

## Democrats open political door on Trump impeachment

House Democrats sought yesterday to pre-emptively dismantle President Donald Trump's core defences in his impeachment trial to argue that his pressure campaign on Ukraine was an abuse of power that warranted his removal. [The New York Times](#) notes that on the second day of opening arguments in the third presidential impeachment trial in American history, Democrats turned to the task of arguing that Trump's actions were an affront to the Constitution, and they worked to disprove his lawyers' claims that he was acting in the nation's interests, not his own, when he sought to enlist Ukraine to investigate his political rivals. In doing so, says the [NYT](#), they waded deeply into the most politically delicate aspects of their case, taking a calculated risk in talking at length about Trump's targets: former Vice President Joe Biden and his son, Hunter Biden. **The oral arguments underscored the political backdrop of the trial, unfolding only 10 months before the election, and how, regardless of the outcome – almost certain to be Trump's acquittal – it is likely to reverberate long after the verdict is reached.** 'Impeachment is the constitution's final answer to a President who mistakes himself for a king,' Representative Jerrold Nadler, the chair of the House Judiciary Committee, told a restless and sharply divided Senate, adding: 'Impeachment is not punishment for a crime. Impeachment exists to address threats to the political system.' Nadler's words were intended to rebut a central tenet of the President's defence, that he cannot be impeached if he is not accused of a specific crime. On the contrary, Nadler said, his conduct was precisely the kind that impeachment was meant to address.