

Romney Attacked Trump – Called Him “Phony, A Fraud”

WASHINGTON – If you are a convinced Donald Trump supporter, Mitt Romney’s scathing personal attack against the Republican front-runner will not mean anything. For the Trump true believers it is a given that the “Republican Establishment” fears the New York billionaire, and so that they will do whatever they can to stop him from becoming the party nominee.

Romney’s attacks Trump

Let’s put this in perspective. Mitt Romney was the 2012 Republican presidential candidate. Although he lost to Barack Obama, for some time he was the national leader of the Republican Party. So, at least some people will listen to what he says on issues of Republican Party national politics in a decisive election year.

And now Romney, using surprisingly strong language, called Donald Trump “*a phony, a fraud*”. He stated that “*dishonesty is Trump’s hallmark*”. And he added that “*his promises are as worthless as a degree from Trump University*” , (a clear reference to the higher education institution created by Trump that is now being sued by former students who claim the whole thing was a scam). Beyond attacking Trump’s character and morality, Romney clearly stated that Trump’s policies would lead America to economic and foreign policy disasters.

Does this make any difference?

In his speech, Romney pointed out that this race is not over. There is still a good chance to stop Trump. There are other candidates in the race. Trump, while ahead in the delegates count, has not amassed a prohibitive lead. He can be beaten.

Alright, Romney delivered his broadside. But will the

Republican Party members who are about to vote in the upcoming –and indeed decisive– primaries really listen? Or is this a wasted effort on the part of a man who after all was defeated back in 2012, and has since practically disappeared from the national political scene?

Well, there is a good chance that at least voters paid attention to Romney's warnings. True enough, Trump has a hard-core of adoring supporters who will be behind him, no matter what Romney or anybody else, will say about him.

More than half of the Republican voters not with Trump

But the record shows that in the primaries held so far about 2/3 of the voters are not with Trump. Worse yet for Trump, many among the non-Trump voters have proclaimed that they will never vote for him, even if he is the official Republican nominee.

In other words, while Trump's support may go up some from 35%, he faces serious difficulties in getting enough votes to secure the nomination. If his opponents are more organized, they can make sure that Trump's support stays at 35%, or below that.

Energize the anti-Trump voters

Obviously, with his speech Romney tried to energize the non-Trump, or anti-Trump, camp. He wanted to convince millions of Republicans who are hesitating that this contest for the party nomination is far from over.

Well, who knows how all this will play out. Sadly, the other three contenders for the GOP nomination, Ted Cruz, Marco Rubio, and John Kasich are either mediocre candidates, (Cruz and Rubio), or bad campaigners (Kasich).

While Trump is certainly not polished when it comes to articulating credible policy positions, he is not facing a

formidable opposition. (This in part explains his surprising success).

Something will happen

Still, it is quite possible that something will happen. Romney's open frontal attack against Trump will have ripple effects. Others will join the anti-Trump coalition. Yes, this means donors, and millions of dollars of PAC money going to fund anti-Trump TV ads. Of course, all this also means creating a civil war within the Republican party. This fight will get really ugly.

Slow down Trump

But the net effect will probably be to slow down the Trump Express. If in the upcoming primaries Trump does reasonably well; but not well enough to secure the number of delegates that will guarantee his nomination prior to the Convention, then his claim to be the anointed Republican leader is voided.

Based on results so far, this scenario is quite possible. Note that In Virginia, as well as other states, most late deciders, primaries voters who made up their minds at the last minute, opted for someone other than Trump.

Therefore, Romney's scathing attack may very well sway many among the millions of undecided who are about to vote in many more primaries in the next couple of weeks. Here is Romney's simple message: "*Fellow Republicans, whatever you decide, do not vote for Trump*".

Everything is possible

In the end, if Trump gets to the Republican Convention without the pledged 1,237 delegates he needs to seal the nomination, almost everything is possible. After the first ballot, all delegates are released from their pledge, and free to vote as they please. Who knows what may happen. Yes, this war within

the Republican Party is going to get a lot worse.

However, for Mitt Romney and many others, avoiding the prospect of Trump as the official candidate of the Republican Party is worth the ugliest of fights.