

If there were any doubt about how President Putin feels about the President's conduct, you need only look to Putin's own words. His statement on November 20 tells it all. He said:

Thank God nobody is accusing us anymore of interfering in U.S. elections. Now they're accusing Ukraine.

That is a short quotation from Putin, but it speaks volumes. Even though President Trump knew there was no factual basis for the theory that it was Ukraine that interfered in the 2016 election rather than Russia and knew that Russia was perpetuating this theory, he still wanted President Zelensky to pursue the investigation. Why? Because, while Putin and Russia clearly stood to gain by promoting this conspiracy theory about Ukraine, so did Donald Trump. He knew it would be politically helpful to his 2020 election.

An announcement of an investigation by Ukraine would have breathed new life into a debunked conspiracy theory that Ukrainian election interference was there in 2016, and it lent it great credibility. It would have cast doubt on the conclusions of the Intelligence Committee and Special Counsel Mueller that Russia interfered in the 2016 election to help President Trump. And it would have helped eliminate a perceived threat to the legitimacy of Donald Trump's Presidency, that he was only elected because of the help he received from President Putin.

I now yield to Mr. SCHIFF.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. Chief Justice. The CHIEF JUSTICE. The majority leader is recognized.

RECESS SUBJECT TO CALL OF THE CHAIR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. Chief Justice, I am going to recommend that we take a 15-minute break at this point.

The CHIEF JUSTICE. Without objection, it is so ordered.

There being no objection, at 2:57 p.m. the Senate, sitting as a Court of Impeachment, recessed until 3:25 p.m.; whereupon the Senate reassembled when called to order by the CHIEF JUSTICE.

The CHIEF JUSTICE. Mr. Manager SCHIFF.

Mr. Manager SCHIFF. Senators, I am going to pick up where my colleague from Texas left off, but I want to begin by underscoring a few of the points that she made, in listening to her presentation, that really leapt out at me in a way they hadn't leapt out at me before.

First, I want to address—my colleague shared a number of slides showing the polling strength of Joe Biden vis-a-vis the President as a demonstration of his motive, the fact that he went over these political investigations to undermine someone he was deeply concerned about.

This is an appropriate point for me to make the disclaimer that the House managers take no position in the Democratic primary for President. I

don't want to lose a single more vote than necessary. But those polls do show the powerful motive that Donald Trump had—a motive that he didn't have the year before or the year before that; a motive that he didn't have when he allowed the aid to go to Ukraine without complaint or issue in 2017 or 2018. It was only when he had a growing concern with Joe Biden's candidacy that he took a sudden interest in Ukraine and Ukraine funding and the withholding of that aid.

I also want to underscore what the President said in that July 25 call. My colleague showed you that transcript from July 25 where the President says: "I would like you to find out what happened with this whole situation with Ukraine, they say CrowdStrike." My colleagues have explained what that theory is about that server, that CrowdStrike server—the crazy theory that it was Ukraine that hacked the Democratic server and that server was whisked away to Ukraine and hidden there so that the investigators and the FBI couldn't look at this server. That is what Donald Trump was raising in that conversation with President Zelensky.

I bring up this point again because you may hear from my colleagues, the President's lawyers, as we heard during the testimony in the House, that the concern was over Ukrainian interference in the election, and why isn't it possible that both Russia and Ukraine interfered in the election? Never mind that is contrary to all the evidence. But it is important to point out here that we are not talking about generic interference. We are not talking about, as we heard from some of my colleagues in the House, a tweet from a Ukrainian here or an op-ed written by somebody there and equating it with the kind of systematic interference of the Russians. What we are talking about here—what the President is talking about here is a very specific conspiracy theory going to the server itself, meaning that it was Ukraine that hacked the Democratic server, not the Russians. This theory was brought to you by the Kremlin, OK? So we are not talking about generic interference. We are talking about the server. We are talking about CrowdStrike. At least, that is what Donald Trump wanted to investigate or announced—this completely bogus, Kremlin-pushed conspiracy theory.

I was also struck by that video you saw of Tom Bossert, the former homeland security adviser for the President, in which he talked about how completely debunked and crazy this conspiracy theory is. And then there was that rather glib line that he admitted was glib, but nonetheless made a point, about the three or five ways to impeach oneself, and the third way was to hire Rudy Giuliani.

Now, it struck me in watching that clip, again, that it is important to emphasize that Rudy Giuliani is not some Svengali here who has the President

under his control. There may be an effort to say: OK, the human hand grenade, Rudy Giuliani, it is all his fault. He has the President in his grip.

And even though the U.S. intelligence agencies and the bipartisan Senate Intelligence Committee and everyone else told the President time after time that this is nonsense, that the Russians interfered, not the Ukrainians, he just couldn't shake himself of what he was hearing from Rudy Giuliani. You can say a lot of things about President Trump, but he is not led by the nose by Rudy Giuliani. And if he is willing to listen to his personal lawyer over his own intelligence agencies, his own advisers, then you can imagine what a danger that presents to this country.

My colleague also played for you that interview with Director Wray. And, again, I was just struck anew by that interview. In that interview, Director Wray says: "We have no information that indicates that Ukraine interfered with the 2016 presidential election." That is Donald Trump's Director of the FBI: "We have no information that indicates that Ukraine interfered with the 2016 election"—none, as in zero.

The reporter then says: When you see politicians pushing this notion, are you concerned about that in terms of the impact on the American public?

And the Director says: "Well, look, there's all kinds of people saying all kinds of things out there."

Well, yes, there are, but this person is the President of the United States. When he says "there are all kinds of people out there saying all kinds of things," well, what he is really saying is the President of the United States. It is one thing if someone off the streets says it, but when it is coming from the President of the United States, you can see what a danger it is if it is patently false and it is promulgated by the Russians.

And, again, the reporter says: We heard from the President, himself, he wanted the CrowdStrike portion of this whole conspiracy investigated, and I am hearing you say there is no evidence to support this.

And Wray says: "As I said, we at the FBI have no information that would indicate that Ukraine tried to interfere in the 2016 presidential election"—none.

And so you can imagine the view from the Kremlin of all of this. You can imagine Putin in the Kremlin with his aides, and one of his aides comes into the office and says: Vladimir, you are never going to believe this. The President of the United States is pushing our CrowdStrike theory.

I mean, you can almost imagine the incredulity of Vladimir Putin: You are kidding; right? You mean he really believes this? His own people don't believe this. Nobody believes this.

It would be bad enough, of course, that the President of the United States believes this Russian propaganda against the advice of all of his advisers—common sense—and everything

else, but it is worse than that. It is worse than that. On the basis of this Russian propaganda, he withheld \$400 million in military aid to a nation Russia was fighting, our ally. I mean, when we ask about what is the national security implication of what the President did, how much more clear can it be that he is not only pushing Russian propaganda, he is not only misleading Americans about who interfered in the last election, that he is not only doing the Kremlin a favor, but that he is withholding aid from a nation at war. The Russians not only got him to deflect blame from their interference in our democracy, but they got him to withhold military aid.

Now, of course, there was this convergence of interest between the Kremlin and the President. The President wasn't pushing Kremlin talking points just to do Vladimir Putin a favor. He was doing it because it helped him, because it helped him and because it could get these talking points for him in his reelection campaign. And for that, he would sacrifice our ally and our own security.

But nothing struck me more from Representative GARCIA's presentation than that quote from Vladimir Putin from November of this past year, just a couple of months ago. Putin said:

Thank God nobody is accusing us anymore of interfering in U.S. elections. Now they're accusing Ukraine.

"Thank God," Putin says. Well, you have to give Donald Trump credit for this. He has made a religious man out of Vladimir Putin, but I don't think we really want Vladimir Putin, our adversary, to be thanking God for the President of the United States, because they don't wish us well. They don't wish us well. They are a wounded animal. They are a declining power. But like any wounded animal, they are a dangerous animal. Their world view is completely antithetical to ours. We do not want them thanking God for our President and what he is pushing out. We don't want them thanking God for withholding money from our ally, although we can understand why they may. To me, that is what stuck out from that presentation.

Now, in the first part of this presentation, we walked through the corrupt object of President Trump's scheme—getting Ukraine to announce these two political investigations that would help benefit his reelection campaign. And just looking at how baseless and fabricated the allegations behind him were made plain his corrupt motive.

But in addition to this overwhelming evidence, there are at least 10 other reasons we know that President Trump directed his scheme with corrupt intent. There are at least 10 other reasons we know that President Trump was interested in his own personal gain and not the national interest in pressing for these investigations.

First, the President only wanted these investigations to be announced publicly, not even conducted.

Second, the President's only interest in Ukraine was the "Big Stuff" that mattered to himself, not issues affecting Ukraine or the United States.

Third, the President tasked his personal lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, to pursue these investigations on his behalf, not government officials.

Fourth, both before and after the July 25 call, the investigations were never part of U.S. official foreign policy. NSC officials, too, make clear that this was not about foreign policy. Other witnesses confirmed the investigations, in fact, diverged from U.S. official policy.

Fifth, the investigations were undertaken outside of normal channels.

Sixth, Ukrainian officials understood that the investigations were purely political in nature.

Seventh, multiple administration officials reported the President's July 25 call.

Eighth, the White House buried the call.

Ninth, President Trump confirmed he wanted Ukraine to conduct investigations in his own words.

And, finally, President Trump did not care about anti-corruption efforts in Ukraine.

Let's go through these one by one.

First, perhaps the simplest way that we all know that President Trump wanted these investigations done solely to help his personal political interests and not the national interest is that he merely wanted a public announcement of the investigations, not an assurance that they would actually be done. If his desire for these investigations was truly to assist Ukraine's anti-corruption efforts or because he was worried about the larger issues of corruption in Ukraine, someone actually investigating the facts underlying the investigations would have been most important. But he didn't care about the facts or the issues. He just wanted the political benefit of the public announcement of an investigation that he could use to damage his political opponent and boost his own political standing.

Ambassador Gordon Sondland, who was at the center of this scheme, made this quite clear in his testimony.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

GOLDMAN. Now, for Mr. Giuliani, by this point, you understood that in order to get that White House meeting that you wanted President Zelensky to have and that President Zelensky desperately wanted to have that Ukraine would have to initiate these two investigations. Is that right?

Ambassador SONDLAND. Well, they would have to announce that they were going to do it.

GOLDMAN. Right. Because Giuliani and President Trump didn't actually care if they did them, right?

Ambassador SONDLAND. I never heard, Mr. Goldman, anyone say that the investigations had to start or had to be completed. The only thing I heard from Mr. Giuliani, or otherwise, was that they had to be announced in some form and that form kept changing.

GOLDMAN. Announced publicly?

Ambassador SONDLAND. Announced publicly.

Mr. Manager SCHIFF. The other evidence gathered by the House's investigation confirms Ambassador Sondland's understanding. For example, recently, the House received documents from Lev Parnas, an associate of Rudy Giuliani's, now indicted, in response to a subpoena. As you know, Lev Parnas was indicted by the Southern District of New York for crimes, including election law violations. As part of the documents that Parnas turned over, we obtained handwritten notes that Parnas apparently took some time in 2019. One of those notes lays out the scheme very clearly and succinctly.

Now, it is not every day that you get a document like this—what appears to be a member of the conspiracy writing down the object of the conspiracy, but that is exactly what we see here. We see the scheme that ultimately was directed by President Trump to coerce Ukraine to announce the investigation of the Bidens. I repeat: to announce the investigation—not investigate, not conduct. The only thing that mattered was the public announcement, as this note says with an asterisk: "Get Zelensky to Announce that the Biden case will Be Investigated."

And in early September, after Mr. Giuliani and Ambassadors Volker and Sondland had tried but failed to get President Zelensky to issue a public statement, President Trump made this clear himself. He explained to Ambassador Bolton that he wanted Zelensky in a "public box"; that is, President Trump would only be satisfied if President Zelensky made a public announcement of the investigations, which he subsequently agreed to do on CNN.

Here is Ambassador Taylor's testimony on this:

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Mr. GOLDMAN. And so, even though President Trump was saying repeatedly that there is no quid pro quo, Ambassador Sondland relayed to you that the facts of the matter were that the White House meeting and the security assistance were conditioned on the announcement of these investigations. Is that your understanding?

Ambassador TAYLOR. That's my understanding.

Mr. GOLDMAN. Now, you referenced a television interview and a desire for President Trump to put Zelensky in a public box, which you also have in quotes. Was that in your notes?

Ambassador TAYLOR. It was in my notes.

Mr. GOLDMAN. And what did you understand that to mean, to put Zelensky in a public box?

Ambassador TAYLOR. I understood that to mean that President Trump, through Ambassador Sondland, was asking for President Zelensky to very publicly commit to these investigations, that it was not sufficient to do this in private, that this needed to be a very public statement.

The fact that the President only wanted a public announcement and not the investigations to actually be conducted demonstrates that his desire for investigations was simply and solely to boost his reelection efforts.

No. 2, turning to the second reason, President Trump's agents who helped to carry out this scheme confirmed that his desire for Ukraine to announce the investigations was solely for his personal political benefit.

As we will explain in more detail in a few minutes, President Trump never expressed any interest in U.S. anti-corruption policy toward Ukraine, nor did he care about Ukraine's war against Russia. He only expressed interest in one thing: investigating his political opponent. This was unequivocally confirmed by the testimony of David Holmes, the senior official at the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv. The day after the July 25 call, Holmes overheard a conversation between President Trump and Ambassador Sondland, who was in Kyiv. The only topic they discussed related to Ukraine was as to the investigations.

