



Is Rand Paul's Romney Endorsement "Trivial" and "Meaningless"?

Is Ron Paul about to endorse Mitt Romney?
Would it mean anything if he does?

These are questions that are being bandied about in conservative, libertarian, and constitutionalist circles in the wake of Senator Rand Paul's endorsement last week of the Republican Party's "presumptive nominee."

[As I reported the day of Senator Paul's announcement](#), the son of Ron Paul told Sean Hannity that his "first choice had always been [his] father," Senator Paul then went on to say that now that the nominating process is over he would be campaigning for former Governor of Massachusetts Mitt Romney.

As shocking as it may be to some to read that a member of the Paul family believes that the nominating process is over and that Romney is the Republican candidate, that wasn't the end of the story.

Almost simultaneously, Congressman Ron Paul (R-Texas) said nearly the same thing in an email to supporters and in an address to the Texas State Republican Convention.

"When it is all said and done, we will likely have as many as 500 supporters as delegates on the convention floor," the libertarian-leaning icon said in his email.

"That is just over 20 percent! And while this total is not enough to win the nomination, it puts us in a tremendous position to grow our movement and shape the future of the GOP," he continued.

Then, in reference to the hundreds of delegates chosen at the various state party conventions to represent their states at the national convention, Ron Paul said, "[We] will send several hundred additional supporters to Tampa who, while bound to Romney, believe in our ideas of liberty, constitutional government, and a common-sense foreign policy."

Finally, the elder Paul encouraged his legion of devoted followers to "let the establishment know that we are the future of the Party and of the country."

[The backlash — primarily aimed at Senator Rand Paul](#) — came swiftly. [Facebook pages were created](#) denouncing the Senator's endorsement, Twitter was buzzing with cries of "sellout" and "traitor," and perhaps most telling of all, blog posts began appearing on Ron Paul's official campaign website reminding readers of other such endorsements by other heroes of the Right, calling them "trivial" and



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meaning “nothing in the grand scheme.”

For example, [one blog post mentions that “libertarian founding father” Murray Rothbard endorsed the candidacy of George H.W. Bush](#) in 1992. Rothbard, the blogger argues, did not abandon his libertarian principles by the “mere act of endorsing [President George H.W. Bush].”

Furthermore, [with regard to Rand](#)’s decision (and possibly Ron Paul’s support of Mitt Romney), “any endorsements made or not made are done with our movement’s goals and efforts within the GOP in mind, whether some understand this or not,” the blogger explains with more than a hint of hubris.

In [a separate blog entry](#) on the Ron Paul campaign website, the writer again reminds readers that there’s nothing in an endorsement by pointing to Ron Paul’s previous support for Republican Representatives John Boehner (Ohio), Dennis Hastert (Illinois), and Newt Gingrich (Georgia) for speaker of the House. The publication of this roster of endorsements represents nothing more than an attempt to get the legion of Ron Paul devotees off Rand’s back by pointing out that the elder Paul has done the same thing in the past. Innocence by association.

The problem is that this defensive posture does nothing to assuage those occupying the more libertarian wing of the Republican Party and it brings up an important question: If endorsements mean nothing and are trivial, why make them at all? Does Mitt Romney need Rand Paul’s help (or Ron Paul’s for that matter) in securing the GOP presidential nomination? No. The very fact that Ron Paul’s popularity and accumulation of delegates is irrelevant to the nominating process reveals all one need know about the governance of the GOP and who rules the Republican roost.

Bloggers (including one writing for [RonPaul2012.com](#)) and [Rand Paul himself](#) insist that his endorsement may help the liberty movement by granting it greater access to the inside. That by “not isolating the Republican Establishment” that same Establishment will reward men like Ron and Rand Paul with positions of power.

There are two problems with that defense. First, the quest for power is of itself a violation of libertarian principles. Libertarians and other friends of liberty do not seek for power, but to bring that power down. They don’t want to see those occupying the seats of influence to be replaced by themselves, they want those seats broken up and burned on the altar of liberty, limited government, and constitutional integrity.

Second, by its very definition, the Establishment will not allow anyone whose philosophy is contradictory to their own to participate in the process. The ruling elites in both major political parties are committed to growing government, perpetuating foreign wars, and diminishing the sphere of personal liberty and state sovereignty. It is inconceivable and laughable that anyone who understands the goings-on in Washington would genuinely be so gullible as to think the wolves want to mingle with the sheep for any reason other than to eat them.

While bloggers remind readers of Ron Paul’s past promotions of other candidates, there is something else to consider that might be more instructive — Ron Paul’s refusal to throw his support behind the GOP’s nominee. As Peter Grier of the [Christian Science Monitor reports](#):

[A] Ron Paul endorsement of Romney would be out of step with much of Paul’s past behavior. He famously refused to endorse Sen. John McCain in 2008, and bolted the party entirely in 1987, running as a third party candidate on the Libertarian ticket.

Did Ron Paul’s refusal to endorse McCain and Bush Senior mean nothing, as well? Or, as is more likely



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the case, was Ron Paul sending a message to the Republican Party that their ways were not his ways and that he would rather depart from them rather than have his name attached to their policies — albeit tacitly? One cannot have it both ways: endorsements are either trivial and meaningless or they are purposeful and powerful messages designed to reinforce the enshrinement of principle over party.

Whether or not Ron Paul ever uses the word “endorse” with regard to Mitt Romney is immaterial. Those who have given time and treasure to the cause espoused and led for so long by the Texas congressman are unlikely to follow anyone attempting to lead them into the GOP’s “big tent.” These devoted freedom fighters recognize that they will be given no greater status than that of a side show in the circus that is Establishment politics.



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