



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on February 2, 2020

With Trump on Brink of Acquittal, Time for Impeachment Post-Mortem and What's Left Unsaid

It's all over but the shouting, as is said. While President Trump's acquittal in his Senate impeachment trial was never really in doubt, it's now just days away with a decision to not allow witnesses. Moreover, Trump's vindication may be somewhat bipartisan, with a few Democrats possibly voting in his favor. Yet some things here have been left unsaid, not the least of which is that what seems an end may just be a dark new beginning.



Democrats had wanted to extend the trial by calling witnesses, despite the fact that the testimony of 17 of them was part of the House process. Thus did some find this prosecution request inexplicable; after all, impeachment has long appeared a loser for Democrats, with Americans bored with the fiasco, the president's poll numbers rising during its course (as happened with Bill Clinton), and his opposition seeming petty and vindictive.

Furthermore, the House witnesses were all *on the Democrat side*, with Republican witnesses having been blocked. So the GOP could perhaps have used the Senate trial to bury the Democrats with damning testimony, in particular by putting ex-vice-president Joe Biden's son, Hunter Biden, on the hot seat and having him testify about his Ukrainian wheeling and dealing.

But if the Democrats were in a hole and couldn't stop digging, the Republicans took their shovels away with a 51-49 Friday vote to block the witnesses. Mitt Romney (R-Utah) and Susan Collins (R-Maine) joined all 47 Democrats in voting yea, but this became only symbolically (perhaps) significant when Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.) and Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), two other wobbly GOP senators, voted nay.

The Democrats' witness request was always a partisan ploy. It was essentially the job of the House to make its case, and their witness testimony was provided to the Senate, of course, along with 28,000 pages of documents. As Trump's deputy White House counsel Patrick Philbin put it, "We heard from a lot of witnesses in the proceedings so far," [reports](#) the *Washington Examiner*. "You've got all of those transcripts, so you can see those witnesses' testimony there," he continued. "You've got a lot of evidence already."

Since that evidence indicated no impeachable offense — and because a two-thirds majority (67 senators) was needed for conviction — acquittal has always been a foregone conclusion. The media have underemphasized this, however, perhaps hoping against hope that it wouldn't be reality and likely wanting to maintain the drama and hence their viewers/readership.

Moreover, the acquittal is expected to be a somewhat bipartisan affair. "I have great confidence in Republican senators and probably some Democrats from what I understand," as Trump [put it](#) to Fox News in a Thursday night interview in Iowa.

"Politico reported earlier this week that Sens. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., Kyrsten Sinema, D-Ariz., and Doug



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Jones, D-Ala. were [the Democrats] weighing whether to vote to acquit the president on at least one of the two articles of impeachment: abuse of power and obstruction of Congress,” Fox also reports.

This is likely a political calculation, as Manchin and Jones represent conservative states and Sinema a toss-up one and none of them want to incur red voter wrath. (Other than the alliteration, politicians and principle don’t generally go together.)

Politics over principle also explains why the manipulation hasn’t stopped. For example, early Friday, Senator Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) “warned that if Republicans reject witnesses, Trump would never truly be acquitted of charges,” the *Examiner* further reports. This talking point was echoed by many other Democrats, too, in office and in the media.

Ironic here, though, is that Trump [didn’t receive due process](#) during the House hearings. That event was precisely what the Democrats complain the Senate trial is: a politicized process with a pre-ordained outcome.

So following Schumer’s “logic,” since Democrats didn’t conduct their House hearings in accordance with trial norms, there wasn’t really an impeachment in the first place. Ergo, there’s no need of an acquittal. (Boy, isn’t that neat!)

Now back to reality. Trump was charged and will be acquitted, and leftists are becoming unhinged, as the amusing video below from *Tucker Carlson Tonight’s* Friday edition illustrates.

Much more could be said here. But since most of it has been, ad nauseam, by others, let’s tread some (hopefully) new ground.

Left largely unsaid:

After the Trump-Russia-collusion narrative’s collapse, the impeachment process began based on alleged impropriety during a July 25, 2019 [phone conversation](#) Trump had with President Zelensky of Ukraine. Because Trump said that “we do a lot for Ukraine” (but never actually mentioned “aid” or “money” at all) and much later in the call requested that Zelensky look into the Bidens’ impropriety, the Democrat interpretation is that there was a quid pro quo (which *isn’t* illegal, mind you).

But weighing against this interpretation is something unmentioned: Trump is notorious for being digressive, switching almost free-association fashion from one topic to another. In fact, this “rambling” style brought criticism during the 2016 campaign. Given this habit, though, should we really assume there’s a connection between two matters simply because the president mentions them — several minutes apart — during a wide-ranging conversation?

Also note the context in which Trump did mention our helping of Ukraine: He was requesting that Zelensky ask our European allies, German chancellor Angela Merkel in particular, why they aren’t doing more for his country.

Second, one of Trump’s main campaign promises was to “drain the swamp.” So couldn’t this have been a motivation, maybe even the sole one, for a request to investigate the Bidens’ corruption?

Whatever the case, the decision to not call Senate trial witnesses has produced one clear winner, a leftist senator no less. Many ([including yours truly](#)) had theorized that the Democrat establishment aimed to extend the trial to, at least in part, keep socialist Bernie Sanders off the stump. They don’t want him as the nominee, after all, and are trying to bolster Biden. Now Sanders can in days return to campaigning.



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What we likely won't have, however, is a return to normalcy. As Congressman Devin Nunes told Fox News Friday (video below), the impeachment trial's conclusion won't likely end leftists' attacks on Trump. Mentioning that House Democrats are going to subpoena ex-national security adviser John Bolton, he [lamented](#), "We're going to have the same exact thing that you have been seeing for the last three and a half years."

This does seem a likely use of the Democrats' House power — as long as they *have* that power. In other words, the American people will decide in November whether to end or extend the attacks on President Trump. And as is always the case under representative government, they won't necessarily get what they want. But they'll sure get what they vote for.

Photo of President Trump: AP Images

Selwyn Duke (@[SelwynDuke](#)) has written for The New American for more than a decade. He has also written for The Hill, Observer, The American Conservative, WorldNetDaily, American Thinker, and many other print and online publications. In addition, he has contributed to college textbooks published by Gale-Cengage Learning, has appeared on television, and is a frequent guest on radio.



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