



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on March 15, 2013

Michael Gerson Mocks Rand Paul and the Fear of an Oppressive Government

A wise man once said that sarcasm is the lowest form of wit. Apparently, this little aphorism escaped the notice of the *Washington Post*'s Michael Gerson.

In [an article published last week](#), Gerson, a former senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, repeatedly mocked Senator Rand Paul (R-Ky.), making light of the senator's recent 13-hour filibuster to delay the confirmation of John Brennan as director of the CIA.



It isn't bad enough that Gerson tosses off one after the other disparaging remark about Paul's efforts to force the president to clear up his notion of his authority to use drones to target and kill Americans in America, but in the title of the article — "Rand Paul Masks His True Worldview" — Gerson presumes to be able to know what Rand Paul is really thinking.

It isn't hard to know what Gerson is really thinking. He makes jokes about "TSA screeners patting down little girls." That a journalist of Gerson's purported talent would make a mockery of such disturbing violations of not only the Fourth Amendment, but of the rules of common decency, says much about the man and his mien.

What of the TSA touching children? Does it happen often? Who knows. The fact that it happened at all is unacceptable in a nation that values not only the purity of its children, but the constitutional prohibition on such behavior, as well.

One account of such an horrific violation was [reported in 2011 by Time magazine](#). This is *Time*'s account of the embarrassing encounter:

After Selena Drexel's 6-year-old daughter, Anna, was subjected to a pat-down in a New Orleans airport, she and her husband decided to put the video on YouTube. The couple's request that their daughter be re-scanned rather than patted down was refused and they criticized the process, saying it qualified as groping and contradicted values that parents should be teaching their children.

The video is [available here](#).

Perhaps the worst part of this entire affair is that the "TSA said that the female employee who administered the pat-down followed protocol." That hardly sounds like the "paranoia" that "evoke[s] fear of an oppressive government," as Gerson claims. And, despite Gerson's belittling of the intrusion, Anna Drexel was actually groped by an agent of the government of the United States, and no one should be so callous as to make light of that fact.

Tying Senator Paul to his father, Ron, Gerson also turns his wry pen on the pair's attempts to expose the dealing of what Gerson sarcastically calls the "secretive, sinister Federal Reserve."

Here again, Gerson lets his agenda get in the way of his journalistic integrity.



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It is true that both father and son have introduced legislation to audit the Federal Reserve and force the central bank to account to the people's representatives for its monetary policies that have sped this nation toward the brink of a financial abyss.

They aren't alone, however. The [Federal Reserve Transparency Act](#) offered by Rand Paul in the Senate is cosponsored by 24 of his colleagues. Representative Paul Broun (R-Ga.) has proposed a [companion measure in the House](#) and that bill has 124 cosponsors. Bills with such broad support seem hardly the work of a couple of paranoid kooks, as Gerson implies.

Again, let's turn away from personality and look to policy. Does the Federal Reserve deserve scrutiny?

First, the unelected governors of the unconstitutional central bank have an absolute stranglehold and monopoly over the flow of our nation's money and credit. Not once since its inception in 1913 has there ever been a thorough audit or an accounting to Congress about its activities.

During its century-long reign over the financial well-being of our country, the Federal Reserve has manipulated our currency until it is nearly worthless. Meanwhile Congress turns a blind eye and a deaf ear to the crisis and the calls to control it.

The fact is that since that day in 1913, the dollar has lost over 95 percent of its purchasing power. Most, if not all, of this precipitous decline was caused by the mindless monetary policy of the Federal Reserve.

The United States of America has been driven to the very edge of a devastating fiscal cliff by the folly of the Federal Reserve and the abdication of its authority by an impotent Congress. Together, these factors add up to \$14 trillion in ill-conceived loans and federal bailouts and a crushing [national debt of over \\$16 trillion](#).

Adding insult to injury, [during testimony to Congress in 2009](#), Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke refused to reveal to committee members the names of the institutions that received trillions of dollars from the Fed. Later, he told our elected representatives that he would not disclose the identity of the foreign banks that were parties to sweetheart deals with the Federal Reserve.

Finally, Gerson saves most of his mockery for Senator Paul's attempt to draw attention to the drone war and the Obama administration's failure to provide justification for the summary execution of thousands in Yemen, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and elsewhere: Additionally, Paul warned, "I have allowed the president to pick his political appointees, but I will not sit quietly and let him shred the Constitution."

Gerson cares less for the Constitution and the facts than for displaying a middling level of comedic talent and an acerbic advancing of his pro-administration agenda.

For although Gerson makes several incorrect claims about the standard for drone strikes set out in the Justice Department "white paper," the fear that an American without any demonstrable association with al-Qaeda or any other allegedly terroristic organization can be killed in a flash of light by Hellfire missiles is real.

Gerson says that "offing a noncombatant at a Starbucks in Pittsburgh is not an option" for the president. He likely used this silly scenario as a feint because he knows very well that offing a 16-year-old American noncombatant while at a picnic with his family is an option — one the president chose and Gerson chose to ignore.

As he sat enjoying a roadside picnic in Yemen with a few second cousins and their friends — most of whom the young Colorado native had never met before that day — Abdulrahman al-Awlaki and all his companions were killed by two Hellfire missiles fired from a Predator drone.



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The finger that pressed the button launching the lethal ordnance was American, and so was the teenage target of that strike.

Fortunately for those “paleoconservatives” who recognize that the events described above are real and really disturbing, Gerson’s article is too sarcastic by half and relies on mockery more than analysis.

Not surprisingly, Rand Paul is better able to explain his “true worldview” than Michael Gerson (despite the latter’s misplaced confidence in his own abilities). In [a letter to the Washington Post](#) published a couple of days before Gerson’s, Paul declared his allegiance and his agenda:

I wanted to sound an alarm bell from coast to coast. I wanted everybody to know that our Constitution is precious and that no American should be [killed by a drone](#) without first being charged with a crime. As Americans, we have fought long and hard for the Bill of Rights. The idea that no person shall be held without due process, and that no person shall be held for a capital offense without being indicted, is a founding American principle and a basic right.

Adding, “I believe the support I received this past week shows that Americans are looking for someone to really stand up and fight for them. And I’m prepared to do just that.”

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