates a group of people who benefit from the injustice of oppressive laws and increasing prison populations. These are clear violations of Operating Principle 3, as well as of other democratic values, such as ensuring justice-based action in international territory. Corporations have a legal mandate to maximize profits for shareholders and some will inevitably use any means necessary to do so, even if it is illegal or unethical. These public policy choices have unnecessarily and unwisely created a system perfectly designed to produce malfeasance.

The United States must re-nationalize the military and all military functions, from taking those security functions now performed by private armies like Blackwater/Xe to those personnel support functions like feeding and doing laundry now performed by corporate behemoths like Halliburton and Bechtel. The United States (as well as all state governments) must mandate that prisons be government-run. These functions must not be ceded to profit-

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43 For the ideological bible of privatization, see Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).
seeking entities. It is true that markets can help make war more efficient and provide more creative targeted and mass killing options, but justice trumps these considerations. War is a national undertaking that reflects upon the people of the nation and should not be a business, nor should it be a reflection of transnational corporations. It only takes the corruption, blackmailing or mistake of one person, the President, to enrich these interests. This issue also needs to be addressed.

**National Sovereignty: Inadequate Justice as Fairness and Imbalance of Power**

Another dangerous, and easily corrupted aspect of the US government included in the Constitution is the disproportionate military power exercised by the Executive Branch, which is often conflated with “national sovereignty.” The Constitution needs to be amended to fix this problem.

In the history of Western nations, national sovereignty has been the primary form of sovereignty on earth. During this time, the national sovereign was simply the national ruler who could give and take away at will the personal liberties of its people, which were granted by the ruler in the first place. There was no such thing as “inherent” rights as exist today in the United States. Liberties were merely gifts of the sovereign. The belief in inherent rights have progressed in recent centuries, under the influence of Enlightenment thinkers, as democratic national governments formed and began to guarantee people inalienable rights, such as the right to a speedy, public trial by jury. National authority is increasingly understood to lie in the collective consent of the citizens.\(^4^4\)

In democracies, then, national sovereignty has appropriately become the sovereignty of the nations as wholes, which exist in order to establish and protect the individual sovereignties of each of its citizens. It can correctly be said that the United States Constitution was written to grant sovereignty to the people and prevent government officials from assuming any authority not specifically granted. Thus, the primary reason for any grant

\(^4^4\) Since the twentieth century, nations have increasingly entered into voluntary agreements to cede some degree of national sovereignty in the interest of mutual benefit, particularly in the areas of trade and environmental protection. Of course, all nations currently maintain right to secede from such agreements—perhaps not without negative repercussions, but it remains a right.
of presidential power must ultimately be for the protection of the individual sovereignties of the people—the true national sovereignty.

National sovereignty includes many more advanced human aspirations than only protection from harm, but the exercise of military power is one important means by which a nation protects its national sovereignty. But if military power is so concentrated in a single person, as it is now in the United States, it is not only a potentially inaccurate representation of the national will, it is a truly grave threat to national sovereignty. Precedent currently permits the president in his role as Commander in Chief to wage war with minimal input from Congress. The people of the nation currently have no direct say in the most profound and consequential choice a nation can take—the choice of whether or not it will wage war. Congress can refuse to fund the war, but it is considered political suicide to do so and thus a very weak check since it can be framed by war proponents as “not supporting the troops.” The only remaining check on this power is an election, but by this time the deed will have been done, and is thus another weak check.

Moreover, when a US president decides that he is a “war president,” he can claim all manner of powers that a peacetime president does not have. In particular, war presidents can and have claimed new rights as well as the authority to take away rights citizens normally hold, diminishing true national sovereignty and concentrating still more power in the president alone. Justice as fairness, not to mention common sense, strongly argues against vesting so much power in the hands of a single person without additional checks.

The military powers of the Executive Branch were originally established for practical reasons, partly because at the time of the founding, information travelled no faster than the speed of a horse, and it was a practical necessity for the Executive Branch to be able to act deliberately when speed was necessary and debate was not a viable option. The Founders were very concerned that the United States would be capable of “energy and dispatch in warfare and foreign policy.” At the time, it was believed that Congress would serve as a

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45 “War” is meant here in the common understanding of the word, though not in the constitutional sense. In constitutional terms, a war requires a congressional declaration of war. See U.S. Constitution, art 1, sec. 8.

46 Alexander Hamilton, “Federalist #70,” in The Federalist Papers, location 6097. (“Energy in the Executive is a leading character in the definition of good government. It is essential to the protection of the community against foreign attacks.”)
check on that power, as only Congress had the power to declare war. Wars start differently today, as presidents have learned that they can circumvent Congress simply by calling military action something other than war—“police action,” for example.

This presidential power is often defended under the notion that it is an exercise of national sovereignty, but, as the above discussion makes clear, this is a misunderstanding of the meaning of “national.” The sovereignty being defended here is only Executive Branch military sovereignty. One might consider it national in the sense that the president is elected by the nation, but at a time when the political wishes of the nation can be quickly and easily measured, this is no longer strictly accurate. In might be argued that this presidential power could, in its best possible use, serve to check the will of a public clamoring to wage an unjust war. But history has, to the contrary, shown that it is generally the Executive Branch that encourages and deceives the country into going to war.

It is no longer necessary or even reasonable for the Executive Branch to hold such vast power over the most powerful and technologically advanced military in the world. The choice to exercise that power belongs in the hands of the American people who will fight it, pay for it, and suffer the consequences. This problem can be remedied through constitutional amendment without eliminating the Executive Branch’s ability to act quickly when necessary. When long-term, major military actions are being considered, such as the latest invasion of Iraq, which was “debated” over many months, there is also time to bring such profoundly consequential actions to a national referendum. Because the consequences of war are so profound, and the whole country suffers the consequences of war, I would hope that the threshold for such actions be set at two-thirds majority—but even a simple majority would be more justifiable than the system we have today. I would also strongly suggest that with the help of physical voting systems, any military draft would pull first from people who voted for military action. This could be accomplished with the help of physical voting systems, which could keep votes anonymous until a war is approved.

Not only would this not be a reduction of national sovereignty; it would increase national sovereignty in the sense that the nation refers to the whole nation, not the person who is in office at a particular moment. Moreover, although national sovereignty is a
principle many hold sacred, its importance rests on a more fundamental sovereignty—individual sovereignty.\textsuperscript{47} National sovereignty exists solely to protect individual sovereignty. It is like the shell of the egg, just as security is the defensive shell for justice. This is the fundamental purpose of national sovereignty—the protection of the rights and liberties of the people of the nation.

Therefore, we must amend the Constitution to require a national referendum to wage war, and because war is such a morally profound and hugely consequential act that affects United States’ relations with the world forever, it should require a two-thirds majority. There is no reason that so much power—particularly to inflict international violence—should lie in one person’s hands.

**ECONOMIC REGULATION: FAILURE OF JUSTICE AS FAIRNESS AND OF OPERATING PRINCIPLE 4**

In order to provide a basis for thinking about justice-based economic policy, what follows is a very condensed outline of the current US economy and economic principles of what is somewhat misleadingly called capitalism. It begins with a clarification of a term that gets thrown around a lot by politicians as if it represented a real an entirely real and positive possibility: a so-called “free market.”

The definition of “free market” varies, depending on the context. In the context of political rhetoric, the definition is hard to nail down, but has some affinity with the “free market” of economic theory. In classical economic theory, a free market is the most efficient market, meaning it allows products to be produced at their lowest possible costs and bought at their lowest possible prices. In its ideal form, a free market is one in which everybody has perfect information about everything that is for sale, including what each item costs to produce and what other price every seller is selling for. So-called consumers (idealized fictional autonomous entities sometimes considered to manifest themselves in humans) also always act rationally and “choose” the best value for their purposes. For this to work well, there must be enough competition so that sellers cannot gouge people in the case of

\textsuperscript{47} Also known as personal or bodily sovereignty. All of these terms are controversial and mean different things to different people, so I ask that you set aside any previous understanding of these terms and accept my definition in the context of this paper.
necessities, such as food and water, land, shelter, health care, information, and today, energy. In non-necessities, there may be no competition because customers may choose not to purchase something if they feel the price does not reflect the value of the item, or if they simply do not want it.

Of course, an ideal free market can never exist in the real world. There are always information imbalances that give one party (usually the seller, since the seller is usually at least relatively more expert in the market for their product, but often the buyer when a seller may be desperate for cash) an advantage over the other that pushes the price in one direction or the other. This ideal market is not the kind of market usually implied by the term in political rhetoric, but this is the theory that underlies the more commonly understood definition used in political rhetoric.

The more commonly understood definition of a free market is one that has no “distortions” or barriers put in the way of the exchange of money for goods. Examples of these distortions are taxes, tariffs, subsidies, minimum wages, price ceilings, public health standards, and other regulations—often referred to as “government interference”—which increase the cost of products and/or slow down their distribution. A government that is attempting to allow this kind of free market to exist is following “laissez-faire” policies. Even these markets also do not exist in an ideal form within the economies of functional governments, though elimination of these kinds of government interventions is the goal of advocates of economic liberalism. In fact, there has been an ongoing trend toward the reduction of tariffs and subsidies since at least General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1947, which paved the way for the establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and other regional trade organizations that work toward the establishment of these kinds of free markets.

There is, however, generally a tension between the demand for this kind of free market and the greater goals of most governments, and any government that is concerned with fostering a reasonably equitable economy and, thus, a large middle class. One important tension comes from the tendency of markets to produce monopolies. One producer is likely to consistently perform better than all of the others, and with economies of scale, large producers can undercut smaller producers and, like Monopoly the board game, eventually run their competitors out of business. The saving grace of the board game, however, is that the
game soon ends and the next game begins with everybody on equal footing. Real markets, of course, have no such built-in mechanism for reinstating a level playing field, which is why the US government occasionally intervenes to prevent businesses from merging and, on rare occasions, even orders the break up of a business into smaller parts.

This monopolistic tendency of unregulated capitalism is known not only to economists, but also to systems thinkers. System thinkers call this kind of system dynamic a “system trap,” and have given this trap the name “success to the successful.” Most people know it by the cliché, “the rich get richer and the poor get poorer.” The key property of this kind of system is that its inevitably resulting inequality is not based primarily upon inequality among people (in education, skills, etc.), but upon the system itself. The algorithm of laissez-faire economic policies may be value neutral, but its human consequences are not.

Monopolistic behavior is just the tip of the iceberg of tensions between free-market advocates and government interests. Government has countless justice and security interests that compel it to play an active role in the marketplaces it provides, ranging from the prevention of corrupt business practices, to the protection of the environment.

The foregoing may give the impression that there is an inherently antagonistic relationship between markets and democratic governments, but this is not the case. On the contrary, governments provide the complete set of conditions that enable markets to exist at all. If it were not for governments—or at least some stable, widely shared system of rules—there would be no marketplace and very few products and consumers. Markets require some minimum level of security and mutually agreed property rights that in developed nations is provided by government. Governments also provide the basic infrastructure that makes most business possible—the currency, the roads, the fire and police departments, the sewage systems, water supply, a legal system, etc. Corporations owe their very legal existence to governments.

Again, there is no inherent antagonism between the functions of democratic governments and markets. Whatever government does that benefits people, also ultimately

48 Meadows, *Thinking in Systems*, 127

benefits business (though not necessarily vice-versa). Any perceived antagonism exists only in the minds of, on one extreme, those who mistakenly believe the so-called free-market ideal is good and possible, and on the other extreme, those who might have some fringe ideologies like socialism or communism. What lies in between and unseen by the ideologues and apolitical alike is the reality that the people demand a lot from their governments (even if they do not realize that government provides the benefits they demand and use\(^50\)), and consequently public servants must determine by what rules market participants should abide, what physical conditions government needs to provide to satisfy the people’s demands, and, correspondingly, what related costs it should be passed on to the participants (businesses and people). These conditions include infrastructure, justice, security, and additional costs include those instruments governments are forced to create to monitor market participants so they do not act in ways that jeopardize public health, such as by creating faulty products, or by polluting. The total cost of providing the conditions for secure and just markets to exist is considerable. These functions are not optional, as some suggest, but are necessary functions of a government, not only for the common welfare of the people, but for the common welfare of business.\(^51\)

These are the primary reasons why the United States has never had a truly free-market economy, and why it became more regulated over time for the sake of justice and safety. The point of this brief exposition of economic theory versus reality has been to explain why economic regulations, including taxes, are justified. That justification, in short, is that markets exist because government creates the marketplace and must be compensated

\(^{50}\) A 2008 survey conducted by Suzanne Mettler found that, for just three of a long list of examples of misconceptions about government, about 43% of people who were beneficiaries of Pell Grants and unemployment insurance and about 44% of Social Security beneficiaries, reported that they “have not used a government social program.” Suzanne Mettler, “Reconstituting the Submerged State: The Challenges of Social Policy Reform in the Obama Era,” Perspectives on Politics 8 (2010), 809.

\(^{51}\) These government functions exist because in trying to minimize expenses and maximize profits, businesses are incentivized to avoid potentially costly measures that make products more safe or less polluting. They try to “externalize” their costs, that is make somebody else other than themselves or the purchaser of their product pay whatever costs they can avoid. Oil companies, for example, benefit greatly from “externalities.” The price of gas neither reflects the prices of getting the gas to the pump (the US military provides the security necessary to get the oil to markets) nor the cost to public health of the resulting carbon pollution. These companies profit greatly from being able to externalize these expenses.
so that it can continue to provide the marketplace and all that entails, most importantly justice and security.

It is necessary to keep this background in mind when debating the merits and drawbacks of particular economic regulations being considered by government. Regulations (rules) always exist, whether written and explicit, or unwritten. The only proper debate is over when to make them explicit and how to pay the cost of creating the desired conditions. It is just as misguided to claim regulation and taxation is “socialism” as it is to strangle beneficial markets with unnecessary, or overly burdensome regulations. While government regulation can be and has been misguided, counterproductive, and even corrupt, a government that is competent and not corrupt creates regulations that benefit people tremendously, and, by creating confidence in markets, ultimately benefits the markets as well. If some regulations based on justice and security prevent some people from creating businesses, from hiring more people, or from making higher profits, this is only proper. Putting economic considerations above justice is unjust. If government acts unjustly, or stupidly in ways that hurt business, it is not government that is the problem; it is the government operators who are to blame, and who, in a healthy government, are quickly replaced.

This background also reveals the intimate connection between the level of taxes that businesses pay, the level individuals pay, government debt, and the level of justice and security in society. If voters collectively decide that they want a certain level of protection from harms stemming from business practices, the extent to which business taxes do not cover these security expenses is the extent to which people are either not protected or pay for that protection out of their own pockets—or to which government goes into debt (until it can no longer support its debt). It is only when participants in the debate have this more holistic understanding of economic regulations that they can come to well-informed decisions about when they are appropriate, what kind would accomplish the goal with a minimum of encumbrance for both business and government, and correspondingly how to pay for the oversight, whether through taxing the direct participants, or spreading the cost across all taxpayers.

In failing to make these trade-offs clear to citizens in its public communications, the US government violates Operating Principle 4. When it fails to provide transparency into the
connection between regulations, taxes, justice and security, voters do not have the knowledge they need to do their job properly. In order to remedy this failure, the US government should provide this information in an easily comprehensible format as part of the FMI. Independent organizations, including news outlets, occasionally produce stories and tools in attempts to provide people with this information, but this should not be left to third parties to provide, nor should it be an occasional project of an enterprising journalist. When the federal budget is posted on the FMI, it can be automatically tied to such a tool, and there will be no need for journalists to explain where tax revenue goes since it will be in plain sight (for an example of this kind of tool, see Figure 1).

Furthermore, as the breakdown of the federal budget in Figure 1 shows, functions and programs do not fall into the Justice and National Security functions that I have suggested are the only appropriate functions of government according to what is generally accepted by Americans. It appears that government accountants placed programs and functions into categories based partly on the departments that perform the functions, and partly based on convenience. Transportation costs seem to fall entirely into the “Transportation” category, even though transportation costs are not distinct, but connected to each function they serve. The accounting categories should be rearranged so that they fall under their true government functions. Health, for example, should fall under National Security; Education should fall under Justice; transportation costs should fall under the specific functions they support; and so on. All functions should be subcategories of either Justice or National Security, or in a few cases split between both. This would not be a difficult change to make, as accounting is computer based and changes need only be made to categories and not individual transactions. In short, markets are good things as long as the stewards of the marketplace understand that the markets exist to serve people and regulate accordingly. We have not figured out a more successful way of meeting the demands of large, complex societies. People should be rewarded for successful innovation and hard work. Being good at this particular game usually benefits society, which also deserves reward. But, a laissez-faire economic system contains the seeds of its own destruction in its system traps, both because of its unjust social outcomes, and because of its tendency to exploit and destroy the commons with environmental pollution. It is not a matter of changing the economic system; it is just a matter of tweaking the inputs. Government needs to provide people with the clear connection
between the services demanded and the costs so that the people can better judge at election
time which public servants are making accurate claims about the costs versus benefits of
government services.

THE MISSING RESET BUTTON: A FIXABLE DESIGN FLAW

Be prepared.

–The Scout Motto

The US government was designed to take the form of a democratic republic in order
to establish justice and national security based on the collective values and consent of the
people. So long as the government is being used properly, the consent of the people is more
or less assumed since proper use of government implies people are well-informed about its
activities and its accountability systems—such as a separation of powers and regular
democratic elections—are fully functional. But the original Constitution and later
amendments have not provided a means for reestablishment of the democratic republic in
preparation for the possibility that government might to be captured, that is, in the case of a
coup. This can be easily remedied. A system should be put in place that would empower
citizens to take a vote of no-confidence in the government and then declare a special election
to replace the failed government. A truly independent system, administered by volunteers in
every voting district, would be an incontestable source of legitimacy. However, in order to
provide a smooth transition, it will be necessary to amend the Constitution so that Martial
law cannot be declared by the failed government in order to maintain power and the control
of military power is automatically transferred to the newly elected administration. This reset
system could established along with the “analog network” discussed in the section on the
FMI.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION TO PART I

In running for President, I felt it was my duty to have a vision of government to serve as a framework for considering action in office. As a candidate, I wanted to develop a vision that I could explain to voters, and that would help me answer any questions about government activities that I had not considered previously, and the many “hypotheticals” that I imagined could be posed. Part I is an elucidation of the vision I have developed.

As a vision, it is deliberately intended to be non-ideological. It is simply a way of seeing government, and a collection of operating principles inferred from that view. I consider it a work in progress, and as I continue to think about government, I think it is possible that I will add more operating principles. For now, I see government as a tool for establishing justice and national security that works best when its operators: (1) do not overturn the government; (2) substantially agree to its proper uses; (3) work in good faith to carry out all functions to the best of their ability even if they do not believe certain functions proper to government; and (4) are qualified to use the tool. The tool works by providing a means to locate and collectively debate issues of national concern, to collectively develop policy responses that fall under its jurisdiction, and to implement these policies.

I believe putting this vision of government into practice would lead to much more constructive government action—both in that it would force us to learn from our policy experiments (with the “good faith” principle, Operating Principle 3), and in that it would make it much easier for more people to participate in a well-informed way (through the FMI demanded by Operating Principle 4). In a rapidly changing society, we need a far greater level of participation that is well-informed about past lessons, present conditions, and the coming technology and environmental challenges of the future.

The US government was established at a time when communications travelled no greater than the speed horse. Communication now travels about 2.66 billion times faster than
a typical galloping horse.\(^{52}\) Lightning-fast and exponentially increasing communications, the growing population, the growing recognition of complex interconnectivity with (and impact upon) all life and life-sustaining systems of earth, the coming advancements of genetic engineering, artificial intelligence, and nanotechnology—all of these developments demand that we adapt our government to the changing reality, and harness the power of the people to find solutions that to local, national, and/or global problems. We need to facilitate the democratic equivalent of what is known as “crowdsourcing.”\(^ {53}\)

Unfortunately, government has often tended to move in the opposite direction. While the voting franchise has expanded episodically since the founding, the number of representatives has not expanded with the population as the Constitution intended.\(^ {54}\) Public servants have too often seen their offices not as public service, but as a means to serve special interests, particularly their own—and no doubt saw the expansion of Congress as a dilution of their own power. Intellectual cover has been provided by authors like Walter Lippmann\(^ {55}\) and too many professors of political science, who argue that governing should be left to the “experts.” Public servants have made this a self-fulfilling prophesy by withholding information and thus placing significant barriers in the way of allowing citizens to become experts in self-governance.

It is time to reverse this anti-democratic process and move forward again in the pursuit of justice. Healthy, effective government demands higher rates of participation, not lower, and has almost no use for money. Despite the limitations of markets, the reason they work as well as they do is because of the relatively free flow of information and freedom of action of the participants. Command and control economies, as history has shown, can achieve only limited success before complexity brings them down. The same goes for

\(^{52}\) 299,792,458 meters per second divided by about 20 miles per hour (or 32,000 meters per 3600 seconds)

\(^{53}\) “Crowdsourcing” is a term coined by journalist Jeff Howe. Howe defines crowdsourcing as, “the act of taking a job traditionally performed by a designated agent (usually an employee) and outsourcing it to an undefined, generally large group of people in the form of an open call.” Jeff Howe, “Crowdsourcing: A Definition,” Crowdsourcing (blog), on left sidebar of website, http://crowdsourcing.typepad.com/. Crowdsourcing is increasingly used by business and in journalism, and is responsible for invaluable resources such as Wikipedia, Project Gutenberg, and LibriVox.

\(^{54}\) U.S. Constitution, art. 1, sec. 2, cl. 3.

command and control governments. Self-governance (democratic governance) demands the provision of timely and relevant information to the people be built in to the process so that the people will can be well-informed enough to direct their tool-system to achieve their collective goals.\textsuperscript{56}

The level of information processing that is necessary to properly engage government with today’s complex world is far too great for our current command-and-control government to handle. The massive national debt and deficit resulting from its incompetence and misdeeds also testify that the answer is not to increase the size and payroll of government. The people must be given the means to competently govern their own government.

The collective efforts of volunteers already provides incalculable benefits through projects such as Wikipedia, and \textit{The Guardian}’s investigation into parliamentary expense account fraud, and LibriVox which uses volunteers to create audio recordings of books in the public domain. If people willingly donate their time to help others in these ways, it is clear many would jump at the chance to do the same if provided an avenue by government. Democratic government is a collective extension of its people, and should facilitate the pursuit of humanity’s highest aspirations. Government must not be allowed to be captured by a non-democratic system that merely provides commodities and makes no distinction in its processes between people and inanimate objects. As indispensable as markets are, market choices are subservient to the aspirations reflected in the best government actions.

Self-governance is not rocket science, and neither is this vision. It is a framework that almost any citizen can understand and ask their public servants to follow. While this does not provide ready-made policy answers, it does provide a foundation and boundaries for government action, and thus shows where government is currently being used improperly—not only in failing to follow simple operating principles, but in establishing and maintaining systems that work against justice and national security.

This essay is intended to point to ways of expanding positive participation, primarily by exposing unnecessarily hidden government activities to the public so that citizens have the

\textsuperscript{56} Show me an academic paper that claims governance should be left to the experts, and I’ll show you a petty tyrant.
information they need to choose their public servants and hold them accountable. The FMI will give the people a means to bypass media gatekeepers and paid lobbyists, and communicate directly with their public servants and each other in meaningful and measurable ways, transparently or anonymously as desired. In the second part of this project, I will detail my presidential campaign efforts, which were undertaken primarily in order to offer voters this vision.
CHAPTER 7

INTRODUCTION TO PART II

Part I of this paper can be seen as the theory—the why—behind the Wilson 2008 Campaign. Part II, on the other hand, describes the what—how theory was put into practice in the campaign. The what is inseparable from the why of this campaign and all campaigns. The what is always an expression of the why. Still, the why of the Wilson 2008 Campaign expressed in Part I regards the problems it is meant to address in government, while my personal reasons for running—my personal why—is left out. To make up for that omission, the following sections of this introduction to will explain my personal reasons for running. Chapter 8 follows with a description of what I did in more or less chronological order. The project concludes in Chapter 9 with a reflection upon the entire paper.

