PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE,
joint with the
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM
and the
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
WASHINGTON, D.C.

DEPOSITION OF: FIONA HILL

Monday, October 14, 2019
Washington, D.C.

The deposition in the above matter was held in Room HVC-304, Capitol Visitor Center, commencing at 9:55 a.m.

Present: Representatives Schiff, Carson, Swalwell, and Heck.

Also Present: Representatives Raskin, Rouda, Rooney, Jordan, Zeldin, Perry, and Gaetz.

Appearances:

For the PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE:

[redacted]

For the COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM:

[redacted]

[redacted]

For the COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS:

[redacted]

For FIONA HILL:

SAMUEL S. UNGAR
LEE WOLOSKY
BOIES SCHILLER FLEXNER LLP
1401 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 2005

THE CHAIRMAN: The committee will come to order.

Good morning, Dr. Hill, and welcome to the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, which, along with the Foreign Affairs and Oversight Committees, is conducting this investigation as part of the official impeachment inquiry of the House of Representatives. Today's deposition is being conducted as part of that inquiry.

In light of attempts by the White House administration to direct witnesses not to cooperate with the inquiry, the committee had no choice but to compel your appearance today. We thank you for complying with the duly authorized congressional subpoena.

Dr. Hill has served with distinction in and out of government, including as National Intelligence Officer for Russia and Eurasia at the National Intelligence Council, as a senior fellow with the Brookings Institution, and, most recently, as Deputy Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Europe and Russia on the National Security Council staff.

In her most recent work at the White House, Dr. Hill held a unique position at the top of the executive branch's policymaking process, in which she would have had access to and been involved in key policy discussions, meetings, and decisions on Ukraine that relate directly to areas under investigation by the committees.

Although you left your position, Dr. Hill, only a few days before the President's July 25th, 2019, call with Ukrainian President Zelensky, we look forward to hearing your testimony today about the range of issues and interactions we are investigating that occurred in the leadup to the July 25th call, as well as your expert assessment of the evidence we have uncovered since you left the White House.

This includes the July 25 call record itself as well as the documentary record that has come to light about efforts after the call to get the Ukrainians to announce publicly investigations into the two areas President Trump asked President Zelensky to pursue, the Bidens and Burisma, and the conspiracy about Ukraine's purported interference in the 2016 U.S. elections.

Before I turn to committee counsel to begin the deposition, I invite the Ranking Member Nunes or, in his absence, one of the Republican members present to make any opening remarks. I will recognize one of the GOP members.

MR. JORDAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Hill, I want to thank you also for appearing today. My understanding is you were coming voluntarily until about an hour ago when the chairman issued to you a subpoena.

THE CHAIRMAN: Excuse me, could we suspend?

Do we have any members here that are not members of the three committees authorized to be present?

Mr. Gaetz, you're not permitted to be in the room.

MR. GAETZ: I am on the Judiciary Committee.

THE CHAIRMAN: Judiciary Committee is not a part of this hearing.

MR. GAETZ: I thought the Judiciary Committee had jurisdiction over impeachment.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Gaetz, you're not permitted to be in the room. Please leave.

MR. JORDAN: Mr. Chairman, really?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, really.

MR. GAETZ: You're going to include Members of Congress on committees that have roles of impeachment --

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Gaetz, take your statement to the press. They do you no good here. So, please, absent yourself.

MR. GAETZ: You're going to have someone remove me from the hearing?

THE CHAIRMAN: You're going to remove yourself, Mr. Gaetz.

MR. JORDAN: Mr. Gaetz is going to stay and listen to the testimony.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Gaetz, you're going to leave the room.

MR. GAETZ: No, I think I have a right to be -- is there a rule you can cite as to why I am not --

THE CHAIRMAN: You're not a member of this committee. This is conducted in closed session. You're not permitted to be here.

MR. GAETZ: I'm on the Judiciary Committee.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Gaetz, please absent yourself from the committee. It's the ruling of the chair you're not permitted to be here. Please leave the committee.

MR. JORDAN: Mr. Chairman, I think in the 20 hours of testimony we've heard in the two previous interviews, there have been a grand total of 12 Members of Congress present. I don't think it's going to hurt to have a 13th Member actually hear something that, in my judgment, all 435 Members of Congress should be entitled to hear.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Gaetz, you're not a member of the three designated committees that are participating in this interview. You're not permitted to be here. That is the ruling of the chair, and you are required to leave.

MR. GAETZ: Do you have a rule that you're able to cite for that?

THE CHAIRMAN: I am citing the House rules and the deposition rules. You are not permitted to be here.

MR. GAETZ: Which rule?

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Gaetz, you are simply delaying the procedures in violation of the rules. Please absent yourself.

MR. GAETZ: Which rule?

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Gaetz, why don't you take your spectacle outside? This is not how we conduct ourselves in this committee.

MR. GAETZ: I've seen how you've conducted yourself in this committee, and I'd like to be here to observe.

THE CHAIRMAN: We'll wait until Mr. Gaetz leaves before we begin. I do want to say that this dilatory tactic will come out of the minority's time for questioning.

MR. GAETZ: This isn't dilatory. You can begin any time you like.

THE CHAIRMAN: We're going to begin the clock. This will come out of the minority's time for questions.

MR. JORDAN: Well, I had a statement I wanted to get to when you interrupted me.

THE CHAIRMAN: We're not back on the record.

[10:43 a.m.]

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Let's go back on the record.

MR. BITAR: Hi. As the general counsel of the House Intelligence Committee, I'm relaying the view of the Parliamentarian, which was just relayed over the phone, to both Members and staff of the minority committees as well as the majority.

The Parliamentarian made clear that the House deposition regulations and the language used therein has always been construed as meaning members of the committees undertaking the joint investigation and not members of other committees who may wish to attend for other reasons, and, therefore, they are not allowed to participate in the deposition itself or be present.

Thank you.

MR. JORDAN: Chairman, could I just add one thing?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. JORDAN: The Parliamentarian was also clear that there is no precedent, no basis for docking anyone's time, that this was a legitimate question and not dilatory in any sense.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Jordan, you have an opening statement?

MR. JORDAN: I do.

On September 24th, Speaker Pelosi unilaterally

announced --

THE CHAIRMAN: The record should reflect that Mr. Gaetz has left the room.

MR. JORDAN: Yes.

On September 24th, Speaker Pelosi unilaterally announced that the House was beginning a so-called impeachment inquiry. On October 2nd, Speaker Pelosi promised that the so-called impeachment inquiry would treat the President with fairness.

However, Speaker Pelosi, Chairman Schiff, and Democrats are not living up to that basic promise. Instead, Democrats are conducting a rushed, closed-door, and unprecedented impeachment inquiry. Democrats are ignoring 45 years of bipartisan procedures, procedures that provided elements of fundamental fairness and due process.

In past impeachment inquiries, the majority and the minority had coequal subpoena authority and the right to require a committee vote on all subpoenas. The President's counsel had a right to attend all depositions and hearings including those held in executive session. The President's counsel had a right to cross-examine witnesses and a right to propose witnesses.

The President's counsel also had the right to present evidence, object to the admission of evidence, and to review all evidence presented, both favorable and unfavorable. Speaker Pelosi and Chairman Schiff's so-called impeachment

inquiry has none of these guarantees of fundamental fairness and due process.

Most disappointing, Democrats are conducting this impeachment inquiry behind closed doors. This seems to be nothing more than hiding this work from the American people and, frankly, as we just saw, hiding it from other Members of the United States Congress. If Democrats intend to undo the will of the American people just before the next election, they should at least do so transparently and be willing to be accountable for their actions.

And, finally, Dr. Hill, we've been advised by the State Department that communications between heads of state are classified, and I think it's important that we keep that in mind as we proceed through today's interview.

With that, I yield back.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Goldman.

MR. GOLDMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

This is a deposition of Dr. Fiona Hill conducted by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence pursuant to the impeachment inquiry announced by the Speaker of the House on September 24th.

Dr. Hill, if you could please state your full name and spell your last name for the record.

DR. HILL: It's Fiona Hill. Last name is H-i-l-l.

MR. GOLDMAN: Along with other proceedings in

furtherance of the inquiry, this deposition is part of a joint investigation led by the Intelligence Committee in coordination with the Committees on Foreign Affairs and Oversight and Reform.

In the room today are majority and minority staff from both the Foreign Affairs Committees and the Oversight Committees, as well as majority and minority staff from HPSCI. Just so the record is clear, equal numbers of staff from both the majority and minority have been and are permitted to be here. This is a staff-led deposition, but Members, of course, from the three committees may ask questions during their allotted time.

My name is Daniel Goldman. I'm the director of investigations for the HPSCI majority staff, and I want to thank you very much for coming in today for this deposition.

I would like to do brief introductions, and I understand that the witness would also just like for everybody around the table to introduce him or herself so that the witness knows who everybody is. So, to my right is Daniel Noble, who is the senior investigative counsel for HPSCI. Mr. Noble and I will be conducting most of the interview for the majority.

And then, if we could just continue down the room next to Mr. Noble, that would be great.

[redacted].

MR. HECK: I'm Denny Heck. I represent the 10th

District of Washington State.

[redacted].

MR. RASKIN: Congressman Jamie Raskin from Maryland's Eighth District.

MR. ROUDA: Congressman Harley Rouda from Orange County, California.

MR. ROONEY: Francis Rooney from southwest Florida, Foreign Affairs Committee.

[redacted]

MR. PERRY: Scott Perry, Pennsylvania's 10th District.

MR. ZELDIN: Lee Zeldin, New York-1.

MR. JORDAN: Jim Jordan, Ohio.

[redacted]

MR. CASTOR: Steve Castor with the Republican staff of the Oversight Committee.

[redacted]

MR. WOLOSKY: I'm Lee Wolosky, counsel to Dr. Hill.

MR. UNGAR: I'm Sam Ungar, also counsel for Dr. Hill.

DR. HILL: Thank you.

MR. GOLDMAN: Dr. Hill, this deposition will be conducted entirely at the unclassified level. However, the deposition is being conducted in HPSCI's secure spaces and in

the presence of staff who all have appropriate security clearance. It is the committee's expectation that neither questions asked of the witness nor answers by the witness or the witness' counsel will require discussion of any information that is currently or at any point could be properly classified under Executive Order 13526.

Moreover, EO 13526 states that, quote, in no case shall information be classified, continued to be maintained as classified, or fail to be declassified, unquote, for the purpose of concealing any violations of law or preventing embarrassment of any person or entity.

Now, I understand that, Dr. Hill, you had classification authorization in your previous job. You were the classifying authority. So we expect you to fully understand the distinction here between the classified and unclassified, and we will be relying on you in part to indicate whether any questions that are asked may call for answers that are classified.

If that is the case, we would ask that you please inform us of that before answering the questions so that we can adjust accordingly. Part of the reason for that is our understanding is that your attorneys do not have appropriate security clearances --

DR. HILL: Right.

MR. GOLDMAN: -- and so we'll want to make sure that we

preserve all classified information in our national security interests.

Today's deposition is not being taken in executive session, but because of the sensitive and confidential nature of some of the topics and materials that will be discussed, access to the transcript of the deposition will be limited to the three committees in attendance. You and your attorney will have an opportunity to review the transcript at a later date.

Before we begin, I'd like to go over a couple of ground rules for this deposition. We will be following the House regulations for depositions. As you know by now, we have previously provided your counsel with a copy of the regulations, and we have copies here as well if you or your counsel would like to review them at any time.

The way this deposition will proceed is as follows: The majority will be given 1 hour to ask questions, and then the minority will be given 1 hour to ask questions, and, thereafter, we will alternate back and forth between majority and minority in 45-minute rounds until the questioning is complete. We will take periodic breaks, but if you or your counsel need any break at any time, just let us know.

As we just understood, you do have counsel here, who just introduced themselves. And so we want to make it clear that, under the House deposition rules, counsel other than

your own counsel, including counsel for government agencies, may not attend. So it is our understanding that the only counsel here today representing you is your personal counsel.

There is a stenographer taking down everything that is said here today. For the record to be clear, we would ask that you please wait until questions are finished before you answer, and we will do the same when you answer. The stenographer cannot record nonverbal answers, such as shaking your head or saying "uh-huh," so it is important that you answer each question with an audible, verbal answer.

We ask that you give complete replies to the questions based on your best recollection. If a question is unclear or you are uncertain in your response, please don't hesitate to let us know and ask that the question be rephrased or asked again. If you do not know the answer to a question or cannot remember, simply say so.

You may only refuse to answer a question to preserve a privilege that is recognized by the committee. If you refuse to answer a question on the basis of privilege, staff may either proceed with the deposition or seek a ruling from the chairman on the objection in person or by telephone during the deposition at a time of the majority staff's choosing. If the chair overrules any such objection, you are required to answer the question.

And, finally, you are reminded that it is unlawful to

deliberately provide false information to Members of Congress or staff. It is imperative that you not only answer our questions truthfully but that you give full and complete answers to all questions asked of you. Omissions may also be considered to be false statements.

Now, as this deposition is under oath, Dr. Hill, would you please stand and raise your right hand to be sworn? Do you answer or affirm that the testimony you are about to give us is the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

DR. HILL: I do.

MR. GOLDMAN: Thank you. Let the record reflect that the witness has been sworn.

Dr. Hill, if you choose, now is your time to make any opening remarks.

DR. HILL: I don't have any openings remarks. I'm just here to answer everyone's questions.

MR. GOLDMAN: And, Mr. Wolosky, do you have anything that you would like to address before we begin?

MR. WOLOSKY: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Goldman.

I would like to enter into the record a letter of today's date, October 14, 2019, from Michael Purpura of the White House Counsel's Office governing the subjects or addressing the subjects of executive privilege and classification, along with a letter from me to Mr. Purpura dated October 13, 2019.

I'd like to make it clear that Dr. Hill is testifying today subject to the contents of these letters or of the White House Counsel's Office's letter, also pursuant to the subpoena she received today, and pursuant to any rulings that are made by the chair during the pendency of these proceedings.

THE CHAIRMAN: Those letters will be admitted into the record.

[The information follows:]

******** INSERT 1-1 ********

THE CHAIRMAN: In light of the White House counsel letter introduced by the witness' counsel, let me state at the outset of today's testimony that this testimony should proceed without any interference or delay.

Dr. Hill, you are compelled to testify at this deposition by a subpoena that the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence issued to you today, October 14, 2019. You are required to provide full, truthful, and accurate testimony in connection with the committee's joint investigation, which is undertaken as part of the House of Representatives' impeachment inquiry.

Your counsel has provided a letter sent to your counsel this morning from the White House stating that the information that you may be asked to testify about today could be covered by a privilege. Under the House deposition rules, as the chair, I have the authority to rule on any such objection, but no such objection will be in order or should be necessary.

As you know, only the President may assert executive privilege, and the President usually does so in writing with specificity along with an opinion from the Justice Department. The President has not communicated any such assertion to the committee with respect to the information requested.

The President has also spoken extensively publicly about

the matters under investigation here, and he has declassified and publicly released a summary of his call with the Ukrainian President. The administration also declassified the whistleblower complaint and a range of accompanying materials that address the range of issues under discussion today.

The President's actions have opened the door to further investigative actions and taking of testimony on these subjects. The President has waived his ability to block others from making statements about the same matters that contradict his own statements or expose his wrongdoing.

Regarding any claim of deliberative process privilege as an element of executive privilege, this is not a privilege recognized by the Congress. Furthermore, the information you have been asked to provide is critical to the committee's investigation and the House's impeachment inquiry.

We must obtain your answers here because Congress has a constitutional duty to expose wrongdoing in the executive and to act as a check and balance to the power of the executive, especially when there is significant evidence that the President is abusing his executive power for his own personal gain. The committees cannot accept any effort to interfere with these proceedings. We therefore expect you do answer all questions during the deposition.

With that, I will yield back to Mr. Goldman.

MR. GOLDMAN: Thank you.

BY MR. GOLDMAN:

Q Dr. Hill, could you please explain for everyone in the room what your role was on the National Security Council?

A Yes. I was the senior director who was overseeing all of the interactions across the interagency pertaining to Europe, our European allies, including also the European Union and NATO, and also including Russia, Turkey, and the subject at hand, Ukraine.

Q When did you join the NSC?

A I formally started on April 3rd of 2017. Technically, it was April 1, but it was a weekend.

Q And when did you depart the NSC?

A I departed the NSC physically on July 19th of this year, 2019. I handed over my duties on July 15th to my successor, Tim Morrison, and I handed in my badge technically on September 3rd of 2019. But I was actually on vacation, a paid vacation from the NSC, from basically July 19 all the way through until handing in my badge again. My last payday was August 30th of 2019. And I give this detailed answer because I know that there's been some confusion as to when I was physically there or what my actual tenure was.

Q And from July 19th until September 3rd, what was your access to email and other communications within the NSC?

A I had some limited access to unclassified email on

my iPhone, and that would have be under agreement with Ambassador Bolton and with other NSC staff. Because of the short handover to Tim Morrison, there were concerns that emails would come into me directly because I'd been there since the beginning essentially of the administration, and they wanted to make sure that if I was the only person getting an email, that it wasn't lost and could be forwarded on.

Q Okay. And prior to joining the NSC, can you just give us a brief overview of your professional experience.

A I have been working on issues related to Russia since I was an undergraduate at university back in the 1980s. And, actually, I first started in a professional way working on Russia-related issues, including actually with my counsel, Lee Wolosky, in the early 1990s when we were both research assistants [redacted] at the Kennedy School at Harvard working on technical assistance projects.

After I completed my Ph.D. at Harvard and finished working with [redacted], I then worked for the Eurasia Foundation. I was the director of strategic planning for the Eurasia Foundation, which was a congressionally funded technical assistance foundation. I became an adjunct fellow at the Brookings Institution in 2000, and I became a full-time employee of the Brookings Institution around 2002, 2003.

I then, from the beginning of 2006 through to November 2009, at the end of the Bush administration and the first year of the Obama administration, was the national intelligence officer for Russia and Eurasia at the National Intelligence Council.

I then returned to Brookings in the end of November 2009, and for the next 7 years, I was the director of the Center on the U.S. and Europe at the Brookings Institution before I joined the administration.

Q You mentioned that you were responsible for overseeing the interagency process as it relates to your portfolio. Focusing on Ukraine, what does that mean?

A That means bringing together interagency meetings, State Department, Pentagon, every other department for discussions of U.S. Government policy. It also means meeting, where appropriate, with Ukrainian officials, meeting with analysts from our intelligence services to get updates on a regular basis on developments in Ukraine, and also preparing, of course, memoranda and any policy documents necessary for the President or the National Security Advisor or other senior members of staff who may be having interactions pertinent to policy.

Q All right. We are going to get into many of the details during your time with the NSC, but I would like to spend this first hour trying to hit on some top-line issues

and get an understanding more broadly about what was going on with Ukraine while you were there.

And, I guess, the first question, and this is perhaps a little difficult, but can you describe, generally speaking, what the official U.S. policy was related to Ukraine and what the focus of official U.S. policy was in relation to Ukraine?

A I think the policy towards Ukraine was going through a period of evolution in the time that I was in the administration. Many of you, being long-serving Members of Congress, and the staff, will of course recall that, you know, a lot of focus was put onto Ukraine after the annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014.

And then, of course, there was the outbreak of the war in Donbas, the downing of MH-17, and decisions made by members of this body to impose sanctions on Russia in response to those acts that were conducted, those acts of aggression against Ukraine.

So, when I came into the administration there was a great deal of debate. This is, of course, you know, the beginning of 2017. We've had essentially 2-plus years of efforts to deter Russia from taking further aggressive acts against Ukraine. The war in Donbas is still continuing.

There's a question about what role the United States should play in the resolution of that conflict, because at that juncture it was the French and the Germans in the course

of the Minsk group, the grouping set up by the French and the Germans, along with Ukrainians and technically also the Russians, to try to find a resolution to the war in the Donbas.

The United States didn't actually have a role in this. So we were in the process of deliberating then what role the United States should play, how we would work together with the French and the Germans to try to seek a resolution of the conflict in Donbas, how we should conduct ourselves in terms of assistance to Ukraine; should there be the provision of lethal weaponry, meaning, of course, defensive weaponry; how would we be able to help Ukraine over the longer term -- this is a big debate with the Pentagon -- to rebuild its military forces that had been decimated not just by the war with Russia but by the annexation of Crimea because the Russians, of course, seized the major ports and the whole entire Ukrainian Black Sea fleet, and, of course, it also devastated their command and control.

We were also concerned about domestic politics in Ukraine. I mean, this has been a longstanding concern through multiple administrations. And when I was in the DNI, I mean, I felt in many respects that I was reprieving, you know, many of the analytical concerns that I'd had when I was national intelligence officer for Russia and Ukraine.

We were worried about the stability of the Ukrainian

Government, the role of oligarchs in the Ukrainian Government. It was a very weak Presidency. There was, of course, a great deal of corruption. This has been standard across most of the republics in the former Soviet Union in their independence.

Many of them had had weak local governance in the Soviet structure. And when they became independent entities, they weren't particularly well set up to be independent countries, and there was a great deal of efforts by private interests to, you know, pick away at the structures of government. That happened in Russia as well.

And we were also trying to figure out indeed how we would work with our European allies on a much broader set of projects related to Ukraine's long-term sustainability. So it wasn't just tackling corruption or helping the Ukrainians build a more viable, sustainable state apparatus and institutions, but also how we would tackle some key problems for them beyond the restoration of their military capability, including their dependency on Russia for energy supplies as well as acting as the main conduit or transit for energy supplies from Russia, exports of Russian energy through Ukraine to the rest of Europe.

So we were also starting to work on a more comprehensive approach to Russia's energy. I mean, you're all very much familiar with the debates about Nord Stream 2. I was there

in the Bush administration for Nord Stream 1 when we were also trying to block the expansion of pipelines from Russia. I mean, we tried again also under Reagan in the Soviet period. I mean, this is a longstanding U.S. policy to find ways of diversifying European energy supplies.

And so we were starting to look at how we could try to wean Ukraine off the dependence on Russian energy and try to find other energy suppliers, be it U.S. LNG or other oil and gas supplies, coal, including from Pennsylvania and, you know, other U.S. States.

So we were, you know, as I'm trying to point out here, having a wide-ranging set of discussions about Ukraine all against the backdrop, obviously, of a debate about how effective the sanctions were being on Russia's own behavior and, you know, Russia's own attitudes towards Ukraine.

MR. WOLOSKY: Mr. Goldman, can I just interject that the witness is obviously testifying to U.S. deliberative processes relating to the conduct of U.S. foreign policy. I actually don't think that this is covered by the letter from the White House Counsel's Office, but I would appreciate guidance and a ruling from the chair on testimony such as the type that she is offering.

THE CHAIRMAN: I thank the counsel for raising the issue, and I'm prepared to rule on it now.

Dr. Hill, you are compelled to testify at this

deposition by subpoena that was issued to you by the House Intelligence Committee on October 14, 2019. Your counsel has raised a potential objection on behalf of the White House stating that information that you are providing could be covered by privilege. Under the House deposition rules, as the chair, I have the authority to rule on that potential objection.

As you know, only the President may assert executive privilege, and he usually does so in writing with specificity along with an opinion from the Justice Department. The President and Department of Justice have not specifically invoked executive privilege with respect to the information requested.

The President has also spoken extensively about the matters under investigation here, and he has declassified and publicly released a summary of his call with the Ukrainian President. The administration also declassified the whistleblower complaint and a range of accompanying materials that addressed the range of issues under discussion today.

The President's actions have further opened the door to further investigative actions and taking of testimony on these subjects. The President has waived his ability to block others from making statements about the same matters that contradict his own statements or expose his wrongdoing. The privilege cannot be used to conceal misconduct during --

in particular during an impeachment inquiry.

To the extent that the White House may be asserting a deliberative process privilege as an element of executive privilege, this is not a privilege recognized by the Congress. Furthermore, the information the witness has been asked to provide is critical to the committee's investigation.

We must obtain your answers here because Congress has a constitutional duty to expose wrongdoing in the executive and act as a check and balance to the power of the executive, especially when there is significant evidence that the President is abusing his executive power for his own personal gain. Therefore, I am overruling any potential assertion of privilege, and I instruct the witness to answer all questions during the deposition today.

MR. ZELDIN: Mr. Chairman, respectfully, if the witness is about to give an answer and is unsure of whether or not her answer may violate a privilege, is the witness permitted to consult with the executive branch for advice on that question of whether or not that content is privileged?

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Zeldin, the White House had the opportunity, in correspondence with the witness prior to the testimony today, to raise any specific objection to any specific question. They chose not to do so. And, therefore, we will go forward as the chair has ruled.

MR. ZELDIN: That's not what the question -- well, respectfully, Mr. Chair, the question is, if the witness' understanding of what is privileged comes up and the witness is unsure as to whether or not her answer is going to violate something that's privileged, will the witness be permitted to get advice before being forced to provide information that may be privileged?

THE CHAIRMAN: No, counsel. The counsel for the witness has already been in communication with the White House, has already received whatever guidance the White House was willing to give. The chair has made a ruling on the question of privilege; none applies here. We will not be asking the witness about extraneous conversations with the President about other matters. Our focus today will be on Ukraine, and the chair has ruled.

Mr. Goldman.

MR. JORDAN: Mr. Chairman, if I could, just one quick followup. So, if Dr. Hill gets a question and she believes it does violate what she has communicated -- the communications her and her counsel have had with the executive branch and she chooses not to answer that question, are you then going to overrule it?

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Jordan, as the witness counsel has already made clear, the witness' counsel has raised the concerns that were expressed to the witness through

correspondence with the White House. It's appropriate that the counsel do so, and they have done so, and I have ruled on that potential objection. That is the process that we will use today.

MR. JORDAN: I would just underscore, Mr. Chairman -- then we can get back to Mr. Goldman's question -- I would just underscore this is why executive -- agency counsel should be here. This is why -- I have never -- this is now -- I've never been in these kind of proceedings where agency counsel wasn't permitted to be present. We wouldn't have these concerns if they were here.

THE CHAIRMAN: Actually, Mr. Jordan, you were present at a deposition conducted by Chairman Issa without the presence of agency counsel, and you were perfectly copacetic with it at that time, so your statement is not accurate. But, nonetheless, the chair has ruled and we will go forward.

Mr. Goldman.

BY MR. GOLDMAN:

Q Dr. Hill, ultimately toward -- by the end of your tenure at the NSC, had the United States agreed to provide lethal military assistance to Ukraine to withstand the aggression from Russia in the eastern area of Ukraine?

A That's correct.

Q And what anticorruption efforts did the U.S. promote within Ukraine during the time that you were there?

A Well, the time that I was there has also spanned what was a period in Ukraine itself of a transition in its own government. I mean, we'll all recall that Ukraine has gone through quite a period of upheaval.

The independence movements back in the 1990s, 1980s, 1990s, then in a period of turmoil and changes of government, and then the events that were sparked off by Ukraine's decision to try to join the European Union, at least to form an association agreement with the European Union, that precipitated Russia's decision to annex Crimea because of the revolt in Ukraine that led to a change in government.

So there was a focus, as I said before, on trying to find a way of getting the Ukrainian Government to stabilize and sustainable. And we were also in the period in the last year or so of preparation for Ukrainian Presidential elections, which made it quite complicated in trying to work with the incumbent government and all of their institutions and then looking forward to what might be a change of government in Ukraine.

So what we were trying to do was work with the institutions that were there already in place, from the prosecutor's office to the Ukrainian Parliament, the Rada, to government officials who these sets of issues came into their purview, and the main locus of that activity was through our embassy in Kyiv and also through the State Department.

Q Now --

A I should also point out, of course, that we have posted to the Embassy in Ukraine, just as is the case in most embassies, representatives of all the U.S. Government departments and agencies that would be involved in these kinds of issues, so from the DOJ, FBI, and many others.

Q But certainly eliminating corruption in Ukraine was one of, if the central, goals of U.S. foreign policy?

A That's right, as it has been with many other former Soviet states where the corruption pervades through anything from the police force to getting into schools, getting medical treatment, you know, all different levels of the public sector.

Q Are you familiar with the Intelligence Community's assessment of whether Russia interfered in the 2016 election?

A I am.

Q And are you familiar with an indictment that the Special Counsel Robert Mueller filed in connection to Russian interference in the 2016 election?

A Yes, I am.

Q Do you have any reason to doubt either the facts alleged in the indictment or the Intelligence Community's assessment that Russia did interfere in the 2016 election?

A I do not.

Q And do you have any reason to believe that Ukraine

did interfere in the 2016 election?

A I do not. We're talking about the Ukrainian Government here when you say Ukraine, correct?

Q Yes.

A Yes, I do not.

Q Okay. I'm going to switch gears for a minute, Dr. Hill. When did you first become aware of the interest in Ukraine of Rudy Giuliani?

A It would have been sometime between July -- I'm sorry -- January 2019 and March 2019. And I first became aware of it partly through articles in the newspaper that I see some of our Members of Congress reading, The Hill, by John Solomon, and also because of Mr. Giuliani's statements on television.

Q Part of your duties and responsibilities is to keep track of matters in the public, right, and in the media related to the areas that you were covering. Is that accurate?

A Not entirely. I mean, my job was to, you know, keep track of what our foreign counterparts were doing. I have to, you know, confess right upfront that it's incredibly difficult to keep up with what everybody else is doing as well.

And I would often rely on members of our internal NSC press corps, other colleagues, our directors, and other

people to flag anything for me that they thought that I should be paying attention to. I had every morning an intel brief, and it didn't, you know, basically always pertain to domestic related issues, of course.

But we do get as much, of course -- I think most of you who have served in government know this -- compilations of clippings that the White House Sit Room deems to be of relevance or of interest. And some of those would be forwarded onto us if they had subject-related interest. So that was how I first became aware that there was some deeper interest on the part of Mr. Giuliani.

Q And what did you understand that interest to have been when you initially learned about it?

A To be honest, I had a hard time figuring out quite what it was about because there were references to George Soros; there were references to 2016; and then there were all kinds of references to -- when I first read the article in The Hill, which I think was in late March of 2019, it was referring to do-not-prosecute lists and statements from the Ukrainian prosecutor, Mr. Lutsenko, none of which I'd ever heard of anything about before.

Q And at this point, what was your impression of the Ukrainian Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko?

A I hadn't really formed much of a personal opinion of him, but certainly from the information that I had, not

just from our embassy but from also colleagues at the State Department and others across the analytical community, there were clearly some problems with this gentleman in the way that he was conducting his work.

Q And around this time, what did you understand the relationship between Rudy Giuliani and the President of the United States to be?

A Beyond the official role of Mr. Giuliani as the private attorney, I had no other sense whatsoever of what his role might be.

Q Okay. Did you ever meet or communicate with Rudy Giuliani directly on matters relating to Ukraine?

A I did not. I've never actually met him.

Q Now, after you first learned about Mr. Giuliani's interest in March, what did you understand to be the development of his interest in Ukraine after March?

A Well, he seemed to develop a very strong interest in Ukraine in that timeframe. And I was trying, you know, to the best of my limited ability, to figure out what that interest might be. And I made a couple of inquiries to people to ask what they knew about his activities, and I will be quite frank in saying that most of the people who I spoke to thought it was related to personal business on his part.

Q And who did you initially speak to about Mr. Giuliani?

A I asked several of my colleagues who were, you know, familiar with his work in New York. I asked other [redacted] because some of the references were obviously to energy related issues. I talked to some of my colleagues across the NSC who work in our energy directorate.

And I tried to read as much as I possibly could in the press to figure out what was going on because, at this point, it started to have an impact obviously on our own work because of the constant references by people to his statements, especially on FOX News.

Q Can you explain what impact it had on the official U.S. policy and your role in making that?

A Because Mr. Giuliani was asserting quite frequently on television in public appearances that he had been given some authority over matters related to Ukraine, and if that was the case, we hadn't been informed about that. But he was making a lot of public statements and, you know, obviously making a lot of assertions, including about our ambassador to Ukraine, Masha Yovanovitch.

Q Did you try to determine whether Mr. Giuliani was accurate and he had been given any portfolio over Ukraine?

A I asked my, you know, direct superior Ambassador Bolton if he was aware of Mr. Giuliani being given some direct taskings related to Ukraine, and he was not aware of this.

Q Did you speak to anyone else about this?

A People in the State Department also.

Q All right. And what was their response?

A Everyone was completely unaware of any direct official role that Mr. Giuliani had been given on the Ukraine account. And, at that particular juncture, no one that I had been in contact with had actually spoken to him.

Q And what particular juncture are you referring to?

A You asked me about the early stages, so around March, April of 2019.

Q To your knowledge, was Mr. Giuliani ever a government employee?

A Not that I know of, no.

Q Do you know whether he held a security clearance?

A I don't know.

Q Now, you said that, initially, you were led to believe that his interest was based on his personal financial interest. Did you come to understand that that interest of his evolved over time?

A If we're talking at later stages, I mean, it depends on how you want to go through this, you know, chronologically or, you know, what I started to know before I left. How would you like to approach this?

Q I'm asking after March, April, up until you left, just broadly speaking, what did you come to understand his

interests to encompass?

A Well, there was a period before the ousting of our Ambassador, and there was a period after this. So, in the period up until the ouster -- and I'm using this, I think, very clearly, I think, for all of us who were working on the Ukraine account, the dismissal of Ambassador Yovanovitch was a real turning point for us.

Because all of the information that I had seen in the press, be it on The Hill, John Solomon's articles, on Mr. Giuliani's whirlwind, on FOX News or the newspaper articles I looked at, material that was -- you know, I asked [redacted] to collect together and, you know, information that I got from other colleagues who were tracking this as well seemed to point towards a mixture of some business associates of Mr. Giuliani. I was told the names of the two gentlemen who happen to have just been indicted. I had not previously come across them at all.

There was also an American businessman in Florida who was associated with them whose name was also mentioned to me, Harry Sargeant. I didn't find any further information out about him. I mean, and my job was to track what was going on with Ukraine, not to start looking, you know, at what domestic actors were about.

I just want to make it very clear that at no time did I try to go beyond the confines of my job. I was just trying

to understand what was going on so that I could then factor that in into any interactions that we were having with Ukrainian officials and across the board across the interagency.

I was told that these gentlemen, Mr. Parnas, Mr. Fruman, and Mr. Sargeant had all been in business with Mr. Giuliani, and that the impression that a number of Ukrainian officials and others had had was that they were interested in seeking business deals in Ukraine.

Q Now why did the removal of Ambassador Yovanovitch mark a turning point for you?

A Because there was no basis for her removal. The accusations against her had no merit whatsoever. This was a mishmash of conspiracy theories that, again, I've told you, I believe firmly to be baseless, an idea of an association between her and George Soros.

I had had accusations similar to this being made against me as well. My entire first year of my tenure at the National Security Council was filled with hateful calls, conspiracy theories, which has started again, frankly, as it's been announced that I've been giving this deposition, accusing me of being a Soros mole in the White House, of colluding with all kinds of enemies of the President, and, you know, of various improprieties.

And it seems to be extraordinarily easy, as Ambassador

Yovanovitch pointed out in her opening testimony, for people to make baseless claims about people and then to seek their dismissal.

So I'd experienced exactly the same treatment that she had in the whole first year of my tenure at the National Security Council, which is a period in which Lieutenant General McMaster and many other members of staff were targeted as well, and many people were hounded out of the National Security Council because they became frightened about their own security.

I received, I just have to tell you, death threats, calls at my home. My neighbors reported somebody coming and hammering on my door. My [redacted] picked up a phone call to have someone call me obscenities to [redacted]. [redacted] very nervous about me testifying today as a result of that.

Now, I'm not easily intimidated, but that made me mad. And when I saw this happening to Ambassador Yovanovitch again, I was furious, because this is, again, just this whipping up of what is frankly an anti-Semitic conspiracy theory about George Soros to basically target nonpartisan career officials, and also some political appointees as well, because I just want to say this: This is not indiscriminate in its attacks.

And so it was obvious to us, and I mean all of my team, everybody at the State Department that I spoke to including

at the higher levels, inside the NSC at the high levels as well, that she'd been subject to a pretty ruthless, nasty defamation to basically remove her from place.

And the most obvious explanation at that point, it has to be said, seemed to be business dealings of individuals who wanted to improve their investment positions inside of Ukraine itself, and also to deflect away from the findings of not just the Mueller report on Russian interference but what's also been confirmed by your own Senate report, and what I know myself to be true as a former intelligence analyst and somebody who has been working on Russia for more than 30 years. So the fact that Ambassador Yovanovitch was removed as a result of this was, I have to say, pretty dispiriting.

Q Who did you understand was responsible for her removal?

A I understood this to be the result of the campaign that Mr. Giuliani had set in motion in conjunction with people who were writing articles and, you know, publications that I would have expected better of, and also, you know, just the constant drumbeat of these accusations that he was making on the television.

And as a result of that, he had created an atmosphere in which she was under great suspicion, and it was obvious that she would lose the confidence of senior people because these

accusations seem to stick to people even when they're proved not to be true.

Q Well, did you understand that the State Department -- well, let me take a step back. Who ultimately made the decision to remove her?

A I assumed, and I was told, that it was at the top levels of the State Department because they felt that her position was no longer tenable.

Q Did you understand whether the President of the United States had a role in this at all?

A I was not led to believe that. I did not hear that, and I was not told that. But it was clear that her position had become untenable by the nature of these accusations against her. And there are many other distinguished public servants who we read about in the paper every single day who have resigned or get pushed out because accusations are made against them that make it incredibly difficult for them to do their jobs.

Q Were you aware, by the end of April when Ambassador Yovanovitch was removed, that the President himself had retweeted some of John Solomon's articles in The Hill related to this?

A I think I had seen those tweets. I'd obviously seen those tweets.

Q And since you were working in the White House, what

did you understand at that point, in April, the President's view of Ambassador Yovanovitch to be, if you knew?

A Basically -- yeah.

MR. WOLOSKY: Let me just caution you not to speculate about things that you don't know.

DR. HILL: Yeah. I was just going to say that I could only form a judgment as everybody else could from the tweets. I was not able to form any other judgment. I did not hear at any juncture the President say anything about Ambassador Yovanovitch.

BY MR. GOLDMAN:

Q And did you discuss Ambassador Yovanovitch with Ambassador Bolton?

A I did.

Q And what was his reaction to this?

A His reaction was pained. And he basically said -- in fact, he directly said: Rudy Giuliani is a hand grenade that is going to blow everybody up.

He made it clear that he didn't feel that there was anything that he could personally do about this.

I met with Ambassador Yovanovitch and Assistant Secretary Phil Reeker on May 1st when she was recalled to Washington, D.C., to hear from her and to hear from Acting Assistant Secretary Phil Reeker what they thought had happened.

Because this had a really devastating effect on the morale of all of the teams that I work with across the interagency because everybody knows Ambassador Yovanovitch to be the best of the best in terms of a nonpartisan career official.

And as a woman, and, you know, I don't see always a lot of prominent women in these positions, she was the highest ranking woman diplomat. And I have worked with her across all of my career in -- both in government when I was at the DNI and also in the think tank world as a professional who works on this region when she'd been Ambassador in Armenia and also in Kyrgyzstan.

And I only have a professional relationship with her. I don't see myself as a personal friend of hers. But I just see her as epitomizing what United States diplomacy should be.

Q During that meeting that you had on May 1st, did she relay to you what the reasoning for her removal was as she understood it?

A She relayed to me basically the same things that she wrote in her testimony, and that has been made public. And she was deeply disappointed and very upset. She also made it clear that she wasn't going to grandstand and that she appreciated that the State Department were trying to help her.

It was obvious that this had left a lot of her colleagues at high levels feeling extremely upset. It certainly seemed that Deputy Sullivan, Assistant Secretary Reeker, and other officials in the State Department's highest levels were trying to do their best to make sure that she, you know, kept her reputation and was also given at least a position in the interim that would be worthy of the kind of person that she is. She's, remember, also been commandant of the National Defense University. I mean, this is really one of our most distinguished diplomats.

Q Did she indicate to you that Deputy Secretary Sullivan had told her that this order had come from the President at that point?

A She did not say that to me, but she did say that he had said to her that there was no cause for her dismissal and that he was deeply regretful of it. She was being very discreet.

Q And it was your understanding that no one at the senior levels at the State Department had any issues with her qualifications or her competence?

A That was my understanding, and the same with all of her colleagues across the diplomatic corps, the ambassadorial corps, and certainly within the National Security Council.

Q And did you understand whether Secretary Pompeo had any concerns about her work product or competency?

A I never heard anything to indicate that.

[11:33 a.m.]

BY MR. GOLDMAN:

Q And you said a second ago or a few minutes ago that you never heard anything directly from the President related to --

A I did not.

Q -- Ambassador Yovanovitch.

Just broadly speaking, we're not going to get right now into the communications, but how frequently did you speak to the President about any matters under your portfolio?

A Only in the context of larger meetings, particularly around visits. It changed over time. In the first year of our -- of the Presidency under General McMaster, he had a very different style, and he would bring many of us into meetings.

That was different under Ambassador Bolton, but I think that that's also quite typical of the approach of different National Security Advisors, so I don't read anything into that. People have a different approach. And, as you know, there's been a big debate since the beginning of the National Security Council when it was first set up, you know, around the time of, you know, World War II and the Cold War, about what the right size, what the composition should be, and what the approach should be, both of the National Security Advisor and the staff.

Q Now, so as it relates directly to Ukraine, how many conversations did you have with -- were you present for where the President was discussing Ukraine, Ukrainian policy, or otherwise?

MR. WOLOSKY: I think it's fine to answer the question of how many, generally speaking, times you were in discussions with the President. I mean, if there are further questions about the content of those discussions --

MR. GOLDMAN: I'm asking because she indicated that she didn't hear anything about Ambassador Yovanovitch directly from the President, so I'm trying just to understand how frequently she would have been in a position to discuss these matters.

DR. HILL: I mean, just also to be clear, Ukraine was not a top policy item in a lot of this period. And my portfolio covered all of Europe. It covered Turkey, which, you know, obviously, there was a great deal of activity, and Russia.

So it was really only ever in the context of when there would be an official meeting with the Ukrainian President. And in the time that I was there, there were not a great deal of meetings with the Ukrainian leadership. There was Poroshenko at one of the U.N. General Assemblies.

So the meetings were only very much in the context of brief preparatory discussions for a meeting -- and this is

obviously covered by executive privilege -- with heads of State.

MR. GOLDMAN: So you said that Ambassador Yovanovitch's removal was a turning point. How did things change after that?

THE CHAIRMAN: Before we go to that, if I could just ask, Dr. Hill, you mentioned that the decision to remove the Ambassador, as far as you knew, took place at the top of the State Department. By that, do you mean Secretary Pompeo or someone else?

DR. HILL: This would be a presumption so --

MR. WOLOSKY: If you don't know the answer, don't speculate. Just state what you know.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ambassador Yovanovitch related seeking support, a statement of support from the Secretary of State. That was not forthcoming. Do you have any personal knowledge of those circumstances?

DR. HILL: I do not. I did take part in basically reviewing statements of support for Ambassador Yovanovitch from the State Department, but this was done at the working level. I mean, there were many announcements trying to refute some of basically the baseless accusations against Ambassador Yovanovitch in the period of March and April.

And I just want to say again that I met with her on May 1st, when she had been unexpectedly summoned back to

Washington, D.C. It took all of us by surprise because, to be frank, I thought that those accusations about her would be dismissed because they were clearly, in some cases, just absurd.

BY MR. GOLDMAN:

Q So just going back to after her removal, how did -- you said it was a turning point. How so?

A Well, it was a shock, to be frank, to all of the team. Ambassador Yovanovitch had been a key person, as I mentioned before. Many of the interagency-approved policies that we were implementing were carried out primarily by the Embassy in Kyiv, and we had just then lost the leadership.

There was also a changeover in the Embassy at that point, as the -- inevitably, as you get into the spring-summer period, as new staff are going to be brought on board at the Embassy. And so there was a bit of a kind of a loss of direction for a period.

Now, we had, of course, the ongoing efforts of Ambassador Kurt Volker as the U.S. Envoy for Ukraine. But at this particular juncture, Ambassador Volker's main job had been to meet with the Russians as well as the other members of the Normandy format Minsk group, the French and the Germans, under the European leadership.

But the Russians at this particular juncture were not really picking up on the idea of having further meetings.

They were stonewalling because they themselves didn't want to make very clearly any steps in determining the future of their own Ukraine policy until they found out who they were going to be dealing with in the Ukrainian Presidential election.

Now, we'd had, of course, the election in April of Zelensky, but at this point, we were also waiting to see what would happen in the Ukrainian Parliamentary elections, the Rada, to see whether Zelensky would be able to have a workable majority.

You might also recall in November of 2018, there was the incident in the Kerch Strait, where the Russians seized Naval vessels of the Ukrainian Navy that were trying to enter through international waters of the Kerch Strait into the Sea of Azov and then detained their sailors after, in fact, firing on the two Ukrainian ships and injuring at least one, but maybe more of the sailors. And they'd taken the sailors to Moscow. They were effectively becoming prisoners of war.

And we'd been focused in this period on trying to push the Russians to release the Ukrainian sailors, and we had pulled down meetings, bilateral meetings with President Putin -- this was actually the President's decision to do so -- in response to the Russians' refusal to release the Ukrainians.

And so, you know, there were many issues that we were

still trying to push at this period, and we had to figure out how we were going to do this. So there was a period of uncertainty as to how we were going to be conducting our Ukraine policy.

Q And that's from the official United States position, you mean?

A Correct.

Q Now, how did Rudy Giuliani's efforts from after -- from May through the summer impact the official U.S. foreign policy?

A Well, we heard that he was planning on visiting Ukraine, and we didn't know why, you know, for what purpose and what was his intent. And, you know, I heard about that on the news and read about that in the paper. I mean, subsequently that meeting was pulled down.

But this was then in the period where Ambassador Volker told us that he was planning on meeting with Mr. Giuliani to try to see if he could resolve whatever issues there may be there. You've had Ambassador Volker come and talk on his own terms and to answer your questions, and I'm sure he's told you what he told us.

But this is also in the period where, rather unexpectedly, our Ambassador to the EU, Ambassador Sondland informed us, but just informed us without, again, us being given any specific directive, that he had been assigned to be

in charge, at least in interim fashion, of the Ukraine portfolio.

Q And around when was that?

A That was in the May-June timeframe.

Q And who did you understand assigned Ambassador Sondland to do that?

A At first, nobody. And it was only later, very late June, when Ambassador Sondland told me again that he was in charge of Ukraine. And I asked, well, on whose authority? And he said, the President.

Q At this point now, Mr. Giuliani had indicated he was going to speak to Ukrainian officials, and then he decided not to go. Now, into the June timeframe into July, did you understand what he was advocating about -- in Ukraine and what his interests were?

A In this period in May, I had a request from a former U.S. Government official to meet with me. This was Amos Hochstein, the former U.S. Envoy for Energy, who I'd previously worked with in different capacities. Mr. Hochstein had been appointed to the board of Naftogaz, the main Ukrainian-U.S -- gas and oil company. He had actually been appointed during this administration, in conjunction with discussions with the Department of Energy.

So I just want to make clear that although Amos Hochstein had been the U.S. Energy Envoy under President

Obama, he was somebody who was well-respected by the Department of Energy, and he had very close ties with Secretary Perry's staff and also with people who served on the National Security Council who worked on energy issues. So they were very comfortable with him taking on this role.

And he'd been in the position for several months, perhaps even a year at this juncture when he came in to talk with me, which was towards the end of May. And he came in to express some serious concerns that he had. In the course of his time on the board of Naftogaz, which he actually said had actually not been a particularly uplifting experience, it had come to his attention that there was a lot of pressure being put on the officials of Naftogaz, who had also reached out to talk to me and my colleagues at the National Security Council, to have other board members put in place and this seemed to be at the direction of Giuliani, and that they were also being pushed more generally in the Ukrainian energy sector to open up investigations into corruption in the energy sector that seemed to go beyond what I had assumed was the thrust of our push on corruption, which was related to people trying to siphon off assets of Naftogaz or to use that improperly, which had been done at many times in the past, and, in fact, would include the energy company Burisma that everyone has been very concerned about.

I, to be honest, had forgotten the name of Burisma. It

had been a long time since that name had surfaced. It had been on my radar screen sometime previously, and I asked Amos to remind me of the Burisma issue. And he reminded me that this was the company that Hunter Biden had been affiliated with.

So, at that juncture, it became clear, from Amos' concerns that he was flagging for me -- he also said that a number of Ukrainian officials had come to him very concerned that they were getting pressure from Giuliani and Giuliani associates -- and he also mentioned the names of Mr. Parnas and Fruman -- to basically start to open up investigations and also to change the composition of the Naftogaz board.

