



ENQUIRY

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Trump the Twitter King

By **WILL SWETT**
STAFF WRITER

No one could have predicted over eight months ago when the Republican presidential field was flooded with over a dozen young, experienced, and accomplished politicians that they would all be summarily rejected for an eccentric Wall Street tycoon whose major accomplishments include being a reality TV star and running a chain of casinos into bankruptcy. Now, just before the Iowa Caucus, conservatives despair and wonder whether their party can be salvaged at all. The Republican Party, and American conservatism itself, will be imperiled if Donald Trump receives the GOP nomination. If such a scenario does unfold, conservatives will be faced with the decision of electing Trump—at best a former crony capitalist Clintonite, and at worst a populist demagogue—or electing a member of the Democratic field, which boasts a criminal, a socialist, and some other guy.

As an inexperienced, unqualified, and unknowledgeable politician, Trump has proven himself over this election season to be an astoundingly successful campaigner.

Last week the conservative publication *National Review* tossed a Hail Mary to try to destabilize the Republican frontrunner, but, once again, it seems as though nothing can disenchant some Republicans of Trump's vulgar allure. His supporters have remained stubbornly loyal, and have intensified their distrust towards anyone who they feel is aligned with the Republican "establishment," which could be just about anyone who dares to question the businessman. Trump astoundingly remains ahead of a diverse Republican field filled with candidates who are infinitely more qualified than Trump to be the next commander-in-chief. He stayed ahead long enough to split conservatives over how to handle his candidacy: whether to vehemently oppose, passively accept, or zealously support him. Most conservatives agree that the Grand Old Party is in

serious danger of fracturing because of the way Trump divided Republicans. Aided by his army of social media followers, Trump took up the anti-establishment call started by the Tea Party movement and turned it to his advantage. Politicians such as Ted Cruz and Marco Rubio, who owe their elections to the grassroots activists, are now decried as part of the establishment elite. Trump has formed his own voting bloc of passionate supporters who zealously defend their champion from any substantive criticism with the same inanities as The Donald himself. When *National Review* launched their "Against Trump" editorial campaign, the demagogue characteristically responded with a torrent of ad hominem tweets aimed at the twenty-two contributors. Unfazed by *National Review's* criticism, Trump has continued to stun political commentators as he has effortlessly shrugged off attacks on his platform, past, and character. Part of the reason Trump's poll numbers have been so steady is his apparent immunity to criticism. Every time an interviewer reveals the reality TV star's insufficient knowledge of world politics or points to his former political alignments, Trump withdraws to Twitter and attacks his antagonists while his supporters validate him with retweets.

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Oren Cass on Climate Negotiations

By **ELIZABETH BARRY**
STAFF WRITER

Many supporters of the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference, from environmental activists to President Obama, hail it as a decisive victory in the war on climate change. The conference, which was held in Paris last November and December, resulted in what news sources call a "historical breakthrough" agreement between nearly 200 countries to reduce the amount of global carbon emissions. Although the amount of international support for this agreement is impressive, critics suggest that the Paris Alliance lacks the framework necessary to make such reductions in carbon emissions possible. One such critic is Oren Cass, a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute who spoke at Hamilton College last Monday as part of the Environmental Studies Program's speaker series. Cass focuses on energy, the environment, and

This Week's News in 140 Characters

EDITORIAL REPORT

-  **Jonah Goldberg** @JonahNRO · Jan 30
NYT Kasich endorsement is editorial equivalent of assisted suicide.
250 retweets, 244 likes
-  **Daniel Foster** @DanFosterType · Jan 29
It's Soviet-esque that we all kind of know that Hillary will never face any consequences and we can only kinda grimly make jokes about it.
195 retweets, 156 likes
-  **Matthew** @Matthops82 · Jan 29
If you can't find one thing wrong with the candidate you support, seek help. You've become a cult member.
302 retweets, 332 likes
-  **zerohedge** @zerohedge · Jan 28
Was it too hot or too cold in December?
12 retweets, 52 likes
-  **Hippo** @InternetHippo · 10h
DEMS, 2006: Anyone who supported the Iraq War is an idiot
DEMS, 2016: Hillary is a foreign policy expert who deserves your vote
124 retweets, 356 likes
-  **MATT DRUDGE** @DRUDGE · Jan 30
State announced 18 emails exchanged between Hillary and Obama would be withheld. WAIT. DIDN'T HE LEARN ABOUT HER EMAILS/SERVER FROM MEDIA?!
728 retweets, 660 likes
-  **Roger Scruton Quotes** @Scruton_Quotes · Jan 30
"Many of the traditions to which conservatives are most attached can be understood as devices for rescuing human life from the market"
26 retweets, 24 likes

OREN CASS cont.

antipoverty policy. He was domestic policy director of Mitt Romney's presidential campaign in 2011–12 and has since outlined conservative policy approaches to poverty, climate change, environmental regulation, and international trade.

