



FEATURE:

Impeachment: week in review

A weekly one paragraph summary report and analysis, including MeetToImpeach news, followed by recaps (with links) of representative on-line articles and essays – typically 800 to 1,600 words.

Week ending 7/22/2018
 (~ 1,610 words)
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Minneapolis 7/22/18 Edition – As President Trump’s European trip and Helsinki summit with Russia’s President Putin are fast fading into the distant past – and with Republicans’ support for Trump at an all-time high in their wake -- the Mueller and Cohen investigations and Stormy Daniels’ attorney are the main impeachment stories this week. Following news of former Trump fixer Michael Cohen’s recording of Trump discussing a possible payment to keep quiet his alleged affair with a former Playboy model, Stormy Daniels’ attorney, Michael Avenatti, claims he has knowledge of the content of additional tape recordings Cohen made of Trump. It’s important to keep in mind that the emergence of physical evidence – tapes and a stained dress – played crucial roles in the Nixon and Clinton impeachment stories. New documents released by the government show more support for the FBI’s basis in requesting surveillance warrants of Trump associates during the 2016 campaign – although Trump claims the evidence shows the opposite. Trump is continuing his own campaign to paint the Mueller investigation as a “Witch hunt.” Trump also appears to be escalating a war of words with Iran – issuing a strong warning to them by tweet – in all caps. Several new books are on the way from former Trump staffers and associates – and Harvard Professor Emeritus Alan Dershowitz’s new book, The Case Against Impeaching Trump, has made the PublishersWeekly top 25 best-sellers for hard cover non-fiction – checking in at #10, with weekly sales of 6,933 copies. However, overall interest in

impeachment books per se remains low – certainly as compared to James Comey’s benchmark, [A Higher Loyalty](#) – with 581,000 copies sold, (that best-seller has dropped off the top 25 list.)

MeetToImpeach Events: MeetToImpeach.com has announced the start of weekly meetings at People's Plaza in downtown Minneapolis. The next ones will be Tuesday, July 24th, from 2 to 3 PM and then again from 6 to 7 PM. "People's Plaza" (AKA "Government Plaza") is between Minneapolis City Hall and the Hennepin County Government Center, at 4th Street and 5th Avenue. Bob "Again" Carney Jr. [also the editor of this feature] said: "The purpose of these meetings is to launch a bi-partisan discussion of what our Constitution actually says about Impeachment and removal from office, and to challenge some major teachings of 'Conventional Wisdom' that appear to be just plain wrong... or incomplete at best." Although Carney is also a candidate for the Republican nomination in the August 14th primary for U.S. Congress in the 5th District, which includes Minneapolis, these meetings will not be campaign events, and will be non-partisan – candidates of all parties are welcome.

Stormy Daniels’ attorney: knows content of more Cohen tape recordings of Trump -- [ABC News](#) reports: “Michael Avenatti, the outspoken lawyer who's representing adult-film actress Stormy Daniels in her case against the president, claimed former longtime Trump personal attorney Michael Cohen recorded more than one conversation with Donald Trump -- and that he knows ‘the substance’ of what they discussed. ¶‘I know the substance of some of the tapes,’ Avenatti told ABC News Chief Anchor George Stephanopoulos on ‘This Week’ Sunday. ¶The New York Times was first to report the existence of a recorded conversation between then-candidate Trump and Cohen, his attorney at the time. In the recording, which was discovered during a court-ordered seizure of Cohen's business records and documents, Trump talks about making a payment linked to former Playboy model Karen McDougal.” If Trump had been talking outside the context of simply denying that affairs had happened, that in and of itself would of course contradict his public denials. Beyond that, in both the Watergate and Clinton impeachments, the simple emergence of physical evidence – tapes and a dress – proved a crucial element in leading towards both impeachment proceedings.

