



47

As the House of Representatives voted on the articles of impeachment against him, Donald Trump tweeted and retweeted 47 times on the 18th of December.

THE ECONOMIST

THE DIFFERENT LANGUAGES OF IMPEACHMENT

The vocabulary of impeachment

Words matter. With less than a year to go before the next presidential election, Democrats and Republicans are engaging in rhetorical warfare in an attempt to win the minds of voters. What if the future of the country hinged on these semantic choices?

Witch hunt!" may be President Donald Trump's favourite way to describe the impeachment proceedings, but that is far from his only colourful disparagement. "A COUP," he protested in October. His defenders have chipped in, calling the process a "Star Chamber", a "show-trial", "Soviet-style" and a "circus". Then there is the

1. witch hunt investigation to uncover and harass a person with subversive views on the basis of doubtful evidence / **impeachment** act of formally accusing a government official of a serious offence which could result in removing them from power / **proceedings** procedure / **colourful** imaginative / **disparagement** condemnation / **coup** coup d'état / **to chip in** to contribute/add comments / **Star Chamber** English court founded in 1487 but abolished in 1641 as the proceedings were secretive and gave no fair due process rights to those accused / **show trial** public trial where the judicial authorities have already determined a guilty verdict / **circus** here, sensationalistic public show which attracts excessive media attention /

ultimate inflammatory comparison: Mr Trump says he is the victim of a "lynching".

2. Impeachment is a political process as much as a legal one—and it duly involves two linguistic struggles, one rhetorical and the other legalistic, waged simultaneously and overlapping. Mr Trump and his allies have concentrated on the rhetorical task, generating a stream of emotionally charged images and comparisons designed to convince his supporters that the process is unfair—the better to keep their rep-

ultimate supreme, greatest / **inflammatory** incendiary. **2. legal** judicial / **duly** justifiably / **struggle** difficulty / **to wage** to conduct, to fight / **to overlap** here, to coincide, to both come within the same category / **stream** flow / **to be designed to** to have as an objective / **supporter** defender / **unfair** unjust / **to keep, kept, kept sb in line** to maintain military discipline when under attack, to control and make sb obey /

THIS IS A COUP! IT'S TREASON!



resentatives in line. So long as Republican senators hold their ranks, Mr Trump will ultimately be acquitted.

WAR OF WORDS

3. To judge from opinion polls, this effort is succeeding, even if some of the metaphorical flourishes are in poor taste. Some people seem to be confused about who does the chasing in a witch-hunt: at Halloween Republicans sold t-shirts depicting Democratic leaders as witches. Actual coups, meanwhile, involve the telegenic seizure of the presidential palace with tanks, not expert testimony in plodding congressional hearings. Lynching is an offensive analogy as well as an inapposite one; the murder of black Americans, often for imaginary transgressions, has little in common with the attempted removal of the world's most powerful man by constitutionally sanctioned means.

so long as provided / **to hold, held, held one's ranks** to stay in line when under attack / **ultimately** eventually, in the end. **3. opinion poll** survey of people's opinions / **flourish** embellishment / **poor taste** crass, crude, simplistic / **to be confused** to be unable to understand clearly / **to depict** to show / **actual** real / **meanwhile** however / **seizure** act of taking possession of / **testimony** formal statement given in a court of law / **plodding** laborious / **hearing** legal proceeding / **inapposite** inappropriate, not pertinent / **murder** killing / **transgression** crime, violation of a law / **attempted** intended and tried / **removal** dismissal from office / **sanctioned** recognised / **means** method, way.



ADVANCED RECORDING

Listen to an excerpt from Richard Nixon's resignation speech as well as Al Gore and Bill Clinton's reactions to the latter's impeachment. CD audio ou téléchargement MP3 (sur abonnement)

faced another, very different challenge: while pressing their political case, they also had to hone specific charges for the articles of impeachment. Two that they considered, "extortion" and "bribery", both had disadvantages. One was that they are contradictory; extortion involves putting a squeeze on a victim, while bribery is more consensual. The second drawback was that both are federal crimes. Politically, if not in law (since the Senate is not a courtroom), pursuing either would have led to demands that they should be proven to the standard of a criminal prosecution. Failure might have undermined the case.

