

The One Unspeakable Four-Letter Word in Trump's Vocabulary Has Five Letters

It was a simple, straightforward question. Debate moderator Chris Wallace wanted to know if Donald Trump would accept the results of the election if he lost. The answer was one more self-inflicted gunshot wound – this one, likely, to the head.

“I will look at it at the time,” Trump said. “I will keep you in suspense.”

He had been doing well up to that point. He sounded knowledgeable and came across as restrained. But neither his demeanor nor his apparent grasp of the issues was going to be the headline the next day. This was: “Donald Trump Won't Say if He'll Accept Result of Election.” That's from the New York Times, which began its story with this:

“In a remarkable statement that seemed to cast doubt on American democracy, Donald J. Trump said Wednesday that he might not accept the results of next month's election if he felt it was rigged against him – a stand that Hillary Clinton blasted as ‘horrifying’ at their final and caustic debate on Wednesday.”

None of this will matter, of course, to the millions who see Donald Trump as their savior. The faithful don't easily abandon their messiah. Trump was right when he said he could shoot somebody on Fifth Avenue and he wouldn't lose any votes. Not from his most loyal acolytes anyway.

And it might not matter all that much either to the guy in Ohio who's been looking for work for way too long. This may be one of those statements that bother the elite more than ordinary Americans who have other, more pressing concerns on

their minds.

So it's no surprise that it matters to the people who help steer the national conversation – the news media, which pretty much detested Donald Trump long before the final debate. Still, the Times is right. Trump's refusal to say he'll accept the election results – barring some evidence of massive fraud – does “cast doubt on American democracy.”

Every losing president in modern times has accepted the decision of the voters – even in super close races like John Kennedy's questionable victory over Richard Nixon or George W. Bush's win over Al Gore.

But if you think the election is “rigged,” as Donald Trump claims, and if you think the fix is in, and if you're as self-centered as Donald Trump is, it might make sense not to make promises about whether you'll accept the election results or not.

But there's something else at work here.

There's just one unspeakable four-letter word in Donald Trump's vocabulary, a word that actually has five letters: L-O-S-E-R.

That's the one thing Trump really can't accept; that he's not the winner he constantly tells us he is. But if Hillary wins, Trump will be a loser whether he likes it or not, a loser unceremoniously told by the American people, “You're fired!”

What happens then? In the short run, I wonder what his loyal minions will do if they think their guy got robbed. If he won't accept the results, why should they? I'm not sure how that anger would play out, but given how they've responded to anyone in the media who has simply criticized Trump – and I speak from personal experience here – nothing is out of the question on that score.

There are also questions about the long run, questions about the very future of the Republican Party. Are we supposed to think that Trump's most passionate supporters will get behind the Republican candidate for president in 2020 if they think there was a conspiracy to steal the election in 2016? I wouldn't bet on it.

But this is what happens when angry, alienated primary voters pick a wrecking ball as their nominee. Before this is over, Donald Trump may bring the Senate down with him – and while losing the House is a longer shot, it could happen.

To all those frustrated Republicans who gave Donald Trump the GOP nomination, congratulations. He's all yours. And I fear so is President Hillary Clinton.