

# Polizette

## NeverTrump ‘Conservatives’ Still Don’t Get It

*A few sour Republicans are still looking for every opportunity to snipe at the president-elect*

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President-Elect Trump’s upset victory on Nov. 8 was not enough for some of the self-proclaimed conservatives who have been longtime NeverTrumpers to wake-up.

Ramesh Ponnuru posted a Cato Institute op-ed to National Review Online Tuesday with only the commentary “Protectionism and Cronyism: The latest demonstration that you can’t have the first without the second.”

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The linked op-ed derides the notion that bad U.S. trade policy has created less efficient markets and unnecessarily harmed American workers. Ponnuru and National Review, who vigorously opposed Trump’s election, evidently now just post free trade groupthink verbatim without even bothering to lay out their own arguments. The NRO response to the millions of Americans who rejected their near-religious commitment to free trade deals is just a link to a pro free trade think tank.

Third-party presidential candidate Evan McMullin, who earned less than .5 percent of the vote in the 2016 presidential election, took his anti-Trump crusade a step further in an op-ed published Wednesday in The Hill.

McMullin lumped in with the Left’s anti-Trump smear campaign and echoed the ridiculous assertion that Trump’s rise has run parallel to rising white supremacist sentiments.

“The white supremacist movement’s alignment with Trump and the GOP raise questions about the party and its future,” McMullin tweeted with a link to his op-ed.

Another determined griper, Daily Wire editor Ben Shapiro, penned a column in Conservative Review Wednesday asserting conservatives still have an obligation to stand up to Trump. Shapiro parrots several attack lines generated by the mainstream media this week, including the assertion Trump will necessarily face conflicts of interest as president. He also critiques Trump's call for an apology after the cast of "Hamilton" lectured the vice president-elect from stage.

But the most tin-eared of Shapiro's assertions is that "Trump has already challenged traditional conservative standards." He charges the GOP nominee has "forced Republicans to swallow anti-conservative heresies on economics (free trade is a negative; entitlements should be left alone)." Trump did challenge those old, failed, Bush-world orthodoxies — and that's exactly the point.

The fundamental problem with these conservatives — the No. 1 reason that they are in the mess they are today — is that they have no popular ideas when it comes to fixing the economy. Free trade deals, without significant protections built in for American workers, are not popular. Open borders are not popular. Cutting entitlement programs is not popular. Jeb Bush ran on those ideas and was crushed. Marco Rubio, a better politician than Jeb, ran on those ideas — and was crushed. John Kasich ran on those ideas and was crushed. Those ideas ended Eric Cantor's career. No one wants the economic agenda they are trying to promote. So they can fight Trump all they want — and on some issues, like judges (where their ideas are more popular), they may have a good effect. But on other issues — like the economy — Trump would be wise to ignore them.

What these Trump-resistant conservatives need to realize is that it's not a question of "trying harder" to resist Trump. Jeb Bush tried really hard. Marco tried really hard. John Kasich tried really hard. They all lost, and they lost because very few people agree with them on key policy issues. And until that changes, this subset of conservatives will be on the outside looking in.