Q So did you come to understand that Mr. Giuliani perhaps, at a minimum, was advocating for an investigation into Burisma?

A It was part of what seemed to be a package of issues that he was pushing for, including what seemed to be the business interests of his own associates.

Q And when -- the way Mr. Hochstein explained it to you, did you understand what Rudy Giuliani's interest in an investigation into Burisma was?

A Not entirely, I did not at that juncture.

Q At a later point, did you come to understand what it was?

A Only, frankly, since I've left the administration.

Q And what is that?

A It's only based on -- and, again, this is what I've been reading in the papers. My jaw dropped when I saw the indictments of these two gentlemen, of Fruman and Parnas. So it becomes clear that they were certainly up to no good. But that was what I was already hearing.

And I was also told by Amos and other colleagues that they had some linkages, so I also want to, you know, get you to step back at this period. This is, you know, March, April, into May, where we were having a standoff over Venezuela. And the Russians at this particular juncture were signaling very strongly that they wanted to somehow make some very strange swap arrangement between Venezuela and Ukraine.

In other words, if we were going to exert some semblance of the Monroe Doctrine of, you know, Russia keeping out of our backyard, because this is after the Russians had sent in these hundred operatives essentially to, you know, basically secure the Venezuelan Government and, you know, to preempt what they were obviously taking to be some kind of U.S. military action, they were basically signaling: You know, you have your Monroe doctrine. You want us out of your backyard. Well, you know, we have our own version of this. You're in our backyard in Ukraine. And we were getting that sent to us, you know, kind of informally through channels. It was in the Russian press, various commentators.

And I was asked to go out to Russia in this timeframe to basically tell the Russians to knock this off. I was given a special assignment by the National Security Council with the agreement with the State Department to get the Russians to back off.

So, in the course of my discussions with my colleagues [redacted], I also found out that there were Ukrainian energy interests that had been in the mix in Venezuelan energy sectors as well as the names again of Mr. Parnas and Mr. Fruman, and this gentleman Harry Sargeant came up. And my colleagues [redacted] said these guys were notorious in Florida and that they were bad news.

Q And you understood that they were working with Rudy Giuliani at that point?

A I did at this point.

Q You mentioned Ambassador Sondland, who I think in June told you that he had been assigned by the President to cover Ukraine. You said that was somewhat of an unusual development. What did you mean by that?

A Well, it was very unusual because we were given no instructions. There wasn't a directive. Ambassador Bolton didn't know about this. Nobody at the State Department seemed to know about this either. I went to consult several times with senior State Department officials to ask them if

they knew if this was the case.

Q And what did they say?

A They said they had no -- no directive, no information to suggest this.

Q And who did you speak to about this?

A I spoke to Under Secretary Hale. I spoke to Assistant Secretary Reeker. And I did have a phone call at one point with Ulrich Brechbuhl, the counsel to Secretary Pompeo.

But I also have to say that Ambassador Sondland had asserted -- and, again, I mean asserted by telling me that he had a very large remit for his understanding of Ambassador to the European Union. He referred to a letter outlining his authorities and his responsibilities given to him by the State Department, which is, frankly, the regular State Department letter to Ambassadors when they, you know, get remit as the plenipotentiaries and the representatives of the President.

In all cases, you know, they have quite extensive responsibilities and authorities anyway. But said that he had been -- again, this is what he said to us, and I can only tell you what Ambassador Sondland said to me, that the President had given him broad authority on all things related to Europe, that he was the President's point man on Europe.

So this meant that anything that was related to the

European Union could, in his view, fall within his purview. And I was constantly going back to State Department and to the Deputy Assistant Secretaries and Acting Assistant Secretary to try to clarify this. And, again, in each case, they had no knowledge of these responsibilities that had been accorded to Ambassador Sondland in his rendition of these issues.

And so I was spending an inordinate amount of time trying to coordinate in some fashion with Ambassador Sondland on a whole range of issues related to visits by heads of states, meetings. And Ambassador Sondland would frequently give people my personal cell phone to call up and demand meetings with Ambassador Bolton or with me.

We had all kinds of officials from Europe, particularly when [redacted] was the president in office of the European Union, literally appearing at the gates of the White House, calling on our personal phones, which are actually in lock boxes, so it was kind of difficult to get hold of them. I'd find endless messages from irate [redacted] officials who'd been told that they were supposed to meet with me by Ambassador Sondland.

I mean, some of it was comical, but it was also, for me and for others, deeply concerning. And I actually went to our Intelligence Bureau and asked to have [redacted] [redacted] sit down with him and explain that this was a

counterintelligence risk, particularly giving out our personal phone numbers. And also just, I mean, basically going beyond the larger remit because he should have been having briefings. If, indeed, he had been given these assignments, he should have been having appropriate briefings for all of these meetings.

And as far as I could understand, the briefings that he was getting -- so he was often meeting with people he had no information about. It's like basically driving along with no guardrails and no GPS on an unfamiliar territory. He was meeting with, for example, [redacted] officials that we had derogatory information on that he shouldn't have been meeting with, or he was, you know, giving out his phone number and texting to, you know, regional officials, for example, the Prime Minister of [redacted] who he met at a meeting in Brussels. All of those communications could have been exfiltrated by the Russians very easily.

So I'll just say right upfront we had a lot of concerns, but I expressed these openly to Ambassador Sondland. So I'm not telling you anything that I didn't say to him.

Q Did there come a time when you had a meeting at the White House with Ukrainian officials in early July, where Ambassador Sondland was also present?

A Yes, that is correct.

Q Do you recall what day that was?

A That was July 10th. So this was essentially the week before I was due to wrap up and hand off.

Q And who was present for that meeting?

A This was a meeting by, at this point, the appointee for President Zelensky to be his National Security Advisor, Oleksandr Danylyuk, and his personal adviser, a gentleman who has been named in the press, Andrey Yermak, with Ambassador Bolton. Secretary Perry was also in attendance. Yermak had an assistant. Ambassador Sondland. There was our Ukraine director, Ambassador Volker, and myself and our senior director for energy affairs, Wells Griffith.

And there may have also been -- the room got a bit crowded and, I had to sit on the back sofa. I think there might have also been one of Secretary Perry's aides with him in that meeting. And then there were other officials who were also there in attendance, but not in Ambassador Bolton's office, who were waiting out in one of the anterooms.

Q And what was the ostensible purpose of the meeting?

A It was twofold. Danylyuk, who was the designated National Security Advisor, was trying to seek assistance in what he wanted to do with a revamp of the Ukrainian National Security Council, which, frankly, could do with it. And so he was wanting to ask Ambassador Bolton for his assistance and recommendations on, you know, what they could do to sort of streamline the national security apparatus, and would the

U.S. be willing to help with technical assistance. I mean, again, this would be something that would normally be done through the State Department. It's not something that the National Security Council deals with. But I think they were trying to get Ambassador Bolton's imprimatur, because he is the National Security Advisor, and support for this.

And also Ambassador Bolton has, you know, deep knowledge of many issues, and Mr. Danylyuk was hoping to get, you know, some of his advice just in the general perspective of national security issues.

And then there was also that the Ukrainians were very anxious to set up a meeting, a first meeting between President Zelensky and our President.

Q And there had already been a written invitation to that effect by that point from the White House, right?

A It wasn't an invitation. It was basically a general, you know, we look forward to seeing you kind of open-ended invitation at the end of a congratulatory letter that was sent to President Zelensky after his election in April.

Q But you understood that the Ukrainians wanted President Zelensky to make a White House visit?

A Correct.

Q Why is that?

A Every single leader, with very few exceptions,

who's either come into office or been in office some period wants to have a meeting with the President at the White House. All of my interactions with Ambassadors or officials from other countries inevitably came to, "When can we have a White House meeting, and if we can't meet with the President, when can we meet with the Vice President?"

And people, you know, in these circumstances were not satisfied with perhaps a pull-aside at a larger event like the G-20 or the U.N. GA. They wanted to have a White House meeting, if at all possible.

Q Did anything happen in that meeting that was out of the ordinary?

A Yes. At one point during that meeting, Ambassador Bolton was, you know, basically trying very hard not to commit to a meeting, because, you know -- and, again, these meetings have to be well-prepared. They're not just something that you say, yes, we're going to have a meeting without there being a clear understanding of what the content of that meeting is going to be.

And that is a perpetual problem for us, that many -- not all leaders but some, you know, want to really just have a photo opportunity often for their own purposes. I mean, legitimacy and legitimization of them as a new leader is obviously very important. That's not just an inconsequential issue.

But sometimes -- you know, the previous President Poroshenko very much wanted a White House meeting in the runup to his election, because he wanted to use that for his election campaign. We've had, you know, all kinds of leaders or people who are running for reelection actually try to ambush the President.

We had one candidate for election in one country that I won't state who showed up at the [redacted] State Fair and worked the rope line to get a picture with the President and then put it up on the website of his campaign, claiming that he'd had a personal meeting with the President. Well, you know, it was against a backdrop, so you couldn't see the cows in the background or, you know, the farm entity, but we all thought it was quite hysterical that they go to those lengths to work the rope line [redacted] to get a picture.

But this shows the importance that leaders put on meeting with our President, and having a White House meeting is obviously the most important of all. And Ambassador Bolton is always -- was always very cautious and always very much, you know, by the book and was not going to certainly commit to a meeting right there and then, certainly not one where it wasn't -- it was unclear what the content of the meeting would be about, what kind of issues that we would discuss that would be pertaining to Ukrainian-U.S. relations.

And Secretary Perry had been talking in this context

about the importance of reforming the energy structures in Ukraine in a very general sense and talking about how important that was for Ukrainian national security and that, as well as reforming their national security structures, they also have to, you know, really pay attention to their Achilles heel, all the places that Russia had leverage, the military sector, which Ambassador Bolton had also been talking about, and then the energy sector, which was really in some considerable disarray.

Then Ambassador Sondland blurted out: Well, we have an agreement with the Chief of Staff for a meeting if these investigations in the energy sector start.

And Ambassador Bolton immediately stiffened. He said words to the effect -- I can't say word for word what he said because I was behind them sitting on the sofa with our Senior Director of Energy, and we all kind of looked up and thought that was somewhat odd. And Ambassador Bolton immediately stiffened and ended the meeting.

Q Right then, he just ended the meeting?

A Yeah. He said: Well, it was very nice to see you. You know, I can't discuss a meeting at this time. We'll clearly work on this. And, you know, kind of it was really nice to see you.

So it was very abrupt. I mean, he looked at the clock as if he had, you know, suddenly another meeting and his time

was up, but it was obvious he ended the meeting.

Q And did you have a conversation with Ambassador Bolton after this meeting?

A I did.

Q Describe that.

A Ambassador Sondland said as he was leaving -- again, I was back -- to the back of Ambassador Bolton's office. And Ambassador Sondland said to Ambassador Volker and also Secretary Perry and the other people who were with him, including the Ukrainians, to come down to -- there's a room in the White House, the Ward Room, to basically talk about next steps. And that's also unusual. I mean, he meant to talk to the Ukrainians about next steps about the meeting.

And Ambassador --

Q The White House meeting?

A The White House meeting. And Ambassador Bolton pulled me back as I was walking out afterwards and said: Go down to the Ward Room right now and find out what they're talking about and come back and talk to me.

So I did go down. And I came in as there was obviously a discussion underway. And there was a very large group of people in the room. They were the aides to the Ukrainian officials, Mr. Yermak and Mr. Danylyuk. There were a couple, at least two State Department aides who had come over with Ambassador Sondland. There was Ambassador Volker's aide, and

there were a couple of other people. I weren't sure who they were, whether they'd been part of Secretary Perry's team. But as I was coming in, Secretary Perry was leaving to go off to another engagement. So I think that one person there was probably one of his team, but I'm not sure for certain, because I didn't recognize the person. And there was also our director for Ukrainian affairs.

And Ambassador Sondland, in front of the Ukrainians, as I came in, was talking about how he had an agreement with Chief of Staff Mulvaney for a meeting with the Ukrainians if they were going to go forward with investigations. And my director for Ukraine was looking completely alarmed. And I came in again as this discussion was underway. Mr. Danylyuk looked very alarmed as well. He didn't look like he knew what was going on. That wasn't the case with Yermak.

And I immediately said to Ambassador Sondland: Look, we can't discuss the meeting here with our Ukrainian colleagues. Ambassador Bolton sent me down to ask -- you know, kind of to make sure that you understand that we'll be talking about the meeting. We'll obviously be looking into this, but that we can't make any commitments at this particular juncture because a lot of things will have to be worked through in terms of the timing and the substance.

And Ambassador Sondland cut me off, and he said: We have an agreement that they'll have a meeting.

And I said: Look, we cannot discuss this in front of our colleagues. You know, we have to talk about, you know, the details of this.

And he said: Okay, okay, I get it.

And he asked the Ukrainians to basically leave the room. So they basically moved out into the corridor.

And I said: Look, I don't know what's going on here, but Ambassador Bolton wants to make it very clear that we have to talk about, you know, how are we going to set up this meeting. It has to go through proper procedures.

And he started to basically talk about discussions that he had had with the Chief of Staff. He mentioned Mr. Giuliani, but then I cut him off because I didn't want to get further into this discussion at all.

And I said: Look, we're the National Security Council. We're basically here to talk about how we set this up, and we're going to set this up in the right way. And, you know, Ambassador Bolton has asked me to make it completely clear that we're going to talk about this, and, you know, we will deal with this in the proper procedures. And Ambassador Sondland was clearly annoyed with this, but then, you know, he moved off. He said he had other meetings.

And I went back to talk to Ambassador Bolton. And Ambassador Bolton asked me to go over and report this to our NSC counsel, to John Eisenberg. And he told me, and this is

a direct quote from Ambassador Bolton: You go and tell Eisenberg that I am not part of whatever drug deal Sondland and Mulvaney are cooking up on this, and you go and tell him what you've heard and what I've said. So I went over to talk to John Eisenberg about this.

MR. GOLDMAN: We'll have to pick that up in the next round. Our time is up. Over to the minority.

THE CHAIRMAN: The minority is recognized.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q Good morning, Dr. Hill, Steve Castor with the Republican staff.

A Yes.

Q Ambassador Volker related his thoughts about the July 10th White House meeting. Was Secretary Perry involved with that, was he in the meeting?

A He wasn't in the Ward Room when I came in. He was leaving out. But he was in the meeting with Ambassador Bolton, correct.

Q The first part of the meeting?

A That is correct, yes.

Q Could you just run down the people that were in the meeting again? Danylyuk, Yermak.

A Yeah, Yermak's assistant or aide, whose name, I'm sorry, I don't recall. There was Wells Griffith, P. Wells Griffith, our senior director for energy. He and I were

sitting together on the sofa. There was Secretary Perry. There was our director for Ukraine, and there was Ambassador Volker and Alex Vindman, and there was Ambassador Bolton. And, again, there may have been another aide to --

Q Was Volker there?

A Volker was there. Yes, correct, he was there. And there may have been another aide to Secretary Perry. I'm just trying to think about the layout across the table. It's not a very big table. Because I think there was somebody else sitting in one of the chairs. And I'm afraid, I'm sorry, I can't recall who it was.

Q Did I get this right? You said Bolton wanted you to go down to John Eisenberg, and he said, "I'm not part of any drug deal"?

A That's exactly what he said, quote/unquote. I think he was being ironic. But he wasn't very happy. He was very angry.

Q Then you went down and spoke with Eisenberg?

A Yes, I went across to speak to him in the other building.

Q And what did you tell Eisenberg?

A I told Ambassador Eisenberg that Ambassador Bolton had instructed me to go over there right away. And I gave him the details of what had transpired in the meeting in Ambassador Bolton's office and then what I had overheard as I

came into the Ward Room and that my, you know, kind of primary concern for me personally was the fact that Ambassador Sondland was saying all of this in front of foreign nationals.

Now, the Ward Room is located right beside the Navy mess. It's inside really the secure spaces of the White House. Ambassador Sondland said he had requested this room through the Chief of Staff's Office, because I was a bit surprised that they had this room. We do meet with foreign delegations in there, but usually in a formal setting, not just for informal talks.

And when he pushed them also out of that, they were basically standing in a space between the Navy mess and the White House Sit Room. So this was an awkward setup, to say the least. So I also expressed those concerns to John, that then foreign nationals, you know, are just standing around in the corridor outside the Ward Room by the doors into the Sit Room.

Q The President sent a letter May 29th, are you familiar with that, where he congratulated Zelensky?

A I am familiar with that, right.

Q And at the end of the letter -- we can make it an exhibit if we need to, but the President says: I would like to invite you to meet with me at the White House in Washington, D.C., as soon as we can find a mutually

convenient time.

A Correct.

Q You're aware of that?

A Yes. And I also want to tell you that Ambassador Sondland told us that he had dictated that paragraph to the President and to the Chief of Staff to add to that letter.

That letter did not go through the normal NSC procedures because the initial draft of the letter that we had put in place was sent back to the Chief of Staff. So Ambassador Sondland coordinated on that letter directly with the Chief of Staff, and it did not go back through the National Security Council Exec Sec. I had to get that letter directly from the White House Exec Sec.

Q Is this an unusual statement to put in a letter?

A Not at all. I mean, it's the kind of thing that one would normally have in -- or might have in a letter, but I have to say, again, we were very cautious because it's not the case that you want actually every single head of state who's just been elected to come to the White House. So we would usually have something more generic, "We look forward to seeing you, you know, kind of at some future event," because a lot of heads of state we'd much prefer to meet with them on the margins of the U.N. General Assembly or NATO or, you know, some other event because, I mean, you can't have basically every week the President having to host some head

of state in the White House.

Q Is it fair to say sometimes these invitations are theoretically extended, but, in practicality, they don't come to fruition?

A That is correct. They're often done as a courtesy, you know, as one -- and the President has had invitations like that himself. You may remember he got an invitation from Theresa May on her first visit to the White House in 2017 for a state visit to the United Kingdom, and that took a long time to come about.

Q So is it fair to say it's part of the diplomatic pleasantries?

A That is correct.

Q Say, we'll bring you to the White House?

A But not always, because we don't always put that in. So, again, Ambassador Sondland specifically told us that he had had that paragraph inserted. And we were, again, somewhat nervous about that, because, again, when you make an invitation like that and an expectation is set up, you need to have a clear idea of the timeframe and then the nature of the discussions.

And at this particular point, we're still waiting for the elections to the Ukrainian Parliament. So I just want to put that on the record.

Q When was that going to be?

A That was going to be in July. Well, in actual fact, at that point -- I'll have to go back and check. Perhaps we can all check whether it had actually been announced because Zelensky was under a great deal of pressure internally, domestically, and also from the Russians.

There was, you know, speculation in all analytical circles, both in Ukraine and outside, that he might not be able to get a workable majority in the Ukrainian Parliament. And all of us are very cognizant of the dangers of writing congratulatory letters to people who can't form governments. We've had a number of letters, in fact, we had to pull back where heads of state that we congratulated then couldn't actually form a government.

And at that point, we were very hesitant to, you know, push forward with any invitation to Zelensky until we knew that he had a workable majority in the Rada and was then going to be able to form his own cabinet.

So myself and others were actually cautioning against extending an invitation at that particular point until we knew that Zelensky would form a government. We were also extremely concerned about Zelensky's relationship with the gentleman Igor Kolomoisky, the Ukrainian oligarch, who was -- the oligarch who was basically the owner of the TV and production company that Mr. Zelensky's famous Servant of the People program had been part of.

And, of course, our analysts and our Embassy and others were watching very closely -- and this is playing out now in the press and public -- to see how much influence Mr. Kolomoisky might have on Zelensky or on government formation.

And Kolomoisky is someone who the U.S. Government has been concerned about for some time, having been suspected and, indeed, proven to have embezzled money, American taxpayers' money, from a bank that was subsequently nationalized, PrivatBank. And he had gone into exile in Israel in this particular timeframe.

Q Is he back in Ukraine?

A So we were watching -- he's gone back to Ukraine. So we were watching for exactly these kinds of eventualities and were very reluctant at that point to put a meeting on the agenda, push for a meeting until we could see how the complexities of Ukrainian politics would play out.

Q What were your thoughts on Zelensky in the runup to his election victory?

A I had an open mind about him. He was, you know, somebody, you know, completely, you know, out of the -- from outside the political realm. Obviously, you know, we asked our analysts to, you know, get us as much information as they could.

And, as I said, the one question we had was really

whether he would be able to act independently. He would obviously need a major Parliamentary majority for this or a significant Parliamentary majority, and whether someone like Igor Kolomoisky or other oligarchs would try to predate upon his Presidency.

Q Did you believe he was genuinely campaigning on being an anticorruption champion?

A There was a good chance that he was. And I'm always one of the people, you know, trust but verify. So I wanted to have a bit more information about him.

Q Had Poroshenko's time run out, you think?

A Poroshenko's time had definitely run out.

I also want to say that, you know, in this timeframe, we were being very careful in the runup to the elections not to appear, as the previous administration had done, to tip our hat in the election.

And we all remember the notorious phone call that the Russians basically intercepted and then put on YouTube of Assistant Secretary Victoria Nuland talking to our Ambassador Geoff Pyatt at the time about decisions about who should be Prime Minister of Ukraine and the very damaging effect that that had. So we were trying to ensure at that time --

Q When did that occur?

A That was during the -- gosh, when was that -- one of the many upheavals in Ukrainian politics back in the

2000s. I'll have to come back to you. That's one of those, you know, trivia questions I would have failed in my pub quiz there.

But, basically, you will all remember that it was intercepted by the Russians. It was a question of then-Prime Minister Yatseniuk about who would be more preferable for the United States. And we had determined as a government that we weren't going to play that game. We were not going to try to in any case -- in any shape or form suggest that Poroshenko was our candidate or that we had a preference for Zelensky or any of the other candidates that were running in the Presidential race.

And that had made President Poroshenko very uncomfortable and he had been agitating for some kind of meeting in that timeframe, including with the Vice President or someone as well.

Q It's been posited that Ambassador Yovanovitch was close to Poroshenko, whether that's true or untrue.

A That's rubbish, just to be very clear. Then anybody in the government who is interacting with Poroshenko, including the Vice President, was -- and the President was close to Poroshenko, and that's just not true.

Q When was it clear that Poroshenko's time was up?

A I think it became, you know, very obvious in his handling of, you know, various issues. The Kerch Strait

incident could very well have been handled differently.

Q When was that?

A That was in November of 2018. They have a perfect right to send their ships through the Kerch Strait, but it seemed to us that this action, you know, was taken -- it was taken on the eve of the armistice commemorations in France, where we'd already announced that there was going to be a meeting between the President and President Putin. There was a lot of scrutiny on other major events.

And it seemed to have been done not just with a freedom of navigation goal in mind, which, again, is completely acceptable and the right of the Ukrainians, but also to gain maximum attention.

And there was a miscalculation there. Perhaps the Ukrainians -- this is speculation on my part, but I think it bears on an analytical basis rather than on anything else -- that President Poroshenko thought that the Russians would catch and release, that they would, you know, perhaps attempt to detain the ships, not that there would be a fire fight, which is actually what happened. I mean, those ships were shot on by a Russian helicopter, and one of the seamen, the sailors, was injured. And I don't think he anticipated they'd seize both vessels and take the sailors off to Moscow.

Q Was it clear that Zelensky was going to be the winner?

A It was not.

Q So it was trending not towards Poroshenko, but it was going to be Zelensky or a third candidate?

A Yeah. I mean, all the analysis, we had many updates at the time we were doing. In fact, the Embassy in Ukraine was doing some really excellent work on polling and on, you know, kind of outreach to Ukrainian citizens and their think tanks. And it was clear that Poroshenko was polling in the single digits, so it was an uphill battle for him if it was a free and fair election.

So our focus was on encouraging all parts of the Ukrainian establishment to have a free and fair election, and signaling to Poroshenko that if he tried to steal the election, this would not be acknowledged by the U.S. Government, that we were watching this. And to be fair to Poroshenko, he really did run a free and fair election. It was something the Russians didn't expect, and it was something I think that a lot of people did not expect.

Q How confident were you that Zelensky would be able to get the margins he needed to form a parliament or to form a majority?

A Not especially confident, to be honest, given the pressures that he was facing and also the role of the Russians in obviously targeting the Ukrainian elections as well. You have to remember that before, you know, the

Russians targeted us and targeted other European countries around their elections, they targeted Ukraine as well. And it was well-documented that the Russians were trying to run their own candidates, people with affiliations with Russian businesses, Russian oligarchs, and with the Kremlin.

Q But, ultimately, he was able to do that in the July election?

A He was, because I think everyone has always underestimated the Ukrainian people's political sentiment and grassroots.

Q Ambassador Volker, you touched on it a little bit in the first hour, what was his portfolio?

A His portfolio was to conduct, as best he could, the negotiations or give the United States a role in the negotiations with the Russians and the Ukrainians to find resolution to the war in Donbas.

So his portfolio covered interactions with the Normandy format Minsk group, the French and the Germans and the Ukrainians and Russians in that context. He was responsible for meetings with President Putin's designated Ukrainian envoy to the Ukrainian conflict, Mr. Sokov. That in itself is a challenge. Sokov is a political operator of the highest caliber and, you know, very well-known in Russian circles. And also to deal with other European leaders who have been, you know, actively involved and engaging with Ukraine, and

our other allies, the Canadians, you know, NATO and others. But it was very much focused on the resolution of the conflict in Donbas.

Q With Ambassador Sondland's self-asserted authority over at least parts of the Ukrainian portfolio, who are the other relevant U.S. officials, not Rudy Giuliani, but relevant U.S. officials involved with Ukraine policy at this point?

A In terms of across the interagency, the equivalent Assistant Secretaries and Deputy Assistant Secretaries of Defense and at State. So --

Q Who are they?

A George Kent is the DAS in charge of Ukraine at the State Department. Wess Mitchell was previously the Assistant Secretary, but he left in February of 2019, February of 2019. Does that sound right?

And Phil Reeker came in as Acting Assistant Secretary, having been the special adviser to EUCOM, only really in April-May. So he was actually dual-hatted until the retirement of General Scaparrotti. He was his chief adviser. So he was, you know, doing two jobs at once. So I think he was appointed of -- named as Acting Assistant Secretary, but he only really was coming into the job in April.

And then, in terms of -- the DAS is Laura Cooper at the Defense Department. Then -- well, we also had had a number

of changes over there. I mean, the Defense Department, there was a whole range of people who were involved in this, because of just the nature of assistance to Ukraine. We'd also had General Abizaid, who had been a chief military adviser to Ukraine. He was replaced by Keith Dayton, General Keith Dayton, who is the head of Garmisch -- our military school at Garmisch.

So you had a broad range of people, people also at, obviously, OMB, Departments of Commerce, USTR. There's a broad range of people who were involved in one way or another on Ukraine portfolio. Department of Justice, the FBI. We had a Department of Justice team working, and also in our Intel agencies as well.

Q And in your directorate, could you help us understand how your directorate was set up?

A We had one director for Ukraine, who at this particular juncture was Alex Vindman. Our previous director -- who was detailed from the Defense Department, he had been -- well, he still is -- a foreign area officer detailed to the Chairman's Office, the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He had been General Dunford's key action officer for interactions with the Russians.

Q And who's that?

A For interactions, this is Alex Vindman.

Q Okay. This is Alex Vindman. Is he still there?

A I'm just giving you his background. To the best of my knowledge, he's still there. His predecessor was Catherine Croft, who was previously the Ukraine desk officer at the State Department, and she went to work for Kurt Volker as his deputy, but only in the very last couple of months.

Q How many officials on your staff concentrated on Ukraine?

A Only Alex Vindman.

Q How many personnel did you have in your organization?

A As you're aware, there was an effort to streamline the National Security Council. [redacted] So, basically, we didn't replace people when they rotated out of detail. So some people had enormous portfolios.

And Alex Vindman had initially been taken on by my -- the other senior director in -- the director with me, Colonel Rich Hooker, who had been, you know, very interested, obviously, in defense-related issues.

And we initially brought him on to look at the totality of Russian defense-related issues, but then there was a determination during -- in the course of the streamlining of the NSC that that should all be concentrated in our defense directorate. So another person had been taken on there to focus on those related issues who would work closely. So we

moved Alex to work on Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova.

Q When did that occur?

A So he wasn't hired primarily -- it had occurred when Catherine Croft left.

Q When was that?

A That would be sometime toward the end of the summer of 2018. Every year, in the summer of -- the summer we have a rotation of detailees. Most people are there for a year. Some people get permission from their agencies for 18 months. And on rare occasions people are seconded for 2 years, but only if their department is willing to pay.

And there was a big debate while I was there that people here may recall about whether departments and agencies were going to pay for additional time beyond the 1 year.

Q And what agencies do you draw the detailees from?

A Every agency, if we can.

Q Such as?

A Every agency that we can that will detail someone. I mean, it's rare to have --

Q Well, in your tenure, what were the agencies supplying detailees?

A Well, it depended, again, on the memorandums of understanding. When I first started, the majority were from the State Department. But the State Department, when Secretary Tillerson came in, was refusing to let people stay

for longer than a year, and there was also some questions back and forth about the downsizing of the State Department.

DOD initially were more receptive to putting forward particularly foreign area officers and particularly people from JCS. And there were a lot of detailees from DOD in the time that I was there across the NSC and all directorates.

[redacted]

I was trying to get someone actually from Commerce, because I felt like we needed, you know, kind of a diversity of views, especially since an awful lot of the issues that we were dealing with related to trade, especially when it came to Europe but also with many other countries. And although that was in our International Economics division, it was very helpful to have people with, you know, broader backgrounds.

We had also detailees from Treasury, although Treasury itself, they got short-staffed and were trying to recall some of their deputies in that time.

And let me just see if I've missed anyone. And then --

Q Which [redacted]?

A I think in some cases, that would be classified.

Q And in total, you had anywhere from 10 to 14 people under your supervision?

A At some times, it was only [redacted] because, often with the detailees changing over, we could go weeks, you know, I see [redacted]

[redacted] could attest that, when you have a changeover of detailees, it often takes a long time for people to come in, and you might be really short-staffed.

So I have been literally down to [redacted] directors, you know, kind of total, and myself have acted as a director and at different times have had to ask our special assistant. We also had a number of special assistants. In my case, we were down to only [redacted] special assistant.

Q The --

A And often that was how people's portfolios ended up getting determined. So we had one colleague who had to cover the entirety of the eastern flank of NATO, I mean 20-plus countries because, when [redacted] came in, the other previous [redacted] directors who were divided up between them had left. And [redacted] did that job for several months and actually did it so well that we decided not to hire an extra deputy. [redacted] was basically working 18-hour days, however.

Q Switching gears back to the July 10th meeting.

A Yes.

Q The next sort of key event was the July 25th call with President Trump and President Zelensky. You had left shortly prior --

A I had.

Q -- prior to the call. But what was the preparation for that call underway?

A It was not because the call had not been announced when I left.

Q So you didn't know the call was scheduled --

A I did not.

Q -- as of July 19th?

A As of July 19th, I did not know it was scheduled. And on July 15th was the last day that I had formal interagency meetings. And from July 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th, I had meetings myself just to wrap up and, you know, kind of basically pass on information about the portfolio to relevant people, including across the interagency.

Q Who did you pass your portfolio on to?

A I passed my portfolio on to Tim Morrison. And so any meetings that were pertinent to Ukraine in that timeframe of that week, he attended with Alex Vindman, although actually, to be honest, I think he was traveling in that period. He went to take part in -- he may have been back by the Thursday -- an arms control meeting with the State Department because he came over, as you know, from being the senior director for arms control.

Q Did he at any point work for you, Morrison?

A Work for me?

Q Yes.

A No, he did not. He was my counterpart in weapons of mass destruction.

Q Then he came over to take your job?

A Correct.

Q Why did you decide to leave the White House?

A I had always said when I came in: I'm a nonpartisan, nonpolitical appointee. I was hired, in fact, by General Flynn, K.T. McFarland, and General Kellogg. And when they first approached me and asked me if I would be willing to do this, I had previously taken a leave from Brookings, I was on IPA to the National Intelligence Office.

So I had actually worked with General Flynn when he was working for Admiral Mullen at the Joint Chiefs of Staff when I was a National Intelligence Officer. And I said that I couldn't commit to longer than 2 years, maximum. In actual fact, I stayed longer because I agreed to help with transition, finding new directors, and also trying to find a successor and to be able to do a handover. And I said I was willing to stay no later than the end of the year to do this. And Tim Morrison wanted to start on July 15th.

Q So you're nonpartisan?

A I am nonpartisan.

Q In this current environment we're in, it's --

A That's actually why I took the job. Because in this current environment we're in, I think it's extremely

important for people who are nonpartisan to serve in government positions.

Q At any point as you were on-boarding, was it -- did you find that you were ostracized because you weren't associated with the more partisan side of the house?

A I got ostracized by --

MR. WOLOSKY: What do you mean? Ostracized by whom?

DR. HILL: Yeah, by whom? Not by anybody in the Republican Party, but I did have a colleague who had previously --

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q Like were you --

A -- who has not spoken to me since I took the job, but for the opposite reasons from what you are suggesting.

Q And how would you characterize, were you a supporter of the President? Were you agnostic?

A I was agnostic. And I don't think that there's anything wrong with that either. I was, basically, like I said, in the case of Zelensky and many others, I think everyone should have a very open mind. And I think it's very important to serve your country and to serve the President and the Presidency, you know, as being duly elected.

And I thought it was very important to step up, as an expert, as somebody who's been working on Russia for basically my whole entire adult life, given what had happened

in 2016 and given the peril that I actually thought that we were in as a democracy, given what the Russians I know to have done in the course of the 2016 elections.

Q So you say you were agnostic on the President, so you hadn't been a critic of the President?

A I had not. There are a couple of articles where I expressed some, you know, skepticism about how his relationship would be with Putin that, you know, kind of perhaps didn't prove to be true, but anyway.

So, I mean, you can look back and, you know, see that, you know, I suggested they might not get along, you know, kind of because, you know, given the different natures of the individuals, I thought, you know, there might be some friction.

Q At any point, did you find yourself becoming a critic of the President?

A I did not. And if I had done, I would have left right away, and I left only on terms. And a lot of people -- and I'm just going to put this out there. You haven't asked the question, but I have been accused of it many times. I did not write Anonymous. I am not Anonymous. So just to say that because --

Q I didn't ask you that.

A -- Lee has been having endless phone calls from people, and I was accused of that within the White House. It

was the most uncomfortable time that I had. It was the only time when I experienced discomfort. Because of people parsing everything I had written. And Michael Anton, who was the head of the press at that time, was fielding endless calls from people saying that I was Anonymous. And I was not, and I will state it for the record: I was not.

Q But you didn't leave the White House because you found yourself becoming a critic of the President?

A No, I didn't. I had given myself 2 years. I stayed longer than that. But, as a nonpartisan person, I did not want to be part of the campaign --

Q And even since you've left the White House, you don't find yourself as a critic of the President?

A I have not returned to the Brookings Institution. I'm on leave. And I have not taken on any speaking engagements. I am not writing a book. I am basically trying to keep my head down, you know, while everybody else is trying to do their jobs. I worked with the most unbelievably professional first-rate team of people, both political and nonpolitical, in the time I was at the NSC, and I want to give them the space to do their jobs.

Q The July 25th call, who would ordinarily be a participant on that call?

A That really could vary because it also, you know, depends -- I mean, there were calls that I would have been

ordinarily on, but I wasn't there or present. I might have been in another meeting or I might not have actually been physically in the building.

So it would usually be -- well, again, it often would be selected by the front office of the National Security Advisor as well as, you know, the kind of the broader White House team. You would imagine someone from the Chief of Staff's Office, someone representing the National Security Advisor, which could be the deputy. It could be myself, as the senior director, or the director if I'm not present. Someone from the Vice President's staff. Often someone from press or the White House counsel.

And if there was an anticipation that a particular topic in somebody else's area of responsibility would come up -- say, it's a call with Chancellor Merkel and she wants to talk about -- let's just pick a random -- Libya, then the director who has responsibility and the senior directors for Libya would basically also be present.

So I can't say for sure, you know, who would normally have been in those meetings, but that's usually -- I mean -- and then you have the White House Situation Room staff, and then other Cabinet members can call in as well.

Now, also remember that there's another side to all of these calls. So, while people start parsing who's in our calls, all of those calls could very easily be being recorded

as well as transcribed by a very large phalanx of other people on the other side of the call. And I will, you know, refer you to look at pictures that, for example, President Erdogan of Turkey would frequently release with himself listening to the call with about as many people as are sitting here in this room.

[12:33 p.m.]

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q Did you speak with anyone? You had left on the 19th, but had you spoken to anybody about the call?

A I did not. I was on vacation [redacted]. And at the time the phone call took place, I think, based on my date-stamp on my phones, I was snorkeling.

VOICE: You were under water.

DR. HILL: I was under water, yeah. It was a pretty good alibi. I didn't take underwater pictures, but, you know, I can basically --

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q So you didn't receive any read-outs of the call --

A I did not.

Q -- until it became public --

A I did not.

Q -- on the 25th?

A No, I did not. I'd actually asked people -- I said I'd promise I would check my email once a day -- and there was a big time difference as well, so that was quite -- and I would forward on to them anything that they needed to deal with and, otherwise, I would prefer if they didn't call me.

Q Okay. But you were getting your email, so you saw the traffic from your --

A That was the first I saw that there was a call.

Q Right. And were there any --

A And I didn't see anything after that call at all.

Q Were there any unclassified read-outs on emails?

A There were not. I mean, they don't normally do that at all.

Q Okay.

A And, usually, any preparation is done on a more secure system, because one should assume that, in those kinds of emails, anybody could be reading them.

Q Right.

When is the first time you learned about the call and its nature?

A Really when it was started to be made public. The first hint that I got that there might have been some discomfort about it was when I was handing back in my badge on September 3rd.

Q Uh-huh.

A And I went in to talk to my office, and I said, how are things going, and people said, well, not great. And I thought, well, okay, something is up. But there wasn't any -- I mean, I was coming in to hand in my badge, so I was technically no longer --

Q Uh-huh.

A And I had a very brief discussion with Tim Morrison, and he didn't mention the call at all. He did take

the time to tell me that Gordon Sondland was apparently glad that I had gone. So I thought, well, that was a rather pointed message from Ambassador Sondland. But I didn't take that to be about the call or anything else. It just seemed to be a fairly gratuitous, you know, kind of messaging as I was leaving.

Q So Ambassador Sondland didn't attend your farewell party?

A He didn't. No.

Q Did you have one?

A Sort of.

Q And when was that?

A That would've been in the week I was leaving. I can't remember when it was, honestly.

Q But back in July?

A June or July, yeah.

Q Where was it?

A It was just in the White House. We had a lot of farewell parties in that period. Well, it was because people are rotating out, and everybody likes to go and relax and see their friends.

MR. JORDAN: Doctor, you mentioned on September 3rd you got a hint of the call or the content of --

DR. HILL: No, I had more a hint that something was up, but I didn't know exactly what.

MR. JORDAN: Not a hint of the call, just a hint that something was up.

DR. HILL: Yeah. People didn't look very happy in my directorate.

MR. JORDAN: Okay.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q Who did you speak with when you came to turn in your badge?

A I spoke to resource management, the financial people, the ethics people. And I also did have a very brief discussion with John Eisenberg and Michael Ellis, who I met with very frequently on a whole number of issues and had a really excellent, you know, professional relationship with.

And I asked them if there was anything that I should be mindful of as I was leaving, in terms of communications. Because I'd seen an email suggesting, again, that we had to keep all communications related to Ukraine. There'd been an email sometime in that timeframe. And I just wanted to tell them that I'd put everything into the records, and was there anything that I needed to know, and they didn't indicate that there was.

Q Did you talk to Vindman?

A I did not talk to Alex Vindman, no.

Q What did Eisenberg and Ellis tell you about your records?

A They said that, as long as I was having no, you know, kind of official communications, that there was no, you know, reason to be concerned, and just asked me what I'd done with all of my records.

Q Like, all your notes that you take in meetings?

A Correct. And I'd already filed all of those with the records office on the 19th.

Q Okay. So you didn't take any --

A I took nothing with me.

Q -- of your own notes with you?

A No. All I took with me was my -- the ethics and, you know, financial agreements. And the reason that I didn't hand my badge in until September 3rd -- because I was on vacation until the 30th -- is that you have to fill out all the ethics paperwork on your last -- or immediately after your last payday.

Q Yeah.

A And you can only then sign out of all of the resource management. It's just, you know, kind of a bureaucratic thing.

MR. JORDAN: Doctor, you said you learned about the call about the time of when it was public. Does that mean you learned about it prior to the 25th? Or when did you learn about the contents and the nature of the call?

MR. WOLOSKY: I believe that misstates her prior

testimony over when she learned about the call, when she continued to have access to her nonclassified email. The record will speak for itself.

MR. JORDAN: No, but she -- earlier, she said -- she said a hint of a call, and she clarified that and said that wasn't about the call necessarily, just a hint of something.

DR. HILL: Yeah, I was alert to the fact that people didn't look happy and something was up, but I didn't put it together with the call.

MR. JORDAN: And there was no time between September 3rd, when you had a hint of something up, and September 25th that you learned about the contents of the call?

DR. HILL: No, I did not learn about the contents of the call. I did learn, as a result of lots of media calling me -- I was with [redacted], and I had very poor -- [redacted] has a WiFi router that doesn't extend beyond, you know, kind of, basically this desk. I had to sit on it to basically get a text. And I basically ran through my entire data plan. And when I eventually called [redacted] to get the data plan extended, [redacted]

When it came back on, I had found I had just bazillions of texts and emails from press. And I didn't know what was

going on. And I texted [redacted] -- it was clearly about NSC and a call. And I texted [redacted], who was not actually directly related to all of this, and said, what's going on? What I do need to know? Why am I getting all of these calls? And [redacted] said, it's the whistleblower account, and it's related to the Ukraine call.

MR. JORDAN: That was before the 25th?

DR. HILL: That would've been -- because I came back on the 25th with [redacted], so it was in the couple of days before that. I basically read about everything as I was sitting in Newark Airport in the transit area with [redacted].

MR. JORDAN: Uh-huh. And who was [redacted]?

DR. HILL: The [redacted] didn't know -- I mean, again, [redacted].

And we kept a very close separation of issues, especially on Russia. Russia was highly coordinated, highly professional. And we kept all the Russia stuff out of everything else, because there was a tendency for people to leak information about Russia, and we wanted to make sure that that did not happen.

MR. ZELDIN: If I -- excuse me. If I could ask a quick followup on that?

So, earlier on in your testimony, you stated that you like to keep your head down. Even without being asked, you stated that you're not the person who wrote the anonymous New York Times --

DR. HILL: I've been asked about every single other time by every imaginable press person, and all of the people who are emailing me, who don't know me, are asking that. So I thought I would just get it on the record so that it's not, you know, kind of, a question that is all hovering over people's minds.

MR. ZELDIN: Yeah, no, I appreciate that. But that's why your last answer just sparked my interest, and I just wanted to ask a followup question. How would so many in the media have your phone number?

DR. HILL: I used to work at a think tank, the Brookings Institution. In fact, I'm --

MR. ZELDIN: It was all from before you were in the White House?

DR. HILL: -- I am technically, you know, supposed to go back there. And I haven't gone back there because you can't really shelter in place at somewhere like the Brookings Institution when something like this is going on. And what I mean by that is, I'm obliged as part of the job as a senior fellow to talk to the media and to the press and to make public pronouncements.

MR. ZELDIN: So --

DR. HILL: And Brookings has, very sadly, [redacted].

MR. ZELDIN: Okay. But you weren't giving out your phone number to the media while in your position at the White House?

DR. HILL: No.

And I'll be very clear, and you can ask any of the press directors, that I only ever gave background interviews at the request of the White House, including the press secretary on the NSC, with NSC press or White House press available. I never, on any occasion, talked to the media outside of those circumstances -- background, authorized interviews. I did not leak any information. I did not talk to the press.

I was accused of many things, and that's why I'm just saying that it gets my back up when people like Masha Yovanovitch and others were accused baselessly of doing all kinds of improper activity.

And I did not leak, and I was not Anonymous. I am not the whistleblower. And I'm not the second whistleblower. Just get this all for the record so we have it all out there and you don't have to ask any more questions about that.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q Yeah, well, you know, if I may just walk you

through this. We first heard about you coming in for today's all-day interview, all-day deposition, last Wednesday night. Nobody told us earlier than Wednesday. I contacted your lawyer on Thursday to try to find out a little bit more information and was unable to connect with your lawyer. We were in here all day Friday. And, finally, I connected with your lawyer for about 5 minutes last night.

And so you have to understand that when we're trying to prepare ourselves and prepare our members, we are being kept in the dark. So you just have to excuse the fact that we're going to have some questions about who were the people you worked for.

A No, I completely understand. And I think, you know, my reaction is not because of you at all. I mean, it's the, you know, kind of, just the onslaught that I have been getting. I've had media inquiries and, you know, people I don't know at all --

Q Got it.

A -- you know, working -- I'm on YouTube. I'm, you know, on the internet.

Q Okay.

A My [redacted] is panicked that, you know, kind of, [redacted] going to be targeted. You know, there are --

Q Well, certainly, that is --

A So I'm responding to, you know, all these

suspicions about who I am as a person. And, again, I am a nonpartisan professional. And that's just what I wanted to have on the record.

Q Dr. Hill, we appreciate your service and have enormous respect for you and, you know, the like-minded nonpartisan people that serve in the National Security Council. And, good heavens, anything that can be likened to a threat and anything with [redacted], good heavens, that is something that nobody, on the Republican side or the Democratic side, will --

A No, I'm aware that this is not you at all. It's just, as you said, when you asked me a question before, given the environment --

Q But just let me be clear that we find that type of thing to be absolutely abhorrent, and we want to assist you in any way possible to minimize that.

A No, I appreciate that.

Q Can you help us understand, like, when is the first time you heard the committee had an interest in speaking with you?

MR. WOLOSKY: I'm going to instruct her not to answer that question to the extent that it calls for communications with her attorney that are covered by attorney-client privilege.

MR. CASTOR: Okay.

Like, how did they know you were represented by Mr. Wolosky then?

DR. HILL: When I asked Mr. Wolosky to --

MR. CASTOR: And when -- like, was it earlier than last Wednesday?

MR. WOLOSKY: Yeah, I mean, I think that if you want to ask a question to the witness, she will answer the question to the extent that she has personal knowledge. If you want to ask a question to me, I'm not the witness in these proceedings.

MR. CASTOR: I don't want to ask a question of you.

I just want to know generally when you first became aware the committee had an interest in speaking with you.

DR. HILL: I became aware of it, actually, when the chairman released the letter publicly about what the -- because, you know, my title is on that list. It said current and former.

MR. CASTOR: Okay.

DR. HILL: And so I assumed --

MR. CASTOR: Okay.

DR. HILL: -- and I hope that it was a correct assumption -- based on the very thorough list of all the people that you intended to call for depositions, that that would cover me.

MR. CASTOR: Okay.

DR. HILL: Now, the title has changed somewhat. It was Europe and Russia when I was the senior director. It's been changed to European Affairs or, you know, European Issues or whatever it's been changed to now.

MR. CASTOR: Okay. And do you remember when that was, generally?

DR. HILL: Well, whenever the chairman published the letter that was put in the media.

MR. CASTOR: When is the first time you learned the committee attempted to contact you specifically?

DR. HILL: I saw that my name was on -- oh, not my name, not my name in person, but my function and my job -- was on the list. So I assumed that, at some point, I would be asked to testify or to speak to someone in some fashion.

And I've known Lee for 30 years. And on my first day back, [redacted] came up to me and said, [redacted] you need a lawyer. And I thought, who do I know? Oh, I know Lee.

MR. CASTOR: And when was that, the 25th?

MR. WOLOSKY: Thank you for the endorsement.

DR. HILL: I know he's a great lawyer. I know he's a great lawyer, just to add to all of that. But I've known him

since before he was a lawyer. Lee's like, great, now I'm going to have no more clients. Anyway, sorry. Oops.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q Which [redacted]

[redacted] does [redacted] work for?

A [redacted] does not. [redacted] used to work for the [redacted].

Q For what?

A I'm not going to bring [redacted] into this. [redacted].

Q I'm not asking you for [redacted] name. [redacted].

A Well, [redacted] did [redacted] for, you know, the government. [redacted] pursued white-collar crime. [redacted].

I mean, I was somewhat disturbed, [redacted], [redacted] would tell me that I should -- and I dismissed it at first, but then, as the news media picked up on this, I thought [redacted] was probably right.

Q And when did you first realize that, indeed, they wanted to speak with you?

A Well, that's when --

MR. WOLOSKY: I mean, again, to the extent that that involves communications with me, I'm going to instruct her not to answer that question.

