

Everything to Lose

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This past week in the campaign for the American presidency we once again witnessed an attempt by the Republican party nominee to hit the proverbial reset button. Different from his previous attempts, we saw a concerted effort to “appeal” to the black vote by the Nixonesque “law and order” candidate. For the second time in a week, Mr. Donald Trump spoke to an overwhelmingly white audience as he asked for “the vote of every single African American citizen in the country that wants to see a better future.” He proceeded to rhetorically ask, again with an overwhelmingly white audience looking on, “What do you have to lose by trying something new, like Trump? You’re living in your poverty, your schools are no good, you have no jobs, 58% of your youth is unemployed, what they hell do have to lose?”

Nothing is new with this move. For nearly one-hundred and fifty years political candidates have professed their deep interests in black progress and pious determination to do everything they can for the race. What is amazing here is the way Donald Trump, his advisors, and possibly many of his supporters believe that the black community will not recognize the slick double-talk that this candidate is all of sudden demonstrating.

As with most of the issues he triumphs, Mr. Trump has offered no solutions or policies, unless you believe building a concrete wall is a concrete solution. Even if Trump did actually come up with meaningful policy, the reactionary elements of the electorate and his party which he so carefully caresses, will unite against and kill any proposal which looks toward real civil, economic, or political equality in the United States.

What have we seen from Donald “what do you have to lose” Trump? Just focusing on the symbolic, rather than policy driven aspects of his campaign, he is the same candidate who failed to speak up during the primaries when former Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan David Duke declared his support for the billionaire candidate. The Ku Klux Klan, an organization that has murdered tens of thousands of African Americans since its founding in 1866.

Mr. Trump has also failed to speak up when this same klansman decided to throw his own hat in the electoral ring. A decision Duke made based on the similarities he saw with his own vision to that of Trump and his followers. Additionally, Mr. “what do you have to lose” has failed to speak up when he has seen the Confederate battle flag being openly waved at his campaign rallies, a the symbol of a traitorous nation, violence, murder and anti-civil rights.

Mr. Trump is also the candidate who has consistently failed to recognize that Black Lives Matter. In

fact in the wake of the shootings in Dallas, which followed murders in Baton Rouge and Minneapolis, he and the Republican Party put on a national convention that at the very least dismissed, and in many ways attacked, such an appeal for the recognition of one's basic humanity.

How can a man like this, who in these obvious moments has failed to recognize the historic and systemic racism that exists in America, now turn to the black community and ask, "What do you have to lose?" The answer Mr. Trump, EVERYTHING.

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