

# Distrust Yourself before You Distrust the Candidate

Trust can be a double-edged sword when it is not founded on insight. In politics as in personal relations, one can trust the wrong person or distrust the right one – with unfortunate consequences. Political candidates almost universally craft their public image to play to the voter's perception of their character – the “kissing babies” syndrome. They know that their audience is susceptible to emotional manipulation and so present themselves as deeply concerned with the public welfare, as scrupulously honest and, most importantly, as likeable and trustworthy.

But let the candidate refuse to play by the rules of the electoral game, to cast politically-correct caution to the wind, and to say directly what is on his mind without hedging or skirting contentious issues, and he will immediately be trashed as a moral pariah or an unsophisticated pleb. Establishment politicians will turn against him in an orgy of vilification and horror, and a partisan media will launch incessant volleys of contempt, vituperation and slander against both his character and his candidacy, dismissing him as a demagogue-in-the-making, a Republican version of Bernie Sanders, a social barbarian, a ruthless capitalist, and so on. In an access of unconscionable blindness, even so generally astute a commentator as Carolyn Glick has fallen for this canard, erroneously claiming that Trump offers no solutions to America's problems, merely focuses on blaming others while channeling hate. The disreputable tactic of blaming Trump for the programmatic violence of the Left – a disingenuous maneuver of which even Marco Rubio and Ted Cruz (aka TrusTed) were not innocent – is another instance of such malfeasance.

Such is the fate of a candidate who has dared to speak truth to cowardice and to grapple with the hot button issues of the

current social, cultural, and political scene: Muslim immigration and the problem of jihad, open borders and the massive influx of illegal aliens, trade imbalance, the deterioration of the manufacturing industry, galloping debt, the shrinking of the middle class and the plight of the American blue-collar worker. The message may not always be carefully articulated (to put it mildly), but it is the one message that addresses the critical dilemma in which the nation now finds itself. It is a message that is anathema to the gated elite, both political and intellectual, which is preoccupied with preserving its palatinate of power and privilege.

The primary strategy of the elite, as I contended in a recent article, is to promote public trust in its chosen candidates and, especially, corrosive distrust in those who have run afoul of its agenda. Cue the Donald. Republican politicians, conservative intellectuals and many common voters are willing to risk the dissolution of the party in ganging up on the one candidate who does not rely on corporate donations and the unsavory commitments that come with them, and who, for all his flaws (and who is without them?) has been willing to take a stand in defence of national security and restored solvency.

In effect, the electorate is influenced to trust the aristocracy of correct sentiment and presumably educated opinion and to distrust the swashbuckling outsider who has not been groomed by the keepers of the political estate and does not adhere to the standards of approved discourse. The individual voter is never encouraged to distrust both his vocal preceptors and his own endocrinal reactions, to engage in research, to reflect on the basis of evidence, and to acquire genuine insight in the process. That is, he is not schooled *to think*, to struggle for objectivity, since the press and the political establishment implicitly agree with ObamaCare architect Jonathan Gruber that the American public is [terminally stupid](#). Whatever the level of public

intelligence, the nomenklatura plainly is not to be trusted.

Whom, then, can one trust? Certainly not oneself – at least, not one's *initial reactions*, whether pro or con. Self-distrust is a healthy position from which to begin one's search for truth – or if undoubted truth is not available to the human mind, let us say *credible verisimilitude*. Nor is it a question of whom one personally likes or dislikes. The issue is larger than that. To base one's voting decision on personal liking or disliking of the man or woman in question, on the assessment of a candidate's perceived personality or public manifestation, on a gut reaction to the face, the voice, the manner and the language is at best problematic. It is like living in an Oculus Rift world.

Trust, as we have noted, can be deceptive. People trusted Obama, possibly the biggest mistake the American people have ever made, and a vote for Hillary or Bernie, diligently angling for voter trust, would only prolong and intensify the agony. In my country, people did not trust former Canadian prime minister Stephen Harper, who navigated ably in the treacherous waters of a stormy political and economic world; instead they placed their trust in Justin Trudeau, who in six short months has amassed a [\\$29.4 billion deficit](#), imported thousands of unvetted "Syrian" refugees at public expense, and is set to raise an already prohibitive tax rate.

Advocating for voter responsibility is a scarcely tenable proposition, and yet it is the *sine qua non* for democratic survival. I cannot say with assurance that Trump is the best man for the presidency, but I can say with confidence that his potential qualifications for the job have been obscured by an unrelenting campaign of calumny and misapprehension that seems almost demented. The Michelle Fields controversy is an excellent example of how the media and the pundits have inflated a tempest in a teacup to tsunami proportions. I was once quite emphatically shoved aside by a pair of bodyguards when I approached Robert Spencer as he was being led to the

podium –my bad, not his or his bodyguards’. A speaker under threat has a right to a protected space.

Admittedly, there is no yellow brick road to the right choice. One can only work to be as well-informed as possible and to *study the issues* with close attention. And to distrust one’s own subjective – that is, immediate, visceral, idiosyncratic or *ad hominem* – reactions to the politician who lobbies for your unearned favor or challenges your congenial assumptions.

First published in the