POLITICAL CRIMES

6. "Bribery" looked the better bet. The constitution specifically mentions it as an impeachable offence. In federal law, any official who demands or seeks "anything of value" in return for "being influenced in the performance of any official act" takes part in bribery. Mr Trump's critics maintained that dangling a White House visit before Ukraine's president, and suspending military aid, were official acts, and that the investigations he wanted in return were "of value".

7. In the end, Democrats balked, and chose a vaguer charge instead: "abuse of power", plus "obstruction of Congress". These, they say, meet the constitution's standard of "high Crimes and

4. These buzzwords have caught on all the same. Mr Trump's camp recently produced a slick television advertisement featuring ordinary voters reaching into this grab-bag of comparisons, calling impeachment a "witch hunt", a "scam" and a "joke". Naturally, Democrats want to rally their troops, too, and have duly come up with dubious slogans of their own. Rashida Tlaib, who was elected to Congress in November 2018, said her goal was to "impeach the motherfucker". Her campaign marketed the catchphrase (bowdlerised with stars) as a t-shirt. For his part, Bill Weld, a dissident Republican, has said that Mr Trump is guilty of "treason", reminding his audience that the penalty for that is death.

5. Such is the nature of the process, however, that, as the accusers, congressional Democrats

4. buzzword trendy word, expression / **to catch, caught, caught on** to become popular / **all the same** nevertheless / **slick** sophisticated / **advertisement** commercial, publicity / **to feature** to present, to show / **to reach into** to put one's hand into / **grab-bag** mixed collection of things / **scam** fraudulent scheme / **joke** farce / **to come, came, come up with** to invent, to create / **dubious** questionable / **motherfucker** (vulg.) piece of sh*t, idiot / **to market** to sell / **catchphrase** slogan / **to bowdlerise** to censor / **guilty** culpable / **audience** public / **penalty** punishment.

5. congressional with a seat in Congress /

to press one's case to put forward / **to hone** to refine, to perfect / **charge** accusation / **bribery** giving money to sb to persuade them to act in your favour, corruption / **to put, put, put a squeeze on** to put pressure on / **drawback** disadvantage / **courtroom** tribunal / **to pursue** to carry out, to do / **demand** requirement / **standard** criteria, regulations / **prosecution** legal proceedings / **failure** lack of success, inability to do sth / **to undermine** to weaken, to compromise, to destroy / **case** affair.

6. bet gamble, risk / **offence** crime, illegal act / **official** government employee/representative / **to demand** to ask for (with force) / **in return** in exchange / **performance** accomplishment / **critic** detractor / **to dangle** to suspend sth in front of sb, here, to offer sth as a motivation to do sth / **investigation** enquiry.

7. to balk to suddenly stop / **high crimes and misdemeanours** misconduct by government officials (specific charge from the constitution of the United States of America) /

Rhetoric may turn out to be more important.

Misdemeanours". Impeachable deeds need not be statutory crimes of the kind tried in a court, scholars note. Noah Feldman, a law professor at Harvard, told the House Judiciary Committee that the adjective "high" refers not to the gravity of the offence, but to the status of the president's office.

BACKING DOWN **8.** Yet in rowing back on "bribery" and "extortion" Democrats may have betrayed a nervousness about levels of proof. In preferring "abuse of power", which has no legal definition, they will seem to some voters to have plumped

for a purely political case (if the underlying offence is vague, Republicans of all kinds will be willing to forgive obstruction of Congress). All of which means that, in the clash of rhetorical language and the technical kind, the rhetoric may turn out to be more important. And that is Mr Trump's home turf. ●

deed act / **statutory** defined by law / **to try** to judge in a court of law / **scholar** academic / **to note** to explain / **law** academic subject studying regulations, jurisprudence, legal procedures etc. / **office** position, responsibility (in government).

