

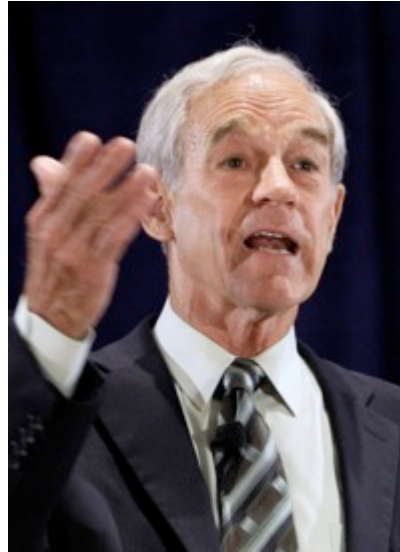


Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on December 29, 2009

Ben Stein Says Ron Paul Uses “Anti-Semitic Arguments”

Former actor-turned-economic and political advisor Ben Stein claimed Ron Paul was using an “anti-Semitic argument” when Congressman Paul argued the United States should refrain from bombing Yemen in a December 28 interview on CNN’s Larry King Live.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oFdG4eySIU8>



Rep. Paul, a Republican from Texas, has argued for removing U.S. soldiers from the Middle East because the American presence there is increasingly seen by many Muslims as a foreign occupation force. Responding to Rep. Paul’s argument that Americans should mind their own business and not become the policeman of the world, Stein argued: “No, we’re not occupiers. That’s the same anti-Semitic argument we’ve heard over and over again. That’s the same anti-Semitic argument we’ve heard over and over again.”

Rep. Paul responded by saying, “That is a vicious attack,” and Stein defended his statement by saying, “Look, that is not a vicious attack.”

The argument began when Dr. Paul noted that American foreign policy experts make bombing decisions while “never asking the question: What is the motive?” He went on to explain that the most recent would-be airline hijacker “said why he did it. He said because we bombed Yemen two weeks ago. That was his motive.” Dr. Paul then went on to explain that the United States is falling into the interventionist trap:

Osama bin Laden said that he has a plan for America. First, he wants to bog us down in the Middle East in a no-win war. He wants to bankrupt this country, demoralize us, as well as have us do things that motivate people to join his radical movement. It seems like we have fallen into his trap.

Dr. Paul (he’s an obstetrician as well as a Congressman) noted that the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan, now in their seventh and ninth years respectively, have spurred terrorist attacks from Muslims who want the foreign troops out of their countries. Ben Stein responded to Dr. Paul by saying, “I never heard anything quite like that in my whole life. What he’s basically saying is that we are doing something wrong by defending ourselves. Look, if these terrorists are trying to kill the government of Yemen, we’ve got to help defend them. They are our friends.”

That was an odd retort, since it leaves the question of who the “ourselves” is in Stein’s sentence. While the question of whether Yemen is a government that ranks among “our friends” is debatable at best (it’s



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a corrupt pseudo-democracy with a horrible human-rights record), it hardly stands to reason that defending a rather insignificant and corrupt government on the other end of the planet is equivalent to defending U.S. soil.

Asked again why terrorists were targeting the United States rather than other free countries, Stein replied, "They're terrorists and murderers because they are psychos. They're terrorists and murderers because they are psychos, same as all terrorists and murderers." But, of course, if they are "psychos," then they don't act with any reason. And if they don't act with any reason, then there's no reason to believe they would target the United States more than any other country. In fact, if they are indeed insane as Ben Stein suggests, there's less chance of them attacking the United States than the country where they are currently living because attacking the United States requires the kind of travel and planning that the insane rarely undertake.

Stein's attack on Dr. Paul is only the latest gaffe by the former movie actor. Stein served as a frequent financial advisor on CNBC in 2007, where [he doled out terrible predictions](#) in a debate with Euro-Pacific Capital President Peter Schiff. Faced with dire warnings about the coming housing market crash from Schiff, Stein predicted a healthy housing market. "Sub-prime is tiny. Sub-prime is a tiny, tiny blip," Stein stressed, [adding](#):

The financials, as I keep saying, are just super-bargains. I predict that, like, Merrill Lynch which is an astonishingly well-run company. Did you know that a couple of days ago it was trading at barely more than seven times earnings? Financials typically trade at a low P-E [price to earnings ratio], but this is a joke. This stock, they might as well be giving it away in cereal boxes and giving it away, that's how cheap it is.

Ben Stein made that investment advice when Merrill Lynch was selling at \$76.04 per share. That value quickly sunk to \$21 per share and the firm only avoided bankruptcy after a 2008 Bank of America merger that nearly bankrupted the banking giant (Bank of America is the largest bank in the United States). Stein [also predicted](#) the stock market would continue to climb during the August 2007 CNBC show. "I think stocks will be a heck of a lot higher a year from now than they are now," Stein announced confidently. When he made this prediction on August 18, 2007, the Dow Jones Industrial Average was bouncing between 13,000 and 14,000, but within a year and a half, the DJIA had sunk to less than 7,000.

Throughout the heated debate, Stein never even tried to explain why Paul's contention that the United States should not be the policeman of the world is anti-Semitic. Ben Stein's accusation of "anti-Semitic argument" is clearly as accurate as his financial predictions several years ago. Perhaps that's why some Ron Paul supporters have started a ["Win Ben Stein's Apology" page on Facebook](#), a play on the former actor's old game show *Win Ben Stein's Money*. Larry King announced that he would invite both people back onto the show December 29 to continue the heated conversation.

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