

Bad Arguments For Nominating Trump

By Charles C W Cooke, NATIONAL REVIEW (Online)
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And Rebuttals To Them

Give It Up, Guys. Only Donald Trump Can Prevail Against Joe Biden.

Why? In 2016, When Trump Won The White House, He Obtained Just 46.1 Percent Of The Vote. Had His Opponent Not Been So Historically Unpopular — And Had The Green Party Not Siphoned Off Votes From The Democrats In A Handful Of Key States — Trump Would Have Lost. In 2020, When He Lost Reelection, Trump Received 46.8 Percent Of The Vote — Lower Than Mitt Romney's Number In 2012. Trump Received 7 Million Fewer Votes Than Joe Biden, Who Barely Campaigned. In The Midterm Elections Of 2018 And 2022, Trump Proved Politically Toxic With The Independent Voters Who Decide American Elections. Since Then, He Has Grown Even More Unpalatable. All Told, It Would Make *More Sense To Say That Trump Is the Only Candidate Who Cannot Prevail Against Joe Biden Than That He Is The Only Candidate Who Can.* Trump's Approval Rating Is In The Low 30s, And 60 Percent Of Americans Wish He Weren't Running For President Again. It Would Be A Peculiar Form Of "Populism" That Considered These Facts To Be Recommendations.

Screw You. You Can't Win Without MAGA, And MAGA Will Only Vote For Donald Trump. You Have To Pick Him.

Actually, The Opposite Seems To Be True. This Argument Was Made In Georgia, Where The Incumbent Republican Governor, Brian Kemp, Was Primaried By David Perdue At The Behest Of Donald Trump And His Acolytes. Perdue Lost The Primary By 50 Points; Kemp Went On To Win The General By Eight. Especially In General Elections, The Only MAGA Voters Just Don't Seem To Matter That Much. Sure, Some Of The Movement's More Monomaniacal Members Will Stay Home If Donald Trump Is Not On The Ballot. But The Loss Of Those Voters Will Be More Than Offset By The Considerable Number Of Non-MAGA Voters Who Are Happy To Return To The Fold. As We Have Observed In The Political Fallout From Trump's Two Indictments, What Is Good For Trump Among The Most Committed Republican Voters Is, In Fact, Toxic For Him Among The Electorate At Large.

To Put It Bluntly, Alienating MAGA Voters May Be Mandatory If A Republican Candidate Is To Win The White House In 2024.

Why Are You Thumbing Your Nose At The Base?

I Don't Really Know What That Means. I'm Not A Politician, I'm A Voter. And, As A Voter, I Have Just As Much Right To Argue For Or Against A Candidate As Anyone Else. I Am Not Obligated To Acquiesce To Bad Arguments Simply Because They Are Made By People Who Are Sensitive Or Unusually Loud. And Whom Are You Referring To As The "Base"? A Party's Base Consists Of Voters Who Can Show Up Every Cycle No Matter Who The Nominee Is. Your Threatening To Stay Home If It's Not Your Guy. Then You're Not The Base.

But We Can't Go Back To The Loser-Filled Republican Party Of Old!

Which Republican Party Was That, Exactly? The One That Won Five Out Of Six Presidential Elections Between 1968 And 1992? The One That Won The White House In 2000 And 2004? The One That Controlled The House For Most Of The Period Between 1994 And 2018? The One That Did So Well In The Elections Of 2014 That It Was Tantalizingly Close To Being Able To Amend The Constitution On Its Own?

There Have, Indeed, Been Some Problems With The Way That The Modern Republican Party Has Chosen To Use The Power It Has Garnered — Although The Criticisms Are Usually Overstated — But It Is Not At All Clear Why Donald Trump Is Regarded As The Answer. For A Start, One Has To Win Elections To Wield Power, And Trump Is Proving A Serious Obstacle To That Aim. And, Besides, The Victories That Trump *Did* Win And That His Champions Are Touting Relied Heavily On The Very Institutions And Figures (The Federalist Society, Paul Ryan, The American Enterprise Institute) That Are Supposed To Have Fallen Out Of Favor. Moreover, With The Exception Of The Imposition Of Tariffs, Trump Did Not Actually Do Most Of The Unorthodox Things That He Promised He Would. He Did Reform The Bureaucracy. He Did Not Champion An Industrial Policy. He Did Try To Procure Funds For His Border Wall Until The GOP Had Lost Control Of The House Of Representatives. And, When The Choice Was Between Listening To The Entrenched Public-Health Establishment And Listening To The People He Claimed To Represent, He Chose The Establishment Every Time. What, Exactly, Did He Do To Earn His Place In The Vanguard?

If We Don't Choose Trump, We Are Allowing The Deep State To Choose Our Candidate.

On Its Own Terms, This Doesn't Make Much Sense, Does It? Practically Speaking, There Is No Difference Between The Insistence That, Because Donald Trump Was Indicted, He Ipso Facto *Must Not* Be The Republican Nominee And The Insistence That, Because Donald Trump Was Indicted, He Ipso Facto *Must* Be The Nominee. Both Arguments Take An External Event And Use It As A Dispositive Case For Nomination. You Just Like One Of Those Cases But Not The Other.

All Right, But The Indictment Makes A Strong Case For Trump, Doesn't It?

Do You Hear Yourself? The Fact That Donald Trump Was Indicted Makes A Strong Case For His Being The Republican Nominee For President in 2024? Why?

Because They're Scared Of Him.

