



Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on March 19, 2010

GOP Bigwigs Resort to Lies to Stop Rand Paul

The Establishment neo-conservative wing of the Republican Party has a problem in Kentucky: Their anointed U.S. Senate candidate, Kentucky Secretary of State Trey Grayson, is losing. According to a March 7 SurveyUSA poll, Dr. Rand Paul would defeat Grayson 42-27 percent if the May 18 primary were held now. "Paul, an eye surgeon, political activist, and son of Texas Republican Congressman Ron Paul, is ahead among all demographic groups and in all parts of the state," SurveyUSA reported.



So Grayson and establishment Republicans have come up with a solution to bolster their lackluster campaign: Lie about Paul.

Grayson's [latest television ad](#) touts "facts" about Rand Paul that are patent lies, and a little more than a cursory [look at Grayson's websites](#) reveals them to be obvious lies. Grayson's television ad states:

We shouldn't put our security at risk by "cutting what we're doing militarily" or by releasing terrorists held at Guantanamo back into battle against our troops in Afghanistan as my opponent has advocated.

A related [YouTube.com video](#) posted by the Grayson campaign claims that Rand Paul wants to "wants to close Guantanamo, release terrorists." The video then quotes Dr. Paul out of context claiming that he would do the following to hardened terrorists held at Guantanamo:

Yeah, that's a tough one. I don't know what you do with them. I think they should mostly be sent back to their country of origin. Or to tell you the truth I'd drop them back off into battle. If you're not going to convict them, and you can't convict them, and you're unclear, drop 'em off back into Afghanistan, it'll take them awhile to get back over here.

Grayson [says](#) this is proof that Paul advocates "releasing the terrorists held there back into battle against our troops." It would indeed be troubling if Dr. Paul favored setting hardened terrorists free to attack American soldiers in the field. Despite the fact that the above was a completely accurate quote, it was a lie because Paul wasn't talking about terrorists at all. Rather, he was talking about innocent people held at Guantanamo. The very next sentences (ironically, also posted in small type at Grayson's website) of Dr. Paul's words in [the very same radio interview](#) explain the context:

It's complicated though. I read something the other day, of 779 people at Gitmo, 90% were captured by foreign fighters, not by us. So some of them are turned in, you know, Afghanistan has had rival warlord for hundreds of years. One guy was a governor, and was under Karzai, and he was a fan of the U.S. He's now in Gitmo he's been there for a couple years, but he was turned in by a rival clan who said he was corrupt and working for the Taliban.

Because Grayson's campaign website included the entire context of the quote — albeit in small type and not in the video — he can't claim to be ignorant of the fact that Dr. Paul was talking about innocents



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rather than terrorists. Thus, his statement that Paul advocates “releasing the terrorists held there back into battle against our troops” is a bold-faced lie. In the latter half of the quote, Dr. Paul was specifically referring to the ground-breaking work by [Seton Hall Law School Professor Mark Denbeaux](#), whose use of U.S. government public releases on Guantanamo detainees disproved [claims by Vice President Dick Cheney](#) the Guantanamo detainees “are people we picked up on the battlefield primarily in Afghanistan. They’re terrorists.”

But Denbeaux proved — using the U.S. government’s own statistics — that [more than 90 percent were not picked up by U.S. or coalition forces on the battlefield](#). (He also has exploded the inflated [myths about the numbers of those released who have “returned to the fight,”](#) noting that the Bush administration regarded three innocent British detainees who were released as having returned to the battlefield because they subsequently granted an [interview to a British documentary team](#).) Many detainees have indeed been proven to be innocent, such as the [17 Uighurs of China](#), [Maher Arar](#), [Khalid el-Masri](#), [Omar Deghayes](#), the [Tipton Three](#) and [others](#).

The real questions in the Kentucky Senate campaign are: Why is Trey Grayson lying about Dr. Rand Paul? Moreover, why is Grayson criticizing Rand Paul for suggesting that innocent people should be released from prison? What kind of human being would object to releasing innocent detainees who, our intelligence agencies concluded, are cases of mistaken identity? Does Grayson really believe innocents should be imprisoned?

The motivation behind the smear is a drive by neo-conservatives to put a stake in the heart of the Tea Party movement. According to a [March 17 article on Politico.com](#), a Rand Paul primary victory “would represent the first true electoral success of the tea party movement. Equally important, it would embarrass Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, whose political organization is running Grayson’s campaign, thrust onto the national stage a Republican with foreign policy views out of the conservative mainstream and, strategists in both parties believe, imperil the GOP’s hold on the seat now held by retiring Sen. Jim Bunning.”

As a result, neocons are calling out the big guns to try to defeat Dr. Rand Paul. “Recognizing the threat, a well-connected former aide to Vice President Dick Cheney convened a conference call last week between Grayson and a group of leading national security conservatives to sound the alarm about Paul,” Politico [added](#). That aide is former Vice President Dick Cheney’s Domestic Policy Advisor [Cesar Conda](#), founder of the lobbyist firm Navigators Global LLC and a lifelong Washington, D.C., beltway insider.

Grayson’s latest atrocity against the truth is fitting a nasty new pattern in the demeanor in the campaign. While Rand Paul has taken a principled, [issue-based campaign](#) and avoided name-calling, [Grayson’s website](#) focuses upon [ad hominem attacks on Paul for obscure statements by a former campaign staffer](#) and tries to paint Dr. Rand Paul as an out-of-stater. The [Grayson website](#) even touts the fact that Dr. Paul attended the prestigious — but out-of-state — Duke Medical School in a campaign bumper sticker “Defeat Duke: Vote Grayson.” (Note: [Grayson’s undergraduate degree is from Harvard University](#), in Massachusetts.)

The Grayson website emphasizes that much of Rand Paul’s campaign contributions come from small out-of-state donors. But Grayson fails to mention that his campaign has been funded by [\\$250,000 in political action committee special interest money](#), or that most of his fundraising has been organized by Washington, D.C. insiders.

The Grayson campaign’s current key initiative seems to be that Rand Paul is not electable and would



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not be an effective legislator in Washington, bolstered by the following Rand Paul quote repeated on the [“Rand Paul: Strange Ideas” website](#) funded by the Grayson campaign:

I personally have made the pledge that I will not vote for any budget that’s not balanced, Republican or Democrat. Some people say, that’s impractical, you won’t be an effective legislator. I don’t want to be an effective legislator.

Politico [explains](#) a related issue: “Establishment Republicans have also begun pressing an electability message, making the case that a Paul primary win could hand the Democrats the seat in November.” But such arguments should fall on deaf ears, as neoconservatives have had their way with the Republican primaries in the last two disastrous electoral cycles for the party. Moreover, Dr. Rand Paul’s moderate views on some issues — on many issues he leans libertarian — will have substantial appeal to Democrats and independents in a general election in contrast to a down-the-line, rubber-stamp GOP candidate like Grayson.

Photo of Dr. Rand Paul: AP Images



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