

Should Conservatives Support Donald Trump if He Wins?

In the final installment of our series on what conservatives should do if Donald Trump wins the nomination, we look at a final scenario and offer our recommendation on whether conservatives should join Trump or the Republican establishment at the Republican National Convention.

Scenario No. 4: If Trump gets to 1,237 delegates, should movement conservatives join Trump in a unified conservative-populist ticket?

We remain convinced that Sen. Ted Cruz is the best candidate in the race and the most likely to govern and lead America according to limited government constitutional conservative principles.

However, as the evidence mounts that the goal of the Republican establishment is to create so much chaos in Donald Trump and Ted Cruz advance of the Republican National Convention that no candidate has a first ballot majority at the Convention, we think it is time for conservatives to consider all the alternatives, including what we should do if Donald Trump is leading at the Convention.

While it is clear Donald Trump is no movement conservative, he is not necessarily an enemy of conservative policies, as we know Hillary Clinton and many establishment Republicans to be.

Indeed, Trump's record of flip-flops and turn-on-a-dime policy changes tells us that more often than not Trump likes to go with the winner and that on many issues that concern conservatives he is either ignorant or indifferent.

So, on one side of the scale are principles and values, particularly the principles and values of our fellow cultural

conservatives, and our desire to have leaders and elected officials who respect and live those values and principles.

On the other side is the white-hot anger of millions of grass-roots, limited-government constitutional conservatives and conservative leaning populists who are not only angry with the leadership of the establishment Republican Party, but disappointed and frustrated with many leaders of the conservative movement as well.

The millions of disenfranchised country class voters who have been turning out for Trump look at the Republican establishment and see enemies who have been complicit in—if not the actual authors of—the three-decade-long destruction of their quality of life.

But they have not found relief through many of Washington's conservative leaders, some of whom have often failed to even try to fight the government policies that have contributed to the degradation of our culture that is enforced by political correctness, the vast increase in the spending and the reach of the federal government and the hijacking of middle class prosperity by crony government policies on trade and immigration.

Don't get us wrong—Donald Trump's lack of interest in many elements of the cultural conservative agenda is no small thing—that's why we prefer Ted Cruz over Trump.

But when faced with a choice between Trump's lack of interest versus the deep and abiding hostility of Hillary Clinton, and the betrayals and lies of the Republican establishment, Trump's indifference to much of the conservative agenda would leave us with a candidate who, unlike John McCain and Mitt Romney, might at least be educable.

Country class Americans are now tired of politicians and conservative movement leaders who lecture them about the Constitution, but who do nothing to fight crime, improve

education, prevent Islam from being taught in their schools, control the borders or encourage domestic economic growth.

The country class wants change and an end to the misrule of politically correct elites who are indifferent to their plight, and they may very well trample anyone who gets in the way of that change—even those who have heretofore led the long fight against the progressive Big Government Republican and Democratic establishments.

Into this environment barreled Donald Trump, who better than anyone else grasped how to channel this country class anger into a political movement.

And “Trumpism” is not as alien to conservatism as some would like us to believe.

Anyone who has read Phyllis Schlafly’s “A Choice Not an Echo” will recognize why the First Lady of the Conservative Movement endorsed Donald Trump.

Mrs. Schlafly posited in 1964 that only by breaking the unseen powerbroker’s hold on power in Washington and the state capitals could conservative governance be achieved—and as the Reagan Revolution of 1980 and the Tea Party wave elections of 2010 and 2014 failed to bring about permanent change and government according to limited government constitutional conservative principles, she was right.

Since 1980, while most Republicans run as conservatives, a majority of Republican Members of Congress have been co-opted into supporting open borders, amnesty for illegal aliens, trade deals that subvert American sovereignty and congressional spending that is so out of control and divorced from reality that it boggles the mind.

The notion of movement conservatives joining forces with the establishment Republican perpetrators of what has become a near-treasonous sellout of our country—and the country class

citizens who believe in conservative ideas and have fought for them for decades—would be an unforgivable betrayal and a disaster for the conservative movement.

Moreover, conservative leaders who might wish to engineer such a rapprochement with the Republican establishment are rapidly losing the ability to do so because the grassroots have decided they will keep their eye on the prize, which is to defeat Hillary Clinton and the Washington Cartel.

In Tennessee, Trump and Cruz delegates have begun to form a grass-roots alliance, and have agreed among themselves to support only the anti-establishment candidates. Many of the 49 delegates in Tennessee who are pledged to either Donald Trump or Sen. Ted Cruz will reportedly meet this month to seal a grassroots alliance in which they pledge their votes during any contested convention only to Trump or Cruz.

Rumor has it that such alliances are in the formative stages in other states as well—and the dynamics are obvious. In many cases those who are Cruz and Trump supporters have spent years battling the GOP establishment in their respective states, and they are natural allies.

There is no such natural alliance with the establishment Republicans who have lied to and betrayed these grass-roots patriots over and over again.

