

Winnowing the field

The Republican field of contenders will likely be a lot smaller after the Nevada primary on February 23. At that point all of those who have not been able to be true contenders, with the exception of Jeb Bush, will lack the financial wherewithal to continue. Thus far we have learned a great deal about the strengths and weaknesses of the apparent major contenders.

Donald Trump remains a brash and direct populist with an ego that reaches into the stratosphere. He is decisive but has yet to present a position, beyond his tax plan, that enables Americans to determine whether, indeed, he will govern as an advocate of limited government and a return to constitutional restraints on power. He has repeatedly said that he will repeal and replace Obamacare (but with what?). He is committed to restoring American military power and wielding that power against terrorists. He has called for establishing a physical border, a wall, with Mexico paying for it, and for deporting illegal aliens. His rash personal attacks and unpredictable nature must engender fear in our enemies ISIS, al-Qaeda, and other terrorist groups; Russia; China; North Korea; and Iran. He is clearly an antidote to a weak and feckless Obama, who is manipulated with such ease by those who seek our destruction.

Ted Cruz is an intellectual with a deep appreciation for the Constitution and with an expressed desire to reduce the size and scope of the federal bureaucracy. He is also committed to a zealous military campaign against Muslim extremists, seeking to build an international coalition to effect that end, and to restoring American relations with Israel. He is also committed to repealing Obamacare. His tax plan troubles many because it depends on a Value Added Tax (VAT) system. The issue concerning whether he “stole” the Iowa primary because his campaign falsely represented to delegates that Ben Carson had dropped out of the race remains a character problem for him.

That character issue will dog Cruz because he has represented himself to be an evangelical Christian and, thus, has raised the bar for himself beyond what goes as standard political fare these days. In other words, as a Christian, he is expected to follow the commandments and be honest in all his dealings with others. Using falsehood to achieve political victory makes him appear hypocritical, as does his failure to admit that he once supported amnesty for illegal aliens.

Marco Rubio is the most articulate candidate, whose soaring rhetoric conveys an optimistic message of American renewal. Despite strident attacks made by Cruz, challenging Rubio's conservative bona fides, Rubio professes a commitment to limited government and to revoking Obama's unconstitutional executive actions, repealing Obamacare, terminating the deal with Iran, and restoring the separation of powers.

Doubt remains as to what extent Rubio will devote himself to eliminating the federal bureaucracy, but no doubt attends his commitment to destroying radical Islamic terrorists, to rebuilding the American military, or to repealing Obamacare.

The good news is that any one of these three candidates would be vastly superior to either remaining Democratic candidate, one of whom, Hillary Clinton, is likely on the verge of being recommended for indictment by FBI Director James Comey (which may force an end to her campaign). The bad news is that millions in the Democratic Party have no problem supporting an avowed socialist for President, albeit the socialist agenda of the Democratic Party has been a mainstay since at least the start of the Obama Administration, just not labeled as such. That growing new left movement will be a force affecting the outcome of the general election. We shall see whether enough Americans still believe in this country and are willing to fight for the Constitution to save it from destruction at the hands of socialists.