MR. CASTOR: Uh-huh.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q The documents produced last night, are you familiar with what was produced on your behalf?

A The -- yes, I am. Yeah.

Q And what were the circumstances, to the extent you know, not involving communications with your lawyer, but how was that produced? Your calendar entries, is that something that you had with you?

A I didn't actually have it with me.

Q Okay. There was a range.

A My assistant at the National Security Council --

Q Okay.

A -- actually kept the calendar. And it's only -- but only for the year in which he was working there.

Q Right.

A And I was asked to, you know, obviously, establish a timeline, you know, and what meetings I would've been available in. And I asked him if he had kept a copy of the

calendar that I would be able to refer to to make sure that we got at least, you know, kind of, the meetings that the committee was most interested in in sequence.

Q The handwritten notes on the calendar, is that --

A That was just me circling --

Q Okay.

A -- you know, what I thought would be most pertinent, and also pointing out that I wasn't -- because the calendar had entries for after I had already left.

Q Sure. I think on the 19th it said --

A I'd gone or something, on vacation, or handed over the --

Q And is that your handwriting?

A Yeah, that's my handwriting. Because he gave it to me and I looked. And I only had one copy of this.

Q Okay.

A And, again, this is me trying to establish the facts as best I can, because, as you know -- you know it. I mean, I can't have total recall of every --

Q Oh, of course not.

A -- you know, single timing and things as well.

Q And I don't expect you to.

A Yeah. Yeah.

MR. WOLOSKY: Can I have just 1 minute?

DR. HILL: Yeah. Please. Yeah.

[Discussion off the record.]

DR. HILL: Yeah, I just also wanted to mention that, you know, obviously, in terms of documents and document retention, everything was filed in accordance with the requirements from records.

And I had asked on that last day that I was in the office, on September 3rd, if I could have a copy for reference of my contacts database, because I wanted to be able to pass on to Tim Morrison and to other colleagues names of ambassadors and ambassadors' staff. And all of those things are unaccessible to your successor when you leave. I mean, the accounts are all closed down.

And that was the similar -- I asked if my assistant, who was actually working in the transition period for Tim Morrison, could have access to the calendar that he had kept for me in that time so that Tim and others would be able to refer back to when I had a particular meeting. Because, I mean, it's obviously important for the Presidential record and for, you know, recordkeeping and for directorate continuity purposes to know when the predecessor met with whom, you know, which ambassador or, you know, which other official.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q You always had a good relationship with Ambassador Volker?

A I did. Very good relationship with him.

Q I think we're clear where you stand with Ambassador Sondland, but --

A I actually had a very good relationship, I thought, at the very beginning with Ambassador Sondland. But the unfortunate thing was I had a blow-up with him --

Q Right.

A -- in June, when he told me that he was in charge of Ukraine, because initially I said to him, "You're not," with that kind of, you know, surprise and probably irritation in my voice.

Q Right. Right.

A And then he got testy with me. And I said, who has put you in charge of it? It seemed like, hi, I'm in charge. You know, there's no ambassador here. Well, at that point, Charge -- Ambassador Taylor had been sent out.

And I said, who has said you're in charge of Ukraine, Gordon? And he said, the President. Well, that shut me up, because you can't really argue with that. But then I wasn't -- to be honest, I wasn't really sure.

Q But Ambassador Volker always acted with integrity?

A He did.

Q In the interest of the United States?

A He did. I have to say, though, that we did say to him that we did not think it was a good idea for him talking

to Rudy Giuliani.

Q And how did he respond to that?

A He said that he thought that he would be able to -- I don't think he used exactly these words, but be able to reason with him and to, you know, kind of, basically, you know, manage this. Well, we did not think that this was manageable.

And Ambassador Bolton made it very clear that nobody should be talking to Rudy Giuliani, on our team or anybody else should be.

Q You may have had a disagreement with Ambassador Sondland, like you just recounted, but, I mean, he always was acting in the best interests of the United States, to the best of your knowledge, correct?

A To the best of my knowledge, correct.

Q Okay. He --

A Ambassador Sondland, I'm afraid, you know, I felt, you know, as I mentioned before, he was driving along on the road. You know, he'd just gone off the road. No guardrails, no GPS.

Q Right.

A And my main concern, that he was wading into, not just on Ukraine but many other issues, everything which he was not being properly briefed. And we reached out to his team at the EU mission, and they weren't giving him briefings

on this.

Q Right.

A And, again, that's why I asked [redacted] to try to find some time to sit with him and to encourage him again not to use his personal phone, not to use other people's personal phone, not to give people's personal phone numbers out.

Q Yeah.

A I mean, he -- I am pretty confident that he was, you know, doing what he thought was, you know, the right thing to get agreements made and to further relationships, but he wasn't doing it in a way that was, you know, going to basically make for good process. And he was also doing this in a way that I thought put him at risk.

Q Who is "we"? You said "we."

A Ambassador Bolton, Assistant Secretary Reeker, Under Secretary Hale, Deputy Assistant Kent.

Q Okay.

A I could just go on and on.

I mean -- and, also, we had complaints from other ambassadors about Ambassador Sondland, that he was wading into their areas. He would show up in their countries without being, you know, kind of -- without really much foreknowledge. In some cases they were pleased, and in other cases they were not. And he would piggyback onto other

people's visits when they wanted to, you know, basically, as the ambassador, shepherd their head of state to visit, and he would be there too.

Q And he wasn't a Foreign Service officer. He was new to the experience, right?

A He was new to the experience. I mean, he was clearly, you know, a savvy guy. He's charming. He's funny. He was well-meaning. I mean, a lot of the stories that have been in the press about him paying for things, actually I think he was doing that out of generosity. He was truly trying to build up morale in his embassy. His embassy loved, you know, the kind of treats and things that he would get for them. He was trying to create happy hours.

I think he was, in the spirit of being, obviously, a pretty good hotelier, he was, you know, trying to do the hospitality part of the embassy, which is actually an important part of being an ambassador.

Q Ambassador Volker related to us that he was engaging with Mr. Giuliani because he believed that Giuliani was amplifying a negative narrative and he had the ear of the President, and so he was trying to make the best of this truism. Is that a --

A That's exactly what he told me as well. I mean, I beg to differ, because I didn't think that this was actually going to be very helpful. Because the more you engage with

someone who is spreading untruths, the more validity you give to those untruths.

Q But Volker's initiatives here and Sondland's initiatives here, is it your testimony that you believe they were trying to do what's in the best interests of the United States?

A I do believe that they were trying to do that.

Q All right. And they're men of integrity?

A I know Kurt Volker definitely to be a man of integrity. And in terms of Gordon Sondland, based on my interactions with him, I've already expressed the concerns, but I can't say that he's not a man of integrity.

And he definitely was very enthusiastic in all of our early initial meetings about serving the United States, serving the President, and really trying to do as good a job as possible to also patch up our relations with the European Union, which were quite rocky.

And, you know, from all reports that I was getting back from EU ambassadors, they actually appreciated his outreach and felt that he was very open --

Q Right.

A -- and they thought, you know, he was really trying very hard.

Q Okay. So he wasn't part of the Lev Parnas and Igor Fruman --

A I don't think he even knew who those gentlemen were --

Q Okay.

A -- because in the meeting where I had a bit of a blow-up with him, I said --

Q Okay.

A -- Gordon, you're in over your head. I don't think you know who these people are.

Q Okay.

A Because I also, myself, didn't know who all of these people were either. I'd only heard their names. And from what I could gather from just, you know, a quick Google and, you know, kind of, open-source search, they seemed to be bad news.

Q Yeah.

And Volker, he related to us that the President had a deep-rooted skeptical view on Ukraine and their corruption environment. Is that something that you can attest to?

A I think the President has actually quite publicly said that he was very skeptical about corruption in Ukraine. And, in fact, he's not alone, because everyone has expressed great concerns about corruption in Ukraine.

Q And, you know, Ambassador Volker related the President's business experience in the region and his knowledge of other business executives that may have tried to

do business in the Ukraine contributed to his deep-rooted views of Ukraine and corruption. Is --

A Correct.

Q -- that something you can attest to?

A Well, I can attest to that, because, again, the President has said this publicly.

Q And then, you know, additionally --

DR. HILL: Can I make a quick request to have a quick bathroom break?

MR. CASTOR: Yeah, we've got about 2 minutes --

DR. HILL: Yeah, I'm not trying to cut you off. I'm just sort of thinking I'd really like to go to the bathroom.

MR. CASTOR: We've got about 4 minutes left. Would you want to --

DR. HILL: Could we just literally take a quick break?

MR. CASTOR: Yes, of course.

DR. HILL: Because I've been kind of waiting for a pause.

MR. CASTOR: We can always take a break.

THE CHAIRMAN: We'll take a quick break.

[Recess.]

THE CHAIRMAN: We're back on the record.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q We were talking about President Trump's -- what was at least related to us as his deep-rooted skeptical view of

Ukraine as a businessman, as both himself in the region and also with his colleagues. But he also had a skepticism as a result of allegations in the 2016 election.

Is that also fair to say, that the President harbored some skepticism, whether based on, you know, legitimate reasons or not, that he did harbor some reservations about Ukraine?

MR. WOLOSKY: I think you should limit your comments to public statements unless there is -- absent a ruling from the chairman on the issue of privilege.

DR. HILL: Yeah, but I think he said it repeatedly in public, you know, kind of recently as well.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q I'm not asking about your personal communications with the President. I'm talking about your understanding, as an official with responsibility for this area, that the President harbored skepticism.

A He's expressed it openly in the press pool and his own statements.

Q You know, the U.S.-Ukrainian relations, you know, obviously, you have the President speaking with President Zelensky. But you also have a fairly robust set of, you know, staff -- at the National Security Council, at the State Department, the DOD, other agencies. You know, you had Kurt Volker, Phil Reeker, Wess Mitchell, George Kent. We have

Bill Taylor. And I apologize for not using their official titles.

A That's all right. No worries, no worries. Yeah.

Q I mean no disrespect by that.

A Yeah.

Q And so, to the extent there may have been some, you know, comments exchanged on the call, isn't there a relatively robust infrastructure around the relationship to help steer anything into the types of back-and-forths U.S. and Ukraine ought to be having?

A Hang on. Can you clarify again? So, absent the --

Q So the President, you know -- absent the President's call with President Zelensky, there is an infrastructure of staff, at the State Department, at National Security Council, that are interacting with --

A Right. Okay.

Q -- Ukraine officials to help everyone understand some of the various things that are being requested.

A Yes.

Q I mean, isn't that --

A Yeah, but I'm not quite sure what the question is, though. I mean, are you -- what are you suggesting?

Q Well, you know, there's discussion about, you know, 2016 and Burisma. And, you know, we saw the back-and-forth on text about whether there's going to be a statement in

advance of the White House meeting. And what we saw, I think, in that exchange is that there was a, you know, good bit of staff work going back and forth that ultimately led to a conclusion where no statement was issued.

MR. WOLOSKY: We're sort of losing you here. It's an extremely long, compound question. You're referring to text messages that are not being presented as exhibits. So we're happy to respond to a question if there's a clear, specific question that you have for her.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q There is an infrastructure of staff dealing with the U.S.-Ukrainian relationship.

A On that particular issue that you're talking about, actually there was not. I mean, if you're talking about the preparation for the call.

Q Uh-huh.

A And that was what I was explaining before about why July 10th was so problematic. Because, normally, there is indeed an interagency process that goes together in preparation for a call.

Q Volker related to us that he got a readout from both the Ukrainian and the U.S. side and nobody mentioned Hunter Biden or 2016.

THE CHAIRMAN: You know, I just want to caution counsel, we can't vet what counsel is saying was represented in

earlier witness testimony. So if you have a question about the facts for the witness, rather than representing what prior witnesses have said, that might be more appropriate.

MR. WOLOSKY: Let me put it another way. The witness is happy to testify to areas that are within her personal knowledge, not Mr. Volker's personal knowledge. So I'd ask you to please direct your questions to her personal knowledge.

MR. GOLDMAN: Time.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you want to finish the last question?

DR. HILL: Yeah. I'm trying to figure it out what it is that you're trying to figure out.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q My question is, there is an infrastructure of staff at the State Department to manage the relationship.

A There is infrastructure to manage the relationship.

Q And all these people, as you've testified, have acted with -- you know, are individuals of high integrity.

A But they were not coordinating across the government. I can be pretty confident, based on where I left things on July 19th, that nobody beyond Ambassador Volker and Ambassador Sondland knew what they were doing, beyond Chief of Staff Mulvaney -- because Ambassador Bolton and -- both Ambassador Sondland and Ambassador Bolton referred to Mulvaney. Sondland said repeatedly he was meeting with Chief

of Staff Mulvaney. And that was it. It was not going down to the rest of the staff.

When I left, I did several things in the week that I left just to wrap up. I had a discussion with George Kent, telling him where I knew things stood and telling him -- and this was not knowing that there was going to be a call, because I don't think it was actually at all even scheduled at this point or even thought of --

Q Uh-huh.

A -- warning him that I was very worried about this whole engagement between Sondland and Giuliani and with Kurt and that he should be mindful of this, and I thought that it was starting to take on different dimensions, including, you know, this reference to, you know, energy corruption. Although, when I spoke to George, I didn't have a full picture. I just told him that he should be really mindful and be careful on this.

And on the very last day, on the 19th, I had a phone call with Ambassador Taylor relating everything that I knew at that point. I was sort of sending out red flags for him and telling him, there's a lot of stuff going on here that we have no insight into and that you need to, you know, kind of, figure out and get on top of this.

And I told him at that point that Ambassador Sondland had told me that he was in charge of Ukraine. And that was

also news to Ambassador Taylor.

THE CHAIRMAN: Let's pause here. We'll take a 10-minute break to either wolf down lunch or get lunch, and then we'll resume in 10 minutes.

[Recess.]

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. We'll go back on the record.

Mr. Goldman.

MR. GOLDMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

BY MR. GOLDMAN:

Q Dr. Hill, before, at the tail end of our initial round, you were describing the circumstances around the July 10th meeting at the White House.

A Yes.

Q And I believe you said that, after you came back from meeting in the Ward Room with the Ukrainian counterparts and the other American officials, you went and spoke to Ambassador Bolton --

A Uh-huh.

Q -- right? And did you inform him of what had just transpired in the Ward Room?

A Yes, I did.

Q And could you just tell us again what he said to you at that point?

A He told me, as I stated before, to go and talk to John Eisenberg. And he basically -- he said, you go and tell

John Eisenberg -- you go and tell Eisenberg that I am not part of this drug deal that Sondland and Mulvaney are cooking up.

Q And what did you understand --

A He was saying that sarcastically, of course, I mean, just to be clear. Actually, he was angry, but he was also sarcastic. I mean, he wasn't --

Q Right, because --

A -- inferring that they were cooking up an actual drug deal in the Ward Room.

Q Right. So --

A Just to be clear.

Q So we're clear, because sometimes --

A Yeah, I know. This could lead to some conspiracy theories and -- yeah.

Q Yes. And sometimes our colleagues don't understand parody or sarcasm, so --

A No. Ambassador Bolton has a reputation for being sarcastic and, you know, for basically using those kinds of expressions.

Q Okay. But what did you understand him to mean by that?

A Well, based on what had happened in the July 10th meeting and Ambassador Sondland blurting out that he'd already gotten agreement to have a meeting at the White House

for Zelensky if these investigations were started up again, clearly Ambassador Bolton was referring directly to those.

And Ambassador Bolton had said repeatedly that nobody should be meeting with Giuliani. And you may recall before that I said that he described Giuliani as a bit of a hand grenade that was going to blow everyone up.

Q Uh-huh.

A And he was obviously, at that point, you know, closely monitoring what Mr. Giuliani was doing and the messaging that he was sending out.

Q Uh-huh.

A So this is also against the backdrop, as all of you will recall, of Mr. Giuliani's frequent appearances on television. And I can't say that I caught all of them, but I was getting them relayed to me by, you know, other staff members. And, often -- I mean, you've all, no doubt, been in the National Security Council buildings and the White House. There's TVs everywhere. So, I mean, I could often just walk down the corridor and catch Mr. Giuliani on the television.

Q But Ambassador Bolton specifically referenced Mr. Sondland and Mr. Mulvaney, who --

A Correct. And he had said previously -- I mean, we had regular meetings with Ambassador Volker, you know, in which, you know, getting back to Mr. Castor's questions, they were all about the, you know, regular coordination of what we

were trying to do on Ukraine, you know, trying to get the Russians to start meeting with Ambassador Volker again, see if we could move forward on the Donbas. Ambassador Bolton made it very clear that, you know, again, he didn't think anybody should be dealing with Giuliani.

Q And who did he make that clear to?

A He expressed it in one of the meetings with Ambassador Volker. But, at that point, I don't think he was fully aware of the extensive meetings that Ambassador Volker was having. This may have been early on, when Ambassador Volker had just started to meet with Giuliani.

Because I only, actually, to be honest, became familiar with the timeline once it was all published in the press. Because we'd already said to -- again, I'd personally said to Ambassador Volker and others that he shouldn't be talking to Mr. Giuliani.

Q And did you say that to Mr. Volker before that July 10th meeting?

A Absolutely.

Q What was Mr. Volker's response?

A Again, you know, getting back to what I said to Mr. Castor, it was really about -- he was trying to fix it. I mean, he was trying to refute, you know, the, kind of, very negative perceptions that were coming out.

But I expressed to him that I was concerned that there

were business dealings, nefarious business dealings, underway. And I had mentioned to Kurt Volker the names of these individuals that had been relayed to me.

THE CHAIRMAN: I just want to follow up with a couple of questions about Ambassador Bolton's comments about not wanting to be part of this drug deal.

Did you understand it from that that he was not referring to an actual drug deal but --

DR. HILL: Of course not. Yeah.

THE CHAIRMAN: -- some other kind of illicit transaction that he believed that Sondland and Mulvaney were engaged in?

DR. HILL: Yes. He made it clear that he believed that they were making, basically, an improper arrangement to have a meeting in the White House, that they were predicating the meeting in the White House on the Ukrainians agreeing, in this case, based on the meeting on July 10th, to restart investigations that had been dropped in the energy sector --

THE CHAIRMAN: And --

DR. HILL: -- by which point it was apparent that this was code, at least, for Burisma. Because that had been mentioned, you know, in the course of Mr. Giuliani's appearances on television and in the course of -- I'd already relayed to Ambassador Bolton everything that had been told to me by everyone, including Ambassador Yovanovitch and Phil Reeker, when Amos Hochstein had come in to see me, and I'd

relayed to him everything I'd been told by our energy directorate and by our Western Hemisphere directorate as well.

THE CHAIRMAN: And not only was discussion of energy code for Burisma, but Burisma was also, at this point, understood to be code for the Bidens, an investigation into the Bidens.

DR. HILL: That never came out explicitly, just to be clear.

THE CHAIRMAN: And --

DR. HILL: I did -- when I talked to Ambassador Bolton, I also talked to Charlie Kupperman at length about this, the Deputy National Security Advisor. I mean, I recall telling Charlie that this was the company that Hunter Biden was associated with. And we were concerned that -- not at this particular juncture, again, not specifically about the Bidens per se, but that Ukraine was going to be played by Giuliani in some way as part of the campaign.

THE CHAIRMAN: Now --

DR. HILL: Because it was positing, you know, here that there was a great deal of, you know, illegal or whatever activity going on in Ukraine, according to Giuliani. You know, basically, the 2016 alternative theory of the election, the cyber issues -- these were all getting put out through these articles in the newspaper. So it was kind of creating

a kind of a story that was out there that was being packaged.

THE CHAIRMAN: Now, do you recall at the time -- you mentioned that Giuliani had expressed that he was going to go to Ukraine. Do you remember when that was?

DR. HILL: That was almost immediately after Ambassador Yovanovitch had been removed from office, so it was sometime in May. I mean, again, I saw it on the television, he said he was going to go. And then I heard it from colleagues. And there was, you know, kind of, quite a bit of consternation on the part of the State Department.

THE CHAIRMAN: And he made it clear, I think, in those television appearances, didn't he, that he was going to Ukraine to seek to have them investigate the Bidens?

DR. HILL: Well, that's what he said. That's what I mean. This is part of -- I mean, I think, you know, part of the dilemma that we all have here in trying to -- you, me, and all of us -- parse this, is that a lot of this is happening on the television, in terms of statements that Giuliani has made.

THE CHAIRMAN: Did that give content to you when you heard these discussions going on, or did that inform --

DR. HILL: Correct, it did. And it was clearly -- I mean, in Ambassador Bolton's office, when I was meeting with him, the television was always on. And it was usually on FOX News. I mean, there was sometimes a split screen. And often

when I was in the office, Giuliani would be on the television, and, you know, Ambassador Bolton would put on the sound to hear what he was saying.

THE CHAIRMAN: So they didn't need to make it explicit in your presence what Burisma meant. It was clear from Rudy Giuliani's public comments that, for Rudy Giuliani, Burisma meant investigating the Bidens.

DR. HILL: Correct. But it was never explicitly said, just to reiterate that.

THE CHAIRMAN: Not until the President's call with President Zelensky.

DR. HILL: Again, which I only read about when the transcript was released.

THE CHAIRMAN: But you've seen that transcript now. And --

DR. HILL: I have. But I was not aware until that point.

THE CHAIRMAN: And, in fact, in that transcript, the President doesn't talk about Burisma; he talks about investigating the Bidens. Is that correct?

DR. HILL: From what I've read in the transcript.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.

Mr. Goldman.

BY MR. GOLDMAN:

Q Ambassador Volker was also at that July 10th

meeting, right?

A He was.

Q Okay. So, to that point, had you gotten any indication that the acting Chief of Staff, Mick Mulvaney, had any discussions about a White House visit with Ambassador Sondland or anyone else?

A Yes, I had.

And just to be clear, that's also a part of, you know, the acting Chief of Staff's role, is to oversee White House visits. It would be rather unusual for him not to have been, you know, consulted with on this.

I mean, you know, at this particular juncture, there was a bit of tension on these visits overall. But many ambassadors -- and I don't just mean our ambassadors, but, you know, kind of, foreign ambassadors and foreign officials -- I mean, were aware that Ambassador Bolton and the National Security staff would always do everything according to national security provisions.

So there were a lot of meetings that -- there were requests, let's say, from heads of state that we actually didn't think merited the President's time, because they weren't pertinent to, you know, basically, policy priorities.

And I don't want to be insulting to any particular countries by, you know, singling any of them out, but let's just say I think you would all, you know, agree that there's

a certain hierarchy of countries that one would imagine that the President should be making the most time for, and there are orders that would be, you know, kind of a nice, you know, diplomatic gesture, getting back to the questions before about the letter, but that, you know, obviously wouldn't be something that one would want to schedule at any particular, you know, kind of fast pace. And these could be, you know, heads of state that the President could have a greeting with at a diplomatic reception at the UNGA and things like this.

Q Well, let me rephrase my question --

A No, so --

Q Oh.

A -- the point is, on this, that Mulvaney's office had been pushed many, many times by Ukrainians and others for a visit. And so I was well-aware that Ambassador Sondland was talking to the Chief of Staff at the moment.

And Ambassador Sondland was, frankly, trying to play us off the National Security Council and Ambassador Bolton against Mulvaney's office. Because we were saying that we didn't actually believe, at that particular juncture, that we should have a meeting with Zelensky. Because we wanted to wait until the July -- by this point, you know, I can't remember exactly, you know -- and forgive me -- when it was announced that the Ukraine elections would be July 21st. Because there was some question about whether it would be a

snap election. The actual election time might have been in the fall. You know, it could've been in October or, you know, some other date.

And so we were waiting to see when the election would be. And we were pushing back against this, you know, kind of, idea that Zelensky needed to have a meeting right away. We were saying, you know, getting back to our earlier discussion, no, we should wait to see if he actually has a majority. I mean, what if he -- and we didn't also want to then be seen to be playing in the Ukrainian parliamentary elections. Because, obviously, a White House visit for Zelensky before the Rada elections, the parliamentary elections, would be a big boost, potentially, to his ability to get a workable or a majority mandate. So we were trying to be very careful.

And Ambassador Bolton knows Ukraine very well. I mean, you've seen, you know, he did his independent visits there. When he was outside of government, he was frequently in Ukraine. He knew all the players. He knows how complicated the politics and things are there. And he was trying to, you know, basically restrain others for pushing for a meeting that he thought would be premature.

Q Prior to that July 10th meeting, were you aware of Mr. Mulvaney being involved in any conversations about a White House visit being contingent on opening investigations?

A I was not.

Q So that was the first --

A That was right.

Q -- that you had heard of it?

A But I knew that he was obviously a player already in decisions about having a visit.

Q Okay.

A And I was -- to be honest, I was quite shocked. I mean, prior to that, the only other indication that I had that Ambassador Sondland and the Chief of Staff were, you know, kind of talking about this, you know, directly was the letter, getting back to the paragraph that we discussed earlier, where Ambassador Sondland essentially, you know, told us that he had, you know, personally made sure that this letter was released and that -- because it was delayed, you know, somewhat, it wasn't immediately out after the election. The election happened over a weekend, and, you know, it was taking a while for the results to get in, but it was, you know, getting snarled up. And Sondland said that he would make sure that the letter got out. And he said that he was the person who put in this paragraph about having the White House visit.

So that's in the week of April 22nd-23rd, if the 21st was a Sunday. So that week immediately after the April 21st Presidential election.

Q You're referring to the phone call?

A No, about the letter that was basically stating that there would be a general invitation for a White House visit.

Q I think the letter was May 29th.

A Was it May 29th? So there was a considerable delay then.

Q So it was after the -- you may recall, just to refresh your recollection, that the inauguration in Ukraine was May 20th.

A Right. Okay. So it was around the inauguration. I'm sorry then. I was getting my dates mixed up.

Q Uh-huh.

A So it was after, then, the inauguration for a congratulatory letter.

Q Right.

A So that makes sense. I'm sorry, because I'm getting my timelines confused here. Because the election happened; there was a congratulatory phone call, which we, you know, kind of, prepared just to say, hey, congratulations, that was great. And then there was an idea then there would be a letter that would be tied to the inauguration. And there was a lot of back-and-forth on when that would be as well.

But that was on the Ukrainian part. Because the

Ukrainians, themselves, were not sure when to have the inauguration, because, again, they were trying to determine when they would call parliamentary Rada elections.

I'm sorry. I got the timeframes confused.

Q No, that's fine.

Just while we're on the topic of the April 21st call, did you listen in to that call?

A I did not. It was on a weekend, and I remember I was doing something with my [redacted], and Alex Vindman, our director, agreed to go in.

Q And listen in?

A Yeah. And it was a very short call.

Q Did you read the transcript?

A I think I'm not --

MR. WOLOSKY: Yeah, I think that would probably be classified, the April 21st call.

BY MR. GOLDMAN:

Q I just want to know if you read the transcript afterwards.

A I did.

Q Okay.

A I said it was a short congratulatory call.

Q All right.

So, just getting back to this, sort of, aftermath of July 10th, you said you were surprised, and Ambassador Bolton

asked you to go meet with John Eisenberg. Did you go meet with --

A I did.

Q -- Mr. Eisenberg?

A Yeah.

Q When did you do that?

A I ended up meeting with him on the next day. I went over immediately and talked to him, you know, very briefly, and we agreed that we would have a longer discussion the following day, where I would talk to him about all of the concerns that I had about what was going on on the Ukraine front.

Q And in that initial brief conversation, do you recall what you said and what he said?

A Yeah. I told him exactly, you know, what had transpired and that Ambassador Sondland had basically indicated that there was an agreement with the Chief of Staff that they would have a White House meeting or, you know, a Presidential meeting if the Ukrainians started up these investigations again. And the main thing that I was personally concerned about, as I said to John, was that he did this in front of the Ukrainians.

Q Why were you concerned about that in particular?

A Well, I mean, this is -- you know, we're talking here about, you know, should one reveal deliberative process

to, you know, kind of, people outside of the government? And here we're having a deliberative process. I mean, this is what Ambassador Bolton was pretty livid about, you know, kind of in an argument between, you know, our ambassador to the EU and our National Security Advisor about having a meeting, you know, in front of the national security advisor-designate of Ukraine and the chief advisor, Mr. Yermak, to the Ukrainian President and a whole bunch of extraneous, you know, kind of, people who hadn't, actually, also been in that meeting on July 10th.

Q The --

A And, again, the Ukrainians were put outside of the Ward Room when I pointed out that this wasn't an appropriate place to be having a discussion about what was going to be a deliberative process about how one goes about setting up a meeting and the timing of it and the content of it. And then they're standing there in, you know, basically the space in the corridor between the Navy mess and the White House Sit Room.

Q And why were you concerned about that specific location?

A Well, because an awful lot of people were going in the Sit Room and are having, you know, deliberative conversations that may or may not be classified on their way into there.

And there's a sign in the Navy mess that says, you know, do not have classified, you know, conversations in here because, you know, external people may be present. But on the way to the Sit Room -- I don't know if you've been in the space. It's about the space of, kind of, the interior here of these desks. So you have a couple of Ukrainians who were standing there as Cabinet members or anybody else could be going into the Sit Room, which will already give them information about meetings that could be taking place there. I mean, they shouldn't have been, you know, kind of, basically out in the corridor.

But, also, that meeting in the Ward Room would've been -- under normal circumstances, we would've known about it. We didn't know that they were actually having a meeting in the Ward Room. And it's completely inappropriate to have, you know, the Ambassador to the EU take the Ukrainians down to the Ward Room to have a huddle on next steps about getting a meeting with the President of the United States.

Q You had said earlier that --

A Now, Secretary Perry, again, I want to say, had left by the time I got down there. He had clearly gone down and then had left. So this is Ambassador Sondland and Ambassador Volker there.

Q And you had said earlier that you were concerned that Ambassador Sondland was a counterintelligence risk. Is

this an example of that concern?

A Well, yes. And a risk not by intent, getting back to Mr. Castor's question about, you know, Ambassador Sondland's integrity, but one about just more about being clueless sometimes about the kinds of natures of threats.

And that's something -- ambassadors get all kinds of, you know, early counterintelligence briefings. But, you know, he has now expanded his remit, you know, to countries that, you know, in the case of Ukraine, are targeted by the Russians. One could be sure that -- you know, I didn't even know whether the Ukrainians had left their cell phones in boxes at this particular point. I mean, they had when they were in Ambassador Bolton's office, but had they picked them up before they went down to the Ward Room? I didn't know any of this.

And so, I mean, all of them -- and you can be sure that they're being targeted by the Russians, if not, you know, kind of, members of our own Cabinet and our own team. And as Ambassador Sondland was using his own personal cell phone at all times, as well as his government-issued cell phone, I became extremely concerned that his communications were not going to be secure.

Q For example, the WhatsApp text messages that you've now --

A Yeah, we were not allowed -- just to be, again,

clear, the White House has disabled all of those functions on the phone. And Ambassador Sondland was always trying to text. And on my White House phone, which did not receive texts, I would always get this kind of ghost text from Ambassador Sondland, from the very first time I met him, texting me to say that he wanted to meet, from his personal cell phone. And every time I switched the phone on, this ghost text would appear. Just to make the point.

But he was the only person, you know, who tried that. We kept telling him over and over again, please do not text us. And the same thing with WhatsApp; we were not allowed to use this because of the Presidential record and Presidential communications.

THE CHAIRMAN: I just want to go back to that first short discussion you had with Attorney Eisenberg.

DR. HILL: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think you conveyed that you described briefly your concern over having this debate about setting up this meeting in front of the Ukraine delegation. You expressed your concern about the security issues involved with having this discussion, where it was taking place.

Did you also discuss with Attorney Eisenberg, though, Ambassador Bolton's concern that there was an illicit transaction here?

DR. HILL: I did. And I said that, actually, what I

would like would be for him to also ask my counterpart, Wells Griffith, to talk to him too, who'd been in the meeting. Because I couldn't really determine, at the time, initially, in the meeting with Ambassador Bolton, exactly what it was that Ambassador Sondland had said that triggered off Ambassador Bolton's reaction.

Because Secretary Perry had been sticking to the regular talking points about energy that we always had, you know, that were obviously referring to Naftogaz and, you know, to the energy sector writ large, which was, frankly, rife with corruption.

And, you know, you may all recall, you know, under previous iterations of the Ukrainian Government, there was the notorious Dmytro Firtash-run organization or intermediary gas entity, RosUkrEnergo -- and I'm sure you had lots of congressional hearings, you know, about this -- that was really basically an interface for all kinds of illicit dealings between the Russians and the Ukrainians.

So we've been on this issue for decades, frankly. I mean, I was working on this with the Bush administration and the Obama administration. Everybody has gone through looking at this issue. So when Secretary Perry was talking, I mean, from my perspective, it's just following in a long line of all of the issues that we said.

And then when Ambassador Sondland came in about specific

investigations, that's when Ambassador Bolton stiffened up and immediately, you know, brought the meeting to a halt, because he tied that to the meeting. But when I went down --

MR. GOLDMAN: Sorry. You mean the White House meeting?

DR. HILL: To the White House meeting or to a meeting with the President. Now, just to be, kind of, clear, actually, it wasn't always a White House meeting per se, but definitely a Presidential-level, you know, meeting with Zelensky and the President. I mean, it could've taken place in Poland, in Warsaw. It could've been, you know, a proper bilateral in some other context. But, in other words, a White House-level Presidential meeting.

THE CHAIRMAN: So then you were saying -- and then you went downstairs.

DR. HILL: And then I went downstairs. And I came in when the conversation was already underway, because I had talked to Ambassador Bolton quickly to, you know, kind of, get a bit more of a sense of, you know, kind of, his concerns and what he wanted me to be watchful for. I mean, I had my own concerns.

As I said, when I was coming in, Secretary Perry was leaving. So I'm not sure that Secretary Perry was there for this portion of the discussion. And Wells Griffith had already -- had also left as well.

BY MR. GOLDMAN:

Q Was Ambassador Volker still there for this?

A Ambassador Volker was still there, and Yermak and Danylyuk and, as I mentioned before, a couple of State Department people and somebody who I thought could've been one of Secretary Perry's aides but I'm not 100 percent sure. Because Secretary Perry had a large -- because he was off to go to do some other business and he had a large group of people with him.

And it was at that point that Sondland was complaining to our director, Alex Vindman, about the fact that he already had an arrangement to have this meeting that he worked out with Mulvaney.

THE CHAIRMAN: And so I want to get back to your conveying this to the attorney, Eisenberg.

DR. HILL: Yeah.

THE CHAIRMAN: What did you convey to him at that first short meeting? And then Mr. Goldman will get into what you conveyed to him in the longer meeting. But in the first meeting, what did you convey to him about any concern you had over this illicit transaction, the "if" that you mentioned?

DR. HILL: Yeah, I explained to him what I just explained to you. And then I said, but I need to actually talk to Wells Griffith and we should talk to Wells about what he understood was the larger context here as well.

Because Sondland talked about Burisma when I was with

him in the Ward Room, but I didn't hear him say Burisma when I was in Ambassador Bolton's office. And, again, I was sitting at the back, on the sofa. They were all, you know -- I was behind Sondland, and he was talking forward. So I wasn't sure if I missed it or whether he didn't say it at all.

And I also wanted to be clear -- because he seemed to sort of interrupt Bolton and Perry -- you know, what it was that Wells understood that Secretary Perry was talking about. Because this gets to the nub of what we're concerned about. Was this a generic discussion about, you know, corruption in the energy sector and Ukraine, or was it something much more specific? And I wanted to make sure that Wells Griffith could also talk to Eisenberg. And that's why we had the larger meeting the next day.

[1:55 p.m.]

THE CHAIRMAN: And did you -- the larger meeting with Eisenberg?

DR. HILL: Just me and Eisenberg and Wells Griffith. I mean meeting, meaning to bring in Wells, and so that I could get into more detail, and I could go through my notes and, you know, kind of basically figure out, you know, what exactly had happened.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you want to walk through that meeting?

BY MR. GOLDMAN:

Q Yeah. So in that meeting on July 11, Wells --

A Wells also came in.

Q What's his last name?

A Wells Griffith.

Q Griffith.

A It's P. Wells Griffith. And he is a long-term, he's a really, you know, superb energy expert, works very closely with Secretary Perry.

Q And it was the three of you?

A Yes, it was the three of us.

Q All right. And so describe that conversation.

A Well, I reiterated to John the day before, and, you know, I apologized to Wells for, you know, jumping on him, but I said that I wanted to, you know, basically just to clarify for John, you know, what had -- I told him what had

happened in the Ward Room, but I wasn't entirely sure, you know, what Wells also thought had happened in Ambassador Sondland's office, because it was immediately after Secretary Perry had gone through his talking points.

And Wells and the deputy -- the deputies to Secretary Perry had worked on those talking points. And I wanted to just kind of be certain, 100 percent sure that Secretary Perry's talking points were exactly what I anticipated or thought that they were, which is about the generic, you know, problems of the energy sector, which is what --

MR. WOLOSKY: You said Ambassador Sondland's office. I think you meant Ambassador Bolton's office.

DR. HILL: Oh, did I? I'm so sorry. Yeah. Thank you for correcting me. Yeah, when Ambassador Sondland was in Ambassador Bolton's office.

BY MR. GOLDMAN:

Q And just to be clear, between meetings with Mr. Eisenberg, did you have any follow-on conversations with Ambassador Bolton?

A I did not, no, not in that time.

Q Did you talk to anybody else about this meeting?

A I talked to Wells Griffith. And then I also had -- my colleague Alex Vindman was really upset, because he said that before I came in Sondland was making it very clear that there was all kinds of -- that there was -- and Perry had

left at this point. He said Perry didn't need to stay, because by the time I came into the Ward Room Alex Vindman was very up upset.

Q And what did Mr. Vindman say?

A He said that these are obviously not issues that the National Security Council was dealing with, should not deal with. And he actually said this along the lines to Ambassador Sondland, that whatever it was that he was talking about was not appropriate for us to be engaged in, and that we were -- you know, could only, you know, be organizing a meeting, you know, as the National Security Council on, you know, official national security basis, and clearly something else was going on here.

Q So at this meeting on the 11th with Mr. Eisenberg and Mr. Griffith, what did Mr. Griffith relay to Mr. Eisenberg about his recollection of this meeting?

A His recollection was somewhat similar that, you know -- and he confirmed that Secretary Perry's talking points were all the usual talking points about energy sector corruption, the importance of getting the energy sector into good shape and diversification of energy, all of the issues that we were trying to do.

We were trying to get the Ukrainians to work with the Czechs, the Poles, and with the Europeans more broadly, the Germans, you know. Secretary Perry had been going to the

Three Seas Initiative, which is all about building up infrastructure in Eastern Europe.

So Secretary Perry was, you know, very much focused on a whole larger initiative spearheaded by DOE but also with the State Department on trying to help Ukraine wean itself off this dependency. So everything that Wells believed that Secretary Perry was saying was related to that.

We also agreed that Sondland seemed to be redirecting it into --

Q What was his recollection of what Ambassador Sondland said in the Ward Room?

A In the Ward Room he wasn't in.

Q Oh, so this was just in the main meeting.

A Wells was also confirming, though, that Secretary Perry was not in on this discussion in the Ward Room, that he'd come down briefly. And that was also important to me because I needed to know did Secretary Perry, you know, have part of this discussion as well.

Q So it was you personally who heard Ambassador Sondland mention Burisma --

A Correct.

Q -- in the Ward Room?

A Correct. And Wells had been sitting with me in Ambassador Bolton's office when the initial meeting took place, and he also understood it was a redirect.

Q And Mr. Vindman was also there --

A Correct.

Q -- and heard it?

A And Kurt Volker.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can you tell us what -- you said Mr. Vindman expressed concern about what took place, and he was there before you got to the Ward Room.

DR. HILL: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can you tell us what Mr. Vindman told you --

DR. HILL: He was really uncomfortable with where the conversation was, and that's also because it was in front of Ukrainians, that it was basically Ambassador Sondland getting very annoyed that he already had an agreement with the Chief of Staff for a meeting between the Presidents on the basis of these investigations.

THE CHAIRMAN: And did he know anything more about the investigations?

DR. HILL: He was alarmed, Mr. Vindman, because he didn't know exactly what was going on. And he said that -- and as I said, Sondland had mentioned meeting with Giuliani in front of, again, the Ukrainians. And --

MR. GOLDMAN: So what --

DR. HILL: -- who was the National Security Advisor --

MR. GOLDMAN: -- did he say about that?

DR. HILL: I didn't get exactly what the wording was.

THE CHAIRMAN: But Mr. Sondland brought up Mr. Giuliani in the context of there being this agreement on the meeting.

DR. HILL: And that he said he'd been meeting with Giuliani as well. This is at least what I understood, you know, from Alex.

THE CHAIRMAN: That was what Mr. Vindman relayed?

DR. HILL: That's what he understood, yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: And did Giuliani's name come up when you were in the Ward Room?

DR. HILL: No.

BY MR. GOLDMAN:

Q Can you just clarify why it was important to you to understand that Secretary Perry's talking points were separate and apart from the reference to investigations by Ambassador Sondland?

A It was important to me because I was trying to figure out how much Ambassador Sondland was coordinating with others. And, again, we'd actually tried to prioritize in this timeframe energy sector reform and all of the work with the other European countries. So I was pretty concerned here in thinking that maybe Ambassador Sondland was not keeping Secretary Perry fully informed of what was going on either.

Q And so --

A And I'd understood from the May inauguration, I was

not in the meeting that relayed back to the President about how the inauguration had gone, but I understood from the readout there that we were to focus on energy sector reform as a top priority, and that Secretary Perry had been asked to sort of step up and to really see what he could do to, you know, work with the Ukrainians in this timeframe to prove that they could actually start to tackle, you know, corruption in Ukraine.

And so by this point I'm personally concerned that there's something else going on, and I wanted to make sure that I understand who it's going on between.

Q So the energy sector reform and the anticorruption efforts surrounding that were what Secretary Perry was talking about?

A Correct.

Q And is it -- was it your understanding that Ambassador Sondland was not talking about that --

A Correct.

Q -- when he mentioned --

A And it's the way that he did a redirect.

Q And what do you mean by redirect?

A Well, Secretary Perry was talking, and then, you know, he laid out all of these talking points. And then Ambassador Bolton said -- you know, was basically saying well, you know, we'll work all the way through all of this,

you know, kind of a rule, you know. At some point start, you know, thinking, you know, basically about a meeting, but, you know, we're going to be, you know, in the process of -- and it was encouraging actually what you're talking about, which was all the staffing work and the different parts of the agencies, State Department. He was urging the Ukrainians to deal with the State Department and to deal with Secretary Perry.

And this is when Sondland, who is, you know, a fairly big guy, kind of leaned over across Ambassador Bolton, because I could see that from where I was sitting, and said to the Ukrainians and back to Ambassador Bolton, but we've already got, you know, kind of an agreement on a meeting.

I mean, he was basically -- and you can imagine, you would all be annoyed as well that he was basically countermanding what Ambassador Bolton had just said. In other words saying, I actually have, you know, some completely separate agreement about a meeting, you know, kind of you're stonewalling kind of thing.

And then he was clearly in the -- when he went out into the office in front of Ambassador Bolton he was kind of clearly, you know, feeling irritated, Sondland was. And that's when he said, let's go back down to the Ward Room and talk about next steps for the meeting. And that's when Bolton was just, you know, I wouldn't say apoplectic, but

pretty furious.

Q Who did Sondland say that to?

A He said it to the Ukrainians.

Q Was it your understanding that he had previously discussed --

A I took it from that that he'd already said to the Ukrainians that there was going to be a meeting and that obviously he was expecting Ambassador Bolton to start, you know, pulling out the schedule, which is not what Ambassador Bolton does anyway. That's worked out through the Chief of Staff's Office and the Visit.

Q And just so the record is clear, when you say meeting, you mean a Presidential meeting?

A A Presidential-level meeting, again, be it the White House, be it in Warsaw, be it, you know, kind of in any of the places it would be.

And we had been again, as I've said repeatedly, Ambassador Bolton and others, recommending against having a meeting at this juncture because this is, you know, before the Ukrainian parliamentary elections.

Q Was it your impression that the Ukrainian officials there were hearing this idea of a Presidential meeting conditioned on these investigations for the first time at that meeting --

A Danylyuk for sure. He just looked alarmed, and

actually he wanted to speak to me afterwards because he obviously didn't know what was going on.

Q And what about Yermak?

A Yermak was more impassive, but I'm not entirely sure that he fully understood everything because I'm not convinced about how good his English is. So I just want to state that for the record, that I wasn't entirely clear that Yermak was understanding everything because he didn't really say too much. And he had an aide with him who was whispering to him, and, again, I was sitting at a distance, and he maybe had been helping him with translation.

Q Did you end up speaking to Danylyuk about --

A I did, but we actually didn't really discuss what had actually happened -- well, I didn't want to discuss what had happened obviously in the Ward Room.

What I was trying to encourage Danylyuk was to work with the State Department, work with our embassy, and, you know, particularly as he was interested in working on the National Security Council reform in Ukraine.

I really wanted to get, you know, Danylyuk into the channels that we all, you know, kind of knew were working on getting back to this robust relationship. Danylyuk was a, you know, very above-board guy, one of the reformers in Ukraine. Actually, he resigned his position in Ukraine recently.

Q Was it your understanding from any of the interactions you had with him or any information you got that Danylyuk was aware of Rudy Giuliani's efforts separate and apart from the official --

A He didn't raise it. He was just generally concerned about actually not having a meeting because he felt that this would deprive Ukraine, the new Ukrainian Government of the legitimacy that it needed, especially vis-a-vis the Russians. So this gets to, you know, the heart of our national security dilemma.

You know, the Ukrainians at this point, you know, are looking at a White House meeting or looking at a meeting with the President of the United States as a recognition of their legitimacy as a sovereign state. And they are, you know, clearly perplexed, you know, kind of about this whole situation surrounding the meeting.

Q What was -- just because we're somewhat short on time, I'm going to jump to the crux of this July 11th meeting. What was Mr. Eisenberg's reaction to what you explained to him had and Mr. Griffith had explained to him had occurred the day before?

A Yeah. He was also concerned. I mean, he wasn't aware that Sondland, Ambassador Sondland was, you know, kind of running around doing a lot of these, you know, meetings and independently. We talked about the fact that, you know,

Ambassador Sondland said he'd been meeting with Giuliani and he was very concerned about that. And he said that he would follow up on this.

He has frequent meetings with Ambassador Bolton and had frequent meetings with Ambassador Bolton and also with Charlie Kupperman, our deputy National Security Advisor, both of whom, you know, were fully cognizant of everything that was kind of going on and churning around.

I'd already expressed concerns to all of them about the removal of Masha Yovanovitch. I mean, I'd gone to talk all the way up my chain expressing my concerns and, you know, basically anger that this had happened.

I'd also talked to the Vice President's staff, to General Kellogg, who was the person who'd hired me and who, you know, I'd previously reported to in the first year of the administration, about these concerns as well, flagging for him that there were problems and that we should --

Q Sorry, just to be clear, you mentioned Ambassador Yovanovitch. What are these concerns?

A That she had been unfairly dismissed, that she'd been forced out as a result of all of these conspiracy theories and these attacks on her.

Q Did you speak to them as well about Mr. Giuliani's --

A I did.

Q -- efforts and influence?

A Because this was all in the news, and, I mean, you know, again, everyone was watching the news and seeing this. And I said that this was, you know, a massive complication in terms of our engagements with Ukraine, because we were also talking about the Vice President having engaged with the Ukrainian leader if we could not schedule a meeting with the President, and that's simply about scheduling.

Because, you know, traditionally the Vice President has played an important role on countries like Ukraine or Georgia or a whole host of issues. And the Vice President had on his itinerary a range of foreign trips, including the trip you saw that he took recently, a personal trip to Ireland.

And we were trying to talk to his staff about whether it would make sense for the Vice President to maybe go via Kyiv or, you know, kind of basically meet with President Zelensky if we could not schedule a Presidential meeting in due course, you know, within a reasonable period of time after the parliamentary elections.

Q After --

A And also, by the way, September 1st we knew was coming up because the President had been invited to commemorate the initiation of World War II.

Q There wasn't a long period of time when you were still there after this July 11th meeting, but at any point

before July 19th did you hear back either from Mr. Eisenberg directly or from Ambassador Bolton or anyone else about any further conversations that Mr. Eisenberg had on this topic?

A Not from Ambassador Bolton, I did not. John Eisenberg said that he had followed up, and he had followed up, you know, through his basically reporting authority, which would be the White House counsel.

Q But did -- and you didn't hear anything else --

A I did not, no.

Q -- on your side of the --

A No, I did not.

Q Do you know whether Mr. Eisenberg spoke to Mr. Sondland at all?

A Well, that wouldn't be, I think, appropriate in his position.

