

DAY SIX: OUR FIRST PURGE

The big news from the Trump transition this morning is that Mike Rogers – who had joined Trump as an advisor on national security close to the end of the campaign – has been ousted.

Former House Intelligence Committee Chairman Mike Rogers left President-elect Donald Trump's transition team, days after Trump's surprise victory and a shakeup at the top of the team's organizational chart.

Rogers' abrupt departure came at the request of team officials, said two people familiar with the matter. The Michigan Republican, who'd also worked for the FBI, had been tapped to help guide the new administration on national security issues.

Several people have already referred to this move as a purge of people associated with Christie. Others have even called it Stalinesque. That suggests Trump demoted Christie last week not because he was perceived as tainted by the Bridgegate scandal, but because of some sense of distrust. I'm also interested in the focus – in stories on this – on Rogers' FBI background – it has been more than 20 years since Rogers worked at FBI, and there have always been lurking questions about the circumstances of his departure. I wonder whether there wasn't a concern about Rogers' loyalty.

Meanwhile, Neocon godfather Eliot Cohen – who led a lot of the Never Trump opposition – has officially given up on reaching out to the Trump's team.

After exchange w Trump transition team, changed my recommendation: stay away. They're angry, arrogant, screaming "you

LOST!" Will be ugly.

I consider all this a good sign.

Not a good sign that our country will soon be led by someone who can't even work with the leading lights of his nominal party. But a good sign that Trump is so aggressively retaliating against Republicans.

A woman from Iran did a tweetstorm the other night describing what it's like to live in a (religious) dictatorship. Read the whole thing. But the key point is that power in dictatorships depends on picking off minorities and those who protect them. The rest of the society remains disciplined out of fear that they will be added to the select group of minorities used to justify power.

Trump will likely (try to) get there, especially with Steve Bannon installed in his White House. Trump has already promised to increase on Obama's already sky high number of deportations of Latinos. His Contract on to America includes several promises targeted at (Latino and Arab) immigrants.

★ THIRD, cancel all federal funding to sanctuary cities.

★ FOURTH, begin removing the more than two million criminal illegal immigrants from the country and cancel visas to foreign countries that won't take them back.

★ FIFTH, suspend immigration from terror-prone regions where vetting cannot safely occur. All vetting of people coming into our country will be considered "extreme vetting."

[snip]

End Illegal Immigration Act

Fully-funds the construction of a wall on our southern border with the full understanding that the country of Mexico will be reimbursing the United States

for the full cost of such wall; establishes a two-year mandatory minimum federal prison sentence for illegally re-entering the U.S. after a previous deportation, and a five-year mandatory minimum federal prison sentence for illegally re-entering for those with felony convictions, multiple misdemeanor convictions or two or more prior deportations; also reforms visa rules to enhance penalties for overstaying and to ensure open jobs are offered to American workers first.

And it includes one that I suspect will be used to target Black Lives Matter and similar opposition groups.

Restoring Community Safety Act

Reduces surging crime, drugs and violence by creating a task force on violent crime and increasing funding for programs that train and assist local police; increases resources for federal law enforcement agencies and federal prosecutors to dismantle criminal gangs and put violent offenders behind bars.

So we should expect Trump to move towards targeting African Americans, Latinos, and Muslims. We should be prepared to protect people from these marginalized groups. More importantly, we should try, as much as possible, to prevent them from *becoming* a minority.

Hillary Clinton won the popular majority on Tuesday. There are plenty more people – such as the African Americans and Latinos that didn't turn out to vote for Hillary, or Republicans who voted against Trump but not for Hillary – who are also in that majority. A majority of this country does not subscribe to Trump's divisiveness. So long as we keep that majority together, it will be very hard for Trump's scapegoating to work.

And rather than turn to his key scapegoats right away, Trump has instead turned against disloyal groups: Lindsey Graham, who opposed Trump because of his attacks on Muslims but who also happens to be closeted; Harry Reid, who has called him out aggressively but is also a Mormon, a faith that very aggressively opposed Trump; now other Republicans, including Neocons, perceived as disloyal. He has, effectively, widened and reinforced the majority that opposes him.

I have less than no time for Mike Rogers. Ditto, Lindsey Graham. But by targeting his own, first, Trump makes it more likely this country can stay together to defend far more vulnerable potential targets.