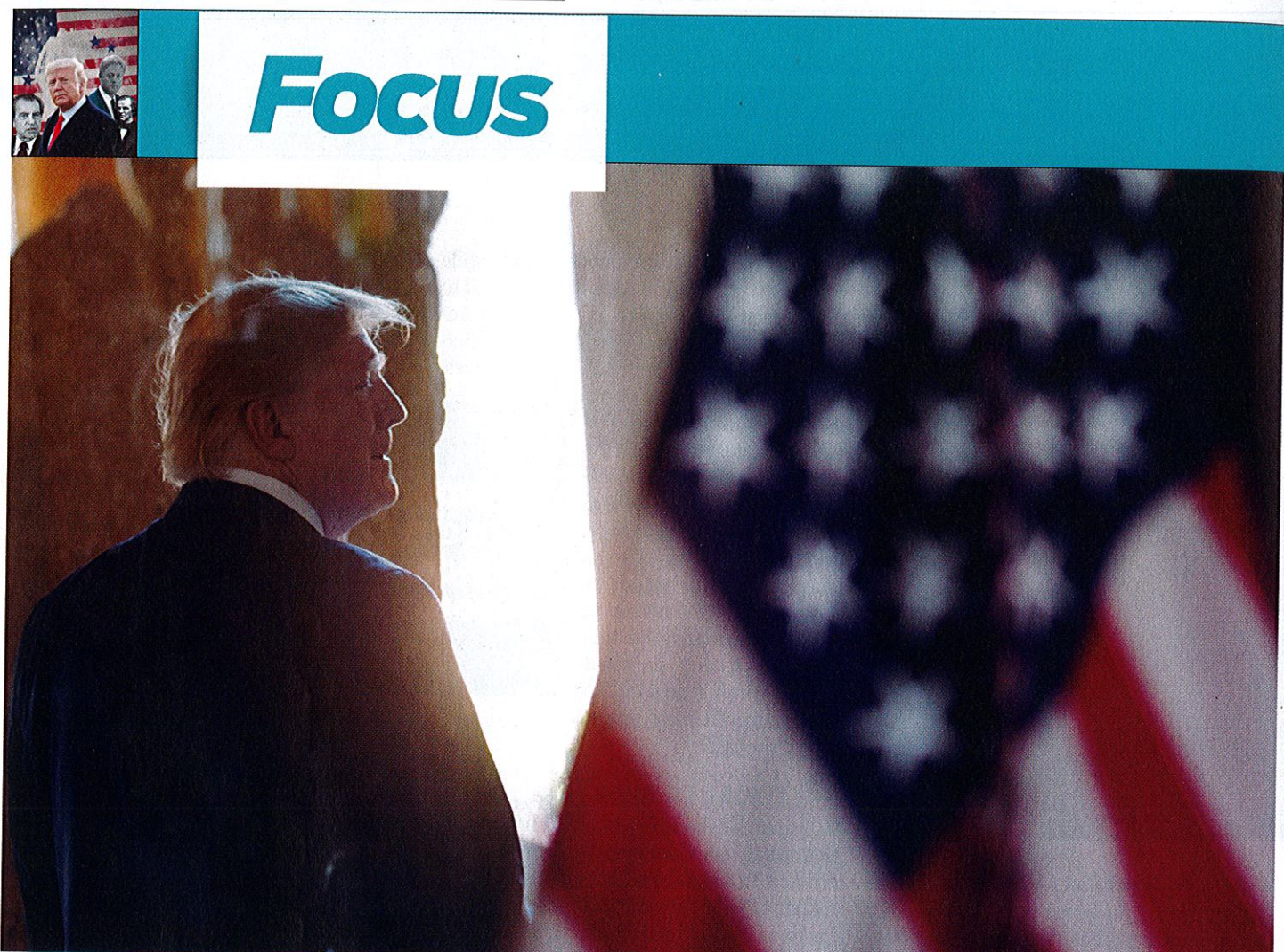
8. yet however / **to row back on** to suddenly change a decision/opinion / **to betray** to reveal / **proof** evidence / **to plump for** to choose / **underlying** fundamental / **to be willing to** to be ready to / **to forgive, gave, given** to pardon, to excuse / **clash** violent confrontation, battle / **to turn out to be** to reveal/to prove to be / **home turf** familiar habitat, territory.