Q Who would be the proper person to speak to Mr. Sondland and tell him to, you know, change his course of action?

A It would be the State Department.

Q And did you hear whether the State Department did that?

A Well, I talked to Assistant Secretary Reeker about this, and I also flagged it, you know, again, as I'd mentioned before, at different points, actually probably not after the July 11th discussion. But I'd also at different

points talked to Under Secretary Hale about the concerns about Ambassador Sondland, well, obviously, going in a direction we were hoping he wouldn't on the Ukrainian issue.

Q And was there a substantive response from Under Secretary Hale or Mr. Reeker?

A I mean, they were aware of it. And, you know, my presumption was based on the fact that they're both, you know, stellar professionals that they would follow up on this in some way.

Q Around this time in mid-July, we understand that there was an order to hold on the security assistance intended for Ukraine.

A Right.

Q When did you learn about that?

A I learned about it in that week, that is my last week there.

Q And how did you learn?

A I learned about it just in the normal course of action. We were informed that there had been a hold on the -- by the -- from OMB.

Q Were you informed as to the reason why?

A No, there was no reason given. And we were told that it actually came as a direction from the Chief of Staff's office.

Q From Mr. Mulvaney?

A Who, I think -- is he still technically the head of OMB?

Q Yes. He hasn't left, yes.

A So there you are then. Yeah. I mean, that's -- I mean, he had three different hats then, I guess, and I think it came under his -- it would have been, you know, I guess, normal for him to have put the hold on.

Q As of that July 10th meeting, do you know whether Ambassador Bolton or anyone else was aware of whether this military aid or security assistance had been put on hold?

A I don't think they knew. It had not been discussed. It was in the last week that I was there.

Q Okay. And did you have any conversations yourself about the hold --

A We did.

Q -- within your reporting structure?

A And, in fact, there was a meeting set up, two meetings on Ukraine in the last week that I was there, but Tim Morrison went and chaired them, so I did not take part in these meetings.

So there was -- interagency meetings were basically called to find out what was going on. And Charlie Kupperman, the deputy assistant to the President, the National Security Advisor, was basically trying to get to the bottom of it.

Q And did you ever learn what he found out?

A I did not, but I know that he was going to go and talk to Mulvaney about this.

And I left on the 19th, so, you know, by that point -- but I relayed to Ambassador Taylor at that point most of the things I've actually relayed to you today.

Q So let's just talk about Ambassador Taylor for our last couple minutes. He had become the Charge d'Affaires in Ukraine?

A Correct.

Q And you spoke to him you said, I think, on July 19th?

A Yes, but I'd actually spoken to him on several occasions before. I think you're all familiar with Ambassador Taylor's biography. I've worked with him in many, many different capacities.

And he was asked after Ambassador Yovanovitch was removed along with a number of other people whether they would be willing to be Charge, because it was agreed that with her precipitous removal -- I mean, she'd initially been, it was my understanding because I'd been told that by the State Department, asked to stay on for a transitional period a bit longer than she was supposed to, you know, as the Zelensky Presidency was underway.

So it was pretty abrupt, notwithstanding all the information we now have about this. So there was a debate

about how -- could you possibly still have the embassy there with, you know, no Charge of any stature.

And there was a new DCM being sent out, Kristina Kvien, who I met in that last week as well, who was just being sent out fresh, although she was very knowledgeable about the region.

And there was a debate back and forth about whether they could find someone from either previous ambassadors to Ukraine or someone from high level, like a Paula Dobriansky, you know, the Ukrainian American community, or somebody who would be willing to be Charge at this transitional period to basically -- again, getting back to the national security questions about showing to Ukraine that we were still supportive of them and that we were still standing by them in the face of Russian aggression -- to have someone of stature there until there could be a formal appointment and naming of a new ambassador.

Q And Ambassador Taylor was someone of stature in your view?

A Correct. Yes. I mean, he'd previously been ambassador to Ukraine and is one of the most distinguished, you know, people that one can think of.

Q I believe you said, and I just want to clarify this, that Ambassador Taylor, you relayed I think you called them red flags --

A My red flags.

Q -- your red flags to Ambassador Taylor, and that he was unaware that Ambassador Sondland had taken lead on Ukrainian policy. Is that --

A Correct. That was news to him. I mean, he, like everybody else, knew that Ambassador Sondland was playing a role, but he had not been told that Ambassador Sondland was the lead.

Q And he had not been told by the State Department?

A No.

Q Nor by Ambassador Sondland?

A No.

Q Okay. All right. I believe our time is up, so I yield to the minority for 45 minutes.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q Is it fair to say just about every special envoy or broadly chartered ambassador sometimes is blamed for jumping out of their lane?

A Yes, but Ambassador Sondland hadn't been named as a special envoy or, you know, ambassador at that time. We had Ambassador Volker who had been named as the special envoy for Ukraine, but Ambassador Sondland was saying that he was in charge of Ukrainian affairs writ large.

Q Are we certain the President never appointed Ambassador Sondland to this role?

A No.

Q Or we only know about --

A As I said before, you remember, when I said, I said what? Who? You know, who said this? And he said the President, and then, you know, I couldn't really argue with that.

Q In the July 10th meeting in the fallout in the Ward Room, was it ever clear to you what investigations were part of this discussion?

A Well, he mentioned Burisma.

Q Burisma. Anything else?

A No.

Q Okay.

A And again, I cut it off because it was obviously going down avenues which were not appropriate for the National Security Council to go down. And also, again, he's haggling almost about this meeting.

Q Are you aware of the allegation -- there's been some reporting, there was a big Politico article in January 2017 -- about Ukrainians' efforts to affect the outcome of the election, the U.S. election?

A I'm aware of the articles.

Q And do you give any credibility to some of the basic charges in there, such as [redacted]? Are you familiar with that? Would it be helpful if we marked this as

an exhibit, this Politico article?

A I've seen that Politico article.

Q Okay.

A Look, I think we have --

Q I can hand it to you.

A No. But we have --

Q Do you want it?

A -- and I am very confident based on all of the analysis that has been done -- and, again, I don't want to start getting into intelligence matters -- that the Ukrainian Government did not interfere in our election in 2016.

Q Okay. But you're aware of the reporting?

A I'm aware of the reporting, but that doesn't mean that that amounts to an operation by the Ukrainian Government.

Q Right. What do you know about [redacted]?

A I don't know very much about them, apart from things that I couldn't speak about.

Can I also say that in my past life at Brookings, is a think tank, I must have had about 25 different people from all kinds of different backgrounds coming to try to use me as a conduit to various campaigns, Republican and Democrat, given my experience and links, from, you know, Ukrainian, Belarussian, you know, Georgian, Russian, all trying to make contact with the campaigns.

I could write a million articles like that putting all kinds of people's names out there based on just the contacts of people that I had.

Q Fair enough. Just asking the questions.

A No, but I'm just saying in here that -- but this gets back to what Masha Yovanovitch said, that you can write something in an article and it somehow becomes true that it's written in an article without all of the due diligence that's done about -- done on this later.

I have my own beef with 2016 and the investigations, that I don't believe it should have started by focusing, first of all, on Americans. It should have started by looking at what Russians were doing, and I think we would have ended up in exactly the same place that Mr. Mueller did on what the Russians did with the same sets of indictments, and it might have not been quite so politicized at the time, because I can promise you that the Russians did everything that he outlined and then some. And I myself have been targeted by the Russians on many occasions.

And that doesn't make me anti-Russian. But I'll just say that this particular Russian administration, run by somebody who is an incredibly, you know, well-skilled KGB operative, is something that you just don't mess with. And we are going to be in big trouble --

Q Who is the KGB operative?

A That's President Putin.

And we're going to be in big trouble, if we don't get our act together, in creating more fodder for them to throw right back at us in 2020. And I think this is an issue of our national security for all of us, no matter what part of the aisle that you're sitting on.

Q Would you agree though that, you know, the bringing of Mr. Manafort's dealings in the Ukraine to the forefront, you know, may have had --

A Corruption is the way that President Putin and other nefarious actors, be they from China, Iran, or North Korea, access our system.

Q Are you familiar with the, you know, the allegation about Serhiy Leshchenko? I'm sorry if I'm not pronouncing that --

A Leshchenko, yes.

Q You know, relating to publicizing Manafort's role in the Ukraine?

A You've also got to remember that Ukraine is going through a massive period of upheaval itself in this period. I mean, this is the period where Yanukovych, the previous Ukrainian President, basically flees the country, leaves all kinds of documents and things behind, and the Ukrainian investigative reporters and everybody poring all over this.

You can go back and look on YouTube at some of the

rather strange things that Yanukovych left behind him. He tried to flush half of his documents down the toilet. He threw some of those in a lake. There was all kinds of material that were out there for people to pick over and to look at. And I think, again, that Mr. Mueller and his team have well documented a lot of this information.

Q But to the extent the Ukrainians were involved in pushing out the information on Paul Manafort, don't you think that could have had an impact on the election?

A There are all kinds of things that could have had an impact on our election.

Q Do you think it's fair that people who are aware of that reporting --

A I don't know how much the average American voter is aware of that reporting. My family [redacted], my in-laws, that was not the reason that they voted in the election, for example. I have a huge American family, and none of them have ever referenced anything like that to me at all. They just -- they care about all the things that the average American cares about, which is health, education, jobs.

Q But if there are Ukrainians trying to push the information out about Manafort, isn't that an effort to influence the outcome of the election?

MR. WOLOSKY: I think she answered the question several

times.

DR. HILL: Also there are Ukrainians pushing out --

MR. CASTOR: It's a pretty harmless question.

MR. WOLOSKY: You've asked it three or four times.

DR. HILL: Yes, but there are Ukrainians pushing out information about Masha Yovanovitch which is untrue. Why don't you ask about that as well? Is Masha Yovanovitch any less of an American that Mr. Manafort? She has not been accused of any corruption.

MR. ZELDIN: Dr. Hill --

DR. HILL: I'm sorry. I'm just getting annoyed about this, because the point is that, you know, Mr. Manafort has also been subject -- I don't know him either. But there's been a trial in which he was convicted of certain activity. And I like to believe that the law was abided by in pursuing, you know, what he did.

And, again, as I've said, corruption is our Achilles heel here in the United States. And I am shocked, again, that we've had the failure of imagination to realize that the Russians could target us in the same way that they use corruption in Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Armenia, Georgia. We, unfortunately, by not cleaning up our own act, have given them the doors in which they can walk through and mess around in our system.

And if Mr. Manafort did half of the things that he was

said to do, shame on him. Okay? And I don't know him. And, again, this is not a partisan discussion. And, frankly, what he did should not be subject to, you know, this kind of back and forth either.

MR. ZELDIN: Just kind of unpacking that back and forth and the origin of it, the first question, the answer was that it was -- and I don't want to put words in your mouth, so please correct me if this is not accurate. But the answer to the first question was where you concluded Ukraine did not interfere in the U.S. election?

DR. HILL: The Ukrainian Government did not interfere in the U.S. election. The Ukrainian Government did not do that. The Ukrainian Special Services also did not interfere in our election.

MR. ZELDIN: Okay. The followup question and answers, the answer is that it's your assessment that where there was interference by Ukrainians that it's your assessment that it didn't change the election results. So I see that there is an interpretation --

MR. WOLOSKY: That misstates her testimony.

DR. HILL: It also misstates it. I have no basis --

MR. ZELDIN: Feel free to correct it. I'm just --

MR. WOLOSKY: We just said it misstated her testimony, so go to your next question, please.

MR. ZELDIN: So the first answer is, it's your position

that the Ukrainian Government did not interfere with the U.S. election, correct?

DR. HILL: Correct.

MR. ZELDIN: Did Ukrainians interfere with the U.S. election?

DR. HILL: I mean, look, this is -- any foreign individual -- the way that you're going with this question is any foreign individual who evinced any kind of interest in the campaigns or tried to meet with anyone in any campaign -- and I just said to you before, I can come up in my own accounting of a whole range of people who are foreign individuals who wanted to meet with the various campaigns -- then that would count as interference, anybody wanting to meet with anybody in any campaign to talk to anybody.

MR. ZELDIN: Okay. As far as --

DR. HILL: So did some Ukrainians want to talk to -- yes, but so did some Chinese, did a lot of Russians. And there were a lot more Russians that were trying to get involved in all kinds of people's campaigns. I myself witnessed some of this, and it wasn't just on, you know, the kind of Democratic or the Republican side.

And, I mean, this is not the nature of my testimony because it's when I was in, you know, not in my current job, but when I was at the Brookings Institution. But remember, I've been the national intelligence officer for Russia before

this for 3-1/2 years. So a lot of the information I have is classified.

And I know from my previous position about how many people who were trying to gain influence into our politics. And it's very -- the Russians want to show that, in fact, that it wasn't them that were involved in 2016.

MR. ZELDIN: Was [redacted] involved in any of the Ukrainians' efforts to interfere with U.S. elections?

DR. HILL: Tampering with our election systems? No.

MR. ZELDIN: All right. Was [redacted] connected at all to any of the activities of Ukrainians to interfere with the U.S. election?

DR. HILL: I can't answer that question. No, I can't answer that question.

THE CHAIRMAN: And just to be clear whether we're talking about on the basis of press reports or are we talking about witness' personal knowledge?

MR. ZELDIN: The witness' personal knowledge.

DR. HILL: My personal knowledge, no. My personal knowledge, no. I mean, there were a lot, a lot of press reports purporting to all kinds of things, and I'm not testifying about press reports.

MR. ZELDIN: So that I don't misunderstand your answer, based on your personal knowledge, you're not aware of [redacted] being connected to any Ukrainians attempting to

interfere with the U.S. election?

DR. HILL: Correct.

And I also want to just point out here that our intelligence agencies were pretty thorough about a lot of the investigations and things here.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q Who was your predecessor at the NSC?

A My predecessor at the NSC -- well, there would have been two predecessors, because this was an amalgamation of two bureaus. The immediate predecessor would have been Celeste Wallander for Russia, Central Asia, I guess, but probably not Ukraine.

Q Who had the Ukraine portfolio?

A I think it would have been Charles Kupchan.

Q I'm sorry, what was his last name?

A Charles Kupchan. He's a professor at Georgetown.

Q And then who had the Ukraine portfolio before Vindman?

A Catherine Croft, who was the Ukraine desk officer at the State Department and then went to work with Ambassador Volker.

Q And what was the timeframe that she had the Ukraine portfolio?

A Up until the summer of 2018. And before her it was -- oh, I can't remember who was before her. There were

several changes of directorates in the time that -- of directors in the time that I was there.

Look, and I'm sorry to get testy about, you know, this back and forth, because I'm really worried about these conspiracy theories, and I'm worried that all of you are going to go down a rabbit hole, you know, looking for things that are not going to be at all helpful to the American people or to our future election in 2020.

You just had the Senate report coming out informing us all yet again, a bipartisan, nonpartisan report from the Senate about the risk that there is to our elections. If we have people running around chasing rabbit holes because Rudy Giuliani or others have been feeding information to The Hill, Politico, we are not going to be prepared as a country to push back on this again. The Russians thrive on misinformation and disinformation.

And I just want to say that that was the reason that I went into the administration when I was asked by General Flynn, K.T. MacFarland, and General Kellogg. We're in peril as a democracy because of other people interfering here.

And it doesn't mean to say that other people haven't also been trying to do things, but the Russians were who attacked us in 2016, and they're now writing the script for others to do the same. And if we don't get our act together, they will continue to make fools of us internationally.

MR. JORDAN: Dr. Hill, was Christopher Steele's dossier a rabbit hole?

DR. HILL: I think it was a rabbit hole.

MR. JORDAN: You think the Russians were trying to influence us and get us to buy into something that was absolutely not true?

DR. HILL: But that was not on any basis -- once I got into the administration I didn't see that that was a rabbit hole that my former colleagues in the National Intelligence Council had gone down to. The way that the Russians operate is that they will use whatever conduit they can to put out information that is both real and credible but that also masks a great deal of disinformation.

So I've written a book on Vladimir Putin, and if you, you know, have a moment when you want to have a sleep aid, you know, late at night, I've laid all of that out there. And Putin himself has gone around, you know, claiming there were dossiers on him trying to redirect people to look in other places for information.

When I was at the National Intelligence Council there was some person who kept constantly writing to us, telling us that we were missing, you know, whole things about, you know, Vladimir Putin, which was clearly, you know, kind of an effort on the part of the Russians to send us down rabbit holes of inquiry that would kind of distract us from looking

at the actual issues that we should be really concerned about. And this was under the Bush administration.

MR. JORDAN: So I just want to be clear, there was a story done in Politico on you last month. In that reporting it says Steele might have been played by the Russians into spreading disinformation. That's what you think happened with --

DR. HILL: It's very likely that the Russians planted disinformation in and among other information that may have been truthful, because that's exactly, again, the way that they operate. And I think everyone should always be cognizant of that.

MR. JORDAN: Yeah. So information that Christopher Steele was played by the Russians, that information was used, as you well know, by our Justice Department, specifically our FBI, as part of the basis for securing a warrant to spy on an American citizen.

DR. HILL: I think it's already come out that that wasn't exactly the case, that the dossier was basically out there when those investigations had already taken place.

MR. JORDAN: Well, that's not accurate. It was part of what was taken --

DR. HILL: Well, some of the information was that it had come through other ways. But, look, I don't want to also get into, again, a discussion that could go down a classified

avenue because I just want to tell you on, you know, really good authority that the Russians -- I mean, again, we should all know this, the Senate has reconfirmed this again -- attacked --

MR. JORDAN: I'm not disputing that.

DR. HILL: -- attacked our democracy.

And also, the point that actually hasn't come out and, again, why I've been very cross in the media, is that the President was attacked as well, because the Russians sought to discredit him.

And I've been very unhappy with the media coverage of all of this, which is why I don't want to start, you know, kind of basically doing testimony by virtue of an article that you've read in Politico. Because everybody wants to sensationalize things, everybody wants to spend time looking at the things that seem sexy, and they don't want to actually look at, you know, talk to what the facts are.

MR. JORDAN: I'm not trying to do that.

Doctor, tell me about your relationship with Christopher Steele.

DR. HILL: He was my counterpart when I was the director, the national intelligence officer. [redacted]

MR. JORDAN: And so --

DR. HILL: So inevitably, when I had to do liaison

meetings with the U.K., he was the person I had to meet with.

MR. JORDAN: And so you had a working relationship with him for how long?

DR. HILL: For the whole period that I was national intelligence officer, so that would be from 2006 to the end of 2009.

MR. JORDAN: Okay.

DR. HILL: So anybody who was working in the intelligence agencies at the time --

MR. JORDAN: I get it.

DR. HILL: -- who was dealing with Russia would have to deal with him. He retired [redacted], as I understand, at the end of 2009.

MR. JORDAN: The story on you says that you spoke with him in 2016. So can you tell me about that conversation?

DR. HILL: That was prior to the time that I had any knowledge about the dossier. He was constantly trying to drum up business, and he had contacted me because he wanted to see if I could give him a contact to some other individual, who actually I don't even recall now, who he could approach about some business issues.

MR. JORDAN: And earlier you said there were all kinds of folks who contacted you from time to time wanting to get involved and have contact with various political campaigns. Is Mr. Steele one of those individuals?

DR. HILL: He was not.

MR. JORDAN: He was not, okay.

And then the same article mentions that you, when you were hired, as soon as you were hired you told Mr. McMaster that you had worked with Mr. Steele. Is that right?

DR. HILL: Yes, in the course of my official duties as NIO, because I thought, obviously, given the situation, it would be worth saying that. I also told Ambassador Bolton this as well.

MR. JORDAN: Okay. And you did that based on the fact that Steele was in the news?

DR. HILL: Correct.

MR. JORDAN: Okay. And you did that after you were hired or before you were hired?

DR. HILL: I mentioned it to General Kellogg when he was interviewing me as well.

MR. JORDAN: Okay.

DR. HILL: I mean, you can't, you know, choose who you have to interact with.

MR. JORDAN: No. I just want to know --

DR. HILL: And at that point Christopher Steele was the [redacted] point person for dealing with Russia.

MR. JORDAN: Great.

MR. ZELDIN: Dr. Hill, are you aware of any interaction between Mr. Steele and Ukrainians --

DR. HILL: I'm not.

MR. ZELDIN: -- involved in the dossier?

DR. HILL: I have no knowledge whatsoever of how he developed that dossier, none, I just want to state that. The first time I saw that dossier was the day before it was published in Buzzfeed when a colleague, like it seemed to be about half of Washington, D.C., had it and showed me a copy of it and I was shocked. And then it appeared in Buzzfeed the next day.

MR. JORDAN: And when you read it you were convinced that it was --

DR. HILL: That was when I expressed the misgivings and concern that he could have been played.

MR. JORDAN: Yep. Okay. Thank you.

DR. HILL: Because if you also think about it, the Russians would have an ax to grind against him given the job that he had previously. And if he started going back through his old contacts and asking about, that would be a perfect opportunity for people to feed some kind of misinformation. I had no basis on which to assess that.

MR. CASTOR:

Q We learned during the course of our investigation that Steele was desperate to see that Donald Trump was not elected President. Do you --

A I don't know anything about that at all, no.

Q How does the National Security Staff staff the Vice President? Is there a separate unit that --

A He has a separate unit. But we, in my directorate, work very closely with the series of people, again, that he has detailees often for just a year at a time who rotate around. And we try to keep them as informed as possible about everything that's happening in our area of responsibility, especially, as I said, that's in the context of, you know, your question about red flags.

I wanted them to know that, you know, if we were discussing the possibility of a Vice Presidential visit, that there would be issues that we might be concerned about to be, you know, very careful about, you know, protecting the integrity of the Vice Presidency and the Vice President.

Because the Vice President played actually a very important foreign policy and diplomatic role in terms of his outreach, and especially this Vice President like, you know, predecessors has really kind of stepped up where there's been a conflict or where there's been some special care needed, you know, for a country that, you know, perhaps isn't one of the top allies but, you know, certainly might need some attention.

And, you know, Vice President Pence has been, you know, extremely good about stepping up when asked, you know, to go and, you know, give speeches for Munich Security Council

conference and other settings, for example.

But the other thing, it's often very difficult for him to do these trips because of course he can't be out of the country when the President is, and he has got other domestic obligations, not least being here as representative as well.

Q Right. There was some question about whether Vice President Pence was going to attend Zelensky's inauguration?

A It depended on the date. I mean, we were hoping, you know, if others couldn't attend that he could. I mean, I myself couldn't attend because of the date, that the way that it -- again, there were several different dates, and then the date that was announced in May was very quickly announced.

Q Right.

A It was, you know, kind of basically with a couple of days' notice.

Q So the decision not to send the Vice President had nothing to do with --

A Well --

Q -- anything other than his schedule?

A I can't say with any -- with complete certainty. I did flag already that there were some problems, but I have no reason to believe -- you know, I flagged to his staff, to General Kellogg that there were some issues, you know, kind of noise going on around Ukraine that was worrisome and that we'd need to get to the bottom of. But I have no basis to

say that he was told not to go. I think it would have been a real stretch for his schedule.

Q Okay. How big is the NSC staff for the Vice President?

A To be honest, I don't know. I don't know the numbers. It's not big at all, maybe about 10 people total.

Q Which is about the same size as your --

A Is that about right, Derek, 10 people at the Vice President's staff?

MR. HARVEY: I think so.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q And that's about the same size --

A Yeah, which is why we always tried to help.

Q -- as your --

A Yeah. I mean, no one can say that the Vice President is overstaffed.

MR. BITAR: Just for the record, that was Derek Harvey answering.

DR. HILL: Yeah, Derek Harvey, yes. You know, I asked him because I could see him and I know that he would, you know --

MR. BITAR: For the reporter.

DR. HILL: I'm sorry. Yes. Yep.

MR. CASTOR:

Q Vice President Biden had a role overseeing Ukraine

policy. Do you know anything about that?

A It was, you know, as far as I understand, you know, part of the division of labor from the previous administration. I mean, as I said, Vice Presidents often, you know, step up and play particular roles.

When I was in the Bush administration as NIO, Vice President Cheney had actually played a very active role on the former Soviet Union, gave many speeches. And I often had to go and brief him as well when I was NIO.

Q When you left the NSC on July 19th, could you just go through your direct reports again?

A There was my assistant. Do you need me to name them all for the record?

Q That would be helpful.

A So there was my assistant [redacted]. He was an NSC direct hire. He's no longer there because he had agreed to be there for the year that I was there and then he would transition off. He's gone to the Treasury Department.

There was [redacted], who was basically detailed from Treasury, and she and I started around the same time and ended the same time. She'd also had an agreement to be there for 2 years, and Treasury was understaffed and wanted to pull her back.

There was John Erath, who was the deputy senior director. John had been there for about a year and from

State Department, and he had previously been detailed out to the Defense Department and all kinds of other -- NATO. He's, you know, kind of a quite long-serving State Department official who covered the whole gamut of issues.

There was -- sorry. I'm closing my mind to kind of do the desk things in order here.

[redacted], who was detailed from [redacted] and covered the entire eastern flank of NATO. I mentioned before that some people ended up with a huge portfolio of countries, so we had everything from the Baltic States all the way down to kind of Romania, Bulgaria, Poland, you know, all those other countries.

There was [redacted], who was detailed from [redacted] who was covering the U.K., France, the Netherlands, and the Western European countries. He's gone back to [redacted].

There was [redacted], also from [redacted], who was our NATO director. And he had a smaller portfolio because NATO is very wide ranging on a whole host of issues.

There was [redacted], who was the director for Turkey, Greece, the Aegean, and at one point had the Caucasus as well, but that actually became too much for him to handle. Turkey is a 24/7, 365-days-a-year job. He's actually now off with the [redacted], so he was also detailed over from the [redacted].

There was Alex Vindman, who, as I explained before, got Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova, also detailed in from the JCS.

There was [redacted], who was detailed from [redacted], so we shared with the [redacted] directorate, and the nature of [redacted] job was classified.

And then there was [redacted], who was our director for Russia and who was really handling all the outreach that we had to the Russian National Security Council and very much focused on just the nitty-gritty of coordinating all of our interactions with the Russians, which at this point were actually fairly extensive.

And he did -- none of these other individuals worked on the Ukraine portfolio. We actually had to ask [redacted] to step up and help on the Baltics and Caucasus just in a pinch because our other directors were getting overwhelmed.

I don't think I've missed anyone. How many people do you have there? How much does that add up to? Is that [redacted]?

Q It's about [redacted], yeah.

A Yeah, that sounds about right. And we previously had a couple more directors and we'd gone -- we were agreeing, I mean, as you've heard and read about the NSC downsizing, we were agreeing to attrition --

Q Right.

A -- you know, so that directors would not necessarily be replaced.

Q So what was it like when you first arrived? Like, you know, how many people did you have reporting to you?

A Initially there were [redacted] people there. But by the time I arrived there was a reorganization going on, because we used to also have Central Asia, and that moved to the directorate covering Central and South Asia. So one of the directors already went, and the Western European portfolio was differently arranged, and we didn't replace one of those directors.

So, in fact, [redacted] had all of the EU, Germany, Italy, the Vatican, Spain, Portugal.

Q In the course of your experience did you ever come into contact with national security staffers that had a political orientation?

A Well, I mean, I had plenty of political appointees from the administration.

Q Any political or nonpolitical appointees that had a political orientation?

A Not in my experience. People did not express those. I mean, I made it very clear from when I came on -- in -- that I was nonpartisan and I did not want people's, you know, politics brought into the office. I mean, people could share opinions. And I was aware, you know, obviously of a few people's political preferences, but they weren't in any way -- that was only just by chance. But they were mostly

all Republicans.

Q When you started were there any holdovers from the previous administration?

A Well, of course there were because the administrations -- that always happens. I mean, I was a holdover from the Bush administration at the DNI --

Q How many of the [redacted] were holdovers?

A Well, when I first started all of them would have been, because my first job, when I came in in March, was to preside over -- that's why I can't remember, you know, all of the sequencing of directors, because the entire staff were from the previous administration. And from, you know, the period between March and the summer, that's when I ended up down with four people at one point. We were trying to find new detailees.

Q And you were --

A And everybody left, you know, well, for the most part, who had just had a 1-year detail in the summer of 2017. But, again, all of these people were detailed from agencies, so they're professional staff.

Q You were initially introduced to the possibility of working at the NSC by General Flynn --

A I was.

Q -- K.T. MacFarland?

A Correct. I had my first discussion with K.T. in

December of 2016.

Q And when General McMaster --

A I had to wait a while to see whether he wanted to continue.

Q Okay. And could you just help us understand, he wanted you to continue to --

A He did. I mean, I came in to meet with him.

Q And --

A I mean, I'd been already offered the job and I was already in the process of onboarding. But clearly, you know, if a new National Security Advisor comes in, he's, you know, perfectly within his rights to decide not to proceed.

Q But he --

A And I didn't know him well. I mean, I knew him somewhat professionally. I'd been at a conference or two with him. But, I mean, it wasn't like I really knew him well.

Q When you onboarded, did you have any Flynn loyalists that you had to -- that left?

A Remember, I was hired by General Flynn, and I knew him from the period when I worked at the DNI. And there were a number of people who continued who had worked with General Flynn. But, yes, it was true that, you know, Ambassador -- sorry -- General McMaster, just like Ambassador Bolton, also did change out the staff.

Q General McMaster, could you identify the differences, top-line differences between how he ran the NSC and Ambassador Bolton?

A They have very different personalities. I mean, they've obviously got very different backgrounds. And General McMaster was very focused on process. He had a lot of interagency meetings. He was focused in the whole year that he was there on the National Security Strategy and then trying to create integrated strategies to pull all the policy together.

So, you know, it was a very different, deliberative approach, a lot of, you know, meetings in his office, a lot of meetings with a lot of staff, you know, going through all the national security principles.

And Ambassador Bolton, you know, is much more of the view, as I think is well known about him, of a much smaller, streamlined National Security Staff in which just the principals interact with the President and, again, small meetings between, you know, the -- he famously has a picture on his wall that's put in all of the, you know, bios of him or the stories about him since it's all been out in public of the picture of the, you know, the Bush White House with Scowcroft and Powell and Cheney and others just at the desk, at the Resolute Desk, you know, kind of a small group.

Where Ambassador Bolton then kept it small, General

McMaster liked, you know, kind of the larger, bringing out the guys, you know, for meetings and things.

Q There was some discussion about the WhatsApp usage.

A Yes.

Q And you indicated that White House staffers couldn't use WhatsApp?

A No. It was not on our phones.

Q But the State Department folks, they --

A Yeah.

Q -- do use WhatsApp?

A So this has actually been an issue not with WhatsApp because it's a relatively, you know, recent platform, but when I was NIO between 2006 and 2009, State Department did an awful lot of business on their BlackBerrys or, you know, whatever their system was at the time.

I think BlackBerrys were invented by 2006, right? I keep remembering times when we all had giant, you know, kind of phones and things like this.

And we had a real problem at the time capturing, you know, the flow of information. And when I was NIO, I mean, an awful lot of things that we relied on were embassy cables and feedback, you know, from our ambassadors or the deputy assistant secretaries, assistant secretaries. And a lot of the information was just not accessible to us because, you know, they'd take weeks to write up a cable and often the

information was not captured.

And, you know, obviously, in the executive branch, because of the concerns about executive privilege, but also about Presidential records, everything needs to be captured.

Q But State Department officials that are utilizing WhatsApp, as long as they're preserving it for their own recordkeeping rules --

A I presume that, you know, the State Department has fairly robust procedures.

We were also instructed, you know, like everybody else, that if anybody, you know, got hold of our personal email in any way or, you know, kind of phone number, that we had to immediately forward that onto our NSC email, which I always did.

It didn't happen very often, but, you know, as you mentioned before, you asked me a question, why did the media have my phone number, my email, in actual fact, it's on my Brookings out-of-office message on leave. So they have it. You know, it's quite easy to get, hence why I get a lot of emails and phone calls.

So sometimes I'd find that, you know, some official had, you know -- couldn't remember the sequence of the NSC, so they'd just use my Brookings email and email me, and I would forward that on. But we were not allowed, as I said, to go before, in any official business in otherwise an official

manner like that.

Q President Trump's Ukraine policy with forwarding lethal defensive weapons to the Ukraine, is it fair to say that that is a much more robust aid policy?

A That's correct.

Q And what else can you tell us about the difference between the current administration and the previous?

A Well, I, myself -- you can find this in the public record -- wrote an op-ed before -- long before I joined the administration, after the annexation of Crimea and with the war on the Donbas, actually opposing lethal weapon provisions, defensive lethal weapons to Ukraine, because I was really worried at the time as an independent analyst and based on what I'd known previously in my NIO job that the Ukrainian military was in such a state of shambles that it would never be able to stand up to the Russian military, which had, you know, basically escalation dominance, and that we were in the danger of basically fanning, you know, of the flames of the conflict and having the slaughter, frankly, of Ukrainian soldiers.

And also that the Europeans wouldn't step up and wouldn't do anything. I mean, this is a perpetual problem that I was facing on many fronts. Remember, Europe is all in my portfolio as well. And we were very concerned that, you know, it could become -- I was concerned, and my cohort at

the time, that it's become a rift in our relations with Europe, that they might actually even step back from sanctions or other commitments that they've made with us as a government.

Now, when I got into the government, the administration, I became actually more convinced that there was a thorough plan, that our colleagues at the Pentagon had really thought all of this through, and that General Abizaid and then, you know, kind of his replacement, Keith Dayton, who had been working on the behalf of the Pentagon as a special envoy of the Secretary to work with Ukrainian defense, as one would hope, they knew what they were doing.

And then they had a proper plan for the long-term sustainability of the Ukrainian military, and that the intent was that the Ukrainian defense sector would be able to get itself back into shape again over time. Because you may recall that Ukraine, as a republic of the Soviet Union, was one of the locus, along with Belarus, of the majority of the defense industrial base of the Soviet Union.

So many parts for helicopters and planes, all the heavy lift capacity for the Russian forces, were still being made in Ukraine up until the falling out between Ukraine and Russia. So we were kind of confident that if Ukraine could get its act together, especially if it could tackle some of the energy issues as well, which, you know, were really

dragging it down, energy efficiency, and as we all know, militaries are one of their biggest utilizers of energy, that over time Ukraine, you know, could actually have a viable military.

And given the size of the country and, you know, the size of the population, Ukraine could actually potentially over time become a formidable military power, like the Poles were already becoming in Eastern Europe.

And so there was a plan there. So I, you know, everybody changes their mind, you know, and kind of learns things, I, you know, was basically persuaded that, you know, this was actually worth doing, even though I still had qualms about Russian escalation dominance and was worried about how this would be provided and making sure not to provoke the Russians.

Q So you came around to the view that it was --

A I did. I mean, I didn't want to use it as a way of just, you know, sticking a finger up to the Russians, you know, which is kind of -- you know, there were a few people that wanted to say, hey, you know, here, Russians, you know, kind of we're taking these actions, but it was very few. I wanted to make sure that it was part of a well thought out policy.

MR. CASTOR: I have about just shy of 10, 8 minutes. Does anybody, any Members have any questions?

MR. ZELDIN: Dr. Hill, Ambassador Volker made it sound like many in the U.S. Government working on these issues really wanted the meeting with Zelensky to happen. And earlier you're testifying a little bit about the desire for a meeting between President Trump and Zelensky. Can you just help me better understand your interest and your team's interest in wanting to set up a meeting between President Trump and President Zelensky?

[2:56 p.m.]

DR. HILL: Well, there was a bit of a split there as well. You know, I think I've made myself clear, but I'll, you know, be more clear. That myself and Ambassador Bolton and, you know, some other parts of our team did not believe we should be having a meeting with President Zelensky -- I mean "we" writ large as the U.S. Government at the highest levels -- until we were very sure how the Ukrainian Rada parliamentary elections would play out. And also, then, we could be really sure -- which, you know, nothing is ever really sure -- about how much Zelensky was going to be under the influence of various oligarchs.

And, again, I was concerned, as was Ambassador Bolton, that there was all this extraneous activity going on that would one way or another impact on this meeting in ways in which -- and this is actually my worst nightmare, what's happening now, that this could, you know, basically spin out and put, you know, kind of the United States in a very bad position because I did not know exactly what Mr. Giuliani was doing. So we are now living my worst nightmare.

MR. ZELDIN: As far as people inside of the United States Government working on the Ukraine issue, there was a difference of opinion and desire of whether or not to set up a meeting between President Trump and President Zelensky?

DR. HILL: Yeah, overall, we all wanted to have a

meeting, but under the right kind of circumstances, you know, with the right messaging and the right discussion because it was important for the legitimization of the new Ukrainian Government and as a strong symbol of U.S. solidarity with Ukraine.

I mean, Ukraine is in a really remarkable and very difficult position. I mean, it first got its independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union and -- Lee will actually remember this. Back in 1994, we all worked on a report called "Back in the USSR" when we were at the Kennedy School that was basically documenting all of the efforts that the Russian Government and Boris Yeltsin were actually making to subvert the sovereignty of all of the new countries that emerged out of the Soviet Union.

And we basically highlighted Ukraine as being the most vulnerable at that particular juncture because this was the period when Ukraine was being pushed to give up its nuclear weapons. And we actually wrote in the report that Ukraine shouldn't give up its nuclear weapons because there was a good chance that they would then be predated upon by the Russians. And this was then addressed by the Budapest Memorandum in late 1994.

And there were all kinds of attacks on Ukraine taking -- this is a long time to go back -- but there were lots of attacks on Ukraine, strange assassinations, all kinds of

threats of military action, including against Crimea, all in this timeframe. And that's when the U.S. Government moved, with others, to basically give guarantees to Ukraine of its sovereignty.

So, when you now look at what's happened to Ukraine, you know, basically 20 years on, exactly what we feared at the time has happened. So Ukraine has basically lost its sovereignty again. And our concern was to show that we were looking at Ukraine as a sovereign country. And one of the ways of expressing that sovereignty is obviously to show respect to their head of state at the very highest levels in our country. It's something that we traditionally do.

MR. ZELDIN: Ambassador Sondland seems to have a reputation, from the conversations I've had outside of this setting and from what we're hearing, that he really liked to get his hands into everything. Even though he was the U.S. Ambassador to the EU, someone told me that he really looked at the entire European continent as his. And on his own initiatives, he was just getting himself involved in everything. Was that pretty much your observations too, or did you have a different observation?

DR. HILL: Well, that was my observation. And I said, you know, before that I was -- I had, you know, what I thought was an unfortunate blowup with him at the time when he told me he was in charge of Ukraine, which it was already,

you know, at the juncture where Ambassador Taylor was being sent out as Charge. And when he said -- that was the first time that he said to me that the President had told him he was in charge of Ukraine.

But prior to that, he'd actually said to me repeatedly when I challenged him, you know, on issues like this where, you know, he was running around with, you know, [redacted] appearing at the White House and, you know, all kinds of other things that he was, you know, doing at the time that were, you know, completely out of the ordinary process, I, you know, said to him again: What's going on here?

And he said: The President has given me, you know, this broad -- I am to be his point man on Europe.

MR. ZELDIN: Do you know whether or not he was actually getting any of this guidance from a higher level, or is it possible that he was just name-dropping the President?

DR. HILL: It is entirely possible that he was name-dropping the President. There were many times where -- I mean, he was a shocking number of times in Washington, D.C., to the point where several people said to me: Is he ever in Brussels?

And I busted him a couple of times on the street in West Executive where, I mean, if he was there, he would normally come in through protocol, as all the other Ambassadors did. They would have a meeting with me or with Ambassador Bolton.

And he would have some meetings with Ambassador Bolton from time to time, but I'd often see him in West Exec coming out of, you know, what looked like he was coming out of the West Wing. And he'd say that he'd been in, you know, to see the President, but I would find from talking to the staff that he'd only been up to see Mick Mulvaney. I don't know whether that's hearsay or presumption or --

MR. ZELDIN: But as far as him getting involved in other countries outside of the EU, he came across as someone who was trying to get his hands into everything on his own initiative?

DR. HILL: If he met somebody in Brussels from another country, they were fair game, is basically how it appeared to be. He spent a long time working on [redacted] for a while and actually made a huge mess-up because he was given a piece of information from the [redacted] Prime Minister that he should have actually handed over to State Department. He sat on it for 3 months.

And people at the State Department had meetings that were pertaining to that piece of paper, and it had never actually been handed over. And the [redacted] thought that their counterparts were either, you know, kind of insane or deliberately obfuscating on the issues that they kept raising.

THE CHAIRMAN: It's time, Mr. Zeldin.

MR. ZELDIN: The time is almost up, or it is up?

THE CHAIRMAN: It is up.

Mr. Goldman.

MR. WOLOSKY: Can we take a 5-minute break?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, take a 5-minute break and we'll come back in.

[Recess.]

THE CHAIRMAN: All right, let's go back on the record. Mr. Noble.

MR. NOBLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

BY MR. NOBLE:

Q Dr. Hill, you said in the last segment of your testimony that we're now living your worst nightmare. Can you unpack that a little bit for us? What do you mean by that?

A Well, I was extremely concerned that whatever it was that Mr. Giuliani was doing might not be legal, especially after, you know, people had raised with me these two gentlemen, Parnas and Fruman. And also they'd mentioned this third individual who, I mean, I guess is actually on the list of names that you had because I didn't recognize all the others of, Harry Sargeant and when I'd spoken to my colleagues who, you know, were based in Florida, including our director for the Western Hemisphere, and he'd mentioned that these people were notorious and that, you know, they'd

been involved in all kinds of strange things in Venezuela and, you know, kind of were just well-known for not being aboveboard. And so my early assumption was that it was pushing particular individuals' business interests.

Q Did there come a time when you understood, though, that Rudy Giuliani was also pushing the Ukrainians to conduct or reopen or open particular investigations?

A Yes. I mean, that was when Amos Hochstein had come to talk to me in May. I think it was May 20th, May 22nd, something like that. So all around the time of when we were preparing for the inauguration. And he had said that a number of Ukrainians had come to complain to him that they were -- that this was starting to happen. I also had the --

Q Just to be clear, that Rudy Giuliani was in Ukraine, trying to --

A Correct.

Q -- press Ukrainians?

A Or was talking to Ukrainians, I mean, in all kinds of different settings, and was sending messages to Ukrainians.

Q And was it about these investigations in particular?

A Also about Naftogaz, again, the Ukrainian oil and gas company. And the --

Q So those two. So Naftogaz and the investigations?

A Correct. And the board of Naftogaz in this same time period had also come to have an official meeting with us in the NSC because --

Q I think we're going to get to that a little bit later.

A But they raised the same concerns, that they felt that they were under pressure to change out their board.

Q And with respect to the investigations, I just want to be very clear, did you have an understanding of which investigations in particular Rudy Giuliani was pushing or pressing the Ukrainians on, and when did you come to realize that?

A It was really in that period of late May after Masha Yovanovitch had been removed where it became clear that it was Burisma. And it was being couched in the context of energy investigations, but it was primarily focused on Burisma.

Q And did you ever come to understand that Rudy Giuliani was also pressing the Ukrainians to investigate matters related to purported Ukrainian interference in the 2016 U.S. Presidential election?

A Only based on what he was saying himself on the television.

Q And when, in what time period did you realize that that was what Giuliani was pressing as well?

A Well, that began with the articles that I started to see in The Hill and others, you know, from March onwards. And I started to pay attention to this. There was also the mentioning of George Soros, which, again, has become this crazy trope where every time somebody mentions the name of George Soros, there's a whole flurry of conspiracy theories, and he seems to be basically orchestrating absolutely everything.

Q Right. So, in your last segment of testimony, I believe you said while you and other NSC officials in the interagency were trying to make Ukraine policy the way that you normally went about such things, there was all this extraneous stuff going on?

A Correct.

Q What do you mean? Were you referring to what Rudy Giuliani and others were doing --

A Correct.

Q -- as the extraneous stuff?

A Correct. And saying, yeah. I mean, so, you know, every single day it seemed -- and that's probably an exaggeration, but every single day it seemed that he was on television, you know, basically spouting off, you know, one thing after another.

Q Okay. And I believe you also said something along the lines that you didn't actually know exactly what Rudy

Giuliani was going on, but did you have -- it seems that you did have some understanding at the time of what he was up to.

A Well, I tried -- I worked extraordinarily long days, so the last thing that I wanted to do when I went home was watch television. And I watch FOX News just as much I watch anything else, and I've appeared on FOX News, and that's how I got to know K.T. I was often on her show. I knew her through the Council on Foreign Relations.

So, you know, just to be kind of clear, I'm an omnivore when it comes to watching the news, and -- but I would have to go home in the evening and try to look on the news to see what Giuliani was saying. And then I would have to go onto YouTube or whatever else I could find, you know, kind of replays of things because people were constantly saying to me: My God, have you seen what Giuliani is saying now?

And it was clearly starting to create this, you know, meta-alternate narrative about Ukraine --

Q And about Ambassador Yovanovitch?

A -- political articles and all these other things as well.

Q And Ambassador Yovanovitch as well?

A Correct.

Q Now, so, when you saw Rudy Giuliani or you talked to your colleagues about his appearances on the television, part of what he was saying and part of what he was pressing

was for Ukraine to investigate Hunter Biden and his connection to Burisma, correct?

A He was. He was.

Q So, at some point, did you come to realize that what Rudy Giuliani was pressing, these investigations were political in nature, that these were investigations that could benefit the President in his reelection campaign?

A I came to realize that one way or another Ukraine was being used as part of the discussions and debates around the elections. And that's what I mean about my worst nightmare because Ukraine and the national security aspects of this and what the Russians have done and will continue to do is something that we should all be -- it should be a nonpartisan issue, and we should all be paying a lot of attention to it.

And that's what I mean about my worst nightmare, is having Ukraine become politicized -- I'm sure it's the Ukrainians' worst nightmare as well -- to become politicized in the way that Russia has become politicized in all of our discourse.

And so, at that point, I saw all of the above being bundled together: somebody's nefarious business interests, conspiracy theories about George Soros or the alternate retellings of what happened in 2016, and then also, potentially, you know, digging up dirt on candidates, all

based on what Giuliani himself was saying, just to be very clear.

Q Right. But did you also have an understanding that Giuliani was working and self-proclaiming to be the agent, essentially, of the President of the United States?

A Yes, of course, I was aware of that. I mean, he said it all the time.

Q And did you have any conversations or did you hear through other U.S. officials about how the Ukrainians were reacting to this --

A Yes. I heard from --

Q -- to this essential shadow foreign policy?

A Yes, I heard from our Embassy staff. And this was after Masha Yovanovitch had left as well. I mean, I was in constant contact with Embassy staff. I heard from former Assistant Secretary Wess Mitchell, the Deputy Assistant Secretary, many others, and, of course, there's a whole think tank world out there. You know, I'm reading articles, and I'm hearing from people all the time.

As well, we had regular meetings with people from Heritage, CSIS, you know, kind of -- Atlantic Council -- because they were doing a lot of work on energy. And I know, you know, a lot of this gets politicized again, but we were meeting with everybody from all of the think tanks. And I'll just point out that our colleagues from Heritage were

complaining to us repeatedly about what they were really concerned about what was going on with Ukraine.

Q Who at the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv were you speaking with about this issue?

A The previous DCM. I mean, obviously Masha Yovanovitch herself before, you know, she was removed, and then, after she was removed, I mean, talking to Ambassador Taylor, who had been reaching out and talking to -- in the course of his work, you know, he'd been, you know, very closely associated with all of the former Ukrainian -- U.S. Ambassadors to Ukraine, who had also been talking to people as well.

Q And the prior DCM, was that Mr. Pennington?

A That is correct. And he got moved on, you know, kind of basically in this sort of timeframe as well.

Q So you said, you know, you were concerned about the politicization of Ukraine. How does that impact our national security, U.S. national security?

A Well, if Ukraine suddenly becomes, as it, you know, certainly appears to be, on the track of being a partisan issue, and we can't have a serious nonpartisan or bipartisan discussion about what the U.S. national security interests in it is, then that's a problem, especially as many of the sanctions that we've put in place -- I'll give you a concrete example about this.

I mean, we put sanctions, as a government and as the U.S. Congress put in place, against Russia because of Russia's annexation of Crimea and the starting of the war in the Donbas. The Europeans came on board with those sanctions and have been tightly coordinating with us since the downing of MH17, the Malaysian airline flight over Donbas, by what has been proven to be Russian operatives. And there's been a very thorough international commission and investigation for this.

The Europeans have started to see that many of these issues, including sanctions that we've put on against Russia from 2016 onwards and now many of our machinations about Ukraine, are nothing more than our own domestic political games now.