A tremendous amount of material was produced as part of this project, most of which have not been included. The materials have been edited heavily in order to produce a document that highlights what I hope will, for the reader, be most interesting and most enlightening about my presidential campaign and today’s national politics.


Why did I, Kelcey Wilson, run for President of the United States of America? As much as I would like this project to be only about my platform, my personal motives were often questioned by friends and strangers. For better or for worse, this is clearly an unavoidable a part of US politics today, so I will try to explain. There was, however, no single answer to this question—there was a confluence of reasons that I cannot place in a strict order of importance. Instead, I will do the best can to explain the major reasons that became the most persuasive to me. This requires a little background.

The 2004 presidential election seemed to me to be one of the most important elections to come around in decades in terms of what re-electing the incumbent, George W. Bush, would mean to the United States and the world. There were countless domestic reasons not to
re-elect Bush, from his multiple violations of his oath to protect the Constitution, to his arrogant incompetence as an executive, but these were issues that could be fixed easily relative to the damage his re-election would do to the international reputation of the United States. Re-electing Bush would compound the incalculably immense damage wreaked by his first term by sending the message to the world that the American people condoned the aggressive invasion of a country that was obviously of no imminent threat to the United States or, for that matter, any other country in the world. Contrary to the attitude of the heavy-handed neoconservative administration, reputation is a crucial element of any country’s power to do good beyond their borders. The administration’s “I don’t do carrots” approach to international relations was not just stupid and unhelpful, it was destructive in itself of American soft power.57 Consequently, for the first time in my life, I was moved to work seriously for a grassroots presidential campaign to unseat the incumbent.

Surveying the field of candidates, I decided to work for Wesley Clark. I did not imagine he would be a great president, but supported him chiefly for three reasons besides the fact that he was not George Bush (and therefore would signal to the world that the American people rejected the aggressive invasion of Iraq). The reasons were: (1) as a retired Army general, he had the best chance of beating Bush in a general election (though, admittedly, not the Democratic primaries); (2) he had a relatively mainstream platform; and (3) the Democratic candidate would have the best chance of beating the incumbent. I was not a Democrat, but was convinced that anybody was better than Bush (a common sentiment at the time, which was immortalized in bumper stickers displaying the acronym ABB: “Anybody but Bush”).

Even as time went on and I became even less impressed with my candidate, I continued to work for him believing he was the “least bad” option from a pool of bad options. After a rather feeble effort that showed he was not really committed, Clark dropped out, and I went to work to Senator Kerry, who ultimately won the Democratic nomination. For the greater goal, I felt I had to hold my nose and press on, but the whole experience of working for the lesser of many evils and not a positive goal left a bad taste in my mouth,

57 For more on soft power, see Joseph Nye, Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics (New York: Public Affairs, 2004).
particularly when Bush was re-elected. I resolved that next time, if the stakes were not quite so high, I would support a candidate based only on his or her merits, and not on any calculation of who is the lesser of evils.

Meanwhile, the re-election of Bush guaranteed the political evils I fought in 2004 would live on. Chief among these evils, in my opinion, was the huge discrepancy between what the public should know about what goes on in government and its practical ability to know, due to its reliance on mostly commercial media for what little relevant and timely information was disseminated. As a consequence, the public could not effectively fulfill its most important duty of holding public servants accountable at election time.

One could argue that the most reasonable response would be to go work with one of several organizations that help disseminate hidden information about government activities, or to work directly on exposing bodies of hidden information. But too often this work relies on adversarial processes, like Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) lawsuits, and rarely uncovers information in a timely way. This long delay means that the revealed information is rarely relevant to addressing current issues, and thus does not have much bearing on voters’ current electoral decisions.

At the time of the 2004 election, this seemed to me to be primarily a problem of media not providing worthwhile information about government, and so I decided to go back to school and study media and mass communication in the hope of finding ways to make media better at providing the public with relevant information about government activities. This certainly was and is an important problem, as most media are not even oriented toward serving this function, but the more I thought about it, the more I came to understand that government itself has the duty and capacity to provide this information to the public unilaterally, despite what media may contribute. (For a detailed explanation see Operating Principle 4 in Chapter 3, and the Free Marketplace of Ideas section in Chapter 5.)

If one believes, as the Founders did, that a well-informed citizenry is a necessary component of a healthy democracy, it would be difficult to deny that the inadequacy of our public information dissemination and analysis system is the most fundamental problem with our government today. It remains in essential respects the same system that was in place at

58 Eg. The Sunlight Foundation, The National Archives, etc.
the founding, relying primarily on non-governmental organizations—mostly commercial media—to disseminate whatever information public servants choose to release, which is itself often limited by the electoral calculations of those empowered to release or withhold it. This limited information is then further filtered by media, which for the most part chooses what to disseminate based on calculations of competitive advantage (i.e., what will sell more papers, what will deliver more “eyeballs” to their advertising, etc.), or based on the outlet’s ideological bent. And while it is impossible not to frame information in stories, ideological media outlets go out of their way to further filter and “spin” the information in order to favor their goals—particularly by reporting events as isolated and ignoring their systemic causes. Thus, it is not just a problem of gate-keeping based on a short-term economic calculus; it is a problem of the far-reaching exclusion of public interest information by and for a relatively tiny group of people.

As long as the public information dissemination is based on the judgments of a small group of people, many of whom have a vested interest in what kind of information is disseminated, public policymaking will be contaminated to that same extent. Many public policy problems and blunders will be direct symptoms of this fundamental sickness because, to the extent that public servants do what those who elected them want them to do, many faulty policy results from faulty public comprehension of the problems. (This is known in computer programming as the “garbage in, garbage out” phenomenon.) In this way, public policy is designed to address symptoms rather than the fundamental problems.

Like prevention in health care, or preventative maintenance in mechanics, or “total quality” in production processes, we need to address public policy to the fundamental problems. And the fundamental problem that causes us to address public policy to symptoms rather than fundamental problems is the lack of relevant and timely information due to a fundamentally flawed public information dissemination and analysis system.

Just as the survival of the body requires that its blood circulates freely, and a clot can threaten the life of the body, government operators have a duty to take all practical measures to address this dangerous barrier against the establishment of the well-informed public that is the lifeblood of democracy. Accountability through elections is the only active check the

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public has on the behavior of its government, and that requires all relevant information. Clearly, the provision of timely and relevant information must be built in to the government system, rather than inconsistently provided by a government bureaucracy through the additional filter of media gatekeepers.

Even as this fact was dawning on me, I did not realize that this could be accomplished easily and inexpensively. For the most part, I am a great fan of C-SPAN, but I am often disappointed with what is not covered, or not archived, and also that they do not release their video to the public domain or enable downloading so that it can be disseminated at will. My first thought was that we needed a government-run version of C-SPAN, though greatly expanded to cover all government activity that might be relevant to the public. This government department would produce and archive all of its video and release it immediately to the public domain for all time. Fortunately, I later discovered that even more expansive and less expensive video coverage could be achieved through webcasting technology that was already being offered for free to the public. (How this can be done is discussed in the following chapter.)

As the 2008 candidates were beginning to emerge in 2007, none expressed recognition that this information-system dysfunction was a component of all of the other problems the nation was suffering, much less the key component that I felt it was. Although I believed a couple of the candidates (who had not already shown disregard for their oath of office) would make good presidents by traditional standards, there was no single candidate I could support wholeheartedly based on my understanding of the fundamental problem. While Barack Obama promised greater transparency, it was not of the scale or scope of what was needed. The focus was not there, and I saw that the fundamental problem would not be aggressively attacked, or even be part of the national debate, since it was not recognized as a fundamental issue by any candidate. I felt and continue to feel that this problem is of such magnitude and urgency that the public should have the option of choosing a candidate who offered solutions to this problem. Since I was in a position to commit some time and money to the cause, I decided to run myself until somebody more qualified could step in.
**ANSWER: TO BE THE CHANGE I WISH TO SEE**

To return to the original question, then, the main reason for running for office was to give voters a crucial but otherwise nonexistent option that was (and is) urgently needed. I believed the public should have the option of choosing a platform of creating government systems for providing relevant, timely information to the public, and my best option for working toward that goal was to do it directly—by running for office.

But I have to admit I probably would not have run if I had not had the demoralizing experiences of working for candidates I did not really support, and then losing anyway. Losing a battle for a cause I was unenthusiastic about was an important motivation. That experience made me want to have the experience of working for something wholeheartedly. Even if it would be a losing battle, I wanted to fight for a cause in which I truly believed.

Of course, many objected to my running for reasons that are easy to guess. Most of these reasons fell into one or both of two categories. The first category was that of my having no track record, let alone one of success, in public service (not counting my military service) or as the chief executive a large organization. The second category was that the belief that I had no chance of winning. Objectors of the first category almost always coupled that with the second objection. Slightly fewer objected to my qualifications than felt I was wasting my time. But winning was never a consideration of running. Beyond believing the platform should be a public option, the campaign was a way of advocating for the ideas represented in the platform. It was not a “stunt,” though it is not surprising that the general cynicism about politics and the occasional actual publicity stunts lead people to believe it was. It was about putting my beliefs into the marketplace—not just the marketplace of political options, but also the marketplace of ideas. It was to work for something I believed in—not for any illusion that I would be elected, but because it was a thing worth doing. It was because to *not* do so would be to guarantee that my platform would not make any impact at all. And it was because the platform I advocated needed (and continues to need to be) implemented by the President of the United States.

More than just to offer a platform, I wanted my campaign to flow from my platform and not be sacrificed for any other goal, such as winning votes. This is in contrast to the case of every major campaign I have ever witnessed, where the highest goal was always to win, and, accordingly, to keep the candidates’ messages and images within the tight and
superficial parameters that are deemed necessary to win particular rounds of voting. One can claim this is necessary to form the broad coalition usually needed to win a winner-take-all election, and for the same reason a positive necessity, but it is nevertheless not the kind of behavior that inspires my support. If a candidate is already compromising this kind of honesty during the campaign, there is no reason to believe the officeholder will behave any differently. Furthermore, by rewarding this kind of behavior in electing these politicians, we are practically guaranteeing the election of the kind of public servants that will bring an ethic of deception to their job. The fact is that if all candidates were completely honest about their beliefs, one of the candidates would still ultimately win, and then we would have the public servant for whom we voted. Honest politicians? Possible? Yes. Likely? I see no evidence that it will happen anytime soon. Worth pursuing anyway? Yes. In writing the Constitution, the Founders attempted to design a system that encouraged honesty and checked dishonesty. They did not completely succeed, but they did pretty well, and we can build upon that foundation.

As a consequence of having my campaign flow from my platform, and having a platform that was not being offered by anyone else, I also had a campaign concept that was, with regard to image control, the antithesis of the mainstream candidates. The Wilson 2008 Campaign concept was to almost entirely let loose the reins of message/image control in order to ensure voters nearly complete access to the candidate and platform through the same tools that I advocate the government provide in Part I of this project.

Before describing the campaign concept in more detail in the next chapter, I will conclude this chapter by acknowledging that it would be easy to assume (and several did assume and tell me with astounding confidence) that I had less worthy motives, or that I was/am simply out of touch with reality on some level. There would be no point spending much time arguing. If there is one thing that studying media and politics has taught me, it is that most people will believe what they want to believe no matter how much evidence to the contrary is provided. That being said, people who are open to evidence are willing to change their mind, and the campaign was designed so that those people could have the kind of access that would allow them to better judge my motives and sanity. My hope was that people would judge me kindly and recognize that I was trying to live up to the sentiments often expressed by our favorite teachers, encouraging parents, and even politicians who then fail to
do the same themselves—sentiments never expressed better than in the words of Gandhi: “Be the change you wish to see in the world.”

But Gandhi’s words alone were not enough to push me forward. When experiencing constant feelings of being up against overwhelming obstacles, including powerful feelings of shyness that have been with me from my earliest memories, I would often rely on the words of Rabbi Hillel: “If I am only for myself, then what am I? And if not now, when?”

Personally, I would be very happy if somebody else took up this cause and succeeded, but until then I supposed I was stuck with it.
CHAPTER 8

THE WILSON 2008 CAMPAIGN

THE WILSON 2008 CAMPAIGN GROUNDWORK

The ends do not justify the means; the means are also ends.

–The Wilson 2008 Campaign Motto

The Wilson 2008 Campaign concept was to run a campaign that had two major qualities:

1. It was intended to be far more transparent than any previous campaign.
2. It intended to give voters as reliable a representation as possible as to how a Wilson administration would look and behave if elected.

The claim that the campaign was intended to be more transparent than any previous campaign was based on at least two elements of the campaign:

1. The intent was to webcast as much of the campaign as reasonably possible—not simply events, but also the inner workings of the campaign, including strategy sessions, meetings with supporters, meetings with lobbyists, general discussions, etc.
2. It was intended that the focal point of the campaign would be the building of a “shadow” administration long before the actual election. In other words, the attempt was to build a complete administration in public—naming posts and appointments—so that the administration constructed in that way would be in position to take over its responsibilities from day one in office, and would also be known to the public and thus could be part of the voters’ equations in their voting decisions. This raises the transparency bar since few campaigns today make appointments known before the election.

These two elements are interconnected in the sense that part of being transparent is making it clear who will be a part of the administration so that voters have a better idea of how the administration will look and behave if elected.

WHY IS A NEW CAMPAIGN CONCEPT NEEDED?

In part, a new campaign concept is needed to fix the many well-known shortcomings of how campaigns are conducted today—the boilerplate speeches, the controlled and extremely limited access to candidates, etc. The Wilson 2008 Campaign was in fact designed to address these issues. I believe a campaign based on this concept would be rewarded by the
public, but more importantly, it is my belief that it is a candidate’s duty to put this concept into practice, regardless of the consequences.

Why is this a candidate’s duty? Because a candidate is applying for a public service job in government, in a way that includes providing all the information the public needs to make electoral decision. This includes providing complete information on the public servant’s own performance. If a person applying to become a public servant refuses to provide all practically available information that might indicate how the servant would perform in office, then the candidate has already shown him- or herself incapable of being a public servant. It is the candidates’ duty to provide this kind of transparency because a candidate as candidate is already acting as a public servant, and must therefore behave as such.

THE CAMPAIGN WEBSITE

The campaign concept described above could not have been put into practice before the Internet provided the medium to do so. The timely information tools I planned to provide were all web-based, so, it was necessary to build a website. Although I had created a website for a small academic journal about ten years earlier, my skills were never more than basic and my memory of even those skills had faded. The technology had also advanced considerably since then. It would have been ideal to have a site developed for me, but offers from friends never panned out and I did not feel that I should spend money before I had the content ready. I felt that it was important to get most of the site up and running before I began the official campaign. I decided to do what I could until I came to the point where I felt professional help might be warranted. This would turn out to be a major time consumer of the campaign.

The mechanics of this massive undertaking is no more relevant to the campaign than the mechanics of writing is relevant to the message, so I will not describe my process of learning this skill, but I will insert pages from the website into the narrative when relevant. The web page reproduced in Figure 2, one of the first I created and posted, is my attempt to answer the why question covered in the previous section.
It seems like we have forgotten—or never knew—that, in our democratic republic, we the People are sovereign and that we have a constitutional right to all the relevant unvarnished information we need to choose our public servants wisely. Moreover, our current and prospective public servants are obligated to provide us with that kind of information whenever practical. It is not for our servants to decide what we do and do not have a need to know.

Yet because our public servants occasionally feel that revealing information would be against their own personal interests—when, for example, they believe it would hurt their chances for re-election, conflict with their narrow ideology, or might even land them in prison—they have been known to withhold information, obscure it, classify it, or spin it beyond recognition. (See Political Corruption.)

Through this campaign I hope to provide a first step toward a remedy for that perceived conflict between the public interest and the personal interests of public servants. This remedy works by taking much of ability for candidates to control their public image and messages out of their own hands. The remedy is simply to broadcast my entire campaign to the public—no editing, no script, nothing but the Internet as the means between me and the People.

Most candidates, of course, are unlikely to give up any of their ability to control their public messages—unless they believe it would help them get elected. I am running this kind of campaign because I do not think of campaigns primarily as means of getting elected, but as a means of informing the self-governing public. I believe campaigns should be about giving voters all the information they need to make a well-informed vote.

If I do get elected, it will not be due to any intentional deception or false image construction. For the first time in history, all voters will have been given the opportunity to know exactly who they’ve hired—including the vast majority of my staff—before we take office. They will also know exactly what my agenda will be.

1 For some reason, we act as though the President is our leader, but our President is our servant. We are not subjects of a monarch or dictator. It is our country. There is no unitary decision-maker. (See the U.S. Constitution.) In fact, our system of self-government is in large part designed in reaction to and for protection against overly centralized and unaccountable government. Ultimately, we the People of the United States of America make all national decisions collectively through our elections and through our constitutional right to petition our elected representatives.

2 Unfortunately, most politicians today, whether elected or not, have been convinced that they must exercise near absolute control over their public image. If they are correct in their belief, they seem to be admitting that they would not be elected if the people really knew who they were. They might be right. Let us hope they are wrong.

Figure 2. Campaign website page explaining why I was running.
WRITING THE PLATFORM

Having made the decision to run, it quickly became clear that I needed to have a complete platform in order to run a real presidential campaign, rather than a single-issue advocacy campaign. I felt this needed to be mostly complete before I made my campaign public. This was fairly easy to do as there were and are so many things wrong but fixable with government, and so many things that need to be done that only national governments can do well at this particular moment in world history.

This was the most fulfilling part of the campaign for me, as it forced me to think about developing a coherent political vision. As mentioned in Part I, I also felt that this was the most important part of being in public office. Most of the platform was finished before I announced my candidacy, but it was updated many times throughout the Campaign. It was always a work in progress, yet it was also far more specific and comprehensive than any of the other presidential platforms of which I was aware.

My complete platform as it stood at the end of the campaign is reproduced in Figure 3. It is interesting as a snapshot of the time it was written. The situation has changed in many cases, making my planks obsolete, and there is plenty expressed in the platform that makes me cringe, seeming naïve even for the time. Notwithstanding, I believe most were on the right track, and my views have not changed so much as they have been refined as I have learned more about the subjects.

ADMINISTRATION 2008

If it had not already been obvious to me, the process of putting the platform together would have made it clear that, as generalists, politicians need good advisors to provide deep knowledge for action in office, and I that would be no exception. Since advisors are such a vital part of the decision-making process, candidates should, as far as possible, tell voters who would serve in the administration long before the election so that voters would have a better idea than they do today of what could be expected once the candidate is in office.

Accordingly, I decided that building the “shadow” administration would be the centerpiece of the campaign, not only because it was probably the most important and revealing category of information that the public should have, but also because it seemed it would be the most difficult and time-consuming undertaking of the campaign. I hoped to
Figure 3. Website page posting of campaign platform.
platform (Last updated 22-Jul-2009 9:05)

I will serve one term only. During this term I will focus on two major national initiatives: 1) creating a nationwide solar power grid that can help us begin to wean ourselves off our dependence on fossil fuels; and 2) ensuring universal access to broadband Internet.

My major focus, internationally, will be to help negotiate peace between Israel and Palestine. All of my service as president — other than that which requires secrecy to best serve the public interest — will be televised or streamed on the Internet in real time.

Additional planks, promises, and perspectives (in alphabetical order)

A P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

APOLOGY TO IRAQIS - I will offer an apology on behalf of the United States of America to Iraqis who lost friends and family in the invasion of Iraq.

ADHERE TO THE GENEVA CONVENTION - I will shut down the Guantanamo and CIA prisons, and move all U.S. prisoners into the justice system.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM - One of the reasons we need universal broadband Internet access (see plank, below) is because it will, to a limited degree, level the playing field with regard to building campaigns. Universal access will not, however, be sufficient to overcome the stacked deck that is the current campaign finance system, which takes its form in large part due to two faulty court rulings: Buckley v. Valeo and Santa Clara v. Southern Pacific. To be blunt, the majority opinion in Buckley v. Valeo is wrong -- limiting money is not limiting speech; it is limiting money. It's that simple. Money is a thing that can be exchanged for other things and services. Speech is an inseparable right. The First Amendment guarantees to all Americans in equal measure. The fact that a very small minority of people control the vast majority of money in the U.S. and world should not also give them the right to more speech. If 100 people sit down at the table to have a discussion, but only 1 has a bullhorn and uses it, it is not a discussion among equals.

Santa Clara v. Southern Pacific (or at least how it has been interpreted) is wrong — corporations are not people and therefore they should not have the right to influence the political process as persons. Because the members of the corporate boards, business owners, etc., already have a vote and can contribute to campaigns as individuals, business interests are already represented in that way. Allowing businesses to establish and contribute to PACs gives their controllers more influence multiplied by the factor of how many boards they sit on, companies they own, etc. Corporations should be banned from using corporate funds for political purposes.

CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATION FOR WASHINGTON, DC - Under the principle of "no taxation without representation," I will support expanding Congress so that the residents of the Washington D.C. can elect their own representatives.

COPYRIGHT LAW - I will not sign any bill that further extends the length of copyright protection.

COUNCIL OF ELDERS - George McGovern has created a bipartisan Council of Elders. I will incorporate the Council of Elders into any policy debates in which they believe they can be of help. (http://biotheblog.nationaljournal.com/archives/2006/07/mcgeever_create.html)

COUNSEL OF FORMER PRESIDENTS - I will seek the counsel of former presidents.

DEPARTMENT OF PEACE - I will support the creation of the Department of Peace.

DRUG POLICY - The so-called 'war on drugs' has been a complete failure from day one. (See www.drugwarfacts.org.) It has not stopped the flow of illegal drugs in the least — anybody who wants illegal drugs can find them. It has empowered and enriched violent criminals. It has turned Mexico into a battleground between rival drug cartels. It is turning Afghanistan back into a narco-state. And the list goes on. We're punishing the rest of the world for our own problems. The best solution would be to legalize some of the most common drugs so that we can regulate, tax, and control them. This would destroy the black market and the cartels who exist because of it. At the very least, we need to decriminalize possession and re-channel the more than $50 billion dollars annually spent on the "war" against our own people toward education and programs to help people quit.

EDUCATION - This is the one issue that I think we can actually throw money at and do a lot of good. Basically, what I would propose is that we create a funded mandate to raise all public school teacher salaries by $40,000 — even starting teachers, so that no teacher has to live on less than $70,000 per year. This will create a huge demand for teaching jobs among well-qualified people who now can't afford to teach, and competition for teaching positions will give administrators the luxury of choice that will drive up the quality of education everywhere. This should only be done if we get rid of outdated mandates and factory-style education programs like 'No Child Left Behind' that try to turn our teachers into robots and our children into mindless clones. Merit-based pay may be done at the local level at local initiative, but a federal merit-based pay program is bound to create perverse incentives and disfave teachers of special education in the same way that NCLB does. Once pay is at the reasonable level that I advocate above, tenure should probably be done away with. All this could be done for about 5% of the cost of a year's worth of the occupation of Iraq.

ENERGY SECURITY - I will support a law guaranteeing people and businesses the right to sell any electricity they may produce back into the grid. I believe this will go a long way to promoting conservation and reducing our dependence on fossil fuels. See also SOLAR POWER.
FCC - I will appoint a chairperson and commissioners who understand that the concept of serving public interest refers to that which helps maintain a healthy democracy. More specifically, I will appoint or maintain commissioners that will help address the problem of concentration of media ownership, lack of diversity, and dishonesty in advertising.

FDA - I will appoint a Secretary of Health and Human Services who will ensure that the FDA adheres to the *precautionary principle* in all approval processes in cases where the public is not given the opportunity to opt in or to use new drugs. In other words, the current approval process is acceptable to cases in which when people who are being treated with new drugs are advised by their doctor of the potential risks, but it is completely unacceptable for the FDA to approve a drug for injecting into cow, for example, which thereby may make it into the human food supply indirectly and without the knowledge of the people who consume it. This deception is currently practiced by the FDA. *Updated 19 Jul 07.*

FEDERAL SHIELD LAW - I would support a federal shield law.

