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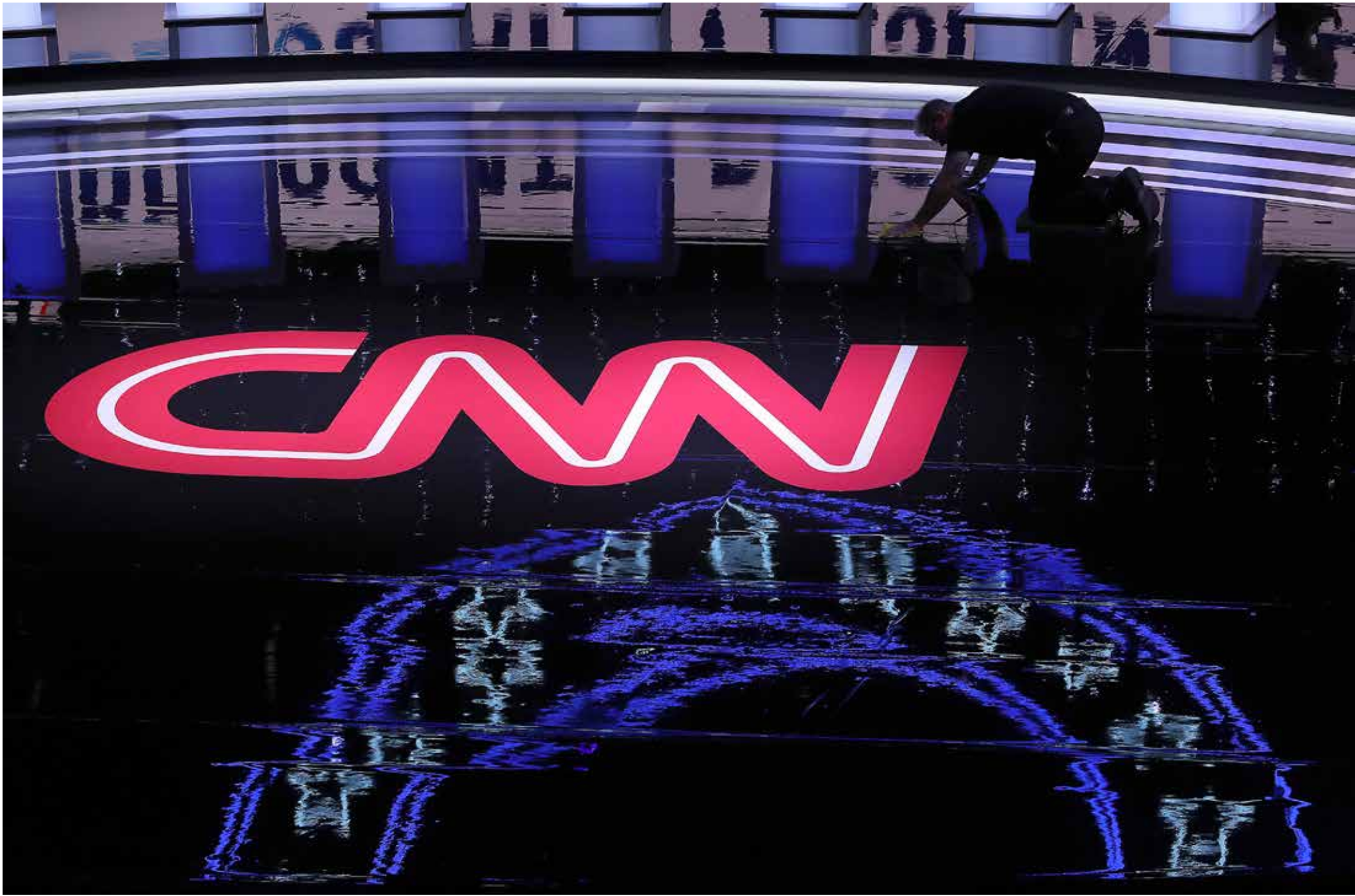
OUR NATION

Carter Page in Washington on May 28, 2019.



Carter Page's Privacy Act Request Remains Unfulfilled

Former Trump campaign adviser at the center of looming spy abuse report by IG has yet to see what the government gathered **7**



A worker preps the stage during a media briefing ahead of the Democratic Presidential Debate at the Fox Theatre in Detroit on July 30, 2019.

Undercover Video Reveals Tension Between CNN Staff, Leadership Over Nonstop Trump Focus

PETR SVAB

CNN President Jeff Zucker has insisted the cable news network has to maximally focus on pushing the story of Democrats trying to impeach President Donald Trump, despite objections by staffers that the push is harming the organization's journalistic integrity, according to undercover recordings.

"Impeachment is the story," Zucker said during a recent 9 a.m. rundown call, according to one of the recordings, which were released Oct. 14 by investigative journalism nonprofit Project Veritas. "You know, I know we're going to feel a tendency to think we're doing too much, but this is the story."

At least some of the recordings were provided by Cary Poarch, a satellite uplink technician who works as a contractor at CNN's Washington bureau. "I just want them to own where they're at," he said of CNN. "Like, hey, if we lean left, cool, let's just say we lean left, if we lean right, let it be known."

CNN didn't respond to multiple requests by The Epoch Times for comment.

'Trump Network'

Several CNN employees told Poarch or other undercover reporters about their dissatisfaction with Zucker's approach.

"There's just nothing we can do if Zucker wants impeachment every single day to be the top story," said Christian Sierra, media coordinator at CNN, in one of the recordings.

Sierra said he "[hated] how everything is like all Trump all the time now."

"Everyone at the network complains about it," he said. "They hate covering Trump every day."

Mike Brevna, CNN floor manager, expressed a similar sentiment in another recording.

"It's the Trump Network, dog. It's like, it's everything is all Trump. They not even thinking about, they not even thinking about anybody else," he said. "They sold themselves to the devil. It's, it's sad. Because there's so much news going on out there, but they don't cover none of it."

Nick Neville, a news associate at CNN, said in the recordings that "a lot of people" at CNN are "trying to, like, just do what they think is, like, the best of journalistic integrity."

"And then you get on the 9 a.m. call and big boss, Jeff Zucker, [lexpletive] tells you what to do," he said. "And it's like you have to like, to a certain extent, you have to follow his verdict."

During one of the morning rundown calls, one of the call attendees pitched a story about MSNBC's Oct. 2 gun control town hall with Democratic presidential candidates.

"Guns will be the central topic in the 2020 Democratic nomination race today," he said. "The Giffords PAC has paired up with MSNBC, they've got a guns town hall in Las Vegas, 10 candidates will be showing up there throughout the day."

"I don't care about the MSNBC event, okay?" Zucker responded. "I don't care about them. Let's just stay very focused on impeachment and everything that happens today because, look, you're going to be coming on at 3 o'clock. Trump is at two."

'Personal Vendetta'

Neville said that Zucker "has a personal vendetta against Trump," at least partly going back to when Trump worked with Zucker on "The Apprentice" reality show.

