



Rival GOP Candidates Struggle to Unseat Trump During Debate

The first Republican presidential debate following the Super Tuesday primaries was held in Detroit on March 3, with the four remaining active candidates — especially frontrunner Donald Trump — often putting on more of a theatrical performance than engaging in a serious political debate.

Dr. Ben Carson, following a poor performance so far in the primaries, announced on March 2 that he would not attend this debate, and did not “see a political path forward in light of last evening’s Super Tuesday primary results.” Carson said he would discuss more about the future of his “Saving America for Future Generations” movement during his March 4 speech at CPAC in Washington, D.C., but his presidential campaign has effectively ended.



Earlier in the day, the Republican Party’s 2012 nominee, former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney, had attacked business magnate Donald Trump’s qualifications to be this year’s GOP’s presidential nominee during a speech at the University of Utah. One of the debate’s three moderators, Chris Wallace, led off the debate by quoting part of Romney’s indictment, wherein he had criticized Trump for “the bullying, the greed, the showing off, the misogyny, the absurd, third-grade theatrics.”

Wallace then invited Trump to answer Romney’s charges, and Trump replied, in part:

[Romney, as the GOP nominee] failed miserably, and it was an embarrassment to everybody, including the Republican party. It looked like he went away on a vacation the last month. So, I don’t take that, and I guess, obviously, he wants to be relevant. He wants to be back in the game.

As far as domestic policy and trade which is killing our country, he said free trade and I believe in free trade also. But, if you look at China, and you look Japan, and if you look at Mexico, both at the border, by the way, where they’re killing us.

Both at the border, and with trade — and every other country we do business with we are getting absolutely crushed on trade. And, he said free trade, I say free trade great. But, not when they’re beating us so badly.

With China we’re going to lose \$505 billion dollars in terms of trades. You just can’t do it.

Mexico, \$58 billion dollars.

Japan, probably about, they don’t know it yet, but about \$109 billion dollars.

Later on in the debate, Trump expanded on his views concerning trade when he said about the Trans



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Pacific Partnership (TPP):

By the way, the Trans-Pacific, if you look at the TPP, a total disaster, which, by the way, Marco [Rubio] is in favor of, they need — it is a disaster for our country. It's trying to be approved by various people, including President Obama. And I'll tell you something. The biggest problem with that is: They don't take into concurrence the devaluation. They're devaluing their currency.

The John Birch Society, with which *The New American* is affiliated, has consistently warned about the pitfalls of so-called free-trade agreements such as the TPP. To learn more about this educational effort, see [here](#).

Trump's comments came during a fiery back-and-forth exchange with Senator Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) after Rubio criticized Trump for having clothes for his Donald J. Trump clothing line manufactured in China and Mexico.

When Wallace asked Trump to respond to Rubio's assertion about Trump Collection being made in Mexico, and then asked: "How soon will you move your clothing collection, the clothes that are made in China and Mexico?" Trump said:

They devalue their currencies. I will do that. And by the way, I have been doing it more and more. But they devalue their currencies, in particular China. Mexico is doing a big number now, also. Japan is unbelievable what they're doing.

They devalue their currencies, and they make it impossible for clothing-makers in this country to do clothing in this country. And if you look at what's happened on Seventh Avenue, and you look at what's happened in New York with the garment industry, so much of the clothing now comes out from Vietnam, China, and other places. And it's all because of devaluation.

Fairly early in the evening, moderator Megyn Kelly, with whom Trump has had an often-confrontational relationship in the past, brought up a very significant point by asking the candidate about his position on granting visas to foreign workers:

... your campaign website to this day argues that more visas for highly skilled workers would, quote, "decimate American workers." However, at the CNBC debate, you spoke enthusiastically in favor of these visas. So, which is it?

Trump replied:

I'm changing. I'm changing. We need highly skilled people in this country, and if we can't do it, we'll get them in. But, and we do need in Silicon Valley, we absolutely have to have.

So, we do need highly skilled, and one of the biggest problems we have is people go to the best colleges. They'll go to Harvard, they'll go to Stanford, they'll go to Wharton, as soon as they're finished they'll get shoved out. They want to stay in this country. They want to stay here desperately, they're not able to stay here. For that purpose, we absolutely have to be able to keep the brain power in this country.

When Kelly asked Trump if he was abandoning the position on his website, he replied:

I'm changing it, and I'm softening the position because we have to have talented people in this country.

