



Time Magazine's Michael Grunwald has an interesting new piece out which examines "Why Ron Paul scares the GOP." Well worth a read:

Under Bush's leadership, of course, the Republican Party has been anything but frugal and anything but isolationist. The congressional Republican revolutionaries seemed to lose their zeal for shrinking the federal government once they controlled it, which is one reason voters expelled them from power in 2006. And these days, it's usually Democrats who call for a humbler foreign policy. Paul's leave-us-alone libertarianism hasn't fit in with a party anxious to read our e-mail, improve our values, assert American power abroad and subsidize friendly industries at home. The party's recent mix of "national greatness" neoconservatives, evangelical theoconservatives and K Street careerists has had many goals, but leaving people alone hasn't been one of them. That's why Paul was the one getting booed at G.O.P. debates. And that's one reason why Paul's fervent followers were banned from the activist Republican website RedState.

In fairness, though, another reason RedState's directors got tired of the Paulistas was that so many of them seemed "what's the polite word?" nuts. Paul's supporters aren't all black-helicopter paranoiacs, but the black-helicopter paranoiacs sure do support Ron Paul. The controversy over a few racist articles in his old newsletters was probably overblown; there's no evidence that Paul himself was ever a racist. But he is an extremist "partly in the Barry Goldwater extremism-in-defense-of-liberty-is-no-vice sense of the word, but also in the wacky let's-relitigate-the-currency-debates-of-the-1820s sense of the word. The late William F. Buckley wanted conservatives to stand athwart history yelling stop; Paul seems to want to slam history into reverse. The guy genuinely wants to abolish the Federal Reserve and start circulating gold again.

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