

OPINION

Impeachment Is What Vladimir Putin Wants

This article is signed by Rep. Michael McCaul (R., Texas), ranking member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and 18 other Republican members of the committee.

House Democrats have announced they'll try to impeach President Trump over a congratulatory phone call with his Ukrainian counterpart, Volodymyr Zelensky. Before details of the call had even emerged, Democrats falsely accused Mr. Trump of holding Ukrainian military aid hostage until Mr. Zelensky investigated former Vice President Joe Biden. In full transparency, Mr. Trump volunteered to provide all the relevant documents and other information to Congress.

Before those documents could even reach our chamber, Speaker Nancy Pelosi unilaterally declared the president had committed a "high crime and misdemeanor." This partisan attack on the president could have far-reaching implications for foreign policy and permanently damage world leaders' confidence in their ability to speak freely and candidly with any U.S. president.

Support for Ukraine has always been bipartisan. Russia seeks to undermine it and to divide Americans.

Presidents have always been guaranteed the ability to speak privately with other world leaders. George Washington rejected House demands to obtain the contents of his foreign negotiations, which he said would "establish a dangerous precedent." Washington understood "the nature of foreign negotiations requires caution, and their success must often depend on secrecy."

The transcript released yesterday with Mr. Zelensky's consent shows unequivocally there was no quid pro quo. Mr. Trump never mentioned military aid or suggested he would suspend funding until allegations about Hunter Biden were investigated.

This Democrat-manufactured crisis has consumed Congress. But no one is more pleased than Vladimir Putin.

Intentional or not, Democrats are literally following the Russian president's playbook. His goal, now and before the 2016 election, has been to pit Americans against one another and erode confidence in our democratic process. The world, which should focus on Mr. Putin's illegitimate annexation of Crimea and continuing aggression elsewhere in Ukraine, instead is fixated on this partisan domestic theater.

Since the people of Ukraine took to the streets in 2014 to oust a pro-Russian president, support for Ukraine has been bipartisan. Republicans and Democrats in Congress have worked together to deliver much-needed military and humanitarian aid to Ukraine and secure its future as a free and democratic country without Russian influence.

The chairman of our committee, New York Rep. Eliot Engel, has always said that politics stops at the water's edge, and his leadership of our committee has reflected that. Our sincere hope is that Mrs. Pelosi won't drag our committee further into a partisan squabble on the world stage. Doing so would damage our ability to conduct effective foreign-policy oversight. Instead, we should focus on fighting Mr. Putin's malign influence around the world, on combating Russian interference in the 2020 U.S. elections, and on helping our partner Ukraine defend itself against Russian aggression.

Hong Kong May Topple Communism

By Gordon G. Chang

As Hong Kong entered the 16th straight week of unrest, protesters adopted origami cranes as symbols of resistance, sang their new anthem, burned the Chinese national flag, erected barricades, threw petrol bombs and beat opponents unconscious. The protest movement in the semiautonomous region now has taken on characteristics of an insurgency as people across Hong Kong society vigorously challenge local authorities.

The 79-day "Umbrella" protest of 2014, as large as it was, had little lasting effect on Beijing, which has ruled Hong Kong as a "special administrative region" since 1997. This year's protests are different. "China's disintegration is now under way," Arthur Waldron, a China historian at the University of Pennsylvania, told me last month.

In Chinese history, regimes often unravel from the outside in. "Disintegration," Mr. Waldron told me, "begins at the limits of empire, only to grow, steadily undermining adjacent territory, until the seats of central power are imperiled." That's what happened in the 10th century to the mighty Tang dynasty, which, as Mr. Waldron puts it, was "mortally wounded by military disorders remote to the capital."

Similarly, in the mid-19th century, the Qing dynasty was fatally weakened by the 14-year-long Taiping Rebellion. Starting in southern China not far from Hong Kong, the revolt—actually an attempted revolution—claimed an estimated 20 million lives and displaced tens of millions more. The Manchu Qing rulers held onto power for nearly a half-century longer but never recovered from perhaps the most destructive civil war in history.