"He's, like, had an ongoing feud with Trump. It's no surprise," Neville said. "He's had an ongoing feud with Trump since 'The Apprentice.'"

"I'm just surprised CNN hasn't been able to take down Trump yet," one undercover reporter said during a car trip with other CNN staffers.

"I mean, I feel like they're trying," Neville responded.

He added that "Jeff Zucker can't really complain" since it was CNN that gave Trump extensive air time during his campaign, thus boosting his candidacy.

In Neville's view, not only CNN, but other networks have also been stifling people like him, who "want to do just, like, the truth, like, the dogged reporting." The executives, he said, are chasing ratings and think, "If we just talk about Trump all day, people will watch."

The executives appear to have a point: Trump has indeed been an eye-ball magnet buoying news networks' ratings across the board. Trump has even said that when he eventually leaves office, it will bankrupt the legacy media that have been near-uniformly critical of him.

Hiram Gonzalez, CNN floor director, voiced a similar opinion.

"Between you and I, we created this monster and now, we're eating him full plate every single day," he said. "Media created the Trump monster."

Yet, his comments suggested CNN's opposition to Trump goes beyond chasing ratings.

"I think we're just trying every single way to show that we're on the right side. ... I think whatever tools are to our disposal, then that's what CNN is doing," he said.

Fox News

Zucker seems to have a particular disdain for Fox News, a major competitor



BRENDAN SMIALOWSKI/AP/GETTY IMAGES

Health Care for Illegal Immigrants Could Cost Up to \$23 Billion a Year: Report

CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON

WASHINGTON—During a June 27 Democratic debate, all 10 presidential candidates raised their hands when asked who among them would provide government-subsidized health care benefits to illegal immigrants.

The Washington-based think tank Center for Immigration Studies (CIS) has since crunched the numbers on the potential costs and released a report on Oct. 10.

Under current law, illegal aliens aren't allowed to participate in the health insurance exchange established by the Affordable Care Act, also called Obamacare. They're also not eligible for Medicaid; although all immigrants can receive emergency services, regardless of status. And U.S.-born children with illegal immigrant parents are eligible for all benefits.

CIS calculated its numbers based on an illegal population of about 10 million people, half of whom they estimate would be eligible for Obamacare subsidies or Medicaid.

"Now, you might say that's surprising, but I think there's a pretty high degree of consensus that very roughly half of illegal immigrants have health insurance," said report author Steven Camarota, director of research for CIS. "Many either have higher incomes so they couldn't get the subsidies or, for the most part, they are insured by employers."

If all 5 million of those illegal immigrants signed up for Obamacare, it would cost an estimated \$22.6 billion per year, Camarota said. But, he said, it's more likely that just fewer than half of those would sign up, for an estimated cost of \$10.4 billion annually.

"Now, another way to think about that is for every 1 million uninsured illegal immigrants who sign up for [Obamacare] and get the subsidy, the cost to taxpayers is about \$4.6 billion," Camarota said.

The report also estimated the cost based on an Obamacare/Medicaid hybrid approach. With 100 percent enrollment, it would cost about \$19.6 billion per year, or \$10.7 billion with about half-enrollment.

"One important caveat about these estimates is, we make no assumption about how giving free or subsidized health care to illegal immigrants might significantly increase the flow of new illegal immigrants into the country," Camarota said. "If low-income people in other countries can come here free and get health care, it seems very likely that that could spur at least some additional

For every 1 million uninsured illegal immigrants who sign up for [Obamacare] and get the subsidy, the cost to taxpayers is about \$4.6 billion.

Steven Camarota, director of research, Center for Immigration Studies



Steven Camarota, director of research for the Center for Immigration Studies, speaks at a panel discussion in Washington on Oct. 10, 2019.

illegal immigration."

He said there would likely be a major push to give low-income guest workers and non-immigrant visa holders free or subsidized care. And the current five-year waiting period for green card holders could also be challenged.

"If we gave Medicaid to illegal immigrants ... legal immigrants certainly would have to get it, and that's many millions of people," he said.

Jason Richwine, a public-policy analyst based in Washington, said the two factors contributing most to being on Medicaid—for Americans and immigrants alike—are a low level of education and larger families. He said 42 percent of immigrant families had at least one member enrolled in Medicaid, compared to 26 percent of native families.

2020 Candidates

The 2020 Democratic candidates have shown an eagerness to provide not only government-subsidized health care to illegal immigrants, but also a pathway to citizenship.

Former Vice President and current Democrat frontrunner Joe Biden said on July 24, "Here's the deal: We have 11 million undocumented people in the United States of America—I would provide a path to citizenship."

Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) said she would expand legal immigration, decriminalize illegal border crossings, and provide amnesty to those here illegally.

"We need a pathway to citizenship for the people who are here and here to stay," Warren said on Sept. 29. "We need a path, not just for DREAMers, but also a

path for grandmas and for little kids and for people who came to work here on farms, and for students who overstayed their visas."

Sen. Bernie Sanders (D-Vt.) says on his campaign website that he would also provide a pathway to citizenship for illegal aliens, as well as "dismantle cruel and inhumane deportation programs and detention centers."

Taxpayer Burden

Health care has become the largest burden on taxpayers by a mile.

Chris Pope, a senior fellow in health policy for the Manhattan Institute, said Congressional Budget Office data shows that health care was 52 percent of means-tested federal programs in 2008.

"By 2028, it's going to be 71 percent," he said.

Prior to Obamacare, Pope said the Medicaid program was mainly used for low-income disabled people, low-income families, and sometimes as an elderly supplement to Medicare.

"Really for able-bodied working-age adults, the Medicaid program didn't really do that much," he said, aside from a few states that tangentially covered some people.

"The Affordable Care Act really changed that. The Affordable Care Act ensured that the Medicaid program was expanded to able-bodied, working-age adults ... earning less than 138 percent of the federal poverty level—which is probably about \$15,000 for an individual. And then, for a family it increases ... so it could be \$20,000, 30,000, \$40,000, depending on household size.

"These days, when you're talking about burdens on taxpayers, it's really all about health care that we're talking about."



A group of illegal aliens is processed by Border Patrol agents after crossing from Mexico into Yuma, Ariz., on April 13, 2019.



President Donald Trump at the Values Voter Summit at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington on Oct. 12, 2019.

Trump Vows to Defend ‘Family, Faith, Freedom’ at Values Voter Summit

PETR SVAB

President Donald Trump promised to defend religious liberty and traditional values, in an Oct. 12 speech at the Value Voter Summit in Washington.

“Our values are under assault like never before,” Trump said at the conservative political conference.

“Extreme left-wing radicals both inside and outside government are determined to shred our Constitution and eradicate the beliefs we all cherish.

“Far-left socialists are trying to tear down the traditions and customs that made America the greatest nation on Earth. They reject the principles of our Founding Fathers, principles enshrined into the Declaration of Independence, which proclaims that our rights come from our Creator.

“But despite the delusions of the radical left, all of us here today know that our rights come from God Almighty and they can never be taken away. Together, we will protect those God-given rights for our children, our children’s children, and generations of Americans to come.”

