



Is Presidential Impeachment on the Horizon? No.

With Democrats having gained control of the House of Representatives and the endless drumbeat of the Mueller probes, many on the left side of the aisle feel that the time is right to begin the process of impeaching President Trump — with or without Constitutional justification. One thing is clear: If Democrats had the necessary support, that process would start immediately. Fortunately for the country, they don't.



It seems never to have occurred to those who speak of impeachment that President Trump — whatever one may feel about him — has not been shown to have done anything that would serve as a basis for impeachment. But that has not stopped some on the Left from dreaming and planning.

In fact, Representative Al Green (D-Texas) attempted to begin the process in December 2017. His measure to open debate on a motion to consider articles of impeachment was soundly rejected by a vote of 364 to 58. At the time, current Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) — who was then the House minority leader — said, “Now is not the time to consider articles of impeachment.” Notice that she did not say that Trump is unimpeachable, only that “now is not the time.”

But that was then and this is now. Has Pelosi shifted her thinking on the subject? The answer to that question depends on ferreting out what her position is — and that is easier said than done. Her position on impeachment of the president is like many of her positions: murky. Furthermore, as in other positions she has taken throughout her career, she seems driven by the pragmatism of following the prevailing winds.

In November 2018, almost as soon as the votes were in showing that Democrats had regained a marginal control of the House, Pelosi [told CNN's Prime Time](#), “I don't think we should impeach a president for political reasons — but I don't think we should not impeach him because we think it's politically impeding for us to do so. We have to see what the facts are.”

To what “facts” was Pelosi referring? The Mueller probe, of course. Because also in November 2018, she [said she would not let Mueller alone decide the president's fate](#). “Recognize one point,” Pelosi told the *Atlantic*, “What Mueller might not think is indictable could be impeachable.” As that article goes on to say:

Maybe there's something else in his tax returns. Maybe there's something that's beyond the special counsel's scope. Maybe there's something Trump has yet to do. “That's why we want to see the documents,” Pelosi said. “Because we're seeking truth. We're seeking truth for the American people about the integrity of our elections, and honoring the Constitution.”

Leaving aside the issue of Pelosi pretending to care about “honoring the Constitution,” the thing that really stands out here is her dangling of the impeachment carrot. Because while she claims that impeaching or not impeaching the president is not about politics, the reality is that that's exactly what it's about. And so, she is hedging her bets, waiting to see which way the political winds may shift.



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on January 23, 2019

Pelosi is politically smart enough to realize that there is nothing approaching the level of support she would need to pull it off. Period. It appears that while she waits for a shift in the political winds, the carrot she continues to dangle is working as she intends.

In the few short hours it took for [the wheels to come off of BuzzFeed's fantastic claims](#) that President Trump had directed Michael Cohen to lie to Congress, many were already saying those claims could serve as the basis for impeachment. When the only tool in your toolbox is a hammer, everything looks like a nail.

So, how has the shift in the balance of power in the House impacted the hope many have for impeachment?

The enticing hope of presidential impeachment continually hinted at by Pelosi led freshman Representative Rashida Tlaib (D-Mich.) — who is not only a Muslim, but also the first Palestinian elected to Congress — to make a profanity-laden call for impeachment within hours of her swearing in. Speaking to her base at an event sponsored by the far-left MoveOn.org, Tlaib recalled a conversation she had with her son when she received confirmation that she had won the November election. “And when your son looks at you and says, ‘Mama look, you won. Bullies don’t win,’ and I said, ‘Baby, they don’t, because we’re gonna go in there and we’re going to impeach the motherf****r.’” Classy. Does she kiss [her kids](#) with that mouth? Because she certainly doesn’t seem to mind spewing vulgarities out of it to them.

To put in the for-what-it’s-worth column, her promise to her young son to “impeach the motherf****r” does not represent a shift for Tlaib. On March 1, while campaigning, she tweeted, “Why am I running? Because this is about electing the jury to impeach @POTUS and I will make a heck of juror.” One observant and constitutionally literate Twitter user replied, “Have you read the Constitution? The House ain’t the jury. You might make a heck of a juror, but you’d suck as an American civics teacher.”

And on January 3, 2019, an op-ed by Tlaib appeared on the website of the *Detroit Free Press*. She wrote, “President Donald Trump is a direct and serious threat to our country. On an almost daily basis, he attacks our Constitution, our democracy, the rule of law and the people who are in this country,” adding, “His conduct has created a constitutional crisis that we must confront now.” Of course, she never explains how Trump “almost daily” attack people in this country, what the “constitutional crisis” is, or how Trump has created it.

Going further, she reflects on Pelosi’s previous statement, ending her banal screed with, “The time for impeachment proceedings is now.”

Is Tlaib correct? In a word, no. Not only does impeachment require “Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors” (which is a great deal higher bar than Tlaib’s vague references to a “constitutional crisis”), but as this writer indicated at the beginning of this article, Pelosi and company lack the support they would need to even attempt such an asinine move. And they know it.

As Alayna Treene [wrote](#) for Axios, “The vast majority of freshman House Democrats” are not ready to take that step. And her assertion is not a matter of opinion. She knows because Axios asked them. Those conversations with the 64 new House Democrats revealed that only six — including, of course, Tlaib — support impeachment. Another seven believe that talk of impeachment is “not helpful.” Three have made no clear, on-record statement about their leanings. And a whopping 48 say Congress should wait to see what (and this writer would add, if anything) the final Mueller report reveals before even considering impeachment.



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What that shows is that Democrats — who have a narrow 37-point margin in the House — are *at least* 30 votes short. And that assumes that every Democrat who is not a freshman would vote to impeach. Since even politically-savvy Pelosi realizes that is not the case and it is more than a stretch to think they could make up those numbers among even those Republicans who are completely out of step with their party, impeachment is not on the horizon. No matter how bad Democrats may want it.

Finally, even in an alternative universe where House Democrats could pull off an impeachment, Republicans still control the Senate. So it would be a hollow impeachment, since there is zero chance that the Senate would convict.

Of course, none of that is going to stop Pelosi from dangling her carrot for political points while hoping against hope that something — *anything* — in the Mueller report or other documents will shift the winds in her favor.

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