

LIBERTY PLEDGE

NEWSLETTER

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April 2015

Rand Paul: The 2016 hopeful is redefining himself

By J. Wilson

Excerpted from *Politico*

Published on April 9, 2015

... The senator is using his presidential campaign kickoff tour this week, including a Thursday afternoon speech at the U.S.S. Yorktown aircraft carrier in Charleston, to present himself as a kinder and gentler version of his father, long the movement's standard-bearer, while also showcasing a scaled-back, sanded-down form of libertarianism that's more palatable to the Republican rank-and-file.

There's no talk from the Kentuckian about ending the Federal Reserve, no quoting Friedrich Hayek and no laments about how the U.S. deserves a share of blame for terrorism – all hallmarks of Ron Paul presidential campaign rallies. Doom-and-gloom has been replaced by sunny optimism; the language of revolution has been supplanted by something that sounds a lot more incremental and a lot less edgy.

... [T]hose who identify with the Libertarian Party, have a word for Paul: sellout.

... Gary Johnson, the Libertarian Party presidential nominee in 2012, chastises the younger Paul for supporting a budget that includes sizable increases in military spending and for cozying up to evangelicals. Paul continues to personally oppose gay marriage and does not call for the legalization of marijuana.

"He is running as a Republican," said Johnson. "If he were libertarian, he'd be running as a libertarian."

Johnson, who served two terms as New Mexico's Republican governor, briefly joined the GOP field in 2011 before leaving to accept the Libertarian Party's nomination. He won 1.2 million votes in the general election, or 1 percent of the popular vote. He said he hopes to run for president again in 2016, partly to offer a contrast to Paul.

"If you Wikipedia classical liberal, that's what most Americans are and that's certainly what libertarians are all about," he said by cell phone as he walked between meetings in New York City. "If I do [run again], it's still a ways away...I would like to do it, but no timetable at this point."

Several ... libertarians mused about what they viewed as the staleness of Paul's presidential stump speech: calls for term limits, a constitutional amendment to require a balanced budget and a law requiring senators to read bills before they vote on them.

... Brian Doherty, a senior editor at the libertarian magazine Reason ... [and] author of the book "Ron Paul's

Revolution," ... said Rand, unlike his father, does not want to get burdened with theoretical debates about what happens when his philosophy is applied in full. "He doesn't want moments like that," the editor said. "I think that's the root of the prickliness...If you're a typical party hack of whatever sort, everyone understands you're just a politician ... No one expects intellectual coherence from you."

Asked in an interview Tuesday why he talked about conservatives and liberals but did not mention the word "libertarian" in his kickoff speech, Paul said "labels can be all-consuming sometimes."

"The label that I've chosen more often than not is actually 'constitutional conservative,'" he said. "My favorite are the articles on the Internet that blare: 'Rand Paul is not a libertarian.' Guess what? I'm a Republican, you know? When I describe it, I say 'I'm libertarian-ish,' which means I have *some* libertarian impulses."

Paul still nods to the privacy concerns that animate the libertarian movement – holding up a cell phone in his stump speech and promising to end warrantless wiretapping on day one as president. But he now starts his point about the National Security Agency by declaring, as he did in New Hampshire on Wednesday, "To defend our country, we need to gather intelligence on the enemy."

While his dad called for an end to the war on drugs, Rand merely talks about rolling back the harshest criminal penalties and applying justice equally to people of all races. ...

Former Kentucky Secretary of State Trey Grayson, whom Paul defeated in the 2010 GOP Senate primary, sees an evolution in Paul's style and approach. Rand in 2010 was "not quite as polished, a little more doctrinaire libertarian, a little harder line on issues [and] definitely more of a dove on foreign affairs than he is now."

"He doesn't have that same sort of hard edge," said Grayson, who had the backing of Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell in that race. "It'll be interesting to see if he can pull off this fusion."

