

Stewart and Rand Paul - One Significant difference:

Senator Rand Paul is a brave proponent of Liberty. I would have voted for his father had I been a Republican in the 2012 primary, and I have a high regard for Rand's positions now. According to "project vote-smart" he and I share positions 88% of the time. A significant difference between Senator Paul and I is his reverence for privacy.

In theory, I share Rand's desire for government and suborned-by-government private firms to stay out of my data. It would be nice if government agencies would not listen into your phone conversations, if private companies would not track your internet use against your will, and if the combination of government + private would not trace the people you contact.

But the genie is out of the bottle. We can't go back to non-tracing. If government sets laws against this, some companies will follow, but others will see enough profit in clandestine record-gathering that they will flout the law. And still others, based internationally, will track and hack without regard to consequences. A bright young eastern European IT guy can be paid \$500,000 from a Russian mobster who will use the information to steal millions.

The solution: *recognize that your conversations, emails, and internet visits can be known.*

Even better: presume they WILL be known, and made public.

The Fourth Amendment forces the federal government to keep Citizens "secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures". Phone transmissions, emails, and internet browsing fall into none of these secure categories.

Nor should they. This Amendment was meant to assure that the rough tactics of the King's magistrates could not be done by our new federal government. In jolly olde England, these included night-time raids, beatings, and theft of innocent people's possessions. Today's searches of our records are dainty and un-intrusive. The citizen usually doesn't even know it's happening.

Also, back in the day, the searches our Framers complained of were largely about political speech. Today, the searches our government needs are to protect us not against political ideas, but against terrorists proposing murder. In the rare cases when a conspirator was plotting an overthrow of an English ruler, it had to be done with large militias. Today, all it takes is single wayward actor, learning how to mix available chemicals, to kill hundreds of civilians. (Timothy McVeigh's Oklahoma City bomb was made of fertilizer, diesel fuel, and other chemicals).

I have a simple solution to our privacy qualms:

Don't do bad stuff.

Think about it. Concern over exposes of cheating your business partner goes away if YOU DON'T CHEAT him. Concern that you will be rooted out for underpaying you employee goes away if you DON'T UNDERPAY her. If you're gonna do bad stuff, be thoughtful enough to

not speak or write about it. That thought itself goes a long way toward stopping you from doing it again. Thus publicity leads to personal betterment. Private lets bad actions continue more readily.

My four word prescription "don't do bad stuff" deserves a definition: bad stuff is that which harms outsiders. If the public will stop considering private peccadillos "bad", then privacy is not needed as much. Viewing "naughty" movies, getting intoxicated, ingesting drugs harms at most yourself. Visiting a prostitute harms at most one person, the wife. So if publicity comes with our not holding private habits at "bad", we have nothing to fear