The Paris Alliance lacks the framework necessary to make reductions in carbon emissions possible.

Cass argued the ineffectiveness of the Paris Alliance before a crowded room of Hamilton students and faculty in a lecture titled "Leading Nowhere: The Futility and Farce of Global Climate Negotiations." He discussed a number of key structural flaws that he and other policy makers believe will result in the failure of the UN's goal to reduce carbon emissions and keep the rise in global warming below 2 degrees Celsius until 2030, when the deal runs out. Among the structural failures that Cass identifies are the abandonment of collective action, the encouragement of Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs), the rejection of the premise of enforceable agreements, and the neglect of baselines and standards.

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Trump Betrays Republican Principles

By **WILL UTZSCHNEIDER**
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The natural follow up question to the slogan "Make America Great Again," is: What is it that makes America, despite inevitably having flaws, a great country and destination for many hoping to improve their lot in life? Is it a set of time-tested ideas, or rather the managerial capability of a single leader? Whenever asked why he would make an effective chief executive, Mr. Trump replies in typical fashion, "I've built a great company, I build great buildings, I wrote *The Art of the Deal*, I did *The Apprentice*." He contrasts himself with other politicians, whom he argues are stupid, incompetent losers (with the exceptions of Sarah Palin, Vladimir Putin, and, as of several years ago, Hillary Clinton) and argues that he, personally, is the missing ingredient to a resurgence in American prosperity and geopolitical influence. He would apparently achieve this resurgence by making terrific trade deals with Japan, Mexico, and of course China. (yuuuge tariffs included.) Trump is unmoored from any kind of principles, abusing his cult of personality to promote himself as

Trump threw such a temper tantrum this past week because of an interview he had with Megyn Kelly, a respected and accomplished political commentator. As a result of the “unfair” treatment by the “lightweight reporter,” Trump asked his Twitter and Instagram followers whether he should go to the next debate.

While the GOP frontrunner’s supporters held a summit over social media platforms to decide whether they should send their demagogue to the pre-caucus debate, Fox released an antagonistic statement that made their decision a lot easier. Fox mocked Trump for his fragile ego, and sarcastically described Trump’s “secret plan to replace the Cabinet with his Twitter followers” who seem to be his main source of advice and encouragement.

Trump, incensed by the “childishly written & taunting PR statement,” declined to attend the debate and scorned the network, claiming that he is personally responsible for its high ratings. Without Trump, the debate was a refreshing flashback to when policy positions and platforms mattered, but the real estate mogul was still at the center of attention before, during, and after the debate, as pundits remarked on the performances in the context of Trump’s absence.

As an inexperienced, unqualified, and unknowledgeable politician, Trump has proven himself over this election season to be an astoundingly successful campaigner. He captivates his audience with the constant repetition of divisive rhetoric and violent imagery, and yet does not give a single point of substance beyond his original campaign promise of “[doing] various things very quickly ... and I will build a great, great wall.”

Trump’s campaign genius has likely fundamentally changed the methods of campaigning, most notably through his masterful use of Twitter and other social media platforms. Through Twitter, @realDonaldTrump can constantly talk directly to his supporters, unfiltered by the media. His impulsive, antagonistic, and forceful voice has complemented his strengths of repeating powerful, colorful, and antagonistic nonsense at his fans.

Trump, who has tweeted that Twitter is like “owning your own newspaper, without the losses,” has proven how powerful the social media platform can be in the hands of a presidential contender whose chief strategy has been maintaining the loudest and most dominant voice in the room.

During the late summer and early fall of 2015, Trump’s Twitter account was mentioned in 6.3 million conversations—three times more than Hillary Clinton and four times more than Bernie Sanders. He

is also retweeted more than twice as often as Clinton. His Twitter following of 5.94 million dwarfs that of the rest of the Republican field, and recently surpassed Hillary’s following, which it now outnumbers by almost 700,000 handles.

