December 10, 2017

Trump's tweets are all his

Re: "Lawyer: Trump can't obstruct -- Dowd says president is too powerful to be guilty of obstruction of justice," Tuesday news story.

Early in his administration, the White House stated clearly and unequivocally that President Donald Trump's tweets constitute the official word of the president of the United States. As a scholar of presidential rhetoric it seems obvious that, just like a formal speech where ghostwriters play a key role, ultimately it doesn't matter who helps craft Trump's tweets. Once written, the words are his. He owns them and they are a permanent part of the public record.

Therefore, regardless of the fact that Trump's outside attorney John Dowd now takes responsibility, it was the president who on Dec. 1 declared that he fired Michael Flynn, his national security adviser, because Flynn lied to the vice president and the FBI. Intent was communicated and, hence, a prima facie case for obstruction of justice mounts.

For the White House now, in view of this new tweet, suddenly to claim that Trump can't be charged with obstruction of justice is at best laughable. The rule of law will -- as it always has -- prevail.

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