FLAG BURNING AMENDMENT - I can't think of anything that would be more un-American than amending the Constitution to prohibit flag burning. As a symbol of the United States of America, the Flag is also a symbol of the Constitution. As a symbol of the Constitution, the Flag is a symbol of the First Amendment, which guarantees the right of free expression. Thus, an amendment to ban flag burning would be equivalent to an amendment against free expression, which would make the Constitution internally inconsistent.

FREE TRADE - Free trade is great, as long as the countries we trade with abide by the same (or better) environmental and labor standards that we do. Free trade is only justified when it is fair. When it is not, *comparative* advantage no longer applies. This is not to say we should not trade with countries that don't adhere to substantially equivalent standards, but each trade agreement must be negotiated on a case-by-case basis. Either way, we must expect and accept that our democratically determined political values will enter into the decisions about what is fair or not, and be reflected in the nature of individual trade agreements.

FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT - I do not believe the U.S. government has the right to restrict the movement of its citizens, within or beyond the borders of our country. I will work to rescind any active policies that do so. (e.g. Cuba)

FREEDOM PLEDGE - I have signed the Freedom Pledge and send it to the American Freedom Agenda headquarters. *Here's a copy.*

GUNS - I believe the Second Amendment guarantees the right to bear arms, and I support that right within reasonable limits. I would never support controls that would ensure that only criminals could own guns. I would, however, support controls that would prevent firearms from getting into the hands of criminals. I would also strongly support legislation to require gun *microstamping* technology to be utilized so that shell casings used in crimes could be traced back to the firearm purchaser.

HEALTH CARE - Although markets are usually the most efficient way of allocating scarce goods and services, the U.S. health care market is almost criminally inefficient. Approximately 31% of our health care spending goes to administration, compared to about 16.7% in Canada. (See [http://content.nejm.org/cgi/content/abstract/349/8/768](http://content.nejm.org/cgi/content/abstract/349/8/768).) This fact belies the claim that business is always more efficient than government. Moreover, Americans pay far more per capita than any other nation, but is ranked 72nd of 191 nations for overall health ([http://www.vio.in/rel/2009/01/26/414-en.pdf](http://www.vio.in/rel/2009/01/26/414-en.pdf)). Consequently, the idea of instituting a national health care system has a lot of appeal. On the other hand, considering the poisonous garbage so many people regularly consume in this country, it seems risky to subsidize other people's ability to make unhealthy choices. Moreover, I am wary of the kind of social engineering policies that inevitably follow when people's behavior has an effect on the public budget. As with most policy choices, a national health system would be a double-edged sword. Thus, the answer to whether we should have a national health care system should be decided by a non-partisan public study that measures the long-term costs versus benefits of national health care. Based on the national health care systems of all the other wealthy countries, it seems likely that the benefits would outweigh the costs, but we need to do a study that lacks in to how national health care might work in the unique social and economic conditions of the United States. If it is determined that the benefits of a national health care system would outweigh the costs, I would support a national health system designed along lines recommended by the study. I would require professionals—not political—management of the system and thorough oversight, and also that the issue be revisited by Congress at regular intervals to determine whether sufficient progress is being made. Finally, the system will need to be designed with an exit strategy, so that if national health system is not working after a reasonable period of time, the legislation will provide for a smooth transition to re-privatization. *Updated 19 Jul 07.*

HYPOTHETICALS - I believe it is dishonest for elected representatives to claim they have a policy of not answering hypotheticals based solely on the fact that they are hypothetical. Letting the public know "what I would do if ..." is one of the most important parts of being a public servant. I will answer all questions based on their merit.

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION - coming soon

INSTITUTIONALIZED BIGOTRY IN THE MILITARY - My first act as Commander in Chief will be to order an end to institutionalized bigotry in the military.

IRAQ - Because the Bush Administration was re-elected in 2004, there can be no doubt that the American People own the Iraq invasion. From that point, the invasion was no longer the act of a small group of immoral ideologues at the top level of the national government, it was a collective act. The sovereign People of the United States spoke and told the world with their votes that We collectively consented to an immoral invasion of a country that was no threat to U.S. or even to regional security. Despite the fact that more people voted against President Bush than for any candidate in history, more people also voted for President Bush than for any candidate in history.

Yet perhaps not surprisingly, the Bush supporters have also turned out to be far less than courageous. With all due respect to the brave but misguided few who joined to invasion because they believed it was the right thing to do, their numbers are miniscule compared to the millions of able-bodied Bush voters and other supporters of offensive war of choice who have not felt a corresponding moral obligation to back up their votes with action. Military enlistments have not only not risen since the invasion, they have fallen considerably, to the point that the armed forces have had to lower their standards in order to attempt to make recruitment quotas.

Considering these two contradictory facts, that is, that We collectively approved of invading a foreign country that was no substantial threat to anyone, despite the fact that too few of us are willing to actually participate in the occupation and counterinsurgency ourselves, it seems too me that there is only one reasonable course of action for the next president to follow.
As soon as possible after taking office, the new president must personally deliver a speech to the United Nations. The speech should begin with an apology to all Iraqis who suffered as a result of the U.S.-led invasion of their country. The President should accept responsibility on behalf of the People of the United States, but also make it clear that preventative war is anathema to civilization, and that, to show our good faith, the Rome Statute will immediately be submitted to Congress for approval (meaning we will become a member the International Criminal Court) and all bilateral immunity, or so-called Article 98 agreements, will be repealed. (Article 98 agreements are bilateral agreements between the U.S. and other nations — generally made under threat of economic sanction or promise of large financial packages from the U.S. — which provide that neither party would bring the other’s current or former government officials, military or other personnel before the jurisdiction of the ICC.)

Next, the President should request that the U.N. debate and vote whether the U.S. should stay or withdraw from Iraq. If the U.N. resolves that the U.S. should withdraw, the U.S. would immediately commence the withdrawal. If the U.N. resolves that the U.S. should stay, the U.S. would stay, but only as part of a U.N. peacekeeping force composed of representative numbers of troops from those countries who voted for the U.S. to stay in Iraq.

While this will not solve the Iraqi fiasco or absolve the U.S. of responsibility, it will bring the U.S. back into the wider community of nations, and at the same time respect the community of nations to address the problems of Iraq in a direct and public manner.

A note on withdrawal versus occupation: The United States has the most powerful military in the world by far. The invasion of Iraq cost the life of less than 100 U.S. soldiers, but the costs of the occupation in lives and treasure are enormous. Clearly, invasion is our strength. Though the occupation has been a failure so far, it does not follow that states now have an incentive to become a "terrorist state." For any state to threaten the U.S. would be suicide. Thus, when people argue that we should stay in Iraq because, if we don’t, we will have to come back later, I say, fine. If we pull out, we will save $100 billion and a thousand soldiers’ lives annually until we have to go back. But chances are we won’t have to go back because Iraq’s leaders will have an enormous incentive to make their country work that they currently don’t have. See also TERRORISM. Updated 19 Jul 07.

ISRAEL-PALESTINE - As President, with the help of experienced diplomats like Dennis Ross, I will personally sit down with Israeli and Palestinian leaders in public (i.e., televised) negotiations until a two-state solution is reached. Updated 19 Jul 07.

JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS - I will nominate judges who understand that the "People" referred to in the Constitution are living human citizens of the United States, and not factions or organizations, nor are they theoretical or ideological entities. Updated 12 Jul 07.

LANGUAGE - My administration will not use deceptive language in order to promote policy.

LIFE - At this point in my life, I would not choose to end anybody else’s life, at any stage of life, unless his or her life posed an imminent threat to any or somebody else’s life. I would not abort a fetus, nor would I kill an adult except in self-defense. But to quote Justice Blackmun’s clerk, "One’s philosophy, one’s experiences, one’s exposure to the raw edges of human existence, one’s religious training, one’s attitudes toward life and family and their values, and the moral standards one establishes and seeks to observe, are all likely to influence and to color one’s thinking and conclusions about abortion" (410 U.S. 113). The people I know who have had abortions did not do it lightly, but they have no regrets, they don’t consider themselves to be murderers, and nor do I. Both are now loving mothers. Do loving mothers murder their own children? If somebody is willing to murder their own children, why would we want them to be mothers? Personally, I wish we lived in a world where pregnancy were always a happy thing. I wish nobody wanted abortions or had them, but I don’t feel I have a right to tell anybody -- let alone strangers -- what they should do with their bodies. COMMENTS (See also, STEM CELL RESEARCH.)

MARRIAGE - I will not support any amendment that would corrupt the Constitution and insert the Federal Government into the personal affairs of its employees, the People of the United States of America. In fact, I think we should deregulate marriage entirely.

MEDIA REFORM - I will support bringing back the something like the Fairness Doctrine. I believe that the First Amendment places an "affirmative responsibility" on the media to air competing points of view. At the time of the drafting of the Constitution, the only real threat to freedom of expression was the government; in the age of broadcast, it is huge media companies that have the power to not so much forbid as to exclude free expression. We need an FCC that recognizes media’s obligation to serve in the public interest.

MEDIATION - I will make use of professional mediators in any negotiations of which I am part, and I will advocate their use in Congress.

MISSILE DEFENSE - We should work on this technology, but it is not as high a priority as prurient defense through other means, especially through preventing nuclear proliferation.

NATIONAL REFERENDA - I would support a constitutional amendment to provide for national referenda in certain, limited circumstances. Some issues are so important, controversial and/or consequential that they might be best addressed with direct input from the People. War, for example. While the Commander in Chief should not be constrained from acting rapidly when national security demands it, if we have time to pursue a U.N. resolution that grants permission to initiate hostilities, in most cases we should also have time to ask permission from the People who are going to have to pay for the war with their money, lives, and limbs. Furthermore, for something so important and consequential as war, the question should not be controversial, and should meet a high threshold, such as a two-thirds majority. Other chronically intractable issues may not require so high a threshold. (See STEM CELL RESEARCH.) For these kinds of issues, we should build in some stability, such as only allowing votes on a particular issue every six years.

NANOTECHNOLOGY - I will advocate a national program to increase funding and operational nanotechnology within 10 years.

NET NEUTRALITY - I support "net neutrality."

NO PARDON FOR BUSH ET AL - If George W. Bush or any of his officers are convicted of any crimes, there will be no pardon during my administration.

NORTHERN COMMAND - I will decommission the Northern Command.

NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION - Preventing nuclear proliferation is the highest national defense priority, and it will be my highest national defense priority as president.

OVERCLASSIFICATION - I will put an end to overclassification, and I will expedite the declassification of anything that has been overclassified. See also, Transparency.

PRIVATE PRISONS - I believe private prisons a very dangerous development. Nobody should have a vested interest in keeping full jails or increasing the size of the prison population. I will support legislation that outlaws this practice.
have built the shadow administration in time to state publicly how they would respond to
current domestic and international events as they happened.

Fortunately, I did not have to start this search from scratch. I had for many years been
compiling a database of people whose views and/or intelligence I admired. I transferred this
database into the Administration 2008 Web page as a starting point. While this list was fairly extensive, it was dwarfed by the size and breadth of the federal government, and so I hoped that in building this administration publicly, any positions for which I did not already have a solid preference could be crowdsourced. Figure 4 shows the Administration 2008 Web page as it stood at the end of the campaign.

**Ballot Access**

Probably the most salient from a certain perspective, but least interesting part of this project for me, was trying to figure out how to get on the ballot. Every state has responsibility for its own elections, and this meant that there were potentially 50 different procedures and sets of qualifications for getting on the ballots of all 50 states.

As the most populous state, I looked into California’s rules first, figuring that it would have the most difficult requirements to satisfy, and that if I could get on California’s ballot I could get on any state’s. Though I could not find rules for the 2008 election, the California’s previous election regulations said that a candidate must be nominated by a political party to get onto the ballot, which meant that if I wanted to get on the ballot in my home state, I would either have to hold my nose and join a party and try to get nominated, or create my own political party. This requirement surprised me, because although I knew political parties to be the most powerful overtly political organizations in the United States, I did not imagine that state governments would require one to be a member of a private, non-governmental entity in order to represent state and U.S. citizens who, of course, belong to many parties or none at all. How could requiring candidates to be partisan be a good way of locating public servants who would work for all the people once in office? This was a failure of what I would later designate as Operating Principles 2 and 3, as described in Chapter 5.

Because creating my own party would at least ensure that I was not supporting an established hierarchical bureaucracy that was more concerned with its own survival and power than with anything else, I decided that creating my own party was the best available option. I could dissolve the party at the close of the election, thus in practice making it a temporary coalition rather than a permanent party.
Figure 4. Campaign website page showing the progress on the Administration 2008 aspect of the campaign.
administration 2008
- help build an executive branch of the best and the brightest

This page is the heart of the campaign. What I will be doing here is creating the Executive Branch that I would like to take office in 2008. When we elect a president, we elect everybody he or she appoints -- it's only right that we know who they will be before we vote.

I encourage and welcome suggestions. Please email suggestions to kelceywilson@wilson2008.com.

I'll begin by making two lists: the first will be the positions that the President appoints or nominates, and the second will be people I might like to have in my administration. As time goes on I will attach names to the first list. Some positions may list multiple names as I try to decide who would be best for the position. Also certain positions require multiple appointees. As this project develops, I will try to improve the layout so that it will be easy to see where a position lies in the overall government hierarchy. Last updated 01-Jan-2009 13:46.

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<tr>
<td>Eric Alterman</td>
<td>Media Matters for America</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kenneth Anderson</td>
<td>American University Washington College of Law</td>
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<tr>
<td>Howard Baker</td>
<td>Former U.S. Senator, R-Tennessee 1967-85</td>
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<td>Michael Beer</td>
<td>Retired Teacher and Antiwar Activist</td>
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<td>Jared Bernstein</td>
<td>Economic Policy Institute</td>
<td>Economic Policy Advisor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sidney Blumenfeld</td>
<td>NYU, Center on Law &amp; Security</td>
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<td>Stephen W. Bosworth</td>
<td>Fletcher School at Tufts University</td>
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<td>Ed Brodkorb</td>
<td>Gerson &amp; Roock</td>
<td>Ambassador Posting</td>
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<td>Lester Brown</td>
<td>Earth Policy Institute</td>
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<td>Sharon Bunke</td>
<td>Third Way</td>
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<td>B. Nicholas Burns</td>
<td>U.S. Department of State</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jeff Chester</td>
<td>Center for Digital Democracy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steven Clason</td>
<td>New America Foundation and Japan Policy Research Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carl Conetta</td>
<td>Project on Defense Alternatives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kellogg Conway</td>
<td>the polling company™, inc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michael Cooper</td>
<td>Federal Communications Commission</td>
<td>FCC Commissioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conrad Crane</td>
<td>Strategic Studies Institute of the U.S. Army War College</td>
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<tr>
<td>Henry Crampton</td>
<td>U.S. Department of State</td>
<td>Coordinator for Counterterrorism (keep current position)</td>
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<td>Mattia Cyril</td>
<td>Youth Media Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rafi Dajani</td>
<td>American Task Force on Palestine</td>
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<td>Richard D'Amato</td>
<td>U.S.-China Economic &amp; Security Review Commission</td>
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<td>Mark DeRosa</td>
<td>The New Yorker</td>
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<td>Dr. Deva Davis</td>
<td>Center for Environmental Oncology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mickey Edwards</td>
<td>Former US Rep (R-OK) 1977-93</td>
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<td>Juliet Epstein</td>
<td>Washington Post</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adm. William J. Fallon</td>
<td>United States Navy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine Fair</td>
<td>USIP's Center for Conflict Analysis &amp; Prevention</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruce Fein</td>
<td>The Liedel Group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noah Feldman</td>
<td>Harvard Law School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Feldman</td>
<td>Gavney Schubert Borer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Then I learned that about 100,000 signatures were required to establish a political party, and about another 1,000 signatures just to get onto the primary ballot in California.\textsuperscript{60}

This seemed impossible for one person, particularly for one person who had so many other things to do—and, of course, this was only one state, albeit one of the most difficult. It was

\textsuperscript{60} See California Elections Code sections 5100(c), 6343, 6523, and 6725.
obvious to me that I would need a campaign team to organize and coordinate a nationwide ballot access effort.

Thus, it became clear that my primary need had become to form a nationwide grassroots organization to collect the signatures necessary to get on the ballot in each state. So instead of spending any time actually collecting signatures and trying to figure out how to get on all 50 ballots myself, the more basic need was to get the message of the Wilson 2008 Campaign widely disseminated in the hope that it would attract people interested in working on the bureaucratic aspects of campaigning for national office, such as getting on the ballot. I reasoned that all of the bureaucratic hurdles would be met as a natural outcome of having support and thereby attracting the people who would volunteer to get it done. I decided not get distracted by red tape and regulatory minutiae, but concern myself as much as possible with understanding the bigger picture and directing the supporters (who I hoped would eventually appear) to get the necessary work done. And since supporters are the people who would vote for me, if supporters did not appear, then there would be no point in getting on the ballot anyway.

Before I could build nationwide support network, I felt it would be necessary to build a core local organization to focus on the activities that would lead to building broader support, as well as to help research and consult on the nominations for administration positions. So it became clear that whether or not the campaign gave rise to a significant amount of public input, if I was going to be able to do what I wanted to do, I would need the support of a campaign team.

**BUILDING A CAMPAIGN TEAM PART I**

Having made this decision, I focused my attention on building the campaign team. In order to figure out what campaign staff jobs would be helpful, I wrote descriptions of particular jobs that I was already in the process of accomplishing, jobs I was attempting to accomplish, and jobs I was planning or hoping to accomplish. I listed these positions with descriptions, and posted them on Craigslist.org, and on the Wilson 2008 Campaign website. Figure 5 shows the page created for the campaign website.
Figure 5. Website page listing campaign team openings, and other ways to help.

Wanted (These jobs are not necessarily mutually exclusive if you have the time available to do more than one thing.) Please email me if you are interested in helping, and feel free to suggest ways to help that are not listed here. Last updated 27-Jan-2008 14:20.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positions</th>
<th>Other Ways to Help</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>all available for volunteer or</td>
<td>Become my friend and/or supporter on Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>internship</td>
<td>Contribute money (Hit the green &quot;Donate&quot; button, above.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>make your own hours</td>
<td>Nominate people for positions the President appoints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballot Access Coordinator</td>
<td>Offer your couch or most bed for a night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief of Staff</td>
<td>Put my bumper sticker on your car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Entry Associate</td>
<td>Start local Wilson 2008 meetup groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Election Commission (FEC)</td>
<td>Take the time to appreciate this campaign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Advisor (preferably, but need not be, a lawyer)</td>
<td>Talk about this campaign with everybody you can and ask them to subscribe to my campaign.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing Associate</td>
<td>Tell your local media and any media contacts about me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Relations Associate</td>
<td>Download and print my cards and hand out to friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web Site Developer/Webmaster</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webcam Operator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ballot Access Coordinator - This Ballot Access Coordinator is responsible for tracking any efforts to get on state ballots and ensuring that no redundant work is being done at the state level. Also possibly calling in efforts in a state or two.

Chief of Staff - The Chief of Staff will ensure the Wilson 2008 Campaign Team is a well-oiled machine. The CoS reports to the candidate, but works closely with the staff, mainly to give support and ensure everybody is on the same page. The ideal Chief of Staff will be able to fly like a butterfly but sting like a bee.

Data Entry Associate - This Data Entry Associate will, for the most part, be entering names and contact information into the campaign database. He/she may also be responsible for updating Web site statistics.

Federal Election Commission (FEC) Liaison - The FEC Liaison is responsible for ensuring FEC regulations are complied with. This person will advise all staff members regarding regulations, and will work particularly closely with the Treasurer.

Legal Advisor (preferably, but need not be, a lawyer) - The Legal Advisor will field whatever legal questions arise as needed.

Marketing Associate - Marketing Associates will enjoy dreaming up and executing schemes to make this campaign a household name.

Public Relations Associate - The Public Relations Associate will seek to understand how the Wilson 2008 Campaign impacts the communities with which it comes in contact, and work to ensure that the Wilson 2008 Campaign lives up to community standards.

Researchers - If staff have questions, researchers will find the answers. They will put all answers to a database I have built for this purpose, and will be made available to the public through www.wilson2008.com.

Treasurer - The Treasurer be in charge of the Wilson for President funds, keep the books, and ensure FEC financial reporting is completed in a timely manner.

Web Site Developer/Webmaster - The Web person will enjoy making the site snazzy and capable of doing lots of cool things while also keeping it user-friendly so that information is easy to find.

Webcam Operator - The Webcam Operator will ensure the Wilson 2008 Campaign is documented on streaming video over the Web. The Webcam Operator will work closely with the Webmaster.

Writer - The writer will relieve me from this painful process I call “trying to write.”
**WILSON 2008 TV**

With the campaign team positions posted, it was time to get my website in the best shape possible in order to build support and hopefully inspire people to join with the campaign.

As discussed above, a main focus of the campaign was to be the transparent building of an administration, all broadcast on streaming video on the Internet. At about the time I decided to run for US president, I heard about JustinTV, which is a site that allows people to create their own interactive media channel in order to broadcast live video from their own webcams. These live streams can be viewed on the JustinTV site, and can also be embedded on one’s own site, or third-party sites (such as MySpace or Facebook) that allowed users to embed HTML on profile pages. Unfortunately, they were still in beta testing and had stopped adding stations during that time. I put my name on a waiting list for JustinTV and searched the Web for alternatives.

The next site I discovered was AWCAST, which allowed me to start right away, but it was buggy and limited, and I used it only briefly before discovering Ustream. Ustream offered exactly what I needed—a free Internet-based interactive broadcast platform for broadcasting video live both from a computer-based webcam and from a mobile phone cam. It also allowed many-to-many, real-time chat capability. This channel provided access to any who might be interested to an insider’s view of campaign activities and enabled real interactive communication between the public and the campaign.

JustinTV also eventually became available and so I used both services. I embedded both of these video streams on a page on my site, but one could also view either on their respective sites. The Ustream site is reproduced as Figure 6.

**THE BLOG**

I also created a blog on my site. I did not have a specific goal for the blog, but planned to write about anything I thought might be important or entertaining to me or the campaign, whether it was thoughts about current events, reporting on the campaign, or my political views. I hoped this would create interest in the campaign and open a line of dialogue with the public. I eventually moved my blog to blogger.com, where I was also able to embed my two Wilson TV channels. I have reproduced a single entry from the blog in Figure 7.
What Is Conservative?

"We should invade their countries, kill their leaders, and convert them to Christianity." - Ann Coulter

For me, the word conservative connotes something basically positive in most contexts. I think of conservative as avoiding excess, moving forward prudently, making cautious progress in order to avoid mistakes and make it more likely that the future will be better -- perhaps not as much better as it could be if a more risky strategy was taken, but, conversely, not as bad as it might be. Think conservative investing.

I believe it is true that, as it is often said, most people are conservative, politically and otherwise, in this country and in all countries. I think of myself as conservative on most political issues, and I don't know many people who are not. But what gets labeled politically conservative today is about as conservative as
the Patriot Act is patriotic. To be a Republican, for example, and
call oneself conservative at the same time is to be either
mercurial or deluded, and, sadly, even the Democrats
perpetuate the error by continuing to associate that word with
Republicans. The proper political label for much Republican doctrine
is reactionary or, at best, stagnant (the latter also being a quality
Republicans often share with Democrats). These are the labels
that should be relentlessly associated with Republicans, just as
liberal is associated with Democrats — but in this case the
'reactionary Republican' label will be more accurate, in contrast to
the 'liberal Democrat' label, since most Dems are more accurately
described as conservative.

