



**David Rothkopf** @djrothkopf

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For the record, and for all the drama offered up by cable news surrounding the resolution to condemn Trump's racism, this is all kabuki theater. It's a distraction, the illusion of action. It neither reins in the president nor will change his behavior or that of the Congress.

Seems like the biggest debates we face right now in Congress are whether to "tsk tsk" or to "tut tut" to finger wag or to shake the honorable heads of our representatives in unison.

What can be done to hold the president accountable moves in slow motion when it moves at all. Congressional requests and subpoenas and contempt of Congress resolutions produce the same infinitesimal progress.

Stronger actions are eschewed not because they are not urgently needed but because they might be politically controversial (though they might not be, they might change public opinion, history suggests they can).

Indeed, televised hearings have the power to change opinions and bring facts to light that can forever alter the view of the president and make his defeat more likely...and make future presidents less likely to feel they can act with impunity.

Impeachment it is argued, should not be undertaken because the Senate will not vote to convict and remove Trump from office. But in their stead the House offers bills that the Senate will not even take up.

The real question before the House is this: if a president enjoys the support of one house of our Congress is he or she above the law? Every day with its inaction, the House answers that questions whether it wishes to or not. The precedent being set is a very dangerous one.

It does not just take moral courage to undertake an impeachment inquiry to hold a criminal president accountable, it takes respect for the rule of law and the institutions of the U.S. government, for precedent and for the consequences of failing to act.

It does not take political courage to undertake such an event. Rather it simply requires the political vision to realize that nothing would do more to expose the president and ensure his defeat than fair, in-depth, fact-based televised hearings into his abuses.

In effect, we do not simply have a bicameral legislature as we once learned in school, or a tripartite government structure. The most powerful body in the U.S. government is the electorate. So the leaders of the House need to change how they view this issue.

They must view it that they an impeachment hearing does not just present its findings to the Senate, it presents them to the court of public opinion. If at the outset the likely obstruction of the Senate was acknowledged, it would reduce the impact of any Senate action.

That said, if a strong case is made, the resistance of the Senate to act could well be used to help defeat GOP Senators in 2020, which is also vitally important to restoring effectiveness (and morality) to our government.

But more importantly, daily on national TV, to an audience of millions, skilled investigators & prosecutors from the House can enumerate & detail the president's many crimes and abuses and their consequences. They can make it clear the dangers posed by letting them go unchecked.

They can at the same time send a message that when a president violates his oath & threatens the security of the US & the very rule of law our system demands, that no matter what the political odds, honest legislators must rise to the challenge of holding him accountable.

We have seen the costs of inaction. We have seen the crimes and abuses compounded on a daily basis. We have seen the administration's sense of impunity grow. We have watched as our democracy has been placed at risk of its continued existence.

We must move beyond the empty gestures. We must find the urgency we currently lack. I say this all with huge respect for the Democratic Congressional Leadership. They are grappling with enormous challenges. They are seeking to do what's right.

But neither loyalty nor respect for them demand silent accession to their current plans. Quite the contrary. Both require that we make the case to do what it is both right and politically best--especially since they are one in the same.

Indeed, they are asking for it. They are seeking us to help build support for such action. I would argue they can play a bigger, better role in leading the development of that support, of making the case for what is right and for demonstrating the leadership the moment demands.

But we can help them by letting them know that this is what we believe, that this is what we feel must be done in the face of the grievous, growing, manifold threats we face from Trump, from his cronies and enablers and from the foreign governments they serve.

That can be done with an email or a phone call or a Tweet or the courage to persuade friends what is right. It can be done with questions in town halls and public demonstrations. But however, it can be done, it must be done.

Because in this instance failing to act is more than just missing an opportunity. It is failing future generations of Americans who might never know democracy as it was intended to be practiced, who will only know corruption and betrayal from their leaders.

Inaction and empty gestures, outraged press releases and miscalculated caution mark the path to that outcome. But there is another way. At least there is for now.

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