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December 5, 2017

RE: Bigotry, Hatred and Hostility from the Presidency

Dear Colleagues and Friends:

I love my country. For this reason, I will bring articles of impeachment to a vote in the House of Representatives on Wednesday, December 6, 2017.

For too long, we have allowed our civility to prevent us from confronting the invidious incivility of President Donald J. Trump. In doing this, hatred disguised as acceptable political correctness has festered in our body politic and polluted our discourse to our detriment. It divides and damages the social fabric of our country in ways that obstruction of justice cannot. It causes unparalleled destruction to our society in the long- and short- term that will not easily heal. Therefore, I choose to focus on these harmful effects in the articles of impeachment I will present.

Friends, whether we like it or not, we now have a bigot in the White House who incites hatred and hostility:

- He is unmindful of the high duties of his high office, of the dignity and proprieties thereof, and of the harmony, respect, and courtesies necessary for stability within our society.
- He has incited hatred and hostility among the American people based on race, national origin, religion, gender, and sexual orientation.
- He has brought the high office of President of the United States into contempt, ridicule, and disgrace.
- He has breached his trust as President and in all of the above has sown discord within American society to the manifest injury (harm) of the American people as well as among many of our allies.

Although he may not be the first bigot in the White House, he is the first who routinely uses Twitter and other public statements to feed an alt-right hate machine, antithetical to the constitutionally protected interests of many minorities, women, Muslims, and the LGBTQ community.

Hence, the question isn't whether we have a bigot as President, the question is: What are we going to do about it? The answer is: Impeachment for his high misdemeanors, which need not be a crime.

Impeachment is a political remedy, not a judicial remedy, thus it may be a high misdemeanor, which may or may not be a crime. The precedent of impeachment for a high misdemeanor as a non-criminal remedy is exemplified in the articles of impeachment against President Andrew Johnson, who was impeached for, among other things:

“...utterances, declarations, threats, and harangues, highly censurable in any are peculiarly indecent and unbecoming in the Chief Magistrate of the United States, by means whereof said Andrew Johnson has brought the high office of the President of the United States into contempt, ridicule and disgrace, to the great scandal of all good citizens, whereby said Andrew Johnson, President of the United States, **did commit, and was then and there guilty of a high misdemeanor in office.**”

In essence, President Andrew Johnson was not impeached for a criminal offense in Article 10 of the articles of impeachment against him, he was impeached for the high misdeed or misdemeanor of speaking ill of Congress. It must be duly noted that the word misdemeanor was defined at the time that Article 2, Section 4 of the Constitution was ratified as a misdeed and is currently defined by Merriam-Webster dictionary as a misdeed in addition to a crime less serious than a felony.

Friends, in the words of Malcom Shabazz, “You’ve been had” if you believe that a president has to perpetrate a crime to be impeached. The framers of the Constitution did more than wisely conclude that no one (including the President) would be above the law. They judiciously concluded that, paraphrasing George Mason, no one should be above justice.

The framers of the Constitution wanted a means to remove a President who had not committed a crime, but was causing harm to society. In fact, impeachment, as prophetically defined by the framers of the Constitution, was designed for a time such as this and a President such as Trump.

Friends, I find no solace in bringing forth articles of impeachment. I do so because some must attempt to “bend the arc of the moral universe toward justice” lest some others will bend it toward injustice. I will vote yes for impeachment, or any procedural vote that would lead to a vote on impeachment, knowing that history will be my final judge and vindication my eternal reward.

Sincerely,



AL GREEN
Member of Congress