

BUSINESS INSIDER

The National Review just dedicated an entire issue to taking down Donald Trump-here's why

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The influential conservative magazine National Review launched an all-out effort Thursday night to take down Republican presidential front-runner Donald Trump.

The latest issue was nothing short of an anti-Trump manifesto, featuring a symposium of opinion pieces from conservative leaders who argue that Trump isn't a true conservative.

It also had a scathing article from the magazine's editors.

"Donald Trump is a menace to American conservatism who would take the work of generations and trample it underfoot in behalf of a populism as heedless and crude as the Donald himself," the editors wrote.

That editorial compared Trump's past Democratic positions to those of Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vermont), accused him of flip-flopping on his signature issue of illegal immigration, declared that he knows little about foreign policy, and bashed his business record, among other things.

"If Trump were to become the president, the Republican nominee, or even a failed candidate with strong conservative support, what would that say about conservatives?" the editors said. "The movement that ground down the Soviet Union and took the shine, at least temporarily, off socialism would have fallen in behind a huckster."

In the National Review's anti-Trump symposium, there were six core arguments about why conservative voters should not choose Trump to be the Republican presidential nominee.

First, the magazine argued that Trump's past **embrace of Democratic politicians and liberal policies exposed him as a fake conservative** who would say anything to win. David Boaz, the executive vice president of the Cato Institute, wrote that conservatives were upset with GOP leaders but that Trump may be "the greatest charlatan" of them all.

While conservatives were fighting the good fight, Boaz argued, Trump was busy "publicly raising money for liberals such as the Clintons; championing Planned Parenthood, tax increases, and single-payer health coverage; and demonstrating his allegiance to the Democratic party."

Other conservative leaders said they welcomed Trump's switch to the Republican Party, but they argued that **he needed more time to be viewed as a reliable conservative.**

"I love conversion stories," radio host Dana Loesch wrote. "I have my own, from when I became a conservative 15 years ago. But I'm not running for president. Donald Trump is. And his 'conversion' raises serious questions."

Third, many of the leaders argued that Trump's **strongman persona and policy prescriptions were antithetical to the anti-government philosophy of conservatism.** Ben Domenech, publisher of the Federalist website, wrote that Trump's candidacy was effectively "an embrace of Barack Obama's authoritarianism."

The Weekly Standard editor Bill Kristol further asked: "Isn't Trumpism a two-bit Caesarism of a kind that American conservatives have always disdained? Isn't the task of conservatives today to stand athwart Trumpism, yelling Stop?"

Trump's self-proclaimed **evangelicalism was also scrutinized.** Russell Moore, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, pointed to Trump's recently saying he didn't "like to have to ask for forgiveness."

"One also cannot help but look at the personal life of the billionaire," Moore wrote. "It is not just that he has abandoned one wife after another for a younger woman, or that he has boasted about having sex with some of the 'top women of the world.' It's that he says, after all that, that he has no need to seek forgiveness."

Moore continued: "Can conservatives really believe that, if elected, Trump would care about protecting the family's place in society when his own life is — unapologetically — what conservatives used to recognize as decadent?"

Still others criticized Trump's business record, arguing in particular that **his embrace of eminent domain** — in which the government forces property owners to sell their land — went against conservative principles.

Mona Charen, a senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center, was particularly scathing on both the eminent-domain issue and on some of Trump's crude statements:

We can talk about whether he is a boor ("My fingers are long and beautiful, as, it has been well documented, are various other parts of my body"), a creep ("If Ivanka weren't my daughter, perhaps I'd be dating her"), or a louse (he tried to bully an elderly woman, Vera Coking, out of her house in Atlantic City because it stood on a spot he wanted to use as a garage).

Last, several of Trump's critics in the National Review accused him of **being ignorant of the Constitution and of foreign policy.**

Former US Attorney General Michael Mukasey questioned Trump's plan to bar Muslims from entering the US, which Mukasey said was impractical. And he said Trump's suggesting the US

should attack terrorists' families "would be a direct violation of the most basic laws of armed conflict."

Novelist Mark Helprin had the most brutal anti-Trump piece of the group. Helprin wrote that Trump's "raging egomania" and ignorance of the Constitution were disqualifying. He added that Trump had "like a tapeworm invaded the schismatically weakened body of the Republican party."

For his part, Trump dismissed the "failing" magazine's attack as an attempt to get publicity.