Here is his testimony:

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Mr. HOLMES. Ambassador Sondland placed a call on his mobile phone, and I heard him announce himself several times along the lines of "Gordon Sondland, holding for the President." It appeared that he was being transferred through several layers of switchboards and assistants, and I then noticed Ambassador Sondland's demeanor changed and understood he had been connected to President Trump. While Ambassador Sondland's phone was not on speakerphone, I could hear the President's voice through the ear piece of the phone.

The President's voice was loud and recognizable, and Ambassador Sondland held the phone away from his ear for a period of time, presumably because of the loud volume. I heard Ambassador Sondland greet the President and explained he was calling from Kyiv. I heard President Trump then clarify that Ambassador Sondland was in Ukraine. Ambassador Sondland replied, yes, he was in Ukraine, and went on to state that President Zelensky "loves your ass." I then heard President Trump ask, "So he's going to do the investigation?"

Ambassador Sondland replied that "he's going to do it," adding that President Zelensky will do "anything you ask him to do."

Mr. Manager SCHIFF. After the call, Ambassador Sondland confirmed to Holmes that the investigations were the President's sole interest with Ukraine because—and this is very important—they benefit the President.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Mr. HOLMES. After the call ended, Ambassador Sondland remarked that the President was in a bad mood, as Ambassador Sondland stated was often the case early in the morning. I then took the opportunity to ask Ambassador Sondland for his candid impression of the President's views on Ukraine. In particular, I asked Ambassador Sondland if it was true that the President did not give a [expletive] about Ukraine. Ambassador Sondland agreed that the President did not give a [expletive] about Ukraine.

I asked, "Why Not?" Ambassador Sondland stated the President only cares about "big stuff." I noted there was big stuff going on in Ukraine, like a war with Russia. Ambassador Sondland replied that he meant big stuff that benefits the President, like the Biden investigation that Mr. Giuliani was pushing. The conversation then moved on to other topics.

Mr. Manager SCHIFF. This understanding by Ambassador Sondland is independently confirmed by President Trump's own interactions with Ukraine.

During his two telephone calls with President Zelensky—first on April 21 and then on July 25—President Trump did not refer to any anti-corruption efforts or the war against Russia. He never even uttered the word "corruption." Instead, he only spoke about investigating his political opponents.

He later confirmed this narrow and singular focus to the press. On October 3, when asked about the Ukraine scheme, he said: "Well, I would think if they were honest about it, they would start a major investigation into the Bidens. It's a very simple answer."

Here is that conference:

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

REPORTER. What exactly did you hope Zelensky would do about the Bidens after your phone call?

The PRESIDENT. Well, I would think that, if they were honest about it, they'd start a major investigation into the Bidens. It's a very simple answer.

Mr. Manager SCHIFF. So we know from witnesses, the President's personal agents, and, most importantly, the President himself that the only thing President Trump cared about with Ukraine was his investigations in order to benefit himself.

To see this even more starkly, it is helpful to remember what Presidential head-of-state calls are normally used for.

Talk to any former occupant of the Oval Office, and he will tell you that the disparity in power between the President of the United States and other heads of state is vast. Since World War II—and consistent with the requirement to "faithfully execute" their oaths of office—U.S. Presidents from both political parties have made good use of this disparity in power in their telephone calls with foreign leaders. They have used those calls to secure commitments that have bolstered American security and prosperity.

Acting as our chief diplomat, President Reagan used his calls to our European allies, like Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, to rally the world against the Soviet threat—the shining city on the hill standing up to the evil empire. His calls laid the foundation for landmark nonproliferation agreements that averted nuclear Armageddon.

It was during a phone call on Christmas Day in 1991 that President George H. W. Bush learned that Mikhail Gorbachev intended to resign as Soviet Premier, marking the end of the Soviet Union. Historians credit his deft diplomacy, including numerous one-on-one phone calls, for bringing about a peaceful end to the Cold War.

Following September 11, President George W. Bush used his calls with heads of state to rally global support for the U.S. campaign to defeat al-Qaida and to work with our allies to

protect and defend U.S. national security and combat terrorism.

President Obama used his calls with foreign leaders to contain the fallout from the global economic crisis, assemble an international coalition to fight the Islamic State, and, of course, to rally support for Ukraine following Russia's invasion of Crimea.

No matter what you think of the policy views or priorities of these prior Presidents, there is no question that they are examples of the normal diplomacy that happens during Presidential telephone calls, and there is no doubt, when you are the President of the United States and you call a foreign leader, that you are on the clock for the American people. Consistent with the faithful execution of his or her oath of office, a President's first and only objective is to get foreign leaders to do what is in the best interest of the United States.

That is not what happened on July 25. On that date, President Trump used a head-of-state call with the leader of Ukraine to help himself—to press a foreign leader to investigate the President's political opponent in order to help his reelection campaign. President Trump abused his authority as Commander in Chief and Chief Diplomat to benefit himself, and he betrayed the interests of the American people when he did so.

Let's go to the third reason that we know the President put his interests first.

The third reason you know that the investigations were politically motivated is the central role played by President Trump's personal attorney, Mr. Giuliani, who has never had an official role in this government but, instead, was at all times representing the President in his personal capacity. There is no dispute about this.

For example, Mr. Giuliani made this point clearly in his May 10 letter to the President of Ukraine himself, where he wrote:

Dear President-Elect Zelensky, I am private counsel to President Donald J. Trump. Just to be precise, I represent him as a private citizen, not as President of the United States. This is quite common under American law because the duties and privileges of a President and a private citizen are not the same. Separate representation is the usual process.

Mr. Giuliani also repeated this publicly. For example, he confirmed this point on May 9, in the New York Times, when he said—well, many things—"We're not meddling in an election, we're meddling in an investigation, which we have a right to do."

"There is nothing illegal about it," he said. "Somebody could say it's improper. And this isn't foreign policy."

He went on to say, referring to the President: "He basically knows what I'm doing, sure, as his lawyer."

"My only client is the president of the United States," he said. "He's the one I have an obligation to report to, tell him what happened."

Think about that. The President is using his personal lawyer to ask

Ukraine for investigations that aren't "foreign policy" but that will be very, very helpful to the President personally. It is not often you get it so graphically as we do here.

Let's go to the fourth reason that these investigations were never part of U.S. policy.

It was not just that President Trump used his personal lawyer; it was also that what he was asking for was never a part of U.S. policy. Witnesses told us that President Trump's investigations were not in his official, prepared talking points or briefing materials. To the contrary, they went against official policy and diverged from our national security interests.

All three witnesses—Tim Morrison at the National Security Council, LTC Alex Vindman at the National Security Council, and Jennifer Williams, who listened to the July 25 call—testified that when President Trump demanded that President Zelensky investigate the Bidens, he had completely departed from the talking points they had prepared for him.

Now, before I get to the video clip, I just want to underscore this: He is not obligated to use his talking points, and he is not obligated to follow the recommendations of his staff no matter how sound they may be. What this makes clear is that it was not U.S. policy that he was conducting; it was his private, personal interests that he was conducting. If it were U.S. policy, it probably would have been in the talking points and briefing materials, but, of course, it was not.

Let's look at Mr. Morrison's testimony on this point.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

GOLDMAN. Now, Mr. Morrison, were—these references to CrowdStrike, the server and 2016 election, and to Vice President Biden and son, were they included in the President's talking points?

Mr. MORRISON. They were not.

Mr. Manager SCHIFF. Here is Lieutenant Colonel Vindman on this point: (Text of Videotape presentation:)

Ms. SPEIER. Colonel Vindman, you are the National Security Council's director for Ukraine. Did you participate in preparing the talking points for the President's call?

VINDMAN. I did. I prepared them.

Ms. SPEIER. So you prepared them. They were then reviewed and edited by multiple senior officers at the NSC and the White House. Is that correct?

VINDMAN. That is correct.

Ms. SPEIER. Did the talking points for the president contain any discussion of investigations into the 2016 election, the Bidens or Burisma?

VINDMAN. They did not.

Ms. SPEIER. Are you aware of any written product from the National Security Council suggesting that investigations into the 2016 election, the Bidens, or Burisma are part of the official policy of the United States?

VINDMAN. No, I'm not.

Mr. Manager SCHIFF. Dr. Hill also elaborated on this point.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Dr. HILL. My point, Mr. NUNES, is that we at the National Security Council were not told either by the President directly or

through Ambassador Bolton that we were to be focused on these issues as a matter of U.S. foreign policy towards Ukraine. So when we are talking about Ukraine in 2016, I never personally heard the President say anything specific about 2016 and Ukraine. I've seen him say plenty of things publicly, but I was not given a directive. In fact, I was given a directive by Ambassador Bolton on July 10 very clearly to stay out of domestic politics.

Mr. Manager SCHIFF. So, to be clear, when President Trump asked for these investigations, he was not asking for them based on an official U.S. policy. His top official advisers had not even been told about these investigations. To the contrary, they were told to stay out of U.S. politics.

And it gets worse. It was not just that President Trump ignored official U.S. policy and the talking points he was given; it was that what he was doing—withholding support from Ukraine—was actually contrary to and harmful to U.S. policy.

There is clear and undisputed bipartisan support for Ukraine. Ukraine is our ally. What is more, they are at war with our adversary, Russia. So our goal should be to help President Zelensky's anti-corruption reforms and to help Ukraine fight its adversary, Russia, in any way that we can.

President Trump's own national defense strategy stated that the United States and its European allies "will deter Russian adventurism"—a clear reference to Russia's usurpation of Ukrainian territory and sovereignty. Consistent with that strategy, we currently have approximately 68,000 troops stationed in Europe. Roughly 10,000 of those U.S. troops are deployed on NATO's eastern border with Russia, to countries like Poland, Hungary, Lithuania, and Bulgaria. These American forces are literally holding the line against another land grab by Vladimir Putin.

The author of that strategy, former U.S. National Security Advisor LTG H.R. McMaster, issued this stark warning about Russia's aggression:

[F]or too long, some nations have looked the other way in the face of these threats. Russia brazenly and implausibly denies its actions and we have failed to impose sufficient costs. The Kremlin's confidence is growing as its agents conduct their sustained campaigns to undermine our confidence in ourselves and in one another.

What General McMaster says obviously makes sense. Russia's confidence, sadly, is growing. We need to stand up to them, and that is why we support Ukraine, to help defeat Russian aggression.

So, on July 25, when President Zelensky spoke with President Trump, that is what he, McMaster, was hoping to discuss—or he would be hoping that he would discuss how we can support Ukraine in its fight against a huge adversary.

Our confidence in one another; that is what President Zelensky was most worried about when he got on the line with the President on July 25, whether Ukraine could have confidence in U.S. support.

Nearly 70 percent of Ukraine's territory—I am sorry. Nearly 7 percent of Ukraine's territory had been annexed by Russian-backed forces. More than 15,000 troops have been lost in the hot war over the past 5 years.

But when President Zelensky raised the issue of U.S. military aid needed to confront Russian aggression, President Trump did nothing to reassure the Ukrainian leader of our steadfast support for Ukraine's sovereignty. Instead, he made personal demands.

It is for these reasons that President Trump's investigations went against official U.S. policy. Witnesses confirmed that President Trump's requests actually diverged not just from our policy but from our own national security.

As Dr. Hill testified, Ambassador Sondland, in carrying out President Trump's scheme, "was being involved in a domestic political errand, and we were being involved in national security policy, and those two things had just diverged."

And as Ambassador Taylor elaborated, "[O]ur holding up of security assistance that would go to a country that is fighting aggression from Russia, for no good policy reason, no good substantive reason, no good national security reason, is wrong."

As these officials so correctly observed, there is no question that President Trump's political errand and our national security diverged; that he did this to advance his reelection, not to advance U.S. national security goals, and that he did it for no good reason but the political one.

But it is more than that. It is more than our national security policy. We, as a country, are meant to embody the solution to corruption. Our country is based on promoting the rule of law. And here, what the President did attacks another of the U.S. strengths, that of our ideals and our values.

Part of that is ensuring the integrity of our democracy and our political institutions. It is a fundamental American value underlying our democracy that we do not use official powers to ask for investigations of our political opponents to gain a political advantage.

When President Trump asked a foreign leader to investigate his political opponent, he abused the broad authority provided to the President of the United States.

Witness testimony again confirms this. Vice President PENCE's adviser, Jennifer Williams, was concerned by the President's focus on domestic political issues rather than U.S. national security because the President is not supposed to use foreign governments for political errands.

She characterized the call as "a domestic political matter." Here is her testimony:

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Jennifer WILLIAMS. During my closed-door deposition, members of the committee asked about my personal views, and whether

I had any concerns about the July 25th call. As I testified then, I found the July 25th phone call unusual because, in contrast to other Presidential calls I had observed, it involved discussion of what appeared to be a domestic political matter.

Mr. Manager SCHIFF. Lieutenant Colonel Vindman also thought the call was improper and unrelated to the talking points he had drafted for the President.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Lt. Col. VINDMAN. It is improper for the President of the United States to demand that a foreign government investigate a U.S. citizen, and a political opponent . . . —it was also clear that if Ukraine pursued an investigation into the 2016 elections, the Bidens and Burisma, it would be interpreted as a partisan play. This would undoubtedly result in Ukraine using bipartisan support, undermining U.S. national security, and advancing Russia's strategic objectives in the region.