So I was very disturbed and distressed in my last few weeks at the NSC in discussions that I had with Europeans. One case in point was the CAATSA sanctions that you as the Congress, you know, kind of put forward, and the decision to basically sanction Mr. Deripaska and Rusal because the Treasury Department did a completely aboveboard -- and this, you know, is on everyone here -- process to really try to deconflict because when -- we're presuming that when you all put on sanctions under CAATSA, there wasn't an intention to close down factories and, you know, major installations across Europe. They're kind of collateral damage. And the

largest aluminum factory, manufacturing factory in Europe happens to be in Ireland. There are major facilities in France and Sweden and, you know, elsewhere.

And all of the Ambassadors came to talk to us, very concerned about the impact that this was going to have on their countries and on, you know, major workforces, massive employment, if the sanctions were done to the narrow letter of the law. So Treasury was talking, you know, with all of them and trying to work on a supervisory arrangement and to try to make sure that there could be no collateral damage.

And when, you know, Ambassadors would come to talk to staff and people here, they got the impression that this was just a political game between both parties and that we were not taking seriously the implications of this.

So they began to believe that we were politicizing our foreign policy, that we were doing it sometimes to target them or that we were doing this, you know, to basically fight out, you know, our own disagreements. And that means that we cannot be effective in working together with our European allies on pushing back against Russia or also trying to enshrine Ukraine's sovereignty.

Q Okay. I want to -- I'm going to jump around just a little bit to cover some topics that you already spoke about. The July 10th and July 11th, 2019, meetings with Eisenberg, are you aware of any documentation of the concerns that you

raised or Mr. Griffith raised with Mr. Eisenberg?

A I'm not.

Q You're not aware of anything?

A No.

Q Are you aware of whether Eisenberg wrote anything down or made any written reports?

A I'm not. I mean, in the time when -- actually, John has really great recall, as one would hope in a lawyer. And -- I'm sorry. I'm making that shtick about poor Lee all the time here.

But he was listening very intently, and he said that he would follow up.

Q Okay. Was he taking notes?

A And I had every reason to believe -- he was very familiar already with a lot of this because, again, like everyone else, he was observing what was going on on the television.

Q Had you had prior conversations with Mr. Eisenberg about these issues?

A In passing, I believe that I had. I met with him probably every day one way or another. His office was opposite mine, so I would see him constantly. But also, just to be clear in terms of process, we always had a legal representative at all of our interagency meetings and -- you know, as one would hope, you know, in terms of keeping us on

the straight and narrow on many things.

Q So, going back to Ambassador Volker, his role was limited to trying to bring peace to the Donbas, correct? He wasn't -- he didn't have -- he wasn't in charge of Ukrainian policy writ large, is that right?

A He was not, although I think, you know, you had a reference before about special envoys. We often saw mission creep with special envoys. And, frankly, it's a difficult job for them anywhere because they're given a particular slice of and are dealing with an issue, and they've got to bring in, you know, so many other things as well.

Q Do you know whether Ambassador Volker ever had direct one-on-one conversations with the President?

A He did not.

Q What about Ambassador Sondland?

A Well, Ambassador Sondland told me all the time that he did, but I don't know if that was actually the case.

Q When was the first time you discussed Rudy Giuliani with Ambassador Volker?

A I'm trying to think about which -- I think it might have been in an unscheduled meeting where I saw him around the time of Masha Yovanovitch's dismissal.

Q So that would have been late April 2019?

A Late April, yes.

Q And do you remember what that conversation was?

A It was basically talking about, you know, kind of basically the circumstances of her dismissal and that we should be extraordinarily careful about dealing with Giuliani.

Q Okay. And can you explain just a little bit more what you said to him, what he said to you about Giuliani and what he's up to in Ukraine?

A Well, he basically mentioned at this time, and I can't say -- I mean, hopefully, he told you this -- exactly when he had his first meeting with him. But he was intimating that he was considering meeting with Giuliani or perhaps he had some initial encounter with him so that he was clearly trying to -- you know, getting back to the question before -- try to figure out, you know, how he could do, you know, the right thing, in terms of trying to smooth this over and trying to deflect away because he was just as concerned as the rest of us were about the, you know, kind of politicization or the distortion of U.S.-Ukrainian relations or, you know, of U.S.-Ukrainian policy.

Q And what did you say to Volker when he suggested he may meet with Giuliani?

A I thought that it was futile. I mean --

Q Explain why.

A Because based on my -- look, I'm not a psychologist or anything, but based on my assessment of what Mr. Giuliani

was saying on the television, it was all over the place. And if that's what he's like in person, I have no way to judge it, but if he was anything like he was on the television, I didn't see the point in having a conversation with him. He seemed at times to actually believe some of the things he was saying that I knew to be untrue.

Q That what Giuliani was saying was untrue?

A Correct.

Q Are you aware that Ambassador Volker produced text messages to us?

A I am aware because they were in the paper.

Q Okay. Have you read some of the text messages that are in the paper?

A In the newspaper, yes.

Q Were you aware that those conversations were going on at the time?

A I was not.

Q You never saw those -- you were never part of those WhatsApp conversations?

A No. And, actually, the timing of it was after I left the NSC. Most of those text messages seemed to have been in the July-August timeframe, as far as I can tell.

Q But, in any event, you weren't aware that Volker, Sondland, and Taylor were having text message exchanges?

A I was not. I would hope that they would be talking

to Ambassador Taylor. In fact, that was also one of my concerns when I was leaving, that they would not have Ambassador Taylor in the loop.

Q And why is that? Why was that a concern?

A Because Ambassador Sondland had done this with our Charge in [redacted]. I mentioned before he'd met the [redacted] Prime Minister in Brussels and then decided that he was going to be the point person to [redacted], because we were also without an Ambassador in [redacted], but we had a very good Charge -- like Ambassador Taylor, who had previously been an Ambassador [redacted] and was retired, but had come back to step up. And Ambassador Sondland just ignored him and pretended he wasn't there.

Q Having reviewed the text messages that are in the papers, what's your opinion of those? Is that normal diplomacy, as you -- based on your experience?

A No.

Q And why not?

A Because of the content and the nature of, you know, setting up a meeting in relation to this, to something that is not a national security deliverable.

Q And can you explain that a little bit more? Like what do you mean by this was not a national security deliverable? What was not the national security deliverable?

A It was obvious from those text messages that they

were referring to the investigations, and that was not something that we were pushing from the national security perspective, certainly not the National Security Council and certainly not the State Department.

Q And they were pushing that in exchange for a White House meeting?

A In exchange for a White House meeting.

MR. NOBLE: I'd like to show you what's going to be marked majority exhibit 1, I guess.

[Majority Exhibit No. 1 was marked for identification.]

BY MR. NOBLE:

Q And this is --

A I'll put my glasses on.

Q -- one of the text message exchanges involving Ambassador Volker and actually Andrey Yermak?

A Uh-huh.

Q And I direct your attention to the entry, the first entry on July 25th, 2019.

A Uh-huh.

Q Do you see that?

A Yes, I do, yes.

Q Can you just read what that says?

A Which? Hang on. It's the one that --

Q Yeah.

A -- starts with Kurt Volker.

Q Yeah, Kurt Volker writing to Andrey Yermak.

A It says: Good lunch. Heard from White House -- assuming President Z convinces Trump he will investigate/get to the bottom of what happened in 2016, we will nail down date for visit to Washington. Good luck. See you tomorrow -- Kurt.

Q Okay. And just for the record, the Bates stamp is KV-19.

A Uh-huh.

Q Dr. Hill, the message that Kurt Volker is relaying to Andrey Yermak, President Zelensky's adviser, how does that correspond or match up or not with the message that Ambassador Sondland delivered during the July 10th meeting that Ambassador Volker was in attendance at?

A It seems consistent with that. At least in that case, he's talking about investigations. And in the context of the July 10th/11th, you know, that was more on the energy sector in the way that Sondland -- but in terms of saying he will investigate and then, you know, get to the bottom of what happened in 2016 is consistent, at least, with the way that that was laid out in the July 10th.

Q But in July 10th in the Ward Room meeting, I believe you testified you overheard Ambassador Sondland specifically mention Burisma. Is that right?

A He did.

Q And can you tell us a little bit more about what he --

A But this seems, you know, somewhat -- well, this is slashed so I don't know -- I mean, obviously, I don't know exactly what they had in mind there.

Q But, again, it's the -- they seem to be exchanging a White House meeting for a commitment by Ukraine to investigate these matters that Rudy Giuliani had been pressing?

A That's what it looks like. The "heard from the White House" is interesting to me because I don't know, obviously, who they heard from in the White House.

Q Was it you or anyone at the NSC that you're aware?

A It would not be me because I was not there. But, I mean, this could be the Chief of Staff's Office.

Q Mick Mulvaney?

A I mean, that leans to speculation, but based on the July 10th, which is 2 weeks prior to that, the only person that Gordon Sondland referenced was Chief of Staff Mulvaney.

And, actually, getting to the point when you asked me before about when did Sondland tell me he was in charge of Ukraine, at that time, in that rather testy exchange I had with him, you know, I was trying to impress upon him the importance of coordinating, you know, with all of these

different individuals and others that, you know, you were laying out. We had a fairly robust set of interactions with Ukrainians.

And he retorted to me that if he was coordinating with the President because, again, this is part of him saying he's talking to the President, he was talking to Mulvaney, and he was filling in Ambassador Bolton -- he didn't say he was talking to him, Ambassador Bolton, he said filling in Ambassador Bolton -- and then talking to, you know, basically -- he said Brechbuhl, Ulrich, at the State Department. He didn't actually mention Secretary Pompeo, which I noted at the time I thought was a bit odd. Who else did he have to inform?

And I said: Well, it would be nice to inform all of us and, you know, the -- obviously, the Deputy Assistant Secretary and others.

And he did not think that he needed to do that.

Q Did you have an understanding why he was --

A He was also, of course, talking to Ambassador Volker and Secretary Perry, and he did mention that.

Q Why was he keeping Ulrich Brechbuhl in the loop?

A Ulrich is a special counselor to -- Brechbuhl -- to Secretary Pompeo. And, of course, Secretary Pompeo at this time is on the road all the time. So I'm -- you know, it would be difficult to meet with Secretary Pompeo on a regular

basis. So that would actually make sense, I mean, but he's the special counselor. He's not, you know, kind of in the chain of command.

And that's actually what I pointed out to Gordon, that he wasn't -- to Ambassador Sondland. He wasn't, you know, kind of basically linked into anybody in the Embassy. He certainly wasn't talking to Deputy Assistant Secretary George Kent, who, you know, on the basis of, you know, the daily interactions, would be managing that in the State Department.

And he wasn't aware of some of the larger policy threads that were going on either. He simply just wasn't aware of some of the elements of things we were trying to do with Ukraine. He wasn't, again, getting a regular brief on any of this either.

Q Do you know whether Ulrich Brechbuhl was generally aware of what Rudy Giuliani was up to in Ukraine?

A I could not say.

Q Did you have any direct conversations with Brechbuhl about Giuliani?

A Certainly not about Giuliani. I did not, no. I mean, I did have conversations with him about coordination, you know, trying to figure out how we could coordinate better.

Q And did Rudy Giuliani come up in those contacts?

A He did not. No, he did not.

Q On the security assistance issue, I believe you testified that the first time you learned that the President had placed a freeze on the assistance was July 18th. Is that right?

A Yes. But I learned that as OMB --

Q Oh, that OMB had put the freeze --

A -- and Mick Mulvaney had put a freeze on. So, just to be clear, I never learned that the President had put a freeze on this. And this is on -- what was happening at this time was there was a freeze put on all kinds of aid and assistance because it was in the process at the time of an awful lot of reviews of foreign assistance.

Q But had there been any discussion within the national security staff about freezing the Ukraine assistance?

A No. I mean, it was at that point supposed to be moving forward.

Q And did you ever get an explanation before you left government for why the freeze was put in place?

A I did not. And I discussed with Alex Vindman, the deputy, and with others that it would be important to follow up on this, and they should work very closely with the Deputy National Security Advisor Charlie Kupperman because he at this point was also trying to keep tabs on everything that was happening. So, I mean, I kept him fully apprised of all

of my concerns.

And, obviously, it was easier to meet with him often than Ambassador Bolton. And, you know, we were aware that Gordon Sondland was talking to Chief of Staff's Office. They're all in the same corridor. And we were hopeful, at least I was hopeful at that time, that Deputy National Security Adviser Kupperman would be able to figure out what was going on.

Q Did Kupperman or Vindman or anyone else you spoke to in that timeframe express any views as to why they believed there was a freeze in place?

A No. They were just wanting to find out. And they were in touch with OMB, and they weren't getting much information apart from the fact there was a freeze. So I'll just say that my assumption at the time was that it was in this general framework of many, you know, foreign assistance items being put on hold.

Q And do you believe that the assistance that the U.S. was providing to Ukraine should have gone through?

A Yes. I mean, it had all been agreed on and was actually in train, but so had some of the other assistance, just to be clear.

Q And were you aware that, at the time, DOD had already certified that Ukraine was compliant with the anticorruption requirement?

A I was aware of that, yes, because that's what I mean; it was already on train, and our colleagues in the Pentagon had been working on this, you know, very thoroughly.

Q Sitting here today, do you have any other -- has your understanding changed about why the freeze was put in place?

A It hasn't actually because, you know, as I said, when I left, there wasn't an explanation, and foreign assistance overall was being frozen. And I haven't seen anything, at least in the public record, that would suggest that it was -- that the foreign assistance was being frozen for specific purposes at that point.

I mean, this was also, remember, again, at the point of discussion about cutting back on lots of Pentagon projects for the building of the wall for Homeland Security purposes, the border wall.

Q After you left the National Security Council, did you have any conversations with anyone about the freeze?

A I did not, no. I mean, I had a conversation with Alex Vindman in the last couple of days. And I did also have a conversation, as I reported before, with Ambassador Taylor. But I said at that point that I had no insight as to why it had been frozen, but I said, again, that I hoped that people would be able to get to the bottom of it with Mick Mulvaney.

Q Did Ambassador Taylor say anything about why he

believed the freeze was in place to you?

A Well, at that point, he was asking me why it was, and I couldn't answer that. And then, again, I was leaving. So, I mean, I'd left that to Tim Morrison. And I believe that the following week they had a meeting. So I left on the 19th. So, sometime on the 22nd or 23rd, there was a meeting scheduled as I was leaving for them to pull everyone together from the interagency to try to get to the bottom of this.

But I did think that if it was political for whatever reason, the wall or, you know, you name it, it would have to be resolved at high levels in the interagency, and that Ambassador Bolton and Deputy National Security Advisor Kupperman would have to sit down with Mick Mulvaney and try to get to the bottom of what was going on. And, again, there were other freezes of assistance because there was a move to push out the new foreign assistance strategy.

Q There's been reporting that the President or perhaps Mulvaney had tasked Ambassador Bolton to do a review of the security assistance. Are you aware of --

A I'm not aware of that. Not when I left, I didn't know about that.

Q If there were a freeze -- if a freeze were going to be put in place like this, would it have been normal for the National Security Council staff to have been involved in the decisionmaking process leading up to the freeze?

A Well, if it was done from the perspective of OMB, this has happened before, so define normal. I mean, you know, in other settings -- actually, when General McMaster was in place there was a lot more process, so a lot more regular interactions. And he always made sure to have OMB and everybody else present in meetings.

And there had been interventions by OMB previously, when Mr. Mulvaney was only single-hatted as the head of OMB, to hold things back and to review them. I mean, that had happened before. But in terms of -- you know, by this point, I have to say in this point in July, the process had somewhat broken down.

Q You testified earlier about the scheduling of a meeting between President Trump and President Zelensky, and that --

THE CHAIRMAN: Can I just interject for a quick question? Dr. Hill, you mentioned I think, when you left your position, you didn't have any firsthand knowledge about why the military assistance was being frozen.

DR. HILL: Correct.

THE CHAIRMAN: And you didn't subsequently personally learn anything that would inform you as to whether it was --

DR. HILL: Correct.

THE CHAIRMAN: -- withheld as part of a broad withholding or for a more insidious purpose?

DR. HILL: I did not, no. I mean, the first I saw of something suggesting otherwise was really in this exchange of text messages and also in newspaper reports.

THE CHAIRMAN: And the text message you're referring to is one in which --

DR. HILL: Ambassador Taylor makes the comment about this.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes. And have you had any conversation with Ambassador Taylor --

DR. HILL: I have not. No, I have not been in touch with him at all.

THE CHAIRMAN: So, if there were a hidden agenda here, in terms of why that military assistance was being withheld along the lines that Ambassador Taylor indicated, that would have not come to your attention while you were there and --

DR. HILL: It would not have done, no. And, again, though I did speak to Ambassador Taylor at great length on the 19th of September, in which I reviewed a whole host of issues that I wanted to hand over to him, so Ambassador Taylor was very much alert to all kinds of concerns. And he was going to, you know, basically -- because he had to in his job as Charge -- you know, basically try to look into these and to try to figure out, you know, how he could work, you know, more closely with Ambassador -- well, he was already working closely with Ambassador Volker but also with

Ambassador Sondland to figure out what was going on.

MR. WOLOSKY: You referenced the 19th of September. I think you meant July.

DR. HILL: July. I'm sorry. Thank you, Lee. I'm sorry. My brain is now more shook up than my water. Sorry.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

DR. HILL: I apologize for that.

THE CHAIRMAN: You testified --

DR. HILL: How does this get corrected, by the way? I mean, do you go back, do you do the whole, you know, kind of correction back and forth of dates, you know?

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, the transcript will read as you said, and the correction will appear as you corrected it.

DR. HILL: Okay, good, thanks. That was just a slip, based on, you know, the timing here. Yeah. Anyway, go ahead. Sorry.

BY MR. NOBLE:

Q The meeting between -- scheduling the meeting between President Trump and President Zelensky, I believe you said that, in your opinion, you were waiting to see what happened in the Ukrainian parliamentary elections --

A Correct.

Q -- which I believe were held on July 21st. Is that right?

A That's right. And I left before that.

Q To date, though, there's been no meeting between President Trump and President Zelensky, at least at the White House, right?

A No, there has not. But there has been a meeting, of course, in the --

Q At the U.N. General Assembly?

A In New York, yes. And, actually, I mean, again, we'd been preferring those kinds of meetings in the past because setting up a White House meeting, as one can imagine, is a very heavy lift and, you know, the scheduling is always very difficult. And, you know, basically, we always try to have a serious meeting wherever we can.

And the initial -- even when I was there, there had been kind of a scheduling aspiration for Warsaw on the 1st of September because that seemed to be actually a very apt first meeting. Because after Poland, you know, the lands that were now modern Ukraine were pretty much run over by Nazi Germany, and, you know, Ukraine suffered greatly during World War II. And we thought it would be appropriate to, immediately after the meeting with the Poles, to have the President meet with Zelensky. So, I mean, that seemed to be kind of a nice packaging.

Q But, as you said, after you left the White House, you weren't privy to the conversations that were going on behind the scenes --

A I was not, no.

Q -- by Ambassador Sondland, Ambassador Volker, and, to a certain extent, Ambassador Taylor about the scheduling of the meeting and linking it to the Ukrainian commitment to investigate --

A I was not.

Q You did not see any of those messages?

A I did not see any of those messages.

Q I believe you said that you've reviewed a copy of the July 25th call summary, the call between President Trump and President Zelensky?

A The one that was published in the newspaper, yes.

Q I'd like to ask some questions about those.

MR. NOBLE: So we're going to mark this government exhibit 2 -- I mean majority exhibit 2.

[Majority Exhibit No. 2
was marked for identification.]

DR. HILL: See, we all have things --

MR. NOBLE: Old habits die hard.

MR. CASTOR: Do you have a copy of that?

MR. NOBLE: We might have another copy.

THE CHAIRMAN: It's just the call record.

MR. CASTOR: Okay, gotcha.

BY MR. NOBLE:

Q So I direct your attention to page 3. You see at

the top there that President Trump says: I would like you to do us a favor though --

A Uh-huh.

Q And then he goes on to mention: I would like you to find out what happened with this whole situation with Ukraine, they say CrowdStrike... I guess you have one of your wealthy people... The server, they say Ukraine has it.

Do you know what the President -- what President Trump was referring to when he was asking President Zelensky to look into those things?

A I think some of this gets to some speculation here. Clearly -- well, this seems to be the alternative theory for 2016 at the beginning here with the whole situation with Ukraine when as you've been asking questions along that Ukraine might have interfered in the election, particularly in the references to CrowdStrike.

Tom Bossert has already spoken out publicly against this, and we spent a lot of time with Tom and General McMaster and others trying to refute this one in the first year of the administration.

Q Can you say a little bit more about that? What did Tom Bossert do in the first year?

A Well, Tom Bossert came out publicly and said that he really regretted this reference after he read the transcript as well because this was a debunked theory. And

this was also a muddle.

Q But you said there were some efforts early on in the administration internally to debunk this theory. Can you explain what you did?

A Basically, Tom and others who were working on cybersecurity laid out to the President the facts about the interference. Again, I can't say any more than that.

Q Okay. But to a certain extent, they advised him that the alternate theory that Ukraine had interfered in the election was false?

A Correct.

Q If you turn to the next page, the top of paragraph 4. I'm sorry. Page 4, the top paragraph.

A Uh-huh.

Q So the President is saying that he's going to have Rudy Giuliani and the Attorney General call President Zelensky about these investigations, and then he goes on, lower in the paragraph, says: The other thing, there's a lot of talk about Biden's son, that Biden stopped the prosecution and a lot of people want to find out about that so whatever you can do with the Attorney General would be great.

And then down in the next paragraph, President Zelensky responds. Kind of middle of the paragraph, you see he says: He or she, referring to the new prosecutor general that Zelensky says he's going to appoint, will look into the

situation, specifically to the company that you mentioned in this issue.

Do you have an understanding of, when President Trump references investigating Biden's son, Hunter Biden, and President Zelensky's response that they're going to look into the company, what company President Zelensky was referring to?

A Well, I think he means Burisma, President Zelensky is referring to.

Q And why is that?

A Because that was the company that Hunter Biden was on the board of.

Q So you had an understanding -- did you have an understanding back at the time that when people like Giuliani were talking about investigating Burisma, they were also saying that Hunter Biden and Joe Biden should be investigated, or Hunter Biden?

A That was becoming apparent. But, I mean, Mr. Giuliani made it very apparent as well.

Q And going back up to that top paragraph, do you see President Trump says: The former Ambassador from the United States, the woman, was bad news and the people she was dealing with in the Ukraine were bad news so I just want to let you know that. Do you know who he's referring to there?

A He's obviously referring to Ambassador Yovanovitch.

And I know that, later on, President Zelensky runs her name back again, although he mispronounces it.

Q I think it's spelled Ivanovich in the summary in the next paragraph.

A Yes.

Q And in the next paragraph, President Trump says: Well, she's going to go through some things. Do you know what President Trump was referring to when he said that --

A I do not.

Q -- Ambassador Yovanovitch was going to go through some things?

A I do not know what that meant.

Q Because at this point, July 25th, she'd already been removed, ousted, as you said, from her position, correct?

A Yes, correct.

Q How did you react when you read that, the transcript, particularly the portions I pointed to about President Trump pushing President Zelensky to investigate the Bidens and investigate Ukrainian -- purported Ukrainian interference in the 2016 election and as well as his comments about Ambassador Yovanovitch?

A I was actually shocked.

Q Why?

A Well, particularly on Ambassador Yovanovitch, and

very saddened because, again, Ambassador Yovanovitch is a great American, and I don't think any American citizen should be disparaged by their President, just to put it out there. So that made me very sad and very shocked and, yeah, not too happy.

And on the other issue, it was pretty blatant. So, I mean, I found that I couldn't really explain that away with an alternate explanation. So that's what I mean about being, you know, quite shocked.

And I was also very shocked, to be frank, that we ended up with a telephone conversation like this because all of the -- and, you know, this is obviously going into executive privilege, and I'm not going to say anything more about this, but I sat in an awful lot of calls, and I have not seen anything like this. And I was there for 2 and a half years. So I was just shocked.

Q And I'd like to ask you some questions, to the extent you can answer, about the process of prepping for these types of calls in a little bit.

So you just said that it was pretty blatant, what President Trump was saying in this call. What do you mean by that?

A Well, that it looks to me like it was in the context of everything else that had come to my attention.

Q And what do you mean by -- you mean like what

Ambassador Sondland had brought up in the July 10th meeting?

A Correct. And then, you know, that Rudy Giuliani's commentary -- I mean, again, Rudy Giuliani has been saying an awful lot of things all the time, and he was pretty inescapable. And after a while, you know, kind of he was making it crystal clear what it was that he was pushing. And this is very much repeating things that Rudy Giuliani was saying in public on television.

THE CHAIRMAN: And by that, you mean that he wanted an investigation done of the Bidens and of this debunked conspiracy theory about 2016?

DR. HILL: Correct.

THE CHAIRMAN: And that this was a condition of getting this White House meeting?

DR. HILL: That's certainly what this looks like, in the context of this transcript.

BY MR. NOBLE:

Q And by "this," you mean the July 25th call summary?

A Correct. But, again, I only read this in the context of the publication of it by the White House and subsequently in the press.

Q And here it's -- I mean, this is essentially President Trump adopting exactly what Rudy Giuliani had been pressing since the spring of 2019 in this phone call. Is that right?

A I mean, Giuliani has been relentless on this point, you know, to the point where, you know, obviously, he has, as Ambassador Volker said, shaped a very negative image.

Q But now it's President Trump pressing the President of Ukraine to do exactly what Rudy Giuliani had been trying to get other Ukrainian officials to commit to, correct?

A That is certainly how this reads.

Q With the assistance of Ambassador Sondland and Ambassador Volker?

A Well, I can't say that it was, you know, directly with their assistance.

Q But you've seen the text messages between them, correct?

A I have.

Q Doesn't it seem that they were, if not assisting, facilitating this scheme?

A They certainly seem to have been -- look, I wasn't in the deposition that Ambassador Volker gave. I don't know how many times he met with Ambassador -- I mean, with Giuliani or Ambassador Sondland, for that matter. I know that Ambassador Sondland talked repeatedly about conversations -- and you have him coming to give a deposition and, you know, I should leave it to him to speak on his own behalf.

But he said to me repeatedly that he was going in

talking to the President. I mean, again, you can actually ask him because he'll have to tell you all truthfully how many times he really did meet with the President because I have my doubts. I could be wrong, but there were often times when he said he'd been in to see the President when other staff indicated to me that they did not believe that he had. He was certainly meeting with Chief of Staff Mulvaney on a regular basis.

Q And how do you know that?

A Because I know that from Mulvaney's staff.

Q Who in particular told you about those meetings?

A Many people did. I mean, he has -- look, and there are also lots of -- again, I keep telling -- well, I've said this before. Any of you who have been into the West Wing, into the entryway when you go in from West Executive, it's a very small space. So lots of people can say that they have seen people.

The front office of Ambassador Bolton, the door is always open. It looks right down the corridor to the Chief of Staff's Office, to the entryway to the foyer. People who are sitting on the staff of Ambassador Bolton could see Gordon Sondland going into Mulvaney's office. The guards could see Ambassador Sondland going into Mulvaney's office.

I didn't have to be told secretly by, you know, some high-ranking staff member. I could just say to someone, the

front desk receptionist: Hey, has Ambassador Sondland just been in?

And I could just say: Did he see the President?

No, but he's been in to see Mulvaney.

So, I mean, I'm uncomfortable with answering, you know, kind of the question the way that you put it because I don't know, you know, to what extent Ambassador Volker, you know, was talking -- I don't know whether when Ambassador Volker is saying, you know, "the White House" whether he means the Chief of Staff or whether he means that Ambassador Sondland has told him that he's heard from the White House and he's just relating that to Yermak.

Q Fair enough. Do you know whether Ambassador Bolton or Secretary Pompeo ever tried to rein in Ambassador Sondland?

A Ambassador Bolton complained about him all the time, but I don't know whether he tried to rein him in because, again, Ambassador Sondland isn't in his chain of command. And Ambassador Sondland, you know, would occasionally -- and I just say "occasionally" -- make an appointment to see Ambassador Bolton, usually when he knew that I or somebody else wasn't there, just to -- so I don't know also what he said to Ambassador Bolton because I didn't get a readout.

So, often what he did with me, I would find out later

Ambassador Sondland had told people that he'd called me and spoken to me about an issue, but he wouldn't relate what I'd told him. He'd just then proceed to go ahead on the way that he wanted to proceed anyway by just simply saying: Oh, I talked to Fiona, and, therefore, you know, kind of I'm doing this.

And I'd find out after the fact that he'd used my name, you know, as the basis of a phone call to just go forward and proceed with doing something.

Q Right. Going back to the transcript just quickly, the investigations that President Trump was urging President Zelensky to undertake, is it fair to say that those were to serve President Trump's personal political interests as opposed to the national security interests of the United States?

A I don't honestly see much national security interest in what I've just read there, and I do not see and I did not see at any point any national security interest in the things that Rudy Giuliani was saying on the television that I watched. Now, I could have missed many of his appearances. Again, they were ubiquitous, and I couldn't keep up with all of them, but I don't believe that he -- anyway, he's not a national security official at this particular juncture.

Q Do you see anything that would benefit President

Trump politically?

A Well, I think it depends on how this all plays out.

THE CHAIRMAN: Our time has expired. The minority.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q Do you know [redacted]?

A I have, yes.

Q And what do you know [redacted]?

A [redacted]

Q What were [redacted]?

[redacted]

Q What were [redacted]?

[redacted]

Q And do you know what the circumstances of [redacted]?

[redacted]

I mean, a similar thing happened with Ambassador Bolton. [redacted] And a couple of other people, there's just been a couple of people who have -- Ambassador Bolton's, one of his key assistants, [redacted], who would actually, you know, know a lot about all of these comings and goings, [redacted].

Q Did you have any discussions, communications with [redacted]?

A I've kept in contact with most of the people that I've worked with, in a general sense. And [redacted] --

Q When is the last time --

[redacted]

Q And so when was the last time [redacted]?

A The last time [redacted] would have been before I went on vacation. I mean, in the last week. We did a lot of wrap-ups with all of the people who were, you know, pertinent. I did a lot of, you know, out-briefing in the professional arena. I often met, as I said, with DAS Kent. You know, I could run through, you know, all the people that I met with in that week just to, you know, wrap things up again.

Q Since you left --

A This was part of the whole briefing, you know, and analytical -- I should actually clarify. When I mentioned analysts before -- I'm an analyst myself, so I tend to use that as shorthand. But, you know, obviously, we met with an awful lot of analysts or, you know, subject-matter individuals from around the agencies.

Q Since you left on July 19th, did you -- have you had any communications with any of the individuals we've discussed today about your --

A With all of my staff.

Q About your appearance here today?

A Well, they know I'm appearing, yeah. I mean --

Q Did any of them reach out to you, have any communications with you?

A Well, a lot of them have reached out to me and, you know, kind of in solidarity, you know, because, I mean, obviously, this isn't a pleasant experience for everybody. And I've had a few people who have reached out because they're just very concerned about the future of the National Security Council, and they're worried that, you know, all of these issues will politicize what has, you know, up until now been -- again, has certainly strived to be a nonpolitical body.

Q Anyone try to influence your testimony?

A No, they have not.

Q And, again, please don't jump down my throat when I ask this.

A I won't.

Q When was the first time that you knew you were coming in today?

A When was the first time I knew I was coming in today?

Q Yes.

A Well, for sure when I got the letter requesting me

to come in.

Q But today specifically, not that you were on a generalized list.

A I don't know when the first day would be because I gave Lee a sense of dates about when I was available.

Q But it was sooner than -- it was farther back in time than last Wednesday, right?

A It might not have been. Actually, when was last Wednesday? What was the date of last Wednesday? I'm sorry, I'm --

MR. WOLOSKY: I'm not testifying. If you don't know the date --

DR. HILL: Yeah. No, I'm sorry, I don't know the answer to that.

And, look, and one of the reasons that I've been basically -- [redacted] And I don't have a laptop right now, which may sound bizarre, because I've taken an extended leave from Brookings. So I only have my iPhone. And I've been, you know, basically trying to keep focused on the personal stuff.

And, also, I wanted to come here without any undue preparation precisely for the reasons that you've said, so that no one could influence my testimony. It's hard to

escape the news, and I've tried to keep on top of that, but I haven't been, you know, completely keeping track of when I knew what, you know, because I wanted to come in and just make myself available, you know, and do my duty.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q Okay. In terms of the universe of State Department officials --

A Yes.

Q -- that you had communications with about these relevant matters, I just want to make sure that we haven't missed anybody. There was Wess Mitchell?

A Yes, who left in February of 2019, yes.

Q And Phil Reeker?

A Correct.

Q And George Kent?

A George Kent.

Q And Masha Yovanovitch?

A Kristina Kvien, who went out to be the DCM. I met with her as she was going out. I also met with Catherine Croft, who I mentioned had been our director previously and replaced Chris Anderson, who was previously Kurt Volker's -- he's another individual you're probably aware of, Christopher Anderson, who is Kurt Volker's deputy.

Catherine was actually in language training to be sent out to Baghdad for all the period after she left, but then

the Embassy in Baghdad got downsized, as you're all aware, so they started redeploying people. And given her work on Ukraine, she was moved to work for Kurt Volker. And I would have talked to all of, you know, the office, relevant office directors. David Hale. I've also talked to Deputy Sullivan, Under Secretary Hale. Brechbuhl only a couple of times. I've talked to Morgan Ortagus, the press spokesman, and press spokesperson -- and Robert Palladino -- I think he's moved on -- press people, because we coordinated a lot of statements in support of Ambassador Yovanovitch.

Q Ambassador Taylor?

A Ambassador Taylor, correct.

Q How about a former Ambassador Pyatt?

A No. I've obviously had contact with Ambassador Pyatt because he's Ambassador to Greece. Is he still Ambassador to Greece? He was, you know, last time when I -- yeah. And so, but I only dealt with him in the context of things that we were doing in Greece. We didn't actually speak about Ukraine, only with the exception of [redacted] So, yeah, I mean, that was the only -- and he's been very good about keeping a separation from his previous work on Ukraine

because he got burned in that infamous phone call with Ambassador Nuland.

Q Kathy Kavalec, do you know her?

A I do know her, yes. She was nominated to be our Ambassador to Albania until an Albanian lobbyist group used a very tenuous tie that she had to Chris Steele to have her removed from the nomination. So this is another thing of somebody who was treated rather disgracefully. She had been instructed as part of her duties to meet with him. She hadn't met him before. She had had very limited interactions with him when he was [redacted] in official position. And she was snarled up in all of these exchanges of emails when she just reported that she'd met with him.

And an Albanian lobbyist group also started to accuse her of being part of spurious conspiracies. And so her nomination to Albania to be our Ambassador was shelved, even though she would have been an excellent Ambassador and was in Albanian language training.

Q Did you have any communications with her in regards to the Ukraine matters?

A I have not. I mean, I've been in touch with her more generally because she's now got a new position. She's being sent out to the OSCE to do some work on the Balkans, but I did not talk to her about Ukraine.

Q How many communications did you have with

Mr. Brechbuhl?

A Only a couple. I mean, these were in general coordination-related issues.

Q Was it --

A I went out to meet with him, you know, first to introduce myself when he was appointed. I happened to have been in grad school with [redacted], so I had a connection. I obviously had met him at some point in the distant past. And I wanted to go and meet him so he'd know who I am and so we could talk about trying to do better coordination. Because Secretary Pompeo didn't have a chief of staff, and, you know, given the incredible amount of travel that he takes, it was important to be able to have some interactions.

And we were also concerned at this point about coordination with a couple of Ambassadors, including Ambassador Sondland. So I wanted to make sure that Mr. Brechbuhl would feel free to reach out to me if there was any issue.

[4:05 p.m.]

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q And forgive me if you said this. We've been here a little bit. Did you have any discussions with Mr. Brechbuhl about Sondland, Giuliani --

A I did not. But I --

Q So it was just Yovanovitch and the circumstances of her departure?

A Correct. But, obviously, Mr. Giuliani seemed to have had --

Q Right.

A -- even at the time, a big influence in her departure.

Q Okay.

A And I expressed concern about that.

Q You expressed concern to Mr. Brechbuhl about --

A I probably said something about the circumstances of her departure. But this is only in a general sense.

Q Was it a one-on-one meeting or telephone call?

A I think it was a telephone call.

Q Okay.

A But it was really about other issues. So, you know, he may -- I took most of my concerns, you know, directly to Under Secretary Hale, Ambassador Bolton, and to Assistant Secretary Reeker. And I also spoke to Deputy

Secretary Sullivan.

Q Uh-huh.

The fact that the foreign assistance was frozen, it occurred on July 18th, which was the day before --

A Yeah, exactly.

Q -- you left. So you may not have a lot of firsthand --

A Correct.

Q -- facts, but --

A And I already said that.

Q -- it's your understanding that it was subsequently lifted?

A That's my understanding.

Q And Ukraine got their Javelins and, you know, everything has been flowing in terms of the financial assistance?

A I haven't any of the information on this at all.

Q But that's your understanding?

A That's my understanding.

Q Is it fair to say that this type of stops and starts is sometimes common --

A Yes.

Q -- with foreign assistance?

A It is.

Q That there's different -- different power centers

have questions and there are some starts and stops?

A That's correct. And as I mentioned before in response to this question, OMB quite frequently would raise a lot of questions about this at other meetings in the past they had.

Q Right. And sometimes there's issues from the Hill. You know, Members get concerned about something, and that has to be sorted out and --

A Correct. And it wasn't clear, when I left, about where was the provenance of this concern, but that Mulvaney, presumably in his hat as sort of the head of OMB, you know, not just as chief of staff, had put the hold on this.

Q So these holds can happen for any reason or no reason?

A Well, there's usually a reason --

Q But good reason.

A -- as you just laid out. Well, it depends on one's perspective of good reason.

Q Right.

A I mean, for some persons, it would be a good reason; for others, it wouldn't be.

Q Right. I guess that's what I was trying to establish.

A Yeah. Yeah.

Q Do you agree with that?

A I do agree with that.

Q And I have a couple followup questions from --

A Sure.

Q -- other rounds. And I know I asked you this before, so forgive me.

You know, witnesses told us when we looked at the -- we looked at the Hillary Clinton investigation, and we looked at the beginnings of the Russia investigation last Congress with Chairman Gowdy and Chairman Goodlatte. And so we had a lot of firsthand testimony about --

A Right.

Q -- Christopher Steele and Bruce Ohr and so forth.

A Right.

Q And it was established -- I don't think anyone really disagreed with this -- that Steele's mindset was that he was desperate, or passionate, that President, you know, Trump not be elected.

And so my question -- and forgive me if you've already addressed this. I just want to be sure. Did you have any idea whether he held that view?

A I had no idea whatsoever. I was shocked to find out that he'd even been -- and undertaken this investigation, honestly.

Q Okay.

A Because what I knew he was doing was, like,

political risk. I thought he was, like, doing, like, controlled risks or Kroll.

Q Okay.

A And all in my discussions with him, I mean, he was clearly very interested in building up a client base. I almost fell over when I discovered that he was doing this report.

Q Okay. So you have no idea whether he was desperate and it related to his business interests or he was --

A I have no idea whatsoever.

Q Okay.

Do you ever have any communications with Bruce Ohr?

A No.

Q You ever met him?

A I mean, not since -- oh, I met him when I was NIO.

Q Okay.

A Because, I mean, he was at interagency meetings --

Q Right.

A -- given the nature of his position.

Q But did you ever have any communications with Mr. Ohr about the Steele dossier?

A I did not.

Q Okay.

How about Mr. Simpson, Glenn Simpson, at Fusion GPS?

A I didn't know who he was until he was --

Q Okay.

A -- basically named in the press.

Q Okay. Fair enough.

President Trump has, from time to time, expressed concern, among other descriptors, of Director Brennan, Director Clapper, and their role, you know, in the run-up to the 2016 election. Was there ever any friction caused by that at the National Security Council between some of the nonpartisan staff that had been serving under Director Clapper and Director Brennan?

A Not that I noticed or was ever raised, you know, to me. We did have discussions in the staff that we wanted to see the nonpartisan depoliticization of intelligence. And having been the National Intelligence Officer for Russia and Eurasia previously, I personally didn't believe that intelligence officials should take political stances. So we did have a discussion about that. But there wasn't any friction within, certainly, my directorate or with any other directorates about this.

Q And did you ever have any discussions with Director Brennan or Director --

A I did not.

Q You did not.

A I worked briefly --

Q About these --

A -- with Director Clapper --

Q About these issues.

A -- when I was the NIO. But, no, I've had no contact with Brennan. I don't think Brennan would know who I am.

Q Okay.

And I think you've addressed this today on several occasions, but I just want to be sure that, other than the reference of Vice President Biden in the transcript, he has never come up during the course of, you know, any NSC activity regarding the Ukraine?

A He did not. No. It's only in the context of Rudy Giuliani --

Q Okay.

A -- on the television repeatedly.

Q Okay. And, to your knowledge, Ambassador Volker or Sondland -- nobody was encouraging the Ukraine to investigate Vice President Biden?

A To my knowledge, no.

Q Okay. It was related to Burisma, and to the extent the Vice President's son was a director on Burisma, that could be a --

A Correct.

Q But it wasn't Vice President Biden --

A I did not hear that.

Q -- himself. Okay. And you never heard of any reason why anybody should be investigating Vice President Biden?

A I also did not hear that, correct.

Q Okay.

A Yeah.

Q Do you have any concerns generally about the circumstances of the transcript release of the July 25th call?

A In what way would I have concerns?

Q Well, it lays bare the communications between, you know, our leader and the --

A I have a lot of concerns now that I've read it, but -- and, no, please, I'm not saying that joking. I mean, it's raised an awful lot of concerns as a result of reading it.

Q But as a more general matter, the declassification of, you know, call records from heads of states, does that concern you?

A Yes, it does, actually, as a general matter.

Q Because if --

A I mean, I was responsible for overseeing many of these in my position, and I was deeply concerned at all times that they would not be leaked.

And in the first period when I was at the White House

and the NSC in 2017 -- [redacted] -- there were a lot of leaks of material, and I felt that this was incredibly damaging.

Q Uh-huh.

A Sometimes it was obvious it was being done to settle scores internally, because there was blame apportioned to people who were not responsible for the leakage. And I firmly believe that one of the leakages of the preparation packages for, basically, a phone call with Putin was used to have General McMaster fired.

Q Okay. Is it due to that pervasive leaking that these transcripts may have been moved to a different server or placed under a different set of --

A I personally never heard of a transcript being moved to a different server. That also -- those circumstances trouble me. But we did move -- and I was responsible for part of that, with our legal colleagues -- to reduce the number of people who had access to any of these transcripts --

Q Okay.

A -- including transcripts that I would write up from meetings with heads of state.

Q Right.

A And I took that very seriously up to the records office.

And there were a number of people who left, you know, from the NSC because they felt very responsible for all of these issues and felt that they couldn't continue with all of this leaking going on. People were being accused, left, right, and center, of having leaked documents. And I think it's incredibly important for all of us to have integrity of communications.

Q Uh-huh. And you're in favor of, if there is a pervasive leak problem, to do something to fix it, correct?

A Yes, but not to put them on a system that isn't designed for that. You can restrict the number of people who have access to it fairly easily. I mean, we did a lot to make sure that you could actually figure out who got access to them. Having been, myself, accused multiple times of leaking documents, we made sure that you could actually get a record of who had --

Q Who accessed it.

A Who accessed it. Exactly. And, also, being very mindful, and we were encouraging people to report if they saw somebody trying to look at their computer, for example, if they had access to something.

And then it was also -- usually, if there was some concern about the sensitivity of the communication, having a restricted number of people sitting in on the call.

Q And what do you know about the alternative server

arrangements?

A I'm not going to talk about it because it's classified --

Q Okay.

A -- and it shouldn't be used for this kind of material --

Q Okay.

A -- unless it has classified content. And very few people have access to it.

Q Okay. And do you know -- can you tell us when the migration occurred?

A I don't know anything about it. I only know what I read in the paper, and, as I said, that raised concerns for me as well.

Q Okay. Do you know if it occurred while you were --

A It couldn't possibly have done because I wasn't there. I wasn't there for the call. So if the question was could the transcript of the call be placed on the server while I was there, the answer is no --

Q Oh, I'm sorry.

A -- because I had left.

Q My question was, the decision to move a certain amount of information from one server to another, did that occur while you were --

A Not related to transcripts. No.

Q Okay. So, if that did occur, it was after you left --

A Correct. But it was -- I do not have any knowledge of any transcript that came under my purview being moved to that server.

Q Okay. There's been press reporting that there may be other calls with, you know, other leaders dating back to the earliest part of the administration.

A I cannot speak to that.

Q Okay.

The July 11th meeting with John Eisenberg you attended with Secretary Perry's --

A Well, no. Our senior director for energy, Special Assistant P. Wells Griffith, he used to work for Secretary Perry.

Q Oh, okay.

A We had a lot of people detail from DOE. I mean, again, you know, you need expertise.

Q Sure.

A And Wells is really a great energy expert.

Q So, if my recollection is correct, after the events occurred, Ambassador Bolton referred you to Mr. Eisenberg.

A Correct.

Q And you walked across the hall --

A I had concerns myself -- well, I went out of the

building and up. John Eisenberg's office is in a separate building from Ambassador Bolton --

Q Okay.

A -- and his office was opposite mine.

Q Right. So, on the 10th, you --

A I went over right away.

Q -- went to talk to him?

A Correct.

Q And you gave him the information?

A I mean, basically along, you know, the lines that I said before, a quick summary, probably about in the same kind of length and with detail that I gave to you.

Q Okay. And then he had you come back a day later to --

A No, I asked if we could go back for a more lengthy call and discussion and asked if we could include Wells because he'd been in the meeting with me --

Q Okay.

A -- and I wanted to make sure that I wasn't, you know, kind of, purporting things being said by Secretary Perry to be part of this as well.

Q Uh-huh.

A Because Secretary Perry had been talking at great length about energy sector and corruption. And at no point did I think that anything Secretary Perry said referred to

any of these issues that are under discussion today.

Q Okay.

A And I wanted to make sure that I was 100 percent correct and that when Secretary Perry had talking points, that, you know, these were -- there was nothing in there about any of these issues. Because, again, that would explain the very abrupt response to Gordon Sondland's interjection.

Q Okay. And nothing Secretary Perry --

MR. GOLDMAN: Mr. Castor, I'm sorry, do you mind? She just said "these issues," and I want to make sure the record is clear as to what she meant.

DR. HILL: Oh. Again, about Burisma and the investigations on energy. I'm sorry. I should've been more specific on that, yeah. And do you need any further clarification?

MR. GORDON: No. Thank you.

DR. HILL: No? Okay.

MR. CASTOR: I'd like 30 seconds back. Just joking. Just joking.

MR. GOLDMAN: It's all yours.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q You didn't have any concerns about what Secretary Perry was saying during that meeting?

A I did not. And I wanted to make sure that it was

very clear with John Eisenberg that, you know, kind of, Secretary Perry was having one, kind of, set of discussions and that, clearly, Ambassador Sondland seemed to be having a different one. Because it was, you know, the --

Q Okay.

A -- disjuncture between the two that was what had immediately got Ambassador Bolton alerted to it.

Q Okay.

A It also suggests that Ambassador Bolton -- Ambassador Bolton also, you know, suggested to me that this was all related to the Rudy Giuliani discussions.

Q Right.

A So he had been, in the run-up to this -- every time I was in his office, Giuliani was on the television. And I told you he'd already told me that Giuliani was a hand grenade that was going to blow everybody up.

Q Uh-huh.

Secretary Perry's, you know, involvement in this and his issues with the LNG and the other, you know, gas issues, you didn't have any issue with anything he was pursuing there, did you?

A Not in the discussions that I had with him.

Q Okay.

A We always had discussions about -- I was the one who often was pushing for Secretary Perry to show up around

Europe --

Q Okay.

A -- sending him off in a plane to Three Seas Initiative meetings and other -- because he knew what we were talking about. And we were trying to get him to integrate or help us integrate --

Q Okay.

A -- all of the different aspects of European energy to bring Ukraine into this so that it wasn't just the United States trying to push on Nord Stream 2. So we got the Germans, the Poles, the Romanians, and others to -- Czechs, Slovaks -- to step up and to help the Ukrainians.

Q Uh-huh. And he led the delegation to President Zelensky's inauguration?

A Correct.

Q And he was involved with, it's been reported, some debriefing of the President about that --

A He was. Correct.

Q -- meeting. And with all of his involvement as it relates to these issues with President Zelensky, you don't have any concerns?

A I personally had no concerns.

Q Okay.

A I wasn't in all of the meetings, but there was nothing in any of my interactions with Secretary Perry that

would lead me to think anything different.

Q Okay.

So getting back to the July 11th meeting with P. Wells Griffith and John Eisenberg --

A Right.

