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December 31, 2007



## Fred's Message to Iowa Voters

### ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF IOWA

Hello, I'm Fred Thompson.

In the closing days of this historic contest here in Iowa, I wanted to take a few moments to talk quietly with you about the stakes in this election and the critical issues you will soon decide.

Because there is no frontrunner here in Iowa and because yours will be the first votes cast in this crucial election year, your decision will be one the entire country closely watches and learns from.

When you go to your local caucus on January 3rd and fill out your paper ballot – and, by the way, it's just that easy – how you vote will go a long way towards deciding who will lead us as president through dangerous years ahead.

That the years ahead will be dangerous needs no elaboration from me. Most Americans know the forces of terrorism will not rest until a mushroom cloud hangs over one of our cities. The recent tragic assassination of former Prime Minister Bhutto in Pakistan again demonstrates the terrorists' will to power and their relentless cruelty.

Along with threats to our national security, we have great domestic challenges before us – the economy, taxes, protecting our borders, and protecting the right to life.

So, I want to talk to you now about the threats and dangers that we face as a people -- but also about the hope and opportunity I see out there.

Before doing that, however, I'd be remiss if I did not -- on behalf of myself and my wife, Jeri – thank the people of Iowa for all your hospitality and warmth over the past few months. Traveling around the state with all our wonderful volunteers and staff and especially with your great congressman Steven King meant getting to know all of you better. And that's been one of the great privileges of our lives.

You may have heard about our bus tour – we're visiting about 50 cities. Having that time out there in the heartland has also taught us once again about what counts in life – the importance of passing on to our children and grandchildren the same safe and free future that others protected and passed on to us.

By any measure, we live in the greatest country in the history of the world. Every generation of Americans has an obligation to keep it that way. And to do that we must remember how we got to where we are -- and why we are so blessed.

That means remembering the fundamental, conservative principles that have unified us for over two centuries.

What are those principles?

- First, the role of the federal government is limited to the powers given to it in the Constitution
- Second, a dollar belongs in the pocket of the person who earns it, unless the government has a compelling reason why it can use it better
- Third, we don't spend money we don't have, or borrow money that our children and grandchildren will have to pay back
- And the best way to avoid war is to be stronger than our enemies. But if we're caught in a fight, we need to win it because not doing so makes us much more likely to be attacked in the

-Also the federal judiciary is supposed to decide cases, not set social policy -- and bad social policy at that

-And the bigger the government gets, the less competent it is to run our lives.

Now these are ideals and principles that made our country free, prosperous and strong. And these principles are the foundation of a conservative movement that I've been faithful to throughout my adult life. These are not principles I decided on a few years ago. They are not concepts that I learned from a focus group. And they are not ideas I came up with to curry favor or to win an election. These principles are part of who I am and, I suspect, they are views and instincts I share with most of you.

And every single one of these principles is under assault today – under assault from a left wing, big-government, high-taxing, weak-on-defense Democratic party. A party whose leadership is licking its chops just waiting to take over the reins of government – waiting to bring to the United States presidency the same reckless power-seeking and incompetence it's brought this year to the United States Congress.

That's why the upcoming caucuses are so important. On January 3rd, the people of Iowa are going to answer an important question. Who's the man you want to represent us -- to stand against this assault and protect our principles and values?

It's a little late in the process to be coy. I believe I'm that man. I can stand up to those who would trifle with our great founding principles. I've done it before. I'll blow the whistle on their schemes. And I know how to beat them in the war of ideas.

And in demonstrating that, I have laid out plans for:

A simplified, flatter income tax to take away power from the IRS

A way to save a Social Security system that is going bankrupt

A stronger military ready to face the threats of a dangerous world; and

A solution to our illegal immigration mess.

Any number of publications and commentators – the Wall Street Journal, the Washington Post, National Review, Investors Business Daily and others -- have praised these plans. And many have pointed out that I'm the only Republican in the race for the presidency who has stepped up to offer such bold, conservative ideas. I invite you to check the policy details on my website Fred08.com.

But you're not electing a set of position papers. You're electing a leader – at a time when strong leadership is going to be needed.