Mr. Manager SCHIFF. Lieutenant Colonel Vindman, as a reminder, is a Purple Heart veteran and says what we all know clearly: It is improper for the President of the United States to demand a foreign government to investigate a U.S. citizen and a political opponent.

And it wasn't just that Colonel Vindman thought it was wrong; he was so concerned that he warned Ukraine, too, not to get involved in our domestic politics.

In May, Lieutenant Colonel Vindman grew concerned by the pressure campaign he witnessed in the media, waged primarily by Rudy Giuliani. During a meeting with President Zelensky on May 20, Lieutenant Colonel Vindman warned the Ukrainian leader to stay out of U.S. politics—because that is our official U.S. policy.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Lieutenant Colonel VINDMAN. During a bilateral meeting in which the whole delegation was meeting with President Zelensky and his team, I offered two pieces of advice: To be particularly cautious with regards to Ukraine—to be particularly cautious with regards to Russia, and its desire to provoke Ukraine; and the second one was to stay out of U.S. domestic policy.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you mean politics?

Lieutenant Colonel VINDMAN. Politics, correct.

The CHAIRMAN. And why did you feel it was necessary to advise President Zelensky to stay away from U.S. domestic politics?

Lieutenant Colonel VINDMAN. Chairman, in the March and April timeframe, it became clear that there were—there were actors in the U.S., public actors, nongovernmental actors that were promoting the idea of investigations and 2016 Ukrainian interference.

And it was consistent with U.S. policy to advise any country, all the countries in my portfolio, any country in the world, to not participate in U.S. domestic politics. So I was passing the same advice consistent with U.S. policy.

Mr. Manager SCHIFF. He once again makes this clear: “[I]t was consistent with U.S. policy to advise any country, all the countries in my portfolio, any country in the world” we do not participate in U.S. domestic politics.

Deputy Assistant Secretary of State George Kent, too, testified that the

President's political investigations, of course, had nothing to do with American anticorruption efforts in Ukraine, which has consistently focused on building institutions and never specific investigations, and that if we do ask countries to do our political errands, it entirely threatens our credibility as a democracy.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

HECK. You also testified on October 15th, in the deposition, about fundamental reforms necessary for Ukraine to fight corruption and to transform the country. And you cited the importance of reforming certain institutions, notably the security service in the Prosecutor General's Office. Was investigating President Trump's political opponents a part of those necessary reforms? Was it on that list of yours, sir? Or, indeed, was it on any list?

KENT. No, they weren't.

HECK. In fact, historically, is it not true that a major problem in the Ukraine has been its misuse of prosecutors precisely to conduct investigation of political opponents? That's a legacy, I dare suggest, from the Soviet era, when, as you stated in your testimony, prosecutors like the KGB were and I quote you now “instruments of oppression.” Is that correct?

KENT. I said that, and I believe it's true.

HECK. So, finally, Mr. Kent, for as long as I can remember, U.S. foreign policy has been predicated on advancing principled interests in democratic values—notably, freedom of speech, press, assembly, religion; free, fair, and open elections; and the rule of law. Mr. Kent, when American leaders ask foreign governments to investigate their potential rivals, doesn't that make it harder for us to advocate on behalf of those democratic values?

KENT. I believe it makes it more difficult for our diplomatic representatives overseas to carry out those policy goals, yes.

HECK. How is that, sir?

KENT. Well, there's an issue of credibility. They hear diplomats on the ground saying one thing, and they hear other U.S. leaders saying something else.

Mr. Manager SCHIFF. The bottom line is this: What was in the best interest of our country was to help Ukraine, to give them the military aid, to fight one of our greatest adversaries, and to help promote the rule of law. And what was in President Trump's personal interest was the opposite: to pressure Ukraine to conduct investigations against his 2020 rival to help ensure his reelection. And when what is best for the country and what was best for Donald Trump diverged, President Trump put himself above the best interests of our country.

Let's now go to the fifth reason that we know the President put himself first.

A fifth reason is that the request for these investigations departed not just from U.S. policy but from established U.S. Government channels.

On the July 25 call, President Trump told President Zelensky that he should speak to Mr. Giuliani and Attorney General Barr, but after the July 25 transcript was released, the Department of Justice disclaimed any knowledge or involvement in the President's political investigations.

The Department of Justice statement from the day the July 25 call was re-

leased says this. This was from September 25.

(Text of Videotape presentation.)

The President has not spoken with the Attorney General about having Ukraine investigate anything relating to former Vice President Biden or his son. The President has not asked the Attorney General to contact Ukraine—on this or any other matter. The Attorney General has not communicated with Ukraine—on this or any other subject. Nor has the Attorney General discussed this matter, or anything relating to Ukraine, with Rudy Giuliani.

Now, this is pretty extraordinary. You can say a lot of things about the Attorney General, but you cannot say that he ever has looked to pursue something he thought was not in the President's interest.

This is pretty extraordinary, where he is saying the moment this transcript is publicly released: I have got nothing to do with this scheme. I don't know why they brought me up in this call. I don't know why the President brought me up in this call. He hasn't asked me to do anything about this. I want nothing to do with this business.

I suspect the Attorney General can recognize a drug deal when he sees it, too, and he wanted nothing to do with this.

Now, if this were some legitimate investigation, you would think the Department of Justice would have a role. That is traditionally how an investigation with an international component would work, but this wasn't the case. This wasn't the case. And the Attorney General wanted nothing to do with it.

If these were legitimate investigations that were in the national interest, why was Bill Barr's Justice Department so quick to divorce themselves from it?

The simple answer is that, as we see so clearly, they were against U.S. official policy and our national security. The Justice Department wanted nothing to do with it, and by asking for these investigations, the President was abusing his power.

Let's go to the sixth reason you know President Trump put himself first. It wasn't just that these witnesses told us—what these witnesses told us in the impeachment hearings about this being wrong. They reported the President's conduct in realtime. So it is not just that they came forward later; they came forward in realtime to report the President's conduct.

Of course, you have seen over the last couple days how many times people are told: Go talk to the lawyers.

Well, Tim Morrison, former Republican staffer, and Colonel Vindman were sufficiently concerned by what they heard President Trump solicit on that July 25 call that they both immediately went to speak to the lawyer, John Eisenberg, the NSC Legal Advisor. Let's take a look.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Mr. GOLDMAN. Now, Mr. Morrison, shortly after you heard the July 25th call, you testified that you alerted the NSC legal advisor, John Eisenberg, pretty much right away. Is that right?

Mr. MORRISON. Correct.

Mr. GOLDMAN. And you indicated in your opening statement, or at least from your deposition, that you went to Mr. Eisenberg out of concern over the potential political fallout if the call record became public and not because you thought it was illegal. Is that right?

Mr. MORRISON. Correct.

Mr. GOLDMAN. But you would agree, right, that asking a foreign government to investigate a domestic political rival was inappropriate, would you not?

Mr. MORRISON. It is not what we recommended the President discuss.

Mr. Manager SCHIFF. I think that is a profound understatement. Mr. Morrison clearly recognized that the request to investigate Biden and Burisma was about U.S. domestic politics and not U.S. national security. Lieutenant Colonel Vindman knew this, too, and he reported his concerns to the White House counsel.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Mr. GOLDMAN. Now, you said you also reported this incident to the NSC lawyers; is that right?

Lt. Col. VINDMAN. Correct.

Mr. GOLDMAN. What was their response?

Lt. Col. VINDMAN. John Eisenberg said that he—he took notes while I was talking, and he said that he would look into it.

Mr. GOLDMAN. Why did you report this meeting and this conversation to the NSC lawyers?

Lt. Col. VINDMAN. Because it was inappropriate. And, following the meeting, I had a short conversation—following the post-meeting meeting, in the Ward Room. I had a short conversation with Ambassador—correction—Dr. Hill. And we discussed the idea of needing to report this.

Mr. Manager SCHIFF. In fact, Lieutenant Colonel Vindman reported concerns twice, and Mr. Morrison did so multiple times as well.

They, of course, weren't the only ones. As this slide shows, Dr. Hill reported her concerns to the NSC legal advisor. Mr. Kent reported his concerns about the State Department's failure to respond to the House's document request. The lawyers were awfully busy.

And why did President Trump's own officials—not so-called Never Trumpers, not Democrats or Republicans, but career public servants—report this conduct in real time? Because they knew it was wrong.

Dr. Hill said: "It was improper, and it was inappropriate, and we said that in the time, in real time."

Lieutenant Colonel Vindman said: "[The July 25] call was wrong" and he had a "duty to report it."

Ambassador Taylor said: "Holding up of security assistance . . . for no good policy reason, no good substantive reason, no good national security reason, is wrong."

Mr. Morrison admitted that he reported the July 25 call "pretty much right away" and "recommended to them that we restrict access to the package."

And Ms. Williams said: "[The July 25 call] struck me as unusual and inappropriate," and "more political in nature."

Mr. Manager SCHIFF. The consensus is clear. The President's demand for po-

litical investigations was improper, inappropriate, and wrong, and again confirms that the requested investigations were not about anything except Donald Trump's political gains.

Let's go to the seventh reason why you know President Trump put himself first. American officials weren't the only ones who recognized the political nature of these requests. Ukrainian officials did, too. That brings us the seventh reason we know that this was against our national interests. Ukrainian officials themselves expressed concern that these corrupt investigations would drag them into U.S. domestic politics.

For example, in mid-July, Ambassador Taylor texted Sondland and Taylor and explained President Zelensky's reluctance to become a pawn in U.S. politics. Ambassador Taylor said: "Gordon, one thing Kurt and I talked about yesterday was Sasha Danyliuk's point"—he is a top adviser to President Zelensky—"Sasha Danyliuk's point that President Zelensky is sensitive about Ukraine being taken seriously, not merely as an instrument in Washington domestic reelection politics."

So here you have Sasha Danyliuk, one of the top advisers to President Zelensky affirming that his President wants to be taken seriously. It is pretty extraordinary when a foreign leader has to communicate to this country that they want him to take him seriously and not just as some kind of a political pawn for political purposes. An ally dependent on us for military support, economic support, and diplomatic support has to say: Please take us seriously. But this is what the Ukrainians are saying. They understood this wasn't American policy—as much as we do—and they didn't want to be used as a pawn.

Ambassador Taylor explained his text during his testimony: "The whole thrust of this irregular channel was to get these investigations, which Danyliuk and presumably Zelensky were resisting because they didn't want to be seen to be interfering but also to be a pawn."

Mr. Manager SCHIFF. This is an important point, too. It wasn't just that they didn't want to be seen as getting into politics, because if they did and it looked like they were getting on the side of Donald Trump, that would hurt their support with Democrats, and if it looked like they were getting involved with the other side, it would hurt them with the President. There was no benefit to Ukraine to be dragged into this. There was no benefit to Ukraine by this, but they also didn't want to be viewed as a pawn.

President Zelensky has his own electorate. He is a new leader. He is a former comedian, and he wants to be taken seriously. He needs to be taken seriously, because if the United States isn't going to take him seriously, you can darn well bet Vladimir Putin will not take him seriously.

So the perception—not just that there is a rift, that he can't get mili-

tary aid or it is in doubt or in question, but the impression—that he is nothing more than a pawn, you could see how problematic that was for President Zelensky. In other words, Ukrainian officials understood, just as our officials understood, just as all those folks you saw—Morrison, Vindman, Hill, and others, all the people who had to go to the lawyers, all the people who listened to that call and understood—that this was just wrong.

Morrison goes on to say that he is no legal expert and can't really opine on the legality of what happened on this call, but they all knew it was wrong. They also knew that it was damaging to bipartisan support. They knew it was damaging to our national security. But here we see. It wasn't just our people. It was the Ukrainians who also understood this was a pure political errand they were being asked to perform.

That is no way to treat an ally at war.

Now, it wasn't just the testimony of U.S. officials on this. We know this directly from the Ukrainians. Indeed, we know this directly from President Zelensky himself, who said: "I am sorry, but I don't want to be involved to democratic, open elections—elections of the USA."

Here is Zelensky saying: "I don't want to be involved." He shouldn't be involved. He shouldn't be involved in our elections. That is not his job, and he knows that, and it is a tragic fact that the world's oldest democracy has to be told by this struggling democracy: This isn't what you are supposed to do. But that is what is happening.

Let's go to the eighth reason why you can know that President Trump put himself first, and that is because there is no serious dispute that the White House tried to bury the call record. They tried to bury the call record. Although President Trump has repeatedly insisted that his July conversation with President Zelensky "was perfect," the White House apparently believed otherwise. Their own lawyers apparently believed otherwise.

Following a head-of-state call, the President issues a summary or readout to lock in any commitments made by the foreign leader and publicly reinforce the core elements of the President's message. However, no public readout was posted on the White House website following the July 25 call. I wonder why that was.

The White House instead provided reporters with a short, incomplete summary that, of course, omitted the major elements of the conversation.

The short summary said:

Today, President Donald J. Trump spoke by telephone with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine to congratulate him on his recent election. President Trump and President Zelenskyy discussed ways to strengthen the relationship between the United States and Ukraine, including energy and economic cooperation. Both leaders also expressed that they look forward to the opportunity to meet.

That was it. Now, I don't know about you, but that does not seem like an accurate summary of that call. As you can see, that summary did not mention President Trump's mention of a debunked conspiracy theory about the 2016 election promoted by Russian President Putin. The summary did not mention President Trump's demand that Ukraine announce an investigation into his domestic political rival, former Vice President Biden. The summary did not mention that President Trump praised a corrupt Ukrainian prosecutor, who to this day continues to feed false claims to the President through Rudy Giuliani.

