

DAVID ROUZER

Dear Friend,

This past October you received a letter from me announcing my candidacy for state Senate and that was followed by a letter of endorsement from Mrs. Jesse Helms. But neither of those letters explains why I decided to get involved in the political process more than a decade ago, nor the fundamental reasons for the vision I have for this state.

To date, I have shared the following story in conversations only and each time I have been encouraged to write it and share it broadly. We all have experiences that, in retrospect, clearly helped shape the course of our lives. This is mine...

It was just a few years following the fall of the Berlin Wall and the crumbling of the Soviet Union. I was invited to participate in a program hosted by the Fund for American Studies in Prague, the Czech Republic, that included about 10 of us from the United States and more than 50 students from the former Communist Bloc.

My newfound friends who had lived the majority of their lives under Communism shared stories of their childhood – and how they longed to one day come to America. They told me of the nights they would stay up late and read and learn about the greatest country the world has ever known.

They had to keep their free market materials and the books on American history and the Founding Fathers hidden in secret panels in the walls of their homes so the secret police wouldn't discover it. If any pro-America material was found by the state police when they came through to search their homes, there would be a significant price to pay.

Yet, in spite of this and with no formal education in the study of America or the free market system, these students knew more about America and its founding and its true purpose in the world than we did! (Of course, in our defense this history is hardly taught, if at all.) They knew because they had lived under tyranny and could only dream of the freedom that we too often take for granted.

It became crystal clear to me that America is here for a purpose. The freedom we have in this country is the exception to the norm on the timeline of history. If it were not for the influence of America, most of the world would be gripped by tyranny – a natural result of human nature in its ugliest form when left unchecked.

So that began my journey. And it just so happened that I graduated just a few weeks before the Republicans took control of Congress that January of 1995. Unlike most that go to work on Capitol Hill, I had no inside connections, no money, and no job -- so I figured I had nothing to lose.

Deep down I knew that if I was ever going to learn and be a part of this great experiment in self-government, this was the time. I was willing to do whatever it took to make my opportunity. I knocked on doors – a lot of doors. I didn't know anyone, but made friends along the way. Several months later, Senator Jesse Helms offered me a job. He took

a chance with a young fellow who had no experience and no political connections, and I was grateful.

Due to the nature of my work for the Senator, we got to spend a good bit of time together. In between battles on the Senate floor, the Senator would share stories with me from his early days in the Senate. Sometimes he would talk about what it must have been like in the very early days of this country. He often told the story of the lady who went up to Ben Franklin as he was leaving the Constitutional Convention of 1787. She tugged on his sleeve and asked, “*Well, Doctor, what have we got – a republic or a monarchy?*”-- “*A republic,*” replied Franklin, “*if you can keep it.*”

Can we keep it? Every generation must answer this question. In my announcement letter, I mentioned the need to improve our education system. Quite frankly, we must have an education system that focuses on teaching our children to think for themselves – not just recite facts and figures forgotten after the test. They should be exposed to the true history of this country and its goodness – not the revisionist history and so-called evils of capitalism found in so many textbooks today.

At a minimum, they should be taught that the freedom we have in America is the exception on the timeline of history – not the norm. Without an understanding of this history and an informed and moral citizenry, our freedom and prosperity cannot survive.

One of our Founding Fathers, Samuel Adams, wrote in a letter back in 1775, “*No people will tamely surrender their liberties, nor can any be easily subdued, when knowledge is diffused and virtue is preserved. On the contrary, when people are universally ignorant, and debauched in their manners, they will sink under their own weight without the aid of foreign invaders.”*

Society today could learn a valuable lesson from ole’ Sam Adams. Certainly, a quick glance at the TV 30 years ago versus what our families see today is revealing enough.

So what changed? With the advent of the Great Society in the Sixties and the cultural revolt at the time, we made an exchange. Government was expanded dramatically hoping to solve all of the social ills. As it has turned out, it only relegated future generations to poverty just as bad as or worse than that of their parents and grandparents.

In the end, we gave government more power over our lives and more of our money. In return we got the breakdown of the family, more illegitimacy, continued poverty and even more dependency on government. In hindsight, it was a poor exchange.

Even worse, we traded away the high moral standards and civility of previous generations in favor of a “me first” and “anything goes” doctrine that has destabilized the founding bedrock of any productive civilization – the family. The exchange has been costly, and we see its impact every day.

Here in North Carolina, the generations that came before us made a different kind of exchange. They invested their time and resources for the betterment of others; the focus of state government was on those things communities could not do for themselves. They were visionaries and philanthropists who created the Research Triangle Park, the university system, the community college system, and laid the groundwork for good roads, bridges, and

water and sewer systems. We have benefited tremendously from their hard-work and selflessness.

But during the last couple of decades, the mindset that overtook our federal government has gained significant ground in North Carolina. And what it has brought us is one of the highest tax burdens in the Southeast, but with little to show for it. The money that once was spent on essential items is now wasted on the pet projects of powerful politicians.

Our roads, bridges, water and sewer systems are failing because of age and mismanagement and 1/3 of our high school students drop out of school. According to a recent John Hopkins University study, North Carolina ranks sixth in the country in the number of high schools with at least a 40 percent dropout rate. As our state economy continues to evolve as it adjusts to (1) the global marketplace and (2) the high gas prices caused by the increasing demand world-wide for oil, this is no time to have water pipes breaking, bridges in disrepair and a failing public education system.

It is time for a new start and a clean sweep. And there is no better time to start than now.

So let's prepare to do what it takes to get back to the basics – the fundamental principles that made this country great in the first place. What we do here and now can make a profound impact on the future of this state and this country. It all starts here at the local, grassroots level.

My generation and those that come after me have to step up. We can no longer afford to sit back and ride on the coattails of those who have come before us. Our freedom and continued prosperity depend on it. I am ready for the challenge, and I hope you will join me in the effort. We must get back to the basic fundamentals and return government to those limited functions for which it is uniquely suited.

As I build my campaign, I need your prayers and your help in the everyday things needed to win a campaign. I will have a very wealthy opponent who will self-finance her campaign and write as big a check as she needs.

I am not a wealthy man; nor do I come from a wealthy family. I must rely on the grassroots efforts of those like you who share the same values and principles. If you believe as I do, I need your help to get our message out to as many voters as possible.

If you are interested in learning more about my candidacy and how you can help, please go to my website at www.davidrouzer.com. Together, I believe we can make a great difference for North Carolina.

In the meantime, best wishes for a great New Year. And as Ronald Reagan was so fond of saying, "May God bless you, and may God bless America."

Best regards,



David Rouzer