

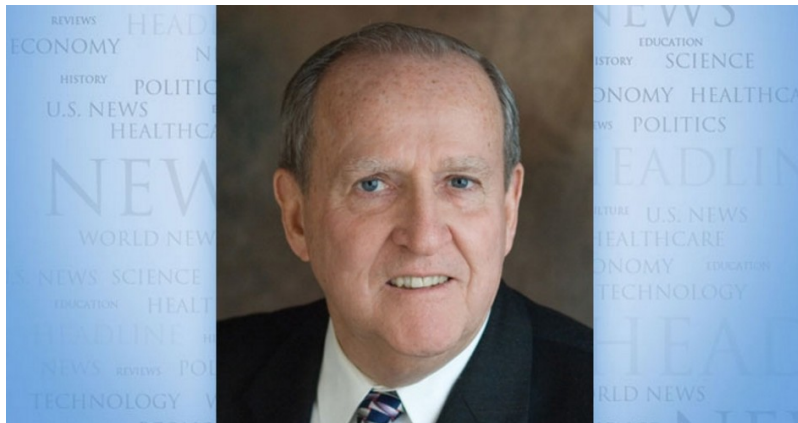


Written by [John F. McManus](#) on November 26, 2019

Impeachment Hearings a Nasty Farce

Leading Democrats insist that the recently concluded round of impeachment hearings by the House Intelligence Committee were totally necessary. They claim that President Trump may have committed a crime worthy of being driven from office. So the nation was subjected to two weeks worth of bombastic scrutiny.

The Constitution states that “bribery” is a crime worthy of removal from office. Definitions of bribery consistently point to someone receiving or providing monetary payments for some stated purpose. No one, not even the Democrats who conducted the hearings, has accused President Trump of using his office for monetary gain. There was no bribery crime committed by Trump, and they know it.



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But the Democrat panel tried very hard to convert the Trump administration’s use of normal diplomatic policy into a crime. **The hearings weren’t about relying on evidence of a crime; they amounted to two weeks of trying to find a crime – while failing to do so.** Like it or not, Trump or his aides asking the recipient of U.S. foreign aid to provide information about Biden family members receiving U.S. taxpayers’ money from government-connected Ukrainians is something a president has a right to do.

Presidents or their aides regularly engage in this kind of activity. Trump wasn’t asking for money; he was seeking information about the money received by the Bidens from government-connected Ukrainians. What President Trump or his aides did was practice norms that are well established. When he was vice president in 2016, for example, Joe Biden threatened to withhold U.S. aid if then-Ukrainian President Poroshenko didn’t fire the country’s prosecutor general, Viktor Shokin, who was investigating the Ukrainian energy company Burisma. That particular Ukrainian official was removed, and President Poroshenko was defeated in a legitimate election. Sitting on the board of Burisma was Joe Biden’s son, Hunter Biden, who received up to \$50,000 per month in compensation. It seems as though the Burisma-Biden connection is what the recent hearings should have investigated.

The hounding of President Trump can be described as a huge political effort, not really an attempt to protect the integrity of the man who is president, or the office of presidency itself. Top Democrats, intensely desirous of defeating Trump’s reelection bid in 2020, will rely on any way to besmirch him. Two weeks of nationally televised hearings seeking to find a crime will sway a number of voters. They will associate the word “impeachment” with the name “Trump” and it will affect their vote in the 2020 election. That’s what the much-ballyhooed hearings were all about.

Most Americans are unaware that Trump’s major “crime” (which surely is not a crime) is that he is not



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part of the “Deep State” that has held power over our nation’s government for decades. Trump is guilty of seeking to “drain the swamp.” He is not guilty of using commonly accepted presidential norms to assemble evidence that Biden family members benefitted by using their political clout to gain monetary favors from a Ukrainian energy company.

Trump is actually doing what the American people expected from him. Call it “upending the Deep State” or “draining the swamp” or something else. All Americans should applaud, not allow themselves to be influenced by a televised sideshow seeking to harm his chances of accomplishing what he has, so far, only partially succeeded at.

John F. McManus is president emeritus of [The John Birch Society](#).



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