If the call was "perfect," if these investigations were legitimate foreign policy, if the White House had nothing to hide, then ask yourselves: Why did the White House's readout omit any mention of the investigations? Why not publicly confirm that Ukraine had been asked by the President to pursue them?

Why? Because it would have exposed the President's corruption.

Sanitizing the call readout wasn't the only step taken to cover up the President's wrongdoing. The White House Counsel's office also took irregular efforts to hide the call record away on a secure server used to store highly classified information. National Security Council Senior Director Tim Morrison, whom you saw video clips on, testified that he requested that access to the electronic file of the call record be restricted so that it would not be leaked.

Mr. Morrison said the call record did not meet the requirements to be placed on the highly classified system, and Mr. Eisenberg later claimed the call record had been placed on the highly classified system "by mistake."

I am sure it was a very innocent mistake. However, mistake or no mistake, it remained on that system until at least the third week of September 2019. So that mistake continued from July all the way through September.

Why were they trying to hide what the President did? This was U.S. policy and they were proud of it. If they were really interested in corruption, if this was about corruption, if this had nothing to do with the President's reelection campaign, if Biden was merely an interesting coincidence, why did they bury the record? Why did they hide the record? Why did they put the record on a system meant for highly classified information, which the folks in here on the Intelligence Committee and many others can tell you is usually used for things like covert action operations—the most sensitive secrets?

Well, this was a very sensitive political secret. This was a covert action of a different kind. This was a corrupt action and it was hidden, and they knew it was, and that is why they hid it. Innocent people don't behave that way.

Let's go to the ninth reason that you know President Trump put himself first. The clearest reason that we can tell that all that President Trump

cared about was the investigations is that President Trump confirmed his desire for these investigations in his statements to his agents and when this scheme was discovered to the American people.

The very day after he solicited foreign interference to help him cheat in the 2020 election, President Trump spoke with Gordon Sondland, who was in Ukraine. President Trump had only one question for Ambassador Sondland: "So, he's going to do the investigation?"

Here is David Holmes recounting the call between President Trump and Sondland:

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Mr. HOLMES. I then heard President Trump ask, "So he's going to do the investigation?" Ambassador Sondland replied that he is going to do it, adding that President Zelensky will do "anything you ask him to do."

Mr. Manager SCHIFF. So here we are; this is July 26. President Zelensky doesn't want to be used as a pawn and doesn't want to be drawn into U.S. politics, but at this point he feels he has no choice. Sondland tells David Holmes he is going to do it. Of course, that is the only thing the President asked about in that call. Sondland says he is going to do it, adding that Zelensky will do "anything you ask" him to do, including, apparently, be his pawn.

Although Sondland didn't remember the details of his conversation, he did not dispute Holmes' recollection of it. In fact, Ambassador Sondland had an interesting take on it, which you should hear.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Ambassador SONDLAND. Actually, actually, I would have been more surprised if President Trump had not mentioned investigations, particularly given what we are hearing from Mr. Giuliani about the President's concerns.

Mr. Manager SCHIFF. That is pretty telling that in this call, the day after he has had this head-of-state call—they finally got the call arranged between these two Presidents—and Ambassador Sondland, with major support of the President, says: I would have been more surprised if he didn't bring it up.

The President doesn't bring up the war with Russia. He doesn't bring up anything else. He just brings this up, and Sondland confirms: Yeah, frankly, I would have been surprised if it was something different because we are all in the loop here.

Everybody understood what this President wanted, and apparently everybody also understood just how wrong it was and how damaging it was.

In September 2019, even after President Trump learned that his scheme was in danger of becoming publicly exposed, he would not give up. He still expected Ukraine to announce investigations into Joe Biden and his alleged Ukrainian interference in 2016. According to three witnesses, President Trump emphasized to Ambassador Sondland during a call on September 7

that President Zelensky "should want to do it."

Then you have the President's remarks on October 3:

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

REPORTER. What exactly did you hope Zelensky would do about the Bidens after your phone?

President TRUMP. Well, I would think that, if they were honest about it, they'd start a major investigation into the Bidens. It's a very simple answer.

Mr. Manager SCHIFF. So here we hear again from the President's own words what his primary object is, and his primary object is helping his reelection campaign—help to cheat in his reelection campaign. After all that we have been through and after all that we went through with the Russian interference in our election and all that cost, he was at it again, unrepentant and undeterred. If anything, he was emboldened by escaping accountability from his invitation and willful use of Russian-hacked materials in the last election, and unconstrained. This is a President who truly feels that under article II he can do whatever he wants, and that includes coercing an ally to help him cheat in an election.

If he is successful, the election is not a remedy for that. A remedy in which the President can cheat is no remedy at all, which is why we are here. This was not about corruption, which brings me to No. 10, the 10 reasons you know President Trump put himself first.

Ironically, the President has argued that his corrupt conduct in soliciting sham investigations from Ukraine was driven by his concerns about corruption in Ukraine. This attempt to legitimize his efforts is simply not credible and not the least bit believable given the mountain of evidence in the record of President Trump's corrupt intent. There is no evidence that President Trump cared one whit about anti-corruption efforts at all. That is the 10th reason you know this was all political.

First, the evidence and President Trump's own public statements make clear that when the President talks about corruption in Ukraine, he is only talking about that sliver—that little sliver—of alleged corruption that just somehow happened to be affected by his own political interests, specifically two investigations that would benefit his reelection.

For example, on September 25, in a joint press availability with President Zelensky—the man who doesn't want to be a pawn—at the United Nations General Assembly, President Trump emphasized his understanding of corruption to relate to the Biden investigation.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

TRUMP. Now, when Biden's son walks away with millions of dollars from Ukraine, and he knows nothing, and they're paying him millions of dollars, that's corruption.

Mr. Manager SCHIFF. I mean, you can imagine how President Zelensky feels sitting there and hearing this—the man who does not want to be a pawn and the man who doesn't want to be pulled into American politics. And

there is the President, at it again, trying to draw his nation in, even while they have a war to fight.

Another example was on September 30, when President Trump stated: (Text of Videotape presentation:)

Now, the new President of Ukraine ran on the basis of no corruption. That's how he got elected. And I believe that he really means it. But there was a lot of corruption having to do with the 2016 election against us. And we want to get to the bottom of it, and it's very important that we do.

Mr. Manager SCHIFF. This is, of course, again, bringing up the CrowdStrike conspiracy theory. What does the President say? "Corruption . . . against us." He is not concerned about actual corruption cases, only about matters that affect him personally.

Two days later, President Trump again tried to link corruption with the Biden investigation.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

The only thing that matters is the transcript of the actual conversation that I had with the President of Ukraine. It was perfect. We're looking at congratulations. We're looking at doing things together. And what are we looking at? We're looking at corruption. And, in, I believe, 1999, there was a corruption act or a corruption bill passed between both—and signed—between both countries, where I have a duty to report corruption. And let me tell you something: Biden's son is corrupt, and Biden is corrupt.

Mr. Manager SCHIFF. Just 2 days after that, the President again equated corruption with actions by others to hurt him politically.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

The PRESIDENT: Here's what's okay: If we feel there's corruption, like I feel there was in the 2016 campaign—there was tremendous corruption against me—if we feel there's corruption, we have a right to go to a foreign country.

Mr. Manager SCHIFF. So here, again, the President is pushing out the Kremlin talking points of Ukrainian interference in 2016 and the CrowdStrike conspiracy theory. Again, when President Trump is talking about corruption, he is talking about perceived efforts by political opponents to hurt him. It is personal, and it is political, but it is not anti-corruption policy.

Ambassador Volker confirmed this fact. Fighting corruption in Ukraine, when used by President Trump and Giuliani, in fact, refers to the investigation of the Bidens in 2016. Volker said:

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

VOLKER. In hindsight, I now understand that others saw the idea of investigating possible corruption involving the Ukrainian company Burisma as equivalent to investigating former Vice President Biden.

Mr. Manager SCHIFF. So, again, although President Trump and Mr. Giuliani had used the general term "corruption" to describe what they want Ukraine to investigate, it wasn't about anything actually related to corruption. The evidence, including the President's own statements, makes clear that this is simply code for the specific investigations that President Trump wanted Ukraine to pursue.

Second, as we have discussed, the President's timing of his purported concerns about corruption in Ukraine make it all the more suspect. Before news of Vice President Biden's candidacy broke, President Trump showed no interest in Ukraine. He gave Ukraine hundreds of millions of dollars under a regime that lost power because of mounting concerns about corruption.

So here we are, the President, in these prior years, giving money to a government, to Mr. Poroshenko, that is viewed as corrupt, and Zelensky comes and runs against him in an underdog campaign—underdog campaign of Zelensky against Poroshenko. And what is the heart of Zelensky's campaign? That Poroshenko's government is corrupt, and he is running to clean it up. He is the reformer. He succeeds because the Ukrainians really want to clean up their government. We see this reformer win and carry the hopes of the Ukrainian people.

President Trump had no problem giving money appropriated by Congress to Ukraine under the corrupt regime of Poroshenko where corruption had existed during Poroshenko. But a reformer gets elected, devoted to fighting corruption, and suddenly there is a problem. There was a reason to give more support to Ukraine. We had a President for whom this was the central pillar of his campaign. He came from outside of the government. People placed their hopes in him. You can see President Zelensky trying to flatter the President in that July 25 call by saying: I am up for draining the swamp too. He ran on a campaign of reform.

So there was no problem giving money to the prior regime where there were abundant concerns about corruption, but you get a reformer in office, and now there is a problem? Of course, we know what changed: the emergence of Joe Biden as a candidate.

In the prior regime, corruption was no problem. A reformer comes into office; suddenly, there is a problem. If you need any more graphic example, again, you look at that call.

No one disputes that Marie Yovanovitch was and is a devoted fighter against corruption. That is her reputation. That was part of the reason they had to get rid of her. If you look at that July 25 call, the President is badmouthing this person fighting corruption. He is praising the former Ukrainian prosecutor, who is corrupt. Are we really to believe that this is about fighting corruption? There was no problem supporting the former regime with corruption problems but problems supporting a reformer trying to clean it up; no problems with a corrupt former Ukrainian prosecutor whom he praises in that call—he is a good man—but problems with a U.S. Ambassador who has devoted her life to this country.

It wasn't until 2019, after Biden emerged as a considerable opponent and after Special Counsel Mueller con-

firmed that President Trump's campaign had welcomed Russian assistance in 2016 that President Trump, we are to believe, suddenly developed an interest in anti-corruption reforms in Ukraine. Never mind that his own Defense Department said they were meeting all the benchmarks. This new administration, the reformer, was doing exactly what we wanted him to do. Never mind that. Now that Biden is in the picture, he has a problem.

Third, when given the opportunity to raise the issue of corruption with the Ukrainians, the President never did. Despite at the request of his staff, the word "corruption" never crosses his lips, just the Bidens and CrowdStrike.

When the President first spoke to President Zelensky on April 21, he was supposed to—he was asked to by his staff—bring up corruption. Go back and check, but I think the readout of that congratulatory call actually said that he brought up corruption. Am I right? My staff says I am right.

So, on April 21, he is asked to bring up corruption. In the congratulatory call to President Zelensky—great reformer—he doesn't bring it up, but you know the readout says that he did. It was just like the readout of the July 25 call, misleading.

Of course, the readout for the second call was far more misleading because there was far more to mislead about. But in those two conversations, there is nary a mention of the word "corruption." We are to believe that, apart from the Bidens, this is what our President was concerned about in Ukraine.

Here is Lieutenant Colonel Vindman. (Text of Videotape presentation:)

Mr. SCHIFF. Colonel Vindman, if I could turn your attention to the April 21 call, that is the first call between President Trump and President Zelensky, did you prepare talking points for the President to use during that call?

Lieutenant Colonel VINDMAN. Yes, I did.

The CHAIRMAN. And did those talking points include rooting out corruption in Ukraine?

Lieutenant Colonel VINDMAN. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. That was something the President was supposed to raise in the conversation with President Zelensky?

Lieutenant Colonel VINDMAN. Those were the recommended talking points that were cleared through the NSC staff for the President, yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Did you listen in on the call?

Lieutenant Colonel VINDMAN. Yes, I did.

The CHAIRMAN. The White House has now released the record of that call. Did President Trump ever mention corruption in the April 21 call?

Lieutenant Colonel VINDMAN. To the best of my recollection, he did not.

Mr. Manager SCHIFF. President Trump also did not mention the word "corruption" on the July 25 call. Here is Lieutenant Colonel Vindman confirming that as well. Well, actually, that slide is what I was referring to earlier—the good work of my staff.

This is the readout of the April 21 call, which says:

President Donald J. Trump spoke today to President-elect Volodymyr Zelensky to congratulate him on his victory in Ukraine's

April 21 election. The President wished him success and called the election an important moment in Ukraine's history, noting the peaceful and democratic manner of the electoral process. President Trump underscored the unwavering support of the United States for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity—within its internationally recognized borders—and expressed his commitment to work together with President-elect Zelensky and the Ukrainian people to implement reforms that strengthen democracy, increase prosperity, and root out corruption.

Except that he didn't.

Let's hear Colonel Vindman. No, we don't have that. OK. Let's not hear Colonel Vindman. You heard enough of Colonel Vindman.