Last year, Rand happily embraced his role as one of the GOP's most sought-after surrogates. At the request of party leaders, he went to several Senate battlegrounds to campaign for the Republican nominee — with a focus on places where a third-party libertarian was polling well enough to play the role of spoiler. He cut several ads for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, which endorsed Grayson over him in 2010.

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Rand Paul Will Break Libertarian Hearts, Just Like Reagan Did

By Jeet Heer

From *The New Republic*

Published on April 6, 2015

For Senator Rand Paul, winning the Republican presidential nomination will involve a delicate balancing act of keeping faith with his libertarian roots while also appealing to the broader conservative base of the party. On issues like the war on drugs and government surveillance, Paul has articulated strongly anti-statist positions that are rarely heard from either party. Yet to be a plausible Republican presidential candidate, Paul, to the disappointment of many of his more orthodox libertarian followers, is increasingly sounding like a typical conservative, especially on foreign policy.

Paul's conundrum shouldn't surprise us: Libertarians have always been an uneasy fit within the broader Republican coalition. Libertarians claim to have roots in classical liberalism of the early modern era, but only emerged as a salient and self-conscious political movement in the 1930s, as a reaction to the expansion of the welfare state initiated by Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. That didn't make libertarians comfortable Republicans, though. As purist counter-revolutionaries who wanted to roll back FDR's achievements, libertarians all too often found Republicans to be cowardly and unreliable allies. In 1940, Ayn Rand, later famous for her didactic pro-capitalist potboilers, campaigned for Republican candidate Wendell Willkie. The experience was disillusioning for Rand, who concluded that GOP timidity itself was the main hurdle to fighting socialism. "Nobody can defeat us now—except the Republicans!" Rand wrote to a friend in 1943.

Over the next 70 years, Rand's disenchantment with the Republicans would be sounded with dismaying regularity by prominent libertarians, who would often prefer to make common cause with eccentric fringe political formations—including left-wingers—rather than the party of Eisenhower, Nixon, and the Bushes.

The late Murray Rothbard, a towering intellectual and political activist in libertarian circles, was a striking example. During the 1940s, he belonged to New York's Young Republican Club, but during the Cold War he concluded that the GOP's militarism was a betrayal of the traditional anti-war and isolationist principles of the Old Right. During the 1950s, Rothbard preferred Democrat Adlai Stevenson to Eisenhower, and while some other libertarians like Milton Friedman jumped on the Goldwater bandwagon in the early 1960s, Rothbard still distrusted the Republicans. "Goldwater and the Conservative Movement are not only not libertarian, but the preeminent enemies of liberty in our time," Rothbard wrote in 1964 in a letter to a small libertarian magazine called the *Innovator*. "For the Goldwaterites are, first, aggressive and ardent champions of American imperialism and intervention in political affairs all over the globe; and, second and most important, are eager advocates of nuclear war against the Soviet Union." During the heady days of the late 1960s, when he dreamed of a new politics cutting across the traditional left-right spectrum, Rothbard even forged an alliance with the Maoist Progressive Labor Party, preferring them to Nixon's Republicans.

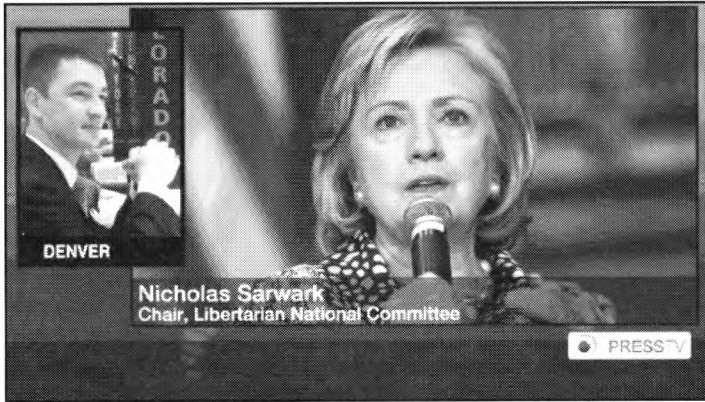
Although Rothbard had a propensity for extremist gestures, he shouldn't be dismissed as a fringe figure, at least not among libertarians. His application of Austrian economic theory to America, formulating a critique of the Federal Reserve as a central source of bad policy, was widely influential, not least on Rand Paul's father, Ron Paul. Moreover, Rothbard's allergic reaction to the Republican Party was widely shared within the libertarian movement, culminating in 1971 with the formation of the Libertarian Party (LP).

