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Viewpoints

President Trump on the road to impeachment



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President Trump's presidency of, now, about 45 days or so has distinguished itself by scandal after scandal. One, ultimately, will do Trump in: his and his staff's secret involvement with the Russians and, in particular, Russian intelligence operatives.

I have no doubt that Russian involvement in the presidential election was enough to change its outcome. This is, without a doubt, the equivalent or far more than Nixon's Watergate.

Seventeen U.S. intelligence agencies have found irrefutable proof that Russia was involved in the hacking and dissemination of information geared to help make Trump the winner of the past election.

When did Trump know about what happened? Did he have direct or indirect contact with the Russians during his campaign? Is there a quid pro quo? Did he or his staff exchange information – secret or otherwise – with the Russians? Is and was there contact with the Russians which has not been disclosed.

There is, of course, a distinction, although not much, as to Trump's staff having direct contact with the Russians without Trump's knowledge or consent or alternatively with Trump's knowledge and consent. Based upon Trump's apparent dictatorial running of both his campaign and the Oval Office, I find it hard to believe he had no knowledge of staff contact with the Russians.

This is major stuff that carries with it the possibility of valid claims extending to perjury, treason, and other "high crimes" – impeachable offenses.

Trump booted out Mike Flynn, the former head of National Security, not because Flynn discussed the lifting of sanctions with Russia or because of his lying about it, which Trump knew about and did nothing. Rather, he lost his job because both Trump and Flynn got caught. The aftermath of the Flynn escapade or escapades is yet to be known.

There are a number of congressional investigations under way, but what really is needed is an independent counsel and/or a special prosecutor to provide us with *all* the facts. These are allegations that go to the very heart of American democracy.

Trump through his aides recently had the gall to ask the FBI to kill its investigation into the "Russian Affair." Fortunately, the FBI stood up to them and refused to do so. Maybe Director Comey will make up the mistakes he made near the close of the November election and surprise us with a complete and transparent report on the intercepted Trump dialog with the Russians.

Connecticut's Chris Murphy, a great U.S. Senator and I am happy to say a good personal friend, had it right when he said, "There are only one or two times in your political career when you face a moment like this" and urged Republicans to put country ahead of party. It is time for all Americans to put country ahead of party.

Trump deliberately creates near scandalous news just about every day. Perhaps he is hoping that the major scandal – the Russian story – will become old news and go away. That will not and cannot happen. It is up to all of us to make certain it does not happen.

When the truth is known and the intercepted conversations are public, Trump will be forced to walk the plank along with his inner circle. One lie too many will put him on the path to impeachment.

I do not think that experienced, moderate Republican U.S. Senators like John McCain and Lindsey Graham will have any problem leading that fight. It can't come too soon. We have to be patient. It may take another five or six months. I truly believe that it will be no later than a year.

Something to look forward to.

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