

Substantial Disruption



Go Back to Where You Came From

By Mike Tully

As I write this, a crowd at a Trump rally is chanting “send her back, send her back!” The President had invoked the name of Minnesota Congresswoman Ilhan Omar, whom he falsely accused of praising Al-Qaeda, and the crowd morphed into a hate chorus. “Send her back,” they scream over and over. “Send her back!” Trump is attacking Omar, along with the three other congresswomen who comprise “the Squad,” Rashida Tlaib, Ayanna Pressley, and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. The President has decided to goose his re-election effort with a hate campaign against them and his twitterpated followers don’t question why the most powerful person on Earth persists in punching down.

“Send her back” is a variation of “go back to where you came from.” When you tell someone to “go back to where you came from,” you are not blowing them a kiss. It’s one of the most aggressive phrases in any language and the target of the language knows exactly what it means. When Seung-Hui Cho had difficulty reciting, classmates taunted the Korean-American, telling him to “go back to China.” He was socially awkward and seemed like an easy target of bullies and their enablers until he opened fire on the Virginia Tech campus and killed 32 people. Cho left a manifesto that raged with the pain of a million humiliations. “Oh, the happiness I could have had mingling among you hedonists,” he wrote, “being counted as one of you.” But he was always told to go back to where he came from. “For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction,” he wrote. “All the shit you’ve given me, right back at you with hollow points.”

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission [cites the phrase](#) “Go back to where you came from” as an example of “potentially unlawful conduct.” There is a reason for that. “(T)he idea that we don’t have any more room for people, or those people don’t look like us, this is a long, ugly strain in American history,” Michael Cornfield of George Washington University [told NPR](#). “They carry these sentiments that we have seen over centuries, but then they get repurposed for the current moment,” said Jennifer Wingard of the University of Houston. ““(G)o back where you came from’ is the same as ‘go back to your own country’ is the same as ‘you are not allowed here’ is the same as ‘no immigrants allowed,’” she added. “Yet it carries all of this historical shorthand with it.”

Trump has tapped into the vein. “So interesting to see ‘Progressive’ Democrat Congresswomen, who originally came from countries whose governments are a complete and total catastrophe, the worst, most corrupt and inept anywhere in the world,” he tweeted. “Why don’t they go back and help fix the totally broken and crime infested places from which they came.” Since three of the congresswomen were born in the USA, the President literally described his own country as “a complete and total catastrophe, the worst, most corrupt and inept anywhere in the world.” If his followers paid attention and had any sense of logic, that would be a damaging admission. Kellyanne “Alternative

Facts” Conway came to his rescue, [telling Breakfast Media’s Andrew Feinberg](#) that Trump meant “originally” from, not literally from – after curiously asking Feinberg “What’s your ethnicity?” She elaborated on Twitter. “We are all from somewhere else “originally,” she tweeted. “I asked the question to answer the question and volunteered my own ethnicity: Italian and Irish.” Should Trump tell Kellyanne to go back to where she came from, presumably she would be subdivided and returned to Italy and Ireland respectively.

Since I frequently criticize Trump, I pondered how to respond should he tell me to go back to where I came from, taking into account Kellyanne Conway’s definition. Which totally broken and crime infested place should I go back to and help fix? Rather than being subdivided, I would choose an origin that exceeds five percent of my heritage on *Ancestry.com*. For example, my largest ancestral background is in “Eastern Europe and Russia.” I can’t fix Russia; Putin has that covered. My Mother’s family came from Hungary, but Trump likes its autocratic Prime Minister, Viktor Orban. Nothing to fix there either. The next highest category is Spain. Perhaps I should go back and fix that messy Catalan thing. But that would mean learning at least two more languages.

Next comes “Ireland and Scotland.” Fixing Ireland probably means trying to put out whatever fires the Brexit fiasco will trigger along the Ireland-Northern Ireland border. I’ll defer to Boris Johnson, England’s cabbage patch Trump, to figure that one out. As for Scotland, that’s easy: get rid of the Trump golf courses. You’re welcome. Finally, *Ancestry.com* says I’m ten percent Native American. If I choose that one, I can stay here and fix things. That sounds good. The first thing I’ll do if I have to fix my ancestral home is turn the tables on Trump and tell him that he should go back to where he came from. “Mr. President,” I would say, “go back to where you came from.”

In other words: go to hell.