

What Should Conservatives Do Now?

In our four-part series on what conservatives should do if Donald Trump is leading the field when the Republican National Convention opens, CHQ Chairman Richard A. Viguerie and I argued in favor of a Trump populist–Ted Cruz conservative alliance to oust the Republican establishment, break the Washington Cartel and bring about a conservative-populist political realignment.

But now we are not so sure that is even possible.

From a strictly political perspective, none of the personal Trump-Cruz battles change the facts and arguments in favor of a populist–conservative alliance to break the Washington Cartel and defeat Hillary Clinton.

Yes, the deep-seated discomfort with Donald Trump's lifestyle is real, but again, 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 walk out 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 his 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. However, a walkout of conservatives to back a third party cultural conservative candidate or populists sitting out the election because convention shenanigans deprived Trump of the nomination, would most assuredly result in the defeat of the Republicans and the election of Hillary Clinton, and probably a Democratic Senate as well.

The bottom line for conservatives comes down to these questions:

- Do we abandon our better judgment and principle in order to support Donald Trump?
- Do we surrender many of our principles and the concept of the moral duty of leadership to back populist Donald Trump, or do we let Hillary Clinton appoint as many as four Supreme Court justices?
- If we do abandon our better judgment and principle, will it will lead to more and more violations of our judgment and principles to continue to support him once he's elected?
- If Trumpism is catastrophically and humiliatingly rejected at the polls in November, is it worth the cost

of making Hillary Clinton President?