

Mr. Chairman. The wisdom of the Founding Fathers is truly amazing. They pledged "their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor" to escape the tyranny of a King. They understood the nature of the human heart struggles between good and evil. So, the Founders created a system of checks and balances and accountability. If corruption invaded the political system, a means was available to address it. The Founders felt impeachment so important it was included in six different places in the Constitution.

The Founders set the standard for impeachment of the President and other civil officers as "treason, bribery, and other high crimes and misdemeanors."

The House of Representatives must use this standard, and the circumstances and the facts of the President's conduct, to determine if the occupant of the Oval Office is fit to continue holding the highest executive office of this great country.

I concur with the premise that the crimes alleged against the President may not directly involve the derelict exercise of executive powers, except the issues of possible misuse of executive privilege. The alleged crimes plainly do involve the derelict violation of the President's executive duties.

The Committee received testimony on American and English history and legal scholarship on

precedents which made plain that personal misconduct, violations of trust, and other charges of a more private nature can be impeachable offenses.

The question before the Committee is this: is perjury to conceal private misconduct and other wrongful conduct to thwart and impede justice in a civil rights case in federal court; and, efforts to obstruct justice in a criminal proceeding and perjury before a federal grand jury, rise to the level of an impeachable offense?

When the President had the opportunity to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, he lied.

Before the court in the Jones deposition, the President lied.

Before the court in the Jones case, in answers to discovery interrogatories, the President lied.

Before the grand jury, the President lied.

Before his Cabinet and his senior aides, the President lied.

Before the Judiciary Committee of the Congress in answers to the request for admissions, the President lied.

Before the American people, the President lied.

What are the consequences if this Committee leaves a known perjurer in the Oval Office?

First, perjury and obstruction of justice drive a stake in the heart of the rule of law. When the Constitution was ratified, it christened the "grand American experiment." America stood alone in being governed by the rule of law, as opposed to the rule of kings, tyrants, czars, monarchs, emperors, chiefs, sheiks, lords, barons, or nobles.

To our founders' credit they created a republic based on the rule of law, rather than a nation based on the whims of man. The American legacy is that we have become the beacon of liberty to the nation's around the world who seek systems of government just like ours. We have an obligation to preserve the

heritage of the rule of law now and for future generations.

The President's lawyers have given us a fantasy defense. The President's defenders would have us believe that the President's misconduct was only private, and therefore, not impeachable.

If the President's verbal engineering prevails then an evasive, incomplete, misleading, and even maddening statement is not a lie;

No one is ever really alone in the cosmos;

"Is" is not a state of being;

A person performing a sex act is having sexual relations, but the person receiving the favor is not

having sex;

And a cover story is not a concocted rendition of an event with the willful intent to mislead others by lies, but instead, a cover story is a simple harmless revision of an historical event.

This is neither believable, reasonable, rational, nor acceptable. The President's defense is completely misguided in its interpretations, parsing, and hair-splitting of words. C.S. Lewis has called this technique "verbicide, the murder of a word."

When the plain spoken English language is twisted into the vague and ambiguous, society is devoid of trust. It undermines our social interactions,

commerce, indeed, the rule of law and government itself. I believe in civility and self-evident truths as a statement of stable social order under the rule of law.

If the President's view of nontruth prevails, we set a double standard. Presidential perjurers will have no consequences to face in the future....everybody else could go to jail.

We will also set a double standard with regard to behavior of the Chief Executive and as the Commander in Chief. Conduct that would strip an Admiral or General of his post, land a sergeant in prison, or deprive an Administrative nominee of a Cabinet post, is condoned for the President. Our

soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines will be bound by a high ethical code of conduct, as they should be.

But our President, who has the power to send them in harm's way, can conform his conduct to a lower standard. I disagree. Leadership is by example and setting the higher standard.

Retired Admiral Edney, who teaches ethics at the Naval Academy, testified before us: "Dual standards and less accountability at the top, will undermine the trust and confidence so essential to good order and discipline as well as mission success" in the military

I believe the Office of the President is one in which is reposed the trust of the American people by

virtue of gaining the majority of the American electorate. If the President can lie repeatedly and without remorse (until the lie is exposed) with regard to his personal conduct, can the President be trusted by the American people, by the Congress, by foreign governments to conduct the official business of the United States? The trust given the President by the people has been broken and betrayed. The President is no longer entitled to the benefit of the doubt as to his actions and judgements, such as in the use of military force or foreign travel. He is now second guessed.

If this Committee cannot bring itself to impeach a

perjurious President, the bar will be raised for future circumstances that the House and this Committee might face. Our children and grandchildren will face Presidents who seek to flout the rule of law in a more ambitious manner because of the precedent set.

I will defend the Constitution and serve as a protector of our national heritage and help define our nation's character. I will not cave in and permit our nation to be ruled by polls, emotions, or the distortion of words.

An ancient Greek philosopher stated, "A man's character is his fate." I am saddened and disappointed that the character of President Clinton

brings us to an impeachment vote for only the third time in over 200 years.

We are debating articles of impeachment today not because of any partisan spite or overzealous prosecutor, but because of the truth about the President's own actions. As difficult and wrenching as this matter is, this Committee must do its constitutional duty and report the articles of impeachment to the full House of Representatives for the sake of our Constitution, for the sake of our country, for the sake of our children.