



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on June 20, 2013

Exclusive Interview With Sen. Rand Paul

“If you give up your rights now, don’t expect to get them back.” That was the warning issued on March 6 by Senator Rand Paul (R-Ky.) during his epic almost-13-hour filibuster of the nomination of John Brennan as head of the CIA.

When asked during his marathon monologue how long he planned to carry on, Paul responded with an inspiring pledge to

 speak as long as it takes, until the alarm is sounded from coast to coast that our Constitution is important, that your rights to trial by jury are precious, that no American should be killed by a drone on American soil without first being charged with a crime, without first being found to be guilty by a court.



His aggressive, unapologetic counterattack against Democrats and those within his own party who seem willing to sacrifice guaranteed liberty for theoretical safety has forced Senator Paul many times to stand alone in the quest to keep America from promoting and perpetuating foreign conflicts around the world.

Whether it is foreign policy or domestic policy, Paul wants to walk a constitutional path. In fact, from the president’s use of drones to subtract names from his infamous kill list to the National Security Agency’s (NSA) tapping of phones and the Internet without probable cause as required by the Fourth Amendment, Senator Paul has been the vanguard of the war on the war on terror.

Although the interview reported in this article occurred before the revelations regarding the NSA’s wholesale surveillance of millions of American phone records, just before press time, on June 9, Senator Paul appeared on Fox News Sunday and proposed filing a class action lawsuit challenging the Obama administration’s unconstitutional surveillance programs.

“I’m going to be seeing if I can challenge this at the Supreme Court level,” Paul said, according to a rush transcript posted by the *Washington Post*. “I’m going to be asking all the Internet providers and all of the phone companies, ask your customers to join me in a class action lawsuit. If we get 10 million Americans saying we don’t want our phone records looked at, then somebody will wake up and say things will change in Washington.”

Some of the senator’s other attempts to force the federal government back inside its constitutional cage include his Fourth Amendment Restoration Act, which aims to guarantee that the constitutional protections of the Fourth Amendment are not violated by any government entity; the Separation of Powers and Second Amendment Restoration Act; and the Preserving Freedom from Unwarranted Surveillance Act. At press time, none of these bills have more than two cosponsors. Lone wolf libertarianism is something that runs in the family.



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Paul, the son of libertarian icon Ron Paul, shares with his father a unique blend of non-partisan constitutionalism with the fearless facing off with the leadership of the GOP. Rightfully so, Senator Paul is adamant about reaffirming his independence of thought and distinguishing himself from his father. In fairness, they do have many differences, but they have many very admirable traits in common, as well.

Very soon, Senator Paul is likely to be able to check one more box in the list of accomplishments he shares with his father — that of candidate for president. Although he has not formally announced his intention to run for president, visits to Iowa and New Hampshire combined with his own refusal to deny a 2016 run for the White House have made many accept his presidential plans as a near certainty.

One thing Senator Paul does not have in common with other presidential candidates — even the self-described “conservatives” — is his frankness. While he possesses an undeniable political savvy that some say will serve him well in the construction of a winning coalition in 2016, one does not get the sense in talking to Senator Paul that he’s performing presidential verbal gymnastics that so many others have perfected.

In a wide-ranging telephone interview with constitutional attorney Joe Wolverton of *The New American* held on May 21, Senator Paul demonstrated this forthright demeanor, speaking plainly and purposefully on issues affecting his own future and the future of freedom in this Republic.

The New American: *Just 10 days after making an appearance in Iowa, you spoke to a sold-out Republican event in New Hampshire. This seems like a softening of the beach for a 2016 campaign to win the White House. Do you think you can do more for the cause of liberty by being president than by being a senator?*

Senator Rand Paul: For about 100 years now, power has been moving toward the executive branch. That trend is mostly bad, but a different kind of president could use executive orders to undo some of the bad that’s been done.

TNA: *That sounds like a very active executive.*

Senator Paul: A more active executive, staying within constitutional bounds, could push back against Congress and work to save money and restore fiscal restraints. Calvin Coolidge, for example, was known to look at every line item in a budget bill before he decided whether to sign or veto it. That’s a good example of an active executive and a good pattern for a president to follow.

TNA: *Speaking of the president, the current occupant of the White House has presided over one scandal after another, each more constitutionally offensive than the last: Benghazi, the IRS, Associated Press wiretaps, etc. Do you think more scandals will come, and will they rise to the level impeachment?*

Senator Paul: This administration is the Old MacDonald’s Farm of scandals: Here a scandal, there a scandal, everywhere a scandal. Before we talk about impeachment, there are many people who need to be held accountable. Has anyone been fired at the State Department? No. The people responsible still have their jobs. And with the IRS scandal, the power to audit has become a political weapon. Nobody wants a government where the taxing authority is used politically.