In prepared remarks interlaced with his typical segues and anecdotes, Trump decried attempts to silence conservative voices through intimidation and social pressure.

“They are trying to hound you from the workplace, expel you from the public square, and weaken the American family and indoctrinate our children,” he said.

He portrayed the political situation in the country as a fight between traditional values on one

Together, we will stand up to the socialists and we will win massive victories for family, for faith, and for freedom.

President Donald Trump

Far-left socialists are trying to tear down the traditions and customs that made America the greatest nation on Earth.

President Donald Trump

side and socialism on the other.

“Together, we will stand up to the socialists and we will win massive victories for family, for faith, and for freedom, just like the victory we had in 2016,” he said.

Impeachment ‘Witch Hunt’

Trump has denounced the attempts of Democrats in Congress to try to impeach him for his phone call with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky as a “witch hunt.”

A whistleblower, reportedly a CIA operative, has accused Trump, based on second-hand sources, of pressuring Zelensky during the call into starting an investigation into potential corruption of Hunter Biden and his father, former Vice President Joe Biden, who’s now one of the leading Democratic presidential candidates.

Zelensky denied being pressured and a transcript of the call released by the White House didn’t demonstrate pressure either.

Trump especially criticized House Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff (D-Calif.), who accused Trump of threatening Zelensky during what was said later by Schiff to be a “parody” paraphrasing of the call.

Syria Pullback

Trump also defended his decision to move several dozens of troops away from the Turkey-Syria border, shortly before Turkey launched an offensive against quasi-Socialist Kurdish forces in Syria, which Ankara believes are connected to a Kurdish terrorist group operating in Turkey.

The Syrian Kurds have been

fighting against ISIS terrorists in the region, with U.S. support.

Some in the U.S. political and military leadership have previously expressed intention to use the Kurds as a proxy military force in the region. Trump said, however, he wants to pull back from intervening in the region’s conflicts, saying the main goal of defeating the ISIS terror group’s self-professed caliphate has been accomplished.

“I don’t think our soldiers should be there for 50 years guarding a border between Turkey and Syria, when we can’t guard our own borders at home,” he said.

He said he wanted to pull out when ISIS was stripped of 97 percent of its territory.

“The military-industrial complex came down on me,” he said. “So I wanted to get 100 percent.”

The United States will still fight, Trump said, but noted that “sometimes we have to know what we’re fighting for.”

“Any military engagement where we send our men and women to fight and die must have clear objectives, vital national interests, and a realistic plan for how the conflict will end,” he said. “We don’t want to be in 19-year wars where we’re serving as a policing agent for the whole country.”

While reiterating a commitment to fight radical Islamic terrorism, Trump pointed out that the United States has spent some \$8 trillion and thousands of lives in the Middle East, only to see the region further destabilize.

“These wars, they never end. And we have to bring our soldiers back from the never-ending wars,” he said.

Growing Secularism Is Pushing Religion, Traditional Values Aside, AG Barr Warns

JANITA KAN

U.S. Attorney General William Barr raised concerns about the increase in secularism in society in a speech on Oct. 11, speaking about how that has contributed to a number of social issues plaguing communities across the nation.

Barr, who delivered his remarks to students at the University of Notre Dame’s law school, drew attention to the comprehensive effort to drive away religion and traditional moral systems in society and to push secularism in their place.

“We see the growing ascendancy of secularism and the doctrine of moral relativism,” Barr said.

He said that the forces of secularism are using mass media and popular culture, the promotion of greater reliance on government intervention for social problems, and the use of legal and judicial institutions to eliminate traditional moral norms.

Barr explored several of the consequences of “this moral upheaval,” highlighting its effect on all parts of society.

“Along with the wreckage of the family, we are seeing record levels of depression and mental illness, dispirited young people, soaring suicide rates, increasing numbers of angry and alienated young males, an increase in senseless violence, and a deadly drug epidemic,” he said.

“Over 70,000 people die a year from drug overdoses,” he said. “But I won’t dwell on the bitter results of the new secular age. Suffice it to say that the campaign to destroy the traditional moral order has coincided, and, as

The forces of secularism have been continually seeking to eliminate the laws that reflect traditional moral norms.

William Barr, U.S. attorney general

Secularists and their allies have marshaled all the forces of mass communication, popular culture, the entertainment industry, and academia in an unrelenting assault on religion and traditional values.

William Barr, U.S. attorney general

I believe, has brought with it, immense suffering and misery.”

Barr said religion has come under increasing attack over the past 50 years, underscoring how secularists are using society’s institutions to systematically destroy religion and stifle opposing views.

“Secularists and their allies have marshaled all the forces of mass communication, popular culture, the entertainment industry, and academia in an unrelenting assault on religion and traditional values. These instruments are used not only to affirmatively promote secular orthodoxy but also to drown out and silence opposing voices,” he said.

He said that people are moving away from “micro-morality” observed by Christians, a system of morality that seeks to transform the world by focusing on their own personal morality and transformation. Instead, he said the modern secularists are pushing a “macro-morality,” which focuses on political causes and collective actions to address social problems.

“In the past, when societies are threatened by moral chaos, the overall social costs of licentiousness and irresponsible personal conduct become so high that society ultimately recoils and re-evaluates the path it is on,” Barr said.

“But today, in the face of all the increasing pathologies, instead of addressing the underlying cause, we have cast the state in the role as the alleviator of bad consequences. We call on the state to mitigate the social costs of personal conduct and irresponsibility. So the reaction

to growing illegitimacy is not sexual responsibility but abortion; the reaction to drug addiction is safe injection sites.”

“The call comes for more and more social programs to deal with this wreckage, and while we think we are resolving problems, we [actually] are underwriting them.”

He also pointed out how the law has been used to “break down traditional moral values and establish moral relativism as the new orthodoxy,” giving the example of how laws have been used to aggressively force religious people and entities to subscribe to practices and policies that are antithetical to their faith.

“The forces of secularism have been continually seeking to eliminate the laws that reflect traditional moral norms,” he said.

Barr also highlighted the role of religion in society, saying it promotes moral discipline while it influences people’s conduct.

“Religion also helps promote moral discipline in society. We’re all fallen. We don’t automatically conform our conduct to moral rules, even when we know that they’re good for us. But religion helps teach, train, and habituate people to want what’s good,” he said.

“It doesn’t do this primarily by formal laws—that is, by coercive power—it does this through moral education and by framing society’s informal rules—the customs and traditions which reflect the wisdom and experience of the ages. In other words, religion helps frame a moral culture within society that instills and reinforces moral discipline.”



Attorney General William Barr speaks at the Securities and Exchange Commission’s Criminal Coordination Conference, in Washington on Oct. 3, 2019.



Former Vice President Joe Biden (L) with his son Hunter in Washington on Jan. 30, 2010.

Hunter Biden Defends Ukraine and China Work, Admits Political Error

IVAN PENTCHOUKOV

The son of former Vice President Joe Biden defended his foreign business ventures but admitted that they amounted to an appearance of a conflict of interest, during an interview with ABC News published on Oct. 15.