Later on, Kelly asked Senator Ted Cruz (R-Texas) about his position on H1-B visas, noting, "not long ago you propose quintupling the number of these foreign worker visas. After you announced for president,



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you reversed yourself, citing reports that the program was being abused.”

Cruz answered:

Well, the abuse of the H1-B program has been rampant. On the face of that H1-B abuse, I have proposed, and promised as president that I will impose a 180 day moratorium on the H1B program to implement a comprehensive investigation and audit because you got U.S. companies that are firing American workers, bringing in foreign workers, and forcing them to train their replacements.

Cruz’s proposed 180-day moratorium on H1-B visas does not constitute an elimination of them, however. *The New American* has published several articles about the negative impact of the H1-B visa program on American workers, including one last October, [“American IT Workers Complain of Losing Jobs to Foreign H-1B Visa Holders.”](#) In that article, we noted that last April 9, Senators Jeff Sessions (R-Ala.), chairman of the Subcommittee on Immigration and the National Interest, and Senate Minority Whip Richard Durbin (D-Ill.) led a bipartisan coalition of senators in sending a letter to then-Attorney General Eric Holder, Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson, and Labor Secretary Thomas Perez, asking them to investigate Southern California Edison’s use of the H-1B guest-worker program to replace American workers.

Curiously, Sessions recently endorsed Donald Trump’s candidacy, and as Trump just admitted during this debate, he has “softened” his position against the H1-B visa program.

In many respects, the tone of this last debate was less than presidential, and included much unrestrained bickering back and forth — especially between Trump and Rubio. Additionally, Trump at one point descended into employing vulgar double entendre.

After Rubio said that the media has given the personal attacks that Trump has made against his rivals “an incredible amount of coverage,” and proposed: “Let’s start talking again about the issues that matter to this country,” moderator Bret Baier invited Trump to give his response. Trump replied:

Well, I also happened to call him a lightweight, OK? And I have said that. So I would like to take that back. He is really not that much of a lightweight. And as far as — and I have to say this, I have to say this. He hit my hands. Nobody has ever hit my hands. I have never heard of this. Look at those hands. Are they small hands?

The audience responded with laughter. Trump’s reference was apparently a response to a comment Rubio had made on the campaign trail when he said that Trump had small hands, “and you know what they say about guys with small hands,” implying Trump was not well-endowed — which speaks volumes about Rubio’s sense of propriety. Trump continued in kind: “And he referred to my hands, if they are small, something else must be small. I guarantee you there is no problem. I guarantee.”

Baier responded by saying simply, “OK. Moving on.”

In an article for the *Free Beacon*, video editor David Rutz observed that this exchange had taken place “during a particularly juvenile section of the debate,” to which we might add: during a section of the debate that was beneath the dignity of any presidential candidate.

However, there were adult sections of the debate, as well, particularly when Cruz and Ohio Governor John Kasich had the floor.

At one point, Wallace asked Cruz to explain his plan to abolish the IRS, and Cruz replied:

So my simple flat tax I have rolled out in precise detail how it will operate where every American



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can fill out our taxes on a postcard. And if you want to actually see the postcard, see all the details, you can find them on our website. It's tedcruz.org.

When we get rid of all the corporate welfare, all the subsidies, all the carve-outs in the IRS code, it dramatically simplifies it. And under Obama, the IRS has become so corrupt and so politicized we need to abolish it all together.

Now, at the end of that there will still be an office in the Treasury Department to receive the postcards but it will be dramatically simpler.

Kasich had an interesting response to Wallace's question about the minimum wage that took a states' rights approach. Wallace asked him:

Governor Kasich, Democrats, as you know, will make income inequality a big issue in the general election. You support raising the minimum wage, although you say not to the \$15 an hour that Democrats are talking about. Mr. Trump opposes any increase because he says it will price American workers out of the world market. Is he wrong about that? No increase in the minimum wage?

Kasich replied, "Well, well, wait a minute, first of all, I didn't say I was for an increase in the federal minimum wage. I said in Ohio we increased it modestly every single year. So I'm not for a federal minimum wage increase.

When Wallace said. "But you did talk about states doing it," Kasich continued, "Well, states — if states want to do it, they ought to sit down with businesspeople and the lawmakers and figure out what will work."

The debate ended with Trump still in the frontrunner position, but with his nomination far from guaranteed. Much depends on how the candidates fare during the remaining primaries and whether or not the "non-Trump" candidates work in cooperation with each other or scramble in competition against each other to make their way to the top of the presidential mountain.

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