TNA: *What about the call to impeach the president?*

Senator Paul: We have to take it one step at a time and look at all the steps and process who is responsible and hold them accountable.

TNA: *At the Republican Party event in Concord, New Hampshire, on May 20, you said that the “main*



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thing” for the Republican Party to focus on is growing the party. How do you do that without sacrificing key principles of small government?

Senator Paul: People have to know that you like and care about them. If you show up in their venues — Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and historically black colleges, for example — those groups will appreciate it. You have to show up and you have to show that you care. Then you can ask for their vote. The working class and seniors should know that they have a place in the Republican Party.

TNA: *You criticized the so-called Gang of Eight’s immigration bill for not being strong enough to garner the support of conservatives. How would a Rand Paul immigration bill improve on the one offered by Marco Rubio and the rest of his group?*

Senator Paul: First, I believe we have to do something. Our work visa program does not work; we need to improve it. We never got the border security we were promised in the 1980s [as called for in the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, passed during the Reagan administration], and the Rubio bill won’t deliver that either. Rubio’s bill calls for a plan and a commission to consider border security. That isn’t doing enough to secure the border. My amendment will call for a “trust but verify” situation. It will require Congress to vote every year on whether the border is being adequately secured. If Congress votes that the border is not secure, then we’ll stop any future immigration reform and the visa program will be slowed down. My amendment would call for a more secure border and will prevent implementation of any national ID card program.

TNA: *Your colleagues in the Senate recently voted to send money and military materiel to the Syrian opposition forces fighting against the government of Bashar al-Assad. Given that the rebel forces are led by known agents of al-Qaeda and that the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) allows for the indefinite detention of anyone — including American citizens — who “substantially supported al-Qaeda, the Taliban, or associated forces,” why have these lawmakers not been detained?*

Senator Paul: You think we should indefinitely detain the entire Senate?

TNA: *Yes, at least every one of them that voted to arm al-Qaeda in Syria. The law must apply to Congress as well as to the citizens they represent.*

Senator Paul: I tried to make the point that there is a remarkable irony in the fact that [in] the original Authorization for Military Force (AUMF) in 2001, Congress authorized the military to go after al-Qaeda; now they have voted to arm them. We already have trouble with a similar program in Afghanistan. Enemies of America will lie and then shoot Americans in the back. In Syria, the rebels will do the same thing. They will say, “I love America” so that they will get a weapon. They will then use those weapons against the very people [the United States] who gave them to them. The irony is that the U.S. is now on the same side as al-Qaeda. We should remember that we were responsible for arming radical Islamists in the 1980s.

TNA: *You’ve been called a libertarian, a conservative, a Tea Party Republican, a Republican liberal, and even a closet neo-conservative. Which of these labels would you use to describe yourself?*

Senator Paul: I don’t really like to be labeled but if I had to use one to describe myself I would call me a constitutional conservative.

TNA: *With that in mind, let me ask you about something very important to many who would describe themselves with that same label. As the federal government continues to consolidate all power into Washington, D.C., and infringe upon our most basic liberties and the Constitution that protects them,*



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states are beginning to pass laws that prevent the enforcement of unconstitutional federal acts within the states' sovereign borders. This response to federal overreach is called nullification. What do you think of the nullification movement?

Senator Paul: I don't like the word nullification because of some of the historical connotation with relation to slavery. There was, though, a Wisconsin law that nullified the federal Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 where runaway slaves were not sent back to the South, so the history is not all bad. I am a big believer in the Ninth and 10th Amendments, though. I firmly believe that those rights not specifically granted to the federal government in the Constitution are left to the states and to the people. I am also in favor of an expansive role for the states in the protection of liberty.

TNA: *Last question, senator. Would you like to announce right now that you will seek the Republican Party's nomination for president in 2016?*

Senator Paul: Not right now. I will continue considering it, but I will not make a decision until sometime in 2014.

— Photo: AP Images

This article appears under the title "Rand Paul Remarks" in the July 1, 2013 print issue of The New American. It is an example of the exclusive content that's available only in our print magazine. Twice a month get in-depth features covering the political gamut: education, candidate profiles, immigration, healthcare, foreign policy, guns, etc. [Digital as well as print options are available!](#)



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