Twitter Thread by Marshall Cohen



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THREAD: To cap off the Trump era, I interviewed a politically diverse group of constitutional scholars, presidential historians and experts on democracy to put together a definitive list of Trump's ten most egregious abuses of power. Here's what we found.

1) SUBVERTING THE 2020 ELECTION. There is broad agreement that Trump's worst abuse was his relentless effort to undermine the vote and overturn the legitimate results. No POTUS ever tried a political coup like this. It's simply un-American, experts said. https://t.co/s5G7tHiHjA

2) INCITING AN INSURRECTION. We all saw what happened on January 6. Trump incited a rally supporters in DC to attack the US Capitol while electoral votes were being counted. He got impeached for it. A permanent scar on his legacy, experts said. https://t.co/s5G7tHiHjA

3) ABUSING THE BULLY PULPIT. Different than other abuses because it's speech, not actions. But still, experts said this was a very big deal. His nonstop lying, attacks, racist rhetoric, and fanning of flames was deeply corrosive to our political culture. https://t.co/s5G7tHiHjA

4) POLITICIZING THE DOJ. Trump repeatedly crossed lines and violated norms that have been in place since Watergate to create independence between the WH and federal law enforcement. Wielded DOJ as a weapon against enemies and shield for himself and allies. https://t.co/s5G7tHiHjA

5) OBSTRUCTING THE MUELLER PROBE. Mueller investigated 10 episodes of potential obstruction and refused to clear Trump. Experts say only a few of the 10 would be a strong case before a jury. But they say that conduct is criminal and an abuse of power. https://t.co/s5G7tHAib8

6) ABUSING THE PARDON POWER. Just because the Constitution gives POTUS a largely unchecked power doesn't mean he can't abuse it, experts said. And even conservative experts were horrified by Trump's pardons, which they said were worse than Bill Clinton's. https://t.co/s5G7tHiHjA

7) UKRAINE AFFAIR AND COVER-UP. This was the basis of Trump's first impeachment, which saw the 1st time a senator voted to remove a POTUS from his own party. Trump's attempted quid-pro-quo with Ukraine and complete stonewalling of Congress were a new low. https://t.co/s5G7tHiHjA

8) LOYALTY OATHS. A recurring theme of the Trump presidency was the personalization of government, with Trump often conflating his interests with the national interests. Experts said Trump's demands forced aides to set aside loyalty to the Constitution. https://t.co/s5G7tHiHjA

9) FIRING WHISTLEBLOWERS & TRUTH-TELLERS. Trump could hire and fire executive branch officials. But experts said he abused it by ousting people that simply did their job or told the truth. Vindman, Yovanovitch, Chris Krebs, Esper, Dr. Rick Bright, many IGs https://t.co/s5G7tHiHjA

#10 PROFITING OFF THE PRESIDENCY. Trump ignored universal advise from ethics experts and refused to divest. Then he spent a large chunk of his presidency promoting his properties. Trump Org. made millions from US and foreign governments while he was POTUS. https://t.co/s5G7tHiHjA

Finally, I'd like to give a shout out to @rickhasen @rossgarber @MichaelGerhard8 @nancygibbs @ProfTolson @LarryDiamond @joegoldman @LisaManheimWA @Debbie_Hellman and other scholars for their insights on this important topic. /END https://t.co/s5G7tHiHjA