

2019 Kettle Kick-off



Palm Beach State College President Ava Parker let the 2019 Kettle Kick-off for the Salvation Army of Palm Beach County, as Rian Porter drops the first dollar in the kettle. Rian is the daughter of Lieutenants Jeremy and Crystal Porter, Corp officers of Lake Worth Salvation Army.

The Check-the-Box Impeachment

Nancy Pelosi said she undertook impeachment "prayerfully," and apparently what she was praying was that she could get it over with as soon as possible.

The House is preparing to send a flagrantly incomplete factual record to the Senate as the basis of an effort to remove a sitting president for the first time in our history.

Pelosi has affected a posture of heavy-heartedness since the outset of the process, saying that "there's no joy in this" and urging a somber spirit as Democrats pursue the facts wherever they may take them -- so long as that's not too far into an election year.

In substantive terms, the Democrats had a good set of public hearings before Adam Schiff's intelligence committee in recent weeks -- with one gaping hole. They didn't have anyone with first-hand knowledge of Trump's directives on Ukraine or his state of mind. The closest was EU ambassador Gordon Sondland, who, still, could only "presume" a quid pro quo over the defense aid.

There are people who probably don't have to presume, and Sondland named some of them: Trump's personal counsel Rudy Giuliani, acting White House chief of staff Mick Mulvaney, Vice President Mike Pence and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. They all were closer to this than Sondland, yet Democrats are happy to make the guy from the outer bounds of the inner circle their "star witness" and forgo the inner circle. To get the more central witnesses requires litigation since they all have at least colorable claims of privilege. The Democrats don't want to wait for the courts.

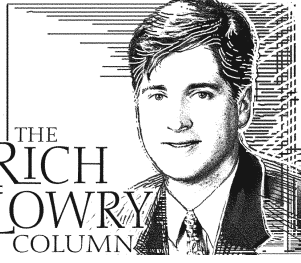
The minimum requirement of a historic impeachment case, only the fourth in our history, would seem to be a complete account of the facts. Schiff used to say as much: "We have to flesh out all of the facts for the American people. The seriousness of the matter and the danger to our country demands nothing less." Now, the seriousness and the danger are demanding that Democrats rush things along so the president can be impeached by the end of the year.

No matter how often Democrats say, "Let's honor the Constitution," their actions say, "Let's check the box." Democrats have had the difficulty from the beginning of trying to build an edifice of impeachment and removal atop the narrow foundation of the Ukraine episode, and now they aren't even going to finish the edifice, content with what they could complete in a two-month investigation largely reliant on the testimony of people who weren't around for the main events (former U.S. ambassador to Ukraine Marie Yovanovitch) or were out of the loop (former Trump Russia adviser Fiona Hill).

With every day that passes it becomes a little more absurd to say Trump should be impeached and removed when the public can make its own verdict in the election. Besides, Democrats know that impeachment is going nowhere in the Senate, so why bother locking down the case to make it worthy of the gravity of the process?

They might as well go with what they have, a partisan impeachment pursued on a political timetable. During Bill Clinton's impeachment, it was his defenders who were saying, "Let's move on." Now, it's Trump's pursuers, who prayerfully and sorrowfully want to get impeachment over with.

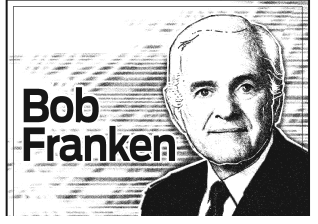
Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.
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Charm Offensive vs Just Offensive

Which of these campaign posters would be better: "Fiona Hill for President" or simply "Fiona!"?

Whichever, the Russian foreign affairs specialist has demonstrated that she has what it takes to unite our own badly divided country with her powerful combination of intellect, toughness and charm. Unfortunately, she was born and raised in the United Kingdom, so she doesn't fulfill the constitutional requirement that the chief executive must be a natural born citizen.



A Brit who emigrated to the United States to seek opportunity, she found it in service to her adopted country. She explained: "I grew up poor with a very distinctive working-class accent. In England in the 1980s and 1990s, this would have impeded my professional advancement." Her daddy was a miner, but she left that life behind and ended up getting a doctorate from Harvard.

