

# Yglesias

## Tim Pawlenty's Doing It Wrong

By **Matthew Yglesias** on May 27, 2011 at 9:59 am

Former Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty continues to be the paper candidate who just can't catch fire. This is often attributed to him being "boring" but Allen McDuffie's reporting on the reaction to his big speech at the libertarian Cato Institute makes it seem like he's actually just a bit of a blunderer:

**"I'm not one who is going to stand before you and tell you we should cut the defense budget,"** Pawlenty said.

**More than one Cato representative called the remarks "disappointing." Cato Executive Vice-President David Boaz said Cato put a copy of a report in Pawlenty's hands that reflects their position on defense spending,** "with the hope we can change his mind." Cato has consistently argued for a severe reduction in military interventions which would, in turn, require fewer service members, less equipment and lower operating costs.



There's nothing surprising about Mr Boring Conventional Conservative not wanting defense cuts. Nor is there anything surprising about the Don't Spend Money On Anything Cato Institute calling for defense cuts. But it's weird for a candidate with his choice of venues to show up at one that disagrees with him in this way and get into a fight. Pawlenty could have spoke at the Heritage Foundation or the American Enterprise Institute or any number of other boring conventional conservative policy outfits to burnish his boring conventional conservative credentials. But McDuffie confirms that "neither think tank had been approached by Pawlenty's offices to host this event, despite reflecting Pawlenty's position on these issues."