

Rand Paul: End Killing of Americans Without Trial

April 28—On April 23, Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) submitted testimony to the Senate Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Human Rights, chaired by Sen. Richard Durbin (D-Ill.). Paul, who held a 13-hour filibuster on the drone question March 6, temporarily blocking the nomination of CIA Director John Brennan, expanded the issue beyond killing Americans on American soil. In his testimony, Paul said, “even overseas, even traitors deserve some due process if they are American citizens. . . .”

In his written statement, Paul said:

“We now know that the President has a kill list, which has already included American citizens, such as terror suspect Anwar al-Awlaki. But particularly if they are not actively involved in combat. If he was actively engaged in combat against our soldiers, there would’ve been no question you take him out. But he was riding in a vehicle nowhere near American troops when he was killed.

“My preference would be that we try Americans

accused of aiding and abetting terrorism as traitors. But if they don’t return, or won’t return, try them in absentia. The Constitution makes clear that treason is a federal crime.

“We should also remember this was the same man who was invited to dine at the Pentagon just months after 9/11. Could the same people whose judgment we trusted to invite al-Awlaki to wine and dine in Washington, also be mistaken in their judgment in their decision to assassinate him? We will never know, because this American citizen never received any trial or due process.”

In his April 23 testimony, Paul also quoted members of the military community who have “argued that our current drone program makes the nation less safe and undermines our national security.” He said:

“Kirk Lippold, Commander of the *USS Cole*, which as we all know, was attacked by al-Qaeda in 2000, said recently of our drone policy: ‘This president, in my opinion, has fundamentally undermined our ability to defend this nation by killing terrorists rather than capturing them. . . . I think ultimately the drone program is setting us up for failure because for each high-level terrorist you kill, that is a high-level intelligence asset that is no longer available to exploit.’”