



## 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 1,200 to 2,000 words.

Week ending 9/9/2018

(~ 2,060 words)

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**Minneapolis 9/9/18 Edition** – Reports of White House dysfunction are the main impeachment-related story this week; but the Senate confirmation hearing for Supreme Court nominee Judge Brett Kavanaugh is a major subtext. The week began with rumblings about Fear: Trump in the White House, Bob Woodward’s new book describing an on-going “nervous breakdown” at the White House. Woodward says he has multiple sources for every claim made in the book, and chronicles an Administration staffed with many who are obviously in great distress to find themselves in their present circumstances, but who apparently believe it is better for them to be in a position to in some ways block, blunt, or delay the most dangerous urges and tendencies of President Trump. Fear is scheduled for release this week – it’s certain to be a best seller. The theme of the book was reinforced by an unusual anonymous editorial published by the New York Times... a high Administration office essentially echoes what Woodward is saying. Vice President Pence reacted by rejecting the thesis of both Woodward’s book and the op-ed, saying that person who wrote the op-ed should resign. Most reporting and opinion speculation suggests that the confirmation of Judge Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court is a foregone conclusion. However, should the Democrats take the House in 2018, based on his testimony, the impeachment of Judge Kavanaugh is possible, for either perjury, or for a claim that even if his testimony was not perjury, it was so evasive and deceptive that he fell below a different

Constitutional standard: “good behavior” – that is required of judges. At the NY Times David Leonhardt draws together threads connecting numerous targets of President Trump with a common core: their knowledge about or work dedicated to opposing a nexus of Trump businesses and corrupt Russian money. Omarosa’s recent book, [Unhinged: An Insider’s Account of the Trump White House](#), dropped from #2 to #9 in its third week on the [publishersweekly.com](#) list of the top 25 non-fiction hardcover books.

**MeetToImpeach event planning:** With fall semester approaching, MeetToImpeach is contacting Twin Cities law schools, inquiring about holding meetings at their campuses. No current meetings are scheduled.

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### **New York Times publishes anonymous op-ed highly critical of President Trump –**

[The NY Times editorial department took an unusual step last week, as stated by their own editorial preface to this linked article:](#) "The Times is taking the rare step of publishing an anonymous Op-Ed essay. We have done so at the request of the author, a senior official in the Trump administration whose identity is known to us and whose job would be jeopardized by its disclosure. We believe publishing this essay anonymously is the only way to deliver an important perspective to our readers. We invite you to submit a question about the essay or our vetting process here."

### **Book tour begins for Bob Woodward’s new book, [Fear: Trump in the White House](#) –**

[On CBS Sunday Morning, David Martin interviewed Bob Woodward](#) about Woodward's new book: [Fear: Trump in the White House](#), and was told: "People who work for [Trump] are worried that he will sign things or give orders that threaten the national security or the financial security of the country or of the world." Martin describes Woodward's account that former Trump Economic Council head Gary Cohn and former staff secretary Rob Porter stole documents from President Trump's desk to prevent him from signing them -- as Woodward relates: "because they realized that this would endanger the country." Asked: "how do they get away with that?" Woodward replied: "He doesn't remember. If it's not immediately available for action it goes away." Martin characterizes such actions as "the exact reverse of what a White House staff is supposed to do." Woodward said of the eight previous Administrations he has

covered, going back to President Nixon, "I never heard of people on the staff in the White House engaging in that kind of extreme action." Woodward recounts a tweet Trump was drafting, but never sent, saying the U.S. would pull out dependents of the U.S. troops stationed in Korea. Woodward said: "At that moment there was a sense of profound alarm in the Pentagon leadership, that "My God, one Tweet, and we have reliable information that the North Koreans are going to read this as an attack is imminent." President Trump has been denouncing the "phony quotes" he claims are in the book. Woodward says he has multiple sources for every claim in the book. The recent anonymous op ed published by the New York Times was associated by Martin with Woodward's book, as confirming the main theme -- that article includes the statement: "I work for the President but like-minded colleagues and I have vowed to thwart parts of his agenda and his worst inclinations." Woodward's comment on the op-ed was that it is too vague; it: "does not meet the standards of trying to describe specific incidents. Specific incidents are the building blocks of journalism."

[On Face the Nation, Margaret Brennan was told this by vice President Mike Pence, regarding Bob Woodward's new book:](#) "The only thing that's wrong about that narrative is everything. Because it shows a complete misunderstanding of how this White House works. What President Trump provides for this country every day is strong and decisive leadership in the Oval Office. The narrative that I've picked up in not only this book but the opinion editorials suggests that things are happening in spite of the President's leadership and nothing could be further from the truth. Our founders envisioned all executive power being vested in the President of the United States, and the American people should know that all the progress that we're making is the result of the fact that President Trump engages in debate, he gets all of the facts, and he's not afraid to make a decision and move forward." Pence also said he has fully cooperated with the Muller investigation, but Pence has not been asked for an interview.