Who Are "They"? The People Who Took Control Of The House Of Representatives in 2018 Because Donald Trump Was So Unpopular? The People Who Won The Presidency In 2020 Because Donald Trump Was So Unpopular? The People Who Won The Senate In 2022 Because Donald Trump And His Preferred Candidates Were So Unpopular? The People Who Spend Their Days Dreaming Of Another Donald Trump Nomination In 2024? Those People? The Democrats Have Been Extremely Open About The Fact That They Want Trump As The Nominee. They Spent Tens Of Millions Dollars Promoting Trump-Backed Candidates In The 2022 Primaries, Betting Those Candidates Would Lose. It Worked Out For Them.

But The Deep State! They're Trying To Get Rid Of Him Because He's Such A Threat To Them.

A Threat? Trump Is Nothing Of The Sort. On The Contrary: *He's The Sort Of Ill-Disciplined Fool On Whom The Permanent Bureaucracy Likes To Feast.* Leave Aside That Trump Can't Be A Threat To Anyone If He Can't Win A General Election. Nothing In The Man's First-Term Record Suggests That He Will Be Able To Reform The Federal Bureaucracy From Within. Trump Was Federally Indicted Because, At Every Stage In The Proceedings, *He Made Profoundly Stupid Decisions.* [Ed. Note: "Very Stable Genius" Or "Fucking Moron"?]

He Took Information To Which He Was Not Entitled. He Refused To Give That Information Back, Even Though By Doing So He Would Have Avoided A Prosecution. He Ignored The Advice Of Lawyers Who Knew How To Work The System. And By Admitting — On *Audiotape*, No Less — That He Knew A Document Was Secret And Knew That That An Ex-President Lacked Authority To Declassify It, He Undermined The Only Defense That Was Available To Him. In Doing Each Of These Things, He Accomplished Nothing And Made His Situation Worse.

Did Trump “Drain The Swamp” Last Time? Why Not? *Because He Doesn't Know How Anything Works, And He Doesn't Care.* Of All The People In The United States — Politicians And Nonpoliticians Alike — Donald Trump Is Perhaps The *Least* Qualified To Reform Washington DC. He Doesn't Grasp Detail. He Sees Neither The Threats Nor The Opportunities. He Is Fatally Susceptible To Flattery. He Has A Short Attention Span.

He Can't Do It. We Know This, Because We've Watched Him Work Since 2015.

Why Are You Abandoning Him In His Hour Of Need?

Come Now, This Isn't Medieval England. It's America. Trump Is A Servant, A Vessel, A Hireling. When Some Of Us balked At Voting For Him In The Past, We Were Told To Ignore The Man's Faults Because He Was Just The Tool Of A Larger Cause We Should Join. When Did That Change?

The Correct Role Of His Employers — The Voters — Is Not To Help Or Hinder Him As A Person, But To Use Him Or Discard Him In Order To Advance A Set Of Political Aims. Even If One Were To Overlook That He Violated His Oath Of Office Last Time He Was Entrusted With Power — And I'm Not — *He Is Simply Not Able To Fulfill The Role For Which He Is Running.* I Want A President Who Can Maintain An Originalist Majority On The Supreme Court, Rein In The Bureaucracy, Balance The Budget, Deal Smartly With China, Advance School Choice, Protect Unborn Life, Ensure That The Bill Of Rights Remains Intact, And Promulgate A Hopeful Conception Of America That Is Capable Of Vanquishing The Ignorant Nihilism Of The 1619 Project And Its Followers. *Trump Is Not That Guy, And He Never Will Be.*

So You Prefer Joe Biden?

That's Not The Choice, Is It? Trump Isn't The Republican Nominee, And He Doesn't Have To Be The Republican Nominee. Hell, He's Not Even The *Incumbent*. The Question At Present Is Not Whether We Prefer The Republican Nominee Or The Democratic Nominee, But Which Candidate For The Republican Nomination We Wish To Elevate. I Can See A Certain Campaign-Strategy Logic To the Trump Camp's Decision To Pretend That He Is Inevitable, But As A Free Citizen, I Am In No Way Obligated To Submit To It.

So You Think That The Democrats And The Media Will be Nicer To Another Candidate Than They Were To Trump?

No, I Don't. But I Do Think It Matters How That Other Candidate Responds To That Inevitable Onslaught. Yes, Mitt Romney Was Too Nice, But That Doesn't Mean Anything Goes. That republicans Have Learned To Fight Back With More Edge Is, I Agree, A Good Thing. I Do Not Agree That This Makes The Case For Flat-Out, All Caps Insanity. The Press Can't Accuse Any Of The Other Candidates Of Having Tried To Stage A Coup — Because They Didn't Do That Either. It Is The Worst Of Non-Sequiturs To Propose That Because Romney Lost To The Most Talented Politician In A Generation, The Republican Party Must Continue To Indulge The *Preposterous Antics Of A Septuagenarian Lunatic*. There Are More Things In Heaven And Earth, Horatio, Than Mitt Romney And Donald Trump. Some Of Them Are Running For President This Year.

Given The Headwinds, It's Important To Make Smart Decisions. A Lot Of Democrats Still Believe That Al Gore And Hillary Clinton Got Cheated Out Of The Presidency And That Only Unfair Racists Appeals Stopped Michael Dukakis From Taking His Rightful Place As President. *You Know What The Democrats Didn't Do? Nominate Those People Again.* They Went Out And Found People They Thought Would Do A Better Job Of Handling What Republicans Threw At Them. That's How They Got The White House Back Three Times.

So You Hate Me Then?

No, And It's Extremely Weird That This Would Be Your Conclusion From What Is Nothing More Than A Political Disagreement. You Like Donald Trump. I Don't. If You Can't Tolerate That, I'd Propose You Leave Your Computer And Go Outside. ###