Q -- and Michael Ellis, I think you said --

A I didn't say, actually, because I'm not sure that Michael Ellis was in there.

Q Oh, okay.

A I did say that, on my last day in the office, on September 3rd, that I met with both John Eisenberg and Michael Ellis.

Q Okay. Okay. What was the final determination of -- you gave a readout of what occurred in the meeting, maybe what your concerns were, what Ambassador Bolton's concerns were. What was the final --

A The final outcome of that was that John Eisenberg said that he would talk about this further, and I presumed that he meant with the White House counsel, with Pat Cipollone, and that he would, you know, raise these concerns about what Sondland had said.

Q Okay.

A And Wells Griffith, you know, obviously, was also you know, concerned in the general sense about the references, you know, that were going out with Giuliani and

the other two, Burisma. But he did not indicate that, you know, Secretary Perry was following up on any of these issues.

Q Okay. And was that loop ever closed? Did Eisenberg ever reach out to you and tell you that he spoke with Mr. Cipollone or any other officials?

A He said that he'd talked to Cipollone, but he didn't then give me any further -- but, again, at this point, having told so many people and also Charlie Kupperman, as well as Ambassador Bolton, there was every indication that they were all going to follow up on this.

Q Right. And presumably you articulated to John Eisenberg --

A And, again, this is July 11th, and I'm leaving the following week. So I don't have a lot of time --

Q Fair enough.

A -- to do, you know, followup.

Q Fair enough.

You related your other concerns about Sondland, not just the --

A Well, I'd said multiple times to him and to others that I was really worried about, you know, Sondland's extensive potentially self-appointed portfolio and that this could cause a whole range of problems, because we didn't have any oversight or insight, often, into what he was doing.

And, again, it's like, you know, the guardrails were off and, you know, kind of, there could be a lot of problems from this.

And I'd already gone and spoken to our intelligence directorate to ask them to reach out to the chief of station at the EU mission to see if they could actually do a proper briefing for him again.

And I'd expressed that to Eisenberg as well, because that's also within Eisenberg's portfolio, to have these kinds of concerns about, you know, kind of, inadvertent disclosure or, you know, kind of, basically if somebody is being targeted by foreign powers. And, basically, at this point, Sondland has made himself a target for foreign powers, because he's basically telling people, I can get you into the White House, I can get you in to see Ambassador Bolton.

You know, you show up at the door, and, I mean, I think all of you who have tried to show up at the door of the White House will know it's actually not that easy to get in and you have to go through all kinds of procedures. You can't just, kind of, appear at the doorstep and be let in by the Secret Service.

People were literally coming up at the door because Sondland was -- and then he would, you know, literally call up and shout at the assistants in the front office to make sure that people were giving, you know, their passports or

any kind of information because he wanted to have meetings.

So he was already offering himself as a conduit to all kinds of foreign officials to the White House for meetings. And it didn't matter whether it was the President, but with myself and others. I mean, that is, in itself, a problem.

Q And these are the concerns you related to Eisenberg?

A Correct.

Q And he was going to talk to Pat Cipollone and he was going to --

A Yeah. And, look, I'm sure from the point of view of Ambassador Sondland, having never been in the diplomatic service before, I mean, and being a business guy, I mean, this is what you do. You kind of connect people, and you set up meetings.

Q Uh-huh. Did you ever communicate to Sondland your discomfort? I know you had talked about the one --

A I did. I mean, I had that -- which is probably why Tim Morrison related to me that Ambassador Sondland was glad to see the back of me when I had come back again.

Q Okay.

A Because we ended up with a kind of testy set of final interactions, which, you know, kind of -- as I said, you know, when I first started off, I had quite high hopes. He was enthusiastic. He clearly wanted to serve, you know,

the -- he's a patriot. He wanted to serve the American people. You know, I didn't get any indication, you know, early off that he was going to go off on a tangent like this.

Q Uh-huh.

How did Volker deal with Sondland?

A I don't really know, because I also said to Kurt that I didn't think he should be spending quite so much time with Sondland. Because, again, if you recall, originally, I was skeptical that Sondland was actually in charge of Ukraine from any higher authority other than his own interest in this issue.

Q Uh-huh. Okay.

MR. ZELDIN: Dr. Hill, you brought up the phone call that President Trump had with President Putin and the leaks that took place and the firing of General McMaster.

DR. HILL: Yes.

MR. ZELDIN: Do you know who leaked that information? When you say that you believe that it was leaked in order to get General McMaster fired, do you know who actually leaked it?

DR. HILL: I don't know for sure, so I won't start to speculate. But I'm pretty confident and, you know, kind of, just from other discussions that I've had more recently, that this was exactly what happened, that this was leaked to get rid of him.

I was on, you know, kind of, phone calls after that with General McMaster when he was being ripped open on this topic, blaming his staff for leaking this. And I know that I did not leak it and that my team did not leak it. And we offered to resign on that day, because it had clearly been used as part of an internal score settling.

MR. ZELDIN: You believe you know who leaked it --

DR. HILL: Could I just offer --

MR. ZELDIN: -- but you're not sure?

DR. HILL: -- to be clear, that this particular "do not congratulate" card was not intended, even, to be briefed to the President. So that's kind of part of the backstory that isn't publicly known. Because we knew that the President was going to congratulate him anyway, because that's -- you know, the President always congratulates people. And we always have a lot of people wanting to put things into, you know, Presidential call packages for the historical record. And it was the State Department that had requested that we write that in.

MR. ZELDIN: I guess just due to the subject matter of why we're here, I won't ask further on that, but in another setting I'd have some followup questions.

DR. HILL: But this gives you the, kind of, sense of how these things can be manipulated, you know, by people, which is also deeply disturbing. Because, again, this is a

national security issue. And no matter what your views are of General McMaster, he's an American hero who served his country, you know, to great distinction. And to be pushed out over the leaking of a stupid card that wasn't even briefed to the President is pretty ridiculous.

MR. ZELDIN: Earlier --

DR. HILL: Whether he was the right person for the job or not is another matter, you know, that you all can debate at some point.

MR. ZELDIN: Earlier on, after you had referenced the term "drug deal," Chairman Schiff asked a question referencing it, where he used the word "illicit" in his question. Do you recall that question and answer with Chairman Schiff earlier?

DR. HILL: I clarified, of course, that the drug deal was an ironic and sarcastic statement that Ambassador Bolton made.

MR. ZELDIN: Yeah. Was your opinion that it was -- I just want to be careful with the use of the word "illicit." Do you believe that it was illegal or no?

MR. WOLOSKY: What are you referring to?

DR. HILL: What was illegal?

MR. ZELDIN: I just -- it was one question and answer from earlier on --

MR. WOLOSKY: You can have it either read back --

MR. ZELDIN: That would be fantastic.

DR. HILL: Yeah, that would be, yeah, because I'm --

MR. ZELDIN: And I think that might serve everybody --

DR. HILL: I mean, clearly, Ambassador Bolton was worried that something was going on, which is why he wanted me to go to John Eisenberg.

MR. ZELDIN: We might get back to that. Just for sake of time --

MR. GOLDMAN: It's going to take a long time to get back to that. If you could just rephrase the question?

DR. HILL: I'm afraid I can't remember the exact phrasing of Chairman Schiff's question.

MR. ZELDIN: You have a reputation, Dr. Hill, of being a master note-taker. And I don't know if this reputation is accurate --

DR. HILL: I haven't been doing all of it quite as much as I normally do.

MR. ZELDIN: Apparently, you -- and you took a lot of notes all the time, and you had books. The -- first off, is that accurate?

DR. HILL: That's correct. I grew up in a town that was very impoverished, and we didn't have textbooks. So I learned to take notes from basically first grade onwards, because, you know, otherwise, I wouldn't have learned anything. And so it's a habit as much as anything else.

MR. ZELDIN: The books themselves, were they --

DR. HILL: They're all in the records.

MR. ZELDIN: They all have been turned back in?

DR. HILL: Correct. On the 19th, I filled up more boxes than I think is normal and spent lots of time putting in all the forms about all the dating of all of those books, and I handed them over to Presidential records.

MR. ZELDIN: And you don't have in your possession any of those books or copies of those books?

DR. HILL: I do not, and that would be illegal.

MR. ZELDIN: Did you ever disobey any orders you disagreed with or refuse to implement superiors' policies that you disagreed with?

DR. HILL: I did not. And if I'd come to a juncture where I'd been forced to do that, I would've left.

MR. ZELDIN: And earlier on, at the beginning of this 45 minutes, you were asked [redacted]?

DR. HILL: [redacted]

[redacted] I did not start formally until April 3rd, and the administration came in in January.

I had already been offered the job at that particular point, but, as I mentioned before, General McMaster came on board. I'd been hired by General Flynn and K.T. and General Kellogg, and so we had to wait a period to see if General McMaster wanted to continue with the hiring process.

[redacted]

MR. ZELDIN: And I apologize for bouncing around a little bit. Just some questions from earlier rounds.

September 3rd, you mentioned that you came back, spoke to your team, and one of the people you spoke to was Tim Morrison.

DR. HILL: Correct.

MR. ZELDIN: And that's when you first became aware that there may be an issue?

DR. HILL: Well, I just noticed that everybody was not, you know, kind of, as chipper as, you know, I was expecting. Well, I mean, I was going in just very briefly --

MR. ZELDIN: Did you --

DR. HILL: -- but there seemed to be, you know, just -- people just seemed tense. And, you know, I put it down initially to the fact that there was a transition, you know, underway and, you know, all kinds of things. But I wasn't exactly -- I was just being honest in saying that I felt at the time that the atmosphere, you know, was different and people seemed worried.

MR. ZELDIN: But you didn't speak to them specifically as to what that issue was?

DR. HILL: No. I just said, how have things been? And, you know, a couple of people said, not so great.

MR. ZELDIN: But nothing more specific than that?

DR. HILL: Correct.

But I had seen -- and I mentioned that before -- that there'd been -- and this is what I did raise to Mr. Castor when you asked about meeting with Michael Ellis and John Eisenberg. As part of my out-briefing, I had to have a meeting with them.

And I had seen an email sometime in the -- I don't know what exactly timeframe it would've been -- maybe late August, early September, just as I was, you know, coming back to D.C. from my vacation, that said we had to retain all documents pertaining to Ukraine.

And so I asked them, did I have to do anything? I also told them I'd already handed in all my documents before I saw this. So I was concerned about my own obligations, making sure I'd done proper retention, because, you know, I hadn't seen that before I left. And, obviously, I might have been more extensive in even keeping some of, you know, the just generic intel pieces you can often just, kind of, archive electronically. Because I didn't know whether it meant, you know, you had to keep anything that had, you know, "Ukraine"

on top and what that meant.

And they didn't tell me anything in particular. They just said that I'd already done what I needed to do.

MR. ZELDIN: So, on July 25th, you were snorkeling during the call. And at the end of the --

DR. HILL: I could've been sleeping, actually, in that time, given the time difference, but anyway --

MR. ZELDIN: Hopefully not at the same time.

DR. HILL: Hopefully not, no.

MR. ZELDIN: At the end of August, you said you returned home from vacation. Was that the same vacation from the end of July --

DR. HILL: I'm afraid it was. I know that sounds outrageous. But I didn't take much vacation in the time I was at NSC, and they owed me 6 or 7 weeks of back pay, and they said they'd prefer to do it as a vacation rather than as a payout.

MR. ZELDIN: That communication --

DR. HILL: So I took an outrageous vacation.

MR. ZELDIN: That communication at the end of August is the first communication that you received to alert you that there may be some issue related to Ukraine?

DR. HILL: Correct.

MR. ZELDIN: And who was the --

DR. HILL: It was an NSC -- you know, from the office of

the legal counsel, so from John Eisenberg and his staff. Very generic. We've had these before, you know, related to a congressional inquiry or anything else, saying that we had to retain all documents pertaining -- any kind of communications.

And, you know, as I said, I'd already handed in my box and, you know, did a big purge of my office. And I'd also handed over things to colleagues that I thought would be useful for them for continuity purposes. And that's why I was nervous. You know, I thought, oops, did I retain everything I was supposed to? And I didn't know what this was about.

MR. ZELDIN: In an earlier round, we ran out of time. I was asking about Ambassador Sondland --

DR. HILL: Yeah.

MR. ZELDIN: -- and how he had stated -- or you had stated that he asserted himself as a lead for Ukraine?

DR. HILL: Correct.

MR. ZELDIN: And that his authority was --

DR. HILL: He said he was in charge of Ukraine.

MR. ZELDIN: And he stated that his authority was granted to him by the President?

DR. HILL: Yeah, because I said, "No, you're not." And, you know, I mean, sorry, it was kind of a bit of a rude retort because I was just so, "What?" And I said, "Well, we

have Ambassador Taylor who's been sent out as Charge. Who says you're in charge of Ukraine?" It wasn't exactly the most diplomatic of responses on my part. And he said, "The President." And I was like, "Oh."

MR. ZELDIN: But you don't know whether or not he actually was given that authority from the President.

DR. HILL: I do not. And nobody else seemed to be aware of that either.

MR. ZELDIN: There's a possibility that Ambassador Sondland was appointing himself as the lead for Ukraine and stating that it was --

DR. HILL: I think you should ask Ambassador Sondland when he submits his deposition.

MR. ZELDIN: Yeah, I will. So we just don't know one way or the other.

DR. HILL: I do not know. There was never any kind of directive. Ambassador Bolton was not informed, and people at the State Department did not seem to be informed about this. I would've thought that Assistant Secretary Reeker, you know, and others would've known, if that was the case.

MR. ZELDIN: One last question before I turn it back over. The calendar that we got with your document production, very detailed. You said it was prepared by someone else. Who --

DR. HILL: My assistant. I mean, it wasn't prepared. I

mean, it's my schedule. It's just a schedule.

MR. ZELDIN: Your assistant post-leaving-the-White-House or from when you were at the White House?

DR. HILL: No, it's actually only from the time that my assistant was making the schedule. So my assistant, this particular last assistant, [redacted], who I mentioned to you before, he only worked with me for a year because, like in many other positions, there was a rotation of detailees. And the role of a special assistant is to keep the schedule.

MR. ZELDIN: Thank you.

DR. HILL: So, I mean, it wouldn't also have every entry on it of everything I ever did either.

MR. CASTOR: Do you have something?

MR. JORDAN: Dr. Hill, Ambassador Yovanovitch said that President Zelensky, you know, had one priority and ran his campaign on ending corruption in Ukraine. Do you share that belief?

MR. GOLDMAN: Mr. Jordan, I'm sorry to interrupt, but I don't believe that was what Ambassador Yovanovitch testified. And maybe if we could just ask -- she wasn't there for this, so --

MR. JORDAN: I'm reading from her statement. She said, "During the 2019" -- which I think has been public. And I think Dr. Hill --

DR. HILL: The public statement. Okay.

MR. JORDAN: I think Dr. Hill said she read it.

DR. HILL: Yeah, I had read that. Yeah.

MR. JORDAN: "During the 2019 Presidential elections, the Ukrainian people answered the question once again. Angered by insufficient progress in the fight against corruption, Ukrainian voters overwhelmingly elected a man who said that any corruption will be his number-one priority."

DR. HILL: He did say that, yeah.

MR. JORDAN: Okay.

DR. HILL: I mean, that was his campaign pledge.

MR. JORDAN: But then, earlier, you also said that you never know, right?

DR. HILL: Yeah. I said that we were concerned, as you might recall, to an earlier question, about the potential influence of Igor Kolomoisky, who was an oligarch, who was the owner of the television and, you know, production company that Zelensky's program, "The Servant of the People," was broadcast on.

MR. HECK: Your time has expired.

I'm inclined to take a 5-minute bio break unless somebody objects.

Hearing no objection.

[Recess.]

MR. HECK: Very good. Let's go back on the record.

Dr. Hill, I'd like to start, before turning it over to

Mr. Goldman.

DR. HILL: Certainly.

MR. HECK: You said in answer to an earlier question from Mr. Noble that the President had been briefed early in the administration that the Ukraine Government did not interfere in the 2016 election in the U.S. How do you come to know that?

DR. HILL: I know that from my interactions with General McMaster and Tom Bossert and many of the National Security staff.

MR. HECK: They both informed you that they had briefed the President thusly. Is that correct?

DR. HILL: Well, they informed me that those briefings had taken place. But I think, you know, part of those briefings were also conducted by the intelligence services.

MR. HECK: Good. Very good. Thank you.

Mr. Goldman?

MR. GOLDMAN: I'll turn it over to Mr. Noble.

MR. NOBLE: Thank you.

BY MR. NOBLE:

Q Dr. Hill, just sticking on that point for a moment, can you say anything about how Mr. Giuliani or others working with him pursuing this theory that Ukraine interfered in the 2016, even though it's been determined that they did not, how does that affect Russia? And can Russia take advantage of

that in any way?

A Of course Russia can take advantage of this. I mean, actually, President Putin's whole schtick since 2016 has been, "We didn't do it."

Q And tried to pin it on Ukraine?

A Pin it on whoever, you know, kind of else, and alternative theories.

Q Are you aware of any conversations between U.S. Government officials and Russia or Russian officials about this theory that Ukraine interfered in 2016?

A I'm not aware of that.

Q Okay.

Are you aware of -- well, did you watch any of the press conference that was held between President Trump and President Zelensky on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly in September?

A I confess I did not.

Q You did not watch it?

A I was with my mother, and I did not watch it. I'm sorry.

Q Okay. Well, during that press conference, President Trump said something along the lines that President Zelensky should meet with Vladimir Putin and settle their disagreement. Was a Putin-Zelensky meeting ever part of U.S. policy when you were working at the National Security

Council?

A I encouraged a Putin-Zelensky meeting to the Russians when, you know, I was speaking to them as well.

Q To what end?

A To, indeed, have Putin -- because for a period of time, Putin was refusing to acknowledge Zelensky as the new, legitimately elected President of Ukraine. And we had been encouraging -- we, writ large -- the Russians to adopt a different strategy towards Ukraine.

And, ultimately, if Ukraine and Russia make peace, it has to be on Ukraine's terms, and it would be much better to be negotiated by Ukraine than, frankly, done by intermediaries. I mean, I think that's the case in point for most disputes and most conflicts. International mediation can only do so much. We've still got Kosovo-Serbia, for example, where we're trying to encourage them to have direct talks. So I don't think that that, in and of itself, is anything that anyone should be concerned about.

And I had gone out to Moscow in between the two rounds of the Ukrainian Presidential election at a point where -- you know, there was an earlier question, you know, were we sure that Zelensky was going to be elected? We were not. But, certainly, between the two election rounds, Zelensky looked like he had a pretty good chance of becoming the President.

And I laid out to the Russians that, you know, maybe they should take a fresh look at this, that, you know, they're creating lifelong enmity with an otherwise fraternal country, people who've been close to them, you know, for hundreds of years of history, and that, you know, they would be well-served to not be just so punitive with the Ukrainians and to, you know, rethink over the longer term.

We also had in June a trilateral meeting with the Russians and Israelis in Jerusalem just before the G-20 in Osaka. And you're probably aware of that happening. And I conducted meetings with my counterparts from the Russian National Security Council, by which time, of course, President Zelensky had already been elected, and I tried to urge them to take a different approach.

Because there were two issues that one could immediately refute with Zelensky's election. The first was the Russians were saying that Ukraine was being run by a fascist government and one that was also hostile to Russian speakers. Well, Zelensky is a Russian-speaking Jew from basically eastern Ukraine. All of his family ties are in Russia. He'd spent an awful lot of time in Russia. He can neither be described as a fascist or as somebody who is hostile towards Russia or Russian speakers. And they couldn't argue with that. And, basically, the point was, you know, this is a time for reassessment.

But they were waiting, honestly -- and this is why it gets back to before, where Russia was looking for as much leverage over Ukraine as they possibly can. They were obviously waiting to see how things unfolded with the Rada, the parliamentary elections, which took place later on in July, and to try to see there how much leverage they would have over Zelensky. They were still holding on to the sailors from the Kerch Strait incident, and we'd been trying to push them to release them. And, in fact, we thought that they might around Orthodox Easter in April, and they didn't. We'd been given all kinds of signs that they might.

And it was very clear that the Russians were looking for anywhere to, you know, basically put Ukraine in a weaker position so that when they do finally sit down with them they'll have the upper hand and Ukraine will have, you know, little choice but to go along with, you know, many of the issues that were already on the table, of maximum autonomy for Luhansk and Donyetsk and basically having a veto over Ukrainian foreign policy, including any chance that Ukraine might have, somewhere off in the future, of their joining NATO or even becoming, you know, kind of a member state of the European Union at some point.

Q Right.

A So it was all very obvious, you know, at this particular juncture, that Russia was looking for leverage.

But we were hoping that we could get, you know, kind of, Putin to see it's somehow, you know, kind of, in his interest, a recalculation and a recalibration of Russian policy, to at least begin to engage with Zelensky.

Q Would a meeting between President Trump and President Zelensky following Zelensky's election be something that the Russians would be paying attention to?

A Sure.

Q Why is that?

A Well, first of all, they are very interested in finding out whether they can drive a wedge between Ukraine and the United States. I mean, President Putin has been out in public -- this is not, you know, classified information or anything from the course of my work, but you can look at any public pronouncement of President Putin about Ukraine, and it's unremittingly negative. And he also, himself, always points to corruption in Ukraine. It's become, kind of, shorthand for, "This is not a real country, this is not a sovereign country, and this is not a country that deserves support from the U.S. or the Europeans at all."

Q Okay.

I want to go back to the July 25th call summary. And we were talking about, I believe in the last round, the transfer of that summary into the NSC Codeword Classified System --

A Uh-huh.

Q -- which I believe is sometimes referred to as [redacted]. Is that -- are you familiar with that acronym?

A I am kind of familiar, yeah.

Q Okay. Do you believe there was any reason for this particular call, the July 25th call, summary to be placed in the [redacted] system?

A No.

Q Okay. And why not?

A Because that's not the appropriate place for these kinds of transcripts. As I said before, they can be restricted, in terms of their access, very easily, and you can keep track of who has access to them.

Q And when you were at the NSC, were you aware that some transcripts were being transferred to the -- or, not transcripts -- summaries of meetings or telephone calls between the President and foreign leaders were being transferred to --

A I was not. And the only circumstances in which that would be conceivable would be if it dealt with classified information.

Q Highly classified information?

A Yes. But, I mean, we do occasionally talk to counterparts about that kind of information.

Q Who would have the authority to order a call summary like the July 25th call summary to be transferred to

the [redacted] system?

A I'm not entirely sure, to be honest, because I've never had to deal with that.

Q Okay.

A I imagine that -- well, I shouldn't imagine. I basically -- I'm not really clear. I would have to refer you back to, you know, other officials to ask for that.

Q Okay.

A That was not, certainly, in my purview. I would never be able to, you know, make a determination to have it in that system.

Q And I think I know the answer to this, but are you aware of whether or not John Bolton or, before him, H.R. McMaster was aware of this practice and that this was going on?

A I don't believe that it happened on any occasion when General McMaster was there. I'd never heard of anything about it. You would have to ask Ambassador Bolton.

Q Okay.

There's been public reporting about the May 2017 meeting between Ambassador Kislyak, Foreign Minister Lavrov, and President Trump in the Oval Office. Did you participate in that meeting?

A I did not.

Q You did not. Did you get a readout from that

meeting?

A I did.

Q Okay. And do you know whether the readout or the notes or the summary of that meeting were placed in the [redacted] system?

A To my knowledge, it was not.

Q Okay.

A But I don't know for sure.

Q Okay.

A There were concerns about that transcript being leaked, and so it was certainly being preserved. And, also, the fact that it was later on requested by Mr. Mueller in the course of his investigation. So there was every effort made to keep that transcript secure.

Q And what were the concerns about that being leaked?

A Well, I think there's concerns every time -- it's been mentioned before -- about the integrity of communications, of leaking information.

Q But was there anything in particular about the conversation or the --

A Well, the conversation seemed to immediately end up in the press.

And let me also just keep saying that, every time we get bent out of shape on issues like this, remember, there are foreign participants in all of these meetings who take just

as good of notes as I do or, in some cases, could very easily be recording some of these meetings. Because when you go -- not in the White House, of course, but if you're in the G-20 or you're in some other public setting, UNGA, I am not convinced that these things are screened.

And I'll just give you an example. When I was at one of the G-20 meetings, a member of the Chinese delegation came in with a big backpack which they left on the chair in one of the meeting rooms, and it was there for the entire time.

Q When you got the readout of that May 2017 meeting, was there anything that caused alarm for you?

A Can I ask why we're going over the May Oval Office meeting? Because I don't see how it's directly related to Ukraine.

Q Well, there's been public reporting about that particular meeting being particularly sensitive within the White House and it being -- the transcript or readout, the summary being placed in the [redacted] system.

A I was not aware that it was placed in the [redacted] system.

Q Right. And I understand that's your --

A Yeah.

Q -- testimony, but we're trying to figure out why that meeting, in particular, could have been --

A Well, that meeting --

Q -- treated the same way as the July 25th call summary.

A That meeting was scrutinized because of, again, the press reporting that the President, who had the authority to declassify information, had talked about something that was previously codeword, in a general sense. And in actual fact, if that was the case, then there would be a reason to put it on [redacted]. Whether he'd said it to, you know, kind of, unauthorized individuals or not, if he had declassified that, but it would still technically be classified codeword.

Q Okay.

A And, indeed, when we had the readout, we had to redact portions of it. So that actually would not be in any way inappropriate on that occasion.

Q Okay.

Going back to the July 25th call summary, some of the portions I read included ellipses. And there's been some public reporting and speculation that there could be other things that were said.

Are you aware of, in the process of creating this type of call summary, whether there's a more word-for-word transcript that's created?

A Transcripts that I produced often had ellipses in them.

Q Okay.

A I put ellipses in.

Q Can you explain to us the process by which these types of call summaries are created, from when the call occurs to when this type of summary is drafted?

A There's been some public discussion of this, but I feel that this might be verging into secure, you know --

MR. WOLOSKY: I'm sorry. Could you repeat --

MR. NOBLE: Yeah. I was asking her to explain the process of creating a call summary. So there's a call that occurs. What's the process by which notes are taken? Is there a verbatim transcript created?

DR. HILL: Is that fine to talk about?

MR. WOLOSKY: You can talk about the process --

DR. HILL: Process. Okay.

I mean, some of this has already been --

MR. NOBLE: Right.

DR. HILL: -- made public. I mean, I saw a piece of it on CNN or something that was reporting to say how the transcript would've come into being.

But the White House Situation Room, they produce that transcript. They actually talk in real-time through kind of a -- I don't know, it's almost like -- I don't know whether you have one as a stenographer, but they actually sort of talk through a device in real-time as they're hearing the speech and the exchange. And that's how --

Q Who talks through the device?

A The White House Situation Room staff. And that produces a kind of a word voice-recognition version of their voice. So they are --

Q And they're repeating what the Presidents are saying?

A And what the translator is saying on the other end as well. And that's probably -- I mean, those of you who, you know, are familiar with voice recognition -- is probably to deal with the fact that translators and others have accents. I have an accent. So, you know, it would make it difficult for the voice-recognition software.

And, also, I think, at this point, we no longer tape our President. That doesn't mean to say that the other party don't tape all of these communications, just to be very clear here.

So that rough transcript is then produced and then sent to either the director or the senior director or both, whoever is available, to look through, and then to others who were on the call that's pertinent to their area of expertise or who have taken notes --

Q Okay.

A -- to check this for accuracy. And sometimes there can be some pretty hysterically funny misrepresentations of what people heard.

Q Okay. I won't ask about examples.

So once you or your director reviews the, kind of, raw transcript created by the voice-recognition software and you make all the corrections, are you the ones who draft the summaries, like the one that we see for the July 25th call? Who drafts that?

A This, to me, looks like the transcripts that we would draft.

Q Okay. And then where does the transcript --

A It goes to our --

Q Are there further layers of approval?

A It goes through further layers of approvals. That was managed by the Executive Secretariat of the NSC --

Q For the National Security Council?

A Correct.

Q Okay.

A And then with the White House review, and it goes to the National Security Advisor and others as well -- and the Deputy National Security Advisor -- to take a look at.

Q Okay.

Skipping around a little bit, are you aware of a compilation of documents, you might say a dossier, that Rudy Giuliani created about Ambassador Yovanovitch and --

A Only from news reports.

Q -- others? Okay. You weren't aware of that at the

time --

A I was not, no.

Q -- that that was created that it came in a White House envelope to the State Department?

A I had never heard anything about that.

Q Did you ever see those types of materials or a similar dossier floating around the White House?

A I did not.

Q Okay.

I believe in the last segment of testimony you said that you had some conversations with Deputy Secretary of State Sullivan --

A Correct.

Q -- about Rudy Giuliani and your concerns?

A Uh-huh.

Q How many times did you speak with Deputy Secretary Sullivan?

A I saw Deputy Secretary Sullivan quite a lot at events, and I often talked to him on the sidelines of this. So, often, these were conversations that I was just having with Deputy Secretary Sullivan, who is a pretty wonderful individual. And, you know, I know he's now been nominated to be Ambassador to Russia. But he and I would talk a lot on the margins of events and other meetings.

Q And did you raise the --

A I did.

Q -- concerns you had?

A Frequently. And he was also concerned.

Q Okay. Did he say anything in response when you raised your concerns about Giuliani's activity?

A He just expressed that he was also concerned. He didn't give any specifics, you know, back again. He just gave me a good, you know, respectful hearing. And it was clear that he was very upset about what had happened to Ambassador Yovanovitch.

Q Did he ever say whether he ever tried to, himself, do something about it or get Secretary Pompeo to do something about it?

A He said that both he and Secretary Pompeo had tried their best to head off what happened.

Q Did he explain how they had tried?

A He did not.

But I was also very much struck by the commentary in her public statement, in Ambassador Yovanovitch's public statement, that they'd been under pressure since summer of 2018. I had no idea. Because, for me, I only -- you know, obviously, as I mentioned before, I just started to pick up that there something after January of this year.

Q Uh-huh.

A And, most definitely, when I saw what I think was a

March 20th article in The Hill by John Solomon, then I looked back and saw that there were, you know, other similar reports. And then, of course, I started to watch Mr. Giuliani on television.

Q Okay.

Did you ever speak with Michael Ellis about your concerns?

A I'm sure I did. But, I mean, not at the request of, as I mentioned before, when I went in to talk to --

Q Mr. Eisenberg?

A -- Mr. Eisenberg. Yeah.

Q Okay. So these were --

A Because I saw all of them, both Michael Ellis and John Eisenberg, pretty much daily, sometimes multiple times in the day. Again, our offices were opposite each other. And it was, kind of, they were with me working on a whole range of issue. This was a big portfolio, and I needed a lot of legal advice. We'd often looked at treaties and other issues that we were trying to coordinate, and we needed them to work with the legal staff at the State Department, for example, or to reach out to DOD for us on a whole range of issues.

And I just, you know, wanted to say that they were the epitome of professionalism, and I've had a great working relationship with them. And I had no hesitation in going to

express concerns to them about any issue.

Q And --

A So I probably talked to Michael on a number of occasions about this, just in a general, hey, you know, this is going on and I'm worried about it.

Q Uh-huh. Did you ever ask him to do anything in particular about --

A I did not. I mean, I was raising concerns, but I did do the official reporting to John Eisenberg.

Q Okay. And did Mr. Eisenberg or Mr. Ellis ever tell you that they had taken steps to try to address the problem or had reported it further up the chain in the White House counsel's office or elsewhere?

A Yeah, I already responded to that, that I believe that John Eisenberg talked to Pat Cipollone --

Q Okay.

A -- in the White House counsel's office.

Q What about Mr. Ellis?

A I do not know about that. And, again, you know, July 11th is just -- 10, 11 -- is just the week before I'm leaving.

Q Okay.

On the issue of the security assistance freeze, had assistance for Ukraine ever been held up before during your time at the NSC?

A Yes.

Q For what -- and when was that?

A At multiple junctures. You know, it gets back to the question that Mr. Castor asked before. There's often a question raised about assistance, you know, a range of assistance --

Q But for Ukraine specifically?

A Yeah, that's correct.

Q Okay. Even though there's been bipartisan support for the assistance?

A Correct.

Q Okay.

A But there's been a lot of hold-up of other assistance, you know, a lot of additional questions asked. I mean, again, clarification. You know, new people -- again, remember, also, there's a lot of turnover in staff at this point. So, as Mr. Castor was sort of suggesting, a lot of people suddenly want to know why is this happening, you know, kind of, who authorized this, what's the nature of it. Sometimes it was just informational.

Q But at this point in time, when you learned about the freeze, July 18th I believe, everyone in the interagency had blessed it, so to speak, and had signed off on the aid. And so, as far as you know, there was nothing that legitimately should be holding it up.

A Correct.

Q Okay.

On the issue of security assistance for Ukraine, are you familiar with the first sale of Javelins to Ukraine --

A I am.

Q -- back in 2018? March or April timeframe, is that correct?

A Yes, that's correct.

Q Okay. Around the same time, are you aware that Ukraine stopped cooperating with Special Counsel Mueller's investigation?

A I was not aware of that.

Q Okay. Are you aware that they also stopped four separate investigations of Paul Manafort around this same time?

A I was also not aware of that.

Q Are you aware that Ukraine allowed Konstantin Kilimnik, who was a witness in the Mueller investigation, slip across the border to Russia?

A I was aware of that.

Q You were aware of that?

A Uh-huh.

Q What did you know about that?

A Well, Konstantin Kilimnik is somebody -- if we're in the space of who knew people in the past, he used to work

for the International Republican Institute in Moscow. And when I was working at the Kennedy School of Government on technical assistance projects, you know, we had a lot of interactions with IRI as well as NDI, and Konstantin Kilimnik was there. And all of my staff thought he was a Russian spy at the time that I was working with.

So Konstantin Kilimnik was somebody who popped up on the radar screen from time to time. So, when his name came up, I immediately had the, you know, reminders of the 1990s and of people being somewhat suspicious of Kilimnik. And so, you know, I did note that he'd --

Q How did you learn that Ukraine had allowed him to exit to Russia?

A It was in a report that I read.

Q Okay. Are you aware of any connection between that and the sale of Javelins to Ukraine?

A I am not.

Q Okay.

You said that sometimes in your transcripts that you created or reviewed you'd use ellipses.

A I did.

Q Why would you use ellipses?

A When the sentence trailed off, it wasn't a complete sentence. And that might be, you know, my English training, because, often, the Exec Sec would correct sometimes and, you

know, change punctuation and things. I overuse commas, for example, and --

Q Are you a fan of the Oxford comma?

A I'm confused, is kind of basically where I am. Because when I was growing up, they changed the comma formatting, and then when I came here, I found there was all kinds of different comma formatting. So I tend to put commas everywhere.

And I also do like ellipses. Because, you know, when somebody trails off, like I just do sometimes, just dot, dot, dot, finish that thought. So I wouldn't read too much into the ellipses.

[5:14 p.m.]

BY MR. NOBLE:

Q While you were working at the NSC, were you aware of whether Kash Patel had any role in the Ukraine portfolio?

A I became aware of that by chance and accident. In the last couple of weeks that I was there, probably in May, just after the Presidential inauguration in Ukraine. I --

Q How did you learn?

A I'd gone over to the Exec Sec in the White House just to pick something up, and this was around the time where we were trying to -- there was going to be a setup to debrief the President on the Presidential delegation. And just one of the people in Exec Sec just as a routine, you know, just said: Oh, the President wants to talk to your Ukraine director.

And I was like a bit surprised by that because the President has never asked to speak to any, you know, of our directors ever before. And I said: "Oh?"

Yeah, to talk about some of the materials.

And I said, "Oh," again because I thought this is strange.

And they said: Yeah, so, I mean, we might be reaching out to Kash.

And I said, "Oh," because Kash -- the only Kash --

Q What was his role as far as you know?

A -- I could think of was Kash Patel, and I thought, well, he is in our International Organizations Bureau and, you know, considerably he works on the U.N. and other related issues but he's not the Ukraine director. The Ukraine director, you know, after all the streamlining is only in our office.

So I basically didn't engage any further because I was wondering to myself: That's very strange.

And I went to talk to Charlie Kupperman, who was going to be taking part on our behalf sitting in on the debriefing for the President. And I said: Apparently, the President may think that Kash Patel is our Ukraine director, and I just want to make sure there's no embarrassment here. I'm not quite sure why that might be, but I want to flag for you that this is the case.

And I related what I related to you. And I said: That probably means that Alex Vindman, our Ukraine director who had actually been on the Presidential delegation, probably shouldn't go into the debrief from the delegation.

Q And this was the May 23 meeting --

A Correct.

Q -- after the delegation got back?

A Correct. And then I went back to my office and started looking at all my distro lists to see, you know, kind of whether Kash was on any of the -- maybe I'd missed out,

you know, that he had some special, again, Ambassador Sondland-like representational role on Ukraine that I hadn't been informed about, and I couldn't elicit any information about that.

Q Did you ever figure out what Mr. Patel was doing with respect to Ukraine kind of behind the scenes?

A I did not, but I raised concerns with Charlie Kupperman about that, and he said that he would look into that, which is the appropriate course of action.

Q And did you ever learn what he learned after he looked into it?

A I did not because, again, you know, it's difficult always to follow up on these issues. But I did warn my office to be very careful about communications with Kash Patel until we figured out why it was that he was sending clearly materials on Ukraine over to the -- because I didn't know what kind of materials.

Q Did you ever see the materials?

A I did not.

Q Okay. Did you ever learn what materials Mr. Patel was providing?

A I did not.

Q Okay. You said that you advised or told Mr. Vindman not to go into the debrief on May 23.

A Well, particularly after it seemed to be the case

he's evidently not Kash Patel and that if there was some confusion over who the director for Ukraine is, that could be rather difficult and awkward.

Q Okay. But you knew this meeting was supposed to be about briefing the President on --

A On the Presidential delegation.

Q -- the delegation to the inauguration?

A And Alex Vindman was also just there as the representative of the NSC. He wasn't the lead of the delegation in any case. And the whole point of the debriefing was for Secretary Perry, Ambassador Volker, and Ambassador Sondland, and Senator Johnson to talk about their experiences and their views on Zelensky and to relay back the meetings.

And Alex was only in those meetings as basically a notetaker and, you know, again, as the representative of the NSC because neither Ambassador Bolton or I were able to go given the timing of the inauguration.

Q Do you know whether Kash Patel attended that meeting?

A I do not. I had never heard any information to suggest that he was there.

Q Okay. Did Mr. Patel have anything to do with Ukraine after that meeting, to your knowledge?

A I'm not aware that he did. And I took him off our

distro list because I was alarmed in thinking that, you know, this is -- I mean, this is obviously just not appropriate, and I'd already reported it to Charlie Kupperman.

Q Do you know whether any of the documents that Mr. Patel was providing to the President relating to Ukraine had anything to do with what Rudy Giuliani was doing?

A I really do not know. And I'll be also clear: I never actually have ever had a conversation with Kash Patel. I knew who he was. I knew he was at the international, you know, organization group, and I'd seen him in meetings.

And I was, you know -- let's just say it's a red flag when somebody who you barely know is involved on, you know, one of your policy issues and is clearly providing, you know, materials outside of the line that we don't even know what those materials were.

And we were always very circumspect about the materials that we provided, and we only ever sent them up the chain to the Exec Sec to Ambassador Bolton. So, I mean, we never did anything to the President's or to the Chief of Staff or anything else except through the National Security Advisor.

Q And it's your understanding, though, that these materials that Mr. Patel provided made their way directly to President Trump?

A That's what I was led to believe from my very brief interaction with the Exec Sec. And, again, I went

immediately and told Charlie Kupperman about this.

Q Okay.

MR. NOBLE: So, Dr. Hill, I do want to go through some of the other meetings on your calendar, and I think we'd like to mark your calendar as an exhibit. So it's going to be majority exhibit No. 3.

[Majority Exhibit No. 3 was marked for identification.]

BY MR. NOBLE:

Q And we have an extra copy for you. And we're just going to skip through some of the meetings and see if there's anything --

A Sure.

Q -- relevant.

A And I just want to assure everybody that I was not filing my nails or having spa treatments in all this black space. I obviously don't look like I was very busy, but there were a lot of other meetings.

And we also were very mindful of our calendars because calendar information can obviously be used by outside parties, meaning Russia, you know, kind of any others to kind of figure out the kind of meetings that they should be checking for people's communications with. So I would also ask people to be very careful with this.

Q Okay. We appreciate that.

Let's skip to page 36. It's Hill 36. These are the entries for April 29th through May 3rd, 2019.

A April 29 to --

Q May 3. It's page 36.

A Yeah. We haven't got -- oh, yeah. I see.

Q Bottom right.

A Yeah. I got it. Yes.

Q Okay. So the meeting on May 1, I think we talked about that with --

A We did.

Q That was with Phil Reeker and Ambassador Yovanovitch?

A Correct. That's when she told me that she was being removed as Ambassador.

Q Okay. The next day, on May 2nd, you had a meeting with Rob Blair.

A Correct.

Q Who is Rob Blair?

A He is the deputy to Mick Mulvaney.

Q Do you recall what that meeting was about?

A Yes. And there was also a meeting with -- JRB was, you know, Ambassador Bolton, and then with General Kellogg. They were both to relate to them -- they were to relate to all of them my meeting with Ambassador Yovanovitch and Phil Reeker.

Q Okay. And what specifically about Ambassador Yovanovitch?

A How disturbed I was by what had happened to her, and I asked if there was anything that we could do.

Q And what did they say?

A That's when, you know, I mentioned to you that Ambassador Bolton, who looked extremely pained, you know, basically said there was nothing that could be done, but Rudy Giuliani was a --

Q That's the hand grenade comment?

A -- hand grenade, yeah, that's going to blow everybody up.

Q Okay. And who is General Kellogg?

A He is the now National Security Advisor to the Vice President. And General Kellogg is the person who hired me along with K.T. McFarland and General Flynn to work at the National Security Council. He's had a number of positions.

Q What was his role at this time?

A He was the National Security Advisor to the Vice President. And I wanted him to know that this very troubling development had taken place because, I mentioned before in the line of questioning, that we were always contemplating: Was there a way that we could get the Vice President, you know, to go to Ukraine at an appropriate time? And, you know, we had been, you know, talking about, depending on the

timing of the inauguration or, you know, any of the potential meetings.

Q Sure. Let's talk about that for a second because there has been public reporting that originally Vice President Pence was supposed to attend the inauguration, and then President Trump, at least has been reported, ordered him not to attend. Do you have any knowledge about that and how that happened?

A Yeah. I already responded to that in regard to Mr. Castor's question, and as I said, there was a lot of scheduling issues. The Vice President can't be out of the country at the same time as the President. And as I mentioned, I'd already flagged that there were all kinds of issues swirling around with Rudy Giuliani and Ukraine and, you know, the ousting of our Ambassador.

And it was going to be very tight for the Vice President to make it for the inauguration. So I, you know, have no knowledge that he was actually ordered not to go, but it was going to be very difficult for him to go.

Q Okay. And --

A And I had already put forward, you know, as I mentioned before, Secretary Perry, who I, you know, was always advocating to go and -- you know, go to things like this.

Q Did you have conversations with General Kellogg

about your concerns regarding Giuliani?

A I did.

Q Okay. And was that -- is that around this time?

A No. This is exactly -- that's what I'm saying. These meetings with the three of them, and I know they look like they were in the same time because they were both very short with Ambassador Bolton, and then with Kellogg, it was for somewhat longer because I had already expressed concerns with Ambassador Bolton beforehand.

And I wanted to flag for Rob Blair, because often ambassadorial issues come through the Chief of Staff's Office, and Rob Blair is a, you know, very good professional, knows foreign affairs, that this was all transpiring and that this was going to have a massive backlash also at the State Department and that it already had, you know, a chilling effect, you know, with our Embassy in Kyiv and also among, you know, many people that we were interacting with.

People were shocked. They'd already got word that she'd been, you know, recalled for or summoned very abruptly for consultations back at home, and she told me at this meeting here that she'd already been dismissed, and it was looking for a time for her to come back.

Q Okay. How did Mr. Blair respond when you raised these concerns?

A He said that he would flag this for Mick and that

he would pay attention to it, for Mulvaney.

Q How about General Kellogg?

A General Kellogg didn't say that he would tell the Vice President, but he said that he would talk to the team. And I also had Jennifer Williams, his director who covered all of Europe, who was our counterpart there -- I mean, again, we talked about how small the Vice President's team is -- and she was also in the meeting.

So I wanted to make sure that they knew that there were issues and they should be very careful, you know, so that the Vice President didn't, you know, get mired up in -- you know, I was flagging, you know, in case Rudy Giuliani or anybody who's sort of seeking meetings.

We did this frequently. I mean, that's what the Vice President's staff would rely on us for sending red flags to them for, you know, meetings they should avoid or, you know, kind of things that they should be aware of because they didn't have a big team to be able to track everything.

Q Okay. Let's skip to the next page, page 37, a meeting on May 6th with, it looks like, the Ukrainian -- it was a Ukrainian delegation along with --

A There was a Ukrainian delegation. I can't actually speak about that one. This was arranged with our intelligence directorate.

Q Okay.

A And then the secure call with Phil Reeker was me following up again on, you know, more of these related issues.

Q Relating to Giuliani?

A Related to concerns about Ukraine and, you know, how things were unfolding with Ambassador Yovanovitch. But also, I mean, as Phil Reeker was the Assistant Secretary for all of Europe, we always had a long agenda of items that we needed to discuss about. And in this, you know, timeframe there was also things related to -- and you'll see on the next page -- Viktor Orban, the Prime Minister of Hungary was coming, and Ambassador Reeker was in charge of obviously Hungary in his portfolio. And we were doing a press background briefing in this timeframe. He was doing one, and I was doing one. So all of these issues would have been on the agenda.

Q Okay. On May 23rd, it's not on your calendar, but that's the day of the meeting we've been talking about when the --

A That's right.

Q -- U.S. delegation came back.

A Yeah.

Q Did you get a readout from anyone about that meeting?

A Yes. I got a readout from Charlie Kupperman.

Q He participated in the meeting?

A He did.

Q And what did he say happened during that meeting on May 23rd?

A He said that the other participants had made -- I mean, he obviously wasn't on the delegation -- had made a concerted effort to express -- and Senator Johnson can talk to you about this because he was in that meeting -- about their positive impressions about Zelensky, and that there had been a lot of stress on energy reform, and that Secretary Perry had been instructed that he had 90 days to see if we could make some progress on the energy -- reform in the energy sector.

And, again, this was all consistent with, as I mentioned before, discussions that we'd been having with our energy team, including with Wells Griffith and his staff and many others, on how we would try to get Ukraine more embedded in European energy security, not just look to some kind of object vis-à-vis Russia or as a transit country for Russian energy, but how we would get Ukraine in and of itself in a better place in terms of its energy diversification and the restructuring of its own energy sector.

Q Are you aware of President Trump saying anything in that meeting along the lines that he believed that Ukraine had tried to bring him down in 2016?

A That was related to me by Ambassador Volker at a later point.

Q Okay. What did Ambassador Volker tell you?

A He told me exactly that.

Q Okay. Had you ever heard -- did you ever hear that on any other occasions, President Trump expressing belief that he believed Ukraine --

A I think he said it publicly, but definitely Mr. Giuliani has said things in that regard.

Q Turning to page 39, on May 24th, that Friday, it looks like you had a meeting with Ambassador Taylor --

A That's right.

Q -- and Mr. Vindman?

A Yes. And I had a previous meeting with Ambassador Taylor on the 13th. So this was when Ambassador Taylor, on page 38, was, you know, basically in the process of -- he wasn't able to go out to the inauguration. He was in the process of going out as Charge.

And as I mentioned before, I've known Ambassador Taylor for decades, and he and I talked, you know, very frequently about some of the challenges he was going to face in this position.

And I know he's going to come in and talk to you himself, but he had made it very clear that if the State Department didn't have his back on this, that he wouldn't

continue in the position. He was very reluctant to step into a situation where the previous Ambassador had been ousted on baseless charges. He was very well aware of all of the dangers here.

Q Did that include the dangers of Giuliani?

A Yes.

Q Yeah. You discussed that with Ambassador Taylor?

A I did discuss that with Ambassador Taylor. And, actually, initially, I thought he shouldn't do it. And then over time we became, you know, more -- we needed Ambassador Taylor, frankly, somebody of his stature. And he said that he had an undertaking from Secretary Pompeo that they would have his back and make sure that he wasn't subject to baseless attacks either from inside of the Ukraine or from the outside.

Q Why did you initially think he shouldn't do it?

A Because he was basically taking over what looked at this point like a tainted, poisoned chalice. I mean, if you have had your previous Ambassador ousted on no just cause and somebody else has to step in and they have to basically clean up a mess, I mean, would you do that?