"I think that it was poor judgment on my part. I think that it was poor judgment because I don't believe now when I look back on it—I know that there was—did nothing wrong at all," Hunter Biden told ABC News. "However, was it poor judgment to be in the middle of something that is ... a swamp in many ways? Yeah."

"I gave a hook to some very unethical people to act in illegal ways to try to do some harm to my father. That's where I made the mistake," Biden said. "So I take full responsibility for that. Did I do anything improper? No, not in any way. Not in any way whatsoever."

Hunter Biden's business ventures in Ukraine and China gained national attention after an anonymous whistleblower complained about President Donald Trump's request for Ukraine to investigate the Bidens' dealings in Ukraine. Trump and his allies continue to spotlight the issue on a daily basis.

Did I make a mistake? Well, maybe in the grand scheme of things, yeah.

Hunter Biden, son of former Vice President Joe Biden



Hunter Biden at Lincoln Center in New York on May 28, 2014.

have hired him were it not for his name. But he defended his qualifications for the job in response to critics who questioned his lack of experience in the energy business.

"I don't think that there's a lot of things that would have happened in my life if my last name wasn't Biden," he said.

"[My father] read the press reports that I'd joined the board of Burisma, which was a Ukrainian natural gas company. And there's been a lot of misinformation. About me, not about my dad. Nobody buys this idea that I was unqualified to be on the board."

"I was vice chairman of the board of Amtrak for five years," he said. "I was the chairman of the board of the U.N. World Food Program. I was a lawyer for Boies Schiller Flexner, one of the most prestigious law firms in the world."

"I think that I had as much knowledge as anybody else that was on the board [about natural gas or Ukraine itself]—if not more."

In a July 25 call, Trump asked Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to look into the firing of a top Ukrainian prosecutor. Trump appears to have been referring to Viktor Shokin, who said in a sworn statement that he was removed due to pressure from Joe Biden because Shokin refused to drop the Burisma investigation. Joe Biden bragged in early 2018 about forcing Shokin's firing by threatening to withhold \$1 billion in U.S. loan guarantees. Shokin was reportedly investigating Burisma when Biden forced his ouster.

Hunter Biden said his position on

the board of Burisma was ultimately a mistake, but denied any impropriety.

"Did I make a mistake? Well, maybe in the grand scheme of things, yeah," Biden said. "But did I make a mistake based upon some ethical lapse? Absolutely not."

"I take full responsibility for that. Did I do anything improper? No, and not in any way. Not in any way whatsoever. I joined a board, I served honorably. I focused on corporate governance. I didn't have any discussions with my father before or after I joined the board as it related to it, other than that brief exchange that we had."

In addition to resigning from the board of the Chinese company, BHR (Shanghai) Equity Investment Fund Management Co., Hunter Biden committed to not work for or serve on the boards of any foreign companies if his father is elected president in 2020. On the same day that Hunter Biden made the commitment, the Biden campaign released a government reform plan that would "rein in executive branch financial conflicts of interest."

Trump responded to Hunter Biden's stepping down from the board of BHR by suggesting the exit was forced.

"Wow! Hunter Biden is being forced to leave a Chinese Company. Now watch the Fake News wrap their greasy and very protective arms around him. Only softball questions of him please!" Trump wrote on Twitter.

ABC News anchor Amy Robach asked Hunter Biden a number of tough questions, including about his discharge from the Navy Reserve due to cocaine use.

"Like every single person that I've ever known, I have fallen and I've gotten up. I've done estimable things and things that have been in my life that I regret. Every single one of those things has brought me exactly to where I am right now, which is probably the best place I've ever been in my life. I've gone through my own struggles," said Biden.

Carter Page's Privacy Act Request Remains Unfulfilled

IVAN PENTCHOUKOV

A U.S. citizen at the center of an 18-month inquiry into abuses of government spying has yet to be allowed to exercise his legal right to review what the investigators say they found out about him over the course of a one-year surveillance campaign that started during the 2016 presidential election.

Carter Page, a former Trump campaign adviser, had no say when the Justice Department and the FBI labeled him an agent of Russia in a secret court proceeding and obtained a Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) warrant in October 2016.

He said he was kept in the dark as the existence of the warrant was illegally leaked to the press, he received no satisfactory answers from the Department of Justice (DOJ) for more than a year after filing a formal Privacy Act request in May 2017, and that the pattern continued when he was handed a copy of the partly declassified FISA warrant application days after The New York Times received it.

Now, as the final report by the DOJ's Office of Inspector General (OIG) is reportedly within weeks of release, Page has yet to receive a federally mandated opportunity to review what's in the report and request amendments. He's negotiating with the DOJ's Office of Privacy and Civil Liberties, but he isn't optimistic, considering the government's pattern of potential Privacy Act violations.

"So far, the right thing has not been done," Page told The Epoch Times on Oct. 16. "I just want it to be accurate. So far, everything they've done has been inaccurate. I have no agenda. I just want the truth."

The Privacy Act of 1974 prohibits the government from releasing information on individuals to the public without their written consent. One of the provisions also empowers citizens to review and request amendments to

These are people who have committed dishonest crimes for years now.

Carter Page, former Trump campaign adviser



SAMIRA BOUADOU/THE EPOCH TIMES

their individual records that the government holds in its possession.

In a letter to lawmakers dated Sept. 13, Inspector General Michael Horowitz wrote that his office would review the draft of the final report marked up by the DOJ to ensure "that appropriate reviews occur for accuracy and comment purposes."

Page said he hopes to be included in these reviews.

The OIG hasn't interviewed Page as part of its inquiry. According to Horowitz, the investigators conducted more than 100 interviews and reviewed more than a million records.

The applications for the Page FISA warrants rely on the opposition research dossier on then-candidate Donald Trump that was compiled by former British spy Christopher Steele. Former Deputy FBI Director Andrew McCabe told Congress that the FBI wouldn't have been able to secure the warrant without the dossier. The warrant applications omit the fact that the Hillary Clinton campaign and the Democratic National Committee paid for the dossier.

The vast majority of the officials involved in preparing, vetting, and submitting the FISA warrant applications

have either been removed from their positions or left voluntarily. All have likely been interviewed by Horowitz's investigators. The OIG has already issued scathing reviews of Comey and McCabe, finding that Comey violated FBI policies and that McCabe authorized self-serving leaks and lied about them under oath.

Page said that many of the people who have been interviewed for the inspector general's inquiry are "supportive of the lack-of-candor crew."

"These are people who have committed dishonest crimes for years now," Page said. "They have a long track record of covering for themselves."

The surveillance powers granted under a FISA warrant are the most intrusive form of spying, allowing investigators access to all of a target's electronic records, including those that have been collected in the years prior to the issuance of the warrant. FISA warrants also allow for a full range of physical surveillance, including the search of premises.

