



Mark Meckler Ridicules Those Opposed to Constitutional Convention

Mark Meckler of Citizens for Self-Government has inaugurated a pattern of ridiculing constitutionalists such as [Phyllis Schlafly](#) (shown) and *The New American's* own Joe Wolverton for being skeptical of pushing the nation into a constitutional convention.



In a [column](#) for *American Spectator*, Meckler — a co-founder of Tea Party Patriots — claimed that the staunchly pro-life Schlafly “stands firmly with *Roe v. Wade* justice” simply because she opposed a constitutional convention. “Sadly, Phyllis Schlafly stands almost alone on the fringe of conservatism, with no significant support from legitimate scholars or notable commentators, clutching feebly to a letter written in the 1970s by liberal activist Chief Justice Warren Burger.” The December 16 [column](#) was full of satire implying that because of her opposition to a constitutional convention, Schlafly had become senile in recent years.

More recently, on January 17, Meckler unloaded on *The New American's* Joe Wolverton with “LOL” — laughing out loud — in the title. The column likewise criticized Wolverton’s scholarly skepticism of a constitutional convention with ridicule. While condemning “Joe’s condescending and arrogant attitude,” so-called, toward proponents of a constitutional convention, Meckler engaged in his own condescending remarks. “I’m not sure what else to say about the bizarre and irrational ramblings of Joe Wolverton,” Meckler wrote, putting Wolverton’s law credentials “J.D.” in quotation marks, implying his law degree from Tennessee’s University of Memphis was somehow not legitimate. Meckler then added: “I’ll do my best in this short post to suppress my laughter (but not the mockery).” Meckler’s article was notable in that he failed to argue down a single one of Wolverton’s points; in fact, he didn’t offer any evidence at all that Wolverton was mistaken in his claims.

(The reader can judge whether Wolverton’s initial column was “condescending and arrogant” by reading it [here](#).)

Meckler is not new to this reporter. I met him once at a [Harvard convention I attended in 2011 as a reporter](#) for *The New American* magazine. There I met the organizer of the conference, leftist Harvard Professor Laurence Lessig, who was trying to forge a Left-Right alliance with the Tea Party over the issue of a constitutional amendment to overturn the Supreme Court’s *Citizens United* decision that



Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on February 18, 2014

affirmed corporations as persons with legal rights of freedom of speech. In attendance at Lessig's confab were dozens of leftist groups: the Coffee Party (a Left alternative to the Tea Party), and various Naderite organizations. Mark Meckler attended that conference as a representative and co-founder of the Tea Party Patriots. Also attending Lessig's conference was constitutional convention advocate Nick Dranias of the Goldwater Institute.

Lessig and others on the Left were recently outraged by the *Citizens United* decision that allowed citizens to pool their money and communicate to voters about their elected officials outside the bounds of the leftist, establishment media. In short, the Left is seeking repeal of the First Amendment's freedom of speech and freedom of the press.

I [remember](#) Meckler leaving Lessig's 2011 confab with a statement that he wouldn't be working with Lessig on the issue of corporate personhood. But as it turns out, Meckler apparently became convinced afterward that America should convene a constitutional convention through Article V of the U.S. Constitution, the first since 1787. Meckler now writes for a website called the Convention of the States, which pushes for a balanced budget-tax limitation amendment to the U.S. Constitution through the constitutional convention method. Interestingly, Meckler [named the leftist Harvard Professor Lessig in the column attacking Schlafly](#), labeling him among "the finest constitutional scholars and thinkers in this country."

Perhaps not coincidentally, the [entire nationwide anti-Citizens United coalition has also since come out in favor of going to a constitutional convention](#), but in this case it would be to "repeal corporate personhood." In fairness to Meckler, the Conference of States organizer may be merely citing Lessig as an authority on the possibility of limiting a constitutional convention to a single topic, and not affirming Lessig's attempt to repeal the First Amendment through a constitutional convention.

But *The New American* has [documented](#) that constitutional conventions are unpredictable things, and cannot be limited to a single issue with any certainty.

Photo of Phyllis Schlafly



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