



The Donald Can be Obama's Trump Card

The boomlet for Donald Trump as a Republican nominee for President of the United States ought to be a wake-up call for Republican candidates and Republican Party leaders alike.

Why has Trump surged ahead of other Republican candidates and potential candidates in the polls? It is not likely that his resurrection of the issue of Barack Obama's birth certificate has aroused all this support.

The birth certificate issue does more political damage to Obama's critics than to the president himself, because it enables the media to paint those critics as kooks. Nor are Donald Trump's political positions such as to create a stampede to his cause.



Radio talk-show host Mark Levin has rebroadcast Trump's varied and mutually contradictory statements on political issues and personalities over the years. It was a devastating revelation of Trump's "versatility of convictions," to use a phrase coined long ago by Thorstein Veblen.

What then is Donald Trump's appeal — and why should it concern Republican leaders in general?

What Trump has that so many other Republicans are so painfully lacking is the ability and the willingness to articulate his positions clearly, forcefully and in plain English. Too many Republicans talk like the actor of whom a critic once said, "he played the king like he was afraid that someone else was going to play the ace."

What electrified so many Republicans about Sarah Palin in the 2008 election campaign was that she was such a contrast to the usual mealy-mouth talk that was more common among other Republican candidates, including Senator John McCain. Whether you agreed or disagreed with her position on the issues, you didn't have to wave your hand in front of her eyes to see if she was awake.

Donald Trump is dangerous in at least two senses. If, by some tragic miracle, he should become the Republicans' candidate for president in 2012, that would be the closest thing to an iron-clad guarantee of a second term in the White House for Barack Obama.

That would be a huge setback for the Republicans — and, far more important — a historic catastrophe for this country.

What seems more likely is that Donald Trump as a candidate for the Republican nomination would use his superior articulation skills — not to mention brash irresponsibility — to trash all the other Republican candidates for that nomination, leaving them damaged goods in the eyes of the public, and therefore less able to gather the votes needed to prevent the reelection of Obama.

Why Republicans seem not to understand the crucial importance of putting the same time and attention



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into articulating their positions as the Democrats do is one of the enduring mysteries of American politics.

It was obvious that the Democrats coordinated their talking points and catch-phrases — “social justice,” “tax cuts for the rich,” etc. — even before the overheard and recorded statements of Senator Chuck Schumer about Democrats’ plans to repeatedly use the word “extreme” to characterize Republicans.

But how many Republican catch-phrases can you remember? Republican rhetoric tends to range from low key to no key.

Nor is there much evidence that Republicans have asked themselves how the left-wing of the Democratic Party gained such ascendancy in recent years, in a country where millions more people identify themselves as conservative than identify themselves as liberals.

In short, there is little or no evidence that most Republicans see any need to fundamentally change their approach to the public. But if they think that they can rely on Obama’s declining popularity to win the 2012 election, they may be in for a rude shock. Worse yet, the whole future of this country and of western civilization will be in jeopardy, in a world where the likes of Iran and North Korea become nuclear powers, while we engage in empty talk at the U.N.

Barack Obama’s declining support in public opinion polls make some conservatives feel that his reelection hopes are doomed. But Donald Trump can be Barack Obama’s secret weapon in his fight to remain in the White House. The Donald can be his Trump card.

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