When President Trump had the ear of President Zelensky during the April 21 and July 25 calls, he did not raise that issue—the word “corruption”—a single time.

There is ample other evidence as well. White House officials made clear to President Trump that President Zelensky was anti-corruption, that President Trump should help him fight corruption. The President's Agencies and Departments supported this too. The Defense Department and State Department certified that Ukraine satisfied all anti-corruption benchmarks before President Trump froze the aid.

The point is this: The evidence is consistent. It establishes clearly that President Trump did not care about corruption. To the contrary, he was pursuing a corrupt aim. He wanted Ukraine to do the exact thing that American policy officials have tried for years to stop foreign governments from doing: corrupt investigations of political rivals.

To sum up, the evidence is unmistakably clear. On July 25, while acting as our Nation's chief diplomat and speaking to the leader of Ukraine, President Trump solicited foreign interference in the U.S. election for one particular objective: to benefit his own reelection. To seek help in cheating in a U.S. election, he requested—effectively demanded—a personal political favor: that Ukraine announce two bogus investigations that were only of value to himself.

This was not about foreign policy. In fact, it was inconsistent with and diverged from American national security and American values. His own officials knew this, and they reported it. Ukraine knew this. And his own White House attempted to bury the call.

The President has confirmed what he wanted in his own words. He has made it clear he didn't care about corruption; he cared only about himself. Now it is up to us to do something about it, to make sure that a President—that this President cannot pursue an objective that places himself above our country.

Ms. Manager LOFGREN. Well, we have gone through the object of President Trump's scheme: getting Ukraine to announce that investigations would be held, and that would help him cheat and gain an advantage in the 2020 elec-

tion. Those sham investigations were to advance his personal political interests, not the national interests of America. Let's drill down on the how—how the President abused the power of his office and executed his corrupt scheme.

As noted earlier, the President executed his scheme through three official actions: first, by soliciting foreign election interference; second, by conditioning an official Oval Office meeting on Ukraine doing or at least announcing the political investigations; and third, by withholding military aid to pressure Ukraine to announce those investigations.

All three of President Trump's official actions were an abuse of his power as President and done for personal gain, but the original abuse was President Trump's solicitation of election interference from a foreign country—Ukraine. He tried to get an announcement of investigations designed to help him in the 2020 Presidential election, so let's start there.

President Trump's corrupt demands of President Zelensky in the July 25 phone call were not just a spontaneous outburst; they were a dramatic crescendo in a monthslong scheme to extort Ukraine into assisting his 2020 reelection campaign.

As was shown, there is evidence of President Trump himself demanding that Ukraine conduct the investigations, but President Trump also delegated his authority to his political agent, Rudy Giuliani, to oversee and direct this scheme. That was beginning in late 2018 and early 2019. Here is how that scheme worked:

First, in January of 2019, Mr. Giuliani and his associates discussed the investigations with the then current and former prosecutor generals of Ukraine. As we discussed, both were corrupt.

Then in late April 2019, the scheme hit a roadblock. A reform candidate, Zelensky, won the Ukrainian Presidential election. The fear was that President-elect Zelensky would replace the corrupt prosecutor Giuliani had been dealing with.

President Trump removed Ambassador Yovanovitch because his agents, including Giuliani, believed she was another roadblock to the corrupt scheme they were undertaking on his behalf. In her place, President Trump directed a team of handpicked political appointees—U.S. officials who were supposed to work in the public interest—to instead work with Mr. Giuliani to advance the President's personal interests. Those were the three amigos. As Ambassador Sondland said, those U.S. officials “followed the President's orders.”

But even with Ambassador Yovanovitch gone, President Zelensky still resisted Mr. Giuliani's overtures. So, at the President's direction, throughout May and June, Giuliani ratcheted up public pressure on Ukraine to announce the investigations. No luck. It was only then, when

Mr. Giuliani could not get the deal done, that President Trump turned to the second official action—using the Oval Office meeting to pressure Ukraine.

Before we turn to this scheme for soliciting foreign election interference, we need to understand how Mr. Giuliani, the President's private agent, assumed the leadership role in this scheme that applied escalating pressure on Ukraine to announce investigations helpful to the President's political interest.

Why is that so important? First, let's be clear. Mr. Giuliani is President Trump's personal lawyer. He represented President Trump with his knowledge and consent. The evidence shows Mr. Giuliani and President Trump were in constant contact in this time period. Both U.S. and Ukrainian officials knew Mr. Giuliani was the key to Ukraine.

Let's review the President's use of Mr. Giuliani to advance his scheme.

First, no one disputes that Mr. Giuliani was and is President Trump's personal lawyer. President Trump has said this. Mr. Giuliani says it. We all know it is true.

Second, President Trump at all times directed and knew about Mr. Giuliani's actions. How do we know this? Let's start with the letter signed by Giuliani to President Zelensky. Here is that letter.

On May 10, 2019, Mr. Giuliani wrote to a foreign leader, President-elect Zelensky. The letter reads: “In my capacity as personal counsel to President Trump and with his knowledge and consent. . . .” Rudy Giuliani, not a government official, asked to speak about President Trump's specific request, and he makes it clear that it was in his role as the President's counsel.

Mr. Giuliani didn't just tell a foreign leader that; he also told the press. The day before Mr. Giuliani's letter to Zelensky, the New York Times published an article about Mr. Giuliani's upcoming trip to Ukraine.

Here is a slide about that article. It said: “Rudy Giuliani Plans Ukraine Trip to Push for Inquiries That Could Help Trump.”

Mr. Giuliani said his trip was to pressure Ukraine to initiate investigations into false allegations against the Bidens and the 2016 election and that it was at the request of the President. He stated that President Trump “basically knows what I'm doing, sure, as his lawyer.”

President Trump repeatedly admitted knowledge of Mr. Giuliani's activities and to coordinating with him about the Ukrainian activities.

POLITICO reported on May 11, 2019:

In a telephone interview with POLITICO on Friday, Trump said he didn't know much about Giuliani's planned trip to Ukraine, but wanted to speak to him about it.

And this is a quote of the President's: “I have not spoken to him at any great length, but I will,” Trump said in the interview. “I will speak to him about it before he leaves.”

President Trump knew and directed Mr. Giuliani's activities in May 2019 when Mr. Giuliani was planning his visit to Kyiv, and that remains true today.

The Wall Street Journal reported that when Rudy Giuliani returned from a trip to Kyiv just last month, "the President called him as the plane was still taxiing down the runway." President Trump asked his lawyer: "What did you get?" Giuliani answered: "More than you can imagine."

Even as President Trump faced impeachment in the House of Representatives, he was coordinating with his personal attorney on the Ukraine scheme. The President asked Rudy: "What did you get?"

The evidence also shows that Mr. Giuliani and the President were in frequent contact. During the investigation and in response to a lawful subpoena, the House got call records. They show contacts—not content—between Giuliani, the White House, and other people involved in the President's scheme. For example, on April 23, Rudy Giuliani learned President Trump had decided to fire Ambassador Yovanovitch. According to phone records, on that day, Giuliani had an 8-minute-and-28-second call with a White House number.

Let's look at what happened the next day, on April 24. Giuliani was again in repeated contact with the White House. For example, he had one 8-minute-42-second call with a White House number. An hour and a half later, he had another call, which lasted 3 minutes and 15 seconds, with the White House. When a reporter recently asked whom he called at the White House, Mr. Giuliani said this: "I talk to the President, mostly."

Rudy Giuliani remained in close contact with the White House after the disclosure of his planned trip to Ukraine in mid-2019. Now, Rudy is the key to Ukraine. We know from Mr. Giuliani and the President's own statements about his role as President Trump's personal agent advancing the Ukraine scheme. We know from their comments and the documentary evidence about the frequency of their contact.

But it wasn't just the frequency of Mr. Giuliani's contact that is significant. Here is what matters: President Trump directed U.S. officials to work with his personal agent, who was pursuing investigations not at all related to foreign policy. U.S. officials, including the President's own National Security Advisor, knew there was no getting around Rudy Giuliani when it came to Ukraine. Witnesses repeatedly testified to the constant presence of Rudy Giuliani on television and in the newspapers. A State Department official, Christopher Anderson, said that John Bolton "joked about, every time Ukraine is mentioned, Giuliani pops up."

After Ambassador Yovanovitch's dismissal, Ambassador Bolton told Dr.

Hill that Rudy Giuliani was a "hand grenade that's going to blow everybody up." Dr. Hill testified that Ambassador Bolton issued guidance for the National Security Council staff to not engage with Rudy Giuliani. That made sense. Why? Because Mr. Giuliani was not conducting official U.S. foreign policy; he was doing a domestic political errand for President Trump.

Now, these phone records, as I say, lawfully obtained, reveal potential contact between Ambassador Bolton and Rudy Giuliani on May 9, the day the New York Times reported his trip to Kyiv. Rudy Giuliani's role in Ukraine policy is yet another topic that Ambassador Bolton could speak to. You should call him and hear what he has to say about it.

Even without Ambassador Bolton's testimony, multiple other administration officials confirmed Mr. Giuliani's central role. Ambassador Sondland said: It was apparent to everyone that the key to changing the President's mind on Ukraine was Giuliani. David Holmes, U.S. political counselor in Kyiv, said: "Giuliani, a private lawyer, was taking a direct role in Ukrainian diplomacy."

Bad enough that the President ordered U.S. diplomats to "talk to Rudy" about Ukraine, the scheme got worse. The evidence shows that Ukrainian officials also came to recognize the important role of Mr. Giuliani. On July 10, 2019, Andriy Yermak, the top aide to President Zelensky, sent a text to Ambassador Volker about Rudy Giuliani. In that text, the Ukrainian official said this:

Thank you for the meeting and your clear and very logical position. Will be great meet with you before my departure and discuss. I feel that the key for many things is Rudy and I ready to talk with him at any time.

Let me repeat that quote: "[T]he key for many things is Rudy."

So the President used his personal agent to conduct his scheme with Ukraine. They were in frequent contact. Everyone—White House officials and Ukrainian officials—knew they had no choice but to deal with Giuliani. What was Mr. Giuliani doing that was so important to Ukraine? Again, the evidence is clear. Mr. Giuliani's focus was to get investigations into President Trump's political rival to help the President's reelection.

We have walked through some of the timeline of Mr. Giuliani's actions and statements about Ukraine, but let's just line them up briefly because it makes the story so clear. April 2019: Vice President Biden officially announced his campaign for the Democratic Party's Presidential nomination. And a reminder: At the time of Biden's announcement and for months after, public polling, including from FOX News, showed that Biden would beat President Trump. The FOX News polling data is up on the chart.

Right after Vice President Biden announced his candidacy and while Biden was beating President Trump in the

polls, Mr. Giuliani said in a public interview with the New York Times that he was traveling to Ukraine to pursue investigations. He wanted to make sure that "Biden will not get to election day without this being investigated." The scheme was all about President Trump's reelection.

This continued in June. Mr. Giuliani tweeted on June 21 and urged President Zelensky to pursue the investigation. The scheme continues even now. Mr. Giuliani has tweeted about Joe Biden over 65 times since September, and President Trump told you himself. He admitted on October 2: "... we've been investigating, on a personal basis—through Rudy and others, lawyers—corruption in the 2016 election." Again, to review, President Trump used his personal agent for Ukraine. He has made this clear to U.S. officials and to the Ukrainians. The evidence shows President Trump and Rudy Giuliani were in constant contact during this period. President Trump directed him to pursue investigations. He told U.S. officials to work with Rudy. He told Ukrainians to work with Rudy. Rudy and his associates pressed Ukraine for investigations into the President's political rival. Giuliani said: "Biden will not get to election day without this being investigated."

Keeping all this in mind, let's turn to the President's first official act: soliciting foreign interference. As we mentioned, in late 2018 and early 2019, Rudy Giuliani and his associates Lev Parnas and Igor Fruman were busy soliciting information from corrupt Ukrainians to help President Trump. They pursued a monthslong campaign to dig up dirt on Biden. In late 2018 and early 2019, Parnas, Fruman, and Giuliani met extensively with two corrupt Ukrainian prosecutors, Yuriy Lutsenko and Viktor Shokin, to gather information they believed would help President Trump. As you will recall, Shokin was corrupt. George Kent described Shokin as "a typical Ukrainian prosecutor who lived a lifestyle far in excess of his government salary, who never prosecuted anybody known for having committed a crime" and who "covered up crimes that were known to have been committed." And remember, because Shokin was corrupt, Vice President Biden had urged his removal. This was in accordance with U.S. policy.

Shokin blamed the former Vice President for his dismissal by the Ukrainian Parliament. He wanted to revive his political fortunes in Ukraine by assisting with Giuliani's effort. At the end of January, Giuliani, Parnas, and Fruman participated in a conference call with Shokin. He made allegations about Vice President Biden and Burisma. Shokin also falsely claimed that Ambassador Yovanovitch had improperly denied him a U.S. visa and that she was close to Vice President Biden. Also, in January, Giuliani, Parnas, and Fruman met with Lutsenko in New York. They discussed investigations into Burisma and the

Bidens and whether Ambassador Yovanovitch was “loyal to President Trump.” Lutsenko held a grudge against Ambassador Yovanovitch because she and the broader State Department were critical of Lutsenko’s failures. They were critical of his failure to prosecute corruption in Ukraine. This was the motivation for Lutsenko to give Giuliani and his associates false information on Biden and Burisma.

