



Does Rand Paul Even Understand What “Isolationism” Is?

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Ron and Rand Paul have complained about being wrongly dubbed “isolationists” even though that name arguably fits whatever passes for their foreign policy.

Now Rand Paul has decided that opponents of bailing out the Castro regime are isolationists. All this proves is that Rand Paul doesn’t know what an isolationist is.

“I think a policy of isolationism toward Cuba is misplaced and hasn’t worked,” Paul writes in Time Magazine.

Isolationism is a policy that the United States would adopt toward the larger world. An embargo on an enemy state in response to its actions against the United States is not isolationism.

Rand Paul is trying to talk about foreign policy using terms he doesn’t understand. That’s a problem for a guy who wants to run for president based on a foreign policy that he seems to make up as he goes along.

“I support engagement, diplomacy, and trade with Cuba, China, Vietnam, and many countries with less than stellar human rights records, because I believe that once enslaved people taste freedom and see the products of capitalism they will become hungry for freedom themselves,” Paul writes.

How one might ask, has that worked out in China?

But Rand Paul doesn’t think through the implications of his arguments. Like Obama he delivers smug one-liners and expects the media to tag along. Except it doesn’t work that way for Republicans.

“Communism can’t survive the captivating allure of capitalism. Let’s overwhelm the Castro regime with iPhones, iPads, American cars, and American ingenuity,” Paul writes.

But the Communist Party is still in charge in China. And our iPhones and iPads are made in China. So are a whole lot of our products.

Rand Paul is arguing against a Cold War policy using outdated Cold War arguments that even a child who reads a Made in China label can poke apart.

It's embarrassing to watch.

"Trade and relations also make it less likely that we ever go to war with China, because the two countries have become economically intertwined," Paul writes.

Paul ought to tell that to China which is building up its military and keeps threatening to go to war with us. But as usual, Rand Paul isn't hobbled by the existence of such petty things as 'facts' and 'reality'.

"After 50 years of embargo and no evidence of tyranny losing its grip, maybe it's time for a new approach," Paul writes.

Except there was actually plenty of evidence of it. But Rand Paul doesn't actually pay attention to foreign policy. He makes cynical arguments based on his political calculations. He has no idea what's going on in Cuba or China and doesn't care.

Then whatever machine powers Rand Paul begins glitching and this happens...

Doug Bandow, of the CATO Institute writes that proponents of the embargo have it all wrong when they make the fear mongering claim that diplomacy with Cuba will make America less safe. Bandow argues that "America has engaged in years of on-and-off discussions with North Korea's Kim dynasty stretching back to the Clinton administration. Under President Obama Washington has been negotiating with Iran's government for months: most people recognize that a diplomatic settlement, no matter how difficult to achieve, would be better than war."

I don't see an argument there that shows that negotiating with North Korea and Iran doesn't make America less safe. The negotiations allowed North Korea to go nuclear. The current negotiations with Iran are doing the same thing.

Whoever writes Rand Paul's speeches just got bored and began cutting and pasting gibberish from CATO into his articles.

The diplomatic settlement being better than war is a classic Obama argument. It's also meaningless. A diplomatic settlement is only better than war when it's a real possibility. When it isn't, it leads to war on worse terms. See Munich.

"For 70 years we had diplomatic relations with Russia, despite the gulags, despite the atrocities of Stalin and others," Rand Paul argues.

He seems unaware that opening diplomatic relations with the USSR was controversial, done by a Democrat and led to disastrous results. Like his China argument, it only really shows that Rand Paul knows very little about history.

“Let’s hope cooler heads will ultimately prevail and we unleash a trade tsunami that washes the Castros once and for all into the sea,” Paul concludes.

I hope the intern he didn’t pay to write that had a good time coming up with that line. In the real world, the trade tsunami will keep the Castros in power. Just as it did the Chinese Community Party.