

After Wisconsin, Trump Remains Strong

Since writing last week that [the moment of truth](#) had arrived for Donald Trump, even I, and even at this late date, have been astounded at the frenzied amplification of the hysteria of his opponents within the Republican party and in the national media. Everyone seemed to detect that Wisconsin could be a turning point, and even very reasonable commentators such as Peggy Noonan and Kim Strassel in the *Wall Street Journal* wrote it up like generals giving battle in places advantageous to their enemies: Cornwallis at Yorktown, Napoleon at Leipzig, Hitler at Stalingrad and at Kursk. Wisconsin was the state of the LaFollettes and the Progressive movement, and, despite the aberrant Joseph R. McCarthy, of Gaylord Nelson, founder of Earth Day, and of maverick Democrat William Proxmire. And the conservatives were authentic conservatives, such as the state's able governor, Scott Walker, who has survived bruising battles with Democratic thuggery from the public-sector unions and from the shamefully politicized Democratic district attorney. Another very respected Wisconsin political conservative is the speaker of the House of Representatives, Paul Ryan, who was drafted as vice president in the bumbling Romney campaign of four years ago, and was drafted again to the speaker's chair after the sudden departure of John Boehner last year. Walker has endorsed Ted Cruz, and Trump and Ryan are far from soul-mates.

It was taken for granted by practically all observers that Trump would lose Wisconsin, though there was a wide variance of predictions of how badly he would lose. But implicit in many of the predictions was that any loss by Trump would be almost the end of his chances. It was deemed to be too late for a front-runner to lose and remain the front-runner, and there were comparisons with the almost Wizard of Oz campaign

of Romney, in which he was momentarily rivaled or even surpassed in the polls after each debate – by Rick Perry, Michele Bachmann, Herman Cain, Newt Gingrich, and Rick Santorum. But by this point in 2012, Romney was farther ahead than Trump. Of course, the comparison is nonsense, as Romney had been running for five years, having come second to John McCain in 2008, and was supported by almost everyone among the party regulars, including every living, dead, or anticipated member of the Bush family.

It was widely assumed that Trump's gift for affronting conventional political opinion would finally swamp his candidacy after he allowed Chris Matthews to hound him into a mousetrap about abortion, and a few other indecorous reflections. These gaffes have poured out of this candidate in a syntactically challenged torrent since he was first dismissed as merely mounting a publicity stunt on the fringes of the stately procession to nomination of Bush, Christie, or Rubio. This has not been a campaign like the others and will not become one now. About 40 percent of this year's Republican voters appear to be Trumpites more than Republicans and they don't care about the offended sensibilities of the bearers of the conventional wisdom. Polls show Trump standing at [National Review](#).