Her work ethic is apparent. She has distinguished herself as an expert on Russia, sliding easily between the think tank world and government. She has served in administrations of both parties and was in the Trump White House as a National Security Council expert on Vladimir Putin's Russia before leaving in July.

In her case, it was not soon enough to avoid the impeachment maelstrom. So there she was, testifying before the House Intelligence Committee's inquiry hearings, televised worldwide. Other witnesses have soft-pedaled their testimony or couched their recollections in super-polite terms in order to not antagonize the snarling GOP members of the committee. Dr. Hill was not about to play that game.

Her opening statement included a frontal assault on the subterfuge by Republicans that the real collusion in 2016 was from Ukrainians trying to elect Hillary Clinton, not Vladimir Putin on behalf of candidate Trump: "This is a fictional narrative that has been perpetrated and propagated by the Russian security services."

That left Devin Nunes, the ranking Republican member of the committee and chief Trump mouthpiece, to sputter, "It is entirely possible for two separate nations to engage in election meddling at the same time." In a short while, the grumpy Republican committee members (pardon the redundancy) decided that it was in their interest to not take on Hill, and instead to just make crabby statements.

GOP Congressman Brad Wenstrup, elected in 2013 in Ohio, is also Dr. Wenstrup, a podiatrist and an Army Reserve officer who has served in Iraq. He also attended to Minority Leader Steve Scalise when Scalise was shot by a domestic terrorist during practice for a congressional baseball game. Wenstrup accused the Democrats of being driven by hate:

"I know that hatred blinds people. I've been in war, and I've studied war, and coups create division. And it's time for this phase of the publicly announced and proclaimed Democrat coup to end."

In response, Hill turned on the charm: "I think that what Dr. Wenstrup said was very powerful, about the importance of overcoming hatred and certainly partisan division ... So I just want to thank you for making what I think was also a very elegant and eloquent and heartfelt defense."

Happily the networks were on a split-screen shot. We could see then that the flabbergasted Wenstrup mouthed the words "Thank you." It was a remarkable display of someone, Fiona Hill, finding common ground -- exactly what it will take for America to recover once Donald Trump leaves office, however he departs.

Bob Franken is an Emmy Award-winning reporter who covered Washington for more than 20 years with CNN.
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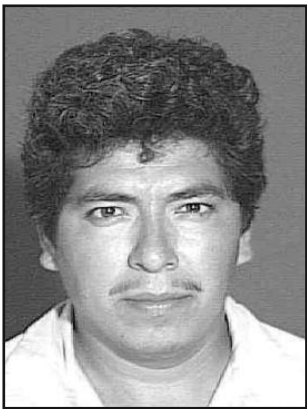
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CRIME STOPPERS OF PALM BEACH COUNTY, INC.

Crime Stoppers of Palm Beach County, Inc., is seeking the public's assistance in locating two fugitives.

Antonio Guevara (alias "Tony") is wanted as of November 21, 2019, for violation of probation: Sexual battery on person less than 12 years of age.

Guevara was born on May 10, 1965, is 5'8" and weighs 180 lbs. He has black hair and brown eyes. Last known address is East Congress Avenue, Lake Worth. He has worked in the maintenance field.

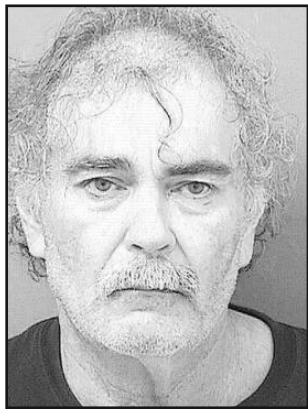


Guevara

Timothy Defer is wanted as of November 21, 2019, for failure to appear: Criminal mischief.

Defer was born on April 26, 1962, is 6'1" and weighs 240 lbs. He has gray hair and blue eyes with multiple tattoos. Last known address is North 2nd Avenue, Lake Worth. He has worked as a laborer.

If you have information on either of the above you may call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-458-TIPS and remain anonymous. You may be eligible for a reward of up to \$3000.



Defer

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