An unbiased look makes it clear that the word conservative has
been abused so much that it has taken on nearly the opposite
meaning. Is it conservative to invade a foreign country that is no
threat to anyone? Is it conservative to want to deregulate to the
point of returning to a feudal society? Is it conservative to appoint
judges who want to overturn settled law with which the vast
majority of people agree? Is it conservative to not think through
the consequences of actions? Obviously not. As we have seen,
these actions and mindsets are risky, subversive, and dangerous.

Yet, the word's positive connotations remain, so that if a politician
or pundit labels a risky or reactionary act or mindset conservative,
many who unreflectively consider themselves conservative
automatically have positive feelings toward that act or mindset.

Thus, ironically, it is those so-called conservatives who most
loudly decry the post-modern condition of moral relativity who are
more culpable than anybody else in detaching the sign from the
signified — from detaching the meaning of the word from its basis.
Thus, ironically, it is those so-called conservatives who most
loudly decry the post-modern condition of moral relativity who are
more culpable than anybody else in detaching the sign from the
signified — from detaching the meaning of the word from its basis
in reality.

For those who are still Republican because they believe in a
conservative government, your heart may be in the right place,
but you're not paying attention to what the Grand Old Party has
become. It is the real conservatives that said "enough is enough"
to Republican Party and put a Democrat in the White House.

Personally, I believe political parties are a negative force in
politics, and I hope people will continue to unaffiliate themselves
with parties and educate themselves enough to think for
themselves about what kind of public policy is best for the
country. But if you feel the need to have a secular religion, or if
you just don't have time to educate yourself on all the issues and
you are looking for a more conservative party to tell you how to
vote, I would suggest the Democrats. I occasionally vote for
Democrats as the lesser of two evils. They may not accomplish
anything positive (though merely responsible government will seem
like something wonderfully positive now that the bar has been set
so low), but at least they won't wreck this country as, in so many
ways, have the Republicans.

a Posted by Kelcy Wilson at 11:10 AM

Labels: conservatism, conservative, partisanship, party politics
**Basic Fundraising Infrastructure**

Although I expected to run a very low-budget campaign, I needed systems in place to accept any donations that might show up. The first thing I wanted to do was to set up a bank account specifically for the campaign in order to ensure complete separation between campaign funds and my personal account. This was actually somewhat more difficult than expected as my bank branch had no experience creating bank accounts for political groups. After some confusion on their part, they eventually ended up opening the same type of account they use for clubs and associations, which is technically considered a business account. But in order to do this, I needed to have an Employer Identification Number (EIN). I had not idea how to get one, but it turned out that they can be obtained immediately simply by filling in an online form at IRS.gov. The next day I was able to open the bank account. This gave me the ability to set up a contributions form using PayPal, which allowed me to accept credit card contributions and to be deposited directly in the campaign account. After establishing a PayPal account, I set up the contributions page (see Figure 8), which was located on the PayPal site. I then added a “Donate” button to my Web site, which linked to the contributions page at PayPal. A potential contributor could then click “Donate” from any page on the Wilson 2008 Campaign website, which would take the contributor to the donation page and, after submitting a contribution, the contributor would be redirected to a confirmation page back on the campaign site (see Figure 9) and be emailed a receipt for the contribution.

**Budget**

I also set up a page that would provide a running account of the Wilson 2008 Campaign’s financial activities, including contributions and expenditures within 24 hours of any financial event. This web page is reproduced in Figure 10, which shows all financial activities from the beginning to the end of the campaign.

**Announcement of Candidacy**

With the website and systems more or less in place—though many elements would be revised throughout the campaign—I decided it was time to announce my candidacy. Virtually all candidates take this opportunity to create a publicity event, but I did not feel
Figure 8. Reproduction of Web page that allowed online donations to the campaign.

ready to deal with much attention, in the off chance that my announcement would draw the public eye. Feeling less than well-prepared and temperamentally quite shy and uncomfortable being the center of attention, I felt great trepidation about the prospect of putting myself into the public eye—especially when it would likely make me the target of some mockery and even anger. On the other hand, it was my feeling that announcing my candidacy would strengthen my commitment to what I believed was a worthy project. And so, on President’s Day, without fanfare, I announced my candidacy on my blog (see Figure 11). A couple months later, I officially filed my Statement of Candidacy Form with the Federal Election Commission (FEC) (see Figure 12). A few days after that, I filed a Statement of Organization, which officially created Wilson for President, the campaign committee that was designated to file any financial reporting with the FEC (see Figure 13).
There is no clear distinction between a political campaign and marketing. For most candidates, the political campaign is essentially a marketing campaign. The Wilson 2008 Campaign was no different. The main point of the project was to put my ideas into the marketplace of ideas, though I went about it in a tentative and amateur way. I was constantly torn between my desire to bring the ideas into the national conversation, and feeling unprepared and introverted. But I forged ahead against my instincts, and produced a few materials that I hoped would attract interest in the campaign.

The major marketing product of the campaign was, of course, the website, which I have already covered. My next marketing effort was a bumper sticker, which I designed in Photoshop, and then outsourced to a printer (see Figure 14). I also designed business cards in Word, which I printed myself as needed on perforated forms (see Figure 15). I posted both on my site, so that people could print cards if they chose, or write in to request bumper stickers.

I also composed two press releases at different points. The first of these was meant to publicize my candidacy (see Figure 16). (The second was meant to publicize my signing of a
Figure 10. Website page showing the total budget of the campaign.
**Budget 01 Feb 07 to 06-Apr-2008 19:34**

### EXPENDITURES

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<th>Total</th>
<th>CONTRIBUTIONS</th>
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<td>9.96</td>
<td>9.96</td>
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<td>578.96</td>
<td>578.96</td>
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<td>704.80</td>
<td>704.80</td>
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<td><strong>March</strong></td>
<td>9.96</td>
<td>9.96</td>
<td>714.76</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>April</strong></td>
<td>9.96</td>
<td>9.96</td>
<td>724.70</td>
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<td>Certified Mailing of Statement of Candidacy 04-04-2007</td>
<td>5.30</td>
<td>15.25</td>
<td>730.00</td>
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<td><strong>May</strong></td>
<td>9.96</td>
<td>9.96</td>
<td>739.96</td>
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<td><strong>June</strong></td>
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<td><strong>July</strong></td>
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<td><strong>August</strong></td>
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<td>Domain Registration + Web Hosting</td>
<td>9.96</td>
<td>9.96</td>
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<td>140.00</td>
<td>149.96</td>
<td>919.76</td>
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*Please note that the 3rd DC PO Box listed above is for $140.00, which is 149.96. The discrepancy is due to the nature of the ticket.*

### October

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Domain Registration + Web Hosting</td>
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<td>9.95</td>
<td>1,367.69</td>
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<tr>
<td>DC to NYC train ticket</td>
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<td>107.56</td>
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<td>Cab to lodging from Penn Station</td>
<td>10.00</td>
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<td>MTA to Harvard Sq</td>
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<td>192.45</td>
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<td>363.44</td>
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<td>Shipping, etc., home</td>
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<td>400.88</td>
<td>1,758.62</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPS copy card + petition copies</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>402.88</td>
<td>1,760.62</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wireless Internet from Spring</td>
<td>96.59</td>
<td>463.47</td>
<td>1,850.61</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total DC Metro fees</td>
<td>29.00</td>
<td>492.47</td>
<td>1,849.61</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Writing press releases is a profession unto itself, one with which I had no experience, so this was yet another thing to learn on the campaign trail. It turns out that there are many tricks to writing and disseminating the kind of press releases that get picked up by media outlets. There are a few rules of thumb. Basic formatting practices should be adhered to, all of which can be seen on this press release. It is also considered wise in most cases to keep the press release as short and yet informative as possible, preferably fitting entirely within one page.
 wilson 2008 campaign blog - blogger: Kelcey Wilson

Below are some blog entries from earlier than the posts available at the new blog.

(Please send any comments to kelceywilson@wilson2008.com, and be sure to indicate the date of the pertinent blog entry.)

***

The corporate and union rules are far less clear to me -- though I have been reading them with at least as much care. I may need to revise my campaign finance plan/situation because, as far as I can tell, corporations are not permitted to contribute directly to federal election campaigns. There are loopholes, of course -- corporations and unions can start PACs and engage in elections to support candidates -- which allow much cash to corporate donations for federal candidates, but I need to do some more research so that I can be sure my plan is worded accurately.

The good news is, as far as I can tell so far, there are no limits on how much anyone or any organization can contribute to Project President because it is not a partisan political committee. COMMENT

Monday, February 26, 2007

(Poled 4/0/07) I am in Washington, D.C. today, visiting a friend. The sole reason for my visit was to see the Cherry Blossom Festival. I have been able to pick up a campaign finance book today at the Politics & Prose bookstore that I would have had to wait a couple weeks to get through Amazon. (Not bashing Amazon -- I love Amazon -- just like good bookstores that are staffed with people who have heard of the books I'm looking for, and have basement coffee shops where I can get a coffee and doughnut and eat it while reading in a comfortable chair until I need off and to everybody's amusement, begin to move as a little trickle of dew runs down my chin.)

We visited the Washington Monument on Sunday and my friend took a picture of me in front of it. Maybe I'll post it when she figures out how to get it out of her digital camera and email it to me. It's funny -- I can't recall many pictures of politicians posing in front of the Washington Monument. I wonder if their image consultants know something I don't. COMMENT

Thursday, February 21, 2007

Stayed home from school today so that I could work on this site and prepare for my trip to Washington, D.C., which begins tomorrow. I didn't get much done on the site, however, though it's now in decent enough shape so that I can concentrate on other things for a little while.

Ultimately, I want to make a site that is far more useful, user-friendly, functional, and aesthetically pleasing (in more or less that order of priority). My biggest goal, which will especially add to the usefulness and functionality of the site, is to provide video of all aspects of the campaign. While I want to everything to be on video, what I think will be of particular interest will be the kind of meetings and campaign work that has usually taken place behind the scenes. I think it will be very interesting to see how conducting transparent campaigns dictates the behavior of the people involved, and, perhaps, changes the behavior of those who are conducting less transparent campaigns.

Wednesday, February 21, 2007

I have not been on this site recently, so that I could study up on campaign finance accounting procedures, but I'm still having trouble finding a lawyer I want to talk to about the issue of campaign finance. I think the best way to do this would be to find a lawyer who is willing to work with me on a pro bono basis and who has experience with campaign finance issues.

Tuesday, February 20, 2007

I got a PO Box today in order to make it a little easier for people to find me and how many others. Otherwise, I've pretty much spent the entire day working on and tweaking the wording of everything I'm trying to say on the site. It felt like I accomplished nothing, and I'm still not happy with the site, so I'll do the same thing tomorrow. Hopefully, it won't take me all day. COMMENT

Monday, February 19, 2007

Chris was complaining that he should be called George Washington's Birthday because, if I understand his argument correctly, it would help educate some people who may not know who George Washington was. At least one problem with that argument: according to my calendar, George Washington's birthday was the February 22nd.

It's Presidents' Day -- a good day to officially announce my candidacy. Does getting my name on the site still run counter to my announcement? It's hard to tell. Everyone has different procedures for getting on the ballot -- and everyone has different procedures for getting on the ballot. I had intended to run without a party affiliation, but according to the research I've done so far on the process in California -- which included leaving an interview with a campaign manager who is running for the Secretary of State's elective office -- it is not even possible to run without being a party member. What's more, running as a third party is significantly more difficult than running as a member of one of the major two. Apparently, nobody wants to play on a low-level playing field in the marketplace of ideas (or just a place where ideas can be discussed).

Effectively blocked from running without a party affiliation, I decided last week to do what might be the best thing and try to get the Unity08 nomination. I researched the site for information about how to proceed, and it looks to me like all I need do at this point is to announce. (See http://www.unity08.com) So, in case the several times I've announced it before to friends does not count, I hereby announce my candidacy for the Unity08 nomination for President of the United States of America. COMMENT

Figure 11. Website blog showing original announcement of candidacy.
Figure 12. Statement of candidacy.
Figure 13. Statement of organization.
It is also essential to target the particular media outlets and, if possible, specific departments and persons that might be interested in writing about your topic. The people, companies, and publicity/public relations firms that do regular press releases have databases of such contacts. I had no such database, nor funds to buy a mailing list, so I had to create my own. I did not spend a lot of time doing this, but I did spend a day building a spreadsheet of major and minor media outlets that I could send my press releases to via email (see Figure 17). As far as I could tell, my press releases had no impact whatsoever.

Finally, so that I could track the effectiveness of my marketing strategies, I created a Web page that allowed people to subscribe to any Wilson 2008 Campaign communications that might be produced. I included on this form a field that required subscribers to select how they learned about the campaign (see Figure 18).

**THE FREEDOM PLEDGE**

Soon after I began the Wilson 2008 Campaign, I learned about the American Freedom Agenda—a group that included the constitutional attorney Bruce Fein—and their opposition to the abuses of the Bush years. They hoped to get candidates to sign a pledge called the “Freedom Pledge,” which had two aims: “the enactment of a cluster of statutes that would restore the Constitution’s checks and balances as enshrined by the Founding Fathers; and, making the subject a staple of political campaigns and of foremost concern to Members of Congress and to voters and educators.” This pledge meshed well with my campaign and policy aims, and so I had no problem signing and trying to promote this effort with my campaign and a press release (see Figures 19 and 20).
Figure 15. Business cards.
For Immediate Release  
March 23, 2007

Presidential Candidate Announces Intent to Televisse His Presidency

Seeking the Unity08 Nomination, Wilson also Plans Behind-the-Scenes Coverage of Campaign

MALIBU — March 23, 2007 — In an audacious bid to restore the nation’s trust in the Executive Branch, Kelcey Brian Wilson launched his campaign for U.S. president with a promise to televise his presidency if elected. “The President is a servant of the People, yet the current administration has taken advantage of our trust and now monitors our personal correspondence at will. Who has inflicted more damage upon our democratic republic in the last six years: the People, or the President? Clearly, it’s time We the People monitor our most powerful servant,” said Wilson.

Innovative, Forward-Thinking, Four-Year Plan

Not simply a gimmick, transparency is a cornerstone of the Wilson 2008 Campaign platform. The campaign adheres to the conditions of Project President, a project organized by Wilson that aims to provide free streaming video coverage of presidential candidates who run transparent campaigns. These conditions include real-time campaign finance disclosure, and public disclosure of people being considered for Executive Branch positions. In addition, Wilson has posted a 40-plank, and counting, platform topped by a pledge to deliver universal broadband Internet access and a national solar power grid in his first and only term.

Born in Pasadena, California, in 1969, Wilson earned his bachelor’s degree, *cum laude*, in Philosophy from Boston College, and is currently at work on a Master of Art in Liberal Arts and Sciences (MALAS) at San Diego State University.

For more information, press only:
Elizabeth Cleveland, 202-378-8597, clevelandelizabeth@wilson2008.com

For more information on the Wilson 2008 Campaign:
http://www.wilson2008.com

For more information on Project President:
http://www.projectpresident.net

Figure 16. Press release announcing candidacy.
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<td>Exec. Editor</td>
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<td>Michael Dowd</td>
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</table>

Figure 17. Media contact list.
VOTER GUIDES

A number of organizations provide online voter guides designed to give voters information about candidates’ political views and affiliations. Some organizations mail out questionnaires, while others provide candidates with online questionnaires. Of the organizations that contacted me, I chose to respond to the two that I felt asked the best
Freedom Pledge

I, Kelcey Wilson, hereby pledge that if elected President of the United States I will undertake the following to restore the Constitution’s checks and balances, to honor fundamental protections against injustice, and to eschew usurpations of legislative or judicial power. These are keystones of national security and individual freedom:

1. No Military Commissions Except on the Battlefield. I will not employ military commissions to prosecute offenses against the laws of war except in places where active hostilities are ongoing and a battlefield tribunal is necessary to obtain fresh testimony and to prevent local anarchy or chaos.

2. No Evidence Extracted by Torture or Coercion. I will not permit the use of evidence obtained by torture or coercion to be admissible in a military commission or other tribunal.

3. No Detaining Citizens as Unlawful Enemy Combatants. I will not detain any American citizen as an unlawful enemy combatant. Citizens accused of terrorism-linked crimes will be prosecuted in federal civilian courts.

4. Restoring Habeas Corpus for Suspected Alien Enemy Combatants. I will detain non-citizens as enemy combatants only if they have actively participated in actual hostilities against the United States. I will urge Congress to amend the Military Commissions Act of 2006 to permit any individual detained under the custody or control of the United States government to file a petition for a writ of habeas corpus in federal courts.

5. Prohibiting Warrantless Spying by the National Security Agency in Violation of Law. I will prohibit the National Security Agency from gathering foreign intelligence except in conformity with the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978, and end the NSA’s domestic surveillance program that targets American citizens on American soil for warrantless electronic surveillance.

6. Renouncing Presidential Signing Statements. I will not issue presidential signing statements declaring the intent to disregard provisions of a bill that I have signed into law because I believe they are unconstitutional. Instead, I will veto any bill that I believe contains an unconstitutional provision and ask Congress to delete it and re-pass the legislation.

7. Ending Secret Government by Invoking State Secrets Privilege. I will not invoke the state secrets privilege to deny remedies to individuals victimized by constitutional violations perpetrated by government officials or agents. I will not assert executive privilege to deny Congress information relevant to oversight or legislation unless supreme state secrets are involved. In that case, I will submit the privilege claim to a legislative-executive committee for definitive resolution.

8. Stopping Extraordinary Renditions. I will order the cessation of extraordinary renditions except where the purpose of the capture and transportation of the suspected criminal is for prosecution according to internationally accepted standards of fairness and due process.

9. Stopping Threats to Prosecuting Journalists under the Espionage Act. I will urge Congress to amend the Espionage Act to create a journalistic exception for reporting on matters relating to the national defense. As a matter of prosecutorial discretion, until such an amendment is enacted I will not prosecute journalists for alleged Espionage Act violations except for the intentional disclosure of information that threatens immediate physical harm to American troops or citizens at home or abroad.

10. Ending the Listing of Individuals or Organizations as Terrorists Based on Secret Evidence. I will not list individuals or organizations as foreign terrorists or foreign terrorist organizations for purposes of United States or international law based on secret evidence.

I will issue a public report annually elaborating on how the actions enumerated in paragraphs 1-10 have strengthened the ability of the United States to defeat international terrorism, secure fundamental freedoms, and preserve the nation’s democratic dispensation.

Kelcey Wilson

Date: 4/07

Figure 19. The Freedom Pledge.
Figure 20. Press release announcing the signing of the Freedom Pledge.

questions: Project Vote Smart and e.thePeople. See Appendices A and B for the completed questionnaires.

THE WIKIPEDIA SAGA

My experience with Wikipedia was one of the more frustrating but also fascinating experiences of the campaign. While looking for ways to promote the Wilson 2008 Campaign, I ran across a Wikipedia article that was specifically aimed at providing a list and some basic information about the 2008 presidential candidates, and noticed that the long list excluded me. I immediately decided that I should be included. Because Wikipedia articles are written and edited by its users, and because I had no staff and had no idea how to edit Wikipedia articles, this meant that I needed to learn how and add my candidacy myself.

After a couple hours of reading and futzing around, I succeeded in adding my candidacy to the list. Recognizing that this could be source of interest in the campaign, I also
added this to the “How did you hear about the Campaign” dropdown list on the subscriber web page (discussed above), which indicated that the Wikipedia article did indeed spur some interest in the campaign.

But at some point I checked in on the page again, and my entry had been deleted. This turned out to be a recurring theme, as I would re-insert my candidacy and check in a week or two later to find it had been deleted. Other user/editors generally had one of two reasons for deleting my candidacy. The most common claim was that that my candidacy (and many other independent candidacies) were “irrelevant,” and therefore might as well be deleted. The other, harder to refute, reason was that we were not “notable” as defined by Wikipedia guidelines.

Eventually, I discovered that the proper way to dispute these deletions was through the discussion board of the article. Each Wikipedia article has an associated “Discussion” page, which people can use to argue the merits of any edits they choose. I successfully argued my case a couple of times, prompting other editors to re-insert me, but I eventually tired of the struggle and gave up.

Wikipedia is an interesting element of the de facto marketplace of ideas today. In the context of political campaigns, it is certainly a media outlet, as it is a source of mediated information about candidates. As such, I felt it unfair that a user could easily and successfully remove me from the article and the worldwide exposure it provided—creating somewhat of a catch-22 situation in which I would not become “notable” without widespread publicity, but was blocked from the publicity that Wikipedia provided. Although I doubt anybody who deleted me saw me as a political threat to their favored candidate, I was always suspicious of their motivations since they did not seem to be based on logic or something like a space limitation.

As I write, the Wikipedia article on 2008 presidential candidates has no reference to my candidacy or any candidate that did not get on the official ballot in any state, and is therefore technically an inaccurate historical record. I think notability is probably a reasonable standard for inclusion in a bound paper encyclopedia, but I see no reason why such a limitation should be placed on a web page with unlimited space. It would add minimal length in list form, would be easy for readers to skip over, or for user/editors to place out of the way, at the end of the article.
THE UNITY08 EXPERIENCE

Early in August 2007, I learned about Unity08, an organization that intended to provide a viable non-partisan avenue for nominating an independent candidate and getting him or her on all 50 ballots. Their idea was to have an online convention that would choose a candidate, and the organization would in turn (attempt to) put that candidate on the state ballots. This was clearly a much more feasible arrangement than building a national organization myself, assuming the likelihood that the prerequisites for being nominated would be easier to meet than the patchwork of state prerequisites. But the prerequisites had not been resolved at the time I discovered them, so I began to communicate with Unity08 to see what the requirements for getting into the convention would be.

I documented much of this process on my blog. An online news outlet called *Irregular Times* picked up on this effort (see Figures 21 and 22).

After many attempts to procure signature forms for Unity08 candidacy, Unity08 co-founder Doug Bailey contacted me to suggest we meet in person. We met on September 12th, 2007, at the Watergate Hotel in Washington, DC. The meeting included co-founder Bob Bailey, and consisted mainly of about a half-hour of the two of them talking about what Unity08 was trying to do. As the monologues wound up, Bailey asked me if I had any questions. I replied with something along the lines of, “Well, the only thing I really need at this point is an official signature form so that I can start the process of collecting enough signatures to get on the ballot for the online convention.” Bailey appeared somewhat miffed at this response. I am not sure if that was because I came off as being disrespectful, or the meeting was perhaps an effort to distract me from my primary mission, or he thought I should have been more bedazzled by their organization and defend them to outlets like *Irregular Times*, or something else, but he quickly agreed to provide the requisite forms the following week. Happily, and to my great relief, as I had begun to suspect it would never happen, the forms were in fact posted for everyone on the Unity08 website the following week (see Figure 23).

THE WILSON 2008 CAMPAIGN HITS THE STREETS

Having obtained the official signature form, I began my first attempt at collecting signatures outside the Metro station at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). My setup was
Kelcey Wilson is an citizen who has been trying to get a run for president started as part of a Unity08 ticket for months now. But he hasn’t been able to, and it’s not because of a lack of effort on his part:

My first stop will be Washington, DC, which will be my home base while I collect signatures in Virginia and Maryland.

Maybe I will also drop in on the Unity08 headquarters while I’m there. I have been trying for three months to get Unity08 to approve a petition form for candidates, which they have suspiciously neglected to do so far. Since I have sent them two sample forms to approve, it shouldn’t be difficult. They claim to want to clean up politics, but by dragging their feet on this, they pretty much seem to be telling us that they want to give the Unity08 nomination to an establishment politician who already has large enough organization to go out and collect huge numbers of signatures quickly, or one who is simply rich enough to hire enough signature collectors. If they donâ€™t get on the ball with that with in the next couple of weeks, they are sure to start to get some increasingly negative press. This organization seems to be preparing to shoot itself in the foot. What’s going on with Unity08? What’s going on behind their closed doors?