And here is the point: Lutsenko and Shokin had grudges against Biden and Ambassador Yovanovitch. Why? Because they were implementing U.S. policy to fight corruption in Ukraine. Now, Giuliani and his associates had motive to harm Biden: to help get President Trump reelected. They had motive to remove Ambassador Yovanovitch or anyone else who got in the way of their efforts to smear Biden. Giuliani admitted this. He told the New York Times that he spoke to President Trump about how Ambassador Yovanovitch frustrated efforts that could be politically helpful to President Trump. Giuliani admitted this was all to benefit President Trump. Documents give us evidence of this scheme. WhatsApp exchanges that Parnas recently gave to Congress made clear that, in exchange for derogatory information about Biden, Lutsenko wanted Yovanovitch removed from her post in Kyiv.

Here is that WhatsApp report. For example, on March 22, Lutsenko wrote: “It’s just that if you don’t make a decision about Madam—you are bringing into question all my allegations, including about B.” Now, here, “B” could either be Biden or Burisma or both, but “Madam” is Ambassador Yovanovitch.

In the March 22 text, Lutsenko implied that, if Parnas wanted dirt on Biden—Burisma—he needed to do something about Ambassador Yovanovitch. Days later, on March 28, Parnas assured Lutsenko that his efforts were being recognized in the United States and that he would be rewarded. Parnas wrote:

I was asked to personally convey to you that America supports you and will not let you be harmed no matter how things look now. Soon everything will turn around and will be on the right course. Just so you know, here people are talking about you as a true Ukrainian hero.

Lutsenko responded with the dirt that President Trump wanted. He wrote: “I have copies of payments from Burisma to Seneca.” Minutes after being reassured that “America supports you and will not let you be harmed,” Lutsenko claimed he had records of payments from Burisma to Rosemont Seneca Partners, a firm founded by Hunter Biden. This text message, along with others, shows that Lutsenko was providing derogatory information on the Bidens in exchange for Parnas pushing for Ambassador Yovanovitch’s removal.

Now, in late March and throughout April 2019, the smear campaign against the Bidens and against Ambassador

Yovanovitch entered a more public phase through a series of opinion pieces published in The Hill. The public airing of these allegations was orchestrated—orchestrated by Giuliani, Parnas, and Lutsenko. We know from records produced by Parnas that he played an important role in getting derogatory information from Lutsenko and his deputy to John Solomon, who wrote the opinion pieces in The Hill.

According to The Hill articles, Ukrainian officials falsely claimed to have evidence of wrongdoing about the following: One, Vice President Biden’s efforts in 2015 to remove Shokin; two, Hunter Biden’s role as a Burisma board member; three, Ukrainian interference in the 2016 election in favor of Hillary Clinton; and four, the misappropriation and transfer of Ukrainian funds abroad.

This was what President Trump wanted from the Ukrainians: the same information Mr. Giuliani and his agents were scheming up with Ukraine to hurt Biden and, in exchange, to have Ambassador Yovanovitch removed.

Now, Mr. Giuliani was very open about this, and here is a clip worth watching.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Let me tell you my interest in that. I got information about three or four months ago that a lot of the explanations for how this whole phony investigation started will be in the Ukraine, that there were a group of people in the Ukraine that were working to help Hillary Clinton and were colluding really—[LAUGHTER]—with the Clinton campaign. And it stems around the ambassador and the embassy, being used for political purposes. So I began getting some people that were coming forward and telling me about that. And then all of a sudden, they revealed the story about Burisma and Biden’s son.

Ms. Manager LOFGREN. Mr. Giuliani got laughed at on FOX News for advancing the crowd source conspiracy theory, but the clip shows that he had been making an effort to get derogatory information from the Ukrainians on behalf of his client, President Trump.

My colleague Mrs. DEMINGS will now further detail how the scheme evolved.

The CHIEF JUSTICE. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I understand the presentations will continue for a while, and I would suggest a dinner break at 6:30 for 30 minutes.

The CHIEF JUSTICE. Without objection.

Mrs. Manager DEMINGS. Chief Justice Roberts, Senators, and, of course, the counsel for the President, at this point, everything was going to plan. Mr. Giuliani was scheming with the corrupt Ukrainian prosecutors who were offering dirt on Biden that would help President Trump get reelected. They were pressing President Trump to remove Ambassador Yovanovitch, including publicly tarnishing her reputation, based on false and baseless claims. But then the President’s scheme hit a roadblock.

On April 21, President Zelensky—then the anti-corruption candidate—

won a landslide victory in Ukraine’s Presidential election. U.S. officials unanimously testified that President Zelensky’s mandate to pursue reform would be good for our national security. However, it was potentially bad news for President Trump’s scheme.

Mr. Giuliani did not have a relationship with Zelensky. As a reformer, he would be less amenable to announcing the sham investigations. Zelensky would not want to get dragged into U.S. domestic politics.

Additionally, the election of a new Ukrainian President raised the concern that Lutsenko, with whom Mr. Giuliani had been plotting, would be replaced by a new Ukrainian prosecutor general. A new prosecutor general, especially one appointed in an anti-corruption regime, would likely be less willing to conduct sham investigations to please an American President.

Mr. Giuliani decided to attack the issue from both sides. He pressed President Trump to remove Ambassador Yovanovitch, which would keep Lutsenko happy. He continued to work hard to get dirt on Biden. And he tried to get a meeting with Zelensky to secure the new Ukrainian leader’s commitment to press the investigations. This strategy played out on April 23 and 24.

First, on April 23, Parnas and Fruman were in Israel, trying to arrange a meeting between Giuliani and the newly minted Ukrainian President Zelensky.

On April 23, Giuliani left a voicemail message for Parnas. Let’s play that voicemail.

Well, I was going to say it would be difficult to hear, but I am sure you cannot hear it at all. Let me tell you what it says. He says:

It’s Rudy. When you get a chance, give me a call and bring me up to date okay? I got a couple of things to tell you too.

Parnas and Giuliani eventually spoke on that same day. We have the phone records that prove that. According to phone records, Parnas and Giuliani had a 1-minute-50-second call.

Fifteen minutes after they hung up, the records also show that Mr. Giuliani placed three short phone calls to the White House. Shortly thereafter, the White House called Giuliani back. Giuliani spoke with someone at the White House for 8 minutes and 28 seconds.

I will quickly note that at the time the Intelligence Committee issued its report in mid-December, we did not know whether that 8-minute-28-second call was from the White House. We have since received information from a telecom company that it was indeed the White House.

We don’t have a recording of that call. Neither the White House nor Giuliani produced any information to Congress about what was discussed. Of course, the White House has refused, as you already know, to cooperate in any way. But even without the evidence that the White House is hiding—with

the evidence we do have—these phone records prove that Mr. Giuliani was keeping President Trump informed about what was going on when he was trying to meet President Zelensky and get Ukraine to commit to the investigations.

Let's look at President Trump's decision to remove Ambassador Yovanovitch. Following the call between Mr. Giuliani and the White House on April 23, Parnas asked Giuliani for an update. Parnas texted: "Going to sleep my brother please text me or call me if you have any news."

Giuliani responded: "He fired her again."

That was, of course, in reference to Ambassador Yovanovitch. Her removal would no doubt please the corrupt Ukrainian prosecutor, Lutsenko, who offered derogatory information about Hunter Biden. It also eliminated a potential obstacle identified by Giuliani.

Parnas responded: "I pray it happens this time I'll call you tomorrow my brother."

And it did—because we know that the very next day, on April 24, Ambassador Yovanovitch received two frantic phone calls from Ambassador Carol Perez at the State Department. The second call came at 1 a.m.

According to Ambassador Yovanovitch, as you can see from the slide on the screen, the Director General of the Foreign Service told her that "there was a lot of concern for me, that I needed to be on the next plane home to Washington."

Yovanovitch recalled:

And I was like, what? What happened?

And Perez said:

I don't know, but this is about your security. You need to come home immediately. You need to come home on the next plane.

Yovanovitch asked what Perez meant by "physical security." Perez "didn't get that impression" but repeated that Yovanovitch needed "to come back immediately." This was no coincidence.

Mr. Giuliani and his agents conspired to meet President Zelensky. They conspired for Ambassador Yovanovitch to be removed. Within hours of Mr. Giuliani saying he prayed Ambassador Yovanovitch would get fired, Ambassador Yovanovitch got a frantic phone call to get on the next plane.

That same day, on April 24, Giuliani appeared on "Fox & Friends" and promoted the false conspiracy theories about Ukraine and Vice President Biden that were all part of this agreement. Let's look and listen to what he said.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

And I ask you to keep your eye on Ukraine, because in Ukraine, a lot of the dirty work was done digging up the information. American officials were used, Ukrainians officials were used. That's collusion with Ukrainians. And, or actually in this case, conspiracy with the Ukrainians. I think you'd get some interesting information about Joe Biden from Ukraine. About his son, Hunter Biden. About a company he was on the board of for years, which may be one of the most crooked companies in

Ukraine. [Ukrainian Russian company—not a Ukrainian—you know, big difference there. Yanukovych—the guy they tossed out and Manafort got in all the trouble with—the guy who owns it worked for Yanukovych, pulled 10 billion out of the Ukraine, has been a fugitive—was a fugitive when Biden's kid first went to work there.] And Biden bragged about the fact that he got the prosecutor general fired. The prosecutor general was investigating his son and then the investigation went south.

Mrs. Manager DEMINGS. Ambassador Yovanovitch was never provided a justification for her removal. She was an anti-corruption crusader, a highly respected diplomat. And she had been recently asked to extend her stay in Ukraine.

While American Ambassadors serve at the pleasure of the President—we do understand that—I am sure you would all agree that the manner and circumstances surrounding the Ambassador's removal were unusual and raised questions of motive.

Every witness who testified confirmed that there was no factual basis to the accusations Lutsenko lodged against Ambassador Yovanovitch. Under Secretary of State David Hale, the most senior career diplomat at the State Department, testified that Maria Yovanovitch was an outstanding Ambassador and should have been permitted to remain in Kyiv.

Even more significant, several witnesses testified that President Trump's decision to remove Ambassador Yovanovitch undercut U.S. national security objectives in Ukraine during a critical time.

Dr. Hill, for example, explained that many of the key U.S. policies toward Ukraine were being implemented by the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv. And then suddenly "we had just then lost the leadership." This created what Hill labeled "a period of uncertainty" as to how our government was going to execute U.S. policy.

George Kent testified that the ouster of Ambassador Yovanovitch "hampered U.S. efforts to establish rapport with the new Zelensky administration in Ukraine."

So why did President Trump remove a distinguished career public servant Yanukovych and anti-corruption crusader and a top diplomat in the State Department?

We know why. The answer is simple: President Trump removed Ambassador Yovanovitch because she was in the way. She was in the way of the sham investigations that he so desperately wanted; investigations that would hurt former Vice President Biden and undermine the Mueller investigation into Russian election interference; investigations that would help him cheat in the 2020 election.

Rudy Giuliani admitted that he personally told President Trump about his concern that Ambassador Yovanovitch was an obstacle to securing Ukrainian cooperation on the two bogus investigations they solicited from Ukraine. And Rudy Giuliani confirmed that

President Trump decided to remove Ambassador Yovanovitch based on the bogus claim that she was obstructing his scheme to secure Ukraine's cooperation. Indeed, Mr. Giuliani was explicit about this when he told the New Yorker last month. He said:

I believed that I needed Yovanovitch out of the way. She was going to make the investigations difficult for everybody.

So let's recap. Mr. Giuliani and his agents, on behalf of President Trump, the United States President, worked with corrupt Ukrainians to get dirt on President Trump's political opponent. Mr. Giuliani said this in press interviews. He texted about it with his agents, and he repeatedly called the White House.

Following the election of a new Ukrainian leader committed to fighting corruption, President Trump removed Ambassador Yovanovitch, an anti-corruption crusader, and Mr. Giuliani told us why: to get her out of the way for the investigations to move forward. That is how far President Trump was willing to go to get his investigations. To smear a highly respected, dedicated Foreign Service officer who had served this country unselfishly for his own selfish political interests is disgraceful.

Even with the removal of Ambassador Yovanovitch, President Zelensky's election victory threw a wrench into the President's scheme. That is because Lutsenko was reportedly going to be replaced. After Mr. Giuliani told the New York Times on May 9 that he intended to travel to Ukraine on behalf of President Trump in order to "meddle in an investigation," Ukrainian officials publicly pushed back. Please hear what I said. Ukrainian officials publicly pushed back on the suggestions of corruptions proposed by Mr. Giuliani, who was working on behalf of the U.S. President.

Well, Mr. Giuliani canceled his trip on May 10 and claimed on FOX News that President Zelensky was surrounded by "enemies" of President Trump. Let's listen.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Mr. GIULIANI. I decided, Sharon, I'm not going to go to Ukraine.

Ms. BREAM. You are not going to go?

Mr. GIULIANI. I am not going to go because I think I'm walking into a group of people that are enemies of the President.

Mrs. Manager DEMINGS. It appears Giuliani's statement influenced President Trump's view of Ukraine, as well. At an Oval Office meeting on May 23, U.S. officials learned of Giuliani's influence. Ambassador Volker testified that President Trump "didn't believe" the positive assessment government officials gave the new Ukrainian President. Instead, President Trump told them that Giuliani "knows all of these things" and said that President Zelensky has "some bad people around him." At this point, the scheme had stalled. Mr. Giuliani and the President knew that they were going to have

trouble with President Zelensky fulfilling his corrupt demand for investigations that would benefit President Trump's reelection campaign.

