



Rand Paul Explains His Support for Romney

Following the announcement last Thursday by Senator Rand Paul that he was endorsing former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney as the Republican Party's nominee for President, he took time to respond to critics of that decision [in an interview](#) with Peter Schiff. Said Rand: "Supporting the [Republican] nominee has been part of my [effort] to have influence.... If Republicans see that you are not going to support the nominee, then doors close."



Rand's strategy is much more political than ideological. He feels that he can do business with and make binding agreements with parties with whom he has major disagreements but those agreements can only be made if he is allowed "inside."

That may be a very good strategy, according to Bob Akimbo, [writing at the DailyPaul.com blog](#):

Let's learn a lesson from the Trojan War. We can bang on the walls of the Federal Reserve until our fists bleed, but it will be a ... lot easier if someone opens the door for us from the inside...

His endorsement of Romney gives him the political capital to put those issues [he favors] front and center.... Did you see that opportunity three years ago?

There is a strong element of pragmatism in Paul's endorsement of Romney. In responding to his critics Paul told Schiff, "People say that 'you're selling your soul.' No, I'm supporting the party that I belong to, in order to try to work within the party to get things [done] that I believe in." But he added that an endorsement of an individual with whom he has major disagreements doesn't mean that he's somehow sold out to that individual:

An endorsement doesn't change any of [my] philosophy....

There are areas of agreement.... People want to characterize everybody as either being good or evil.... There are definitely things in between.

This is Paul's backhanded way of saying that he got some "quid pro quo" out of his [30-minute meeting](#) with Romney before making his announcement last week. Rand said that, based on that conversation, Romney [will now support](#) auditing of the Federal Reserve, that he will oppose the SOPA legislation threatening Internet privacy, that he will allow construction of the Keystone XL Pipeline, and that he would sign the REINS Act that would require the Congress to vote on major pieces of regulations drawn up by government agencies.

Paul's decision was also based on political reality. By failing to endorse Romney, Paul would put into jeopardy the chairmanships of several state Republican parties. He explained:

We've won the chairmanship of several parties now. Iowa, Nevada and I think Maine. We have a large control of the ... party. Many of the rules of the party are that you can't be chairman and not endorse the nominee of the party. So do we want to give up those chairmanships?

If we give up those chairmanships and don't stay part of the party then everything my dad has



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on June 14, 2012

done, all of the thankless hours and days that he has traveled for 2007, 2008, 2011 and 2012, all of those hours will be for naught.

We are actually in a position where we have significant power within the party, and the Romney campaign and everybody else realizes that we are going to be a force to be reckoned with...

Paul is also clearly looking to 2016 when his Senate term ends, just in time for a run for the presidency:

When I ran for the Senate [in 2010] I made a promise that I would support the nominee [whoever he was]. This was ... necessary because my father had not supported the nominee in 2008, and one of the campaign tactics [used] against me was: "your dad didn't support the nominee, and if you won't [then] we don't want you in our party."

If he runs in 2016 that can't be used against him.

But Paul is running big risks of alienating precisely those supporters who have propelled him onto the national scene. As the press release from Libertarian Party headquarters [noted](#):

It's what Rand Paul did *not* say that Mitt Romney will support that tells us what we really need to know.

He did *not* say that Mitt Romney would cut federal spending.

He did *not* say that Mitt Romney would never raise taxes.

He did *not* say that Mitt Romney would end Obamacare.

He did *not* say that Mitt Romney would bring the troops home from Afghanistan.

As Joe Wolverton [pointed out](#) in *The New American* on Friday, "It seems unlikely that a politician as savvy as Rand Paul ... would ever take the loyalty of [his supporters] for granted.... The millions of Americans who considered his father the last great hope for the restoration of the Republic ... are, at the end of the day, not soldiers in the Ron Paul Battalion, but are in fact an army in the cause of liberty and the Constitution." If those soldiers perceive Rand Paul as just another politician seeking his own end, they will scatter to the wind and that great cause will suffer a mighty blow. Surely Rand Paul knows that but is willing to take the risk.

Photo of Rand Paul: AP Images



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