

Conservatives attack Trump as GOP realizes he will be their nominee

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It has taken them half a year, but the Republican Party establishment finally realizes that Donald Trump is going to be their nominee in 2016. Conservatives, however, are looking for a miracle. The *National Review* published its manifesto on Friday—a full issue called **“Against Trump,”** dedicated to attacking the front runner. In response, the RNC disinvited the *National Review* **from hosting a debate.** The *National Review* has one of the largest magazine circulations in the United States and is a highly respected conservative journal.

This development comes on the heels of the latest polls that show that Trump has reclaimed the lead over Ted Cruz in Iowa, and now **leads in New Hampshire by 20 points.** Trump’s only serious opponent, Senator Ted Cruz, has come under attack from all sides this week after he began rising in the polls. Former senator and Republican presidential candidate, Bob Dole, blasted Cruz in an interview. Iowa’s Republican governor, Terry Branstad, urged Iowans not to vote for the Texas Senator.

In its **editorial,** the *National Review* said Trump is “not deserving of conservative support in the caucuses and primaries.” They said “Trump is a philosophically unmoored political opportunist who would trash the broad conservative ideological consensus within the GOP in favor of a free-floating populism with strong-man overtones.”

“Trump’s political opinions have wobbled all over the lot,” the editors continued. Calling Trump a real-estate mogul and reality-TV star, they pointed out that he has “supported abortion, gun control, single-payer health care à la Canada, and punitive taxes on the wealthy.” They compared him to Bernie Sanders, saying both have “more than funky outer-borough accents.” They maintain there are great gaping holes in Trumps conservative agenda and laid out examples.

The “Against Trump” manifesto also included a series of essays by conservatives including commentator and pitchman Glenn Beck; David Boaz, executive vice president of the Cato Institute and the author of *The Libertarian Mind*; L. Brent Bozell III, chairman of ForAmerica and president of the Media Research Center; Mona Charen, a senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center; Ben Domenech, publisher of the *Federalist*; Erick Erickson, editor of *The Resurgent* and an Atlanta-based talk-radio host; and William Kristol, editor of *The Weekly Standard*, and Mark Helprin, conservative author and commentator.

“Trump has made a career out of egotism, while conservatism implies certain modesty about government. The two cannot mix,” Mona Charen wrote. L. Brent Bozell said “The GOP base is clearly disgusted and looking for new leadership. Enter Donald Trump, not just with policy prescriptions that challenge the cynical GOP leadership but with an attitude of disdain for that leadership—precisely in line with the sentiment of the base...” calling Trump the greatest charlatan of them all.” Ben Domenech branded Trump’s message as “Euro-style identity politics.” William Kristol asked, “Isn’t Donald Trump the very epitome of vulgarity? Isn’t Trumpism a two-bit Caesarism of a kind that American conservatives have always disdained?”

Reports are circulating that big Republican donors have decided Trump is ok after all, according to **Rachel Maddow**. Trump told an audience Thursday that “they decided they like me now,” referring to the GOP elite. Criticism of Cruz by establishment Republicans gives credence to those reports. The fact the *National Review* has been disinvited to host a debate, if we believe its publisher, indicates the RNC has decided if you can’t beat him, join him. One of the stages of recovering from grief is acceptance. The establishment seems to have reached the acceptance stage.

Republicans were talking about a brokered convention as a way of stopping Trump. Now it appears that the establishment has decided he is inevitable but conservatives think he is not acceptable. Cruz is the victim of his theatrics in the Senate, and is being hurt by Trump’s questioning his legal standing to be president given his Canadian birth. Recent revelations about his undisclosed loans from Goldman Sachs are proving to be a distraction for Cruz. So, conservatives may hate Trump, but who is their alternative?

Senator Lindsay Graham, however, did not mince words when describing the sad state of affairs in the GOP. He said that choosing between Trump and Cruz is like **deciding whether to be poisoned or shot**. “What does it really matter,” he lamented.

We live in interesting times.