Le préfixe "mis" indique quelque chose de « mal » :

- a **misdemeanour** (\$ 7) un délit
- a **misconception** une idée fausse, erronée
- a **misunderstanding** un malentendu
- a **misadventure** un mésaventure
- to misfire** rater
- to misjudge** mal évaluer
- to mishandle** mal gérer

Focus



IMPEACHMENT: AN AMERICAN STORY

Countries around the globe have different processes for ousting a leader, often involving courts and/or legislative bodies. In the United States, the Founding Fathers modelled the impeachment clause after a system in Britain which gives Parliament the authority to investigate royal advisers and other higher officials. This is a political process, not a criminal one.

to oust évincer / **to involve** impliquer, faire intervenir / **Founding Fathers** Pères fondateurs, rédacteurs de la constitution américaine / **after** ici, d'après, sur / **adviser** conseiller / **official** (haut) fonctionnaire.

IMPEACHMENT: HOW IT WORKS

Article 1 of the United States constitution gives the House of Representatives sole power to initiate impeachment and the Senate sole power to try impeachments of the president. A president can be impeached if they are judged to have committed «treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanours» – although the US Constitution does not specify what these are.

sole exclusive / **to try** to judge in a court of law / **bribery** corruption / **misdemeanour** criminal offense / **to specify** here, to go into detail, give precise information on.

1 The House of Representatives passes articles of impeachment, the equivalent of congressional charges. A simple majority of members need to vote in favour of impeachment for it to pass to the next stage. Democrats currently control the House.

to pass to vote through / **charge** accusation / **stage** here, phase / **currently** at present, at the moment.

2 The chief justice of the US Supreme Court then presides over proceedings in the Senate. The president is tried, with senators acting as the jury. For the president to be found guilty two-thirds of senators must vote to convict. Republicans currently control the Senate.

chief justice Supreme Court President / **to be found guilty** to be judged as responsible (for a crime) / **to convict** to recognise as guilty, condemn.

A TIMELINE OF EVENTS LEADING TO THE IMPEACHMENT OF PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP

A lot happened in the lead up to President's Trump impeachment in the House. Here are a few dates to give you an idea of how the events unfolded.

timeline history, chronology / **lead up** period of time preceding sth / **to unfold** to take place, to happen.

August 12 A member of the intelligence community lodges an anonymous whistleblower complaint alleging that in a series of events culminating in a July 25 call with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, the U.S. President used «the power of his office to solicit interference from a foreign country in the 2020 U.S. Election.»

intelligence information of military or political value / **to lodge** to submit / **whistleblower** person who informs on a person or organisation regarded as engaging in an unlawful or immoral activity / **to allege** to accuse, claim / **office** position, here, presidency / **foreign** from another country.

September 24 The formal impeachment inquiry is announced by Democratic Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi.

inquiry investigation / **Speaker of the House** president of the House of Representatives.



September 25 Trump releases a copy of the White House summary notes of the July 25 call, which corroborate the whistleblower's complaint.

to release to make public, communicate, publish / **summary** brief account of the important facts.

October 31 The House approves a resolution to formalize the procedures of the impeachment inquiry against Trump. Overall Democrats vote "yes" and Republicans "no".



overall generally, on the whole.

October 22

Bill Taylor, the acting US ambassador to Ukraine, tells investigators how conventional channels of diplomacy were sidelined by an "irregular" group of politically appointed officials.

channel path, way, means of communication / **to sideline** to remove from active participation / **appointed** nominated, chosen.

December 10

The Judiciary Committee unveils its articles of impeachment: abuse of power and obstruction of Congress. Trump is the first president to be charged with these specific articles.

to unveil to reveal, announce.

December 3

Following numerous high-level testimonies, the House Intelligence Committee publishes a report stating: "The impeachment inquiry has found that President Trump, personally and acting through agents within and outside of the U.S. government, solicited the interference of a foreign government, Ukraine, to benefit his reelection".

numerous a number of, many / **testimony** formal statement / **to state** to say, specify / **within** at the heart of, in the confines of.

