



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on May 28, 2011

Herman Cain Joins the Ranks of the Constitutionally Confused

During a rousing [speech](#) chastising “those that are not going to read” the Constitution, the GOP hopeful made another revelatory gaffe. This misstatement must have been particularly embarrassing given the timing. First, it occurred during the first of many speeches he’ll give as a candidate for President. Second, it was part of a longer statement on the need to “enforce the Constitution” and how those not reading the Constitution are causing us to not “go by the Constitution.” Finally, Cain, a long-shot candidate at best, has sought to portray himself as a staunch constitutionalist.



Here are Cain’s exact words:

We don’t need to rewrite the Constitution of the United States, we need to reread the Constitution and enforce the Constitution. We don't need to rewrite, let's reread. And I know that there are some people that are not going to do that, so for the benefit of those that are not going to read it because they don’t want us to go by the Constitution, there’s a little section in there that talks about life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.... When you get to the part about life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, don't stop right there, keep reading. Because that’s when it says when any form of government becomes destructive of those ideals, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it.

Every constitutionalist (and everyone who has already done as Cain suggests and "reread the Constitution") knows that “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” are three of the unalienable rights listed by Thomas Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence, and appear nowhere in the Constitution.

Perhaps Mr. Cain, the former CEO of Godfather’s Pizza, got himself into this difficult dilemma because he violated the the rule of speaking only about what you know. Apart from selling deep dish, what does Herman Cain know best?

One thing he knows plenty about as a former insider is the Federal Reserve. Cain became a member of the board of directors to the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City in 1992 and served as its chairman from January 1995 to August 1996, when he resigned to become active in national politics.

This association places Cain in an awkward position with his reported “Tea Party” supporters. Although he [shuns](#) the “Tea Party” label, his affinity for (mis)quoting the Constitution and preaching the limited government gospel attracts many disciples from that congregation.

Bailouts, although not included among the enumerated powers granted to Congress in the Constitution, was something [supported](#) by Herman Cain. Cain agreed with the passage of the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) bank bailouts as a way to save the economy. The former Fed board member believed



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that the bailouts were a good investment in the future.

In a 2008 editorial, Cain wrote, "Owning a part of the major banks in America is not a bad thing. We could make a profit while solving a problem." In May 2011, Cain [addressed](#) his advocacy of the TARP expenditures, saying, "I don't have any regrets.... I studied the situation. I didn't have trouble with the idea; I had trouble with its implementation, picking winners and losers."

For those of a constitutional bent who may be tempted to throw their support behind Cain's candidacy, his [opposition](#) to auditing the Federal Reserve should also be of particular interest. Cain stated that an audit of the Fed was "unnecessary," and he has suggested that if Americans want to know anything about the workings of the unconstitutional central bank, they should contact one of the Fed's "PR people."

When asked if he favored Congressman Ron Paul's position that the Federal Reserve should be abolished, Cain [mused](#), "What would you replace it with?" That's likely an honest question coming from one who doesn't know the difference between the Constitution and the Declaration.

In fairness, it isn't just Herman Cain who can't keep the core principles of the Constitution straight in his head.

Before he became Speaker of the House, Congressman John Boehner (R-Ohio) [stood](#) on the steps of the Capitol Building and, while waving a copy of the Constitution in his hand, incorrectly quoted that document, proclaiming that he was "stand[ing] with the Founding Fathers, who said, 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, and that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.' "

Again, those words were written by Thomas Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence — though it is in some way laudable that so many elected representatives would deign at all to attempt to cite the Founding Fathers in any way, given their incorrigible habit of legislatively ignoring our founding documents altogether.

Sadly, another politician touted by the media (and sadder still, by many of the Tea Party activists themselves) recently demonstrated her inexcusable unfamiliarity with the simplest events of American history. During a speech she gave at an event organized by the Republican Liberty Caucus of New Hampshire, Representative Michele Bachmann (R-Minn.) declared: "You're the state where the shot was heard around the world at Lexington and Concord." The statement is an unfortunate mistake, since the battles at Lexington and Concord — where the "shot heard 'round the world" was fired — were fought in Massachusetts, about 70 miles south of the venue where Bachmann was speaking.

While many of us make such errors daily, Representative Bachmann's gaffe is doubly embarrassing as she is the very vocal leader of the House Tea Party Caucus and often adopts the patois of the Revolutionary War in her speeches and public appearances.

How should Patriots and friends of constitutional liberty and limited government react to these all-too-frequent missteps on the part of those courting their support and suffrage? We should learn that the answers to our problems, including the salvation of our grand republic, is not to be found exclusively in Washington, D.C. Most of those wanting to wear the robes of public office and seeking to relocate to the Potomac are not modern-day Moseses, leading the faithful to the Promised Land on the other side of that river.

That said, we are fortunate that there are men like Ron and Rand Paul representing their constituents



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faithfully. Sadly, however, such patriotism and unerring devotion to the Constitution are uncommon among their colleagues and those who would become such.

Just as the road to serfdom runs through Washington, the road to freedom runs through the state capitals of the fifty sovereign states, all of whom have the natural and irrefutable right to resist the imposition of tyrannical laws and mandates made by the would-be plutocrats in the nation's capital.

Photo: Herman Cain

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