Now if you watched or heard about the most recent debate between the Republican candidates you probably know that I declined when called upon by the moderator to do any hand-raising – I just thought that there should be some things that are below even the dignity of presidential candidates. But the point's this: I don't think it was difficult to pick the leader out of that line-up. If those other fellas can't stand up to an overbearing moderator in a debate, I'm not sure how they would fare against the leader of Iran or North Korea.

Now there are many good men running for our party's nomination. Each of them loves our country. Each of them has something interesting and useful to offer. But the fact of the matter is that the Republican Party is a conservative party. That's the philosophy that's shaped us. That's the philosophy that has won us elections. And that's the philosophy we must champion if we are to win again in 2008.

And on that score, among each of the men seeking our party's nomination, my record stands out. I entered public life as a conservative. I served in the Senate as a strong, consistent conservative with a 100% pro life voting record. And I have the same philosophy today that I had back then. What you see is what you get. I dance to no man's tune. And no one has ever accused me of changing my position on anything for the sake of political expediency. That's why when someone here in Iowa said conservatives were looking for a horse to ride in 2008, I responded, "Saddle me up." And in the battle of ideas, we can't afford a Republican leader who doesn't have a core philosophy that grounds him. I know who I am. I know what I believe. And I am ready to lead.

When I was in the federal government, I concentrated on national security. I served on the Intelligence

Committee, met with foreign leaders around the world. And I managed for the Republican side the passage of the Homeland Security bill which I believe has helped us prevent another "9/11."

I continued public service after I left government. Although my role on TV's "Law & Order" got considerably more publicity, I took on other roles from time to time as well. When Condoleeza Rice needed someone to advise her on matters of international security, she called on me. When the President needed help to get a good conservative judge confirmed as Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court, he called on me.

What it all comes down to is this: The most important issue facing us is the national security of our nation and the safety of our people.

I've spent a lot of time both in and out of government working to make the American people safer. I know the world we live in, I know what we need to do, and I know it's going to require strong leadership.

And I would ask people to think one thing before they caucus: When our worst enemy is sitting across from us at the negotiating table, and they're thinking about what they can do to harm the United States of America, and what they might get away with, who do you want sitting on our side of the table representing you, working to keep you safe? That's probably the person you ought to elect as President.

I've been tested. And I believe our country's best days are ahead of us if we take on the responsibility of leadership. The American people are waiting for us to step up, protect our values, our principles and our country. Together we can do something great for America. I welcome that challenge.

But, my friends, I need your help.

Because right now in this final weekend another issue is before us: that of electability.

I believe I am the only candidate in this race who can bring our party to victory in the Fall. First, because of the firmness of my principles and the trust that that engenders. Secondly, because of the detailed program I've put before the people. Third, because I've been tried and tested – and I'm a known quantity in public life.

But, most of all, I think I know how to talk to the American people about the opposition and the danger their victory would pose to the principles we hold dear.

You know in the last debate – when I was asked the biggest problem with American education-- I had a ready answer: "The NEA."

By which I meant the National Education Association -- that highly politicized, Washington-based union that is a hindrance to students as well as to the teachers it claims to represent.

But you know the NEA is not the only problem. Just like its education policy, the Democratic party's foreign policy is heavily influenced by another left-of-center pressure group—Move On.org <<http://on.org/>> which implied that our leading general in Iraq betrayed us, that tells our men and women in uniform that the war they are fighting is lost, and then tries to cut off funds for our troops in the field.

And its social policy is heavily determined by the radically secularist ACLU -- which tries to take God out of the public square and leaps to the legal defense of our Nation's enemies.

You know, when I'm asked which of the current group of Democratic candidates I prefer to run against, I always say it really doesn't matter. Because these days all those candidates, all the Democratic leaders, are one and the same. They're all NEA, Move On.org <<http://on.org/>> , ACLU, Michael Moore Democrats. They've allowed these radicals to take control of their party and dictate their course.

So this election is important not just to enact our conservative principles. This election is important to salvage the once-great political party from the grip of extremism and shake it back to its senses. It's time to give not just Republicans but independents and, yes, good Democrats a chance to call a halt to the leftward lurch of the once proud party of working people.

