



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on July 2, 2013

Is Rand Paul Pandering for Political Gain?

Senator Rand Paul (R-Ky.) is actively seeking co-plaintiffs in a class action suit he plans to file against the National Security Agency (NSA).

In a [press conference held earlier this month](#), Paul explained the central charge in his complaint:

The fourth amendment states clearly that warrants must be specific to the person and the place. A court order that allows the government to obtain a billion records a day and does not name an individual target is clearly beyond the scope of the fourth amendment. So far we have over 250,000 people who have signed up to challenge the constitutionality of the generalized warrants. If anyone with a cellphone wants to be part of the lawsuit they should go to [RandPac.com](#).



Today, anyone looking up [RandPac.com](#) will be presented with [a pop-up offering the opportunity to join the lawsuit](#).

Paul is not new to the defense of the Fourth Amendment. Since arriving in the Senate in 2011, the son of former congressman Ron Paul, has made a habit of championing the Constitution and challenging violations of that document.

Something that is new to the senator, however, is campaigning for president. If the reports are to be believed, though, he will soon become very familiar with the rigors of running that particular gauntlet.

During a recent appearance at a Republican event in West Columbia, South Carolina, Paul demonstrated a deftness that should serve him well come 2015.

Part of the presidential pas de deux that Paul will need to perfect before officially putting his name on the ballot for 2016 is distinguishing himself from his famous father without alienating the elder Paul's legions of faithful followers.

[On July 29, the Daily Beast reported](#) on Paul's speech in the Palmetto State. The political blog played up the distinctions between Ron and Rand. In the story, the Daily Beast said the "undertones" of the address were "unmistakable" and that Paul's primary point was to declare to the 100 GOP activists in attendance: "Rest assured: I'm not my father."

Of course, Senator Paul said no such thing. What is unmistakable is that the overtone of the Daily Beast article is meant to create a chasm between son and sire — a chasm that doesn't exist.

Consider this sample paragraph from the piece:



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Paul is well-aware of his dad's reputation in the Palmetto State. Former Rep. Ron Paul barely competed in the 2012 primary here largely because his isolationist worldview was deemed a non-starter in a place home to eight military bases. In order to be competitive here three years from now, Rand knows he needs to vanquish Ron's long shadow.

The Daily Beast claims that "gone were Paul's barbs about the IRS, his musings about diversifying the party and his lengthy critique of the immigration bill that's dominated Congress for the first half of the year. Even his standard line of attack against Hillary Clinton was subdued."

Logically, then, the Daily Beast is asserting that burdensome taxes, the conversion of the IRS into a political torture device, and Hillary Clinton's failure to protect U.S. diplomats and servicemen serving at the Benghazi, Libya, consulate would not play well in a state renown for its long history of military service.

Yet, the Daily Beast reports, Paul "earned audible accolades for his call to sever foreign aid to hostile countries."

Has such a call not been a plank in the Ron Paul platform for decades?

"We rarely seem to hear the view of those who support the US side and US interests. I am on that side. I believe that we can no longer police the world. We can no longer bribe the Israelis and Palestinians to continue an endless "peace process" that goes nowhere. It is not in our interest to hector the Palestinians or the Israelis, or to "export" democracy to the region but reject it when people vote the 'wrong' way," [Ron Paul wrote in 2011](#).

If Rand Paul were trying to run from his libertarian leanings, standing up for 13 hours in the Senate and demanding due process for those being targeted in the U.S. drone war is probably not the way to do it.

And, the fact is, that during his speech in South Carolina, Rand Paul didn't pander or pretend he favors cutting defense spending.

"People say, you're not going to go to South Carolina and talk about waste in the military, are you? There's waste everywhere. Anybody's ever been in the military knows there's waste. Doesn't mean I'm against national defense. National defense is the most important thing we spend money on," Paul explained.

The author of the Daily Beast piece is not convinced. David Catanese claims that Paul's speech in South Carolina exposes a potential weakness that can be exploited by rivals in 2016. The flaw, Catanese says, is that "Paul has morphed into a panderer, all too willing to tweak his positioning in the pursuit of politics."

What the Daily Beast seems not to understand is that when it comes to delivering the message of constitutional conservatism, focusing is not the same as faking.

In not one of the excerpts of Paul's speech reprinted in the Daily Beast piece does Rand Paul retreat from any of his policy positions — even the most libertarian ones.

For example, the blog post tries to distinguish Paul's South Carolina talking points from those delivered in early primary states, Iowa and New Hampshire.

In May, Paul began the 2016 tour with [an appearance at a Lincoln Day dinner in Cedar Rapids, Iowa](#).

Throwing substantial slabs of red meat to the GOP activists gathered to hear the senator, Paul took aim at an easy target: Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Speaking of the Benghazi terrorist attack that



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resulted in the death of four Americans, Paul said, “First question to Hillary Clinton: Where in the hell were the Marines?” Paul’s pillorying of Clinton demonstrates an impressive political savvy. A [new Quinnipiac poll](#) shows Clinton leading Iowa voters by a narrow 46-42 percent margin.

Regarding a potential Clinton-Paul contest in 2016, [Quinnipiac reports](#): “In general Sen. Paul appears to be the better GOP candidate at this point in Iowa. Part of the reason may be the publicity from his recent high-profile visit to the state, but more likely is that he begins with a solid base of support — the folks who voted for his father in the 2008 and 2012 caucuses.”

First-in-the-nation primary state New Hampshire was the second stop on Paul’s tour to soften the beach for a White House invasion in 2016. As with Iowa, Paul can likely count on his father’s supporters in the Granite State as well. The senator seemed to recognize this, claiming, “We’ve had a lot of friends up here for years.”

Curiously, CNN accuses Senator Paul of trying to ride his father’s coattails. [CNN reckons](#) that the friends referenced in Paul’s New Hampshire statement “are likely the libertarian minded activists who backed his father’s campaign for president — many of whom attended the fundraiser.” In 2012, Paul’s iconic father — Ron Paul — finished second behind eventual Republican nominee Mitt Romney in the GOP New Hampshire primary, garnering [nearly 57,000 votes or 22.89 percent of the total votes cast.](#)

The bottom line is Rand Paul is not his father, never claimed to be his father, and voters shouldn’t expect him to be. Regardless, there will always be platoons in the Ron Paul army that are on the verge of not only deserting the Rand Paul camp, but of trying him for treason.

One unapproved comment, one word of perceived partisanship, one hint of straying from the Ron Paul party line and this group charges Senator Paul with neocon sympathies and calls for his head on a silver charger.

Rand Paul isn’t flying under false colors. He is a self-described “constitutional conservative” who has a record to run on, and it’s a record that holds undeniable appeal to a burgeoning battalion of Americans tired of a president and a Congress determined to race toward tyranny.

There’s no denying, however, that those who prefer their presidents “progressive” will print anything that will paint Paul as an apple that has fallen far from the tree.

In [a statement to The New American in May](#), Senator Paul said he will not make a decision on 2016 until sometime in 2014.

Photo is of Rand Paul with Major General Campbell

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