

Slate

Ron Paul Biographer: Campaign Shift is "Utter Idiocy"

By David Weigel

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"I'm angry beyond belief," said Brian Doherty.

We were at the offices of Reason magazine* in Washington, in the high-ceiling library, on Monday night. Doherty, a senior editor of the magazine, was schlepping his new book: *Ron Paul's Revolution*. He spent more than a year writing and reporting a biography of the candidate and his movement. The release date had arrived. And then Paul's campaign put out a statement announcing the end of active primary campaigning, something that the political press -- led by Matt Drudge -- reported as the de facto end of the race.

"I can't think of any explanation that makes sense, so I assume some conspiratorial explanation I'm dreading the conversations I'm going to have with people next week," said Doherty. "They were announcing what they were already doing. Why did they make a big deal out of it? If it's not part of a secret deal with Romney, it's merely utter idiocy."

Doherty excused himself to speak to the larger libertarian crowd. Reason's editor, Matt Welch, led off with the big question.

"How does it feel that Ron Paul kneecapped your book today?" asked Welch.

"He sort of did the same thing for a better reason in 2008," said Doherty, "but this is an extremely un-propitious time for me and my book -- and I would say, for him and his people, his followers. The news about Ron Paul today, if he hadn't done this, would have been that his supporters raised ruckuses in a number of conventions... the racking-up-of-delegates thing, which he'd been doing well with, had been the story about Ron Paul. They made the story about something else today. I wish they hadn't done it."

Today, Paul's campaign will hold a conference call to explain the decision -- always a sign that something's going smoothly. Doherty will keep selling the book, leading off with an event at the Cato Institute.

"Rand Paul will be there," said Doherty at the Reason offices, "if he still feels like facing a public audience."

*I worked at the magazine for two and a half years and remain a contributing editor.