While the scope of surveillance granted to the FBI in the Page FISA remains classified, the bureau may have been granted access to the communications of the entire Trump cam-

Inspector General Michael Horowitz at a Senate hearing in Washington on June 18, 2018.

aign via the FISA's "two-hop" rule. The rule allows the government to spy on all individuals who communicated with the target and extends to those who have contacted the people who contacted the target.

Page said he intends to sue the government if the OIG report determines that the FISA warrant on him was illegally obtained.

The surveillance of Page was one of several tools the Obama administration employed to spy on Trump's campaign as part of its counterintelligence investigation into alleged collusion with Russia. The government directed at least two spies, Stefan Halper and Azra Turk, to interact with Trump campaign associates. Then-CIA Director John Brennan funneled intelligence collected by foreign allies to the FBI. Brennan told Congress that the intelligence was used to start the investigation of the Trump campaign.

While Horowitz focused on the conduct of officials within the FBI and DOJ, Attorney General William Barr assigned U.S. Attorney John Durham to investigate the spying operation beyond the two agencies. Brennan said earlier in October that he would be interviewed by Durham.

SAMIRA BOUADOU/THE EPOCH TIMES



Carter Page, petroleum industry consultant and former foreign-policy adviser to Donald Trump during his 2016 presidential election campaign, in Washington on May 28, 2019.



Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and Rep. Adam Schiff (D-Calif.), House intelligence chairman, hold a press conference about the impeachment inquiry of President Trump, at the U.S. Capitol on Oct. 2, 2019.

Impeachment Inquiry Compared to ‘Star Chamber’

MARK TAPSCOTT

WASHINGTON—Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi’s latest refusal to allow a formal vote on impeaching President Donald Trump has some legal experts worrying that a modern version of England’s infamous Star Chamber court is emerging here in America.

The Star Chamber court met secretly, afforded defendants no due process, delivered verdicts that couldn’t be appealed, and meted out often barbaric punishments. The chamber was especially feared in the 16th and 17th centuries, and its unrestrained cruelty was among the reasons the Puritans migrated to America.

Late on Oct. 15, Pelosi rejected increasingly angry Republican demands for an up-or-down vote in the House of Representatives on opening a formal impeachment process.

“We will not be having a vote,” Pelosi said. A formal vote would require all 435 members of the House to go on record one way or the other on the impeachment issue.

Approval of a formal impeachment inquiry would afford Trump due process protections that are currently denied by Pelosi’s defense of the informal process.

The informal process—with House Select Committee on Intelligence Chairman Adam Schiff (D-Calif.) at center stage—functions almost entirely behind closed doors, with Democrats only promising the release of transcripts sometime in the future.

For now, House Democratic leaders are keeping a tight lid on their impeachment drive, even to the point on Oct. 15 of cutting off the microphone of House Minority Leader Steven Scalise (R-La.) as he asked on the House floor, if “the House been authorized to conduct an impeachment inquiry into President Trump?”

The day before, Rep. Matt Gaetz (R-Fla.) tried to attend a closed meeting of Schiff’s panel hearing testimony, but was locked out.

Afterward, he wrote on Twitter, “To exclude Members of Congress from hearings confirms the American people’s suspicions: this is not a legitimate ‘impeachment inquiry’ — it is a charade.”

Due Process Lacking

The closed-doors have civil rights-law experts such as Hans von Spakovsky of the Heritage Foundation’s Meese Center for Legal and Judicial Studies noting that Star Chamber oppression, especially during the reigns of Kings Henry VII and Charles I, prompted the founders to include strong due process guarantees in the Constitution.

“We established basic rules of due process in this country in order to avoid the way things had been done in

We will not be having a vote.

Nancy Pelosi, speaker of the House

England with secret, anonymous accusations, with witnesses you couldn’t confront and cross-examine,” von Spakovsky told The Epoch Times on Oct. 15.

“I mean, all the kinds of things the way Star Chambers operated, and even though impeachment isn’t a legal prosecution or legal case in the courts, it is such a serious undertaking, with such substantial consequences that those same basic rules of due process should apply even more so than in court,” he said.

“Other than declaring war, there is no more serious undertaking by the House of Representatives than impeachment because they are removing a duly elected president and overturning the choices of the American electorate,” von Spakovsky noted.

A former Department of Justice counsel, von Spakovsky was a member of the Federal Election Commission for two years.

Mark Fitzgibbons, president of corporate affairs for Virginia-based American Target Advertising, is an expert in federal administrative law. He told The Epoch Times on Oct. 16 that “comparisons of this secretive, unconstitutional impeachment process to the Star Chamber are appropriate because impeachment is an adjudicative process, not legislative, even though conducted by Congress.”

The Pelosi-Schiff process to date “violates constitutional rights by, at a minimum, prohibiting confrontation of witnesses and violating due process. It has become a dangerous mockery of the constitutional process,” Fitzgibbons said.

Brian Darling, former counsel to Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) and an authority on congressional rules, told The Epoch

Times, “The fact that House Democrats are departing from precedent shows this is not a fair process, and President Trump will be impeached by the House no matter what evidence is presented to the contrary. The great risk for Democrats is that the American people correctly discern this to be a wholly partisan effort.”

House Makes Its Rules

But George Washington University law professor Jonathan Turley recently warned both parties in Congress that the Constitution allows the House to conduct an impeachment under whatever rules it chooses.

[Impeachment] is such a serious undertaking, with such substantial consequences that those same basic rules of due process should apply even more so than in court.

Hans von Spakovsky, senior legal fellow, Heritage Foundation’s Meese Center for Legal and Judicial Studies

Turley criticized Pelosi for not having a formal vote, writing that “the current impeachment ‘inquiry’ rests on the authority of one person. Until the entire body votes, it remains the Pelosi impeachment effort rather than a House impeachment process.”

Still, Turley said, “On its face, the Constitution does not require anything other than a majority vote of the House to impeach a president. It is silent on the procedures used to reach that vote, and courts have largely de-

ferred to Congress to create its own internal rules and processes in fulfilling constitutional functions.”

Turley also testified before the House Judiciary Committee in May and cited a 1975 case—Eastland v. United States Servicemen—in which the court stated:

“The wisdom of congressional approach or methodology is not open to judicial veto. ... Nor is the legitimacy of a congressional inquiry to be defined by what it produces. The very nature of the investigative function—like any research—is that it takes the searchers up some ‘blind alleys’ and into non-productive enterprises. To be a valid legislative inquiry there need be no predictable end result.”

Some Democratic Hill veterans generally support Pelosi’s approach, but worry about how the public sees it. “Like the Speaker, I am a bit agnostic on this. Despite what the Republicans say, a vote to begin the process is not needed,” Jim Manley, former communications director for then-Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.), told The Epoch Times on Oct. 16.

“But the fact that House Democrats couldn’t agree simply to get this out of the way shows a bit of weakness to me,” he said.

Pelosi isn’t likely to switch course, however, according to Heritage Action Executive Director Tim Chapman, as long she has “no incentive to expose her moderates to a politically risky vote ... Pelosi doesn’t want to give [Republicans subpoena power] as long as she can get what she wants politically out of the unofficial House proceedings.”

