

Why Donald Trump May Well Become Our Next President

by Rebecca Bynum (October 2015)



I attended a Donald Trump rally yesterday, October 3, in Franklin Tennessee. I've never seen attendance like it. I arrived an hour early and the line snaked around the building then back on itself around the building again – and the people kept coming and coming. They were mostly average working people, I estimate about a third were under 30. All were heartened by the crowd itself. Everyone I spoke to expressed renewed hope for America in *this candidate*. Eventually, the organizers stopped letting people in and we were all stranded out in the rain. The couple behind me had driven all the way up from Alabama. About two thirds went home at that point, but around 750 people gravitated toward a small courtyard where a loud speaker was set up so that we could hear the speech inside. We stood in the rain and listened intently. Mr. Trump graciously came out afterward and spoke a few words to us before turning to the press. He said, "Excuse me, I have to do this press conference. They're totally dishonest, but I have to do it anyway," and everyone laughed. Honesty is what the people want.

Of course, the press *were* dishonest in their coverage. The picture above shows that small die-hard crowd outside (that's me under the tree), but was presented by Fox News as though that crowd constituted the entire rally. And in general, the press tries to present Donald Trump as angry and harsh, even mean and demagogue-ish. In person, he is very charming and personable, almost boyish in his enthusiasm, which is a very winning quality.

People really feel as though he is speaking not so much to them as *for* them. He expresses *their* views, yet he's unconventional and best of all he's not politically correct. And he consistently, and quickly, comes up with creative ideas as solutions. In Franklin, he put forward the idea that the rich Gulf Arab nations build a safe zone for refugees, so that when the fighting stops, they can immediately go home (and when it starts again, they can go back to the safe

zone). Trump clearly understands the cruel reality of incessant war in the Middle East. He sees the obvious, that strong-men as leaders, brutal as they may be, maintain order and stability and that this is the best we can hope for in that region. Our dreams of a democratic Middle East have long been dead and there is no "moderate opposition" which stands a chance of winning, let alone governing, in Syria. He wants to leave Assad in place and let Russia deal with ISIS there for now, which is indeed our only sane option at this point, yet naturally, the talking heads jumped on him for that position. At each step, Trump seems to give reasonable, common sense solutions without the ideological baggage most candidates carry and which makes their answers so predictable. Trump is refreshing because he actually appears to be thinking for himself – a rare thing in politics.

On their Sunday morning news shows, both Chuck Todd, who has been proclaiming the beginning of the end of the Trump candidacy for a while now, and George Stephanopoulos, a Clinton acolyte, asked Trump what it would take for him to get out of the race. They seem to think his ego will become bruised at some point and when that happens, he'll pick up his marbles and go home. I doubt that.

The Donald Trump I see really believes in America. He's the quintessential all-American boy who believes he can do anything he sets his mind to. Even his touchiness about the polls is somewhat endearing. However, he's not soft and he's far from stupid. He has figured out how to use the media as no other candidate ever has. He understands he can speak directly to the people just by using Twitter, thus bypassing the usual media filter. I've also never seen a candidate learn and grow so quickly before. Those who are watching to see him stumble badly will likely be disappointed. He's writing his own script.

He knows, and we know, the country is in an absolute mess (we've had years and years of weak Presidents) and he believes in his heart he can help put it right. He said he felt he had to run because he doesn't see anyone else who is bold enough to do what needs doing. "I had to, I had to," is how he expressed it. I understand that feeling completely and so did the audience.

Unfortunately for his naysayers, there is no reason for Trump to drop out of the race – he's not going to run out of money and he doesn't think anyone else could possibly do a better job. He will fight it out to the end, and I for one believe he will win the nomination.

Looking to the general election, the democratic field is as weak as it was when they ran McGovern against Nixon or Mondale against Reagan. From what I saw at that rally yesterday, I honestly think Trump could sweep the Independents and bring a big chunk of the younger generation into the Republican Party.

Of course it's early – we'll see.

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