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Opinion Editorial

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On September 24, House of Representative Speaker Nancy Pelosi announced that a formal impeachment inquiry on President Donald Trump was being launched (Fandos, 2019). This was the result of a whistleblower complaint regarding a phone call between him and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on July 25. Trump allegedly withheld \$400 million in military aid to pressure Ukraine into investigating Joe Biden, a political rival for the 2020 U.S. Presidential elections. The news of the whistleblower complaint sparked fire among the Democrats, who demanded urgent impeachment action, claiming Trump's actions were unconstitutional.

There are many reasons that Trump's actions are cause for impeachment. Firstly, Donald Trump used his military assistance to Ukraine as an exchange for their President to investigate Joe Biden. Many politicians have these exchanges of interests, whether with other political parties or with foreign governments. This is illegal and there can be consequences if discovered by the public. Secondly, did Trump's actions violate the Constitution? Obviously, Joe Biden and Donald Trump have some conflicts since Obama's presidency; they are allowed to accuse each other in an official debate, but they can not involve foreign forces in politics. This violates the Emoluments Clause of the American Constitution that clearly states politicians are prohibited from using foreign forces to interfere in internal affairs, such as elections (Duignan, n.d.). The act, which Trump has successively asked China, Russia, and the Ukraine to investigate Joe Biden, is likely to be a means for him to use external forces against Biden.

Donald Trump's behaviour may be slandering Biden's character, because he doesn't have any evidence that proves Biden is doing something nonpermissible. Biden will run for President in 2020, so he is likely to be Trump's strongest opponent. Thus, it can be seen that this call is probably for Donald Trump's personal interest.

The last ethical issue is, how can the president of the United States threaten another country to do what is in their interests? A report written by Desmond Butler and Michael Biesecker mentioned that "Ukraine felt pressure from Trump administration to investigate Biden" (2019). This is not only related to the Constitution of the United States but may even violate international law. Since the United States is so powerful, international law is not binding on it.

In these weeks of studying, we can see that these issues are related to several concepts we've discussed in class:

Firstly, Trump is involved in a real conflict of interest because he has been making bribes with Ukrainian president Zelensky. A conflict of interest occurs when personal interests influence a person's ability to fulfil their duties (Eisan, 24 October 2019). Trump has held off on funding for the Ukrainian government until the President agrees to meet his terms, and this can be seen as a type of bribe.

This conflict of interest suggests that Trump is totally self interest. He does not seem affected by the effect of his actions and is only concerned that there he suffers no negative consequences, suggesting he follows the teleological approach of ethical decision making (Sexty, 2017, p.7&114).

Trump is subject to procedural justice, since once a formal impeachment inquiry is launched, an impartial application of rules or procedures must be followed (Kilgore, 2019). Trump may also be subject to retributive justice, which would enforce a penalty that is appropriate for the offence, but is just and fair (Eisan, 24 September 2019). In this case, he would be forced to step down from his position as President because he is deemed unfit for office. He could be unable to run for re-election.

Another ethical concept that presents itself is Trump's questionable morals. Many people have accused him of devoid of values. Values are core beliefs a person strives to uphold according to their moral compass (Eisan, 12 September 2019).

Conversely, there are those who believe that Trump should not be impeached. A Washington Post-ABC News poll taken in October found that 47 percent of Americans say he should not be (Balz and Guskin, 2019). Trump is popular among Republican voters so Republican lawmakers aren't going to be swayed in favour of impeachment. Since Trump is in a powerful position, people are afraid of speaking out against him, aware that negative consequences may arise if they do. Impeachment also suggests government incompetence and discredits democracy; Trump was elected by the people; therefore, they should be able to have him see the term through (Coaston, 2019).

Moreover, there are a myriad of stakeholders that are affected by Trump's Impeachment Inquiry, but the main stakeholders in this situation are:

Nancy Pelosi, the woman who initiated the impeachment inquiry, she strode to make sure that the President is accountable for his actions; the idea that nobody is above the law.

Donald Trump is the biggest stakeholder as they wouldn't be conducting an inquiry if it wasn't for his unethical actions. The Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky is a stakeholder since he is the man on the other end of the call; the media has a script of him and Trump conversing.

The House of Representatives are also involved, as they have the voting right to Trump's Impeachment and they have the sole power of the process so that he doesn't have the power to reverse the impeachment, however he can be re-elected as they haven't made a mandate stating that a president can't be re-elected after his powers are suspended. Joe Biden also holds a position, as he will be Trump's biggest rival in the upcoming 2020 election. Trump has accused Biden of abusing his power by coercing the Ukrainian president to cover up any criminal activities linking to his son.

However, there is the role of the whistleblower. Two blowers came to light, solidifying Trump's actions. They are anonymous, which questions whether their information was credible. If they are exposed, their lives are threatened and the company's they are attached to may suffer.

Lastly, the U.S. and Ukrainian citizens: the outcome of the impeachment can have adverse effects on both parties as the U.S. can be more in a positive spotlight as they have held up their word to ensure nobody is above the law and a zero tolerance of unethical behaviour.

The media is an important stakeholder since it has a large impact on society's view of a situation. In this case, a lot of the developments have been occurred when the media was watching so they could quote directly what happened, rather than speculate. The president's extensive use of social media, specifically Twitter, contributes to creating a broader audience who is aware of the situation. Furthermore, the media often offers their own perspectives that may sway their audience, thereby altering the way people vote in the upcoming election.

In light of the foregone, it is evident that removing a president from office is very difficult. President Trump's impeachment proceedings proved very controversial: both parties went to great lengths to hide their wrongdoings, however our analysis focused on the Trump side. Despite the criticisms and with an unknown outcome, it can be surmised that Nancy Pelosi's impeachment probe was the right action to be taken.

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