

Some Questions

by James Como

1. How are the mayors and governors who support sanctuary cities, and who threaten to defend them as sancturies for undocumented immigrants against federal authority, *not* incipiently separatist – in fact, potentially rebellious? Nullification all over again? Is George Wallace chuckling in his grave over the assertion of *City Rights*?

2. President Obama has shown an unseemly willingness to cite his high approval ratings. On the other hand, we all know that his peeps let him down, even after he made their support personal. He fails even to acknowledge that phenomenon (the Dem loss owing, he believes, to Hillary not getting around enough). Many of us recall that, every time he gave a speech in support of the ACA, it's popularity fell. And recently he has insisted that the Dems have no policy problem but a communication problem which, of course, cannot reflect any deficiency of his own. Still: how to explain his personal popularity? Simple, I think: the public makes a mental distinction between the head of government (posturing, narcissistic, fraudulent, incompetent) and the head of state (attractive, fluent, poised).

3. Should those of us who regard Hillary as a political, moral and ethical gargoyle and Progressives as her idolaters – should we encourage the Left-wing lunacy that has irrupted since the election? True, the tantrums – from riots, to marches, to posturing theatrical brats, even unto a nonentity so skinny that she disappears when standing sideways but will mock the incoming First Lady: in their own right hateful and hate-filled – the tantrums are dangerous, grotesque, and toxic, but in their smugness, condescension, self-righteousness, and sheer ugliness might they be useful? As convenient emblems of features that people voted against when

electing Donald Trump, and that therefore rouse even more and sturdier opposition? In a word, No. Such behavior creates the occasion for bad governance: acrid ash in the eyes of the body politic.

4. So then? Should Trump's people – his team, surrogates, and sounding boards – sound off? Indeed, they should, they must, but not against the idolaters. Rather, they should “go hard” (as the President-Elect would say) against the trolls in the tribes of white supremacists, anti-Semites, nativists, and all other sorts of loud-mouth, atavistic bigots who really are feeling their oats. First, because they deserve the opprobrium; second, because it shows balance: no matter their pretensions and pretences, abusers of civility and of civic order, from the trivial to the menacing, are symmetrically unworthy of any safe space whatsoever. The Trump team must be able to say, “*that's* how it's done!”

5. I recall an event eight years ago. Fox News outed Van Jones as a Truther. It ended his nomination for a position in the Obama administration. A close call, but not the big news. That was when some knucklehead in the White House opined that “maybe we should be watching Fox News.” So: should someone in the new administration be watching MSNBC? Yes, and relentlessly. Not because its commentators aren't predictably full of their own soup (though there are, even if rarely, moments of lucidity), but because a guest sometimes does not have a contrived complaint but a real one, authentically expressed; in fact, so worthy of attention that its co-option by the idolaters should not be uncontested.

6. Finally, will, then, those mayors, governors and gargoyle wannabes relent? Of course not. They are not a good-willed, disinterested opposition: scarcely worth the ink, the air, or the electrons. Doesn't matter. What does matter, I believe, is resoluteness, conviction, and healthy doses of Pence-erian equanimity – consistently – from the new administration. And that it ignore post-presidential pontifications: after all,

almost everyone else will.