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Source Set A—Pro-Impeachment Inquiry

Instructions: You will analyze sources that take a position on the impeachment inquiry into President Trump. Source Set A (sources 1-6) includes sources that support an impeachment inquiry. Source Set B (sources 7-12) includes sources that oppose an impeachment inquiry. Your teacher will assign you a source from each set. Read your assigned sources. Follow the guidelines for analyzing sources provided in “Evaluating Media Sources.” Be prepared to share your responses with your classmates.

Source 1: A tweet from former Republican Governor of Ohio John Kasich. Kasich ran against Donald Trump for the Republican presidential nomination in 2016 and has been a critic of the president.

You can view the original tweet here <bit.ly/2nUjziW>.

September 23, 2019 at 10:14 a.m.

“I have a simple message for the @GOP members of Congress:

“Where are you? Are you hiding under a rock? This is not political. This is our national security we’re talking about here.

“The intel committees in Congress need to review information. Follow the law!”

Source 2: “Seven freshman Democrats: These allegations are a threat to all we have sworn to protect,” an op-ed in *The Washington Post*, September 23, 2019, by Representatives Gil Cisneros of California, Jason Crow of Colorado, Chrissy Houlahan of Pennsylvania, Elaine Luria of Virginia, Mikie Sherrill of New Jersey, Elissa Slotkin of Michigan, and Abigail Spanberger of Virginia. The authors are seven moderate first-term Democrats elected in 2018.

You can view the full article here <<https://wapo.st/2n2dVvc>>.

“Our lives have been defined by national service. We are not career politicians. We are veterans of the military and of the nation’s defense and intelligence agencies. Our service is rooted in the defense of our country on the front lines of national security....

“The president of the United States may have used his position to pressure a foreign country into investigating a political opponent, and he sought to use U.S. taxpayer dollars as leverage to do it. He allegedly sought to use the very security assistance dollars appropriated by Congress to create stability in the world, to help root out corruption and to protect our national security interests, for his own personal gain. These allegations are stunning, both in the national security threat they pose and the potential corruption they represent. We also know that on Sept. 9, the inspector general for the intelligence community notified Congress of a ‘credible’ and ‘urgent’ whistleblower complaint related to national security and potentially involving these allegations. Despite federal law requiring the disclosure of this complaint to Congress, the administration has blocked its release to Congress.

“This flagrant disregard for the law cannot stand. To uphold and defend our Constitution, Congress must determine whether the president was indeed willing to use his power and withhold security assistance funds to persuade a foreign country to assist him in an upcoming election.

“If these allegations are true, we believe these actions represent an impeachable offense. We do not arrive at this conclusion lightly, and we call on our colleagues in Congress to consider the use of all congressional authorities available to us, including the power of ‘inherent contempt’ and impeachment hearings, to address these new allegations, find the truth and protect our national security....”

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Source 3: Statement by Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi announcing a formal impeachment inquiry of President Donald Trump, September 24, 2019. Pelosi is a Democrat.

You can view the full statement here <<https://nbcnews.to/2n11fVp>>.

“Good afternoon. Last Tuesday, we observed the anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution on September 17th. Sadly, on that day, the Intelligence Community Inspector General formally notified the Congress that the administration was forbidding him from turning over a whistleblower complaint on Constitution Day.

“This is a violation of the law. Shortly thereafter, press reports began to break of a phone call by the President of the United States, calling upon a foreign power to intervene in his election. This is a breach of his constitutional responsibilities.

“The facts are these. The Intelligence Community Inspector General, who was appointed by President Trump, determined that the complaint is both of urgent concern and credible, and its disclosure, he went on to say, relates to one of the most significant and important of the Director of National Intelligence’s responsibility to the American people.

“On Thursday, the Inspector General testified before the House Intelligence Committee, stating that the Acting Director of National Intelligence barred him from disclosing the whistleblower complaint. This is a violation of law.

“The law is unequivocal. The DNI staff, it says the DNI — DNI, Director of National Intelligence— shall provide Congress the full whistleblower complaint....

“And this week, the President has admitted to asking the President of Ukraine to take actions which would benefit him politically. The action of the Trump — the actions of the Trump presidency revealed a dishonorable fact of the President’s betrayal of his oath of office, betrayal of our national security and betrayal of the integrity of our elections.

“Therefore today, I’m announcing the House of Representatives moving forward with an official impeachment inquiry. I am directing our six committees to proceed with their investigations under that umbrella of impeachment inquiry.

“The President must be held accountable. No one is above the law....”