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BENJAMIN CHASTEEN/THE EPOCH TIMES

LeBron and the Tipping Point for Celebrity Opinions



A Chinese flag placed on a mannequin wearing the U.S. basketball uniform as Chinese shoppers look at clothing in the NBA retail store in Beijing on Oct. 9, 2019.

ROGER L. SIMON



Commentary

Two things are disgracing the reputation of Los Angeles at this moment—a sickening homeless crisis largely caused by the city’s spineless liberal leadership and the statements of LeBron James, the leading player for the National Basketball Association’s L.A. Lakers.

Because we live in a celebrity culture, the latter is more in the news these days. And that’s part of the problem.

Basketball mega-star James—close to the most famous athlete alive—has seen fit to inform the rest of us ignorant folk that Houston Rockets general manager Daryl Morey was “misinformed” when he tweeted in support of the Hong Kong democracy demonstrators. At a Shanghai hotel meeting with NBA Commissioner Adam Silver, the Lakers’ forward even went so far, according to an ESPN report, as to urge punishment of the Houston executive.

They don’t call him King James for nothing. But back to the “misinformed” assertion. It’s one of the purest examples of projection since Sigmund Freud described that pathology at the turn of the 20th century. James accused Morey of being what he (James) was and is. It’s James who is misinformed, extremely, and not just because, like so many athletes these days, he decided to skip college to extend his remunerative professional career, although that should at least encourage humility.

It didn’t. James seems notably incurious about China and probably other things. When something interrupts the money flow, it’s best not to know about it. Nevertheless, it’s fine to make pronouncements and bully those who might have the guts to do so. Never mind that Mao outdid even Stalin and Hitler in mass murder; he still sells more T-shirts (although Che has given him a run for the money). Never mind that the Chinese regime still keeps millions of people locked in concentration camps. Maybe the poor souls can be offered NBA games on satellite TV after a day of forced labor and political indoctrination.

What a relief!

Increasingly, celebrities’ views are being rejected, even ridiculed, by the public.

LeBron James of the Los Angeles Lakers during a preseason game against the Brooklyn Nets as part of 2019 NBA Global Games China in Shanghai, on Oct. 10, 2019.



LINTAO ZHANG/GETTY IMAGES

It’s easy to make fun of James now—Twitter is having a field day—but he’s only the very large tip of a very large iceberg: know-nothing celebrities who opine about politics. They are legion—and not just from the world of sports, although the head coach of the NBA’s Golden State Warriors, Steve Kerr—who should know better given that his father was shot in the head by a Shiite terrorist—should start to think with a bit more clarity before he speaks in public.

Recently, however, entertainers seem to have been springing up with their opinions almost as never before, when those opinions are no more valid, in many ways less, than the man or woman on the street.

Privileged Guilt

James let the cat out of the proverbial bag here with his obvious greed, because much of this celebrity be-

havior is motivated by guilt from an extraordinarily privileged life, even more than it is by an unceasing craving for attention. They are revered and paid millions as an entertainer or an athlete for what many of us would consider just having fun.

So an ultra-left public face is invented, consciously or unconsciously, to assuage this guilt, to pretend to be the “people’s tribune” when they are as far from the people as one could imagine.

Sometimes, this is comical. Robert De Niro can almost make you laugh with his out-of-control obscene attacks on Trump, spewing f-bombs like a machine gunner in an action movie, except you’re not sure you’re laughing with him or at him.

Just the other day, Jane Fonda (net worth \$200 million, according to wealthygorilla.com) informed us she’s been a “climate scientist for decades and decades” (evidently a well-paid one) as she was dragged off by the cops to regenerate her activism from a bygone era. Again, comical.

Or nauseating, depending on how you’re feeling that day. We may (fingers crossed) finally be reaching a tipping point, when celebrities opining about political and social issues is a turnoff for the country. Increasingly, their views are being rejected, even ridiculed, by the public.

James’s certainly were. If, in choosing his personal gain over the suffering of more than a billion Chinese under communist rule, he has alienated a sufficient number of Americans, he may inadvertently have done us all a favor.

He may have inched us forward to that glorious day when entertainers, in the words of Fox News host Laura Ingraham, “shut up and sing,” and athletes shut up and play ball.

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Views expressed in this article are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.



President Donald Trump is applauded by former President Barack Obama, former Vice President Joe Biden, and Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.), during Trump's inauguration ceremony at the Capitol on Jan. 20, 2017.

Political Elites Are Untouchable No More

BRIAN CATES



Commentary

The breathtaking hypocrisy of many of President Donald Trump's accusers is about to be fully exposed.

If you've been watching the impeachment theater these past few weeks, you've no doubt heard the very serious crimes they accuse the U.S. president of having committed.

They have accused him of using his office for political gain and pressuring Ukraine to help investigate former Vice President Joe Biden.

The fake news media has begun a full-court press to sell the narrative of a besieged president who is slipping underwater, growing more and more unpopular by the day, as so-called whistleblowers and manufactured scandals surround him.

The problem is, Trump neither looks nor acts like a president who is under siege. In fact, he looks to me like he's having the time of his life.

The Big Flip

I believe that a big reason why Trump looks like he's really enjoying himself these days is that he knows what's about to go down. It will turn out we have been watching one of the most blatant cases of projection ever. Top politicians have psychologically projected all their own behavior onto this president.

What is "psychological projection"? Britannica Encyclopedia defines it this way:

"Projection is a form of defense in which unwanted feelings are displaced onto another person, where they then appear as a threat from the external world. A common form of projection occurs when an individual, threatened by his own angry feelings, accuses another of harboring hostile thoughts."

Literally, every single crime these Democrat and Republican-elite class people have been accusing Trump of doing, they've been doing themselves—in many cases, for decades.

The fake news media has begun a full-court press to sell the narrative of a besieged president who is slipping underwater, growing more and more unpopular by the day, as so-called whistleblowers and manufactured scandals surround him.

Trump Turns the Tables

While the attention of the nation was fixed on him, as everyone waited to see how Trump would deal with this latest fake scandal being launched to push for his impeachment, he masterfully did two things at once:

First, he took the wind out of the sails of the new "Trump-Ukraine corruption" narrative by quickly declassifying and releasing both the call transcript and the fake whistleblower's complaint.

Second, he pointed straight at a real scandal: the Biden family's well-known dealings with both Ukraine and China.

It hasn't exactly been a secret for some time now that there are very troubling questions about just what went on with the Biden family in Ukraine and China; it's just that it's been understood by the mainstream media and the political elite class that it's impolite to dwell on the subject, or to try to get some real answers.

However, since Trump steered the news media to go back to the issue of whether the Biden family enriched itself by using Joe Biden's office, the former vice president isn't handling it well. A video of the Democratic presidential candidate blowing his top at a reporter for having the unmitigated nerve to ask him about the apparent conflict of interest quickly went viral.

The reason Biden is so upset at being asked this question—for which he had almost an entire week to prepare an answer—is that until now, reporters knew they weren't supposed to be asking him about this kind of thing.