December 13

The panel approves the two articles of impeachment on a party-line 23-17 vote. The result makes Trump the fourth US president - after Andrew Johnson, Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton - to face impeachment by the House.

panel team of people selected to judge sth / **to face** to experience.

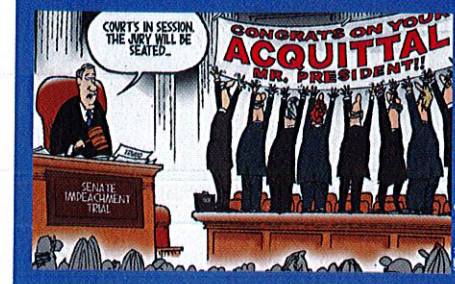
December 18

Following a two-month inquiry, the House of Representatives votes in favour of the two articles of impeachment.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts will preside over the trial in the Senate, but the senators will ultimately act as both judge and jury. Justice Roberts is there to make sure the trial adheres to the predetermined rules, but if any vote during the trial ends in a tie, he has the final say. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi will also select a group of Democrats to act as impeachment managers - essentially prosecutors for the House. These lawmakers will present the lower chamber's case for impeachment to the Senate. After the trial, if less than two-thirds of the Senate vote to convict, Trump will remain in office. If two-thirds vote to convict, the President would be removed from office and vice president Mike Pence would take over.

ultimately here, in fact / **to adhere (to)** to respect / **rule** code of regulations / **tie** equal number of votes on each side / **manager** here, advocates for the prosecution / **prosecutor** lawyer who leads the case against a defendant, representing the state / **lawmaker** legislator / **case** arguments (for) / **in office** in power / **to remain** to continue / **to take, took, taken over** to assume responsibility, to replace sb.





VIDEO BONUS

Discover the origins of the impeachment procedure and why it has come into play on four occasions so far in American history.
www.vocable.fr/videos-anglais

THE GUARDIAN | TOM MCCARTHY

WHICH OTHER US PRESIDENTS HAVE BEEN IMPEACHED?

History of presidential impeachment in the United States

Calls for President Trump's removal from office have been increasing since the beginning of his term in 2017. Despite the many scandals that have surrounded his office, it was not until the summer of 2019 that an impeachment procedure was finally launched. Let us look back at the other members of the very exclusive club of impeached presidents.

Donald Trump has become the third president in US history to be impeached. It's an exclusive club that no one wants to join – but who else is in it, and why? Here's a look back at the two prior impeachments and a third near-miss case.

IMPEACHMENT #1: ANDREW JOHNSON (1868)

2. The assassination of Abraham Lincoln in April 1865 unexpectedly elevated his vice-president, Johnson, an outspoken white supremacist but strong anti-secessionist, to the White House. With the aftershocks of the civil war manifesting in bloody voter suppression and racially motivated terrorism across the South, Johnson's presidency was immediately thrown into tumult by demands that the new president take steps to cement the war's promise of racial equality. But Johnson vetoed civil rights legislation, uni-

laterally pardoned hundreds of former Confederate leaders and called for the murder of his political enemies.

3. Johnson was in essence impeached for undermining the cause of racial equality, the historian Brenda Wineapple wrote in her book *The Impeachers*. But the bulk of the impeachment clauses against him were predicated on a relatively narrow charge of violating a contemporary "tenure of office" law (repealed soon thereafter) by removing his secretary of war, Edwin Stanton, who was instrumental in opposing racist attacks on suffrage for former slaves. Johnson remained in office after being acquitted in the Senate by one vote – a bribed victory, historians have speculated.

former ex, previous.

3. in essence essentially, basically / to undermine to weaken, damage / bulk main part, majority / to predicate to be based on / narrow limited / charge accusation / tenure of office law U.S. federal law (in force from 1867 to 1887) intended to restrict the power of the president to remove certain office-holders without the approval of the Senate / to repeal to annul, rescind / thereafter after that / to remove to dismiss, oblige to leave office / to be instrumental in to play a key role in / slave person who is owned by and who works for another / to remain to stay, continue / in office in power / to bribe to give sb money in order to persuade them to do sth for you.