**Trump campaigns to his base – get out and vote or they'll impeach me --**

[TIME reports:](#) "At a rally in Montana on Thursday night, President Donald Trump argued that supporters should vote for Republicans in the midterms so he won't get impeached. ¶"This election, you aren't voting for a candidate, you're voting for which party controls Congress. It's a very important thing," Trump said. ¶"Trump continued, 'But I say how do you impeach somebody who is doing a great job, hasn't done anything wrong. Our economy is good. How do you do it?'"

"They like to use the 'impeach' word,' he said, before launching into an impression of his critics... "Trump is probably correct that a Democratic House is more likely to impeach him than the current Republican-controlled one, but while there have been some calls for impeachment among the liberal grassroots, there's little evidence that Democratic leaders would pursue it at this point."

### **As Judge Kavanaugh's Supreme Court hearing ends, his possible impeachment emerges --**

[Slate published an article](#) by Lisa Graves, the former chief counsel for nominations for the ranking member of the Senate Judiciary Committee in the early 2000s, when some of Sen. Patrick Leahy's (D-VT) documents were stolen from a server by GOP Senate aide Manuel Miranda. Graves writes of Judge Brett Kavanaugh, President Trump's nominee to the Supreme Court, that rather than considering his confirmation: "the better question is whether he should be impeached from the federal judiciary... Newly released emails show that while he was working to move through President George W. Bush's judicial nominees in the early 2000s, Kavanaugh received confidential memos, letters, and talking points of Democratic staffers stolen by GOP Senate aide Manuel Miranda. That includes research and talking points Miranda stole from the Senate server after I had written them for the Senate Judiciary Committee as the chief counsel for nominations for the minority... Kavanaugh should be removed because he was repeatedly asked under oath as part of his 2004 and 2006 confirmation hearings for his position on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit about whether he had received such information from Miranda, and each time he falsely denied it..." Graves makes plain her view that Kavanaugh's testimony: that what he did and the documents he saw were all in the normal course of business as it was conducted at the time, is false News accounts indicate many documents Democrat's consider relevant to Kavanaugh's confirmation were either provided very late, or have still not been provided. However, Graves makes it clear that even with the documents currently available, the case that Judge Kavanaugh committed perjury is strong. If Kavanaugh is confirmed, and Democrats come to control the U.S. House, this could end up as the basis for his future impeachment.

### **Is de facto money laundering for corrupt Russians Trump's most serious wrongdoing? --**

[David Leonhardt recounts in the NY Times](#) a "suspicious pattern" -- a common background theme for the people President Trump has targeted with Twitter and other attacks.

Leonhardt wonders why Trump -- with his long history of dumping anyone and anything that becomes inconvenient for him -- seems to be refusing to dump Putin no matter what. Leonhardt writes: "This odd refusal is arguably the biggest reason to believe that Putin really does have leverage over Trump. Maybe it's something shocking, like a sex tape or evidence of campaign collusion by Trump himself. Or maybe it's the scandal that's been staring us in the face all along: Illicit financial dealings — money laundering — between Trump's business and Russia." Using as an example Bruce Ohr, "a formerly obscure Justice Department official" -- Leonhardt writes: "Ohr fits a larger pattern. In his highly respected three-decade career in law enforcement, he has specialized in going after Russian organized crime. ¶It just so happens that most of the once-obscure bureaucrats whom Trump has tried to discredit also are experts in some combination of Russia, organized crime and money laundering. ¶It's true of Andrew McCabe (the former deputy F.B.I. director whose firing Trump successfully lobbied for), Andrew Weissmann (the only official working for Robert Mueller whom Trump singles out publicly) and others. They are all Trump bogeymen — and all among 'the Kremlin's biggest adversaries in the U.S. government,' as [Natasha Bertrand wrote in The Atlantic](#). Trump, she explained, seems to be trying to rid the government of experts in Russian organized crime. ¶I realize that this evidence is only circumstantial and well short of proof. But it's one of many suspicious patterns about Trump and Russia. When you look at them together, it's hard to come away thinking that the most likely explanation is coincidence." This is a topic journalist David Cay Johnston has also written about extensively. The general argument is this: people (often Russians) with piles of illicit cash on hand simply paid Trump cash for properties -- at inflated prices that are a reward for whatever risks Trump might have been taking for doing this. By simply depositing their payments, Trump has effectively been laundering this money. Of course, on a de facto basis casinos are also often money laundering operations -- that's done by buying chips with cash and then cashing them in later for a check -- it doesn't matter whether the chips were actually ever gambled or not. Money laundering as a service has been the de facto heart of Trump's business model for decades.

### **NFL Protesters vs Trump – Season Two --**

[ESPN reports](#): "The NFL is not expected to implement a new policy on the national anthem this season, league sources told ESPN, no matter how many meetings and conversations occur regarding the topic. ¶The new policy is going to be no policy -- at least for this season,

according to sources." Only scattered protests were reported at the beginning of Season Two of "NFL Protesters vs. Trump" – [CSN reports](#): "Ten National Football League (NFL) players from six teams protested, in one way or another, during the playing of the National Anthem in the first week of NFL regular season games."

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