Biden had better get over being asked about that, because it's not going away.

The Clinton family's dealings have also been there in plain sight, much of it for decades. We all remember how Hillary Clinton claimed she would disclose any foreign funds donated to her foundations, then stopped doing that halfway through her tenure as secretary of State.

These top politicians could have all their dealings in the open because they knew nothing would be done about it; they were all protected. They knew they were all untouchable.

Understand that top Democrats and Republicans weren't putting any real effort into hiding any of the things they were doing because there was no real reason to hide it. After all, who was in any position to do anything about it, even if they'd have been willing to try? The Clintons? The Bushes? The Obamas? The Bidens? The Romneys?

These people were the problem; they were about as far from a solution as you could get.

Then a Miracle Happened

And then, a miracle happened. Trump won the 2016 election. And everything is starting to change.

Trump's critics do have one thing exactly correct: He's definitely not the "right" kind of person when it comes to winking and nodding and moving on from massive blatant corruption by politicians being done right out in the open. They rake in millions of dollars in illegal deals with foreign governments and companies, when not making use of allies' intelligence services to spy on political opponents.

All of these "corruptocrats" who cavorted and caroused in the open for decades, not even trying very hard to hide the vast amounts of cash they were raking in by selling their offices, left behind mountains of evidence of what they were doing.

That's why these political elites are so frantic to get Trump out of office by any means necessary, as quickly as they can. While some have been selling fairy tales about how a clueless Trump has been putting all the wrong people into the top jobs at the Department of Justice, what's actually been happening is that three years of careful, deliberate preparation are about to pay off.

Brian Cates is a writer based in South Texas and author of "Nobody Asked For My Opinion ... But Here It Is Anyway!"

Views expressed in this article are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.

Focus on Giuliani Overshadows Allegations of Ukraine Corruption

STEPHEN B. MEISTER



Commentary

Following House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's announcement of an "impeachment inquiry" of President Donald Trump, former

New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani—previously a U.S. attorney and now personal counsel to the president—gave a series of blockbuster TV interviews.

In them, Giuliani accused former Vice President Joe Biden of bribery and corruption with respect to his Ukraine-related actions while Biden was President Barack Obama's point man in Ukraine.

Giuliani's Ukraine-related investigatory efforts quickly became the focus of the impeachment inquiry—even overshadowing the content of the Trump-Zelensky call itself. The charge went from that Trump had pressured Zelensky to open an investigation into his 2020 political rival Biden—by threatening to withhold U.S. aid to the Ukraine—to that Trump had been trying, through his personal attorney Giuliani, to dig up dirt on Biden.

Those are two very different charges: Under our Constitution, impeachment requires "treason, bribery or other high crimes or misdemeanors." When Pelosi first announced the impeachment inquiry—the day before Trump released the call transcript—it was clear Trump was being accused of violating a federal campaign finance law, by allegedly soliciting aid from a foreign power to assist in his 2020 re-election campaign—namely, through the foreign power's investigation of a political rival.

That claim, as I previously wrote on these pages, suffers from two flaws: There's no precedent for the contention that a foreign power's investigation of a political rival qualifies under the campaign finance law as a "thing of value" to a campaign, and regardless, Trump, as the nation's chief executive, has both a right and duty to investigate corruption of U.S. politicians wherever it may take place.

Giuliani's investigation into Biden's alleged corruption, on the other hand, is just "opposition research." It's not a campaign finance violation (let alone a ground for impeachment) for a candidate, at his own expense, to research a political rival, whether that takes the form of investigating the opponent's prior voting record, as many Democratic nominees have done in Biden's case, or alleged crimes or scandals.



Then-Vice President Joe Biden and his son Hunter Biden walk in President Barack Obama's inaugural parade in Washington on Jan. 20, 2009.

Of course, sometimes "opposition research" is false and defamatory, as was the case for the Steele dossier, which ironically was, in large part, the product of disinformation fed to Steele, while he was working for Fusion GPS at the behest of the Democratic National Committee and Hillary Clinton's campaign, by Russian agents. This same information was ultimately submitted by the Justice Department to the Federal Intelligence Surveillance Court to obtain search warrants on the Trump campaign volunteer Carter Page, without disclosing that it had been paid for by the DNC and Clinton. That may have been a crime, a question that will be addressed by the forthcoming report from Justice Department Inspector General Michael Horowitz.

That said, a crucial point is being missed (or, more likely, intentionally overlooked) by the mainstream media: Giuliani's Ukraine-related investigation efforts began as a purely defensive effort to uncover facts that might have exonerated Trump from the criminal conspiracy claims then under investigation by special counsel Robert Mueller.

Mueller was investigating the charge that Trump had colluded with Russian agents to interfere in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. Foundational to the Russian interference thesis was the contention that Russian agents had hacked the DNC server in 2015–2016. The DNC hired a Silicon Valley cybersecurity firm, CrowdStrike, to investigate the origins of the hacking of its server. The firm concluded that the Russians had likely hacked

the DNC server.

CrowdStrike is owned in part and led by a wealthy Russian-born cybersecurity expert, Dmitri Alperovitch. CrowdStrike never turned over the DNC server to the FBI, which in consequence was forced to rely on CrowdStrike's "Russian fingerprints" finding without independently verifying it.

It would be legal malpractice for any lawyer defending Trump against the Mueller investigation to fail to include a deep dive into the alleged Russian hacking of the DNC server, which would have started with locating the server. According to Giuliani, his Ukraine-related investigation began in November 2018 as an effort to defend Trump against charges of conspiring with the Russians to interfere in the 2016 election.

The Mueller investigation began in May 2017 and concluded in March 2019. In a recent interview by Fox News host Sean Hannity, Giuliani said his work for Trump in the Ukraine began in November 2018, while the Mueller investigation was still pending. It wasn't until April 25—five months after Giuliani began his work in Ukraine—that Biden declared his candidacy.

This timing is significant: Giuliani, as Trump's lawyer, would have had no reason to discredit Biden before he declared his candidacy in 2020 (which, given Biden's age, was an open question until he declared), but every reason to be searching, at that time, for exculpatory evidence assisting in Trump's defense of the Mueller investigation relating to the 2016 election.

Questions about Hunter Biden ac-

cepting a lucrative consulting arrangement with Burisma, while his father was Obama's point man in Ukraine, were certainly in the public realm long before the July 25 call between Trump and Zelensky. The New York Times had reported as early as 2015 that "the credibility of the vice president's anti-corruption message may have been undermined by the association of his son Hunter Biden with one of Ukraine's largest natural gas companies, Burisma Holdings, and with its owner, Mykola Zlochevsky, who was Ukraine's ecology minister under former President Viktor F. Yanukovich before he was forced into exile."

Giuliani had gone public with his claims of Biden's corruption at least as early as April, a full three months before the now infamous Trump-Zelensky call, though no one in the media seemed to care about the Biden-Ukraine corruption claims in April, let alone back in 2015. The timing unties Giuliani's inquiries into Biden's alleged corruption and Trump's call with Zelensky.

