

If you don't regularly receive my reports, request a free subscription at [steve\\_bakke@comcast.net](mailto:steve_bakke@comcast.net) !  
Follow me on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/@BakkeSteve> and receive links to my posts and more!  
Visit my website at <http://www.myslantonthings.com> !

## “Dump Trump” Was Doomed from the Start

By Steve Bakke  February 7, 2020



The “dump trump” movement was doomed from the start. Democrats chose the wrong battle and presented their case poorly.

The movement has early roots in pre-election 2016 with the recently discredited FISA warrant relating to alleged Trump/Russia election collusion. And the first public mention of impeachment occurred even before Trump’s inauguration. Moments after the inaugural ceremony the Washington Post reported impeachment efforts in the works. The democrats’ tortured process was an impeachment in search of an offense, and eventually the infamous telephone call provided something to pursue.

The “obstruction charge” dealt primarily with Trump’s predictable use of the executive privilege president. Legal scholar Johnathan Turley seemed to kill that charge when he testified: “.....if you make a high crime and misdemeanor out of going to the courts, it is an abuse of power. It’s your abuse of power.” But nevertheless, in a rush to impeach, legal remedies available for challenging Trump’s assertion of privilege were foolishly not pursued.

Finally, it came down to the “abuse of power” charge, and the two parties talked past each other by considering very different questions:

- Democrats asked: “Did Trump ask Ukraine for help investigating a potential election opponent?”
- Republicans asked, “Was Trump justified in investigating a potential political opponent.

The answer to both is “yes.”

The republican question was legitimate. The Barisma/Biden relationship deserves scrutiny it never received. It had been commonly known and quietly criticized, but never investigated or debunked as democrats claim. It was simply disregarded. The abuse of power charge implies that a presidential challenger can’t be investigated by a current president, even if suspicious events had occurred. That’s nonsense.

Wedded to their narrower, less valid question, articles of impeachment were feverishly presented to the Senate along with demands to enforce subpoenas and pursue witnesses the House hadn't found time for. They rushed to impeach Trump in order to subject him to extended public ridicule. Susan Collins, exhibiting her usual reason and wisdom, explained her vote to acquit by pointing to the House's responsibility to seek the full extent of its own remedies rather than relying on the Senate.

The House presented evidence that was mostly hearsay, interpretation and supposition. In a traditional trial they would have faced this: "Objection! Hearsay! Speculation! Relevance! Requires a conclusion by the witness." Those were sustainable objections.

The acquittal vote split approximately along party lines. When deliberating the usual well-developed issues, siding along party lines is common. But we witnessed something far more important. This party line vote was prima facie evidence of an unproven case. Their most damaging strategies included: pretending the Bidens were irrelevant to the trial, Schiff's theatrics of making up scripts "for what might have happened," insulting the Senate and pushing the Senate to cover for the House's botched investigation. The democrats were defeated by rules of evidence, due process, and reasonable doubt. Eloquent and emotional hyperbole was their only substitute for these shortcomings, and the Senate "jury" saw through it all.

Trump must bear some responsibility for this unfortunate adventure. If he were less outrageous in style and persona, showing more respect for traditional processes and decorum, impeachment efforts might have been futile. Yet, part of the democrats' failure was responding to their disdain for him with an ad hominem attack, appealing to feelings and prejudices more than presenting compelling, provable facts.

I question whether or not democrats wanted to prevail. They could have staged their theatrics and other questionable tactics around appealing to the TV audience as an introduction to the next presidential campaign. If so, they harmed their cause. And did Vladimir Putin achieve his goal? Democrats took the bait, stirred the pot, and delivered Putin the prize: rumor, misinformation and infighting which led to chaos and division.

Following similar reasoning to that used for the Senate's decision to acquit Bill Clinton, the current Senate clearly recognized the President's approach was flawed, and perhaps reckless. As with Clinton, the Senate wisely decided nothing warranted removal from office.

The 2016 election is finally over. Paraphrasing Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, the Senate was structured to keep temporary rage from doing permanent damage to the republic.

Fortunately, acquittal means voters can decide in 2020. That's as it should be.