

It Wasn't Easy, but Donald Trump Won Me Over

I have to admit, when I saw the headline "*Donald Trump goes it alone*" I was taken aback.

My first thought was, *why?* Why would the Republican presidential nominee have to "go it alone?"

W. James Antle III of the *Washington Examiner* expands on his headline, "Trump cannot count on Republican leaders to defend him during controversies or amplify his criticisms of the Democrats the way Clinton can count on her party. He cannot rely on the conservative media, which is often as critical of him as the liberal media. Commentators across the political spectrum are rooting for him to lose badly. ...

"To reunify the party, the man who claims he can make America win again must prove that his campaign can win again. And he'll have to do it all by himself."

Let's start with the premise that I didn't vote for Trump in the Virginia primary. I also spent the last half of 2015 openly wondering how anyone could or would support him as the Republican presidential nominee. In the first four months of this year, I cheered Ted Cruz's victories and fervently advocated for the rest of the Republican field to get out so Cruz could face Trump one-on-one and beat him.

I was depressed and rather shocked when Cruz uttered the words "I have decided to suspend my campaign" after the Indiana primary on May 3.

It was like the feeling you get the morning after the team you've lived and died with over the course of a 162-game Major League Baseball season loses in the bottom of the ninth in the seventh game of the World Series. I briefly considered

withdrawing from politics altogether or joining with the #NeverTrump movement and abstaining from this year's election.

But then reality struck. Donald Trump was going to be the Republican nominee and Hillary Clinton was in good shape to be the leader for the Democrats. One or the other is going to be celebrating on Election Day in November. Now isn't the time to sit it out.

The decision to support Trump wasn't all that difficult. After re-examining his issue positions, it became clear he isn't that far apart from any of the other Republican nominees of the recent past—and he was actually much improved in other areas, such as immigration and some aspects of his foreign policy vision.

Trump is a bit of an oddball, for sure. He's got a personality that's bigger than life, one that turns off an awful lot of people. The "ordinary folks" I've spoken with who don't like him are passionate in their opinions on the man. Snowshoes will be mandatory in hell before some of these people will change their minds.

I don't agree with them. And I don't agree with the Republican officials who are now treating Trump like he's some sort of contagious disease that needs to be quarantined—and muzzled.

Republicans and conservatives should be rallying around Trump for more than mere disgust at the opposition too, though there's plenty not to like about Hillary Rodham Clinton. She's the very embodiment of everything that's wrong with American government. She believes in income redistribution, punishing taxation and a social agenda that's about as far removed from tradition as you're going to get.

Her list of negatives goes on and on. Vote for her, and you get another Obama-like extra-constitutional dictator who will ignore the feckless Republican Congress and rule by executive fiat. She'll appoint administration personnel who will impose

their special interest agendas on the American public. And she'll place several proven liberals on the Supreme Court.

America as we know it (or knew it) will cease to be if she's elected.

But more than that, Donald Trump deserves support from Republicans and conservatives because the American People are looking for someone who's different. Trump may have real political skills, but he's not a politician. He brings a businessman's perspective to government. If something's broken, he'll fix it, or at least try.

Listen to his speeches—at least the organized ones with the teleprompter—and you'll realize he approaches problems predominantly from a pragmatic standpoint. He's willing to frame issues in ways people understand and use language that's direct and to the point. Trump sees terrorist attacks being perpetrated by radical Muslims. He, therefore, won't be suggesting that the police start looking for the next possible murderer in an Amish meeting hall.

Some solutions are black and white. They may not be politically correct, but America can use a little practical know-how to get the government pointed back in the right direction.

Despite Antle's claims above, there are a few signs Trump's detractors are coming around. Nick Gass of Politico reports on one such person, "A week after Hugh Hewitt called on the Republican National Committee to change its convention rules if Donald Trump could not change himself, the conservative radio host has signaled that he is back on board supporting the party's presumptive nominee. ...

"What changed his mind? Trump's speeches on Friday and Monday, addressing religious liberty at the Faith & Freedom Coalition conference and responding to the Orlando, Florida, attack, respectively. Hewitt wrote that Trump 'has returned to a

winning message and walled off the assorted 'never Trump' holdouts trying to upend his nomination.'"

Good for Hewitt. He has the guts to reverse himself and announce it publicly.

It's not an easy thing to do. Because of my 100 percent commitment to Ted Cruz during the primaries, it still feels a little strange to advocate so strongly for Trump. But I honestly believe that despite the many blemishes on the Donald, he can be worked with to set a new and positive course for the country. And I say this because he's chiefly a practical person.

He's also patriotic. As a golfer, I've been to a couple of Trump's golf clubs and was surprised to see a huge American flag flying over the 18th hole at each of them (and he did this long before running for president). The flag is never out of place in any setting, but most golf club owners don't position it in such a prominent place. You know what that tells me? Donald Trump loves America. He may be a little nutty about his persona and celebrity, but there's a patriotism there that isn't found on the other side of the aisle.

He won't go on a worldwide apology tour. He'll advocate for the country's best interests at all times. He'll be a president that people can feel good about, even if they have reservations about Trump the man.

And if he loses, don't blame the Democrats. It will be because the Republican establishment failed to get behind him and support him when they had the chance. Period. They'd rather lose with a stiff plastic candidate like Mitt Romney or Jeb Bush than try to win with Trump because he won't kneel and kiss their ring.

For those who say Trump will destroy the Republican Party if elected and, therefore, can't support him, then maybe the party needs to be destroyed. The voters chose him. Now it's

time to get behind him and help him win.