Almost every analyst today assumes that one way or another, Beijing will prevail in the current crisis. China's Communist Party maintains the world's largest standing army, with more than two million personnel. Some 7,000 are already stationed in Hong Kong. The hard-core protesters dressed in black—a "guerrilla force," according to American correspondent Michael Yon—number



A Chinese flag burns at a Hong Kong protest Sept. 12.

only in the thousands.

Yet despite appearances, Beijing is at a disadvantage. The mass of Hong Kong residents firmly oppose Beijing's encroachments. The protests, initially over a bill that would have allowed extradition to the mainland, have widened in scope. Now the target is China itself and its effort to eliminate the "one country, two systems" arrangement that had promised Hong Kong a "high degree of autonomy."

A constant of Chinese history is that regimes begin to disintegrate along the periphery.

China's efforts to take over Hong Kong have resulted in a shift in self-identification, especially among younger adults. A recent Hong Kong University survey shows that the share of 18- to 29-year-olds who self-identify as Hong Konger rather than Chinese or mixed has surged to about 75% from 40% a decade ago. Almost nobody in this group believes he is Chinese only. A plurality of residents of all ages now see themselves as Hong Konger only.

Changes in self-identification have fueled a still-small independence movement, which did not exist a decade ago. Whether or not Hong Kongers want to separate fully from

China, Beijing has to be concerned by protesters there repeating the line from "The Hunger Games": "If we burn, you burn with us!"

As protesters clash with police, analysts worry about another Tiananmen, the June 1989 slaughter in Beijing. Soldiers in tanks and armored personnel carriers moved to the center of the capital, killing at will.

I think Chinese leaders know that such a response is not possible this time. Hong Kong's dense urban landscape—tall buildings and narrow roads and alleys—reduces the advantages of armor and favors defenders, who can occupy the high ground from apartment buildings. Many protesters say they're willing to fight to the end; eight have committed suicide to dramatize their cause.

The militant demonstrators not only are determined but are becoming an effective fighting force. Mr. Yon, who has observed them from the beginning, told me the emerging contingent of youthful fighters is "breathing, growing, evolving so fast that I am having difficulty tracking its evolution." Chinese ruler Xi Jinping surely does not want his first war to take years, kill thousands of Chinese, and end in a loss.

The authorities don't have the ability to clear the streets, and the longer the demonstrations continue, the higher the risk they spread to the mainland. Mainlanders have already crossed the border into Hong Kong to stand with the protesters

Latino Workers Save America From Stagnation

By Sol Trujillo

A startling fact: If the U.S. Latino population were an independent economy, its gross domestic product would be the fastest-growing among the world's developed economies. U.S. Latino GDP is now \$2.3 trillion, as detailed in a new report that estimates the group's economic output by measuring their share across 71 industries. The task for U.S. policy makers is to allow this trend to continue strengthening the country at large.

Unfortunately, while economic output for Latinos has climbed steadily, the overall U.S. economy is slowing in the long term. Growth reached 2.9% last year, compared with the postwar average of 3.2%, and most economists predict the rate will decline further in coming years.

A big factor in that decline is America's slowing labor-force growth, down from 2.3% in 2000 to 0.7% in 2017. While the official unemployment numbers look great, the share of prime-age Americans seeking jobs has decreased. The drop-off will be compounded in coming years by more older Americans retiring and a declining U.S. birthrate. If not for the Latinos, who have comprised 82% of growth in the U.S. workforce since 2008, Social Security would already be in danger of collapse.

Latinos in the U.S. are like cavalry coming over the hill to support the economy and sustain growth through coming decades. The growth of the Latino cohort is a unique advantage America has compared with other aging economies.

Latinos are America's most youthful cohort and are growing six times as fast as the population overall, expected to exceed 100 million by midcentury. These are the people filling jobs now and who will continue to do so for decades. But even they can't keep up with the demand. We need more like them.

The U.S. needs an immigration policy focused on recruiting people who are ready to work in every sort of job, who have demonstrated an exemplary work ethic, and who have become essential workers in many industries.

Consider how much more expensive food would become if not for the Latinos who make 39% of U.S. food-processing workers and 34% of cooks. Health care would be extremely costly without Latino workers, who occupy 1 in 4 support jobs in that sector.

The list goes on: Imagine where the \$9.6 billion apparel industry would be without 47% of all cut-and-sew apparel workers and 44% of all sewing-machine operators.

