

Trump's parting with Lewandowski may be a taming of the beast

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As news broke Monday morning, June 20, that Donald Trump fired his campaign manager, Corey Lewandowski, rumors began to circle about the state of the Trump Presidential Campaign and the power struggles within.

Hope Hicks, spokeswoman of the Trump Campaign, offered a brief statement, stating "The Donald J. Trump Campaign for President, which has set a historic record in the Republican Primary having received almost 14 million votes, has today announced that Corey Lewandowski will no longer be working with the campaign."

With no warning and suspicious little being said so far about the decision to drop Lewandowski, many could begin to speculate at the nature of the move. Allegations have started that the children of Donald Trump had encouraged what was likely a move to remove the controversial campaign manager and that the issue began with Lewandowski's rift with Paul Manafort. Though Lewandowski has publicly denied the dispute, a power struggle between himself and Manafort seemed apparent for some time. Manafort, a seasoned political operative hired by the Trump campaign in March of this year, is a veteran of the GOP political elite who worked on the political campaigns of Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan and both Bush presidents.

The move to hire Manafort was seen at the time as one to increase Trump's electability and aid him in the effort for what was feared as an imminent contested GOP convention. Lewandowski, who had been with the Trump campaign since the beginning, had fully embraced the gung-ho attitude of the Trump presidential character. Lewandowski caught criticism back in April for obstructing journalist Michelle Fields and calling her "delusional" after a Florida press conference. Where Manafort and Lewandowski split was on whether to maintain the Trump brand of politics or to make Trump electable again. Manafort represented much of the interest focused on aligning Trump with the power source of the Republican Party, while Lewandowski saw the candidate's strongest asset in the brash attitude that made him the political outsider.

Even as Trump became the presumptive nominee and his strongest opponents began to step down, it seemed apparent that he had embraced his persona as the political troublemaker of this election cycle. The latest move now comes across as an effort to tame and groom Trump into the candidate that the GOP will want to take into the general election. The message is apparent; with the level of discussion that came about over a potential contested convention, and the various rumblings of party elite, there has been a lot of concern for the GOP about making Trump their candidate. Paul Manafort's rise to position and Lewandowski's downfall will signal the shift in the Trump character to one the GOP hopes will appeal to a broader audience outside the camp of dedicated Trump supporters.

Lewandowski was with the campaign since the start, and his departure may come with more backlash than anticipated. The move has sparked tough publicity and caused doubt as to why anyone would 'change horses' midstream.' If Trump really has a shot at the presidency, Manafort may be his best option; however, with Manafort as a member of the GOP elite, the move may hurt his credibility as the 'political outsider.' The loss of Lewandowski may come to cost Trump that image. The question then remains: can Trump expand his appeal to a general audience without losing the same fervor that brought him success in the GOP primary elections?

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