That brings us to the next phase of this scheme. Although his corrupt scheme was in trouble due to the unexpected results of the Ukrainian election—the election which yielded an anti-corruption reformer—President Trump doubled down on his scheme to solicit investigations for his personal benefit.

In May of 2019, with a gap in American leadership in Ukraine after Ambassador Yovanovitch was removed, President Trump enlisted U.S. officials to help to do his political work. The scheme grew from false allegations by disgruntled, corrupt Ukrainian prosecutors to a plot by the President of the United States to extort the new Ukrainian President into announcing his political investigations. During the May 23 Oval Office meeting, President Trump directed Ambassador Sondland, Ambassador Volker, and Secretary Perry to work with Mr. Giuliani on Ukraine. Giuliani had made clear he was pursuing investigations for President Trump in a personal capacity. He said publicly, on numerous instances, that he was only working for the President in a personal capacity and not on foreign policy. Yet President Trump still told White House officials that they had to work with Mr. Giuliani to get anywhere on Ukraine. We heard significant testimony on this point. For example, Ambassador Volker recalled that at the Oval Office meeting on May 23, President Trump directed the U.S. officials to “talk to Rudy.” Ambassador Sondland testified that President Trump directed them to “talk to Rudy.” In that moment, the U.S. diplomats saw the writing on the wall and concluded “that if we did not talk to Rudy, nothing would move forward, nothing would move forward on Ukraine.” Pay attention to Ambassador Sondland's testimony.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Ambassador SONDLAND. In response to our persistent efforts in that meeting to change his views, President Trump directed us to, quote, “talk with Rudy.” We understood that “talk with Rudy” meant, talk with Mr. Rudy Giuliani, the President's personal lawyer.

Let me say again, we weren't happy with the President's directive to talk with Rudy. We did not want to involve Mr. Giuliani. I believe then, as I do now, that the men and women of the State Department, not the President's personal lawyer, should take responsibility for Ukraine matters.

Nonetheless, based on the President's direction, we were faced with a choice. We could abandon the efforts to schedule the White House phone call and the White House visit between Presidents Trump and Zelensky, which was unquestionably in our foreign policy interest, or we could do as President Trump had directed and talk with Rudy. We chose the latter, of course, not because we liked it, but because it was the only constructive path open to us.

Mrs. Manager DEMINGS. And just like that, U.S. officials charged with

advancing U.S. foreign policy—U.S. officials who were supposed to act in our country's interest—were directed to, instead, advance President Trump's personal interests. From that point on, they worked with the President's personal agent on political investigations to benefit the President's reelection.

Their work on President Trump's behalf to solicit foreign interference in our elections continued throughout all of June. For instance, on June 21, Mr. Giuliani tweeted that President Zelensky had not yet publicly committed on two politically motivated investigations designed to benefit President Trump. And when Mr. Giuliani's public efforts and his tweets didn't move President Zelensky to announce the investigations, he used U.S. diplomats as directed by President Trump. This is important.

After Giuliani canceled his trip to Ukraine in May and commented that President-elect Zelensky had enemies of President Trump around him, Giuliani had minimal access to the new Ukrainian leader's inner circle. His primary Ukraine connection, Prosecutor General Lutsenko, had already been informed that he would be removed as soon as the new Parliament convened. So President Trump gave him U.S. diplomats and directed them to work with Mr. Giuliani on his scheme. As you heard, President Trump told Ambassadors Sondland and Volker to talk with Rudy and work with Rudy on Ukraine. And what did that mean? Well, Mr. Giuliani tried to use Ambassador Sondland and Volker to gain access to President Zelensky and his inner circle through their official State Department channels and made clear to President Zelensky that he had to announce the investigations.

On June 27, Ambassador Sondland brought Ambassador Taylor up to speed on Ukraine since Ambassador Taylor had just arrived in the country a few weeks beforehand. Ambassador Sondland explained that President Zelensky needed to make clear that he was not standing in the way of the investigations that President Trump wanted—that President Zelensky needed to make clear that he was not standing in the way of the investigations that President Trump wanted. And here is his testimony.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Ambassador TAYLOR. On June 27th, Ambassador Sondland told me during a phone conversation that President Zelensky needed to make clear to President Trump that he, President Zelensky, was not standing in the way of investigations.

Mrs. Manager DEMINGS. Ambassador Taylor relayed this conversation to one of his deputies, U.S. Diplomat David Holmes, who testified that he understood the investigations to mean the “Burisma-Biden investigations that Mr. Giuliani and his associates had been speaking about” publicly.

Let's listen to Mr. Holmes.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Mr. HOLMES. On June 27th, Ambassador Sondland told Ambassador Taylor in a phone

conversation, the gist of which Ambassador Taylor shared with me at the time, that President Zelensky needed to make clear to President Trump that President Zelensky was not standing in the way of, quote, “investigations.” I understood that this meant the Biden/Burisma investigations that Mr. Giuliani and his associates had been speaking about in the media since March.

Mrs. Manager DEMINGS. Even with the addition of President Trump's political appointees to aid Mr. Giuliani's efforts, President Zelensky did not announce the investigations. As Mr. Giuliani's June 21 tweet shows, the Ukrainian President was resisting President Trump's pressure.

So what happened? Well, that brings us to the President's next official act: turning up the pressure by conditioning an official White House meeting on Ukraine announcing his political investigations.

Senators, I know we have covered a lot of ground, but as we have shown, there is overwhelming and uncontradicted evidence of the President's scheme to solicit foreign interference in this year's Presidential election.

Let me say this also. Each time that we remind this body of the President's scheme to cheat, to win, some of his defenders say that we are only concerned about winning the next election—the Democrats are only doing this to win the next election.

But you know better because this trial is much bigger than any one election, and it is much bigger than any one President. This moment is about the American people. Whether a maid or a janitor, whether a nurse, a teacher, or a truck driver, whether a doctor or a mechanic, this moment is about ensuring that their votes matter and that American elections are decided by the American people.

President Trump acted corruptly. He abused the power of his office by ordering U.S. diplomats to work with his political agent to solicit two politically motivated investigations by Ukraine. The investigations were designed solely to help his personal interests, not our national interests. Neither investigation solicited by President Trump had anything to do with promoting U.S. foreign policy or U.S. national security. Indeed, as we will discuss later, both investigations and the President's broader scheme to secure Ukraine's interference was a threat. It was a threat. It was a threat to our national security. The only person who stood to benefit from the abuse of office and solicitation of these investigations was Donald Trump—the 45th President of the United States.

This was a violation of public trust and a failure to take care that the laws be faithfully executed, but when it came down to choosing between the national interests of the country and his own personal interests—his reelection—President Trump chose himself.

Mr. Manager JEFFRIES. Mr. Chief Justice, the distinguished Members of the Senate, the counsel to the President, and all of those who are assembled here today, earlier this morning, I

was on my way to the office, and I ran into a fellow New Yorker who just happens to work here in Washington, DC.

He said to me: Congressman, have you heard the latest outrage?

I wasn't really sure what he was talking about. So, to be honest, I thought to myself, Well, the President is now back in town. What has Donald Trump done now? So I said to him: What outrage are you talking about?

He paused for a moment, and then he said to me: Someone voted against Derek Jeter on his Hall of Fame ballot. (Laughter.)

Life is all about perspective.

I understand that, as House managers, we certainly hope we can subpoena John Bolton and subpoena Mick Mulvaney, but perhaps we can all agree to subpoena the Baseball Hall of Fame to try to figure out who, out of 397 individuals, was the one person who voted against Derek Jeter.

I was thinking about that as I prepared to rise today, because what is more American than baseball and apple pie? Perhaps the one thing that falls into that category is the sanctity and continuity of the U.S. Constitution.

As House managers, we are here in this august body because we believe it is necessary to defend our democracy. Some of you may agree with us at the end of the day, and others most likely will not, but we do want to thank you for your courtesy and for your patience in extending to us the opportunity to present our case with dignity to you and to the American people during this solemn constitutional moment.

I want to speak for just some time on the second official act that President Trump used to corruptly abuse his power, which was the withholding of an official Oval Office meeting with the President of Ukraine.

As discussed yesterday, "quid pro quo" is a Latin term. It means "this for that."

President Trump refused to schedule that Oval Office meeting until the Ukrainian leader announced the phony political investigations that he demanded on July 25. He knew President Zelensky needed the meeting to bolster his standing. He knew that Ukraine was a fragile democracy. He knew that President Zelensky needed the meeting to show Vladimir Putin that he had the support of Donald Trump, but President Trump exploited that desperation for his own political benefit—this for that. Did a quid pro quo exist? The answer is yes.

Let's listen to Ambassador Sondland on this point.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Amb. SONDLAND. I know that members of this committee frequently frame these complicated issues in the form of a simple question. Was there a quid pro quo? As I testified previously with regard to the requested White House call and the White House meeting, the answer is yes.

Mr. Manager JEFFRIES. Did President Trump abuse his power and commit an impeachable offense? The answer is yes.

The phony political investigations that President Trump demanded from Ukraine were part of a scheme to sabotage a political rival—Joe Biden—and cheat in the 2020 election. No national interest was served. The President used his awesome power to help himself and not the American people. He must be held accountable.

The President's defenders may argue, as Mick Mulvaney tried to, that quid pro quo arrangements are a common aspect of U.S. foreign policy. Nonsense. There are situations where official United States acts, like head-of-state meetings or the provision of foreign assistance, are used to advance the national interests of the United States. That is not what happened here. Here, President Trump sought to advance his own personal political interests, facilitated by Rudolph Giuliani, the human hand grenade.

Let's walk through the overwhelming evidence of how President Trump withheld an official White House meeting, which was vitally important to Ukraine, as part of a corrupt scheme to convince President Zelensky to announce two phony political investigations.

First, the Oval Office meeting President Trump corruptly withheld constitutes an official act. President Trump chose to withhold this meeting for a reason. It was not some run-of-the-mill meeting. It was one of the most powerful tools he could wield in his role as the leader of the free world. It would have demonstrated U.S. support for Ukraine's newly elected leader at a critical time. Ukraine is under relentless attack by Russian-backed separatists in Crimea and in the East. Ukraine desperately needed an Oval Office meeting, and President Trump knew it.

Second, President Trump withheld that Oval Office meeting to increase pressure on Ukraine to assist his reelection campaign by announcing two phony investigations. As my colleagues have detailed extensively throughout the day, this is a classic quid pro quo.

Third, multiple administration officials, including the President's own handpicked supporters and appointees, confirmed that a corrupt exchange was being sought.

Finally, contemporaneous documentation makes clear that the President corruptly abused his power to advance the scheme to try and cheat in the 2020 election—this for that.

Let's explore whether the granting or the denial of an Oval Office meeting constitutes an official act.

As we discussed earlier today, an abuse of power occurs when the President exercises his official power to obtain a corrupt personal benefit while ignoring or injuring the national interests.

Pursuant to the Constitution and more than 200 years of tradition, as President, Donald Trump is America's head of state and chief diplomat. Article II grants the President wide lati-

tude to conduct diplomacy and to, specifically, receive Ambassadors and other public Ministers. The President decides which head-of-state meetings best advance the national interests and which foreign leaders are deserving of an official reception in the Oval Office—perhaps one of the most prestigious nonreligious venues in the world.

In diplomacy, perception matters. Meetings between heads of state are make-or-break moments that can determine the trajectory of global events, and a meeting with the President of the United States in the Oval Office is unquestionably monumental, particularly for a fragile democracy like Ukraine.

The Oval Office is where foreign leaders facing challenges at home go—like a war with Russia—in pursuit of a strong and public demonstration of American support. That is especially true in this particular case. The decision to grant or withhold an Oval Office meeting to President Zelensky has profound consequences for the national security interests of both Ukraine and the United States.

To understand the full context of President Trump's corrupt demands to the Ukrainian leader, it is important to consider the geopolitical context—that all of you are very familiar with—confronting the Ukrainian people.

Ukraine is at war with Russia. In 2014, Russia annexed Crimea by force. The United States and other European countries rallied to Ukraine's defense, providing economic assistance, diplomatic support, and later, with strong advocacy from this body, lethal aid. This support meant Russia faced consequences for its aggression.

Here is Ambassador Yovanovitch's testimony explaining just how important the United States is to Ukraine.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Amb. YOVANOVITCH. The U.S. relationship for Ukraine is the single most important relationship, and so I think that President Zelensky, any president, would do what they could to lean in on a favor request. I'm not saying that that's a yes, I'm saying they would try to lean in and see what they could do.

Mr. GOLDMAN. Fair to say that a president of Ukraine that is so dependent on the United States would do just about anything within his power to please the president of the United States if he could?

Amb. YOVANOVITCH. If he could. I'm sure there are limits, and I understand there were a lot of discussions in the Ukrainian government about all of this, but yeah, we are an important relationship on the security side and on the political side. And so, the president of Ukraine, one of the most important functions that individual has is to make sure the relationship with the U.S. is rock solid.

Mr. Manager JEFFRIES. But it isn't just the relationship itself. It was a public meeting in the White House that would show U.S. support for Ukraine.

A meeting with the President of the United States in the Oval Office is one of the most forceful diplomatic signals of support that the United States can send.

Veteran diplomat George Kent testified to this.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Mr. KENT. New leaders, particularly countries that are trying to have good footing in the international arena, see a meeting with the US president in the Oval Office at the White House as the ultimate sign of endorsement and support from the United States.