Good question. If Unity08:

1. Hasn’t got a form for candidates to gather petition signatures, and
2. Won’t even respond to Unity08 contenders on their own who want to start gathering signatures, but
3. Requires candidates to collect signatures
4. Has ten months to go until its supposed presidential vote,

then by gum, how is anybody but a connected insider who is filthy rich going to get on the Unity08 ballot?

If Unity08 were really a “grassroots” “people’s movement” (as it refers to itself), it would be embracing people like Kelcey Wilson. It’s not, which is another sign that it isn’t.


a small collapsible set of shelves, purchased nearby, that I used as a makeshift podium. I placed the computer on top, with the camera pointed at myself. I also had a sign placed on the front of the shelves. The interest was practically zero and felt very awkward. After two short days of this I realized that my sign was not only amateurish and ugly, it also had a tone of conspiracy theory about it (see Figure 24—the only surviving record I have of it is a screen shot of the AWCAST channel mentioned above), and was probably making an already difficult task even harder. The headline was “Help Televis the Presidency … Let’s Start
Three Dates for Unity08
posted 17th September 2007 in Alternative Parties, Election 2008, Politics, unity08 by Jim Cook

Three dates of relevance to Unity08:

Today: Unity08 has pledged to presidential candidate Kelcey Wilson to make petition forms available by today so that any citizen can begin collecting signatures to run as a presidential candidate through Unity08. At 4:40 pm EST, two forms are available: the petition for prospective candidacy and the prospective candidacy application.

But this is not sufficient. Gathering 100 signatures to become a “prospective candidate” is a relatively trivial task. The real work of any Unity08 presidential campaign is moving from “prospective candidate” status to the status of a “qualified candidate.” The qualification process for someone to become a full candidate for president through Unity08 is described in the Draft Rules:

> While on the list of Prospective Candidates, Prospective Candidates and/or their Principal Supporters will be allowed to solicit support from Unity08 Delegates in order to qualify as Candidates for the Unity08 Presidential Nomination.

> Prospective Candidates may qualify as Candidates for the Unity08 Presidential Nomination by having, in each of ten different states, 2,500 registered voters in each of those states (a total of 25,000 registered voters) electronically sign up on the Unity08 website to support the Prospective Candidate AND by having, in each of five different states, 500 registered voters in each of those states (a total of 2,500 registered voters) sign a hard copy petition to support the Prospective Candidate.

There is no form available through which the hard work of collecting 2,500 signatures in ten states can be completed, and there is no current location on the Unity08 website at which a “prospective candidate” can have 2,500 registered voters sign an indication of support. There is no indication by Unity08 of a time at which these will become available. Nine months and two weeks are left before the supposed Unity08 convention for a citizen to first gain prospective candidate status, and then to complete the candidate qualification process — and Unity08 has not made it possible for this process to be completed.

Kelcey Wilson despaired on August 19, 2007:

> I have been trying for three months to get Unity08 to approve a petition form for candidates, which they have suspiciously neglected to do so far. Since I have sent them two sample forms to approve, it shouldn’t be difficult. They claim to want to clean up politics, but by dragging their feet on this, they pretty much seem to be telling us that they want to give the Unity08 nomination to an establishment politician who already has large enough organization to go out and collect huge numbers of signatures quickly, or one who is simply rich enough to hire enough signature collectors. If they don’t get on the ball with that within the next couple of weeks, they are sure to start getting increasingly negative press. This organization seems to be preparing to shoot itself in the foot. What’s going on with Unity08? What’s going on behind their closed doors?

Kelcey Wilson still has some reason for despair. Why won’t Unity08 make a full petition form for candidate qualification available now? When will the form be posted?
Watching the Watchers” and had an ugly picture of George Bush and Dick Cheney on a TV set.

At the end of my second day, I decided to build a better sign and start fresh at a new location. That same night I discovered Ustream and took some time to get my station up and running and integrated with my website. The following day I took the Wilson 2008 Campaign to the University of Maryland’s College Park campus.
Petition for Prospective Candidacy of ____________________________
for Unity08 Nomination for President of the United States

This petition is pursuant to the draft rules of Unity08, which state that a prospective candidate “must provide to Unity08 a ‘hard copy’ petition signed by registered voters supporting his/her candidacy.”

Please read before signing:

“By signing this petition, I certify that I am a registered voter and I support the prospective candidate listed above for the Unity08 nomination for President of the United States at the online convention of June 2008. I understand that the information provided may be used to verify my voter registration.”

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<td>Address</td>
<td>Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Email or Phone (required for verification purposes)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Completed petitions with original signatures (no photocopies) should be sent by certified mail to: Unity08, Candidate Registration, P.O. Box 12345, Arlington, VA 22219. Note: It is important to achieve a total of 150 valid signatures.

This petition form was circulated by:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full Name (print)</th>
<th>Signature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address</td>
<td>Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone Number</td>
<td>Email Address</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 23. Unity08 official signature form.
THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK

My next stop was the University of Maryland, College Park. I created a new sign that I thought would create more interest, which read “Help Me Run for President of the United States” (see Figure 25). I thought the students might at least find it amusing and that would get some conversations started.

Maybe it was the redesign, maybe it was the student culture, but for whatever reason, the campaign did indeed generate more interest at the College Park campus. As I became more comfortable with talking to strangers, and as I refined my initial pitch, responses became more positive. At the first location near the NIH and at College Park, I approach people with, “Help televise the presidency,” though this ultimately garnered few signatures. At College Park, I began to intersperse, “Help me get on the ballot,” which seemed slightly more effective. When people did engage with me, it almost always generated positive
responses and a signature. Still, it was very slow going. When people approached me, I would immediately launch into an explanation of my goal of increasing transparency through webcasting, but the topic of transparency is not a subject that is uppermost in many people’s minds, nor very interesting. I would estimate that three-fourths of the people I spoke with did not even know what the term meant until I explained.

Nevertheless, many of these discussions made people curious about the other elements of my platform. In this case, I would almost always next explain my “National Clean Energy Program” plank (see Figure 3, p. 71). This single plank generated the most positive reaction by far, and many agreed to sign my petition based on that reason alone. I eventually switched my approach line almost exclusively to, “Help create a national clean energy program.” When this developed interest, people would usually look at my sign, which also told them this was a presidential campaign, and if they came to talk, I would tell them

Figure 25. Improved campaign podium sign.
about the clean energy program, and if they stuck around to talk, I would explain the transparency plank. With this approach, if people agreed with the National Clean Energy plank, they were almost guaranteed to sign the petition. These people also almost always agreed with the transparency plank once they understood what it was about and were satisfied that I was not talking about common sense measures that would help inform the public and make public servants more accountable.

I did not keep track of the numbers of positive and negative interactions, or on how many interactions led to signatures, but I estimate that of the people who spoke with me, about 95 percent agreed with any aspects of my platform that they knew about, and of that 95 percent about 85 percent gave signatures. Although I had a few negative responses, some very negative, which loomed large in my emotions, when I could step back and think objectively about the experience, I was astonished by how positive the response was. Most who had positive responses, but did not sign, told me they just did not like to give out their information.

Despite these very positive percentages, which were repeated at other locations with very different demographics, my experience was similar, it might be a mistake to assume that they would reflect the potential reactions of the larger population. The vast majority of people—even the people who looked carefully and listened to my pitch—passed right by. I suspect that people who are willing to approach people who are out collecting signatures, particularly a random guy they have never heard of who says he is running for President of the United States of America, are also the kind of people who would react positively to what I was offering. I would guess that people who engage with signature collectors, in general, want political change.

**ONWARD TO NEW YORK CITY, TO CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS AND BACK TO WASHINGTON.**

After a couple of weeks in Washington, DC, I headed to New York City, where I had arranged to stay with a couple of friends. I settled on Washington Square as the place to set up my campaign. The demographic here was much more diverse than the Maryland campus, but overall the reactions were very similar. Maybe I had grown more comfortable with what I was doing, but I also enjoyed the setting much more. I felt less like a foreign invader and more like just another New York character doing his thing. It also did not hurt that the food
was so much better than the campus fast food outlets, and I was introduced by a friend to 9th Street Espresso, where they make the best latte I had had in my life at that point.

After about a week in New York, I headed up to Boston, where I had also arranged stays with a couple friends. I set the campaign up in Harvard Square which turned out to be a little less successful than the other venues. A number of factors may have contributed. The weather was significantly colder and occasionally sprinkled rain or light snow, which was not conducive to stopping and having an extended conversation. Another factor may have been the culture or geology of the location, which I may have not taken well enough into account. Harvard Square is a crowded thoroughfare that is more of a teen hangout than a place where adults come to relax. There are plenty of commercial spaces to find sanctuary, but relatively little public space. Hence, the teenagers hang out in what little there is, and the older folks hurry through as quickly as possible. I probably should have chosen a place on campus, or headed to Boston Common. I am not sure why I was so intent on being at Harvard Square, but I collected signatures there for four days, and enjoyed spending those nights with old friends who I had not seen for years. Finished in Boston, I hopped the train back to DC and to a friend’s home in Maryland.

**THE DIAMONDBACK INTERVIEW**

Back on the University of Maryland, College Park campus, a journalism student by the name of Eli Segall approached me for an interview, which we set up for the following day in a coffee shop on campus. When we met, I told him the entire interview would be streamed live on the Internet, and asked if he would join me in front of the camera, but he chose to remain off camera. The entire interview can be seen at the Ustream channel of Wilson 2008 TV. During the lengthy interview, Segall focused mostly on my personal history, as if he were going to write a biography. Not knowing what else to do, I let him take the interview wherever he wanted (see Figure 26).

The article appeared in *The Diamondback*, the campus student newspaper, a few days after the interview. It was about 625 words, and contained only a single sentence that referred

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61 The channel url is http://www.ustream.tv/channel/wilson-2008-tv. The interview is located at http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/66609.
to the purpose of the Wilson 2008 Campaign, which was, astonishingly glib: “The platform includes apologizing to Iraqis for the Iraq war, universal Internet access and transparency of government” (see Figure 27). The article focused on the long-shot nature of the campaign and how little attention it was getting, a few personal details and some rather lame and irrelevant responses I made to questions about my history. In many ways it was the prototypical commercial “strange news” piece. It was light and almost making fun of me.

To make matters worse, I decided to respond to the piece with a letter to the editor. It was a hurried and badly written response, particularly in its irritable tone. The paper ignored my letter. After some back and forth with the paper, they agreed to print my response, and requested another copy. I wrote a slightly better response this time, but they chose to print the poorly written response I had first sent. Thankfully, this letter has since been deleted from the Diamondback website, and I have only a copy of this slightly better one:

Dear Editor,

I was disappointed with the article written about me on October 26th, “A long shot campaign hits the campus trail in front of McKeldin.”
A long shot campaign hits the campus trail in front of McKeldin

By [il Segal]

Published: Friday, October 26, 2007

Updated: Tuesday, August 11, 2009 23:08

In February, Kelcey Wilson announced in his blog that he was running for president of the United States, but no one read the posting.

Most candidates would be upset by such a thud. Not Wilson.

"I intentionally didn't publicize it," he said. "I wanted to be working in the background."

For the past month, with his laptop and a stack of bumper stickers, Wilson has been campaigning for president in front of McKeldin Library. He appears an unlikely, if not contradictory, contender.

He has raised no money and has no campaign staff; he described his place of residence as "mobile" and admitted the campaign could make him a "butt of jokes."

"I don't even want a political career," he wrote in an e-mail.

Wilson, 38, is running for the nomination of Unity08, a recently founded non-profit group. He said he decided to run for president last fall, when efforts to start a social commentary magazine in Los Angeles fell through.

"I started brainstorming how to accomplish the goals I wanted to accomplish with the magazine," he said.

One goal included showing how "the system, for lack of a better word, allows bad things to happen, I guess."

Wilson needs 2,500 registered voters to sign his petition and 20,000 more online to be the Unity nominee.

He had zero online signatures last night and a third of his 250 hard-copy signatures came from the Maryland campus, he said. The rest were obtained while sitting in Washington Square Park in New York and Harvard Square in Cambridge, Mass.

Students at this university had mixed reactions to the campaign.

"You get that first reaction of 'you're joking,' or, 'This isn't serious,'" Wilson said. "Then people hear about my platform and they really like it."

The platform includes apologizing to Iraqis for the Iraq war, universal Internet access and transparency of government.

Raised in Southern California, Wilson has spent a lifetime changing jobs and transferring schools, working at a magazine, a start-up toy company and a software firm. He dropped out of Lehigh University to join the Navy, attended junior college, and earned a philosophy degree from Boston College. He is now studying for a liberal arts master's degree from San Diego State University.


After announcing his candidacy, Wilson bumped into childhood friend Dominic Crapuchettes at a school reunion in Southern California. Crapuchettes, a Greenbelt resident, offered Wilson a place to stay if he campaigned in the Washington area. Wilson took him up on the offer, and this month he spent roughly a week in Crapuchettes' spere bedroom, rent-free.

Unity08 co-founder Doug Bailey said there are six confirmed candidates running for the Unity nomination, including Wilson. According to the Federal Election Commission, there are 115 candidates nationwide registered for the presidential race.

"Is it possible that an unknown can come out of nowhere and do it?" asked Bailey.

"Absolutely."

Wilson said he remains optimistic. On Thursday he will fly home to California to build a campaign team, and while he hasn't raised a dollar, money isn't an issue. Wilson said he inherited $200,000 last year and is willing to spend $50,000 before he throws in the towel.

Wilson, who will return to the campus in December, dismissed the notion that he faces impossible odds, insisting the campaign is something he has to do.

"[It's] to everybody's advantage if I can prevent people from jumping to the conclusion that I'm somehow out of my mind," Wilson wrote in an e-mail. "I'm not so concerned about people mocking it for its improbability so long as they at least appreciate my personal justification for running as distinct from my political motivations."
Given the opportunity to write the first print article about an outsider campaign for President of the United States of America on the College Park campus, having interviewed the candidate for well over two hours, and having had access to the candidate’s extensive website -- which advocates a number of solutions to national problems that are of great salience to the general public -- the author conveys no sense of the most important part of the candidacy. There is practically no indication of what the candidacy is all about.

For one thing, the Wilson 2008 Campaign is about building a national solar power grid in four years by creating a subsidy to help put solar panels on homes and businesses, and paying for it by allowing people to sell their excess clean energy directly into the grid. This policy alone will bring about a chain of positive effects from the economy to the environment to international relations, and no other candidate is offering such a bold yet practical solution despite the clear and pressing need for it.

I would also submit that no other candidate is offering anything as potentially interesting to readers. On my website, www.wilson2008.com, there are over 50 additional interesting and relevant planks, such as webcasting my presidency, strengthening the U.N., media reform, and ensuring universal access to broadband Internet.

Granted, it is hard to represent any serious campaign well in 500 words or less, but it’s certainly worth a try, and I believe it could be engaging and informative for the public.

Very respectfully,
Kelcey Wilson

In retrospect, this process led to two of the bigger lessons of the campaign. The more obvious lesson is not to let articles get to you, and even if they do, just try to forget about them. If you feel you must write a response and think it might do some good, wait until you calm down, and then make sure you have it critiqued by one or two people whose opinion you respect. This is a lesson I have learned and forgotten many times in other contexts, but hopefully I won’t make the same mistake many more times.

The less obvious but more positive and proactive lesson that the whole process (the interview, the resulting fluff piece, and my emotional response) made me realize was that an interviewee needs to go into an interview with purpose and discipline. Although part of what I was trying to do with the Wilson 2008 Campaign was be as open and honest as possible, it was not necessary for me to lay down for a news outlet and let it paint any old image of me or the campaign. The campaign had its own media outlet, Wilson 2008 TV, which was providing the kind of transparency Segall was asking me to bypass for his own purposes.
There would be plenty of opportunities to discuss my personal life if the campaign built support, but the only good reason to write an article about what I was doing now was to let the public know what political vision was being offered by the Wilson 2008 Campaign. When dealing with this news organization, I should have tried to focus the interview on providing information regarding the content and purpose of the campaign, and asked the author to write a serious piece, even though there would be no guarantee he would do so. I tried to make that point during a quick follow-up on the phone with Segall before he finished writing the article, and he quoted that attempt at the end of the piece, but made no attempt to do so.

One could claim there is a slippery slope here, leading to the kind of public image-making that I have been condemning, but I disagree. The National Marketplace of Ideas, of which the Wilson 2008 Campaign was a limited prototype, establishes a different dynamic in the relationship between candidates, the press, and the public. The Free Marketplace of Ideas is where candidates (and officeholders) must communicate with their constituents, or they will be held accountable. As has always been the case, candidates can answer or refuse to answer questions from the press and try to sculpt a favorable public image, and the press can, as always, frame its pieces in any way it chooses, but both the press and the candidates will have to be more responsive than they have been in the past to what the people feel is important through the Free Marketplace of Ideas. The press will no longer have as much power to control the news agenda, as they will not be in as much control of what the public knows. Candidates can do what they want to bring out the message they want the public to hear, and trying to get news outlets to focus on what candidates believe is newsworthy is a perfectly legitimate way for them to relate to the press. If people want to ask candidates about their personal life, they can do so directly, and support or reject candidates according to their responses or lack thereof.

As a candidate, my position was that the vast majority of news outlets were failing to serve the public with helpful analysis of what limited information the government makes available. As a candidate, particularly a candidate with no staff, one must prioritize. It is not a matter of withholding information; it is a matter of giving unto news media what is news. If the people, through the Free Marketplace of Ideas, decide my personal life is news, then so be it, but until then there is no reason to allow media to create “infotainment” out of their
self-interested framing of my story. Perhaps it seems as unlikely as it would be ironic, but I believe the Free Marketplace of Ideas could lead to a system dynamic through which politicians will begin to hold news outlets to much higher journalistic standards than what is currently practiced, and more people will come to understand the distinction between “infotainment” and news.

**MORE MEDIA ATTENTION**

Needless to say, the Wilson 2008 Campaign did not attract much media attention. Although the campaign was in effect an advocacy campaign, and it would have made sense to court media more aggressively, I never came to feel confident in my ability to come off well in interviews. As mentioned earlier, I can be quite shy, which results in some stage fright, stuttering, misstatements, and nonsensical statements. So, instead of making media appearances my primary effort, as from a marketing standpoint it perhaps should have been, I focused on honing my vision, which I hoped would give me more confidence and a better ability to express why I was doing what I was doing.

As already mentioned, *Irregular Times* had given me some space in conjunction with the outlet’s focus on Unity08. That outlet also wrote a couple of articles specifically about the campaign. I had a “Google alert” set to my name so I could learn about any coverage of the campaign that was posted on the Internet. I really enjoyed seeing the *Irregular Times* articles, which took my campaign relatively seriously, and I took the opportunity to participate in the reader comments (see Figures 28 and 29).

**BUILDING A CAMPAIGN TEAM PART II**

After a few more days in Washington, I flew to Los Angeles where a friend had a spare room she let me stay in while I organized the next phase of the campaign. At that point in time I focused on building the campaign team. It seemed unlikely to me that I would find people who had the time or interest to put in to this project, but I nevertheless took a serious attitude toward the project. It is difficult to do something of this magnitude, and, of course, I knew that winning was unlikely—perhaps on par with winning the lottery—but it seemed self-defeating to me to approach the project as a doomed attempt to do the impossible,
Kelcey Wilson UStreaming a Presidential Candidacy
posted 3rd October 2007 in Alternative Parties, Election 2008, Media, Politics by Jim Cook

Head on over to Kelcey Wilson’s MySpace page and you’ll find a little window in which you can watch the no-party 2008 presidential candidate, live at work on his computer.

It’s strangely gripping to watch Wilson read online, scratch his chin in thought, and repeat the word “unbelievable” (yes, there’s a studio too) as he writes. You want a real insider view on a real outsider’s campaign? This is it.

3 Comments to “Kelcey Wilson UStreaming a Presidential Candidacy”

1.
Kelcey Wilson says:
10/3/2007 at 5:15 pm

Sometimes it’s more interesting. During the last couple of days if anybody tuned in they would have seen me collecting signatures in front of the library at U. Md. College Park, talking to students about my platform, getting lectured at by some, being proselytized to by a group of Christian activists, getting a farmer’s tan, and learning how difficult it is to collect a few signatures from strangers — especially during midterms. I will be broadcasting these sessions more and more, and as I build a campaign staff the office show should also get more and more interesting.

Also, if people visit me at my sight — http://www.wilson2008.com — and press the “WATCH” button, they can watch and chat with me at the same time.

Reply

2.
Jim says:
10/3/2007 at 6:18 pm

Interesting! Thanks for the tip.
Do you have a “greatest hits” archive of the interesting moments?

Reply

3.
Kelcey Wilson says:
10/3/2007 at 11:57 pm

Not yet. At a minimum I would need a fanatical intern who can watch and record me all day and then edit together the best stuff, and post it on YouTube or something…. It could happen.

I am planning to start posting my daily schedule, which should at least help anyone who’s interested to tune in at more promising times. Maybe I’ll get that going in the next couple of days.

Kelcey Wilson A to C. Will You Read to Z?

posted 20th August 2007 in Alternative Parties, Election 2008, Politics, unity08 by Jim Cook

Kelcey Wilson is mounting a run for President in 2008 as part of a Unity08 ticket, although Unity08 is apparently refusing to communicate with him.

Wilson has drafted an A to Z set of platform positions. Here are positions A through C:

“APOLOGY TO IRAQIS – I will offer an apology on behalf of the United States of America to Iraqis who lost friends and family in the invasion of Iraq.

ADHERE TO THE GENEVA CONVENTION – I will shut down the Guantanamo and CIA prisons, and move all U.S. prisoners into the justice system.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM – One of the reasons we need universal broadband Internet access (see planks, below) is because it will, to a limited degree, level the playing field with regard to building campaigns. Universal access will not, however, be sufficient to overcome the stacked deck that is the current campaign finance system, which takes its form in large part due to two faulty court rulings: Buckley v. Valeo and Santa Clara v. Southern Pacific. To be blunt, the majority opinion in Buckley v. Valeo is wrong â€“ limiting money is not limiting speech. It’s that simple. Money is a thing that can be exchanged for other things and services. Speech is an inalienable right the First Amendment guarantees to all Americans in equal measure. The fact that a very small minority of people control the vast majority of money in the U.S. and world does give them the right to more speech. If 100 people sit down at the table to have a discussion, but only 1 has a bullhorn and uses it, it is not a discussion among equals.

Santa Clara v Southern Pacific (or at least how it has been interpreted) is wrong â€“ corporations are not people and therefore they should not have the right to influence the political process as persons. Because the members of the corporate boards, business owners, etc. already have a vote and can contribute to campaigns as individuals, business interests are already represented in that way. Allowing businesses to establish and contribute to PACs gives their controllers more influence multiplied by the factor of how many boards they sit on, companies they own, etc. Corporations should be banned from using corporate funds for political purposes.

CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATION FOR WASHINGTON, DC – Under the principle of “no taxation without representation,” I will support expanding Congress so that the residents of the Washington D.C. can elect their own representatives.

COPYRIGHT LAW – I will not sign any bill that further extends the length of copyright protection.

COUNCIL OF ELDERS – George McGovern has created a bipartisan Council of Elders. I will incorporate the Council of Elders into any policy debates in which they believe they can be of help. (http://hotlineblog.nationaljournal.com/archives/200607/mcgevern_create.html)

COUNSEL OF FORMER PRESIDENTS – I will seek the counsel of former presidents.

What do you think of them? Do you find them ridiculous? Or do they tempt you to read on to Z?

9 Comments to “Kelcey Wilson A to C. Will You Read to Z?”

1.

**J. Clifford** says:
8/20/2007 at 10:28 pm
Actually, from what I can see it’s A to V – though he’s doubled up on many other letters of the alphabet. Should we start a Kelcey Wblog for President section in one of our presidential campaign shops?
Reply

2.

