

## **Nunes Opening Statement for Whistleblower Disclosure Hearing**

**September 26, 2019**

I want to congratulate the Democrats on the rollout of their latest information warfare operation against the President, and their extraordinary ability once again to enlist the mainstream media in their campaign.

This operation began with media reports—from the prime instigators of the Russian collusion hoax—that a whistleblower is claiming President Trump made a nefarious “promise” to a foreign leader. The released transcript of the call has already debunked that central assertion, but that didn’t matter. The Democrats simply moved the goalposts and began claiming that there doesn’t need to be a quid pro quo for this conversation to serve as the basis for impeaching the president.

Speaker Pelosi went even further when asked earlier if she’d put the brakes on impeachment if the transcript turned out to be benign. She responded, “We have many other candidates for impeachable offenses.” So there you go—if their whistleblower operation doesn’t work out, the Democrats and their media assets can always drum up something else.

And what other information has come to light since the original false report of a “promise” being made? We’ve learned the following:

- The complaint relied on hearsay evidence provided by the whistleblower.
- The Inspector General did not know the contents of the phone call at issue.
- The Inspector General found that the whistleblower displayed “arguable political bias” against Trump.
- The Department of Justice investigated the complaint and determined no action was warranted.
- The Ukrainian President denies being pressured by President Trump.

So, once again, this supposed scandal ends up being nothing like what we were told. And once again, the Democrats, their media mouthpieces, and a cabal of leakers are ginning up a fake story, with no regard to the monumental damage they’re causing to our public institutions and to trust in government, and without acknowledging all the false stories they propagated in the past, including countless allegations that the Trump campaign colluded with Russia to hack the 2016 election. We’re supposed to forget about all those stories but believe this one. In short, what we have with this storyline is another Steele dossier.

I’ll note here that, in the Democrats’ mania to overturn the 2016 elections, everything they touch gets hopelessly politicized. With the Russia hoax it was our intelligence agencies, which were turned into a political weapon to attack the president. And today, the whistleblower process is the casualty. Until about a week ago, the need to protect that process was a primary bipartisan concern of this committee. But if the Democrats were really concerned with defending that process, they would have pursued this matter with quiet and sober inquiries, as we always do for whistleblowers.

But that would've been useless for them. They don't want answers, they want a public spectacle. And so we've been treated to an unending parade of press releases, press conferences, and fake news stories.

This hearing itself is another example—whistleblower inquiries should not be held in public at all, as our Senate counterparts, both Democrats and Republicans, obviously understand—their hearing with Mr. Maguire is behind closed doors. But again, that only makes sense when your goal is to get information, not to create a media frenzy.

The current hysteria has something else in common with the Russia hoax. Back then, they accused the Trump campaign of colluding with Russians when the Democrats themselves were colluding with Russians in preparing the Steele dossier. Today, they accuse the president of pressuring Ukrainians to take actions that would help himself or hurt his political opponents. And yet, there are numerous examples of Democrats doing the exact same thing. For example:

- Joe Biden bragged that he extorted the Ukrainians into firing a prosecutor, who happened to be investigating Biden's own son.
- Three Democrat senators wrote a letter pressuring the Ukrainian general prosecutor to reopen investigations it reportedly froze on former Trump campaign officials.
- Another Democratic senator went to Ukraine and pressured the Ukrainian President not to investigate corruption allegations involving Biden's son.
- According to Ukrainian officials, Democratic National Committee contractor Alexandra Chalupa tried to get Ukrainian officials to provide dirt on Trump associates and tried to get the former Ukrainian President to comment publicly on their alleged ties to Russia.
- Ukrainian official Serhiy Leshchenko was a source for Nellie Ohr, wife of Department of Justice official Bruce Ohr, as she worked on the anti-Trump operation conducted by Fusion GPS and funded by the Democrats.
- And of course, Democrats on this very committee negotiated with people they thought were Ukrainians in order to obtain nude pictures of Trump.

As you see, it's a reliable rule of thumb in these information operations that whatever the Democrats accuse you of doing, they're doing themselves.

People can reasonably ask why the Democrats are so determined to impeach this president when in just a year they'll have a chance to vote him out of office. In fact, one Democratic congressman—one of the first to call for Trump's impeachment—gave us the answer when he said, "I'm concerned that if we don't impeach the president, he will get reelected."

Yes, winning elections is hard, and when you compete you have no guarantee you'll win. But the American people should have a say in all this, and they made their voices heard in the election. This latest gambit by the Democrats to overturn the people's mandate is unhinged and dangerous.

They should end this entire dishonest, grotesque spectacle and get back to solving problems, which is what every member of this committee was sent here to do. Judging by today's charade, however, the chances of that happening anytime soon are zero to none.