1. to impeach to charge (a public official) with an offence committed in office, here, by Congress of the U.S. president / prior previous / near-miss here, almost impeached, an example of impeachment avoided / case affair, here, trial.
2. unexpectedly suddenly, without warning / outspoken frank, fervent / aftershock repercussion / civil war war in the US between the North and South (1861-1865) / to throw, threw, thrown into to propel (fig.) / demand insistent request, requirement / to take, took, taken steps to implement measures / to cement here, to consolidate / to veto to oppose, vote against, reject /



BASIC RECORDING

Shelly takes us through the impeachment process and the Watergate scandal on the Basic recording.
CD audio ou téléchargement MP3 (sur abonnement)



IMPEACHMENT #2: BILL CLINTON (1998)

4. While the Clinton impeachment is linked in popular memory to his relationship with the White House intern Monica Lewinsky, he was impeached for lying to a grand jury in a separate case, brought by a former Arkansas state employee, Paula Jones. In response to a sexual harassment lawsuit filed by Jones, Clinton denied in a sworn deposition and a later video interview that he had a sexual relationship with Lewinsky. That assertion was contradicted by a report submitted to Congress by independent counsel Kenneth Starr, who documented Clinton's relationship with Lewinsky in lurid detail.

5. Impeachment proceedings against Clinton were opened in October 1998, and the House of Representatives approved two articles of impeachment against him, for perjury and obstruction of justice, in December. Two other proposed articles – for abuse of power and perjury a second time – were voted down. The Republican-led Senate – stronger

than today's, with a 55-seat majority at the time – acquitted Clinton easily on both counts, with the closer case drawing only 50 votes out of 67 needed.

NEAR-MISS: RICHARD NIXON (1974)

6. In November 1972, Nixon won re-election by what was then the largest margin of victory in the history of US presidential elections. But five months earlier, a burglary at Democratic offices in the Watergate hotel complex had set in motion a chain of events that would end his presidency. In his investigation of the burglaries, special prosecutor Archibald Cox uncovered a dirty campaign to attack Nixon's political opponents, financed by a secret slush fund and directed by Nixon himself. For months, Nixon publicly denied all involvement.

But an impeachment inquiry was opened in October 1973, after Nixon fired the top two officials in the justice department for their refusal to fire Cox.

time era, époque / count accusation (of a crime) / closer case accusation with best chance of winning, presented and argued last / to draw, drew, drawn here, to obtain, win / out of from, of.

6. large big, considerable, here, overwhelming / burglary the act of breaking in to a building to steal / to set, set, set in motion to trigger, unleash / investigation enquiry / prosecutor person appointed to conduct criminal prosecutions in the public interest / to uncover to reveal, discover / slush fund secret cache of money, hidden finance / involvement participation / inquiry investigation / to fire to dismiss, discharge from service / top official high ranking employee.

Under pressure from fellow Republicans, Nixon resigned on 9 August 1974, before the full House could vote on impeachment.

7. A fight over evidence ensued, including tapes of Nixon's Oval Office conversations. In late July 1974, a third of elected Republicans on the House judiciary committee joined Democrats to approve three articles of impeachment, for obstruction of justice, abuse of power and contempt of Congress. The release of a "smoking gun" tape a week later, fixing Nixon at the center of the conspiracy, sealed the president's fate. Under pressure from fellow Republicans, Nixon resigned on 9 August 1974, before the full House could vote on impeachment. ●

7. evidence (inv.) proof / to ensue to follow / tape recording / late the latter part of / contempt disdain, disrespect / release publication, making public / smoking gun absolute proof / to seal one's fate to determine absolutely, permanently one's destiny / pressure influence, demand / fellow here, other (member of the same party) / to resign to leave (a position), to quit.



It was repealed soon thereafter (§ 3) par la suite

"thereafter" est un mot de style soutenu. Ce style est de moins en moins utilisé, même dans le monde des affaires, à l'exception des documents officiels.

D'autres exemples :
hereafter ci-après
herby par la présente
herewith ci-joint