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Trump's impeachment inquiry

On September 24 it became public that an impeachment inquiry into current president Donald Trump had begun. The inquiry was founded on the idea that during Trump's July 25 call to the president of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelensky, Trump pressured him into investigating the president's political opponent Joe Biden. During the call Trump says, "I would like you to do us a favor though because our country has been through a lot and Ukraine knows a lot about it." Later, Trump specifies that he would like Volodymyr Zelensky to "find out what happened with this whole situation with Ukraine." During the time of this call the United States was withholding military aid designated to go to Ukraine. Because of this and the president's request for a "favor", many have been lead to believe that he pressured Volodymyr Zelensky into helping him. On its own this would not be an impeachable offense; however, Trump later says that "Biden went around bragging that he stopped the prosecution so if you could look into it..." Because of Trump's inclusion of his political opponent in the quid pro quo, the president is now using the power of the presidency to gain political favor which is potentially an impeachable offense.

The call between Donald Trump and the president of Ukraine was found in an anonymous whistleblower report. The report contained several alleged obstructions of justice committed by president Donald Trump during his time in office, focusing specifically on his call to the president of Ukraine. The report was initially sent to the acting chief of the National Intelligence, Joseph Maguire, who withheld the complaint from the house until Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the house, backed Adam Schiff's impeachment inquiry, chairman of the house, was running. Despite Maguire being required by law to provide it.

Recently a large divide has arisen between house Democrats on whether or not to charge Trump for the call with the president of Ukraine exclusively or for all the crimes detailed in the whistleblower report. Another possible obstruction of justice that house democrats have considered using for the inquiry is the White House's incomppliance with the Muller investigation into Trump's ties with Russia and possible interference in the 2016 election.

Republicans have detailed their response to the impeachment in a memo released on the fifth. Within the memo, there are four main flaws regarding the impeachment hearing highlighted by the republicans. The first of which, house

Republicans state, is that Democrats do not have enough evidence to support their claim of a quid pro quo as Zelensky claimed not to have known the US was withholding military aid at that point. Secondly, the call summary released by the white House contains no explicit reference to a quid pro quo. Thirdly, Zelensky released a statement claiming that there was no pressure on the July 25 call. Finally, the military aid denied to Ukraine was restored in September.

House Democrats have also spoken about their political views regarding the impeachment inquiry. In an NPR interview with Massachusetts congresswoman Katherine Clark, vice chair of the House Democratic caucus, said that “today, we're moving into bringing the facts directly to the American people and setting up the process for how we will have those open hearings, just like we said that we would always do as we conclude the closed-door testimony of witnesses.” Clark says that she and the other house Democrats are attempting to bring the facts of what transpired with Ukraine, and all other obstructions of justice detailed in the whistleblower report directly to the American people.

Citations:

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