Q I'm not testifying, but --

A Yes. But I think basically most of us would think twice, three times, four times before agreeing to do this.

Q Yeah. On page 39, there's this meeting on the 22nd

with Amos Hochstein. Is that the meeting that you referred to earlier?

A That's the meeting that I referred to. And I related to Ambassador Taylor, who also knows Amos Hochstein from the past, what he had told me and suggested that he should, you know, also talk to him if he wanted to. But Ambassador Taylor seemed to know a lot of this information anyway. Ambassador Taylor is extremely well informed, and he's, you know, kind of never stopped on his keeping track of Ukraine, you know, since the time that he was an Ambassador.

Q Okay. What about this meeting on May 23 with Kristina -- I'm going to --

A Kvien. She is the new DCM, deputy chief of mission, in Ukraine.

Q And what was this? Was this meeting just a briefer on --

A Correct.

Q -- before she went over?

A And for us to talk about, you know, kind of policy issues. And I related to her, you know, the hopes that we would be able to focus with the Ukrainians on this broader energy sector reform and how we could work with other European embassies there, the Germans, the Poles, the Czechs, the Slovaks, you know, not just the usual, you know, suspects of, you know -- we always work obviously with the EU or the

NATO allies in a general sense, but how we could be more proactive in trying to get the Europeans to do more on Ukraine.

And it wasn't just about military issues; it was also about energy because, you know, the Germans -- we were in this spat with the Germans about Nord Stream 2, but, you know, the Germans also have the wherewithal to help Ukraine refurbish its energy infrastructure and, you know, also to work with the Poles and the Czechs and Slovaks for bringing in LNG.

And the Germans were also at this point talking about bringing through Bremen, and through a new port, LNG into Germany that also could come into Ukraine if there was indeed a building up of the infrastructure in that part of Europe.

Q Okay. On page 41, we're moving into early June, you had a SVTC with Ambassador Volker, it looks like?

A Yes. That was for him to update the Europeans on, you know, the Presidential delegation and some of the next steps, you know, on -- and then, you know, the question still at this point was, were the Russians going to be at all willing to meet, you know, as we're getting now past the inauguration of President Zelensky, or were we going to have to wait until the larger elections were taking place?

And so this is a kind of occasion where the French and German counterparts to Ambassador Volker would relay

information from meetings that they had participated in. I have to confess, I was only in part of that meeting.

Q Okay. That's okay. We don't need to go into detail. But I did want to ask you --

MR. HECK: [Presiding.] Your time has expired.

Minority.

DR. HILL: And just as a note, the Alex Ukraine thing after this is to follow up to say, you know, to kind of make sure that we were, you know, following up on any issues that would pertain to us in terms of interagency coordination.

So, often, when we had a meeting, I would follow up with our Ukraine director just to make sure that if we had any do-outs that we had to be in charge of -- and, you know, at his level, there's lots of working-level meetings that I don't participate in -- just to make sure that everyone is on the same page.

MR. NOBLE: Okay.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q So you told Mr. Vindman not to go to the debriefing with the President?

A We agreed with Charlie Kupperman that, given what I'd just learned about this confusion about Kash Patel, that it would not be best.

Q What if it was just a mistake?

A Charlie Kupperman led me to believe that it

probably not was a mistake, and he didn't want to get into personnel issues.

Q Okay. So --

A But he was clearly concerned by this as well.

Q What exactly was the issue? It sort of strikes us as random that now we're talking about Kash Patel.

A Well, it was a bit random to me too. I'd never talked to -- I would -- him, and I told you I didn't have any meetings with him. And suddenly the Exec Sec, just, you know, the regular guys, you know, who I'm picking up some other material for are telling me that the President wants to meet with this Ukrainian director about materials that they had got from him and, you know, just to have -- an alert that he'd be asking for Kash. And that's obviously what, you know, for me --

Q Is it possible there was just a mixup, that --

A It didn't sound like it. That doesn't really happen. I've not had that kind of mixup before. It's not like the names of directors -- not everybody knows our directors.

Q Any other reason the President would know Kash Patel? I mean, maybe --

A I couldn't tell you. I think you'd have to ask that yourselves. I don't know.

Q And you have never met Mr. Patel or you didn't --

A I have met him. I know what he looks like, and I'd been in meetings with him. But I'd never had any one-on-one interaction with him, and he'd not been attending any of our Ukraine meetings. He was on the general distro for his directorate. But I started to worry that he'd been sending some of our materials in an unauthorized fashion, so I made sure that he wasn't on any of our distros that could have been internally.

Q Did you communicate your issue with Ambassador Bolton?

A Charlie Kupperman said he would speak to Ambassador Bolton about this.

Q Okay. And did he ever get back to you about what the --

A He said that he was dealing with it.

Q Okay. That's it? That was the end of it?

A Charlie Kupperman always dealt with issues that you brought to him, and it was in discussion with him that he said that he would go in and sit in and give us a readout of the meeting, because it was another red flag at that point that something was going on, because Kash Patel had not been involved in the inauguration meeting. And I never raised this with Kash Patel because, again --

Q Was this like a widely known fact at NSC? It just seems like a rather random factoid.

A When I told my office that this was the case, I said: Has any of you had any interaction with Kash Patel? It alarmed everybody.

Q Right. But now it's the subject of a Q and A being raised by, you know, congressional staff. I mean, how would that information get to congressional staff?

A Well, that suggests that Charlie Kupperman did indeed raise it with people.

Q Including congressional staffers?

A I don't know about that, but he must have raised it with other people because, you know, how else do you guys get to know a lot of this stuff?

Q Okay. But you haven't communicated that information --

A I have not.

Q -- in advance of today, right?

A I have not.

Q And the information conveyed to the majority has been equal in terms of majority and minority get the same information coming from you?

A I haven't spoken to anybody from any of the staff.

Q Okay. So this is the first time that you've been here talking --

A About?

Q -- about these matters? You didn't have a

pre-brief?

A That is correct, I did not.

Q Or any pre-felt telephone calls?

A I did not.

Q And to your knowledge, there was no proffer raised by your representatives, whether your attorney or otherwise?

A What do you mean a proffer?

Q Proffer is when, you know, an attorney will call and talk about the testimony that his or her client intends to give.

A Not to my knowledge. Although, now, what I have to say is that I've read a lot about my testimony, purported testimony, and as you know, I don't have a written testimony in the press.

Q Right.

A So, as I had raised Kash Patel as a concern in my directorate and to other people, and I mentioned it to DAS Kent, Deputy Assistant Secretary Kent, and to also Ambassador Taylor, and after I'd put it up the chain asking them to be aware if there was any communication from Kash Patel, I can be, you know, fairly confident that they talked to other people about this.

Q Okay. So it wasn't a mistake. It was something to be handled, in your view?

A Correct. That's right.

Q Okay. And --

A And based on my experience of 2 and a half years at the National Security Council, something like this isn't usually a mistake. We had an awful lot of people in the early stages of the administration doing all kinds of things that were not in their portfolio.

Q Okay. Did you talk with Mr. Patel's supervisor?

A I did not because they were in the moment of a transition there as well. And Charlie Kupperman was the person who was dealing with all personnel issues, so I went to the appropriate channel.

Q And did he ever --

A I also was not, you know, at the time, you know, going to, you know, basically throw Mr. Patel under anybody's bus. I told Charlie Kupperman about it, and I said: I barely know Kash Patel. I know what he works on.

But I did go back to my office and, again, flag for the people who were working on Ukraine that they should just be alert to make sure that they had no representation from him and, you know, kind of suggested there may be some confusion -- that is exactly what I said -- from our Exec Sec for whatever reason about who is our Ukraine director. And I just want to make sure that everyone knows it's Alex Vindman, and there is no other Ukraine director at the NSC.

Q Okay. And Vindman wasn't in the May 23 debrief?

A He was not.

Q Was anybody from NSC?

A Charlie Kupperman.

Q Okay. And Charlie Kupperman didn't get back to you with a result of his --

A He gave me a readout, and I just, you know, repeated that --

Q No, with the Kash Patel issue.

A He did not. But I wouldn't necessarily have expected him to, but my experience with Charlie Kupperman is he always followed up, always, on any issue that I brought to him.

Q Well, if there's some confusion about somebody operating in the Ukraine policy space --

A Then he would have dealt with this.

Q -- you would think that he would follow up with you.

A From what I've heard most recently is that Kash Patel has been moved to counterterrorism, where there's not a lot of terrorism going on in Ukraine.

Q Okay. But I guess my point was, if there was an issue that needed to be deconflicted and Mr. Kupperman went and did that but didn't come back to you, I mean, what --

A He did not, but, I mean, he would not necessarily. If there was any disciplinary or anything else as a result of

that, he would not come back to me on that. That's a personnel issue that he would deal with.

Q Did he indicate to you that he had handled it?

A He said he would. He said he would handle it.

Q Okay. But you never had any closed loop --

A I did not, no.

Q I'm going to ask you about the Politico article from January 17th again.

A Okay.

Q I just want to warn you in advance.

A All right. I mean, I have to go back and read that all over again.

Q And we have copies if anybody wants one.

A You don't work for Politico, do you?

Q What's that?

A Well, it's just you're touting this, you know, kind of Politico article.

Q I'm not touting it. No. I'm just -- you know, this is, you know, a news account. It's rather in depth. You know, this is a reporter that --

A Who's the reporter? Jog my memory.

Q Mr. Vogel, Kenneth P. Vogel. Do you know Mr. Vogel?

A I mean, I know of him. I've seen his bio and other things.

Q Right. I mean, he's gone on to The New York Times at this point. And, you know, this article goes through [redacted] -- entreaties to the Ukrainian Embassy, you know, here in the United States. And Mr. Vogel interviews and gets people on the record talking about what [redacted] was interested in.

And I'm just -- all the guffawing over the veracity of this article, I'm just --

A This is in January 2017, this article.

Q Yes. Yes.

A So, remember, I go into the government, into the administration in April of 2017.

Q Right.

A By which time, I receive or when I go in an awful lot of briefings --

Q Right.

A -- from the Intelligence Community, and I read all of the documents pertaining to 2016. And I am then in endless meetings about this to try to push back against the Russians.

Q Right.

A And so all of the materials that I have from a classified context, there is none of that, anything, you know, related to [redacted].

Q Okay. But, I mean, it's -- you know, reporting is

a compilation of talking to sources. And you're not saying the whole story is just --

A No, I'm not.

Q -- outright fabrication, right?

A No, I'm not.

Q Okay. Are you able to characterize what parts of the story concerns you?

MR. WOLOSKY: I mean, we --

DR. HILL: I really -- yeah, I'd like to know why we're doing this.

MR. WOLOSKY: Just wait before we get to that.

DR. HILL: Yeah. Okay.

MR. WOLOSKY: You know, I don't know what document you're talking about.

MR. CASTOR: Okay. We can make an exhibit.

MR. WOLOSKY: I haven't read it. The witness hasn't read it.

DR. HILL: Well, I read it a long time ago.

MR. WOLOSKY: A long time ago. It's not been entered as an exhibit --

MR. CASTOR: I'm going to enter it.

MR. WOLOSKY: -- or offered as an exhibit. Do you want us to sit and read the article? I mean we're here. We'll do whatever you want.

MR. CASTOR: This is exhibit 4.

[Minority Exhibit No. 4
Was marked for identification.]

MR. WOLOSKY: If you are going to ask her about, you know, generally what's accurate and what's not accurate, you know, why don't you point her to specific portions of the article.

MR. CASTOR: Yeah, I'd be happy to.

DR. HILL: Yeah, I remember, I mean, of course, this article. And as I said before, I could give you a long list of people who were reaching out on all kinds of different fronts to all of the campaigns, all of the campaigns, from all kinds of different sources who were trying to do something like this.

MR. CASTOR: So you don't discount the fact that [redacted] was probably doing what's reported here? I mean, you're an expert --

DR. HILL: It's not -- well, what specifically are we talking about?

MR. WOLOSKY: Well, what specifically are you referring to because we're not going to have her answer -- you know, affirm broad statements: Is this accurate? Is this 30-page article accurate?

DR. HILL: Yeah. And it's also, you know, talking about people in the Ukrainian American community, which is pretty extensive, people with meetings at the Embassy. And as you

know, there were all kinds of peace projects that were being put around at that time. I received about three of them from different people.

I had people asking to talk to Colin Powell and would I, you know, help set things up with that --

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q Sure.

A -- before, you know, for example, Jeb Bush, you know, you name it. There were people coming forward trying to use any contact that they possibly could to talk to people. And there aren't articles about all of them.

So, when I go back to Brookings, perhaps I could start writing a lot of articles about the people I knew previously in the runup to the 2016 election who were trying to do some of these things too. It does not amount to a large-scale Ukrainian Government effort to subvert our elections which is comparable to anything that the Russians did in 2016.

And if we start down this path, not discounting what one individual or a couple of individuals might have done, ahead of our 2020 elections, we are setting ourselves up for the same kind of failures and intelligence failures that we had before.

Q Okay. I --

A Look, and I feel very strongly about this.

Q Evidently.

A I'm not trying to mess about here.

Q Evidently you do.

A Yes, and so you should, too, in terms of our national security.

Q Well, let me help you understand here. I'm trying to understand: Is it the whole thing, everything?

MR. WOLOSKY: Ask her a question about a specific thing of which she has personal knowledge, and she'll respond. She's not going to respond to an 18-page article based on some general --

MR. CASTOR: I'm not asking her to respond to an 18-page article. I marked it as an exhibit, and we're about to get into it.

MR. WOLOSKY: Well, ask her something specific, Mr. Castor.

DR. HILL: Are you trying to suggest -- sorry. Okay.

MR. WOLOSKY: Just ask her a question, and she will respond.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q Okay. Page two --

A All right.

Q -- a Ukrainian American operative -- this is the third paragraph on page two -- who was consulting for the Democratic National Committee met up with top officials of the Ukrainian Embassy in Washington in an effort to expose

ties between President Trump, top campaign aide Paul Manafort, and Russia, according to people with knowledge of the situation. The Ukrainian efforts had an impact in the race helping to force Manafort's resignation.

MR. WOLOSKY: Answer to the limit of your personal knowledge that you had.

DR. HILL: Well, this is the conclusion of Kenneth Vogel and David Stone.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q Right. And so --

A This is not the conclusion of the U.S. intelligence agencies.

Q Okay. So --

A I cannot make that conclusion just based on that article either.

Q Okay.

A This is an assertion, the conclusion that the authors of this article are making.

Q Okay.

A Now, should we have been looking, all of us, overall, at every effort to interfere in our election? Yes, we should have been.

Q At my peril, I'm trying to figure out whether this is just complete fiction that was pitched to a reporter and has been completely debunked based on information you have or

whether there's any other explanation for this --

A It is a fiction that the Ukrainian Government was launching an effort to upend our election, upend our election to mess with our Democratic systems.

Q Okay. But there could have been some Ukrainians that were interested in injecting information --

A And this appears to be a Ukrainian American, which we're also talking about Mr. Fruman and Mr. Parnas are Ukrainian Americans who were also trying to subvert our democracy and who managed to get one of our ambassadors sacked.

Q On page 11 is where it starts getting into Leshchenko's involvement. Like, what do you know about Leshchenko's efforts to expose the Manafort issue?

A Only what I have read in the press.

Q Okay. So there is nothing that you have --

A Again, this is in January of 2017, and the period in which I entered into the government and, you know, the period in which you're working there, we unearthed more and more information on what the Russians were doing.

Q Okay. I'm not --

A And it's not to --

Q -- trying to compare what they're doing --

A Yes, but I'm not sure where we're going with this line of inquiry here --

Q I'm just asking you about --

A Because if you're also trying to peddle an alternative variation of whether the Ukrainians subverted our election, I don't want to be part of that, and I will not be part of it.

Q I'm not trying to peddle anything. I'm trying to ask you about what information you have regarding these. And, you know, frankly, if we didn't have such a --

A But you're asking me about an article that was written in Politico in January of 2017.

Q And I probably wouldn't have returned to it, but it was just such a passionate rebuke of this article that just --

A Well, it's of the thrust of the question that you're asking here, which is to basically -- you know, what we're dealing with now is a situation where we are at risk of saying that everything that happened in 2016 was a result of Ukraine in some fashion.

Q Yeah, I'm not saying that. I'm not --

A Well, that's certainly what it sounds like to me.

Q I'm not going down that path. I'm just simply trying to understand the facts that are discounted -- or recounted in this story.

On page 13, it talks about the Ambassador Chaly penning an op-ed. Do you have any familiarity with the op-ed that

the Ambassador wrote that was negative to the President, the President when he was a candidate?

A There were an awful lot of people from every imaginable country at this particular point trying to game out where things were going to go in our election. We can find an awful lot -- we had to do this, by the way, before every head of state visit. We had to comb through what any of them might have said in the course of the election campaign that might be negative toward the President, and there were an awful lot of people who said negative things.

You might remember a moment in public in the Rose Garden with Prime Minister Tsipras of Greece, and I got my ass chewed out for this one afterwards because we hadn't noticed -- because I don't happen to speak Greek and didn't have on hand a Greek-speaking staff member, but John Roberts of CNN did a gotcha moment for Tsipras in public, full view -- I remember it very vividly -- pointing out to Tsipras negative things that he had said about the President and how much he hoped that President Trump was not basically elected during the Presidential campaign.

And the President was not at all happy, and the press staff said to me: How could you have missed that?

Well, it was all in Greek. So I presume that CNN has a whole Greek staff on board who are poring over things at, you know, vast expense. Well, we don't have lots of

Greek-speaking staff members poring over everything.

So, getting back to this again, many individuals were trying to game out our political system, many other governments. The Russians are the government that have been proven from the very top to be targeting our democratic systems.

Q Okay. Fair enough.

A And I'm sorry to be very passionate, but this is precisely --

Q I'm just trying to get your --

A -- why I joined the administration. I didn't join it because I thought the Ukrainians had been going after the President.

Q I didn't say you did. I'm just trying to get your reaction to --

A Well, my reaction obviously is pretty strong because, again --

Q I know. It's proven very interesting.

A -- I'm extremely concerned that this is a rabbit hole that we're all going to go down in between now and the 2020 election, and it will be to all of our detriment.

Q I'm just asking you to give your reaction and if you have any firsthand information given your area of expertise.

A My firsthand reaction is exactly -- of certain

information -- is exactly what I've said, that there may be [redacted], and I can name lots of other American citizens with various appellates to them who were running around trying to do similar things with similar embassies.

Q Okay. But you don't have any firsthand information about Ambassador Chaly? Was that ever a point of discussion?

A It was not. But Ambassador Chaly was always trying to obviously push President Poroshenko's interest and, you know, obviously has now been removed by President Zelensky.

Q Right.

A He was the former chief of staff to President Poroshenko.

Q Was President Poroshenko, you know, in favor of Hillary Clinton over President Trump to the extent you know?

A I do not know. I do know that President Poroshenko spent an inordinate amount of time in the early stages of the administration trying to create as good a relationship as he possibly could with both the Vice President and the President.

Q On page 14, Ukraine's Minister of Internal Affairs, Avakov --

A Mr. Avakov, yeah.

Q Yeah. He had some disparaging remarks about the President on Twitter and Facebook. Do you have any firsthand

information about that, or can relate any additional information?

A I can't. As I said, we found disparaging remarks made by pretty much every world leader and official at different points about the President. So, you know, this is not surprising but, again -- you know, and the fact of this was in the course presumably of the campaign. Again, this is January of 2017, this article.

Q Okay. And this will be my last passage that I point you to, page 15, a Ukrainian Parliamentarian Artemenko?

A Artemenko. Yeah, I don't really know him.

Q It was quoted -- you know, it was very clear that they, presuming the Poroshenko regime, was supporting Hillary Clinton's candidacy. They did everything from organizing meetings with the Clinton team to publicly supporting her to criticizing Trump. I think they simply didn't meet -- that is with the Trump Organization because they thought Hillary would win.

A Well, I think that this is the kicker here. As you well know and as we all know, there was an awful lot of people who actually thought that Secretary Clinton would win the election. So an awful lot of countries and individuals were already preparing for that eventuality by trying to curry favor with the campaign.

Q Okay.

A And certainly, as I said earlier on, before President Trump was selected as the candidate, I mean, if you're at all interested, at some point, I can sit down with you privately and go through all of the people I know who tried to go through every single one of your colleagues' campaigns from every kind of different people who came up to us, because I had colleagues who were working on Senator Rubio's campaign, on Bush's campaign, on Jeb Bush's campaign.

And, believe me, there were Ukrainians, Ukrainian Americans, Russians, all of whom wanted to talk to those campaigns too because they didn't think that President Trump would become the candidate.

Q Fair enough. Yeah. And at the end of today, I am pretty certain you and maybe your lawyer won't want to see me again, but --

A No. No. It's totally fine. I'm just trying to basically say here that I have very -- you know, obviously strong feelings about our national security. And I just want to, if I've done anything, leave a message to you that we should all be greatly concerned about what the Russians intend to do in 2020. And any information that they can provide, you know, that basically deflects our attention away from what they did and what they're planning on doing is very useful to them.

Q The bottom of exhibit 3, on each page there's a

date stamp July 31.

A That was when my assistant printed it out. As you can be aware, I was not actually there at the time.

Q And do you have any firsthand information about why this was printed then?

A Because that was his last day in the office. And before I left, after I'd been in to talk to our legal team, I asked if I could have a copy of the contacts and the calendar for reference purposes so that I could help Tim Morrison with transition.

And I wasn't actually able -- the contacts is also date-stamped the same time because I wasn't savvy enough to be able to print it out. Every time I printed it, it didn't print.

Q Fair enough.

And then it was printed --

A Simple incompetence.

Q It was printed on the 31st and then --

A And he held onto it, and I picked it up --

Q When you came in in September?

A Basically, yep. My printer -- picked it up from him, yep.

Q To the extent that the information that Mr. Giuliani was communicating to the various persons, to the extent the individuals he was communicating that information

to --

A That was a lot of us, I think, you know, but anyone who was watching.

Q -- took it at face value --

A Right.

Q -- and didn't undertake their own fact checking --

A Right.

Q -- or own investigation. If they simply took it at face value, you know, is it fair to say that if people genuinely believed what was being provided, I mean, is it fair to say that that could have yielded some of the results that we saw?

A What results?

MR. WOLOSKY: I don't understand. Too much breadth in that question. Could you sort of maybe break it down?

DR. HILL: Yeah. What results?

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q Well, some of the results about the information Mr. Giuliani was proffering --

A Right.

Q -- you testified yielded the unpleasant result of Ambassador Yovanovitch being recalled?

A Oh, Ambassador Yovanovitch being recalled. Well, yes, if you believe in conspiracy theories and, as you said, you know, and you don't have any --

Q Right.

A -- alternative ways of fact checking or looking into issues, if you believe that George Soros rules the world and, you know, basically controls everything, and, you know, if you --

Q Was Mr. Giuliani pushing that?

A He mentioned George Soros repeatedly, and The Hill article as well did and many others.

Q But just the March 24th Hill article?

A I think it was the 20th or something like that, that I saw.

Q Okay.

A And I was very sensitized to this issue because in the whole first year at the NSC --

Q Right.

A -- more people, myself included, were being accused of being Soros moles. And, indeed, I'm out on InfoWars again with Roger Stone, Alex Jones purporting that indeed from the very beginning I've been involved in a George Soros-led conspiracy.

Q Okay.

A So, if you believe things like that, I mean, in general, and a lot of people seem to do, or some people seem to do --

MR. WOLOSKY: I just wanted the record to reflect that

Mr. Castor laughed in response to that question.

MR. CASTOR: Well, no. No.

MR. WOLOSKY: Let me finish. And this is a very serious matter, okay. This is a matter where people are being targeted and people --

MR. CASTOR: That is an outrageous -- that is outrageous to say that I laughed at that.

MR. WOLOSKY: You did laugh, and I want the record to reflect it because this is a very serious matter where people's lives potentially are in danger. And it's not a laughing matter.

MR. CASTOR: She discussed a number of individuals and situations that I have no familiarity with, and so to the extent you think that --

MR. WOLOSKY: And when she mentioned Soros and InfoWars and the fact that she is now back into that cycle, you laughed about it.

MR. CASTOR: I didn't bring up InfoWars.

DR. HILL: I did. I did.

MR. WOLOSKY: And you laughed. So the record will reflect it.

MR. CASTOR: Well, that is, you know, an absolutely ridiculous characterization.

DR. HILL: Look, I think the unfortunate thing that we're all in at the moment -- and as I said, you know, I try

at all times to, you know, maintain this nonpartisan, you know, expert approach, but we're in an environment where people believe an awful lot of things.

I mean, Mr. Soros and a whole lot of other people were sent pipe bombs. I had a call from one of the detailees from the FBI who was in my office previously, my previous special assistant, who told me to seal up my door slot today before I came down here because he's been following the alt right out of those -- and white supremacists.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q Who was that?

A My colleague back at the FBI, who was detailed, my special assistant, and he said I'm lighting up the Twittersphere.

Q Okay. I have no --

A I don't follow all of this stuff, so I have to rely on other people tipping me off about this.

Q Okay. I know nothing about Alex Jones or anything like that. I'm simply interested in The Hill reporting and, you know, what Lutsenko may or may not have said to Solomon and --

A But it's become part of what's become a very large universe of information and stories that are out there on the internet that is really affecting an awful lot of people's judgments.

MR. CASTOR: Mr. Jordan?

MR. JORDAN: Okay. Dr. Hill, I just want to go back to where I was last hour, if I could. Again, Ambassador Yovanovitch in her statement last week talked about corruption is not just prevalent in Ukraine but is the system. And then along comes this guy, Zelensky, who is running a campaign on -- you know, totally on cleaning up the corruption, I mean, it's a central issue of his campaign, and wins. And my understanding is he won rather big.

DR. HILL: He did win big, yeah.

MR. JORDAN: But as you indicated earlier, you still don't know. You know, people run campaigns and say things, and then they get elected and sometimes they do things that aren't consistent with what they told the voters they were going to do.

DR. HILL: Right.

MR. JORDAN: So you wanted to wait, see how things happen in the parliamentary elections --

DR. HILL: Yep.

MR. JORDAN: -- see how he handled himself. And so you wait and the parliamentary elections go well for his party, right?

DR. HILL: Well, this happened, you know, in July, July 21st, by which I had already left, but that is correct, yeah.

MR. JORDAN: Right. You're kind of waiting. And you also said earlier that -- I guess you were probably also waiting to see what happened -- what kind of feedback you got from the folks, Secretary Perry, Senator Johnson, who went to the inauguration, see what their feedback was. And my understanding, that feedback was positive for President Zelensky.

And you testified earlier that --

MR. GOLDMAN: Sorry to interrupt, but if that's a -- you're nodding, so I just want the record to reflect you're saying yes.

DR. HILL: Oh, I'm so sorry. Yes. I forgot the first -- yes. That is correct. Yes. I'm sorry.

MR. JORDAN: And then you said earlier that, you know, OMB holds up dollars all the time.

DR. HILL: Uh-huh.

MR. JORDAN: It happened -- in your, you know, extensive experience, it's happened several times, even happened with Ukraine, right?

DR. HILL: That's correct.

MR. JORDAN: Yeah. And then, in the end, it sort of all worked out, the Javelins happened, the security assistance dollars happened, continued to flow. And then, when President Trump and President Zelensky meet, like many people have told us, it seems to me they actually hit it off when

they met in New York.

So we've got all this stuff going on, and I get it, and we've spent several hours talking about it all. But as I look at it all, in the end, it kind of worked like it normally does. I understand there were different people talking and doing different things, and you talked a lot about Ambassador Sondland and Mayor Giuliani and different things.

But in the end, what needed to get done, everything you have said -- you agreed with the Javelins going there. You agreed with the security assistance happening. You felt, I think, like the rest of the folks that we have spoken to, that if President Zelensky and President Trump get together, they're actually going to get along.

And you felt that when the Senator and the Secretary went there for the inauguration, they liked this guy too. All that kind of worked out. Is that fair to say?

DR. HILL: Well, it depends on what you mean about working out. The President and President Zelensky did, in fact, meet at the U.N. GA. That is correct. The military assistance appears to have been delivered, to the best of my knowledge and also to yours.

But in terms of the overall U.S.-Ukrainian relationship, no, I wouldn't say that this has worked out because we're in the middle of now what is a scandal about Ukraine. So the

manner in which we got to this point has been extraordinarily corrosive, the removal of our Ambassador and what we have done, which is laying open what appears to have been an effort in which a number of unsanctioned individuals, including Ukrainian American businesspeople, seem to have been involved in these efforts --

MR. JORDAN: Dr. Hill, why do you think President Zelensky was in favor of a new Ambassador to Ukraine from the United States?

DR. HILL: I only see what I see in the transcript, in which he's talking to the President. He didn't say that he was necessarily in favor. He's just responding to what he has been told in this transcript.

MR. JORDAN: I mean, I can look at this transcript again, but I think he said he favored it 100 percent. He was pretty emphatic about --

DR. HILL: He's responding to what the President said, as far as I can tell here. I can't speak to what President Zelensky is thinking. I really can't.

MR. JORDAN: You think he's simply responding to the President's suggestion? It seems to me, if that was the case, he would say: Okay. I think that would be fine.

He says: No, I agree with you 100 percent. She was for Poroshenko.

DR. HILL: He also says that he agrees 100 percent,

actually 1,000 percent, on, you know, Angela Merkel and other European countries not helping Ukraine, which actually isn't true. It is true, as the President has asserted, that they're not helping on the military front, but the Germans and the French and other Europeans are giving an awful lot of technical assistance and funding and money to Europe. We were trying to get them to do more, but it's not true that they're not doing much.

Look, I can't speak to what either of the Presidents were thinking in this moment. I can only read and respond to the transcript.

MR. JORDAN: Well, okay, fine. I mean, we have what President Zelensky said. He obviously wanted a new Ambassador just like President Trump did.

DR. HILL: Well, he doesn't say he wanted a new Ambassador here. He wants his own new Ambassador. President Zelensky also removed Ambassador Chaly because he's newly elected, and Ambassador Chaly used to be President Poroshenko's National Security Advisor and Special Assistant, Special Diplomatic Advisor.

MR. JORDAN: I'm just reading what President Zelensky said. I agree with you 100 percent -- page four, second paragraph, President Zelensky, near the bottom: I agree with you 100 percent. Her attitude towards me was far from the best as she admired the previous President and she was on his

side.

DR. HILL: Look, I can't speculate about why President Zelensky was saying this and about what he was thinking about at this particular time. He also doesn't have her name correct.

MR. JORDAN: You don't think --

DR. HILL: And he says: It was great that you were the first one who told me that she was a bad Ambassador.

He said: It was great that you were the first one who told me that she was a bad Ambassador.

MR. JORDAN: I understand. I'm not saying --

DR. HILL: No. But I'm just saying that this seems to suggest something else, so perhaps all of us shouldn't be speculating on what they were basically both thinking or saying.

MR. JORDAN: I'm not speculating. I'm just saying what he said. I'm asking you --

DR. HILL: Well, he says: It was great that you were the first one -- the first one -- who told me that she was a bad Ambassador because I agree with you 100 percent.

That doesn't mean to say that he thinks that she was a bad ambassador. He's responding to what the President has said to him.

MR. JORDAN: So, when he said, "I agree with you 100 percent," he's not agreeing with the President 100 percent?

DR. HILL: Well, he's agreeing with the President 100 percent if the President has told him that she is a bad Ambassador, as the first one who is telling him.

MR. JORDAN: All I'm --

DR. HILL: I'm just saying to you what I'm reading here as well. And, look, I don't want to start parsing what either the President is saying or President Zelensky --

MR. JORDAN: I didn't posit why he wanted her. I just said what he said. You're the expert on Ukraine, not me.

DR. HILL: Look --

MR. JORDAN: I'm asking you what you think --

DR. HILL: I am saying that he --

MR. JORDAN: -- why did President Zelensky, the guy who ran on corruption, the single biggest issue, that was his campaign, he wins, he gets elected. He wins the parliamentary races, and he says -- he wins overwhelming in his Presidential election, he says he wants a new Ambassador. I'm just asking you --

DR. HILL: You'll actually see here that there's an error in translation here. So, remember, President Zelensky doesn't really speak English. He speaks some English but not a lot of English. I would like to actually know whether this was, you know, fully interpreted or whether he himself was attempting to speak in English for this because you'll actually see it's quite garbled.

So, if you start to actually look at this paragraph here, and I worked as a translator as well, as an interpreter, just to be clear here, and I do speak Ukrainian, although not as well as I speak Russian, and what he's saying here is he has got confused between the Ambassador to the United States from Ukraine, which could, in actual fact, be his Ambassador, the Ukrainian Ambassador to the United States. So he's getting himself confused in this particular point here.

MR. JORDAN: What was her name -- or his name, excuse me?

DR. HILL: That's Ambassador Chaly. But you see, he says here: It'd be very helpful for the investigation to make sure that we administer justice in our country with regard to the Ambassador to the United States from Ukraine.

So that's already a confusion.

MR. JORDAN: Well, but he didn't say --

DR. HILL: So what I'm saying here is -- he didn't, but he's getting confused.

MR. JORDAN: He said Yovanovitch.

DR. HILL: Yes, but as I say, he's getting confused because he's talking about the Ambassador to the United States from Ukraine.

MR. JORDAN: Okay. Fine.

DR. HILL: So what I'm saying here is, and then he said:

It was great that you were the first one who told me -- the first one who told me -- that she was a bad Ambassador because I agree with you 100 percent. And then he says her attitude to me was far from the best as she admired the previous President and she was on his side.

And this is what we understand as being said by Rudy Giuliani. Because I know from working with Ambassador Yovanovitch that she wasn't personally close to Poroshenko.

MR. JORDAN: Dr. Hill, that is fine.

DR. HILL: And let me just tell you this, there's been two instances -- just let me finish -- there's been two instances in which ambassadors have been refused agrement or been refused consideration by the countries because they've been accused of being close to the previous incumbent President.

This happened with our Ambassador to Georgia, and she'd been previously serving in the Embassy in Georgia under Saakashvili, and the current President said that she was close to him and purported to provide information to me and to others, and this wasn't true. Again, as I've said before, anyone who had worked with President Poroshenko --

MR. JORDAN: Doctor, I'm not asking about Georgia. I'm asking about Ukraine.

DR. HILL: No. But I'm pointing out to you that this is a common refrain that we get from other embassies in other

countries when they don't necessarily, you know, want to either have an ambassador that we're trying to send to them or that they want to curry favor with many of our officials. They will often refer to things like this.

MR. JORDAN: All right. Thank you.

MR. ZELDIN: Dr. Hill, do you have a relationship with former Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland?

DR. HILL: In what way, a relationship?

MR. ZELDIN: Professional.

DR. HILL: A professional relationship, yes, when I was working in the previous capacities as the national intelligence officer. She's a long-term, you know, Foreign Service officer. She'd been the National Security Advisor to Cheney, for example, to Vice President Cheney at that time. I do not have a personal relationship with her beyond the professional relationship.

MR. ZELDIN: Are you aware of her directing anyone at State to talk to Christopher Steele during her tenure as Assistant Secretary?

DR. HILL: I was aware from the exchanges that she asked Kathy Kavalec to talk to him after we had this discussion already, when I suppose Christopher Steele had asked to talk to her, and she asked Kathy Kavalec to talk to him instead.

MR. ZELDIN: In your opinion, would that be proper?

DR. HILL: I wouldn't have talked to him in that

position, but whether it's proper or not, I think, is a judgment for Assistant Secretary Nuland and others.

MR. ZELDIN: This was in the midst of the 2016 election, correct?

DR. HILL: I believe that's the case. I mean, I read about this later, and Kathy Kavalec told me that she'd been instructed to go and talk to him.

MR. ZELDIN: Has anything been stated so far today that you would describe as classified, or would you say everything up to this point is unclassified?

DR. HILL: I don't think that anything that I have said is classified. Or are you referring to just questions that you have asked? I mean, I think that when we've got into -- and this is why, you know, perhaps I've been a little harsher in my responses to the questions about the Politico piece and things about Ukraine because I have a lot of classified information that leads in other directions, and, obviously, I can't share those.

[6:15 p.m.]

MR. ZELDIN: But it's your --

MR. BITAR: Just as a matter of record for the interview, this interview, as we said at the outset, has been conducted at the unclassified level. We have not flagged anything at this moment in time as classified.

DR. HILL: No, and I have confined all my answers to the things that have either been in the public discussion --

MR. BITAR: I just don't want to leave any ambiguity, in light of the question

MR. ZELDIN: That's why I'm asking the question.

So specifically with regards to the first round of questions, you stated something about Venezuela and Russia. Do you recall talking about some type of --

DR. HILL: Yes. I said that the Russians signaled, including publicly through the press and through press articles -- that's the way that they operate -- that they were interested in -- they laid it out in articles, I mean a lot of them in Russian -- but, you know, obviously, your staff and Congressional Research Service can find them for you -- positing that, as the U.S. was so concerned about the Monroe Doctrine and its own backyard, perhaps the U.S. might also be then concerned about developments in Russia's backyard as in Ukraine, making it very obvious that they were trying to set up some kind of let's just say: You stay out

of Ukraine or you move out of Ukraine, you change your position on Ukraine, and, you know, we'll rethink where we are with Venezuela.

And I said that I went to Moscow. It wasn't a classified trip because I was going to meet with Russians. And in the course of those discussions, it was also apparent, including with a Russian think tank and other members, that the Russian Government was interested in having a discussion about Venezuela and Ukraine.

MR. ZELDIN: And just for my own knowledge then, so that's something that it's all been publicly reported, everything's unclassified there?

DR. HILL: It's been reported and that the Russians, the Russians themselves made it very clear in unclassified public settings that they were interested at some point in -- and, in fact, it was even reported in the press that I had gone to Russia, by someone that asked a question of our State Department officials in doing a press briefing: Had I gone to Russia at the time to make a trade between Venezuela and Ukraine? It was asked as a question to Christopher Robinson during a press briefing at the State Department.

MR. ZELDIN: Did you state earlier that there was a nexus between Rudy Giuliani associates and Venezuela?

DR. HILL: I was told that by the directors working on the Western Hemisphere. I didn't have a chance to look into

this in any way. I was told that the same individuals who had been indicted had been interested at different points in energy investments in Venezuela and that this was quite well-known.

MR. ZELDIN: Have you maintained -- after you left the U.S. Government, have you been in contact with any Ukrainian Government officials?

DR. HILL: I have not.

MR. ZELDIN: Have you had contact with any U.S. Government officials sharing any information with you about when Ukraine became aware of a hold on aid?

DR. HILL: I have not. I've only read about it in the paper.

MR. ZELDIN: So the sole source of information that you have with regards to the hold on aid to Ukraine has been based on press reports?

DR. HILL: No. Well, you said about Ukrainian officials, when they knew about when the aid had been put on hold.

MR. ZELDIN: With regard to Ukrainian officials, solely through press reports?

DR. HILL: I only know about that from press reports. When I left, it had just been announced internally, and I was not aware at that point whether the Ukrainians knew about that. So I left on July 19th.

MR. ZELDIN: And you were snorkeling on July 25th?

DR. HILL: I was snorkeling quite a bit in that timeframe, yeah.

MR. ZELDIN: How much time do we have left?

MR. HECK: Three minutes.

MR. ZELDIN: We yield back.

MR. HECK: Turn now to the gentleman from California, Mr. Rouda, who has a couple of questions.

MR. ROUDA: Thank you very much.

Dr. Hill, thank you for a long day of testimony.

MR. GOLDMAN: Mr. Rouda, can you use the microphone?

MR. ROUDA: Just a couple quick questions. You talked a little bit about the aid that was approved in a bipartisan fashion that it is typical for the agencies and departments involved to slow down and move forward, step back as the process goes through for them to get to their final approvals.

If I understood your testimony correctly, it did appear that all approvals had been made at the time that this aid was delayed and that that would be characterized as unusual.

DR. HILL: That is correct.

MR. ROUDA: And equally unusual that the communication from Mulvaney to the respective departments, that there was no specific reason for it. Would you characterize that as unusual as well?

DR. HILL: That is correct.

MR. ROUDA: Thank you. And then I just want to get a little bit of better understanding on the voice memorandum -- the call memorandum, excuse me. And if I understand correctly from your testimony, we have individuals who are repeating exactly what the President of the United States has said as well as what the President of Ukraine has said that's going into voice analytics, and that that is more than one person, is that correct, that's doing that activity?

DR. HILL: I think there may be more than one person at times.

MR. ROUDA: So do we know in this --

DR. HILL: I know -- I personally myself know of one person who usually does this, but there could be two at the same time, particularly if it's, you know, kind of a long call or, you know, maybe one person does one person, one person does another.

MR. ROUDA: So, in this situation, we don't know as we sit here right now whether there was one or more people who --

DR. HILL: I do not know.

MR. ROUDA: But, regardless, it's being dictated into the voice recognition, and then there's a process to go back and check against people's notes to make sure that the memorandum is as close as possible to what they believe they

heard during that call?

DR. HILL: That's right.

MR. ROUDA: And then, once that's completed, various individuals, including members of the White House staff, have the ability to review that memorandum as well and make any additional edits?

DR. HILL: Say again. Members of the --

MR. ROUDA: Members of the White House staff would have the ability to look at that call summary?

DR. HILL: Only the Executive Secretariat would.

MR. ROUDA: Okay, the Executive --

DR. HILL: But usually for punctuation or, you know, kind of style punctuation-related issues.

MR. ROUDA: And is it possible that the memorandum that was circulated could have had redactions from it?

DR. HILL: It's possible, but it doesn't necessarily indicate this in looking at this. This is not inconsistent with other transcripts that I've worked on.

MR. ROUDA: Thank you, Chairman. I yield back.

MR. HECK: Mr. Goldman.

MR. GOLDMAN: Mr. Noble will take it.

BY MR. NOBLE:

Q So I'd like to go back and ask about some more of the meetings on your calendar.

A Sure.

Q Actually, this one is not on your calendar, but the day before the meeting on the 5th that we were talking about, there was a dinner or some kind of celebration hosted by Ambassador Sondland in Brussels to celebrate independence 1 month early. Were you aware of that?

A I was. Yeah, that was in June. And this was the dinner that he had invited President Zelensky to attend.

Q Right. Do you know why he invited President Zelensky?

A Yes. Basically, this was in the course of, you know, the discussions that it would be very difficult for us to necessarily get a high-level meeting scheduled with President Zelensky, you know, immediately after his election.

We'd already talked at great length about, you know, kind of all the back-and-forth about what we were going to do about trying to have a Presidential meeting or a meeting with the Vice President.

And the Germans and the French and others were already inviting President Zelensky to visit. And Ambassador Sondland, what was traditionally -- well, I guess the United States Embassy always traditionally has a July Fourth party. For whatever reason, Ambassador Sondland was going to have his a month early.

You know, it was within the respectable period after the election of President Zelensky. We all wanted to have a

touch of some description at a high level with him, something that would, you know, show that the United States was paying, you know, attention to him. And Gordon Sondland came up with that idea and, in fact, we all supported it.

Q Who else attended the dinner, do you know, on the U.S. side?

A I never saw a full invitation list. I mean, I read that Jay Leno was there, which was quite interesting and I guess makes sense. He's one comedian, you know, and another. And I do know that Jared Kushner was there. There was even a discussion about that because he was going to Europe for other business. And it was discussed that this would be a signaling, you know, on the part of the White House that, you know, Zelensky was being treated seriously by having a member of the President's family and also another senior White House official attending that dinner. So we did not see this as untoward in any way.

Q Did you get a readout from the meeting?

A I did not get a readout. I mean, this was being billed more as something social, and it was to introduce Zelensky to the European Diplomatic Corps and other European heads of state. And I believe that he -- President Zelensky had some other meetings around that with European officials.

Q Okay. On page 42, on June 13, you had a meeting with Ambassador Volker and Ambassador Bolton.

A Yes.

Q Do you recall what that meeting was about on the 13th?

A Yes. That meeting was, again, looking forward to where we were going to try to go with Ukrainian policy, whether there was going to be any hope of having the Russians revisit some kind of process again with Ambassador Volker.

I mean, at this point, he's been waiting for some response from Sokov as to whether he's intending to meet with him again and whether we should anticipate the Russians doing anything before the Rada, the parliamentary elections. And he was relating to Ambassador Bolton, you know, all of his efforts to talk to the Europeans and to others at that time.

Q Did you recall that that, on June 13th, that was the same day that President Trump told George Stephanopoulos in an interview that he'd be willing to accept dirt from a foreign government on a political opponent?

A I did not make that connection. No, I did not recall that.

Q So you didn't discuss that with Ambassador Volker --

A No.

Q -- and Ambassador Bolton?

Did you ever discuss that statement by the President with Ambassador Bolton?

A I did not, no.

Q Did that raise any concerns for you when you heard the President say that?

A I mean, it raised general concerns about, you know, what does that mean? I mean, obviously, you know, I'm sure, based on my responses to some of these questions, you can be sure I don't approve of that kind of thing because, again, this is where we've all got ourselves into a predicament.

Q And did you discuss that concern with anyone else at the NSC?

A I did not.

Q On the next page, on the 17th, you met with General Kellogg about Ukraine.

A Yes.

Q Do you recall what that meeting was about?

A Yes. This was, again, you know, following up with him on my previous concerns and also trying to check to see if there was any more chance that perhaps the Vice President might consider, you know, going to Ukraine at some point in the summer.

Q And the next day you met with Ambassador Sondland?

A That is correct. That was the day that I was told by Ambassador Sondland that he was in charge of Ukraine.

Q Okay. We've gone over that. Skipping forward to the 3rd of July, it's on page 45, you had a meeting with

Michael Ellis and John Eisenberg, and it looks like you handwrote this transition and question mark?

A Yes, because I think that was my first initial transition meeting, and I just wanted to, you know, kind of double-check for myself because, you know, this is already in the month that I'm leaving, and there was an awful lot of things I had to make sure that I was complying with. I was also asking them, were there any of the issues that we'd all worked on together that I should specifically think about handing off to others, other individuals.

Q This was a week before the meeting on July 10th that we talked about earlier where Sondland blurted out about pushing --

A That is correct. And that hadn't -- actually hadn't been fully scheduled at that particular time. We were working on having Oleksandr Danylyuk and Andrey Yermak come, but we didn't at that moment actually know that Ambassador Sondland and Ambassador Volker were going to participate as well.

And in actual fact, they weren't on the initial list to participate because I'll just say it was actually highly unusual for both of them to be at a meeting with a senior Ukrainian official that was with Ambassador Bolton. I mean, the normal thing would have been to have Ambassador Volker have his own meetings with them at State Department, but

Ambassador Sondland was pretty insistent on getting into the meeting along with Ambassador Volker.

Q Was he admitted to the meeting over the objection of --

A And then that's actually when we also determined that Secretary Perry should be there as well, because obviously we were having Ambassador Volker and Ambassador Sondland, and Secretary Perry was having -- you know, basically, was really in the process of initiating work on the Ukrainian energy sector. Then, if we were going to have the two of them, we should then have Secretary Perry as well and cover the whole range of issues. It also seemed, to be frank, to be an opportunity for coordination that we obviously sorely needed at that point.

Q Fair enough. The May 20th inauguration, the U.S. delegation, its composition, was there ever any debate about whether or not Ambassador Sondland should attend the inauguration?

A Yes. He wasn't on our initial list.

Q Okay. How did he --

A We were trying to determine -- and the Chief of Staff's Office kept putting him back on. And Ambassador Sondland, in any case, said he was going.

Q Mick Mulvaney's office kept putting him back on?

A That's right.

Q So did Ambassador Bolton essentially get overruled?

A Essentially. I mean, that actually is not uncommon for us to put forward a list and then others to put forward lists. The State Department often puts lists forward of people that they want to be attending as well. And Ambassador Sondland also got the State Department, Lisa Kenna, who is the Executive Secretary at the State Department, to make it clear that he should attend.

Q What do you mean, he got Lisa Kenna to make it clear that he should attend?

A He contacted me when he wasn't on the list that Ambassador Bolton had put forward and said he wasn't on the list and that he would be contacting Lisa Kenna to write to the NSC to make sure that he was on the list. And he wanted to know why he wasn't on the list. And I related to him that the list had been drawn up according to people who were responsible for, you know, Ukrainian affairs.

This is before -- remember, this is May 20th, before he's announced to me that he's in charge of Ukraine on June 18th -- and that there was, you know, kind of no reason to see at that point why he should be going to the Presidential inauguration of the Ukrainian President as Ambassador to EU. It was just simply -- as simple as that.

And he said that he had been instructed by the State Department and that he would have Ulrich Brechbuhl, you know,

if necessary, call, but he was going to have Lisa Kenna send a note to the Executive Secretariat.

