

When Trump Is Presidential, His Critics Are Left Out in the Rain

It was an altogether fitting, albeit pathetic, picture. Shortly before Donald Trump delivered the greatest speech of his life, a speech some pundits called historic in its own right, Rosie O'Donnell "addressed a rain-soaked crowd outside the White House .. during the 'Resistance Address,' an event countering President Trump's speech to a joint session of Congress later that evening. She criticized Trump on his foreign policy, stance towards race and women's rights, while urging the 100 or so gathered to resist Trump (and the weather) through the night" (my emphasis).

And so, as Trump spoke to tens of millions of Americans (and probably millions of others watching around the world), O'Donnell spoke to roughly 100 protesters, doubtless chilled to the bone in the rain.

And as Trump called for unity and reached out to African-Americans and Jews and Muslims and immigrants—and Democrats—O'Donnell exclaimed, "This is not Russia. To Donald Trump and his pathetic band of white, privileged criminal businessmen, I would like to say to him, 'nyet, sir.'"

In reality, the "nyet" is to her, not to him, and her words and actions only underscore that fact.

This was a night when CNN's Van Jones had the sense to praise Trump for his speech, especially the moment he honored the widow of the slain Navy Seal, saying, "He became president of the United States in that moment, period," adding, "That was one of the most extraordinary moments you have ever seen in American politics."

It was a night when Wolf Blitzer said that Trump delivered “an important, powerful speech,” when Anderson Cooper said that, “This was probably, without a doubt, one of his best speeches that I’ve ever heard,” and when even NPR’s Scott Detrow could say, “This is far and away Trump’s most presidential moment to-date, and the most broadly-framed argument for his agenda. All relative, but notable.”

And remember: This is the voice of the left (and many more quotes could be cited), the voice of the Trump critics, of those characterized by the president as enemies of the people. Yet they were largely in agreement in recognizing the importance of the moment.

But on the Democratic side of the aisle, a little-known, former governor was tasked with responding to Trump, but his presentation was so underwhelming that even Rachel Maddow described it as “stunty and small”—which actually describes the state of the Democratic party at this point in time. (We could also add the adjective “leaderless.”)

And so, we will remember the Democrats who would not stand with and for the president when he called for war against radical Islam or, worse still, who would not stand with and for the widow of a slain Navy Seal.

And we will remember the comment of the new DNC Chair Tom Perez, who described Trump’s epic speech by saying, “This was Steve Bannon on steroids with a smile.” Did I just say “stunty and small”?

We will also remember the celebrities who railed on Trump in the most vulgar and immature of terms, like Charlie Sheen (who really does seem to need help), addressing the president as, “you Fascist, legally (offensive phrase), despotic imbecile!” (Yes, a grown man wrote this; he also labelled Trump a “simpleton” and a “[expletive] piglet fraud.”)

George Takei responded to Trump’s statement that, “We cannot

allow a beachhead of terrorism form inside America,” by tweeting, “Yes. And let’s start by putting a stop to Radical White Supremacist Terror.” And Joshua Malina tweeted, “That was the worst speech I ever didn’t have to watch to know that it was terrible.”

Of course, Trump has many hurdles to overcome, many difficult decisions to make, many storms to navigate, much work to be done, and perhaps even some crises to endure.

But the formula for his resounding success—which means the even more resounding defeat of his opponents—is to step into the fullness of his role as the president of the United States of America, with all the awe and responsibility that position evokes, and to do his best to keep his most important campaign promises.

If he will do that, his critics will end up all wet, perhaps literally as well as figuratively.

To quote Van Jones again, “For people who have been hoping that maybe he would remain a divisive cartoon, which he often finds a way to do, they should be a little bit worried tonight. Because that thing you just saw him do, if he finds a way to do that over and over again, he’s going to be there for eight years.”

Well said. {eoa}