



Presidential Candidate Ron Paul's "Extremism"

The extreme hard-line attitude of many Republicans [including Paul] has significantly raised the prospects for a national default and rating agency downgrades that would sweep across the nation and many states, causing an economic cataclysm and public outrage unlike anything ever seen in the history of the republic.



Budowsky isn't alone. Writing for the liberal *Mother Jones*, Josh Harkinson examined briefly 15 of Ron Paul's "[most extreme positions](#)," claiming that once Tea Partiers really learned what Paul stood for, they would run away and hide from him and his campaign for the presidency.

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Excessive histrionics aside, what are, you may ask, Paul's positions on such issues as the national debt, excessive government spending, defaulting on government promises, and interventions both military and civilian?

Paul's position on the national debt has for many years been clear and consistent: Continued deficit spending would eventually [lead the country](#) to its present economic and fiscal crisis, which is set to become much worse if substantial changes aren't made in our country:

The national debt now stands at just over \$14 trillion, while net total liabilities are estimated at over \$200 trillion. The government is insolvent, as there is no way that this massive sum of liabilities can ever be paid off. Successive Congresses and administrations have shown absolutely no restraint when it comes to the budget process, and the idea that either of the two parties is serious about getting our fiscal house in order is laughable.

Paul supports the [Austrian School](#) of economic thinking, which accurately predicted well in advance the current economic recession. Said Paul:

Loose central bank monetary policy cause booms and busts: it drives down interest rates below the market rate, lowering the cost of borrowing, encourages malinvestment, and causes economic miscalculation as resources are diverted from the highest value use as reflected in true consumer preferences. Loose monetary policy caused the dot-com bubble and the housing bubble, and now is causing the government debt bubble.

He offers little hope that default can be avoided. Indeed, he claims that default is already taking place, as it has for years, with the gradual debasement of the dollar's purchasing power through inflation. But a formal default through delaying or failing to make interest payments altogether on sovereign debt is merely recognizing reality: "The U.S. will default on its debt sooner or later, and it is certainly preferable that it be sooner rather than later ... continually raising the debt ceiling only forestall[s] the



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day of reckoning and ensures that when it comes, it will be cataclysmic. We have a choice: default now and take our medicine, or put it off as long as possible, when the effects will be much worse.”

Other pieces of the Ron Paul puzzle that he says need to be put in place to save the Republic include:

- Substantially modifying the unconstitutional entitlement programs including Social Security and Medicare and eventually turning back the responsibilities of caring for and providing for people to the people themselves;
- Abolishing half of all federal government agencies, [including](#) the departments of Energy, Education, Agriculture, Commerce, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Labor, and Environmental Protection;
- Letting states set their own policies on abortion, gay marriage, prayer in school, and most other issues;
- Ending foreign military adventures in nation-building and returning the Defense Department to its original mandate: defending America;
- Abolishing the Federal Reserve.

The economic facts make clear that Paul's positions are logical, reasonable, rational, and necessary in order to rein in excessive government spending, regulation and intervention, to say nothing of putting constitutional restraints back in place. Citizens will recognize charges of extremism as simply a “cover” to avoid serious argument on these matters. As noted by Tom Mullen on [DailyPaul.com](#), “The moment an argument is made that departs from the status quo, the tag of extremism is applied to its author in the attempt to deflect attention away from the argument itself.” It’s also used as a bromide to provide “a comfortable escape from those realities that most Americans are not ready to face.”

But that argument is already beginning to fail as more and more American citizens are coming to understand that the Republicans and Democrats are on the same side in the deficit reduction war. As Mullen puts it:

While the blue team and the red team will continue to fight with each other, they both realize that average Americans are becoming more open to hearing from people *who refuse to put on either jersey*. [Emphasis added.]

And those disenchanted with and effectively disenfranchised from either team are not running away and hiding from these positions, but are instead finding their own voice. In a just-released poll, [Rasmussen](#) reports that while “Congressman Ron Paul may be a long shot to win the Republican presidential nomination ... he runs competitively with President Obama right now. The latest Rasmussen Reports national telephone survey of Likely Voters shows Paul picking up 37% of the vote, while the president earns 41%.”

This was enough to catch the attention of the [Los Angeles Times](#), which pouted, “Voters who supported Obama in 2008 because they were promised change would probably be delighted at the speed with which Paul would try to end the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and [with] his resistance to involving the U.S. in foreign military actions.”

Those same voters, if Paul were elected President, would likely also be delighted at the speed with which he would begin the dismantling of the regulatory state; the turning back to the states their legitimate and necessary functions, usurped by the federal government; and, finally at long last, allowing the free market an increasing flow of oxygen to revive the economy and begin to repair the



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damage caused by all the statist "remedies." As emphasized by author Mullen: "If reason, justice and equity are extremism, then it is time to listen to the extremists."

Photo of Ron Paul: AP Images

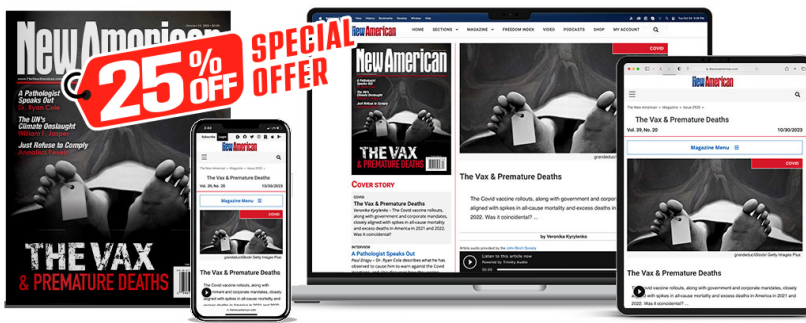


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