So in seeking the nomination of my own party, I want to say something a little unusual. I am asking my fellow Republicans to vote for me not only for what I have to say to them, but for what I have to say to the members of the other party -- the millions of Democrats who haven't left the Democratic party so much as

their party's national leadership has left them.

In this campaign I will be seeking the support of millions of Democrats who no longer believe that they can trust their own party's leadership on the issue of national security.

I will be seeking the support of millions of Democrats with young families who are beginning to see the economic burdens they may face because of their party leadership's taste for high taxes and politically motivated refusal to fix social security and remove the threat of a shortfall in federal benefit plans that could be a catastrophe for younger taxpayers.

And, finally, I'll be seeking the support of Democrats who are weary of spin politics and the permanent campaign and endless attempts to control the media dynamic-- who think policy stances ought to be judged on a higher criteria than what works better in a sound bite or fits this week's campaign-message guidance.

So I'll be asking good Democrats as well as Independents to give us another chance -- to see if a Republican president and Congress that's dedicated to conservative principles can move forward with an agenda that goes beyond narrow partisanship and political expediency and actually deals with the long-term foreign and domestic crises we face.

I know we can do better than a 14% approval rating the current Congress had. And I know we've learned our lessons from last year's election. We're the party of smaller, smarter government, lower taxes, and less Washington spending. And the only way we win is if we understand that, remain true to it, and refuse to yield to those who would have us abandon it.

All of this, then, and more is why I'm running for president. I believe, that, yes, we can deal with the dangers and threats before our nation and the world.

And we can begin now by remembering who we are, where we came from, and what we've done before as a people. This isn't the first time our nation has been in grave danger, even in our own lifetime. Not long ago ours was an East-West world where the democracies were beleaguered and small in number. Now so much that was once unimaginable is happening before our eyes. We see a world where representative government is flourishing. A world where the global economic boom is taking millions out of poverty every year. A world where there's even talk of a permanent end to poverty.

Well, we got to this place because of leaders who saw something more than political expediency, leaders like a Ronald Reagan. A Ronald Reagan who would use his time in office wisely precisely because he thought politics had higher uses than just the pursuit of power.

He spoke often of the abuses of government power that our founding fathers feared and warned against. You know, I've always thought one of the most impressive things about one of those founders -- George Washington -- was his willingness to walk away from power. Having spent eight impossibly difficult years in a military struggle against the greatest military power on earth, he was filled with an awe and wonder not at the work of mere mortals but at the workings and power of Providence, an awe and wonder that was never to leave him. To his dying day he was to remind Americans that the one condition of a prosperous and free people was a belief in a will higher than our own, a trust in Providence.

Lincoln had it too -- the conviction that no free people and certainly no president can long endure without a belief in a wisdom far exceeding any human understanding.

I know the people of Iowa think that way. I recognize it when I see it. That's one of the great advantages that comes from growing up in another part of the heartland -- Lawrenceburg Tennessee. On Sunday morning, my hometown was a pretty busy place-- people on the way to hear the good news -- the good news that the future is in better hands than our own. So, thanks to what I learned in those early days I've always known no matter how much we want it otherwise, we humans aren't in charge. Life is sometimes harsh though in teaching us that truth.

And all this was much on my mind last summer when I decided to run for the presidency. Especially as I looked around my home at another generation -- a three-year old and a five-month old -- and thought -- as have so many of you over the past few years -- about the safe future I had and how much I wanted to make that future a certainty for my children and yours.

So for this reason and all the others I mentioned, I'm hoping that you support me in the days ahead. I am hoping too that you'll join me in something that comes pretty easy here in "the heartland" -- a prayer of

thanks for the great things that have happened in our time. And a prayer of hope too. Hope that when the history of our own age is written it will be said of us what was said of those before us. That we were unswerving in our dedication to the cause of human freedom and dignity. And that we kept our trust in the will of Him who made us -- and who enjoins us to now go forth and make a newer world,

Thank you all. May God bless you and May God bless America

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