Of course one cannot dismiss the idea that the master negotiator will negotiate his own deal with the Republican establishment, but in the eyes of some of his strongest supporters this seems unlikely. To them the idea that Trump will form an alliance or reach an accommodation with the establishment would be such a deep betrayal of his most ardent supporters that it seems even less likely than the idea of a conservative #NeverTrump alliance with the Republican establishment.

Why would conservatives not join with populists to harness

their mutual passion for change?

In state after state the Republican primary turnout has far surpassed the Democratic turnout. For example, in Michigan the Republican primary attracted a record 1.3 million voters, surpassing the previous record of million votes cast in the 2000 primary between Arizona Sen. John McCain and then-Texas Gov. George W. Bush.

While Democratic primary turnout has declined (except for 2008) GOP turnout, by contrast, has been relatively stable from 1980 through 2012, averaging about 10 percent of eligible voters in years with contested nominations and dipping to 7 percent or lower in uncontested years.

Through the first 12 primaries of 2016, combined Republican turnout was 17.3 percent of eligible voters—the highest of any year since at least 1980. (Pew Research figures)

While primary turnout isn't conclusively predictive of general election results it is indicative of voter enthusiasm—and the enthusiasm is all on the side of the outsiders Trump and Cruz.

Either Trump or Cruz has finished first or second in every primary or caucus, except D.C. Through the first dozen primaries Trump alone booked more popular votes than the two leading establishment candidates combined; 7,542,328 vs 6,091,821 for Kasich and Rubio. Together, Cruz and Trump have more than twice the establishment popular vote—13,023,702 vs 6,091,821.

Why would conservatives make a deal with the losers who have betrayed them and lied to them over and over?

In a negotiation one has to make an offer to get a counter offer and so far conservatives aren't at the table with Trump, even though the numbers indicate that a conservative-populist alliance is much stronger and more likely to defeat Hillary Clinton than an establishment-conservative alliance or an

establishment–Trump alliance.

There is no doubt that many cultural conservatives will find it difficult to vote for a man who is in many respects the poster boy for debasing American culture; we share that concern, and it is one of many reasons we prefer Ted Cruz to Donald Trump.

This deep-seated discomfort with Donald Trump's life-style is real, but from a strictly political perspective it does not constitute a reason for movement conservatives to abandon their natural populist allies to make a deal with the establishment Republicans whose misrule, lies and betrayals have created the present political environment and enabled the rise of Donald Trump.

But what of establishment Republican threats to go Third Party if Trump obtains the Republican nomination?

Again, history, in the form of the 1980 and 1992 elections is instructive.

In 1980 the all-but-dead liberal Rockefeller wing of the Republican Party chose to walkout and back the Third Party candidacy of liberal Republican Congressman John Anderson against conservative Ronald Reagan.

The liberal Anderson booked 5,719,850 votes or 6.6 percent of the vote while Reagan won a majority of the popular vote with 43,903,230 votes and 50.8 percent of the total.

In contrast, in 1992, H. Ross Perot running as a conservative populist against the moderate Republican George H.W. Bush booked 19,743,821 votes or percent of the popular vote. Bush was soundly defeated even though Democratic rival Bill Clinton did not get anywhere near a majority of the popular vote, booking only 44,909,806 votes or percent of the votes cast.

Looking at the 2016 exit polls and the historical evidence it

is more likely that a walkout of liberal to moderate Republican voters would not defeat a unity ticket of conservatives and populists, but a walkout of populists in the form of a Trump Third Party candidacy or populists sitting out the election would most assuredly result in the defeat of the Republicans and the election of Hillary Clinton and probably a Democratic Senate.

Conclusion

If conservatives form their own cultural conservative Third Party to oppose Trump in the General election, they are certain to elect Hillary Clinton.

If conservatives sit out the election, they are certain to elect Hillary Clinton.

Based on the historical evidence, the results to-date in the 2016 primaries and 2016 exit polling if conservatives make a deal at the Republican National Convention to deprive Donald Trump of the nomination they are certain to elect Hillary Clinton.

The only scenario that does not, on its face, result in the election of Hillary Clinton is an alliance at the Republican National Convention between Cruz's conservative delegates and Trump's populist delegates who unite to guarantee that the two leading post-primary candidates are nominated as president and vice president—as they were in 1980.

Right now, the establishment's goal is to sow as much chaos as possible in the lead-up to the Republican National Convention so that no candidate reaches the magic number of the 1,237 delegates necessary to win the nomination on the first ballot.

We urge Donald Trump and Ted Cruz delegates to be smart about what is happening, keep their eye on the prize, which is defeating Hillary Clinton and dismantling the establishment

stranglehold on our country, and to follow the lead of their compatriots in Tennessee by forming an alliance to ensure that the Republican National Convention nominates a conservative-populist ticket.

Such an alliance would not guarantee a Republican victory, but like 1980, it would create the most competitive coalition of voters to defeat Hillary Clinton, and with a victory in November it would break the Washington Cartel's stranglehold on America and preserve constitutional liberty for future generations. {eoa}

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