**Iroquois** says:
8/20/2007 at 10:32 pm
I did read them already, except for the links. He has given a great deal of thought to some things I had not considered. But he has no hair. Does this bother anyone else? It bothered me when Alan Augustson was not closely shaven in his campaign photo (especially when his opponent is so immaculately and expensively groomed), and this skinhead look bothers me even more. I know the meaning of hair changes with time and different generations, but the only meanings I know for butch-short hair are: 1) militaristic thinking, 2)conservative reactionary thinking, 3)neo-Nazi thinking, 4) avoidance of head lice, 5) doesn’t care what women think of him 6) his mother makes him. None of these things fit what I think the country needs in a president.
Reply

3.

**J. Clifford** says:
8/20/2007 at 10:34 pm
Uh, what about possibility number 7 – receding hair line?
&...
There are irregular writers who manage to have receding hairlines without looking either like Neanderthals or like they engage in daily hand-to-hand combat.

Reply

Hey, not me! I've got a full head of hair (checking in the back).

Reply

No, it wasn't you I was thinking of, J.Clifford, but I didn't want to name names and disturb a certain fragile Truce. Wilson just doesn't look like he could cuddle. Eeeew. Maybe he lost his hair through no fault of his own from cancer treatments.

Reply

You know, this test of whether a presidential candidate looks like he could cuddle is worth just about as much as the test of Bush as a candidate according to whether you would want to have a beer with him. Presidents are not for cuddling. I think we should evaluate Kelcey Wilson according to his words and deeds, not according to his haircut.

Reply

so back to the meat — i'm afraid there isn't much here though i do see a few things i like.

(1) the author knows the difference between council and counsel (and knows that neither of them is always right), that's an indication of a level of education, i suppose, which i like to see. please ignore inherent hypocrisy of my uncapitalized comments.

(2) copyright law does need reform, and not in the form of caving, again, to disney's ridiculous demands for the ever-longer life of their stupid mouse.

(3) i'm torn about what to do with DC: i agree that no representation sucks, but face it, most of us have no representation; i don't think that geography is the primary unifying trend of interests as it was perceived to be when this system was set up. i'd much rather see a number of "members at large" to be elected by various demographic groups (each person could opt out of voting for their local rep to vote for a MAL; the top N MALs would get seats). But at least he isn't calling for DC statehood, not that the point against putting the capitol in a particular state carries much weight any more, but i do feel traditionalist on that point.

(4)(a) hope this is a typo: "The fact that a very small minority of people control the vast majority of money in the U.S. and world does give them the right to more speech" because i agree with the rest of that paragraph.

(4)(b) "corporations are not people and therefore they should not have the right to influence the political process as persons." — true, and part of the great injustice that is modern corporate law, we give them almost all the benefits of being people and almost none of the responsibilities, however, while i agree with the spirit of what he's getting at in this paragraph, i'm not sold on "corporations should be banned from using corporate funds for political purposes." because i think there's a big fat grey line between donating to a political candidate and giving to charity, and there's all sorts of things on that line that i think corporations must be allowed to do.

overall, however, this look better than most of the candidates in the current field.

Reply

Hi folks, I really appreciate that you read and thought about my platform. I wasn't sure anybody was doing any more than skimming.

I'm going to upgrade my site pretty soon, so that you can post questions and comments, so if you want, you can get me to address the concerns you mention. You can also correspond with me directly if you want at kelceywilson@wilson2008.com. Check the planks first, though, because I occasionally make refinements. (I plan to tweak the campaign finance plank a little.)

I'll also be webcasting my campaign on my site starting this September.

As for the crucial hair question: I surf-kayak a lot and having little hair makes life a great deal easier. I also save a fortune in haircuts — especially relative to what Edwards pays. I clip it myself. Having said that, I have been keeping it a little longer these days...
because then it really would seem like a waste of time. The possibility of actually becoming
president was in a way almost irrelevant to the project, and so I approached it without any
consideration of probability, but entirely as a project that was worth doing, at the very least,
for the few people it would reach and persuade to take the issue of transparency seriously.

I outlined a pitch that I imagined I would deliver to people who knew people who
might want to help. Here is a copy of the outline:

**Here is what I’m trying to do:**

The Wilson 2008 Campaign is a complete approach to restoring freedom through
high-quality accountable government, energy independence, citizenship, and
ethical international relations.

The approach begins

1. Running a completely transparent campaign, broadcast over the Internet, so that
   voters can really get to know the candidate before they vote, and citizens can
   learn about the electoral process.
   - www.wilson2008.com

2. Building an administration during the campaign, based on ability and merit, so
   that voters aren’t just voting for the President, but for the entire Executive Branch,
   and so that the government is ready to go on day one.

3. Once in office, webcasting as much of the presidency and administration as
   possible, and ensuring universal broadband Internet access so that everybody can
   have equal ability to monitor their government.
   - As many Executive Branch meetings as possible that might be of public
     interest will be broadcast to the public.
   - Budgeting will be broadcast to the public
   - I will ask the current president to declare national voting holiday, and once
     in office I will make every federal election a national voting holiday.

4. Creating a national solar power grid to free us from reliance on scarce energy
   sources, drastically reduce greenhouse gases, drastically reduce the cost of
   energy.
   - National subsidy to loan the entire cost of putting panels on homes and
     businesses—paid for by a monthly payment equaling equal or less than the
     amount paid to utilities previously, and by allowing people to sell any
     excess clean energy back into the grid at market prices.
   - For utilities that are negatively affected by this policy, providing financial
     support to help them convert themselves into clean energy companies.

5. Bringing the UN into the debate about how to help Iraq, and whether it should
   provide an international peacekeeping force when the U.S. withdraws.
• According to majority Iraqi wishes, we should pull out anyway, but we should give the world community the opportunity to act through the UN to solve the problem that the U.S. helped create in Iraq.

6. Greatly reducing the percent of any media market that a single business can own.
   • Media concentration is a serious and growing threat to public safety and democracy in the U.S.

7. Nationalizing the military.

8. Passing a federal law making private prisons illegal.

**I’m looking for somebody who would enjoy doing a few things:**

1. Publicity for campaign
   • Looking for a PR organization that would like to do my PR pro-bono
   • Looking for a producer who would like to turn my campaign into a web show

2. Campaign treasurer (if title matters, finance chairperson)

3. Webmaster (webmaster of the universe)

4. Scheduler (production coordinator)

5. Campaign manager (and/or a person who know all the angles – see Miller’s Crossing) including (with treasurer) ensuring campaign meets filing deadlines

6. Signer (sign language)

7. Researcher

8. Network connector (somebody who figures out who leads to whom)

9. Cameraperson

10. Organizing support events

11. Help build an administration
   • Researching possible appointments
   • Contacting my selections

11. Assigning responsibilities for tasks
   • including finding as many volunteers as you want to take over whatever responsibilities you’re ready to hand over, as well as finding a volunteer coordinator to relieve you of assigning tasks to volunteers

Time: your choice but no less than 2 hours/week

Workload: decreases as you learn/ increases as you get interested

Privacy: decreasing privacy

Frustration: no frustration because you’re having fun
I delivered the pitch to one friend over dinner. I told her ahead of time that although I was serious in this attempt to develop a team, I did not really expect results, but that I wanted the experience of doing this kind of thing. Having finished the pitch, she responded very positively, and did in fact contact a few people who themselves expressed interest, but they ultimately did not get in touch with me to help. As with many experiences in this campaign, I can only speculate why nobody chose to help, but I believe the largest factors among those who thought it was a good idea (not among those who thought I was nuts) was the fact they had lives that were already fully committed to other activities (like making a living), and a hesitancy to take time away from more relaxing activities.

**ARTICLE ON THE UNITED NATIONS**

As a read of the Wilson 2008 Campaign platform indicates, I was very concerned with the abuses of the Bush Administration, particularly with the unprovoked and unnecessary invasion of Iraq, the associated “war” powers claimed, and the administration’s many violations of the Constitution. Part and parcel of this destructive and anti-American behavior, I felt, was the arrogant dismissal of international public opinion as expressed in the United Nations, and the sidelining of that body except insofar as it served the Administration’s propaganda purposes.

As flawed and ineffective as it is, the UN is a valuable institution and one that could be made more valuable. There is a thoughtless tendency, particularly on the political right, to throw this baby out with the bathwater. There is also a widespread conspiracy theory that the aim of the UN is world government and domination. Many people who have no idea of its role, group it in with a lot of other things they know nothing about but consider evil seemingly for no other reason than that somebody on cable news says it is. Seeing this unfounded insanity coupled with the Administration’s cynical misuse of the UN, I felt the need to attempt to write a strong argument in support of the UN, warts and all.

The article “How the UN Protects American Sovereignty” (see Appendix C) is that first attempt, which I published with an online publisher called Helium.com, and linked to from my blog.
THE WILSON 2008 CAMPAIGN NATIONAL ROAD TRIP

Having failed to build a team, I decided to continue the mobile campaign in the way I had previously—by myself—but by car this time, instead of by air and train. While campaigning in Washington Square, I met a person who told me about an organization called CouchSurfing. CouchSurfing is an online social network (located at couchsurfing.org), not unlike Myspace or Facebook, but the site’s specific purpose is to build a network of people who are willing to offer a place for travelers to stay for a limited time in exchange for the same privilege when they travel. It is not a house swapping system, where two households exchange homes for a limited time. The idea is to provide travelers with options of places to stay for free in people’s homes, with the expectation that the traveler will also offer his or her home (couch) to anybody in the network—not simply to those with whom the traveler stayed. It has a “pay it forward” ethos, but can also be a way of being friendly and helpful and of meeting people.

I created a profile at CouchSurfing.org and also created a group within the site called “Kelcey Wilson for President in 2008”⁶² that I asked people to join as an expression of support for what I was trying to do, and to offer up their couches if I happened to come to their area. I also wrote the organization and asked if they had any interest in highlighting the Wilson 2008 Campaign on their home page. I received some positive response from a person in their marketing department, yet despite many promises, and even meeting with her in Birmingham, Alabama, nothing came of it.

I also composed a new letter that I hoped would drum up a little support of any kind—volunteer or financial—which I posted on my blog and Website (see Appendix D). It could be argued that this letter is that it is too long. One of the big no-nos of marketing is to produce something that is so long that almost nobody would want to take the time to read it. But in writing this lengthy letter, my aim was to reach those rare people that would be interested enough to read it through and then be inspired to work for the campaign. I felt that a more superficial piece would be less likely to succeed in that way. Still, I am not aware of any effect this letter may have had, as it received no comments on the blog, or any other kind of measurable reaction.

COUCHSURFING, CAMPING, MOTELING, HOTELING, ETC.

Having posted the letter, and in communication with the CouchSurfing marketing department, which I still believed at that time would help publicize my effort, I embarked upon the “Wilson 2008 Campaign National Road Trip.” Many highlights of this road trip around the country were documented in my blog, and will not be repeated here. Instead, I will paint the big picture, beginning with the “Couchmap,” which was a visual representation of my route that I updated and posted on my website after each travelling day (see Figure 30). (I drew the map myself because I could not find a map online that I was sure could be reproduced without violating a copyright.)

Almost from the beginning, I learned that lining up a place to stay through CouchSurfing would not be as easy as I had imagined. I stayed with friends when possible, beginning with my first stop in San Francisco, and was able to arrange my next couch in Santa Cruz before I left San Francisco, but I was not able to secure a place for my next stop, so I had to camp near San Luis Obispo. Lacking the hoped-for publicity, the “Kelcey Wilson for President in 2008” group only drew three members, and so I was unable to plan an itinerary based upon knowing I would have a place to stay at certain locations around the country. It would have helped if I had planned much farther in advance for this trip, or had a campaign worker who was dedicated to lining up campaign stops, but my early interactions with CouchSurfing’s marketing representative convinced me that the couches would surface as the word got out about what I was doing. On the other hand, having a solid itinerary would have had its weaknesses. I fell very ill in East Texas and had to recuperate there for about a week, which probably would have ruined any arrangements made for subsequent stops. Out of 24 stops, only 7 came through CouchSurfing, and the rest relied on friends, motels, hotels, or campsites. While staying with friends was part of the plan from the start, the camping and motel stays were direct results of not being able to locate a couch through CouchSurfing—except in Las Vegas, where I won at blackjack and decided to spend part of the winnings on a room.

My efforts at drumming up media attention were even less successful, which in part reflects the effort I put into it. When I started the road trip, I had a plan based upon the belief

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63 Now located at http://kelceywilsonforpresident.blogspot.com/.
Figure 30. The Couchmap.
that it would be easy to find places to stay, that I could stay in a single location for at least a couple of days before moving on, that CouchSurfing would promote what I was doing, and that, in turn, would attract supporters who might be willing to help with trip planning and contacting media, so that I could focus on communicating effectively with the public. None of these things panned out. Of the seven places I arranged through CouchSurfing, only two offered me a place for more than one night, and one of those two places was so filthy that I politely declined, saying I had a schedule to keep. The CouchSurfing representative also encouraged me to believe that CouchSurfing would highlight my efforts on the front page of their site, and she would help contact media for me, but when we finally met face-to-face in Birmingham, it became clear to me that she was a flake who would not follow through.

Therefore, until the Birmingham meeting, I did not put much effort into publicity myself, but focused on finding places to stay, getting from place to place, researching and writing about issues and the campaign. A single campaign worker would have made a huge difference. Even somebody to drive while I worked would have doubled the time I could spend on other needs, but that did not happen. I forged ahead in the hope that somebody might be inspired to join me.

After the Birmingham meeting, however, I felt quite let down, and I began to question the usefulness of what I was doing. To make matters worse, I learned that Unity08 had called it quits, claiming they did not have the support they needed to continue. And although I never really expected to get on the ballot, I have to admit it did take a lot of motivation away from doing the campaign. Working for something measureable, however unlikely, and the prospect of participating in a real political convention were motivating factors.

By the time I hit Clemson, South Carolina, I was seriously considering putting an early end to the road trip. With a friend to stay with in Bethesda, Maryland, I decided that it would be my final stop before turning back to California. I had reached the end of my rope, and felt a strong desire to move on. I made a beeline back to Los Angeles.

**ROAD TRIP REFLECTIONS**

It was an adventure that I wouldn’t trade. I saw many places that I had not seen before, and met a lot of interesting people, most of whom I am sure thought me a strange
character to be doing what I was doing. But it was not recreational. I did not sightsee. I went from destination to destination, and it was a grueling schedule, which probably contributed to my illness in Texas. I learned so much from this experience, mostly from mistakes that I would be sure to avoid if I ever try to do something like this again. Of all the lessons learned, the first thing I would be sure to do differently would be to bring along at least one friend or supporter to drive. All the other problems would have been much easier to overcome with the added hours a driver would have provided. A single additional committed campaign worker would have made a world of difference in both productivity and morale.
CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION TO PART II

If a nation ... nourishes its own people and doesn't meddle in the affairs of others, it will be a light to all nations in the world.

–Lao-Tzu

We are collectively becoming more aware of the scientifically verifiable interconnectedness of the vital systems of the planet. There is more than 97% consensus among climate scientists (and nearly 100% among reputable climate scientists of high expertise)\(^64\) that human actions are having a destructive impact that is planetary in scale. By increasing the average global temperature, as well as by overfishing the oceans and deforesting the land, the human species is in the process of upsetting the global environmental balance and, thus, causing the greatest mass extinction in over 65 million years.\(^65\) Each extinction of plant and animal life has a knock-on effect that nurtures a vicious cycle of destruction. Creatures that had relied on extinct species for food and/or shelter must find other sources or become extinct themselves. The destruction of plant life leads to soil erosion that destroys still more plant life and the animals that depend upon it. This destruction of plant life also reduces the capacity of the earth to process the greenhouse gas, carbon dioxide, further increasing the average temperature and ocean acidification. Higher temperatures lead to shorter winters, hotter summers, less snow pack, dryer landscape, more frequent and widespread wildfires, which further increases carbon dioxide while at the same time destroying the planet’s capacity to turn carbon dioxide into oxygen, thus prompting further destruction of systems of life. Higher average temperatures means the sunlight-reflecting polar ice thaws earlier and earlier, providing more surface area for the sunlight-


absorbing ocean water, which raises the average ocean temperature, which leads to earlier thaws. And so on.

One behavior—the pumping of unprecedented amounts of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere—is having one direct effect—a seemingly small increase in the average temperature of the globe—but which indirectly upsets countless other systems. The global atmospheric system can, within limits, repair itself and maintain life as we know it, but systems have tipping points and there is a point of no return. One behavioral change—replacing fossil fuels with currently available solar and wind power (and using those sources to charge fuel cells) can, in time, give the earth soils and forests the time to cycle the CO₂ out of the atmosphere and reverse global warming. One human behavior—one recently adopted human behavior—change can save the planet, and yet we continue full-speed on our destructive path.

Why?

It is not as if the solution is unknown or requires advances in technology. It is not as if there is any reasonable doubt among the experts that the problem needs to be addressed without delay. There is only one reason any reason any U.S. business other than the fossil fuel companies have to oppose its adoption: electricity pricing that would put them at a competitive disadvantage to competitors who use cheaper fossil fuels. But there is an easy solution to that issue: subsidize solar and wind power so that their market prices are at or even below fossil fuel prices.

Imagine.

Imagine how far a financial investment on the scale of the Iraq war would go to jump-start our solar power industry? Imagine the countless productive jobs that would be produced, and the infrastructure that would be put in place for the next wave of cheaper, more-efficient solar panels. Imagine if we freed the electric grid from the energy companies and allowed anybody with access to an electric outlet/(inlet) to sell their excess clean energy back into the grid? Imagine how much excitement and entrepreneurial energy would be unleashed if people could earn money simply by plugging their self-produced clean energy back into the grid, and no longer be economic prisoners of a scarce, finite resource that must be mined and delivered by organizations that benefit from scarcity by charging the highest price the market will bear?
It would be one thing to use the government-tool to intervene in the market for the latest wide-screen TV, but the energy market is a very different thing. We are talking about a product as addictive as cigarettes, yet far more essential to modern life, and that currently enriches those few people at the tops of those few companies that have such disproportionate representation in the highest levels of our government and that one could easily suspect have led us into wars primarily to ensure our access to these resources. It is not necessary to prove that this military-industrial-congressional complex that Eisenhower warned us against is in any way culpable for the wars of the last few decades; it is enough to understand that since the conflict of interest exists and that it can be easily removed from government, it should be removed without delay.

What could be the objection to this?

Today, the big objection with the most traction at the moment seems to be the national debt and deficit. We cannot let past and current war spending be the excuse for not spending the money necessary to do what will prevent future wars. After all, it is only money—not blood—and the money would go directly into the pockets of working Americans who would be building the new clean energy infrastructure. This is the most important national security issue—not even second to nuclear proliferation. Nuclear proliferation may run a close second, but when our tax money and the blood of our young soldiers are no longer propping up repressive regimes in order to ensure the flow of oil, our enemies will rapidly diminish, and so then will the threat of nuclear terrorist attack. Subsidizing clean energy is no more a big government program than waging foreign war, and it is far less corrosive of our civil liberties. If we really want to spread democracy, we need to do it from a foundation of a strong democratic example, a strong economy, and an energy supply that cannot be disrupted by physical or political attacks.

In short, the problem is clear and the solution is clear. The problem is grave and we must take major steps right away. As good as markets are at delivering the products we want, collectively we demand cheap energy more than we care that it is clean, and so we cannot simply cross our fingers and hope that consumer behavior will take care of this problem in an acceptable time period. For the most part, markets are almost miraculously useful things, but they are not the panacea for all ills, especially when improperly incentivized markets that externalize their true costs are the cause of the problem. Government coordination is
necessary and proper in this case. The market for a single class of products—clean energy producing products—must be vigorously nurtured through an adept application of our government-tool to the problem.

Why is it not already happening?

Given the simple solution, the reason can only be one or a combination of two options:

Option 1: If our government operators are truly representative of the interests of their people, than the reason for the inaction can only lie on the information side—that is, there must be enough people who either are not aware of the gravity of the problem, or who do not believe the scientific consensus, to divide government into inaction. How could people be so ignorant or complacent? The only way for people to not be aware of or believe in the scientific consensus can at this point only be the result of active media efforts to contest or diminish the gravity of the problem, or distract its audience altogether.

Option 2: The only other possibility is that government does not primarily represent the interests of the people, but of the people who benefit from a fossil-fuel economy.

There are no other options. It may be Option 1, Option 2, or a combination of the two. One may say this is my opinion, but it is only an opinion insofar as a fair and objective assessment of facts is an opinion. Though it may be tempting to believe government operators are either stupid or insane, and stupidity must certainly play a supporting role, these seems far less likely than the former options to be fundamental causes. If there is another reason the operators of government are not now in the midst of a full-throttled attack on this grave and urgent global emergency, please let me know now at kelceywilson@gmail.com so I can start working on a more complete solution.

As of now, I have not heard of a remotely convincing alternative and am focusing my energy on the solutions proposed by this project. Given these two possible sources of government inaction—a poorly and misinformed public, and government operators who represent destructive interests at the expense of the people’s interests—I conceived of this project as a way to attempt to inject a cure into the system by addressing both possibilities. I am trying to address both possibilities by offering relatively simple solutions and showing by example that it is possible to provide at least one of the solutions I am advocating. By creating a prototype of the Free Marketplace of Ideas discussed in Part I, I showed that a
transparent campaign could be run at minimal cost, and that the same tools could be used to create a far more transparent, responsive, accountable, and effective government system. This more transparent, responsive, accountable, and effective government system would lead to the second solution, that of doing what is clearly in everybody’s interest—healing the planet through a simple program that addresses the fundamental problem of our reliance on fossil fuels.

To recap this strategy, the Free Marketplace of Ideas will:

- Provide people with timely and relevant information about the performance of their government operators.
- Provide elected public servants with their own media channel as a means of interactive two-way communication with the constituents they serve. It will allow public servants to easily provide information and rationale for their proposed government actions while allowing their constituents to engage in the process and influence their servant’s action through input vetted by other participants.
- Provide candidates for office with the exact same capabilities as elected public servants, as a means of communication with the constituents they hope to serve. This will obviate the need for campaign financing, particularly the need to spend money on advertising through commercial media.

As the general public will know where to go to get all the information they need to be capable of self-governance, there will be no need for business to provided campaign funding, and therefore it will not be justified. Business money will be justifiably banned from politics. Business will still have a voice in politics—through the people in business, who participate in the discussion, and not through their ability to magnify their influence with the media access they can buy with business funds. There will be no need for candidates to spend money on advertising, and therefore candidates could be put on an equal footing by banning campaign spending on advertising. This system would remove any legal justification for the “money is speech” legal abomination, as well as any justification for public funding of campaigns beyond that needed for the provision of the system itself. This would consequently eliminate much of the moral hazard that is the funding of campaigns by business interests.

Even if these logical steps were not taken, the influence of moneyed interests would be reduced through the emergence of good candidates who do not take money and by shining light on those candidates who accept business money. If lobbying by business were still allowed, the system would still allow anybody to watch and listen in on any meetings between business interest and the public servants, shining a light on the activities of public
servants and providing a record of potential quid pro quo by which they could be held accountable.

The FMI would, in a very real way, give control of the government-tool equitably to all of the people, so that party politics and destructive business interests will find it much harder to divide government and control the public agenda to the detriment of the wider public interest. This is not an idealistic claim. The system will be no panacea, and will not solve divisive issues of ideology, such as the debate over abortion, but for clear and practical problems that adhere to the laws of physics, I am convinced that effective solutions will come much more readily and painlessly. If the potential of such a system to hold our public servants accountable sounds idealistic, it is only because we have been jaded and are accustomed to public servants not being held accountable.

Granted, the Wilson 2008 Campaign did not make much of a dent in the public discussion, but I am unknown and have none of the kinds of noteworthy accomplishments that attract support in the current political culture. I believe wholeheartedly that somebody who was already notable and respected, with the right platform and just a little more assistance than I had, could compete with any of the well-funded candidates today. If such a person could not compete, it could only be through his or her deliberate exclusion from commercial media and commercial media’s ability to control the public agenda. The Free Marketplace of Ideas would wrest that power from commercial media and put it into the public’s hands. The Free Marketplace of Ideas would be the people’s media, so the agenda would be driven by all of the people, and not by the tiny number of people who run commercial media for their own special interests.