Trump’s uncensored stream of consciousness on Twitter has allowed him to rant and rave and hit the pressure points of disenchanting republican voters. Every week, Trump has kept the conversation about him, causing pundits to explain every political move by any Republican candidate in the context of the “Trump phenomenon.”

Alexis de Tocqueville once praised the press for being the “chief democratic instrument of freedom.” If ever there was a time when that was a fair assessment, it was certainly before the age of the internet, when Trump’s illiberal rabble-rousing is the top story every day. Even something as seemingly insignificant as a single Twitter account is now a medium with the same capability to influence voters as *National Review*.

OREN CASS cont.

While Cass acknowledges that the conference managed to produce a major agreement between countries, he argued, “[it] also marked the collapse of a 25-year effort to catalyze collective global action on climate change. By design, the negotiating process provided no mechanism for the world to act collectively on the reduction of greenhouse-gas emissions.”

Instead of negotiating, representatives at the conference adopted a “pledge and review” process in which each country proposed their own INDCs for emissions cuts. Those proposals were made at each country’s discretion and required no particular format, metrics, or baseline for comparison.

In addition, the contributions were neither legally binding nor were there consequences established for noncompliance. This created a situation in which countries with weak pledges receive applause for their barely-existent commitment to climate change mitigation.

President Obama proudly declared that “180 countries . . . show[ed] up in Paris with serious climate targets in hand,” despite the fact that many countries were not actually pledging to change their behaviors.

China, for instance, pledged that its carbon dioxide emissions would peak “around 2030,” which is exactly when a prior study by the U.S. suggested they would peak anyway. India offered only a 33 to 35 percent improvement in carbon intensity, a decline slower than its present trajectory, but included nothing pertaining to its future emissions.

As a result of the lack of serious commitments from both developed and developing countries, a recent MIT study shows that even when combined, all of the carbon reduction pledges put forth during the Paris Climate Change Conference are not likely to have a significant

impact on the projected global temperatures between now and 2030.

Cass also explained that in addition to the structural failures of the Paris Alliance, he doubts that the conference was even meant to produce a serious document. In an article in *National Review* last December, he argued that the climate conference “aimed to burnish the legacies of participants and justify the enormous sums of political capital expended on the process. The goal of actually mitigating climate change seemed far from [the negotiators’] minds. The political accomplishment of a signed agreement, never mind its contents, had become the end in itself.”

At the end of his lecture, Cass proposed several alternative approaches to the climate change problem, including collective action, compensation (climate finance) and coercion. The most feasible alternative to the Paris Alliance, he argues, relies on technological innovation, or creating cleaner, cheaper energy sources through investing in privately owned corporations.

Unless policy makers are able to formulate a comprehensive plan, preparations for the April 21, 2016 Paris Accords signing will continue. The question remains, will the United States sign?

TRUMP BETRAYS cont.

a Caesar who will restore a feeling of national strength and pride. His appeal lies in the belief that there is a quick answer to fixing all problems, and that a strong man can make the trains run on time.

The essential problem he sees with the country is not that it has a large, corrupt bureaucracy, but rather that it is missing his leadership.

Rarely, if ever, has Mr. Trump uttered a word about the

Constitution, or any a sense of reverence for the separation of powers, limited government, or the protection of private property. How about eminent domain? “Wonderful!”

Trump’s managerial style is incompatible with the main tenet of American conservatism: skepticism about a large and powerful government. The founding replaced the power of a king with the power of a document that established the separation of powers, states’ rights, and the protection of private property, among other things. The founders thoroughly rejected the idea of power being vested in the hands of an autocrat, which is exactly what Trump promises.

The predecessors of the Republican Party, the Whigs, were founded on the opposition to Andrew Jackson’s excessive use of executive power. A charismatic, strong willed general, Jackson had campaigned on a theme of “a general cleansing” of corruption in the capital. He saw his task as to ignite a populist force against an entrenched ruling elite. During his presidency, while issuing several mandates to shut down a national bank, he spoke of supporting the Constitution using his own understanding, and acted as if the president were independent of both the opinions of judges and Congress. This led to the creation of the Whig Party, forming in opposition to “King” Jackson.

It’s fair to ask whether or not King Trump would rule by unilateral executive action as Jackson did. It’s both ironic and chilling that supposed supporters of limited government are looking to an overly vigorous executive to restore a sense of stability.

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ENQUIRY

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