The party—founded by David Nolan, an anti-statist advertising man who was disgusted by Nixon's embrace of wage and price control—quickly gained the support of a wide swath of the libertarian movement, including generous subsidies from David and Charles Koch. David Koch was even the LP's vice presidential candidate in 1980. In the 1970s, the Koch Brothers seemed to have shared Rothbard's hope that libertarians forge a partnership with the radical left. In the mid-1970s, Charles Koch made a bid to buy *The Nation* magazine, hoping to use it as a wedge for an opening to left-of-center opinion. When that attempt failed, Koch financed *Inquiry*, a libertarian journal that published many left-wing radicals like Noam Chomsky.

For Rothbard, the mission of the LP was to be a "party of principle," as against the GOP, a party of expediency. This disgruntlement with the GOP remained core to the LP's identity. Andre Marrou, who was the LP's presidential candidate in 1992, despite his checkered history of not making child care support payments, voiced the common consensus when he said in 1991 that Nixon "really disappointed me. He didn't cut government like he said he would—just like Bush and Reagan." After a lifetime of spurning the GOP, Rothbard returned to the Republican fold in 1992, just three years before his death, giving his blessing to George H.W. Bush. Rothbard became a born-again Republican because he saw Pat Buchanan's success in the primaries as proof that there was still a vital anti-establishment wing to the party. Ron Paul, who was deeply swayed by the ideas of Rothbard and his ideological mate Lew Rockwell, made a similar return to the GOP. The Koch Brothers, perhaps out of pragmatism, have also turned their energies toward the Republican Party.

Yet if there has been a Republican turn among libertarians, it is worth remembering that this movement has come from people who don't see the GOP as their ideal vehicle but rather as a necessary evil. Moreover, Rand Paul is not necessarily one of those people. Unlike his father, he didn't leave the Republican Party and return as a blistering libertarian voice. He has always been a Republican, albeit one that spoke with a libertarian lilt, so his current move to the party's center is entirely predictable.

As history shows, the Republicans who most closely echoed libertarian rhetoric often proved the biggest disappointment: "Ronald Reagan raised many libertarians' hopes only to dash them," Brian Doherty notes in his authoritative and enthusiastic history of libertarianism, *Radicals for Capitalism*. While almost all Republican presidential candidates dream of being the next Reagan, Paul is shaping up to be the Gipper Redux in the most disillusioning way possible for libertarians: a politician who stirs hopes that are certain to be dashed.



LNC Chair Nicholas Sarwark on *Press TV*

Transcript from *Press TV*
Published on April 12, 2015

“Hillary Clinton is going to announce that she wants to run for president again.

“This just shows that the old parties still continue to not only offer no solutions to the American people, but they’ll offer no new candidates.

“Hillary Clinton’s run for president before. Her husband’s been president.

“It’s like her Republican opponent will be Jeb Bush, who’s brother of a previous president and son of a previous president.

“Only the Libertarian is going to offer a candidate who’s going to have some fresh ideas about how we can reduce government’s role in your life in order to let you have more freedom over how you live.

“I expect that the Clinton campaign will run on the same issues and the same tired ideas that she ran on when she challenged Barack Obama before.

“And we’re ready to show people that there’s actual freedom as an option on the ballot instead of the same old reboots and retreats.”

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5 Quotes From Libertarian Politicians on Increasing the Federal Minimum Wage

By Jerry Shaw
From *Newsmax*

Published on April 7, 2015

Libertarians try to reduce the role of government in all areas, including economics. Federal minimum wage laws need to be limited, according to these free market politicians in the Libertarian Party and through the libertarian wing of the Republican Party.

