The Democrat’s Rhetorical Conundrum

April 22, 2019

Make no mistake: The Democrats are confronted with a real conundrum about how rhetorically to respond to the Mueller Report. For quite some time, and echoing the sentiments of respected political experts, I have argued that Democrats should focus their discourse on the 2020 election rather than the Report and subsequent investigations. Some have responded to this argument by claiming that it advocates political expedience in lieu of a concern for presidential oversight and preservation of our nation’s institutions.

This is not an accurate characterization. Let me clarify. When the framers of the Constitution established a system of checks and balances, they understood that perhaps the most powerful check on the president, as well as effective tool for preserving our nation’s institutions, is the vote. Hence, contending that Democrats rhetorically must prioritize the 2020 election over additional investigations and possible impeachment hearings, is not a recommendation for political expedience. Nor does it constitute an abdication of the obligation to protect our democracy and preserve presidential oversight. To the contrary.

If Democrats employ this rhetorical strategy, there is a better chance they will be successful in voting Trump out of office. And many legal experts believe the result of this is that Trump more likely would be indicted—something not possible while he is a sitting president. More importantly, if the Democrats regain control of the executive branch, they—unlike Trump—will appoint qualified government officials and enact legislation to: (1) restore the rule of law; (2) preserve the
sanctity of and faith in the country’s institutions; (3) prevent future presidents from becoming autocrats capable of undermining our government and its longstanding democratic norms; and (4) make sure foreign governments never again will interfere with our elections.

Rick Cherwitz
Austin, TX