Documents emerge showing basis for FBI investigation of Trump during campaign

[USA Today](#) reports: "The FBI told a secret federal surveillance court in 2016 that it believed Carter Page, a onetime foreign policy aide to President Donald Trump’s campaign, 'has

been collaborating and conspiring with the Russian government' in its efforts to interfere in the presidential election, according to a trove of documents made public late Saturday. ¶The FBI released more than 400 pages of documents in response to lawsuits by USA TODAY and other media organizations. It was the first time the government had made public copies of top-secret applications seeking wiretaps of an American under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, which are among the government's most closely held intelligence secrets. ¶Swaths of the records released Saturday were blacked out because the FBI said they remain classified, including details about why the FBI believed Page was participating in Russia's election meddling. But the fragments of records the government made public offer a rare window into one of the earliest phases of the investigation into possible ties between Russian meddling and the Trump campaign, which has cast a shadow over the first years of Trump's administration." While President Trump has been trying to spin the new information to support his claim that the initial FBI investigation was wrongful, the evidence appears to contradict that claim, and also to show that House Intelligence Committee's memo about the early surveillance was misleading.

[ABC News](#) (via the Associated Press) is reporting that in the wake of his European trip and Helsinki summit, President Trump has returned to his theme -- calling the Mueller investigation a witch hunt: "Capping a week of drama, back-tracking and blistering statements from allies about his attitude toward Russian election interference, President Donald Trump on Monday returned to familiar rhetoric, referring to the special counsel's Russia probe as a 'hoax' and 'Witch Hunt.' ¶Trump spent last week trying to reassure the country that he accepts that the longtime foe interfered in the 2016 election, despite his public undermining of U.S. intelligence agencies in Helsinki while standing alongside Russian President Vladimir Putin. But Trump cast doubt once again in a Sunday tweet, diminishing at least the significance, if not the existence, of the interference and the U.S. investigation into Russia's actions. ¶'So President Obama knew about Russia before the Election,' Trump tweeted. 'Why didn't he do something about it? Why didn't he tell our campaign? Because it is all a big hoax, that's why, and he thought Crooked Hillary was going to win!!!!'"

Book Beat:

The [PublishersWeekly](#) website shows [The Case Against Impeaching Trump](#), by Harvard Emeritus Professor Alan Dershowitz is on their list of top 25 non-fiction hardcover best sellers

for the first time, at #10, with weekly sales of 6,933 copies. The publisher was reported to have shipped 50,000 copies to bookstores. This is a significantly better sales performance than To End a Presidency, from rival Harvard Professor Lawrence Tribe -- but that's a relative statement - the real lead to this story is that there seems to be an overall lack of interest in books on the subject of impeachment. However, on the broader topic of Trump's presidency and sundry related topics, two other books are on the current top 25 list -- The Soul of America: The Battle for Our Better Angles, by John Meacham, at #8 with 7,955 sales (on the list for ten weeks) and The Plot to Destroy Democracy: How Putin and His Spies Are Undermining America and Dismantling the West, by Malcolm Nance, at #14, with 4,076 sales (on the list for three weeks.) BTW -- The President is Missing by Bill Clinton is #1, with 36,723 sales (on the list for six weeks) -- but it's in the fiction category.

[PublishersWeekly](#) also has an article this week titled Trump Staffers... and their books. The list begins with former FBI Director James Comey's A Higher Loyalty -- Comey was of course not a staffer, but his book has sold 581,000 copies so far. Books reported to be on the way include: The Briefing, by Sean Spicer, to be released next week; Anthony Scaramucci (untitled) to be released this fall; H.R. McMaster, untitled, scheduled for 2020; Roger Stone, not a White House staffer, said he is working on a book. Hope Hicks is rumored to be receiving offers from publishers for as high as \$10 million; Steve Bannon is seen as a prize publishing catch -- but doesn't appear interested.

Republican support for Trump stronger than ever – but bookie’s impeachment odds rise

[Fortune reports](#): “Trump advisor Newt Gingrich called the president’s handling of the recent Helsinki summit with Russian president Putin “the most serious mistake of his presidency.” The broader Republican base, it appears, would beg to differ. ¶According to a new NBC/WSJ poll, 53% of Republicans approve of Trump’s handling of Russia. What’s more, the poll, which was conducted in part before the summit and the rest after, saw an insignificant change in the results, perhaps demonstrating the durability of Republican support for Trump. The poll found that overall, Trump’s approval rating among Republicans is at 88%, the highest since he took office.

[An Irish bookmaker says](#) it is now more likely Donald Trump will be impeached in light of the recent summit with Russian President Vladimir Putin. ¶Paddy Power, the betting shop

based in Dublin, has said the odds of Mr. Trump being kicked out of the White House have gone from 8/1 to 2/1 following the pair's meeting in Helsinki, Finland. [Ed. Note]: this may be a thinly traded market subject to manipulation.

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