Mr. Manager JEFFRIES. President Zelensky was a newly elected leader. He was swept into office on the pledge to end pervasive corruption. He also had a mandate to negotiate an end to the war with Russia. To achieve both goals, he needed strong U.S. support, particularly from President Trump, which Zelensky sought in the form of a White House meeting.

David Holmes, political counselor to the Embassy in Kyiv, described the particular importance of a White House visit to Ukraine in the context of its war with Russia.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Mr. HOLMES. It is important to understand that a White House visit was critical to President Zelensky. President Zelensky needed to show U.S. support at the highest levels in order to demonstrate to Russian President Putin that he had U.S. backing, as well as to advance his ambitious anticorruption agenda at home.

Mr. Manager JEFFRIES. In other words, Ukraine knew that Russia was watching carefully.

That was particularly true in the spring of 2019, when Donald Trump launched the scheme at the center of the abuse of power charge.

During this time period, Vladimir Putin was preparing for peace negotiations with the new Ukrainian leader. Putin could choose to escalate or he could choose to deescalate Russian aggression. And influencing his decision was an assessment of whether President Trump had Ukraine's back.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Amb. TAYLOR. The Russians, as I said in my deposition, "would love to see the humiliation of President Zelensky at the hands of the Americans."

Mr. Manager JEFFRIES. An Oval Office meeting would have sent a strong signal of support that President Trump had Ukraine's back. The absence of such a meeting could be devastating. Indeed, Ukraine made very clear to the United States just how important a White House meeting between the two heads of State was for its fragile democracy.

At the deposition, as the one on the screen reveals, LTC Alexander Vindman, the director for Ukraine on the National Security Council, recalled that following President Zelensky's inauguration, at every single meeting with Ukrainian officials, they asked their American counterparts about the status of an Oval Office meeting between the two Presidents.

Initially, the Ukrainians had reason to be optimistic that a White House meeting would be promptly scheduled. On April 21, during President Zelensky's first call with President Trump, the new Ukrainian leader

asked about a White House visit three times. As part of that brief congratulatory call, President Trump himself did extend an invitation. Ukraine's dependence on the United States and its desperate need for a White House meeting created an unequal power dynamic between the two Presidents.

As Lieutenant Colonel Vindman testified, it is that unequal power dynamic that turned any subsequent request for a favor from the President into a demand.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

The CHAIRMAN. Colonel, you've described this as a demand, this favor that the President asked. What is it about the relationship between the President of the United States and the President of Ukraine that leads you to conclude that when the President of the United States asks a favor like this, it's really a demand?

Lieutenant Colonel VINDMAN. Chairman, the culture I come from, the military culture, when a senior asks you to do something, even if it's polite and pleasant, it's not—it's not to be taken as a request, it's to be taken as an order.

In this case, the power disparity between the two leaders, my impression is that, in order to get the White House meeting, President Zelensky would have to deliver these investigations.

Mr. Manager JEFFRIES. Ambassador Gordon Sondland, Trump appointee, also acknowledged the importance of this power disparity and how it made President Zelensky eager to satisfy President Trump's wishes.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Mr. GOLDMAN. Holmes then said that he heard President Trump ask, quote, "is he," meaning Zelensky, "going to do the investigation?" To which you replied, "he's going to do it." And then you added that President Zelensky will do anything that you, meaning President Trump, ask him to. Do you recall that?

Ambassador SONDLAND. I probably said something to that effect because I remember the meeting—the President—or President Zelensky was very—"solicitous" is not a good word. He was just very willing to work with the United States and was being very amicable. And so putting it in Trump speak by saying he loves your ass, he'll do whatever you want, meant that he would really work with us on a whole host of issues.

Mr. GOLDMAN. He was not only willing. He was very eager, right?

Ambassador SONDLAND. That's fair.

Mr. GOLDMAN. Because Ukraine depends on the United States as its most significant ally. Isn't that correct?

Ambassador SONDLAND. One of its most, absolutely.

Mr. Manager JEFFRIES. In other words, any request President Trump made to Ukraine would be difficult to refuse.

So when President Trump asked Ukraine to investigate Joe Biden, as well as the wild conspiracy theory about the 2016 election, those were absolutely interpreted by President Zelensky and his staff as a demand.

And that is where the White House meeting enters into the equation. When Ukraine did not immediately cave to Rudy Giuliani in the spring and announce the phony investigations, President Trump ratcheted up the pres-

sure. As leverage, he chose the White House meeting he dangled during his April 21 call, precisely because President Trump knew how important the meeting was to Ukraine.

Following their visit to Kyiv for the new Ukrainian leader's inauguration, Ambassador Sondland, Ambassador Volker, and Secretary Perry met with President Trump, and each of them encouraged the President to schedule the meeting. Here is what Ambassador Sondland had to say.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Amb. SONDLAND. We advised the president of the strategic importance of Ukraine and the value of strengthening the relationship with President Zelensky. To support this reformer, we asked the White House for two things. First, a working phone call between Presidents Trump and Zelensky, and second, a working oval office visit. In our view, both were vital to cementing the US-Ukraine relationship, demonstrating support for Ukraine in the face of Russian aggression and advancing broader US foreign policy interests.

Mr. Manager JEFFRIES. So even though this meeting was critical to both Ukraine and America, President Trump ignored all of his policy advisers and expressed reluctance to meet with the new Ukrainian President. He refused to schedule an actual date.

He claimed that Ukraine "tried to take me down" in 2016 and directed that three U.S. officials "talk to Rudy." And even though on May 29 the President signed a letter reiterating his earlier invitation for President Zelensky to visit the White House, he still did not specify a date.

But then President Trump went further. He met with Ukraine's adversary, Ukraine's enemy, our enemy. President Trump met with Russia.

This didn't go unnoticed. Ukrainian officials became concerned when President Trump scheduled that face-to-face meeting with Vladimir Putin at the G20 summit in Japan on June 28.

Mr. Holmes testified on this particular point and the troubling signal that meeting sent to our friend, to our ally, Ukraine.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Mr. HOLMES. Also, on June 28th, while President Trump was still not moving forward on a meeting with President Zelensky, we met with . . . He met with Russian President Putin at the G20 Summit in Osaka, Japan, sending a further signal of lack of support to Ukraine.

Mr. Manager JEFFRIES. Now, let's discuss how exactly President Trump used the withholding of the White House meeting to pressure Ukraine for his phony investigations—his quid pro quo scheme.

It is important to understand that the pressure exerted on Ukraine by delaying the White House meeting didn't just occur right before the July 25 call. That pressure existed during the entire scheme, and it continues to this day.

We know this from the efforts of administration officials to secure the meeting and from the Ukrainians continuously trying to lock down a date.

For example, even after President Trump expressed reluctance about Ukraine on May 23, his administration officials continued working to secure a White House meeting.

On July 10, for instance, they raised it again when Mr. Yermak and Ukraine's national security advisor met with John Bolton at the White House.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Dr. HILL. And then we knew that the Ukrainians would have on their agenda, inevitably, the question about a meeting. As we get through the main discussion, we are going into that wrap-up phase. The Ukrainians, Mr. Danylyuk, starts to ask about a White House meeting and Ambassador Bolton was trying to parry this back.

Mr. Manager JEFFRIES. As you have seen, President Zelensky didn't just raise the Oval Office meeting on his April 21 call, he raised the meeting on the July 25 call with President Trump again.

President Zelensky said on the July 25 call: "I also wanted to thank you for your invitation to visit the United States, specifically Washington, DC."

After the July 25 call, the Ukrainians continued to press for the meeting, but that meeting never happened.

Only on September 25, after the House announced its investigation into the President's misconduct as it relates to Ukraine and the existence of a whistleblower complaint became public, did President Trump and President Zelensky meet face-to-face for the first time. That meeting was on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly in New York. It was dominated by public release of the July 25 call record that occurred the day before. It was a far cry from the demonstration of strong support that would have been achieved by an Oval Office meeting.

Even President Zelensky recognized that a face-to-face talk on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly was not the same as an official Oval Office meeting. Sitting next to President Trump in New York, he again raised a White House meeting. Here is what President Zelensky said:

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

President ZELENSKY. And I want to thank you for the invitation to Washington. You invited me, but I think—I'm sorry, but I think you forgot to tell me the date. But I think in the near future.

Mr. Manager JEFFRIES. President Trump was not just withholding a small thing; the Oval Office meeting was a big deal. Ukraine remains at war with Russia. It desperately needs our support. As a result, the pressure on Ukraine not to upset President Trump—who still refuses to meet with President Zelensky in the Oval Office—continues to this day.

David Holmes testified that the Ukrainian Government wants an Oval Office meeting even after the release of the security assistance and that our own U.S. national security objectives would also benefit from such a meeting.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Mr. HOLMES. And although the hold on the security assistance may have been lifted, there were still things they wanted that they weren't getting, including a meeting with the President in the Oval Office. Whether the hold, the security assistance hold continued or not, the Ukrainians understood that that's something the President wanted and they still wanted important things from the President. That continues to this day. We have to be very careful. They still need us now going forward.

In fact, right now President Zelensky is trying to arrange a summit meeting with President Putin in the coming weeks, his first face-to-face meeting with him to try to advance the peace process. He needs our support. He needs President Putin to understand that America supports Zelensky at the highest levels. So this doesn't end with the lifting of the security assistance hold. Ukraine still needs us, and as I said, still fighting this war this very day.

Mr. Manager JEFFRIES. Let's evaluate exactly how President Trump made clear to Ukraine that a White House meeting was conditioned on Ukraine announcing two phony political investigations that would help with President Trump's reelection in 2020—help him cheat and corrupt our democracy.

By the end of May, it was clear that President Trump's pressure campaign to solicit foreign election interference wasn't working. President Zelensky had been elected and was rebuffing Mr. Giuliani's overtures. Even when President Trump directed his official staff to work with Mr. Giuliani in an effort to get President Zelensky to announce the two phony political investigations, that didn't work. So President Trump apparently realized that he had to increase the pressure. That is when he explicitly made clear to Ukraine that it would not get the desperately sought after Oval Office meeting unless President Zelensky publicly announced the phony investigations that President Trump sought.

On July 2, 2019, Ambassador Volker personally communicated the need for investigations directly to President Zelensky during a meeting in Toronto.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Ambassador VOLKER. After weeks of reassuring the Ukrainians that it was just a scheduling issue, I decided to tell President Zelensky that we had a problem with the information reaching President Trump from Mayor Giuliani. I did so in a bilateral meeting at a conference on Ukrainian economic reform in Toronto on July 2, 2019, where I led the U.S. delegation.

I suggested that he call President Trump directly in order to renew their personal relationship and to assure President Trump that he was committed to investigating and fighting corruption, things on which President Zelensky had based his Presidential campaign. I was convinced that getting the two Presidents to talk with each other would overcome the negative perception of Ukraine that President Trump still harbored.

Mr. Manager JEFFRIES. After Ambassador Volker instructed President Zelensky in Toronto on what to do, he updated Ambassador Taylor on his actions. He told Ambassador Taylor that he had counseled the Ukrainian President on how to "prepare for the phone call with President Trump." He also

told Ambassador Taylor that he advised Zelensky that President Trump "would like to hear about the investigations."

In addition to Ambassador Volker's direct outreach to President Zelensky, Ambassador Sondland continued to apply pressure as well during two White House meetings that took place on July 10 with Ukrainian officials. The first meeting included National Security Advisor John Bolton, Dr. Fiona Hill, LTC Alexander Vindman, Secretary Rick Perry, Ambassador Volker, as well as Bolton's Ukrainian counterpart and Ukrainian Presidential aide Andriy Yermak.

After discussion on Ukraine's national security reform plans, Ambassador Sondland broached the subject of the phony political investigations.

Fiona Hill, who also attended the meeting, recalled that Ambassador Sondland blurted out the following in that meeting with the Ukrainians: "Well, we have an agreement with the Chief of Staff for a meeting if these investigations in the energy sector start." That is code for Burisma, which is code for the Bidens.

Ambassador Volker also recalled that Ambassador Sondland raised the issue of the 2016 election and Burisma investigations. Ambassador Volker found Ambassador Sondland's comments in that meeting to be inappropriate.

(Text of Videotape presentation:)

Ambassador VOLKER. I participated in the July 10 meeting between National Security Advisor Bolton and then-Chairman of the National Security Defense Council, Alex Danyliuk. As I remember, the meeting was essentially over when Ambassador Sondland made a general comment about investigations. I think all of us thought it was inappropriate.

Mr. Manager JEFFRIES. The exchange underscores that by early July, President Trump's demand for investigations had come to totally dominate almost every aspect of U.S. foreign policy toward Ukraine. Securing a Ukrainian commitment to do investigations was a major priority of senior U.S. diplomats, as directed by President Donald John Trump.

The July 10 meetings also confirmed that the scheme to pressure Ukraine into opening investigations was not a rogue operation but one blessed by senior administration officials at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. As Ambassador Sondland testified, "Everyone was in the loop."

Mr. Majority Leader, based on the statement that we should break at around 6:30 p.m., I ask your indulgence. This may be a natural breaking point in connection with my presentation.

The CHIEF JUSTICE. The majority leader.

RECESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. Chief Justice, I ask unanimous consent that we have a break for 30 minutes.

There being no objection, at 6:24 p.m., the Senate, sitting as a Court of