These five quotes show how libertarians feel about increasing the federal minimum wage:

1. Ron Paul, a former congressman from Texas, has run for president as a Libertarian and a Republican. He wrote that increasing the minimum wage appeals to those who don't understand economics, but it actually harms lower-income workers, according to *The Washington Times*.

"Raising the minimum wage increases the price of labor, thus decreasing the demand for labor," Paul said. "Unskilled and inexperienced workers are the ones most often deprived of employment opportunities by increases in the minimum wage."

2. Paul's son, Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky, carries on many of his father's

libertarian ideas within the Republican Party. He called the minimum wage "temporary," according to Politico.

The senator said, "It's a chance to get started. I see my son come home with his tips. And he's got cash in his hand and he's proud of himself. I don't want him to stop there. But he's working and he's understanding the value of work. We shouldn't disparage that."

3. Gary Johnson introduced some of his libertarian ideas to the public when he was governor of New Mexico and as the Libertarian Party presidential candidate in 2012.

As the owner of a construction business with 1,000 employees, he did not focus on the minimum wage, he told *The Huffington Post* in a live interview.

"I think the minimum wage is much ado about nothing," he said. "Who ultimately ends up paying for that?"

Instead of risking the loss of jobs for workers and the higher costs for employers, Johnson said, "Let the market place function."

4. Arvin Vohra, vice chair of the Libertarian National Committee, challenged President Obama's call for an increase in the federal minimum

wage during the 2015 State of the Union address.

Vohra maintained that increasing the minimum wage takes away educational opportunities for young workers because the hikes kill jobs.

"Many young people develop responsibility and marketable skills in entry-level, minimum-wage jobs," Vohra said. "Those skills make workers more attractive to future employers."

5. As state chairman of the Republican Liberty Caucus of South Carolina, Daniel Encarnacion challenged the Republican establishment to make a better case against minimum wage increases.

"If it is too politically toxic to explain a slam-dunk economic argument that a higher minimum wage leads to unemployment — something firmly based on the law of supply and demand — then why are we even busy spinning our wheels?" he wrote in his column titled, *Minimum Wage Politics: Challenging the Political Class*.

"If we aren't fighting for principles, then what are we fighting for? Aren't we just all wasting our time? Why donate to and volunteer for a party that is empty and hollow?"

Rand Paul: 2016 hopeful is redefining himself

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The libertarian candidates Paul campaigned against understood why he was doing it.

Sean Haugh, the libertarian nominee for Senate in North Carolina, supported Ron Paul's presidential campaign in 2012. He even briefly registered as a Republican to support delegates aligned with the former Texas congressman at the state convention. Last year, as Haugh polled in the high single digits, Paul traveled to the state to campaign for Republican nominee Thom Tillis, who narrowly beat a Democratic incumbent.

... [S]aid Haugh[,] "I long ago made my peace with the fact that Rand Paul is running for president; that means he'll do and say a lot of things to pander to the base of the Republican Party and pacify the establishment."

Haugh, who ... plans to run for Senate again in 2016 against Republican Sen. Richard Burr, ... would support Gary Johnson

over Rand Paul. ...

In Alaska last year, where Democratic Sen. Mark Begich was running ads to boost Libertarian candidate Mark Fish's vote share, Paul cut competing commercials aimed at getting libertarians to back Republican challenger Dan Sullivan.

... Fish said of Paul this week[,] "[H]e's giving social conservatives a few things to chew on, hoping that libertarians will understand why he's doing that."

Carla Howell, the political director of the national Libertarian Party, thinks Rand might ultimately hurt the cause by "pandering to Republican elitists and special interests."

"The question is: which side will he help more?" asked Howell, the Libertarian nominee against Mitt Romney when he ran for governor of Massachusetts in 2002. "Will he deliver on advancing freedom more? Or will he saddle us with more big government by helping politicians like Mitch McConnell and whoever ends up being the 2016 Republican nominee?"

Kyle Cheney contributed to this report.