Ponder the availability and cost of new homes if the \$1.3 trillion construction industry were missing 37% of its workers, 56% of roofers, and 70% of drywall installers.

Latinos also strengthen the economy by creating jobs. Latino entrepreneurs produce more than \$700 billion annually. And as Latinos in the U.S. have become

They're the youngest U.S. ethnic cohort, growing at six times the rate of the total population.

wealthier, they increasingly contribute to the economy as consumers. They account for nearly 30% of America's growth in real income. With that comes purchasing power, and from 2010-17 real consumption by Latinos in the U.S. grew 72% faster than the rest of the population.

Sustaining these trends will re-

quire even more workers, and that means the U.S. must fix its immigration process. Americans can't afford to put up walls and choke off our labor supply or deport people already working here. President Trump's restrictionist policies would stifle U.S. GDP for years to come.

As an American, I believe we have the opportunity to separate ourselves from stagnant, low-growth economies such as Japan and sustain an economy that can catalyze growth and reignite the American dream. We need comprehensive reform of immigration laws and policies. It's the only way we can reverse the course of economic decline.

Policy makers must do everything possible to further stimulate Latinos' contribution to economic growth, which is an essential component for all Americans' chance at a prosperous future.

Mr. Trujillo is a business executive and chairman of the Latino Donor Collaborative.

Mr. Chang is author of "The Coming Collapse of China."

Trump Can Do Even More on Iran

By Stephen Rademaker

The effectiveness of the Trump administration's sanctions strategy against Iran has been astonishing—doubly so because the "maximum pressure" policy has faced wide opposition, including from close U.S. allies. Most foreign companies have decided to avoid doing business with Iran rather than face potential U.S. secondary sanctions, and this week Britain, France and Germany joined in blaming Tehran for the recent missile attack on Saudi Arabia.

Iran complains bitterly about Mr. Trump's policy, but by violating its nuclear commitments and attacking its neighbors, it practically invites the U.S. to do more. One option is to put the full weight of international law behind its sanctions campaign—unilaterally.

President Obama's sanctions rested largely on six binding resolutions adopted by the United Nations Security Council between 2006 and 2010. They were terminated in 2015 by Resolution 2231 implementing the nuclear agreement, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

Under Resolution 2231's "snapback" provisions, any JCPOA participant can file a complaint with the Security Council about "significant non-performance of commitments"

by another participant. That triggers a 30-day process, at the end of which all provisions of previous Security Council resolutions are reimposed unless the council adopts a resolution to the contrary—which would be subject to the American veto.

The U.S. has the legal authority to reimpose international sanctions unilaterally.

Thus the U.S., acting alone, can both trigger this provision and ensure that sanctions are reimposed. In December the U.S. will hold the Security Council presidency, putting it in a position to manage this process.

Some might argue that because the U.S. withdrew from the JCPOA, it's no longer a "participant" and therefore cannot trigger this procedure. In fact, Resolution 2231 defines "JCPOA participant" to include the U.S. without qualification.

Despite their likely qualms about restoring U.N. sanctions, most Western countries can be expected ultimately to comply with clear international law, especially since Iran is progressively pulling

itself out of compliance with the JCPOA. Russia and China may not, and it would be regrettable if they began openly defying binding U.N. Security Council mandates. But if the Trump administration were preoccupied with international law and institutions, it wouldn't have abandoned the JCPOA in the first place.

Reimposing the terminated U.N. Security Council resolutions would offer many benefits from the administration's perspective. The U.S. policy of "maximum pressure" would be backed up by multilateral, U.N.-imposed sanctions. The scope for international resistance to U.S. policy—under the European Union's "blocking statute," for example—would be narrowed. Important JCPOA benefits Iran has been counting on—such as expiration of the U.N. arms embargo in October 2020—would vanish.

Equally important, the U.S. would have enhanced leverage in any new negotiations. The baseline would no longer be the JCPOA, which conceded Iran's right to operate uranium-enrichment and ballistic-missile programs, but previous U.N. resolutions that prohibited Iran from operating such programs.

Mr. Rademaker is senior of counsel at Covington & Burling and a former assistant secretary of state.

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