In conclusion, even if the experts are completely wrong, the worst thing that can happen by addressing the imaginary climate problem is that we spent government money to fix one problem that did not exist. But in addressing this non-existent problem, we would solve a host of problems that do exist. Giving people an infinite choice of cheap, clean energy will lead to a massive decrease in air pollution and resulting health problems like lung cancer, and the end of a major source of funding for corrupt regimes and corrupt public servants, including our own. So, even if global warming were not a problem, national security would still demand that our government address our reliance on foreign and domestic fossil fuels.
The worst thing that could happen by creating a Free Marketplace of Ideas is that our government would spend a relatively infinitesimal amount of money—which could conceivably be part of the massive national security budget—on a system that does not work, does not encourage greater participation in public policymaking decisions, does not provide better solutions than the current government operators, does not cure the government of the nested party bureaucracies, does not obviate the need and therefore influence of money in politics, and so on. In other words, the worst that can happen would be the status quo, but at least we will have tried something.

Finally, if the worst has already happened, and we have passed the tipping point for the planet, it is still our responsibility to our children to pass down a system that can help any survivors cope with the impoverished planet that will be our legacy. It would be wrong to pass down the same easily gamed, command-and-control political system that destroyed the planet. Let us give the future a tool built to facilitate self-governance, and an educational system for ensuring people share the values of and capacities for self-governance.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

THE VOTERGUIDE.ORG: E.THEPEOPLE
[The Voterguide.org limited themselves to some basic biographical information and ten questions, each with character limits of about 250 words. My answers were as follows:]  

1. **Biographical Information**  
Campaign Website: www.wilson2008.com  
Campaign Email: kelceywilson@wilson2008.com  
Age: 39  
Education: Bachelor of Philosophy, cum laude, Boston College, Currently working on Master of Liberal Arts & Sciences (MALAS) at San Diego State University  

2. *In light of escalating home foreclosures, a credit crunch and a possible recession, what role, if any, should the federal government play in strengthening the nation's economy?*  
   
   A preventative role is preferable, i.e., a regulatory role. "Regulation" is a much misunderstood and maligned word, and the deregulatory fervor of the last 30 years has undoubtedly been partly a result of that misunderstanding—at least on the part of the average voter. "Regulation" is just a fancy word that means "rules." The U.S. Constitution is a set of written regulations that delineate the structure and role of our government. There are also countless unwritten rules about life that we live by, often without our being aware of it. These are the social rules that are the basis of civilization. In short, without rules, society would crumble.  
   
   Ideally, government regulations are a way of attempting to bring into line those who would act out of line with generally accepted social values, particularly the value of not doing harm to others. Clearly, just as we need mutually understood rules of the road that are enforced for public safety without bias, we also need reasonable rules for the banking industry that protects the public. Thus, just as there are size limits to automobiles, future regulation, first and foremost, should ensure that no bank be allowed to get "too big to fail." Banks that gamble and loose should fail. This is the self-correcting mechanism of capitalism. This rule in itself will prevent the kind of meltdown we are currently experiencing, and will also naturally limit executive compensation without resorting to caps.  

3. *How do you see the role America plays in the Middle East changing during the next two years? How do you see it changing further in the future?*  
In the next two years as President, I would re-establish the United States as an honest and tireless mediator in peace process. I won't promise anything innovative here except complete
dedication to doing the basic diplomacy it will take to bring peace and the inevitable two-state solution to Israel and Palestine as soon as possible.

Regarding Iraq: the basic strategic equation that is playing out is based on asymmetric warfare. As long as the U.S. thinks it needs to be in Iraq, Iran and other countries and organizations who are opposed to U.S. hegemony can, with very little financial cost to themselves, force the U.S. Government to borrow billions from China every month in order to provide quid pro quo to its campaign financiers and future employers such as Halliburton, KBR, and Bechtel. This is absurd, unnecessary, unsustainable, immoral, and would end under my presidency. With the U.S. out, Iran will ensure there is peace in Iraq.

Regarding Iran: Iran is a natural friend of the U.S. If we start being a friend to Iran, Iran will be our friend. This friendship would benefit Israel above all because friends are in a much better position of influence, and the U.S. would work tirelessly to get Iran to recognize Israel and to prevent Iran from making the bomb. Iran wants to be part of the solution. On the other hand, if diplomacy fails and Iran goes nuclear, regardless of U.S. wishes, Israel will destroy Iran's nuclear infrastructure. Whether good or bad, that's reality.

4. What are your strategies to address the dual challenges of rising costs and decreasing access to quality healthcare?

Simple: I will create a government run health insurance company that is so efficient, it will put all of the corporate insurance companies -- with their approximately 30% administration costs and obscene executive salaries -- out of business. Fees will be means-based, and those who cannot afford to pay, will be subsidized. Health care itself will remain market-based. Anyone can choose any doctor they want, see any specialist they want, etc. The National Health Insurance Agency will be empowered to negotiate the lowest possible drug prices from drug companies, and great economies of scale will be achieved. There will be a minimal, means-based, capped copay in order to prevent unnecessary visits. There will be strict oversight to ensure taxpayer money isn't being spent on unnecessary procedures. The rich will still be able to pay out of pocket for the best health care in the world. Public health will increase -- and therefore so will national productivity and tax revenue. The profit motive will remain for drug companies and health care providers -- thus ensuring innovation and efficiency -- but it will be removed from the non-productive middleman that provides no
direct health benefit -- thus ensuring our system focuses on providing health rather than mansions and yachts for corporate executives.

5. How do you propose to keep Americans safe both at home and abroad?

Long term, my clean energy program will eliminate any excuse for propping up "governments" that oppress people (see wilson2008.com), and will thus eliminate the root causes of much of the anger and desperation that leads to terrorism. It will also address global warming, which unchecked may become the major source of global insecurity.

In addition, my administration will do everything possible to remove hypocrisy from our foreign policy. This will include, as one of my first acts, the public renunciation of the immoral Bush Doctrine before the United Nations. I will also work toward strengthening the UN as a place for constructive mediation and for effective action by creating a democracy caucus within the UN whereby the democracies of the world can act independently of the totalitarian regimes.

Short term, I will ensure global control of nuclear materials, sign the ICC treaty, and disband the Northern Command.

Having said that, total safety is a perverted fantasy. If we institute every safety measure being advocated, we would find ourselves living in one giant prison of walls and all manner of surveillance. And yet, even in places that fit that description today - in actual prisons - there is no guarantee of safety. On the contrary. In inhumane environments people become inhuman. So if you are worried about terrorism, you need to get life in perspective before this madness goes any further. We are all far more likely to get struck by lightning than by a terrorist attack.

6. Americans are concerned about rising energy prices, dependence on foreign energy and the potential damage of fossil fuels. How would you prioritize those concerns and what, if any, are your strategies to address them?

The solution is so simple and so beneficial to everyone except the oil companies, I am baffled by the fact it is not in progress already. I will create National Clean Energy Program to subsidize purchase of solar panels and other clean energy sources for personal and business use and allow anybody in the country to sell any excess clean energy that they produce back into the grid in order to repay the federal government for the subsidy. In other words, the government will coordinate a program to both help clean the air of greenhouse
gases and provide energy security by dispersing power production throughout the country (in the same way that the decentralization of the Internet provides security from attack), and also by providing cheap and plentiful clean energy from which the People can profit through both innovation and conservation. In this way the program will be self-sustaining. As the market price of clean energy falls, the subsidy will be phased out. Thus, the government will essentially act as bank giving a loan to the American People that will get paid back in 10-20 years (just as the government has done many times and proposes to do now for major manufacturing and financial interests). In short, with a relatively small initial investment (as compared to the invasion of Iraq, for example), we can quickly achieve clean energy independence. Those who claim energy independence is impossible and inadvisable lack vision, and they are simply wrong.

7. Is America's educational system working? If not, what should the federal government do to improve it?

I believe national standards are a recipe for disaster. While they may help some kids do better on standardized tests, ultimately they tend toward the destruction of the intellectual diversity that is the strength of the human race. I am vehemently opposed to this factory-style education. Children are not products.

Though my tendency is to limit federal intervention into local education choices, if I were to intervene I would start by providing funding to raise teacher salaries by about $40,000. This would create a market demand for teaching jobs that allows highly qualified people who couldn't previously afford to be a teacher to have a career in education. High demand for limited supply of jobs will give school administrators the luxury of choosing the cream of the crop. Without resorting to standards or any other kind of intervention, the quality of education will naturally rise everywhere.

Another national educational program that the next President can and should institute that will cost almost nothing, but will educate the entire country, would be to make the Executive Branch transparent by webcasting all Executive Branch policy meetings and negotiations that must not by made secret for reasons of national security. The Internet has made this possible, practical, and cheap. We all have a constitutional right to know what our public servants are doing. There is simply no good reason why this kind of transparency should not happen yesterday.
8. Some economists say a growing national debt and massive looming financial commitments to Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security are leading us toward a fiscal crisis. Do you agree there is a crisis and, if so, what will you do to assure greater fiscal responsibility?

I do not agree that there is a crisis in these programs per se. There is simply a crisis in government. The kleptocracy now in control of the Republican Party has intentionally put these programs at risk in the interest of corporate profits. Through our system of quid pro quo campaign finance (otherwise known as legal bribery), our elected "representatives" have channeled vast amounts of taxpayer money, including that of taxpayers who haven't even been born yet, toward pork and unnecessary wars. All that is needed to save these programs is the fiscal responsibility of putting taxpayer money where most of the taxpayers want it. Clearly, if we could find the money to invade a foreign country that no threat to the United States, we can find the money to provide a safety net for the sick and elderly.

One way we can be sure to clean up this corruption is through the kind of transparency I mention above. All Executive Branch meetings regarding policy should be webcast to the public. In this way, people and news organizations can monitor our public servants and rebroadcast any shady dealings - but preferably the cameras will keep them honest. Congress has no less a responsibility to make public their meetings regarding policy - meaning no more private meetings with campaign contributors. Lobbyists have no right to privacy in their dealings with our public servants. We have every right to know how our representatives are representing us.

9. Do you believe the federal government has a role in protecting the environment? If so, what are your policy priorities?

Absolutely. One of the chief roles of our government has always been the protection of citizens from bodily harm. Protecting the environment protects public health. One of the great moral declines in this country has been the development of the ideology that corporations are amoral institutions whose only legal obligation is to maximize profits for shareholders. What this means is that corporations will go to the very limits of what is legal in order to maximize profits. Thus, any cost they can externalize they will. In other words, if there is no specific law that prevents a corporation from polluting, for example, and polluting provides them with a competitive advantage, they will not hesitate to pollute. Consequently, until the government reforms corporate law (which will probably first require campaign
finance), it is the government's duty to protect the People from "externalities" like pollution that threaten public health through environmental degradation.

One of my top priorities would be reforming corporate law so that business is legally responsible for the protection of the environment, so that the price of goods reflect the actual cost (which includes the cost of repairing damage to the environment and the costs pollution inflicts upon public health).

I would also appoint an EPA majority who are advocates for the people, not for polluters as the current majority is.

Finally, my National Clean Energy Program will directly address the problem of global warming.

10. How do you propose to reform our immigration policy in Washington?
Immigrants are risk takers, and thus are like gold for the U.S. economy and culture. In many ways, immigrants are the quintessential Americans. Yet, anti-immigrant rhetoric rears its ugly head periodically, particularly when Republicans are in political trouble and need to motivate their base to vote. Although there are many ways immigration policy could and should be improved around the edges, I actually don't think it is so bad now. I would only try to make it a little easier to immigrate legally, try to get Congress to pass a functional worker visa program, and I would relax security measures a bit.

Illegal immigration is a problem that has its roots in lack of opportunity abroad. This lack of opportunity largely the result of a relatively static social hierarchy in Latin America. This will change eventually from internal pressure, and immigration to the U.S. will naturally subside (to our detriment), but it is going to to take time.

In short, immigration per se is not the problem that partisans would have you believe, nor is it, in itself, a major security risk. The extent that it is a security risk is the extent to which the U.S. acts unjustly in the world and causes anti-Americanism, and to the extent that nuclear materials may be obtained by terrorist groups. Thus, we can mostly solve the immigration problem by ensuring terrorist groups can't get their hands on nuclear materials, and by electing a President who will conduct a just foreign policy.

11 Do you believe abortion should be limited? If so, to what degree?
Yes -- I believe individuals should personally choose to limit abortion. Our government can and probably should have a role to play in helping further limit abortions in the sense that the
people can use government as a tool to help mediate the development of a society in which unwanted pregnancies are few and, when unplanned pregnancies happen, the parents are nevertheless happy bear and raise the children.

I also believe that those who believe they have a right to tell other people what to do with their bodies need at least to step up and practice what they preach by ensuring that every orphaned child is adopted. The political behavior regarding the abortion issues is similar to that of the occupation of Iraq in the sense that few of the people who are responsible for re-electing the administration that invaded Iraq actually took the next logical step and enlisted in the military, which is consequently stretched thin due to low recruitment. If so-called pro-life voters actually practiced what they preached, I believe this issue would fade away as abortion became increasingly rare.

Pro-lifers can win this struggle, but they can not win it with the legal system. They can only win it by working together with pro-choicers to build a society in which woman seldom have accidental pregnancies, and, when they do, they nevertheless have no good reasons to terminate their pregnancies.
APPENDIX B

PROJECT VOTE SMART: POLITICAL COURAGE TEST
**Abortion Issues**

*Indicate which principles you support (if any) regarding abortion.*

[ ] a) Abortions should always be illegal.
[ ] b) Abortions should always be legal.
[ ] c) Abortions should be legal only within the first trimester.
[ ] d) Abortions should be legal when the pregnancy resulted from incest or rape.
[ ] e) Abortions should be legal when the life of the woman is endangered.
[ ] f) Dilation and extraction or "partial-birth" abortion procedures should be legal.
[ ] g) Medicare, Medicaid, or federal subsidies should be prohibited from being used on abortion procedures.

h) Other or expanded principles.

[Answer: Whether legal or not, to feel that her best alternative is an abortion must be one of the saddest experiences a woman can have. Clearly, the ideal solution to the problem would be to build a society in which women always have better choices than abortion. That should be our focus—not making more criminals out of good people in desperate situations, because if abortion is murder, then countless women—likely including women you know personally—are murderers. To be pro-life is to be pro-choice, which is to work for building peace and justice on earth so that all the unborn are wanted.]

**Budgetary, Spending, and Tax Issues**

*Indicate what federal funding levels (#1-6) you support for the following general categories. Select one number per category, you can use a number more than once.*

1) Budget Priorities

a) Agriculture [Maintain Status]
b) Arts [Maintain Status]
c) Defense [Slightly Decrease]
d) Education [Greatly Increase]
e) Environment [Greatly Increase]
f) FEMA [Maintain Status]
g) Homeland security [Maintain Status]
h) International aid [Maintain Status]
i) Law enforcement [Maintain Status]
j) Medical research [Greatly Increase]
k) National parks [Greatly Increase]
l) Public health services [Greatly Increase]
m) Scientific research [Greatly Increase]
n) Space exploration programs [Maintain Status]
o) Transportation and highway infrastructure [Maintain Status]
p) United Nations [Maintain Status]
q) Welfare [Maintain Status]
r) Other or expanded categories

[Answer: This collection of issues are too diverse and many are too complicated for this kind of indication of preferences to have much value. Each issue should include space for explanation of each funding preference.]

2) Defense Spending
a) Armed forces personnel training [Maintain Status]
b) Intelligence operations [Greatly Decrease]
c) Military hardware [Maintain Status]
d) Modernization of weaponry and equipment [Maintain Status]
e) National missile defense [Maintain Status]
f) Pay for active duty personnel [Slightly Decrease]
g) Programs to improve troop retention rates [Greatly Decrease]
h) Research and development of new weapons [Slightly Decrease]
i) Troop and equipment readiness [Slightly Increase]
j) Other or expanded categories

[Answer: Regarding (g): While I believe we should provide automatic re-signing bonuses for people in crucial rates who maintain the highest evaluation scores, I believe that troop retention levels during wartime are an indication of the justness of the war, and should not be artificially inflated by throwing good money after bad and turning our national military into a band of mercenaries. If the justness of a war does not attract warriors, then we should either withdraw or institute a draft -- starting with the children of elected officials and of employees in the oil and military industries.]
3) Taxes

*Indicate what federal tax levels (#1-6) you support for the following general categories. Select one number per tax, you can use a number more than once.*

**Family Income Taxes**
- a) Less than $12,000 [Eliminate]
- b) $12,001-$40,000 [Slightly Decrease]
- c) $40,001-$100,000 [Maintain Status]
- d) $100,001-$180,000 [Maintain Status]
- e) $180,001-$350,000 [Slightly Increase]
- f) $350,001 and above [Greatly Increase]
- g) Other or expanded categories
  [No answer]

**Other Taxes**
- a) Alcohol taxes [Maintain Status]
- b) Capital gains taxes [Maintain Status]
- c) Cigarette taxes [Slightly Increase]
- d) Corporate taxes [Maintain Status]
- e) Gasoline Taxes [Greatly Increase]
- f) Inheritance taxes [Slightly Increase]
- g) Other or expanded categories
  [Answer: Corporate taxes should be consistent and transnational corporations who do business in the U.S. should be required to maintain the same environmental and labor standards, including minimum wage adjusted to the local cost of living, in their factories and offices abroad as the United States requires domestically.]

**Deductions/Credits**
- a) Charitable contribution deduction [Maintain Status]
- b) Child tax credit [Maintain Status]
- c) Earned income tax credit [Maintain Status]
- d) Medical expense deduction [Maintain Status]
- e) Mortgage deduction [Maintain Status]
- f) Student loan credit [Greatly Increase]
g) Other or expanded categories
[No answer]

4) Do you support the permanent repeal of the federal estate tax? [No]
5) Do you support requiring the federal budget to be balanced each year? [Yes]
6) Other or expanded principles
[No answer]

**Campaign Finance and Government Reform Issues**

*Indicate which principles you support (if any) regarding campaign finance and government reform.*

[ ] a) Support public taxpayer funding for federal candidates who comply with campaign spending limits.
[ ] b) Remove all contribution limits on federal campaigns and parties.
[ ] c) Support prohibiting ads containing candidates' name that are paid for by third parties from airing 60 days before a primary and 30 days before a general federal election.
[X] d) Support instant run-off voting (IRV).
[X] e) Support designating Election Day as a national holiday.
[X] f) Support giving the President the power of the line item veto for items concerning appropriations.
[X] g) Support limiting the President’s use of signing statements in order to prevent an alternative interpretation of the bill.
[X] h) Support a federal shield law to protect reporter-source privilege.

i) Other or expanded principles

[Answer: Although I agree with (g), the President actually does not have the power now to interpret a bill as he or she likes, so that issue is somewhat misleading. What President Bush has been doing with his signing statements is unconstitutional. Where's Congress? What ever happened to checks and balances?]

**Crime Issues**

*Indicate which principles you support (if any) regarding crime.*

[ ] a) Support the use of the death penalty for federal crimes.
[X] b) Eliminate the use of the death penalty for federal crimes.
[X] c) Support programs to provide prison inmates with vocational and job-related skills and job-placement assistance when released.

[X] d) Support programs to provide prison inmates with drug and alcohol addiction treatment.

[X] e) Reduce prison sentences for those who commit non-violent crimes.

[X] f) Support mandatory jail sentences for selling illegal drugs.

[X] g) Decriminalize the possession of small amounts of marijuana.

[ ] h) Support strict penalties for internet crime (e.g. hacking, identity theft, worms/viruses).

i) Other or expanded principles

[Answer: I decline to answer (h), not because I don't support penalties for Internet crime, but because the meaning of "strict" is ambiguous.]

**Education Issues**

*Indicate which principles you support (if any) regarding education.*

[X] a) Support the federal government funding universal pre-kindergarten programs.

[X] b) Allow parents to use vouchers to send their children to any public school.

[ ] c) Allow parents to use vouchers to send their children to any private or religious school.

[ ] d) Allow teachers and professionals to receive federal funding to establish charter or magnet schools.

[X] e) Increase funding for the Pell Grant program.

[X] f) Decrease interest rates of Stafford Loans.

[X] g) Support federal tax incentives to help families save for college.

[X] h) Ban university financial aid officers from owning stock in or accepting gifts from student loan lenders.

[X] i) Require universities to disclose financial relationships with lenders.

[ ] j) Support federal education standards and testing requirements for k-12 students (No Child Left Behind).

[X] k) Eliminate all federal education standards and testing requirements for k-12 students (No Child Left Behind).

l) Other or expanded principles

[Answer: Regarding federal standards, I don't think it's a good idea to allow whatever factions happens to hold the most power at the moment in the federal government to dictate
their educational ideologies to parents who vote against the majority. If I were elected, I would support raising the starting salaries of teachers at every level to $100,000 a year and eliminating tenure. I believe competition for these jobs would ensure that the U.S. would have the best educated population in the world.

**Employment Issues**

*Indicate which principles you support (if any) regarding employment.*

[X] a) Increase funding for national job-training programs that retrain displaced workers or teach skills needed in today’s job market.

[ ] b) Reduce government regulation of the private sector in order to encourage investment and economic expansion.

[ ] c) Encourage employers to offer child care services, flex-time scheduling, comp-time, and unpaid leave for family emergencies.

[ ] d) Increase the federal minimum wage.

[X] e) Support the right of workers to unionize.

[ ] f) Eliminate all federal programs designed to reduce unemployment.

[ ] g) Other or expanded principles

[No answer]

**Environment and Energy Issues**

*Indicate which principles you support (if any) regarding the environment and energy.*

[X] a) Strengthen the regulation and enforcement of the Clean Water Act.

[X] b) Strengthen the regulation and enforcement of the Clean Air Act.

[ ] c) Support increased development of traditional energy resources (e.g. coal, natural gas, oil).

[X] d) Strengthen emission controls on all gasoline and diesel-powered engines, including cars, trucks, and sport utility vehicles.

[X] e) Strengthen fuel efficiency standards on all gasoline and diesel-powered engines, including cars, trucks, and sport utility vehicles.

[ ] f) Support domestic oil exploration in areas that are currently restricted.

[ ] g) Encourage further development and use of alternative fuels.

[ ] h) Support the use of ethanol as an alternative fuel.

[ ] i) Support research and development of nuclear reactors as an alternative energy source.
j) Allow energy producers to trade pollution credits under "cap and trade" laws.

k) Support international mandatory emission targets to limit global warming.

l) Support international voluntary emission targets to limit global warming.

m) Other or expanded principles

[Answer: I support the creating of a National Solar Power grid, supplied by providing a subsidy for people to put solar panels on homes and business, to be paid for by allowing consumers to sell any excess clean energy produced back into the grid at market prices minus a grid usage fee (to help pay for grid maintenance). We will always need a mix of energy sources, but we should be focusing our efforts on solar and building a big enough solar market to be able to take advantage of economies of scale.]

**Gun Issues**

_Indicate which principles you support (if any) regarding guns._

a) Allow individuals to carry concealed guns.

b) Require a license to carry a concealed gun.

c) Require a license to possess a gun.

d) Ban the sale, ownership or possession of handguns except by law enforcement or other government officials.

e) Require gun owners to store guns in a safe or lockbox, or to have them disabled with a trigger lock.

f) Allow individuals to carry guns on college campuses.

On (g) and (h), indicate what levels (#1-6) you support for the following categories.

g) Enforcement of existing restrictions on the purchase and possession of guns. [Greatly Increase]

h) Restrictions on the purchase and possession of guns. [Maintain Status]

i) Other or expanded principles

[Answer: I support microstamping of bullets so they can be traced back to the guns that fired them.]

