

RARE MOMENT OF CANDOR, SAYS PORTER

Speaking from his home today (01-22-08), Dr. Steven Porter, the independent candidate for Congress in the 3rd district of Pennsylvania, said that yesterday's television debate in South Carolina between Clinton, Obama, and Edwards provided "a rare moment of candor in the political campaign."

"Beyond the petty squabbling," Porter commented, "was an all-too-short discussion of the corruption which special interest money has brought to the American democracy. The three Democratic front-runners all acknowledged that big money has harmed the process of government, and each scrambled to avoid being tainted by it. It was Obama who finally said that, in his words, 'nobody's hands are clean.' Such admissions are rare and deserve far greater exposure.

"The recent press release I sent out documenting the huge amount of special interest money behind both major party candidates attests to the fact that Obama's comment was an understatement. But the problem is far, far larger than the Presidency," Porter went on, "because Presidents must rule jointly with the support of Congress, and most members of Congress have been bought and sold many times over by special interests in the financial, legal, real-estate, business, defense, labor, and religious sectors of the economy.

"Even an untainted President (and at this point, it appears that Edwards is the least tainted of the so-called 'front-runners') must cope with a Congress whose prime motivation is to serve not their constituents but the monied interests which have put and which keep them in office—in great part with the complicity of an American media that benefits by the billions from the sale of campaign ad time.

"The American democracy has been compromised—perhaps irrevocably—by the corrosive influence of special interest money and special interest politics. There are few ways to combat this trend and restore the democracy. One is to have the public funding of all elections—not a likely scenario because it would take the votes of the corrupted politicians to do it. Another is to elect un-owned independents free from the strangle hold of special interest money—again difficult to do because money buys the ad time, and ads influence the votes.

"America is really up against it, to use an old phrase. It will take a great deal of pain to convince a rather unthinking nation to support honesty over wealth. Perhaps the impending recession will be a catalyst for that. If so, it is too bad that many will have to suffer before the democracy awakens—if ever it does."