

In The 2-Man Race There's Only 1 Conservative

After last night's debate, it is now becoming clear that the race for the GOP nomination is a two-horse race. We're down to a choice between Donald Trump and Ted Cruz.

They were the clear winners in last night's debate. The non-scientific, post-debate, online polling (e.g., Drudge Report has it 56-31 Trump over Cruz, The Blaze has it 46-44 Cruz over Trump at the time of writing) shows that Trump and Cruz are in a tier by themselves with everybody else, including Marco Rubio, in single digits.

Rubio had an excellent night—somebody must have told him that the perception of him is that he's weak, and so he came charging out of the chute—but he simply hasn't been able to gain traction. He has slowly been sliding backwards in the polls, and did nothing last night to stop his descent and reverse his direction.

Everyone else is just marking time until they can make a graceful exit. Carson is an enormously likeable and intelligent man, but his persona is simply not a good fit for a presidential campaign. He's just being himself, and kudos to him for not trying to be anything else, but he looks soporific next to higher energy candidates.

Christie was his normal endearingly pugnacious self, but he's hauling around too much moderate baggage to have a serious shot at winning the GOP base. Kasich, like Carson, suffers from presentation disadvantages—his hand gestures and facial contortions get distracting after a while. And no one would mistake him for a conservative. The air will continue to leak out of Jeb's tires until they're all flat.

So we're down to Trump v. Cruz. Trump bested Cruz on their

exchange over New York values, although what everyone passed over was Cruz's clear delineation of what he means by New York values—"socially liberal, pro-abortion, pro-gay marriage, focus around money and the media." Who could possibly argue with that? (Well, the *New York Daily News*, for one, whose screaming cover in this morning's edition is "Drop Dead, Ted." So Cruz has offended New York liberals. And this hurts him how, exactly?)

On the other hand, Cruz delivered a kill shot on the eligibility issue and neutralized the *New York Times* innuendo on the reporting of a senate campaign loan. He did in fact report it on his very public senate disclosure form, and he and his wife Heidi borrowed the money from themselves, against their own assets. It's little different than someone taking out a home equity loan.

The good news now is the field is clearing. Voters can begin to focus on a binary choice, comparing the two candidates side by side.

While no one I know reasonably questions Cruz's conservative bona fides, the same cannot be said with regard to Mr. Trump. Conservative Review, headed by editor Mark Levin, has done yeoman's work in spelling out Trump's positions on a number of key issues, based on his political history. It is not a pretty sight.

On **illegal immigration**, Trump was for it before he was against it, as recently as 2013.

While Cruz and Jeff Sessions were fighting the push for open borders, Trump was supporting the Dream Act, telling a group of illegal aliens, "You have convinced me."

Even after declaring for the presidency, Trump spoke what amounts to gibberish on the issue. He said (emphasis mine),

"We're going to do something. I've been giving it so much

thought, you know you have a—**on a humanitarian basis**, you have a lot of deep thought going into this, believe me. I actually have a big heart. ... I mean, a lot of people don't understand that, but **the DREAMers, it's a tough situation, we're going to do something, and one of the things we're going to do is expedite—when somebody's terrific, we want them back here, but they have to be legally.**"

Trump's overall plan is to deport everybody, but then immediately bring them back in and make them legal in the process. That's what we call amnesty. Lawbreakers will be rewarded by instantly being granted legal status after enduring the inconvenience of a bus ride to the border.

Trump's plan makes almost no sense. He wants us to go the trouble to round up all 12-20 million illegals who are here, deport them all from the country, and then immediately bring back all the non-criminal deportees and make them fully legal. If that's the approach, it makes much more sense to just deport criminal illegal aliens and then legalize the rest, which is a Marco-Rubio-"Gang of Eight" type approach but hardly a conservative one.

In August of 2013, after the Gang of Eight bill had been voted on, Trump said, "[I]t's too early to say" what parts of the bill he liked.

He was for **Syrian refugees** before he was against them. In September, with regard to the Syrians, he said, "On a humanitarian basis of what's happening you have to." A day later he started to reverse course. "We should be very careful." Then he abruptly began calling for an all-out ban on Muslim immigration (which I personally support, and have since 2009). We know where he stands today, but who knows what tomorrow holds?

Trump has nothing but admiration for **Mitch McConnell**. While conservatives were trying to replace him in the GOP primary

with red-to-the-bone conservative Matt Bevin, Trump was propping McConnell up. "It would be a shame if he didn't win."

Trump seems to have little appreciation for the danger to American liberty, especially to religious liberty, posed by a hyperactivist **federal judiciary**. While Rowan County clerk Kim Davis was languishing in a jail cell for being a Christian, Trump said, "We had a ruling from the Supreme Court and **we are a country of laws** and you have to do what the Supreme Court ultimately, whether you like the decision or not, and it was a 5-4 decision, whether you like the decision or not, you have to go along with the Supreme Court. That's the way it is."

He seems to have no appreciation for the constitutional fact that the Supreme Court cannot in fact make law, since according to Article I, Section 1 "all legislative powers" are vested in Congress, leaving absolutely none for the Supreme Court. It couldn't make something "the law of the land" even if it wanted to, at least according to the Constitution given us by the Founders. Shouldn't we at least insist that a Republican president taking an oath to uphold and defend the Constitution have some idea of what's in it?

Trump also criticized Antonin Scalia for Scalia's opposition to affirmative action. Trump accused Scalia of being "very tough" on the black community. Affirmative action is nothing but thinly disguised racism, granting special favors and privileges to some solely on account of the color of their skin. That's what Martin Luther King Jr. fought *against* all of his life.

On **abortion**, he thinks his radical leftist sister, who now sits on the Third Circuit Court of Appeals, would make a "phenomenal" Supreme Court justice, even though she is a judicial defender of the practice of partially delivering a baby, sticking a fork in the back of its head, sucking out its brains, and crushing its skull before yanking the rest of its

lifeless body out of the birth canal.

On **guns**, he has been a past supporter of a ban on assault weapons, even putting that position in his book, *The America We Deserve*. "I support the ban on assault weapons," he said. An "assault weapon," of course, is just an ordinary rifle gussied up to look more menacing than it actually is. Does he still want to ban rifles? We need to know.

On **health care**, he has been an ardent supporter of a single-payer plan, à la Bernie Sanders, and to my knowledge has yet to repudiate the idea.

On **homosexuality**, he is dangerously indifferent. While he claims to be for "traditional marriage," he told Thomas Roberts of *MSNBC* last November that his position is "evolving."

He's changed party affiliation four times, and was a Democrat as recently as 2009. Most of the money he has donated over his public life has gone to card-carrying liberals. He openly admits he used his money in the past to buy influence with politicians. This is what the Bible quaintly calls bribery.

Outside of his current position on a border security wall and temporarily suspending Muslim immigration, it's hard to find a single position which would make one think Donald Trump is a conservative.

We're about to exit the polling stage of the campaign and get down to the only polls that count, the ones where people actually vote. "Caveat emptor" is Latin for "buyer beware." I don't know what "voter beware" would be in Latin, but whatever it is, conservatives ought to heed it with regard to Donald Trump. {eo}

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