**Health Issues**

_Indicate which principles you support (if any) regarding health._

a) Implement a universal healthcare program to guarantee coverage to all Americans, regardless of income.
b) Expand eligibility for tax-free medical savings accounts.

[X] c) Allow the importation of prescription drugs into the United States.

[ ] d) Support expanding prescription drug coverage under Medicare.

[ ] e) Offer tax credits to individuals and small businesses to offset the cost of insurance coverage.

[X] f) Support expanding child healthcare programs.

[X] g) Allow doctors to prescribe marijuana to their patients for medicinal purposes.

[ ] h) Providing healthcare is not a responsibility of the federal government.

i) Other or expanded principles

[Answer: While I currently support a single-payer system, I do so for the simple reason that our current system is a market failure, and I believe that it is worth a try to give the government a chance to do better. I would do it by making the government the single insurance provider. I would also provide an escape hatch and require strict oversight to monitor and ensure the system meets clear benchmarks in cost, quality, coverage, etc., so that if benchmarks are not consistently met or exceeded, the program can be smoothly terminated and the previous system reinstated.]

Immigration Issues

Indicate which principles you support (if any) regarding immigration.

[ ] a) Decrease the number of legal immigrants allowed into the country.

[ ] b) Establish English as the official national language.

[X] c) Support a temporary worker program.

[ ] d) Support harsher financial punishments for employers who knowingly employ illegal immigrants.

[ ] e) Support amnesty for illegal immigrants already working in the United States.

[ ] f) Illegal immigrants should have to return to their countries of origin before being considered for citizenship.

[X] g) Illegal immigrants should be given a pathway to citizenship.

[ ] h) Support merit-based visas over family-based visas.

i) Other or expanded principles

[No answer]

International Aid, International Policy, and Trade Issues
International Aid

*Indicate which principles you support (if any) regarding international aid.*

[X] a) Support the United States granting aid to countries when extraordinary circumstances cause disaster and threaten civilian lives.

[X] b) Support the United States granting aid to countries when it is in the security interests of the United States.

[ ] c) Eliminate United States aid for any nation with documented human rights abuses.

[ ] d) Aid granted by the United States should be scaled back and eventually eliminated.

e) Other or expanded principles

[No answer]

International Policy

*Indicate which principles you support (if any) regarding international policy.*

a) Should the United States continue to provide leadership in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process? [Yes]

b) Should the United States support the creation of a Palestinian state? [Yes]

c) Should the United States impose greater international sanctions on Iran if it continues to defy United Nations mandates? [Yes]

d) Should the United States support the Lebanese government against insurgent forces? [Yes]

e) Should the United States maintain its troop levels in Iraq? [No]

f) Should the United States withdraw its troops from Iraq? [Undecided]

g) Discuss your proposals for Iraq.

[Answer: The United States should put this issue up for debate within the United Nations and abide by its collective decision. By asking the world community for help in this way, we will put some of the burden of solving this problem on its shoulders and show that we respect their perspectives. Though we created the problem, flaunting our disregard of the world opinion as expressed by the UN, we now have the opportunity to strengthen the UN and help ensure peace through consensus and building trust, and not through security, which as Dietrich Bonhoeffer says, is the opposite of peace.]

h) Should the United States apply greater economic and diplomatic sanctions against North Korea if it fails to suspend its nuclear program? [Yes]

i) Should the United States increase financial support for Afghanistan? [Yes]
j) Should the United States increase military support for Afghanistan? [Yes]
k) Should the United States trade nuclear fuel to India for civilian purposes? [Yes]
l) Should the United States decrease financial support for Pakistan? [Undecided]
m) Should the United States decrease military support for Pakistan? [Undecided]
n) Should the United States be involved in bringing an end to the violence in Darfur, Sudan? [Yes]
o) Should the United States be involved in bringing an end to the violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo? [Yes]
p) Should the United States provide economic and military support to the Transitional Government of Somalia? [Undecided]
q) Should the United States use sanctions to encourage the government of Zimbabwe to end its human rights abuses? [Undecided]
r) Should the United States support the creation of an independent nation of Kosovo? [Undecided]
s) Other or expanded principles
[Answer: For all issues about which I am now undecided, I will convene public panel discussions composed of the leading experts in the fields, which will be broadcast live over the public airwaves, on cable, and on the Internet, and I will make any decisions based upon the consensus and my best judgment.]

**International Trade**

*Indicate which principles you support (if any) regarding international trade.*

a) Do you support the United States imposing economic sanctions on China? [No]
b) Do you support the United States imposing trade sanctions on Venezuela? [No]
c) Do you support the United States involvement in free trade agreements? [Yes]
d) Do you support the United States involvement in intergovernmental organizations dedicated to trade? [Yes]
e) Other or expanded principles
[Answer: The basic principle of being involved in intergovernmental organizations dedicated to trade, and in free trade agreements is sound. The economics of comparative advantage is not debatable. But we live in a democracy, and these agreements must be approved by the public--not negotiated and agreed upon behind closed doors, as they are now. Furthermore, it
should always be kept in mind that trade must also be fair. If one country can produce goods more cheaply because they have no environmental or labor standards, that needs to be accounted for in any trade agreements.]

**National Security Issues**

*Indicate which principles you support (if any) regarding national security.*

a) Do you support using military tribunals to try suspected terrorists when ordinary civilian courts are deemed inappropriate or impractical? [No]
b) Should law enforcement agencies have greater discretion to monitor domestic communications, to prevent future terrorist attacks? [No]
c) Should the United States hold foreign states accountable for terrorists who operate in their country? [Yes]
d) Should the federal government increase funding to states and cities for homeland security? [Yes]
e) Do you support pre-emptive military strikes against countries deemed to be a threat to United States national security? [Yes]
f) Do you support the creation of a federal identification card system? [Undecided]
g) Do you support long-term use of National Guard troops to supplement the armed forces in assignments overseas? [No]
h) Should the United States expand its missile defense shield? [Undecided]
i) Other or expanded principles

[Answer: Questions (c) and (e) are ambiguous. I said yes to (c) under the assumption that it means that the foreign states have the power to do something positive yet refuse. I said yes to (e) based on the assumption that the use of the word "pre-emptive" indicates it is in response to an imminent threat. The invasion of Iraq was not a pre-emptive response to an imminent threat. It was an aggressive invasion of a country that was no threat to the U.S., and we all knew it at the time, and it was therefore immoral to say the least.]

**Social Issues**

*Indicate which principles you support (if any) regarding social issues.*

a) Should same-sex couples be allowed to form civil unions? [Yes]
b) Should same-sex couples be allowed to marry? [Yes]
c) Do you support a federal constitutional amendment defining marriage as between a man and a woman? [No]

d) Should sexual orientation be included in federal anti-discrimination laws? [Yes]
e) Do you support federal funding for research on existing embryonic stem cell lines? [Yes]
f) Do you support federal funding to create lines of stem cells from new embryos? [Yes]
g) Should the federal government consider race and gender in government contracting decisions? [No]
h) Do you support affirmative action in public college admissions? [Yes]
i) Should the federal government continue affirmative action programs? [No]
j) Should the federal government regulate internet gambling? [Yes]
k) Other or expanded principles
[No answer]

**Social Security Issues**

*Indicate which principles you support (if any) regarding Social Security.*

[X] a) Allow workers to invest a portion of their payroll tax in private accounts that they manage themselves.

[X] b) Ensure the viability of Social Security by increasing the payroll tax.

[X] e) Raise the retirement age for individual eligibility to receive full Social Security benefits.


f) Other or expanded principles
[Answer: Social Security will be fine if we balance the budget.]

**Welfare and Poverty Issues**

*Indicate which principles you support (if any) regarding welfare and poverty.*

[X] a) Require welfare recipients to spend at least 40 hours a week in a combination of work and training programs.

[X] b) Continue to give states and local governments flexibility in and responsibility for welfare programs through federal block grants.

[X] c) Support housing assistance for welfare recipients.
d) Abolish all federal welfare programs.
e) Other or expanded principles

[Answer: I support requiring welfare recipients to spend 20 hours a week in a combination of work and training programs. The balance should be used in job-hunting activities.]

**Presidential Priorities**

*Please explain in a total of 200 words or less, your top two or three priorities if elected. If they require additional funding for implementation, please explain how you would obtain this funding.*

[Answer: The highest of many top priorities of will be to help the People move away from their reliance on fossil fuels and other scarce and destructive energy sources, and toward a source that need not be dug up or grown or even owned or controlled by any entity that might advantage of scarcity to reap obscene profits. Solar. There will be no need to pay for this energy in anyone’s blood or treasure. Using this energy will not darken the skies, but will instead help purify our air and rivers and oceans. The rates of a wide assortment of ailments will plummet. Budgets will balance. Instead of transferring more and more of their wealth to fewer and fewer, the People will keep their money and use their power in ways we can only imagine now.

Even if for some reason you don’t believe in man-made global warming, it should be clear that we need this kind of energy security. If you agree with the scientists, or if you at least would rather be safe than sorry about something so vital, it should be clear that solar is the way. For more of my priorities, read my platform at www.wilson2008.com.]
APPENDIX C

HOW THE UN PROTECTS AMERICAN SOVEREIGNTY
How the UN Protects American Sovereignty:
A Case for a Strong United Nations

The United Nations: The name seems to fan the flames of conspiracy in the hearts of Ron Paul supporters and others on the far right. But why?

There is, in fact, a shining golden nugget buried beneath the muck of nationalism, racism, and xenophobia: political sovereignty - freedom from external political control. But what kind of political sovereignty? Individual? State? National? For Ron Paul and his supporters, the most heated battle at the moment is over national sovereignty, and the fear that the UN will take it away and make Americans the subjects of an all-powerful world government.

Yet national sovereignty is not even their most treasured political authority. That glory goes to individual sovereignty. No other sovereignty comes close in importance. The other sovereignties are only important insofar as they guarantee individual control over our own lives. Without individual sovereignty, the individual is simply not free, and the so-called state and national sovereignties are no more than mirages.

A dictatorship, for example, may refer to its national sovereignty, but what it is really referring to is the sovereignty of the ruler, not the nation, since the regular people have no sway over the government's policies. This kind of sovereignty is usually best described as corporate sovereignty, or fascism, because the power being wielded in the name of the nation is merely the expression of a tiny, unelected governing body that has little if any concern for the collective interests of the nation in general. Any national sovereignty claimed by a non-democratic government is a delusion at best because a nation of people without personal sovereignty is a nation of subjects, not of voting members of the highest branch of a democratic national government-the Popular Branch.

For national sovereignty to exist, then, individual sovereignty is required.

Still, individual sovereignty is only a necessary condition, and not a sufficient condition of national sovereignty. National sovereignty would mean that a nation's people could speak and act effectively, collectively in the international sphere through its government, and this is, of course, something U.S. citizens have never really had in foreign affairs.
Our lack of national sovereignty today is a reality that exposes the muddled nature of Paul et al's thinking about this issue. Although the Constitution balances the three branches fairly well with regard to domestic policy, the Founders and subsequent precedent have made the Executive Branch sovereign and nearly unchecked with regard to foreign policy. This was done for what seemed like good reasons at the time.

It is important to remember that the Founders lived at a time when the fastest communications traveled by horse, and invasions could come without warning from sea. The U.S. was, moreover, a fledgling democracy surrounded by monarchies and empires relentlessly and brutally bent on expansion. Empire building had been the name of the game from time immemorial, and nobody had any reason to believe that would ever change.

Accordingly, it was also a time when white Americans considered it their "manifest destiny" to control the continent and many in the political and commercial elite even hoped the U.S. would become the next great colonial power. George Washington, in fact, believed that he had helped found a new empire.

The Founders gave the Executive Branch such expansive military powers, therefore, largely because it would have been impractical to tie the President's hands with congressional debate when defense of the country or the seizure of territory might demand immediate action. Though the Constitution located the power to declare war in the Legislative Branch, the Executive Branch was given ample constitutional room to respond to the geopolitical conditions of that time.

Most importantly for the purpose of this essay, Executive Branch power helped provide the national security needed to maintain U.S. independence from foreign powers thereby keeping the People of the United States free enough to exercise their individual sovereignty within their borders.

Thankfully, the age of European empires is over. We live in a very different world today. Americans' world, in particular, is completely transformed. Instead of being an island of individual sovereignty in an ocean of despotism, we are just one democracy in a world in which despotism is becoming increasingly rare. We, moreover, have a military so dominant that U.S. taxpayers are required to spend more to fund it than the rest of the world combined spends to fund their militaries.
In this context, the idea of an external existential threat to the United States is beyond absurd. Of course that does not mean that murderous fanatics from Wyoming to Saudi Arabia are unable inflict painful or even potentially nuclear wounds, but it does mean that Executive foreign policy sovereignty is no longer the device it once was for safeguarding individual sovereignty.

On the contrary, despite a seemingly widespread sentiment that our government would never turn into a tyranny, it is an incontestable truth that the Executive Branch is now the greatest threat to our individual sovereignty.

I am not arguing that the Bush administration will attempt a coup. Still, it is worth considering a few uncomfortable facts.

Consider, first of all, that the current president calls himself a "war president," and many in Congress oddly claim we are at war, though no war has been declared by Congress - the only body the Constitution gives authority to declare war. This is because the Legislative Branch has essentially forfeited its constitutionally designated war powers by giving the Executive Branch the statutory ability to use force in Iraq.

Consider also that the President now claims hurricanes and other national disasters are security threats. In the following lines from the “National Strategy for Homeland Security,” released in October 2007, this administration reveals a creepy willingness to frame the universe in terms of security:

Indeed, certain non-terrorist events that reach catastrophic levels can have significant implications for homeland security. The resulting national consequences and possible cascading effects from these events might present potential or perceived vulnerabilities that could be exploited, possibly eroding citizens' confidence in our Nation's government and ultimately increasing our vulnerability to attack. (p. 3)

Apparently this administration believes anything that erodes "citizens' confidence in our Nation's government" is the Nation's mistake, not a sign of the government's corruption or incompetence. Thus, in its wisdom this administration has determined the Nation is a potential security threat to itself, and We the People need to be protected from ourselves by the Executive Branch. Accordingly, the Bush administration has militarized disaster relief and commissioned a new military command - the Northern Command - that is empowered to override civilian bodies such as FEMA on orders from the President.
It could, therefore, be reasonably argued that the People have already lost their personal sovereignty because the U.S. is now just one disaster, be it hurricane, earthquake, terrorist attack, or massive power grid failure, away from martial law. When a disaster inevitably hits, the Executive Branch can claim absolute sovereignty.

What does the UN have to do with all this? It has no authority or power to prevent a coup. It has no reach into the domestic policies of its members. It has no military powers except those agreed to on a case-by-case basis by its members. By design, the UN is not terribly effective much of the time. How can the UN help?

It can and does help by providing a public venue where the world community comes together peacefully in order to develop consensus about issues of mutual concern. In so doing, it strives to create peaceful geopolitical conditions, which makes it a little more difficult for any government to claim the war powers it needs to take away civil liberties. It may have limited influence, but that influence may occasionally be enough to prevent catastrophe.

Of course the UN needs to be cleaned up—it needs to start to live up to its own charter—but what representative body does not? Shall we scrap the U.S. Constitution because our current president is violating his oath to uphold it?

There is much that is good in Ron Paul’s platform, but if Ron Paul fans really want national sovereignty, they must first understand what it is, and that it nowhere currently exists. U.S. foreign policy is an expression of Executive Branch sovereignty, not the nation's. Yes, we can express our disapproval of executive policy every four years by our votes, but as we have learned and apparently forgotten many times, that is more than enough time for the Executive Branch to act against the national and human interest with devastating totality.

As James Madison said over two centuries ago, “Of all the enemies of true liberty, war is, perhaps, the most to be dreaded, because it comprises and develops the germ of every other.” When our internal checks fail, a strong UN can help protect our sovereignty by helping to prevent war.
APPENDIX D

LETTER TO SUPPORTERS
January 26, 2008

Dear Friends and Supporters, including those who just signed my petition because they believe democracy means having real choices:

For many years and especially since the 2003 run-up to the invasion, I have been studying media and American politics, and thinking about how to build inoculations against the combination of media consolidation and market fragmentation that helps a relatively few powerful people mislead and misinform so many good people.

Obviously, the most important step toward finding the proper remedy is making the correct diagnosis from the symptoms.

**SYMPTOMS**

We know many symptoms: the buying up of local media outlets by transnational corporations and the resulting loss of quality local programming; the continuing dearth of minority ownership and upper management in media outlets; a majority of commercial news viewers—and 80% Fox News viewers—in late 2003 who had misperceptions on several issues that strongly correlated with support for an invasion of Iraq.

Many treatments may suggest themselves: making high-school level media education universally available in order to help young people to think critically about the messages being sent through media; reforming media ownership rules that over the last 20-plus years have been slanting more and more in favor of big business and against local and minority ownership; ensuring a majority in the FCC are public servants, and not lapdogs to the major media conglomerates.

These treatments are important and may happen if the majority of our public servants actually start serving the public, but it’s unlikely these can be lastingly achieved until a far more fundamental internal condition is addressed.

**DIAGNOSIS**

That condition is an acute lack of governmental transparency, particularly in the Executive Branch. We are overly reliant upon the press, which itself has very limited access behind the scenes, to tell us about what should be in plain view to all people. What’s worse, vast majority of people get their news from media outlets owned by enormous conglomerates whose primary allegiance is to profits and not the public (See http://www.freepress.net/ownership/chart.php?chart=main.)
To put it more simply, the problem is we’re driving blind. If our government were a car, it would be a car without a front windshield, and we’d be driving fast on a windy mountain road with nothing but the view out the side windows to help keep us from driving off a cliff. The Founders were horse-and-buggy people so they made a horse-and-buggy government that fit the limited suffrage of the times, but with nearly universal suffrage and today’s fast-moving world, we need a windshield. We need more eyes forward, on the road ahead, and we need to be able to monitor our drivers so we can be sure they are competent—or hire somebody else who is.

What we have today, excessive secrecy, is a vicious spiral that inevitably leads to corruption and injustice. In a democracy, excessive secrecy is corruption. It is a kind of a mini coup d’état because self-rule simply does not exist—the People are not sovereign—when the people don’t know what their public servants are up to.

TREATMENT

Transparency—sunshine—is truly the best disinfectant, and a necessary (but not sufficient—more on that later) condition of restoring health to the constitutional mechanism we use to establish justice and solve our collective problems. The trouble is not that we don’t know the treatment, the problem is administering it to the uncooperative patient made delirious by the disease.

THE STRATEGY

Some of the candidates occasionally mention transparency, but give few if any details about how they will ensure it. It seems more like an afterthought than a recognition that transparency is the lifeblood of democracy. Most telling, if they were really committed to transparency, they would be practicing it now in their roles as public servants, yet nobody is. We can’t solve the other problems if our view of the big picture is obscured.

As the tipping point of irreversible global warming approaches, while those in power remain bent on global military and economic dominance, and as powerful emerging technologies from artificial intelligence (AI) to nanotechnology to genetic engineering will soon give unprecedented power to those who control them, the need is urgent. And nobody but the President can guarantee the necessary Executive Branch transparency.

That is why I am running for president—not because I expect to win—but because this needs to be a major issue in the 2008 election. Transparency needs a representative in the
national race, at the very least in order to put this issue in front of a national audience, and big media certainly won’t be bringing this issue up on their own.

My strategy is to run the most transparent campaign in history, to show by example what our public servants should have been doing all along. My hope is that my example will create a popular demand for the mainstream candidates to do the same, and to carry that ethos into the White House.

**TACTICS**

Later this month, I will set out on a nationwide campaign/road trip to try to bring attention to this issue. With the help of a laptop computer with a webcam and a wireless broadband card, I will be webcasting as much of the campaign as I possibly can. I have done a kind of practice run already. I have campaigned at the University of Maryland at College Park campus, Washington Square in New York City, Harvard Square in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Venice Beach, California. As most of you know, since I got your emails during that trip, the response was almost universally positive among those who took the time to talk to me.

This time, my goal is to circle the entire country by car, and spread the message about transparency (and a national clean energy program—more on that below) one town at a time. One of the ways I plan to keep expenses down is to travel only to places where people have invited me to stay in their home. I hope to do this with the help of a social networking website called CouchSurfing.com—a organization composed of people who travel and make their couches available to travelers.

During this campaign, my main activity will be providing another important aspect of a transparent presidential campaign. I will be spending the majority of my time building my ideal Executive Branch staff. In other words, I will be filling all my the presidential appointment positions so that voters will have a much better sense of what kind of Executive Branch it would be before they actually vote. Again, this is something candidates should have been doing all along since appointees have a very significant influence on the character of the Executive Branch, as well as on the lives of Americans. You can find the beginnings of this effort at http://www.wilson2008.com/administration_2008.html.

I will also be strongly advocating a “put a man on the moon” style National Clean Energy Program. This is actually the plank that has generated the most interest in my
campaign so far. You can find a description of this and the rest of my platform at http://www.wilson2008.com/planks.html.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Earlier, I wrote that transparency is a necessary but not sufficient condition of restoring the health of our democratic republic. As you know, there is no single sufficient condition of restoring democracy. Like any human relationship, democracy is a process, not an end state. It must be nurtured with cooperation and mutual respect, and, if neglected, it slips away. Democracy requires effort, not least being the kind of effort you have made if you’ve read through the letter to this point.

Another way to help is to support ideas you believe in—not only those candidates big media have told you can win a national election. The last couple of elections may make you think that the most important outcome is that the bad guys don’t win, and I don’t entirely disagree. But there are things you can do that won’t risk an election and yet still help push our country in a positive direction. Supporting this effort is just such a thing.

There are a number of ways you can help. Four ways are almost effortless:

1. Anybody with a couch can support me on my national tour by offering me the use of it for a night or two, click here for details.

2. Since I will not be paying for hotel rooms or campaign consultants or TV commercials, my campaign will be relatively inexpensive, but there will be significant costs. The major cost of the campaign will be travel expenses. At this point, I plan to travel by my car. If you would like to donate money for gas or other campaign expenses, you can do so by going to Wilson2008.com and clicking on the “Donate” button. All major credit cards are accepted. You may also donate through my Facebook page. (If you are not my Facebook friend, I encourage you to add me.) You can see my other expenses here: http://www.wilson2008.com/budget.html.

3. Now is the time to start calling your local media or any media contacts you might have and let them know what I am doing. Likewise, if you can suggest or help arrange people I might form coalitions with, I would greatly appreciate it. I encourage you to include this letter with any email correspondence you send.
4. Encourage everybody you know to subscribe to my mailing list. (If you would like to be removed from this mailing list, please reply to this email and replace the subject with “Remove.”)

Probably the hardest way to help, but the most helpful, would be to be my intern or partner during the spring semester. I basically need somebody to follow me around with the webcam, and do some other odds and ends. Bear in mind that, with the travelling, it would be almost impossible to take any other courses. If you know anybody who would be interested, or are willing to advertise the position at your alma mater, I would greatly appreciate hearing from you.

A full list of ways you can help can be found here:


CONCLUSION

All of the candidates today claim to be the “change” candidate—even the Republicans. A few nights ago, I watched as, flanked by signs that read “CHANGE BEGINS WITH US,” Mitt Romney praised George Bush’s performance in office. Followers of Barrack Obama regularly hear beautifully written inspirational yet vague speeches that attempt to frame him as the candidate of change. I don’t deny anyone’s good intentions—certainly, change from the unsustainable policies of the Bush Administration is all but inevitable—but the fact is that all of these candidates have achieved their lofty positions by being good at playing politics as usual. Occasionally these candidates give lip service to transparency, but look at how they run their current offices. The proof is in the pudding. They may sound great on the campaign trail, but if you watch them, as I do, performing on C-SPAN, you know that no one person, especially one who is already in office, is going to ride to our rescue.

When we know what’s really going on in this country, we’ll ride, altogether, to our own rescue. Please help yourself by supporting transparency.

With hope for a bright future,
Kelcey Wilson
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