The vice president holds the second-highest office in the United States, and the president is charged with faithfully carrying out the laws of the United States, which criminalize bribery involving our politicians. Joe Biden is on video admitting that he threatened to withhold \$1 billion in U.S. aid if then-President Petro Poroshenko didn't fire top Ukrainian prosecutor Viktor Shokin. It's surely worth investigating whether Joe Biden withholding U.S. aid if Shokin wasn't fired constitutes a criminal bribe (as would surely have been claimed if one were to replace Hunter Biden with Donald Trump Jr.), separate and apart from whether Hunter Biden accepted a bribe from Burisma and Zlochevsky, which also should be investigated.

Hunter Biden's interview on Oct. 15 with ABC's Amy Robach was more incriminating than it was exculpatory. The question isn't how much Joe and Hunter discussed the latter's consulting in Burisma, or how "honorably" Hunter served as a board member; instead, the twofold question is: 1) Did Hunter get the job because of his last name?—he explicitly admitted he did; and 2) did his tying himself to Burisma have the effect, whether discussed with Joe Biden or not, of inducing the elder Biden to inoculate Burisma and Zlochevsky?

I believe that Shokin's firing, at the elder Biden's insistence on pain of losing a billion in U.S. aid, followed by Zlochevsky's favorable settlement with the next prosecutor and return from exile, provide all the answers we need to warrant a full investigation.

A sitting U.S. president isn't required to choose between letting an allegedly corrupt U.S. politician get off scot-free and impeachment, just because the politician in question happens to have declared his candidacy, making him a political rival to a president seeking reelection.

Otherwise, anyone seeking to bribe a sitting first-term U.S. president need only declare his candidacy before entering the White House with a briefcase full of cash seeking to bribe him. If the president declines to take the bribe, the bribing ex-politician need only say, "I declared my candidacy; you will be impeached if you try to have me prosecuted."

Giuliani's legitimate efforts—no thanks to the mainstream media—have shone a disinfectant light upon the impeachment inquiry that Pelosi and House Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff are working so hard to keep secret, and that will help people make up their minds based on facts.

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Views expressed in this article are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.



Rudy Giuliani in Franklin Township, Ind., on Nov. 3, 2018.



Charlie Gerow (R) and fellow tellers count the elector's votes from a ballot box in the House of Representatives chamber of the Pennsylvania Capitol Building in Harrisburg, Penn., on Dec. 19, 2016.

Did Founder James Wilson Oppose Electoral College, Favor ‘National Popular Vote?’

ROB NATELSON



Commentary
James Wilson of Pennsylvania (1742–98), a distinguished lawyer who eventually served on the U.S. Supreme Court, was one of the most influential of the Constitution’s framers. Some scholars rank him as second only to James Madison.

Advocates of direct popular election of the president have long claimed Wilson as one of their own. And a casual glance at Madison’s notes of the Constitutional Convention seem to show Wilson arguing for direct popular election.

But a fuller understanding of the historical record shows that while Wilson flirted with the idea of direct election, he never strongly advocated it. In the end, he firmly supported the Constitution’s plan for indirect election through the Electoral College.

Here’s the story:
Soon after the Constitutional Convention met in May 1787, it became obvious that choosing a presidential election procedure would be a tough job. Wilson later called it “the most difficult of all on which we have had to decide.”

When the delegates embarked on that task, Wilson had two main priorities: (1) assure the president could act independently of Congress and of the states, and (2) assure the president enjoyed popular support.

So Wilson rejected a proposal to have Congress choose the president. He also rejected a proposal for state governors to make the choice. But Wilson was uncertain what the alternative should be. Later in the convention, he con-

The historical record shows that those who claim Wilson supported a ‘national popular vote’ are mistaken.



An engraving of founding father James Wilson.

fessed that he “had never made up an opinion on it entirely to his own satisfaction.”

That uncertainty was clear when, on June 1, 1787, Wilson ventured that, “At least ... in theory he was for an election by the people.” After Wilson sat down, George Mason of Virginia responded that direct election was impractical, but he invited Wilson to encapsulate his ideas in a specific proposal.

Wilson offered his proposal the following day. It did not call for direct election, but for the voters in fixed districts to choose electors, who then would choose the president.

Was Wilson being inconsistent? Why would he advocate “election by the people,” yet instead propose indirect election?

He wasn’t being inconsistent. Wilson considered both direct and indirect election as forms of “election by the people.” As he phrased it in remarks on July 19, 1787, “he perceived with pleasure that the idea was gaining ground, of an election mediately [indirectly] or immediately [directly] by the people.”

Many writers have missed that point because they don’t know the significance of Wilson’s background.

In England, qualified voters chose members of the British House of Commons directly. But Scotland—where he was born, raised, and educated—employed a system of indirect election: Voters and popularly elected local councils chose electors (called “commissioners”) who, in turn, designated their representatives in Parliament. To the Scottish way of thinking, this was a form of “election by the people.”

At the time, Maryland also was using an indirect election procedure for choosing state senators. Many of the convention delegates admired the

Maryland system.

After months of debate, the Convention sent the presidential election issue to a committee of 11 of the most distinguished delegates. That committee recommended that the president be elected by presidential electors chosen in the states. If no presidential candidate received a majority of electors, then there would be a runoff in the Senate.

This was clearly not direct election, but on Sept. 4, 1787, Wilson delivered a speech to the convention in support. However, he suggested that runoffs be transferred away from the Senate (which he considered too aristocratic) to Congress as a whole. The convention partly agreed: It moved the runoff election to the House of Representatives.

After the convention adjourned on Sept. 17, 1787, Wilson continued to praise the Constitution’s presidential election system. At the Pennsylvania ratifying convention later in the year, he said the president “will be chosen in such a manner that he may be justly styled the man of the people.” Although he acknowledged that direct election might be a good method also, it was only his second favorite: “next after the one prescribed in this Constitution.”

He also acknowledged that “it was the opinion of a great majority in Convention, that [direct election] was impracticable,” and that “The choice of [the president] is brought as nearly home to the people as is practicable. With the approbation of the state legislatures, the people may elect with only one remove”—in other words, with state legislative approval (now granted in every state), the people themselves may select those who elect the president.

Wilson’s views were unchanged four years later, when he praised the Constitution’s presidential election system lavishly in his famous “Lectures on Law.”

Thus, the historical record shows that those who claim Wilson supported a “national popular vote” are mistaken. Although Wilson toyed with the idea of direct election, when all was said and done, he preferred the presidential system featured in our Constitution.

Rob Natelson is a widely published constitutional scholar and historian and the author of “The Original Constitution: What It Actually Said and Meant.” Formerly a tenured constitutional law professor, he is now senior fellow in Constitutional Jurisprudence at the Independence Institute in Denver.

Views expressed in this article are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.

Vice President Joe Biden (back 2nd R) takes part in the count of the Electoral College votes for the 2012 presidential election at the Capitol in Washington on Jan. 4, 2013.



JEWEL SAMAD/AFP/GETTY IMAGES