Source 4: “Democrats’ only choice is to impeach Trump,” by Elie Honig on CNN’s website, September 24, 2019. Elie Honig is a CNN legal analyst and former federal and state prosecutor.

You can access the full article here <<https://cnn.it/2n0yNmB>>.

“...But Congress cannot stop at the criminality question. Because even if Trump’s conduct dodges the statutory raindrops and doesn’t quite meet the definition of any federal crime, impeachment at its core is a remedy for abuse of constitutional power.

“Impeachment need not be based on a crime. The Constitution prescribes impeachment for ‘treason, bribery, or high crimes and misdemeanors.’ But the term ‘high crimes and misdemeanors’ is not defined anywhere in the Constitution or statute, and appears to be drawn from English parliamentary practice, which provided for impeachment for crimes or for conduct beyond established criminal law.

“The Constitution separates impeachment from criminal prosecution. Draft articles of impeachment against President Richard Nixon included abuse of power and misuse of public office, while one of the proposed articles of impeachment against President Bill Clinton (voted down by the full House) related to abuse of power for non-criminal conduct. Fundamentally, impeachment is a political process with a political remedy (removal from office), while criminal charges address violations of law by imposing a punitive remedy (imprisonment and/or a fine)....

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“Until now, Pelosi has stuck to her commitment not to pursue impeachment, instead offering up limp and hopeless legislative proposals. But Trump’s conduct here is so flagrant, so lawless and so abusive that Pelosi is now changing course on impeachment.

“By stepping up and seriously pursuing impeachment, House Democrats can salvage their legacy and meet their obligation to defend the Constitution against ‘all enemies, foreign and domestic.’”

Source 5: “Statement from National Security Professionals,” at National Security Action, signed by nearly three hundred former U.S. foreign policy and national security officials, September 27, 2019. National Security Action is an organization that opposes the policies of President Trump.

You can download a PDF of the full statement here <<http://bit.ly/2nZrPhu>>.

“...President Trump appears to have leveraged the authority and resources of the highest office in the land to invite additional foreign interference into our democratic processes. That would constitute an unconscionable abuse of power. It also would represent an effort to subordinate America’s national interests—and those of our closest allies and partners—to the President’s personal political interest.

“Having worked across administrations of both parties to uphold and advance those national interests, we consider the President’s actions to be a profound national security concern. Our relations with the rest of the world and our policies on the global stage must be based solely on what is in the national interest. The introduction of any other considerations of the President debases our democracy, has the potential to make us more vulnerable to threats, and sends a message to leaders around the world that America’s foreign policy can be dangerously corrupted by catering to a single individual. If we fail to speak up—and act—now our foreign policy and national security will officially be on offer to those who can most effectively fulfill the President’s personal prerogatives.

“To be clear, we do not wish to prejudge the totality of the facts or Congress’ deliberative process. At the same time, there is no escaping that what we already know is serious enough to merit impeachment proceedings. From there, the facts—and nothing but the facts—should dictate how Congress holds the President to account and signals to the world that our foreign policy and national security are not for sale.”

Source 6: “Why the Trump Impeachment Inquiry Is the Only Option,” from the editorial board of *The New York Times*, September 27, 2019. The editorial board is made up of fourteen writers and editors from the *Times* Opinion department.

You can view the full article here <<https://nyti.ms/2mmACK1>>.

“...THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAVE LEARNED over the past week that Mr. Trump, during a July phone call, pressed the president of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelensky, to investigate Joe Biden, one of his leading political rivals, according to a written summary of the conversation released by the White House. What’s more, Mr. Trump offered the assistance of the Justice Department in that investigation. These facts are not in dispute, which is why some of the president’s die-hard defenders are trying to dismiss the conversation as an inconsequential instance of the president’s bad judgment.

“But it was so much more dangerous than that. A president’s use of his power for his own political gain, at the expense of the public interest, is the quintessence of an impeachable offense. It was, in fact, one of the examples the Constitution’s framers deployed to explain what would constitute ‘high crimes and misdemeanors,’ the standard for impeachment....

“The decision to impeach a president is inherently political, in the sense — the noble sense — that it must be made in the public interest. But it should never be political in the narrow sense of being dictated by the latest poll or the next election. This is a moment for political courage. Americans deserve a government devoted to addressing their real problems. But to get that, they need a government balanced as the founders intended, with

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free and fair elections and a president checked by Congress from the selfish exercise of extraordinary power. Mr. Trump has disparaged and degraded the institutions of American governance, and it is now time for them, in historic rebuke, to demonstrate the majesty of representative democracy.”