



Written by [Wallis W. Wood](#) on August 11, 2013

Please, Governor Christie: Shut Up!

What is it with Republicans anyway? Why, when public sentiment is shifting in their favor, do they form a circular firing squad and begin taking pot shots at each other?

Let's begin the sad survey with New Jersey Governor Chris Christie's needless denunciation of the "dangerous" tilt toward libertarianism represented by Rand Paul, the junior Senator from Kentucky.

Sitting on a panel with other Republican Governors last month, [Christie fired the first shot](#) when he said: "This strain of libertarianism that's going through both parties right now and making big headlines I think is a very dangerous thought."

He went on to say: "I love all these esoteric debates that people are getting in."

Asked if he was referring to Paul, who is often mentioned as a potential rival for the Republican Presidential nomination in 2016, Christie replied, "You can name any number of people who have engaged in it, and he's one of them. I mean these esoteric, intellectual debates."

Christie suggested that anyone who opposes National Security Agency surveillance efforts should talk to the families of those who died in the 9/11 attacks. "I want them to come to New Jersey and sit across from the widows and orphans and have that conversation," he declared. "And they won't. 'Cause that's a lot tougher conversation to have."

Paul responded via Twitter:

Christie worries about the dangers of freedom. I worry about the danger of losing that freedom. Spying without warrants is unconstitutional.

Regarding Christie's comments, Paul told [Newsmax](#): "It's a low blow to anyone to use someone's tragedy."

Could the debate sink any lower? Well, yes, it could. And it did, when Representative Peter King (R-N.Y.) decided to pile on. He declared that his fellow Republican (Paul, not Christie) would have favored a policy of appeasing [Adolf Hitler](#) if he had been in Congress in the years leading up to World War II.

Turns out that both Christie and King are still annoyed at Paul for not agreeing to all of the Federal aid they wanted in the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy. Paul tried to set the record straight on that one.

"I actually supported giving them one year's worth of funding and then offset the spending that we spent on Sandy — offset it with spending cuts with money that we're spending overseas giving to countries that are burning our flag," he told Newsmax.

But the argument over government snooping on our emails and phone calls is just one of the battlegrounds dividing Republicans in Congress. Immigration is another big one. So is the coming battle over raising the debt ceiling.





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But the biggest one right now is on efforts to defund Obamacare.

While no one thinks that the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act can be repealed in the current Congress, Senators Ted Cruz (R-Texas) and Mike Lee (R-Utah) are leading efforts to cut off the money to implement it. Doing that is “the single best opportunity to defeat Obamacare,” Cruz says. And he adds, “The fight we are engaged in in the next 60 days is the most important fight of this Congress.”

Not every conservative agrees with him. Senator Tom Coburn (R-Okla.), who can usually be counted on to support any effort to trim Federal spending, has been outspoken in his opposition to the defunding efforts. He’s called the proposals “hype,” “dishonest” and “impossible.”

“I’m getting phone calls from Oklahoma saying ‘Support Mike Lee,’” Coburn has said. “And I’m ramming right back: Support him in destroying the Republican Party?”

Those are unusually harsh words from the normally mild-mannered Coburn. They earned him some applause from Senator John McCain (R-Ariz.), who once dubbed his libertarian colleagues as a bunch of “wackobirds.” McCain sent out this tweet:

I agree with my friend Dr. Coburn: “Tom Coburn: Campaign to defund Obamacare ‘dishonest,’ ‘hype’”

And Richard Burr (R-N.C.) called the defunding proposal “the dumbest idea I’ve ever heard.”

What’s got them all so upset? It’s the idea that if Congress doesn’t pass a continuing resolution by Oct. 1 to fund the Federal government, the government will have to shut down. And the Democrats have said they won’t approve any measure that doesn’t include money for Obamacare.

Syndicated columnist [Charles Krauthammer](#) has made it clear that he does not agree with the GOP insurgents:

This is nuts. The president will never sign a bill defunding the singular achievement of his presidency. Especially when he has control of the Senate. Especially when, though a narrow 51 percent majority of Americans disapproves of Obamacare, only 36 percent favors repeal. President Obama so knows he’ll win any shutdown showdown that he’s practically goading the Republicans into trying.

Never make a threat on which you are not prepared to deliver. Every fiscal showdown has redounded against the Republicans. The first, in 1995, effectively marked the end of the Gingrich revolution. The latest, last December, led to a last-minute Republican cave that humiliated the GOP and did nothing to stop the tax hike it so strongly opposed.

Karl Rove has also joined the “don’t defund” side of the debate. In his column last week in the [Wall Street Journal](#), the Republican bigwig warned:

For congressional Republicans, the challenge is to keep the upper hand provided by their strategy of passing continuing resolutions at current levels to fund the government. They must not overreach. For it’s an iron law that Republicans get blamed for any government shutdown, no matter who controls the White House or Congress.

So Mr. Obama is baiting Republicans to overplay their hand by forcing a government shutdown or failing to offer a constructive conservative agenda.

Daniel Horowitz, policy director for the Madison Project, is one of many conservatives who disagree. He has called for a [“fight to the death”](#) over this issue:



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We stand today at the precipice of enacting the worst government program ever. We have two choices: we can continue funding Obamacare, only to find ourselves discussing modest tweaks to the law in 10 years from now — not unlike the way we are forced to approach Medicare now. Or we can end the cycle of big government by forcing a fight to the death over this cancer to our country before it takes effect. It is that simple. There are no other options. Anyone who opposes the defund effort before the law takes effect is essentially admitting that Obamacare will become enshrined into the welfare state forever.

Cruz agrees. “If we don’t stand and fight now,” he said, “we never will. If we don’t stand and defund Obamacare today, we are saying we surrender.”

So the battle lines have been drawn. Expect the war of words to escalate dramatically when Congress comes back from its August recess. The pressure to cave will be enormous.

Do you know where your Congressman stands on this issue? If you don’t, this would be a mighty good time to find out. And help stiffen his backbone, if he needs it.

Until next time, keep some powder dry.

Chip Wood was the first news editor of *The Review of the News* and also wrote for *American Opinion*, our two predecessor publications. He is now the geopolitical editor of *Personal Liberty Digest*, where his *Straight Talk* column appears weekly. This article first appeared in [PersonalLiberty.com](#) and has been reprinted with permission.



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