Trump's Speech Trumped Cruz

By Phyllis Schlafly *July 26, 2016*

Donald Trump's acceptance speech proved that his vision, not Ted Cruz's, is the future of the conservative movement and the Republican Party. Trump hit the right notes in his talk in putting America first, while Cruz's presentation to the convention the night before was thin on conservative substance.

Cruz did not disqualify himself from being a future standard-bearer merely by failing to endorse Trump, but also by failing to embrace the conservative policies that are necessary to make America great again. It was Trump, not Cruz, who succeeded in fulfilling Ronald Reagan's goal of "raising a banner of no pale pastels, but bold colors which make it unmistakably clear where we stand on all of the issues troubling the people."

Trump repeatedly and passionately demonstrated in his acceptance speech that he would stand up for Americans and do everything in his power to end the exploitation of the United States by the rest of the world. "Americanism, not globalism, will be our credo!" Trump declared, adding that "the American people will come first once again."

As Trump did throughout the campaign, he led on the fundamental issues of immigration and trade. While his rivals eventually followed his lead, it was Trump who framed the issues and forced the media to pay attention to them.

Trump explained in a compelling way the harm resulting from crime by illegal aliens. He described how he personally met with the family members of a young woman with a promising future who had been killed by an illegal alien, who was then released and still remains at large in our country.

On jobs, the Republican Party since the 1990s supported free trade deals that have cost American workers dearly. Trump has single-handedly converted our Party into one that is now pro-American-worker.

"I have visited the laid-off factory workers, and the communities crushed by our horrible and unfair trade deals," Trump declared during his speech. "These are the forgotten men and women of our country ... who work hard but no longer have a voice."

"I am your voice," Trump then said, amid thunderous applause. For the first time since Ronald Reagan, the Republican Party has a nominee who actually represents the average American worker.

An astounding 12 million non-Republicans crossed party lines to vote for Trump in the Republican primaries. The Democrats did not vote for Trump because they prefer supporting a billionaire, but because they like his positions on immigration and trade.

Trump extolled "the dignity of work and the dignity of working people." He brings back to the Republican Party the "bricklayers, carpenters, and electricians" whom he said his father was most comfortable being with.

Trump observed that "America has lost nearly one-third of its manufacturing jobs since 1997," and that NAFTA was "one of the worst economic deals ever made by our country." "Never again," Trump added.

In contrast, Ted Cruz's speech at the convention made only passing references to immigration and trade, without the substance or the passion that Trump expressed. Instead Cruz repeated "freedom" over and over, some 23 times, declaring that "America is an ideal," and that the ideal is merely that "freedom matters."

Cruz's speech reflected the views of his mega-donors, who tend to be more libertarian than the conservative views of the average American. Leaving people alone to do whatever they like is not enough to restore the United States to military superiority or economic independence, or to achieve the many other goals set forth in the Republican Party platform.

Cruz's vision is not that of Ronald Reagan, who made the United States stronger and more prosperous as Trump vows to do. Trump emphasized in his speech his opposition to the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which he said "will not only destroy our manufacturing, but it will make America subject to the rulings of foreign governments."

Trump even pledged "to never sign any trade agreement that hurts our workers, or that diminishes our freedom and independence." Cruz made no such pledge and failed to mention the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

Trump obviously meant every word in his electrifying speech, as when he expressed his genuine outrage at how "big business, elite media and major donors are lining up behind the campaign of [Hillary Clinton] because they know she will keep our rigged system in place." Cruz's speech had no such criticism of Hillary, and relied on superficial rhetorical devices like devoting much of his speech to a story about a sympathetic victim with whom Cruz had no personal connection.

The shortcoming of Ted Cruz is not only his failure to endorse the Republican Party nominee. The greater flaw is that, like Mitt Romney and others in the Republican Establishment, Cruz has failed to embrace the conservative vision that Donald Trump stands for.