

Here's How Carly Fiorina Impacts the Battle for the GOP

Sen. Ted Cruz's announcement that he would choose former Hewlett-Packard CEO Carly Fiorina as his running mate took few by surprise, but it quickly changed the dynamics of the final stages of the Republican presidential nomination.

Gone for Cruz are the convention intrigue, the horse trading and the possibility of stopping Donald Trump by trading the vice president nomination to one of the other candidates with a significant accumulation of delegates, such as Marco Rubio or John Kasich.

In its place is a team that presents a stark contrast to Donald Trump and his flamboyant populism.

Where Trump flip-flops, Cruz and Fiorina project clarity and principle.

Where Trump engages in sophomoric braggadocio, Cruz and Fiorina project maturity.

Where Trump divides, Cruz and Fiorina build coalitions.

And most importantly, where Trump alienates women, cultural conservatives and other segments of the conservative electorate, Cruz and Fiorina unite them.

While the Trump campaign sought to portray Cruz's decision to choose and announce his vice president this far ahead of the Republican National Convention as a move born of desperation, it was anything but.

As Politico's Alex Isenstadt and Katie Glueck reported, "The Cruz campaign deliberated over whether to pick Fiorina for the

last two weeks, according to one person familiar with the move. It has polled the potential ticket, examining it for its prospective strengths and weaknesses.”

Far from a desperate move driven by Donald Trump’s sweep of the Northeast Republican primaries it was a well-calculated move driven by the numbers and the expectation that no candidate will reach the 1,237 majority needed to clinch the nomination on the first ballot.

“I’m not getting to 1,237 delegates, and Donald J. Trump is not getting to 1,237 delegates,” Cruz said, and depending on how he does in California and the continued success of his delegate outreach campaign he is undoubtedly right.

Carly Fiorina for her part wasted no time in going after Donald Trump.

In an email to supporters released immediately after the announcement Fiorina wrote that:

... Donald Trump’s nomination would be a disaster for America.

If Trump is our nominee, conservatives will be forced to choose between two liberals in November: both corrupt, both big government crony capitalists, and both part of the system that has gotten us in the mess we’re in.

Worse, if we nominate Donald Trump, we would be guaranteeing four years of Hillary Clinton in the White House.

In many ways Carly Fiorina is an inspired choice for vice president; she brings to the Cruz campaign a strong resume as an outsider and job creator, and she has proven herself to be both eloquent and scrappy as a candidate and surrogate for Cruz, particularly against Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton.

But the bad news in Senator Cruz’s decision to select Carly Fiorina as his running mate before the Republican National Convention actually opens is that it would appear to preclude

a grand conservative–populist alliance of Trump and Cruz that might permanently break the Washington Cartel’s stranglehold on Congress and the machinery of the Republican National Committee.

By choosing Carly early, Cruz has made the GOP Convention a three-army battle in which Trump’s populists, Cruz’s movement conservatives and the dark forces of the Republican establishment all vie against each other for dominance and the Republican nomination for president and at this point no one can predict which way the battle will turn. {eoa}

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