

Herman Cain's Problem is Herman Cain

Written by Dr. Wilmer J. Leon, III
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As GOP presidential hopeful Herman Cain battles charges of sexual harassment from four different women, he has used a number of ploys to defend himself. At the end of the day, whether the issue is sexual harassment, who developed his 9-9-9 Plan, or his limited understanding of foreign policy, the source of Herman Cain's problems is his inability to command the facts. His problems don't stem from the Perry campaign, "unstable women," or the liberal media; Herman Cain's problem is Herman Cain.

As serious as sexual harassment allegations are, Cain's larger problem has been his inability to tell a consistent story about them. His campaign has called the allegations, "unsubstantiated personal attacks." After emphatically denying any knowledge of the allegations, Cain later revealed that he discussed them with his former consultant and current Rick Perry strategist, Kurt Anderson. He then accused Anderson of leaking the initial story. According to Cain, "When I sat down with... Anderson in a private room...we discussed opposition research on me... I told him that there was only one case, one set of charges, one woman while I was at the National Restaurant Association (NRA)." The problem with this story is that Anderson denies ever having had the conversation with Cain, "I didn't know anything about this so it's hard to leak something you don't know anything about."

Cain's modus operandi seems to be that he conjures up an explanation that he believes will work and then finds another when it fails. He denied any knowledge of the NRA reaching financial settlements with his accusers stating, "As far as a settlement, I am unaware of any kind of settlement..." He later stated that the parties may have reached a severance agreement but

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he was not involved in that process. Subsequently, it was disclosed that, "...one of the women involved had received a payout of \$45,000, substantially more than the Republican presidential candidate suggested she had." As the president of the NRA at the time of the allegations and the settlement, it stands to reason that Cain would have been involved in discussions with NRA legal counsel about the legitimacy of the allegations, tactics to address them, and any proposed settlements. When this denial failed, Cain then blamed the Democratic opposition for his woes, "...the Democrat machine in America has brought forth a troubled woman to make false accusations."

Cain has even gone so far as to claim that he never met Sharon Bialek, the only accuser to speak publicly about her experience. Cain's response to Ms. Bialek's allegations was, "I don't even know who this lady is...." Cain's assertion was contradicted by Ms. Bialek's former boyfriend, Victor Jay Zuckerman. Zuckerman recounted an evening that he and Bialek spent with Cain in 1997; "At that party, Mr. Cain engaged both of us in conversation..."

Finally, when all else failed, Cain blamed the "liberal media." This is a play from the McCain/Palin playbook. When Palin could not answer simple questions such as "...what newspapers and magazines did you regularly read..." or misspoke about launching attacks into Pakistan, Palin attacked the "liberal media" and "gotcha' journalism."

As if his inability to get his story straight on sexual harassment allegations is not enough, Herman Cain can't tell the difference between an economist and an accountant. During the Washington Post-Bloomberg debate, Cain credited Rich Lowrie with developing his 9-9-9 Plan calling him "my lead economist". Cain stated, "He is an economist, and he has worked in the business of wealth creation most of his career." Lowrie actually holds a degree in accountancy from Case Western Reserve University, not economics. Some may call this an exaggeration. Others may call it the intentional misrepresentation of a substantial fact for personal gain; better known as a lie.

Some republicans seem to be so attracted to Cain's folksy charm that they seem willing to accept sexual harassment allegations by four different women as "unsubstantiated personal attacks." Some may even dismiss the reported eye witness account of former NRA political consultant Chris Wilson as an aberration. Wilson stated, "...I was around a couple of times when this (harassment) happened...This occurred at a restaurant in Crystal City (Virginia) and everybody was aware of it..." Some may even be able to accept an accountant as an economist, but they should not. They should demand more from a presidential candidate.

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With globalization, the interdependency of international markets, and instability in the Middle East, anyone seeking the office of President of the United States must have a firm grasp of the issues and an informed world view. The inability to pronounce Uzbekistan or stating that you'll defer to the generals on the ground to develop a Middle East strategy is not presidential. The Commander and Chief sets international policy. He does not have it dictated to him/her by the generals that he commands. That's not "leading from behind" that's leading in reverse!

If Herman Cain does not understand that China already possesses nuclear capability (and has for decades), "They've (China) indicated that they're trying to develop nuclear capability..." and has too much "stuff twirling around in his head" to give a succinct answer on Libya, he's not ready for the world stage.

Cain has been placed in a position, whether wittingly or unwittingly, to serve a purpose for the Republican Party. Like Alan Keyes, and Michael Steele before him, he is another "straw man." He is being used to promote a misperception of political inclusion within the Republican Party and should be dismissed as the political minstrel show that he has become.

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