Q Of the National Security Council?

A Of the National Security Council.

Q Do you know whether she sent that note?

A I believe she did. We'd also invited quite a lot of people. I think, you know, Senator Portman as well as Senator Johnson and a range of other people. But the scheduling was so tight that very few people were able to come.

Q Was Sondland, Ambassador Sondland originally on the list of attendees for the July 10th meeting?

A No. Initially -- I mean, this is a meeting that was requested with Ambassador Bolton, and they asked if they could attend, Ambassador Sondland and Kurt Volker. Then we decided to -- that we should also have Secretary Perry come.

Q Who did they ask to attend, Ambassador Bolton? Whose permission did they have to get?

A They went through Ambassador Bolton's office. And we were also then asked to push forward if they wanted to attend. So we had some back-and-forth with Ambassador Bolton about this. Because, again, in the spirit of coordination at this particular juncture, it seemed like actually a good thing to do.

Q Okay. We may have talked about this one, so

forgive me, but on page 46, there was a meeting with George Kent --

A Yes.

Q -- on Monday, July 8th. What was that about?

A That was basically in the course of my -- you know, I mentioned before I was trying to do handover meetings. And I wanted to fill in DAS Kent about the -- Deputy Assistant Secretary Kent -- about the fact that we were working very closely with Secretary Perry on trying to promote energy-related issues. And given his portfolio, I asked him if he would take the lead in making sure that there was full coordination with Secretary Perry on the energy issues.

Q Okay. On page 47, we may have talked about this one as well, July 19th, your meeting with Ambassador Taylor --

A Yes.

Q -- about Ukraine. Was that another -- that was a transition meeting?

A It was a secure phone call with him.

Q Okay.

A He wasn't at this point in -- he was actually in Kyiv. This was actually a secure phone call.

Q And is this the conversation you had where you went through the laundry list of concerns with him?

A That is correct.

Q Okay.

A And this was because, you know, obviously, the previous week we had, you know, had this -- these episodes, and I hadn't been able to talk to him since. I was trying to schedule a call with him.

And as you can see, I've also got Phil Reeker. We had lunch and I basically was trying to hand off. It wasn't just, again, about Ukraine in his case. All these issues that I was worried were loose threads that needed to be wrapped up, and I was worried there wouldn't be coordination on.

Q Got it.

A And then, as you can see here, Mr. Danylyuk called me as well, because he was still worried about not having reached a conclusion on who he should engage with to work on the National Security Council reform in Ukraine. And I suggested to him again that he work with Deputy Assistant Secretary Taylor -- Kent and also with Ambassador Taylor, because that would be appropriate, because normally the State Department carries out this kind of technical assistance or advisory role. And we'd already done this, of course, with the Ukrainian military, with General Abizaid and also with Keith Dayton.

Q Did Danylyuk raise anything about the -- any concern about setting up a meeting between President Zelensky

and President Trump?

A He kept expressing concern that there was no sign of the meeting. And I assured him that Ambassador Bolton was treating it seriously and that we would do it, you know, when it was appropriate in terms of the schedule. I also stressed again that, at this juncture, we needed to wait for -- you know, as I've said to our colleagues, that we needed to wait for the Rada elections and then to see about the formation of the government.

Q Which were scheduled for the following week at that point?

A The following week, correct.

Q Okay. And then, on July 23rd, the next page, there's a Ukraine PCC meeting?

A Yes.

Q I take it you did not attend that meeting?

A I did not. And I actually didn't attend the meeting that's also on the calendar for the 18th, because I'd already handed over to Tim Morrison. The last series of meetings that I went to in my formal capacity were on the 15th, the redacted meetings.

And after that, we'd agreed with Ambassador Bolton and Charlie Kupperman that, you know, because of the short nature of the -- that we should hand over to Tim. But Tim had been traveling in this period. He did return on the Thursday, you

know. And then the point was to have this meeting on the Tuesday, which was actually supposed to be where they started to discuss what was going on with the hold on the military assistance.

Q Did Mr. Morrison, do you know, did he attend that meeting on the 18th, or was he still traveling?

A I would have to check. He might have -- I remember he came back I think on the Thursday, but he might have missed the meeting. But this, looking at this, you know, often when it says Vindman, this is a meeting that is being held at the director level, which could have been, you know, kind of preparing for the larger meeting on the Tuesday, which Tim Morrison in that new role would have been --

Q Would have attended?

A That's right.

Q Okay. That's it on the calendar. Thank you.

MR. GOLDMAN: Mr. Jordan, with your consent, would you mind if I took over this round, even though ordinarily we understand the rules are that counsel, just since we don't have a time limit?

MR. JORDAN: Are you guys planning on using all 45?

MR. GOLDMAN: I don't know.

MR. JORDAN: Go ahead.

MR. GOLDMAN: Thank you.

BY MR. GOLDMAN:

Q Briefly, you mentioned earlier Dmytro Firtash. I don't want to get into too much detail about him. But I'm curious whether you know, whether you learned at any point whether Parnas and Fruman had any association with Firtash?

A I did not learn that, no.

Q And do you know whether Rudy Giuliani had any connection to Firtash?

A I also do not know that.

Q Do you know who represents Firtash in his extradition to the United States?

A I actually didn't know that either. Who was it? Do we know that?

Q I mean, the public reporting right now is that it's Joe diGenova and Victoria Toensing.

A I see. No, I don't know either of those names. I mean, all of my knowledge of Firtash comes from my time when I was at the DNI and then, you know, subsequently, to some degree, when I was in the think tank world because, of course, his role in RosUkrEnergo and the, you know, various middleman dealings between the Russian and Ukrainian energy sectors was very well-known. But he didn't really come onto the radar screen very much in my time in the administration.

Q Are you familiar -- I'm going to switch gears now to Naftogaz again. Are you familiar with the public reporting that Secretary Perry tried to convince Naftogaz to

change members of their board?

A I was not familiar in the way that it's been publicly reported. I know that, you know, we were focusing on Naftogaz. Secretary Perry hadn't opposed Amos Hochstein being on the board initially, but there was definitely a discussion about how was Naftogaz going to be moving forward into the future. And part of that would have required probably getting, you know, kind of a pretty robust oversight board. And there were concerns expressed to me by the Naftogaz executives when they came to visit that they were under a lot of pressure at that particular point.

Q Pressure from whom?

A They did mention to me that there was pressure coming from Ukrainian Americans. They didn't get into any details because they clearly felt uncomfortable about this. But one of the women on the board who actually at that point was potentially slated to be Deputy Foreign Minister told me that it was coming from these Ukrainian Americans who were dealing with Giuliani.

Q Fruman and Parnas?

A That's exactly the case, yes.

Q Did you ever become aware of a memo or an open letter written by Dale Perry?

A No. I don't know who that is.

Q Did you ever come to learn whether there was a

meeting in March of this year in Houston between an executive on Naftogaz, with Naftogaz, Andrey Favorov, and Parnas and Fruman?

A I did not know, but this could be what they were referring to, because it's after that time when they came in to see me. And this is around the time when Amos Hochstein came in and said the Naftogaz people being on the board are coming under an awful lot of pressure.

Q So just one last little bit on this. What was the rationale, that they would need a stronger board, you said, or -- I don't want to -- I don't know that that was your exact terminology, but --

A Well, I mean, that was part of the discussion about how Naftogaz was going to become self-sufficient. They had debt issues. This is, you know, kind of a company that really needed an overhaul, and although the people who had been involved there had, you know, been trying to be very professional -- this is, you know, a far cry from, you know, some of the days of Russian and Ukrainian energy interactions -- there's obviously still a lot of work to be done.

I also just want to reiterate here that, as the National Security Council, you know, we weren't having a major role in a lot of these issues. I mean, we were really trying at that point, you know, at the direction of Ambassador Bolton and others, beginning back at the beginning of the

administration, to play more of a coordinating role. And in terms of the energy sector reform, this was really Department of Energy in conjunction with the State Department.

So, when people were approaching me with these concerns, I was referring them back at all times. Hence, why I was having regular consultations with Deputy Assistant Secretary Kent and also to then, now Charge Ambassador Taylor in Kyiv, because that would be the appropriate place for them to follow up. There wasn't any expectation, even on the National Security Council reform, that we would play some kind of meaningful role in that.

MR. HECK: Dr. Hill, I have to step out. I'm going to make every effort to return, but in the event that I am not able to return before you conclude, which I think everybody is aspiring to at this point, it is important to me that I express my personal appreciation for your presence here today.

Indeed, I would say that, in the years that I've been in the Congress, I've never seen anybody testify for 9 straight hours and have every bit as much energy and recall in the ninth hour as they did in the first hour. And I'm very, very grateful to you for your presence today and for your considerable public service.

DR. HILL: Thank you, sir. Thank you.

BY MR. GOLDMAN:

Q Did you understand how the Naftogaz executives could feel pressure from two businessmen, Parnas and Fruman, in such a meaningful way?

A Well, I think there were lots of efforts in the Ukrainian energy sector, as in the Russian energy sector at many times, to, you know, move away from, you know, the sort of state supervision, to hive off parts of different companies.

In my previous guise in the think tank world, I've written a lot of articles and publications on the energy sector. And when I was at the DNI, I was involved very heavily in analysis of the energy sector in Ukraine and in Russia and elsewhere. This was, you know, an area, obviously, there's a lot of money to be made.

And, you know, as you know, in the Russian energy sector, a lot of the people who are in charge of that sector are very close to President Putin. He himself has taken a personal interest in this.

And RosUkrEnergo, Mr. Firtash and others, all of the oligarchs involved in these energy sectors, have been close one way or another to the Kremlin, because, in many respects, the Ukrainian energy sector is dependent on Russian energy, both as a transit route to the rest of Europe and also because an awful lot of the energy exploitation was taking place in areas close to Russia, and at different points,

Russians were invested in energy sector development.

And, of course, after the annexation of Crimea, a number of potentially promising Ukrainian gas and oil fields were actually annexed by the Russians as well.

So, you know, this is a kind of fairly complicated procedure, and there's a lot of opportunity for a number of individuals, you know, kind of be they Ukrainian American businesspeople or people who have been -- you know, Western businesspeople who have been involved in the energy sector, to get involved in investments there.

I also came across, I just have to say, people who were not Ukrainian American but Americans who I was also wondering what they were up to, in terms of their own interest in the energy sector.

Q Right. But that doesn't necessarily answer the question as to how two businessmen from Florida could make the Naftogaz executives feel significant pressure.

A Their connections. The connections that they were either imputing or purporting in the context of these meetings.

Q The connections to whom?

A To Rudy Giuliani, and through that by, you know, usurpation, I presume, of some kind of Presidential authority, or purporting to be doing this on the kind of behalf of, in some way, of Rudy Giuliani.

Q Was it not the case that Naftogaz had significantly reduced its dependence on Russia?

A It had, but there's still, you know, kind of a way to go. And they were also having financial problems at this particular juncture, and they were hoping that the United States and other international entities would help them with funds that they needed, both for restructuring but also for purchases of gas, you know, for the winter.

Q So do you believe that two oil and gas executives or finance executives from Texas was the solution to revamping the board?

A I am not quite sure who you're talking about there, again.

Q I'm sorry. That was the public reporting.

A Oh, I see.

Q That Secretary Perry was advocating for --

A I wasn't familiar at all with who Secretary Perry and others might be advocating. I'm just relating that the Naftogaz executives told me that they felt under pressure. And, again, I referred them to the State Department and to, you know, obviously, our colleagues at Department of Energy. And I did talk to Ambassador Taylor, Deputy Assistant Secretary Kent, and also Phil Reeker about this.

Q Because it wouldn't necessarily be your area of focus?

A Correct.

Q Understood. I have a few final questions a little bit later, but I'm going to turn it over to Mr. Raskin to see if he has any questions.

MR. RASKIN: Thank you very much, Dr. Hill. Thank you for your remarkable service to our country. And speaking as one Member, I can say I'm extremely proud of you, especially because you're my constituent. And thank you for the way you've conducted yourself through this very difficult process as well.

One of the reasons that you've taken umbrage at being led down a path which looks like the conspiracy theory that it was Ukraine and not Russia that interfered in our election in 2016 is that you said that it undermines our capacity to respond to 2020 properly, to understand what's happening or what's about to happen in 2020.

And I wonder if you would expound upon that a little bit. What is about to happen, best you can tell, in terms of Russian interference in our current Presidential election?

DR. HILL: I think, as we have gone on over the past, you know, 2 and a half years, and since the whole proceedings and the Mueller report, you know, in terms of press reporting and more in-depth investigations by social media, we realize, you know, how sophisticated and how extensive the Russian interference has been.

But the Russians, you know, can't basically exploit cleavages if there are not cleavages. The Russian can't exploit corruption if there's not corruption. They can't exploit alternative narratives if those alternative narratives are not out there and getting credence. What the Russians do is they exploit things that already exist.

And if you look at actually how President Putin himself has responded to what he fears would be our, or other interference in his elections, you can see, you know, what he has done. He's made it impossible to have foreign money into his elections. He's cut down NGOs and other foreign entities, you know, from everything from Transparency International to IRI and NDI and other entities.

He has basically designated anyone with any kind of foreign experience as a fifth column and as a traitor to the country. He has gone after people like Alexei Navalny and Vladimir Kara-Murza, both people who you here as Members of Congress know -- Vladimir Kara-Murza has been here and met with congressional staff -- as stooges of the West and as people who are being played.

And, also, he has, you know, created a good degree of plausible deniability by sending out patriotic hackers to -- from, you know, for example, Mr. Prigozhin, his, you know, erstwhile cook or kind of catering oligarch, who has been paying for and sponsoring the IRA, the Internet Research

Agency, that has been basically doing the same kind of research on all of our campaigns and all of our individuals, to dig up dirt and to, in fact, exploit any weakness in our system and to throw back all kinds of information on our candidates.

So the more that we denigrate ourselves, the more that we end up in across-the-aisle screaming matches, the more dirt that we put out on our own political candidates in the course of our own race, the more that the Russians will use that to amplify this.

And I think it's been very well documented right now how they've tried to exploit race. They've tried to exploit religious differences. And if you look very carefully at what Putin does, he never does anything like this in his own establishment. Putin presents himself as the President to everybody. He never singles anybody out on the basis of their race or their religion or their ethnic background. He lets other people do that, and he plays with it, but he has basically harnessed -- he's the first populist President, and he has harnessed that populism very effectively.

And I made a mistake when I did my research on Putin in the book that I wrote, because I actually wrote that he doesn't really fully understand our system and how it operates. I meant that from a positive point of view. But my mistake was in not fully understanding that he understands

all the negative aspects of how our system works, and he's playing that right back at us.

MR. RASKIN: He understands the weaknesses?

DR. HILL: Correct. And the more divisive our politics are, the more that he can pick partisan differences apart and encourage people to go out and exploit that, the more vulnerable that we are.

MR. RASKIN: So partisan rancor and division is one of the weaknesses he's exploited, but you also said that corruption is our Achilles' heel. And I don't know whether you were thinking specifically about Mr. Parnas and Mr. Fruman, but --

DR. HILL: I was.

MR. RASKIN: You were -- will you explain --

DR. HILL: Because the failure of imagination for myself, again, in writing this book -- and I've forced Lee to buy a copy now -- is if you read the epilogue and, you know, the final, you know, chapter -- and I'd be happy to send everybody, you know, this -- is basically Putin was a case officer in the KGB. He has said many times that his specialty is working with people, which means manipulating people, blackmailing people, extorting people. He looks at people's vulnerabilities.

And this is why I was concerned about the Steele report because that is a vulnerability. Christopher Steele going

out and looking for information. He's obviously out there soliciting information. What a great opportunity to, basically, you know, present him with information that he's looking for that can be couched some truth and some disinformation.

So he's looking out there for every opening that he can find, basically, and somebody's vulnerability to turn that against them. That's exactly what a case officer does. They get a weakness, and they blackmail their assets. And Putin will target world leaders and other officials like this. He tries to target everybody.

So a story from when I was working on the book, I was also looking for information for the book to write about Putin. And my phone was hacked repeatedly, and the Brookings system was hacked repeatedly. And at one point, it was clearly obvious that someone had exfiltrated out my draft chapters. I mean, you know, they were in draft form.

And then, mysteriously, after this I started to get emails from people who purported to have met me at different points in my career, people I kind of vaguely remember. I'd look online, and there would be these, you know, LinkedIn pages or there might be, you know, something I could find out some information for them. And they'd start offering me information, you know, that somehow purported to, strangely enough, some of the chapters that I was actually working on.

And when I would go to meetings in Russia, people would basically, you know -- so that I was being played, or they were attempting to play me as well. And I've seen this time and time again.

So the more that people are looking for business opportunities, the more that they're doing something that is illegal or certainly shady and nefarious, the more that Putin can step forward and the people around him to exploit this.

And you can see this time and time again in every one of the former Soviet republics and really across Europe as well. They've given money to political parties, to all kinds of political operatives, or sometimes they've just simply given access to people.

MR. RASKIN: The firing or the recall of Ambassador Yovanovitch followed upon a sequence of events that looks to me very much like a political hit and propaganda, that there was a campaign out to get her. Please give me your sense of if I'm right about that. And have you ever seen an Ambassador removed in similar circumstances before in your career?

DR. HILL: Well, that's what I said, that I believe as well that that was also a political hit on her. And I mentioned in reference to the question about do I know Kathy Kavalec that I believe that there was a hit done on her as well by the Albanian Democrats, who picked up on information,

including the fact that she'd been mentioned in these exchanges with Bruce Ohr and Toria Nuland on Chris Steele, and used that to denounce her and to basically force the State Department to pull back her name. She was already in Albanian language training, which mustn't have been a lot of fun, I can imagine, but she was already well progressed on this. And she's now going out to have some role in the OSCE.

And there was also something similar done to our Ambassador-designate, Bridget Brink, to Georgia by the Georgians, also, you know, purporting to create a dossier and material.

And I was also -- Connie Mack, not the Congressman but his son, went to Vice President Pence's staff and asked for me being removed, providing as an exhibit the InfoWars and all the other information, saying that I was a Soros mole in the White House.

MR. RASKIN: In answer to a kind of all's well that ends well suggestion about this situation, you said, in fact, the U.S.-Ukraine relationship is now covered in scandal.

I wonder to what extent is the Ukrainian Government still looking to see how it should respond to the request for political dirt on the Bidens. Is that story over, or are they still waiting to see what happens in the United States now?

DR. HILL: I'm sure they are still waiting to see how

that happens. But I'm sure that they also want to find out for themselves if there's any, you know, kind of thing there that they should be scared about or concerned about in any way. Not scared, let's just say concerned about.

And I was struck by the fact that their prosecutor announced that they were, you know, reviewing all of this again. And I think if I were President Zelensky and his new team, having been unfamiliar in actual fact with what was going on before -- remember, President Zelensky was engaged in making, you know, programs and playing a President on television. He wouldn't necessarily be familiar with all of this as well. So it's not actually, you know, completely ridiculous that he would actually be asking to have some investigations for his own purposes to see, you know, quite what has transpired here.

MR. RASKIN: Finally, the inspector general of the Department of State gave us a package, essentially, of propaganda materials and conspiracy theory, which I think Rudy Giuliani took credit for later. You've emphasized a lot the role that propaganda has played in attacking certain people and advancing this agenda in Ukraine, and I just wonder if you would expound generally on this.

Do you think we're in a period where political propaganda is playing a very seriously role in undermining the legitimacy of government, undermining the legitimacy of

public officials, and what are your thoughts about what needs to be done about that?

DR. HILL: Well, I do. Look, I mean the issue -- I mean, this is, you know, obviously a big debate that we're having nationally about campaign finance and about the role of political action committees.

But what President Putin and others have seen -- and this gets back, you know, to be fair to you and your kind of question here about, you know, individual efforts by Ukrainian Americans or anybody to, you know, kind of get into campaigns, is they see an opportunity through the existence of these kinds of entities to play out something similar themselves.

I've often described Vladimir Putin as heading up a Super PAC, but he's not an American citizen. It's not part of a legitimate campaign, and it's not part of our democracy. But what he's doing is using exactly the same tactics and using, in fact, the campaign research that we all produce as part of our, you know, political efforts, to turn it right back at us. So that is, again, exactly the kind of actions that people like Putin take.

So the only way that we can keep the Russians out of our politics is to clean up our own act.

MR. RASKIN: Ma'am, we don't allow our own government to spend money on our politics. Why should we allow other

people's governments to spend money on our politics?

DR. HILL: That's exactly right. That's the kind of question, that's why I was getting so testy. You know, and I apologize again for getting a bit testy. I've got a bit of a headache now. You know, kind of a long day here.

But that's the kind of point that I am trying to get across here, that, you know, these are, you know, as you rightly point out, foreign governments, be they Ukrainian or Russian or others. The scale of what the Russians have done, they've also opened it up for the Chinese. And when President Pence said that the Chinese make the Russians look like junior varsity and he got pooh-poohed somewhat, you know, out in the press on that, he was absolutely right.

The biggest thing that I was most disturbed about in the course of my work is really the scale of Chinese efforts. The Chinese have a lot of money. They've infiltrated all of our universities. They've infiltrated a lot of our companies. And we can't get too carried away and, you know, start with a mass hysteria about China. But I was completely shocked, frankly, when former Senator Lieberman was basically signed up to represent a Chinese company at this particular juncture.

We should all be extraordinarily careful about our former senior officials and others going on to foreign companies of this nature. It's one thing to go and work with

American companies or allied companies, the Netherlands and Norway, Sweden, you know, the United Kingdom, but it's another entirely when we know that a country has some adversarial intent towards us, and also from anyone who has had a security clearance to go into lobbying efforts.

And I was deeply disturbed to find out that my resume could be put in a filing of a FARA report by Connie Mack and could be used as an exhibit to try to create a case against me to ask the Vice President and his staff to have me fired for being a Soros mole in the White House. I mean, they laughed him out of a hearing and, you know, basically didn't listen to this, but this was, unfortunately, the kind of actions that were taken against Masha Yovanovitch. And if you also see with Kathy Kavalec, the Albanian Democratic Party, where they took on an advocacy group and put out her information, also in a FARA.

So we have permitted open season on our diplomats, and it could happen to anybody. It doesn't matter whether they're a noncareer official. It happened, rather disturbingly to me, to rather a lot of women, but it can happen to any political person as well. Any one of us here could be subject to this kind of claims and these kinds of attacks, any single person who gets crosswise with any of these individuals or any of these countries, if they think that any of us are in the way. And I've been extraordinarily

concerned about this.

And, again, that's the only reason that, you know -- again, Mr. Castor, I don't mean to jump down your throat, but I'm really worried about this. And, you know, one of the reasons that I actually decided that I wanted to also come out of the administration during the campaign was to be able to speak about this publicly.

Now, in the case of right now, I think that, you know, what you're all doing here -- I know that there is debate about this -- is actually very important to get to the bottom of what has really been happening. If nothing else, we should all agree that what happened to Ambassador Yovanovitch is unacceptable, and we should not be letting this happen to our public servants across the board because it could happen to congressional staff. It could happen to absolutely everybody.

And I will, you know, try to, as I said, keep my head down and, you know, try to keep out of the public spotlight while this process is underway because I want to see that it's done in as nonpartisan and as serious a way as possible, but I eventually want to be able to speak out against this kind of activity.

I'm not a Russia hawk. What I am is a critic of the way that this government, led by a KGB former case officer who specializes in manipulating people's vulnerabilities and

exploiting corruption -- it's what Putin did in the 1970s, when he joined the KGB in Leningrad and St. Petersburg. They went after American businessmen and set up sting operations. He's been targeting the business community.

I firmly believe he was also targeting President Trump, and he was targeting all of the other campaigns as well. And I think that that was the mistake when the 2016 investigations were launched, not to take it from the point of view what Russia was doing to target Americans, no matter who they were in the system.

MR. RASKIN: Based on what you just said, one final question. Why do you believe that Putin was targeting Donald Trump from his days as a businessman?

DR. HILL: Because that's exactly what President Putin and others were doing. Again, he was part of a directorate in the KGB in Leningrad. That's what they did exclusively was targeting businessmen.

And as a result of that work that he had there, he was then the deputy mayor in St. Petersburg under Anatoly Sobchak back in the period when, actually, Lee and I were working together for [redacted], and we had delegations coming over from Sobchak. As deputy mayor, he was in charge of the liaison with all of the businesses in Leningrad and St. Petersburg. And that was filthy, the politics there at that particular juncture, as we recall.

BY MR. GOLDMAN:

Q We just have a couple minutes in this round, and, unfortunately, we are going to need to go to another round on our end, but it won't be a full round. But I do just want to circle back to one thing. You've said earlier today that you have -- you are aware of no credible evidence that Ukraine was involved at all in the 2016 --

A As the Ukrainian Government.

Q The Ukrainian Government, right. And are you aware of any evidence that Vice President Joe Biden in any way acted inappropriately while he was Vice President in connection --

A I'm not.

Q -- to Ukraine?

A I'm not.

Q So you're not actually endorsing the idea of reopening these investigations by the Ukrainian Government. Is that right?

A As a personal endorsement? I think if the Ukrainian Government wants themselves to figure out -- this is a new government -- wants to figure out, you know, what may have happened for their own informational purposes, they're perfectly within their rights to do that.

Q So are you referring then to sort of a review of what has happened in the past, or are you talking about

actually reopening this investigation?

A I think what their prosecutor has announced is somewhat ambiguous. He has said that they are going to look into this. He didn't say very specifically in the direction that they're going.

Q But you're not aware, at least, of any evidence that either of --

A I am not.

Q -- these investigations should --

And so whether or not they want to look into Burisma for their own purposes, in terms of any political investigations related to U.S. politics, you're not suggesting that that's something that they should do?

A I am not suggesting that, no.

MR. GOLDMAN: All right. I will yield to the minority.

MR. CASTOR: I've got a couple questions.

MR. JORDAN: Can I go first then?

MR. CASTOR: Sure.

MR. JORDAN: So, Dr. Hill, you said that the Russians and particularly Putin uses propaganda to go after people and it could happen to anyone. They can target --

DR. HILL: Yes, and also kompromat, which is, you know, basically, you know, what the Steele dossier was, which was, you know, kind of compromising information on individuals.

MR. JORDAN: And that is my question. Did it happen to

the President in 2016, 2017?

DR. HILL: I think that there's a good chance that was the case and that, you know -- and, again, compromising material was being collected on a whole range of individuals. And it was most definitely being collected on Secretary, former First Lady and Senator Clinton as well.

And I did, in the course of public speaking at the time, you know, point this out, that we should be investigating, you know, what the Russians were trying to do against all of our political candidates.

MR. JORDAN: And the material that was used against the President, you don't think that in any way was accurate? You think it was this propaganda, this kompromat, this -- that was contained in the now somewhat famous Steele dossier?

DR. HILL: I said that I wasn't in a position to assess that, obviously, from my private capacity then. But I said that I felt that it also be looked at and investigated, the kind of information that was being collected.

Now, I believe that the Mueller report and Mr. Mueller and his team did look at some of this information. But, again, they were looking at, you know, information in a more general sense. I would have much preferred to see, from my own perspective, the Mueller report focusing at the outset on what was it that the Russians were doing and then, as the course of that, following the investigatory leads, which, you

know, they did in any case, to find out what doors were opened for them into our political system.

I think they would have still, to be quite frank, come down where they did on Mr. Manafort, because, again, these are all back doors, of people who are doing, you know, political dealings in other countries of the nature that he was -- that open up the door for Russians and others to step in.

MR. JORDAN: You just -- you know, and I get it. You were very emphatic about this could happen to anyone, this propaganda machine that Russia engages in using. And then in the, I think, earlier rounds and based on the story that was written about you last month, you said you believe Steele could have been played by the Russians.

And it seems to me like if we're talking about propaganda being used to target a political figure, there is probably no bigger, better example than what happened with the dossier targeting the President of the United States. There's no bigger political figure anywhere. So that seems to me to be example number one.

DR. HILL: At that point, though, remember he was a candidate, as was Secretary Clinton, to be the President. This was before the election when this dossier was being produced.

MR. JORDAN: I understand.

DR. HILL: There was also information on other candidates as well, you know, who weren't ultimately selected to be, you know, the two Presidential candidates. So, again, I just want to reiterate I think the Russians were targeting everybody, and they were trying to get as much information as possible -- and what --

MR. JORDAN: Fair enough, but we --

DR. HILL: What the Russians do, again, is they get information that's not just plausible but often is factual. That's the way that they operate with a story. And then they will sprinkle into that disinformation.

MR. JORDAN: Fair enough. But the fact that the dossier was used to go after the individual who won the election, now President, seems to me to be example number one.

DR. HILL: Well, it was done before he was elected as President.

MR. JORDAN: No, I understand.

DR. HILL: But I think it's also -- there are two examples. Also, what the Russians did to target Secretary Clinton.

MR. JORDAN: Thank you.

DR. HILL: So I think that both of those issues are the case. And, again, that's what I would like to flag to make sure that we're all aware that everyone is a target because their goal was to discredit the Presidency. Whoever was

elected President, they wanted to weaken them. So, if Secretary Clinton had won, there would have been a cloud over her at this time if she was President Clinton. There's been a cloud over President Trump since the beginning of his Presidency, and I think that's exactly what the Russians intended.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q The documents that Mr. Patel purportedly gave to the President, I can't remember whether you --

A I didn't know what they were.

Q There was never closure on that?

A There was no closure on that.

Q And you learned that information from, was it staff in the Executive --

A It was staff in Exec Sec.

Q It wasn't the Exec Sec?

A It was not. No, I just simply went down to pick up something else. I would often go over myself because I was worried about, you know, kind of the, you know, the command and control of valuable documents if I needed something to get signed, and I would, you know, kind of take it back, you know. And often, when I was going over to see Ambassador Bolton, so I just popped in, basically, to pick up a document that I needed, and that was when -- it was just an aside. They assumed that I knew.

Q And my colleague David Brewer has a quick question as well.

A Sure.

BY MR. BREWER:

Q Dr. Hill, thanks for your patience today. Following up on Mr. Castor's line of questioning, how many times during your tenure at NSC did you communicate with Mr. Patel, by email or by phone?

A I didn't communicate with him at all.

Q Okay.

A He was on a distro list at one point for the -- just some of the Ukraine issues, but he was on multiple distro lists because he was in the International Organizations. So the U.N. and other International Organizations fell under his purview, as far as I understood.

Again, to be honest, I didn't really know him at all. I knew what he looked like. I knew his name. And he'd sat in some meetings. I had no reason up until that point, really, to think that I needed to know him. And he never introduced himself to me.

Q I understand. Ma'am, have you ever spoken with any members of the media about Mr. Patel?

A I have not.

Q Ma'am, today at 1:16, Manu Raju, who I understand is a reporter for CNN --

A Who?
Q Manu Raju.
A I don't know who that is. Manu Raju?
Q He's a reporter, I understand, from CNN. He tweeted some substance of your testimony here today.
A I don't know how that was possible because I've been in here with you the whole time.
Q That's what I was going to ask you. Have you spoken --
A There's been lots of people in and out, so I suppose you should ask your colleagues if somebody's been talking to CNN.
Q So, just for the record, you have not spoken to Manu Raju since you've been here today?
A I have not had my telephone. I have been in your full -- and I have not met with Manu Raju in the bathroom here. And I think you can attest you saw me in the bathroom. And they have had full custody of me at all times.
Q And just one last question, ma'am: Have you directed anyone on your behalf to speak with Mr. Raju about your testimony?
A No. I don't know who Mr. Raju is.
Q Thank you.
A And I also -- as you know, I didn't have a written testimony, and I have just been subject to your questions,

and I did not know what you were going to ask me.

MR. BITAR: Thank you for that.

DR. HILL: Although I did suspect that you might ask me about was I Anonymous, because my attorney here -- I decided to get ahead of it -- picked up some threatening phone calls. So there you are.

MR. BITAR: And just to be clear, the committee is not in any way suggesting, I would hope, that you or anybody around you has been, quote/unquote, leaking any information.

MR. BREWER: No, I am not suggesting that at all. I just want to get the facts, that you have not spoken to Mr. Raju or directed your attorney or anyone on your behalf to speak to Mr. Raju.

DR. HILL: That is correct.

MR. BREWER: Thank you. I think we're ready, yes.

BY MR. GOLDMAN:

Q I just have a few, but I do want to go back. We're almost done.

A Okay.

Q Honestly, you did say you --

A He has to get a plane. He's already, you know, I think had his office -- he said if he didn't appear outside, his office, he intends to --

Q Well, we appreciate you guys' willingness to stay here and to stay late and to answer all of our questions.

It's been a long day. And your -- I think, as one of the Congressman said, your recall and attention has been remarkable, and we are greatly appreciative.

I want to go back to this somewhat unusual circumstance regarding Kash Patel. Am I correct that he had no involvement in the Ukraine portfolio?

A Apart from, you know, whatever interaction there would have been, you know, on the U.N. and other kind of front. I mean --

Q In what way would that have manifested?

A I'm trying to actually think. At the time, I thought, well, what involvement does he have? You know, is he the point person in IOA for Ukraine? And I asked one of my colleagues who interacted with the IOA on a regular basis.

MR. BITAR: For the record, can you clarify IOA?

DR. HILL: Oh, sorry, the International Organizations -- and I've forgotten what the acronym stands for. International Organizations and Agencies. I mean, basically, the directorate that covers the United Nations and other multilateral organizations, and covers human rights and at different points also dealt with, you know, our responses to public health crises and foreign assistance and things like this as well.

MR. GOLDMAN: And that was his directorate?

DR. HILL: It was his directorate. I mean, again, to be

very clear, I didn't really know him very well. I'd seen him in a couple of meetings, but then there would be -- you know, large meetings like this, where everyone would be invited. I was not aware that he had -- was running point on any issues related to this.

MR. BITAR: And just to clarify again for the record, you're not suggesting he was the senior director for that directorate, right?

DR. HILL: No, he's not. He was not the senior director.

MR. BITAR: So he was a director among several?

DR. HILL: He was a director at that time, among several. And I had more interaction with two other, you know, directors in that directorate.

MR. JORDAN: Dr. Hill, you used the term "distro." Is that distribution or --

DR. HILL: Distribution list, I'm sorry.

MR. JORDAN: I just want to make sure. I figured that was the case.

DR. HILL: That's a shorthand for when you, you know, are kind of sending -- I'm sure you do it here internally, you know, various distribution lists. But I didn't usually send those out. So, again, you know, I was kind of also worried about what kind of documents, you know, might have been, you know, sent, beyond talking points for meetings. I

mean, again, I -- to be honest, I'm a bit surprised that you've raised his name, because beyond after going to talk to Charlie Kupperman, I mean, I hadn't done anything to kind of follow up on this again.

BY MR. GOLDMAN:

Q We're a bit surprised to hear that the President thought he was the Ukraine director. So that's why we're trying to figure out --

A So was I. That was why I went to speak to Charlie Kupperman.

Q Right. No, I understand the course of action you were taking and that you did take, and I understand that there was no follow-on to you from the Deputy National Security Advisor who handled employment matters. What I'm trying to understand is what his actual role was at that time.

A I'm not entirely clear. I just basically asked my staff to find out: Was he being asked to be the point person within the agency for that directorate for any particular reason on Ukraine?

Q And what was the answer?

A As far as they could tell, no.

Q Had your Ukraine director, I think it's Alex Vindman, had he --

A He had never spoken to him beyond seeing him in a

meeting. And it was the same with most of my colleagues. Others knew him, but didn't know that he was -- thought he was a perfectly nice person and interacted with him. They were just as surprised as I was.

Q And just to be clear, you were the senior director overseeing, among other countries, Ukraine?

A Correct.

Q So in --

A And a lot of directorates have a point person for Ukraine, you know, in defense issues, for example. I mentioned before that Alex Vindman was initially supposed to be covering a whole gamut of defense issues that intersected with Russia. And, you know, obviously, defense issues are very much related to Ukraine, given the fact that there's a war going on between Russian proxies and the Ukrainian forces. And then it was determined, as part of the streamlining, that most of those defense issues would be within our defense directorate.

So, you know, there would be interactions with the people in our defense directorate on issues related to this and, you know, representatives coming from international economics if there was, you know, something purporting to the Ukrainian economy. So there were people who had within their bundle of responsibilities issues that would pertain to Ukraine or other countries.

[7:15 p.m.]

BY MR. GOLDMAN:

Q But would all of that information flow ultimately through you on up the chain?

A Normally. That's why it attracted my attention. And it's also because the Exec Sec staff member clearly thought that this was reporting through me.

Q Right. But I'm just trying to understand that. Even if he were to have had some sort of involvement with Ukraine from another directorate, that it still, ultimately, in normal channels, will get funneled up through you, on up the chain --

A Normally. Although, you know, I'm sure [redacted] and others will, you know, recall those often jurisdictional spats between directorates, particularly if something was overlapping.

This happened repeatedly with CT, or the Counterterrorism Directorate, that they felt that they ought to have, you know, for example, the direct reporting on an issue that fell into their purview.

And we had a few disputes sometimes between some of our directors and the CT directors about who had responsibility, you know, for a particular issue.

Q But you knew what they were doing on those disputes.

A I did know what they were doing, correct.

Q So can you give us an assessment of how unusual it was that, as you understood it, someone outside of your directorate was providing information to the President about Ukraine? Had that happened about any of your countries that you oversaw in your 2-1/2 years there?

A Yeah, I think -- you know, normally, there was also, you know, a very extensive clearance process. So anything that was going to the President would have been, you know, fully vetted and cleared, you know, across the NSC directorate if there'd been a request. And, normally, the request would've come through Ambassador Bolton.

Q And let me ask you something else. If something were to come through other channels, related to Ukraine, on up through Charlie Kupperman or Ambassador Bolton, would you have expected them to loop you in on it and ask you about it?

A I think it would depend on the nature of the material. I mean, if it fell into the purview of, say, our cyber and it might have been, you know, related to something that was classified and that, you know, perhaps I was not read into, then, you know, it's possible that I would not necessarily have known about that. But, in this case, this seemed to be talking about some routine materials.

Q And just to be clear, this was --

A And, again, I did not want to put the Exec Sec

person, who was totally a staff member, in a difficult position. They --

Q Understood.

A -- clearly were just relating to me this request or just thinking that I already knew and were giving me a heads-up.

Q Relating the request from the President?

A That they just were, you know, kind of -- I think they thought they were reminding me that the President, you know, wanted to speak to the Ukraine director about the materials.

Q Okay.

A And just to give me a heads-up and to say that, you know, they might be contacting Kash. And that's when, obviously, I thought, whoa, okay.

Q When you mentioned this to Charlie Kupperman, did he --

A He was surprised.

Q I was going to say, did he know about this at all?

A He did not.

Q Okay. Did he indicate to you whether he understood that Ambassador Bolton knew of this at all?

A He indicated that Ambassador Bolton did not know about this as well. He acted very surprised.

Q And that seems -- is that outside of the normal

operating procedures within the National Security Council?

A Yes. This was unusual, which is why I flagged it.

Q Okay.

A I mean, there have been cases of, you know, general mistaken identity, you know, in the past that have been not particularly a big deal. But this is, of course, happening in this context in which all kinds of other things are going on as well.

Q And just to be clear, you don't believe this is a case of mistaken identity.

A No. I mean, it was clear -- I mean, Kash is not a usual name. And Kash is not Alex.

Q Oh.

A I mean, it wasn't clear to me, though, that everybody in Exec Sec would know who Alex Vindman was anyway. I mean, yes, he'd been on the delegation as a representative, but he wasn't, you know, someone who was particularly well-known.

Q During your 2-plus years there, how frequently did the President ask to meet with any directors on any of the countries that you oversaw?

A Not on any of my countries, he had not.

Q Never.

A He had not. But it's possible that he had asked for other people. I mean, we had people with, you know,

various specific areas of expertise on other issues that he could easily have asked for and I wouldn't know about that.

But he had not on any of my -- other staff members at high levels would request a director to attend a meeting, you know, given the serious nature of meetings, and a number of our directors did go to, you know, high-level meetings and sit in with them. And, often, if I wasn't there, one of our directors would go.

Q But not the President?

A They might be there in the context of a Presidential head of state meeting if I --

Q Sorry. I just meant the President had never --

A No.

Q -- specifically requested --

A Never.

Q -- a director within any of your portfolios.

A Not in my portfolio, he had not.

Q Okay. And did you -- I would imagine it was relatively important for you to understand what information the President was reviewing related to Ukraine, given that that's part of your portfolio.

A That's correct, which is why I took it to Charlie Kupperman.

Q And did you ever figure out what it was?

A I did not.

Q After having brought it the first time, did you go back and make a subsequent request, given the importance for you to understand what the President was seeing related to Ukraine?

A Well, I started to be concerned around this, that then it was obviously, you know, material that was not part of the national security process. And if --

Q What do you mean by that?

A Well, obviously, it wasn't related to the issues that we were working on. It had to be something else. And then, you know, as I expressed -- Charlie had already -- I'd already expressed to Charlie Kupperman my concerns about the Giuliani accusations, and I had no idea whether this was related to this or to any other issue. Again, I don't want to speculate. But I was confident that if I needed to know what this was, Charlie Kupperman would tell me and would inform me.

Q And he did not.

A He did not.

Q Are you aware of whether Kash Patel ever met with Rudy Giuliani?

A I do not know.

Q How about with Mick Mulvaney?

A I don't know that either.

Q And Ambassador Sondland?

A I also don't know that.

Q And so, after that initial conversation with Charlie Kupperman, you heard nothing else about this?

A I, at one point later on, asked Charlie Kupperman, you know, what was generally going on with Kash Patel, and he told me that he was going to be transferred to Counterterrorism.

Q And did you understand that there was a reason for that?

A I inferred from that that it was to -- basically in response to what had happened.

Q Was that perceived -- how was that in response?

A He said to me that that was more fitting with the issues that he was interested in, that Patel was interested in. I mean, again, look, these are personnel matters. That's --

Q Right.

A -- normally handled by Charlie Kupperman. And Kash Patel was not in my directorate. And I flagged my concern. I also did not want to start, you know, jumping down the throat of the Exec Sec staff person, who clearly had just told me something that they did not realize, you know, I did not know. And I immediately went upstairs to flag it.

Q Are you aware of whether any other United States Government officials ever engaged any Ukrainian officials in

any way to request that they initiate these investigations that Rudy Giuliani was -- and President Trump referenced on the July 25th call?

A I'm not aware of that, no.

Q Okay. Are you aware whether any Congressmen or Senators were involved at all in this effort?

A I'm not. I mean, I've only read, you know, what's been reported in the press most recently about some of the involvement including Congressman Sessions. I was surprised.

Q Related to Parnas and Fruman?

A Correct. And Ambassador Yovanovitch. I mean, I did not expect that that was, you know, the originating source for the pressure against her.

Q Uh-huh.

And is there anything more about Mr. Mulvaney's role in this whole Ukraine issue in connection with, you know, Mr. Giuliani's efforts?

A Not beyond what I've already told you.

Q Okay.

You, obviously, left July 19th. And you've exhaustively answered our questions today, and we are very appreciative of that. You've mentioned repeatedly concerns that you had about, in particular, Mr. Giuliani and his efforts.

When you read the call transcript of July 25th, the call record, which you must have done just a couple weeks ago, did

it crystallize in your head in any way a better understanding of what was transpiring while you were there?

A In terms of providing, you know, more information with hindsight, unfortunately, yes.

Q And in what way?

A The specific references, also juxtaposed with the release of the text messages by Ambassador Volker -- you know, what I said before -- really was kind of my worst fears and nightmares, in terms of, you know, there being some kind of effort not just to subvert the national security process, but to try to subvert what really should be, you know, kind of, a diplomatic effort to, you know, kind of, set up a Presidential meeting.

Q This may --

A There seems to be an awful lot of people involved in, you know, basically turning a White House meeting into some kind of asset.

Q What do you mean by "asset"?

A Well, something that was being, you know, dangled out to the Ukrainian Government. They wanted the White House meeting very much. And this was kind of laying out that it wasn't just a question of scheduling or having, you know, the national security issues worked out, that there were all of these alternate discussions going on behind.

Q And you have discussed the July 10th meeting where

Ambassador Sondland indicated that. We've gone through the Kurt Volker text on July 25th. You've now read the transcript of the Presidential call between President Trump and President Zelensky.

Would you agree this doesn't seem to be a one-off; this seemed to be a fairly considered campaign over a period of time?

A Well, it certainly dovetails with the activity that we started to see after the ouster of Marie Yovanovitch, of Masha Yovanovitch. So, for me, Masha Yovanovitch's ouster was some kind of tipping point or turning point.

Q And this wasn't --

A Because it was after she was removed from her position that you started to see, you know, more of this activity.

Q And, even then, I believe you said that you understood, at least from Ambassador Yovanovitch, that she was told that the President had ordered her removal. Is that right?

A She didn't tell me that at the time when I saw her --

Q I'm sorry.

A -- May 1st. She was being discreet, but she told me that there had been a lack or a loss of confidence in her position and that, although they told her that she wasn't

being removed for cause, her position was no longer tenable --

Q But --

A -- and that she had wrap up her -- she stated this in her public testimony.

Q Right. And Deputy Secretary Sullivan told you, though, that the State Department was quite supportive of her and it had nothing to do with her work performance.

A That's correct.

Q So --

A And I was also surprised to read in her public testimony that there'd been a pressure campaign, that she'd been told there was a pressure campaign going back to the summer of 2018.

Q Okay. Well, Rudy Giuliani doesn't have the authority to remove the Ambassador, correct?

A I don't believe that he does. That's correct.

Q Right. So did you infer at the time who made the decision to remove her?

A I actually inferred at the time that it had been made at the top of the State Department --

Q So you think it was Secretary Pompeo?

A -- in response to, you know, obviously, concerns that had been raised against her which one could trace right back to what Mr. Giuliani had been saying and he had been

building up into a crescendo of criticism about her in that period.

Q And now having read the call transcript, do you have a different view of what occurred?

A Well --

Q The call record.

A Well, based on what I read in the transcript and what she said in her testimony, which was obviously told to her, then I have a different view -- well, I have the view that we're now discussing, that the President asked for her to be removed.

Q Okay.

And I don't mean to belabor this, but Rudy Giuliani was not a government official. And so, did you have an understanding of for whom he was acting on behalf of?

A I did not, actually. I mean, I was often worried, in listening to him, that he was acting on his own behalf.

Q Right. Now, I'm sort of saying, now that you're looking back at the text messages, the call record, and putting it together with all the meetings and other interactions that you saw --

A I still have questions of whether he was acting on his own behalf, particularly after the indictment of Mr. Parnas and Mr. Fruman.

Q Understood. But do --

A I think --

Q -- you also understand that the President adopted a lot of Rudy Giuliani's views, to the extent they are Rudy Giuliani's?

A Well, given the drumbeat of Rudy Giuliani's views on the television, I think if you listen to that long enough, you know, it kind of -- God knows what anybody would think, getting back to, you know, questions that have been posed before. He seemed to be, you know, basically engaged in a concerted effort to propagate these views.

Q Uh-huh.

A But I cannot say that this was -- all of the things that he was doing was at the direction of the President. I can't say that.

Q But you did notice in the call transcript that the President said several times that President Zelensky should speak with Rudy Giuliani, right?

A I did.

Q So did that give you an understanding --

A But that suggests that Rudy Giuliani has all of the information. I mean, again, he's being directed to talk to Rudy Giuliani. And, you know, when we refer to the ellipses, you know, the President isn't laying out in full all of these issues. So, you know, kind of, a lot of this information is coming from Rudy Giuliani, and Rudy Giuliani seems to be, in

some fashion, orchestrating a lot of these discussions.

Q If Ukraine actually did initiate these investigations, who would they have benefited?

A Well, they might have benefited Mr. Giuliani and his business colleagues just as much as anyone else.

Q How so? An investigation into Joe Biden, how would that have helped --

A It's an investigation, but it wasn't just into that. There was investigations writ large. So if there's upheaval in the Ukrainian energy sector and people are removed, perhaps this gives the opportunity for these individuals and other individuals to get investments or lucrative board positions.

Q Did President Trump mention the energy sector or corruption in the energy sector in the July 25th call?

A He doesn't seem to have done so. I mean, he refers to directly, as I stated -- but, overall, we were -- again, there have been lots of references to energy sector and to corruption in the energy sector. And, technically, Burisma is part of the energy sector in Ukraine.

Q Right. But you understood -- as we discussed, you understand Rudy Giuliani and, clearly, President Trump's view of the Burisma to the extent that they wanted an investigation related to the Bidens?

A I see what was in the transcript, but I'm also

referring to all of the discussions that were out there in public on the television and all the statements by Mr. Giuliani. They seemed to cover a lot of ground and a lot of territory. I think it's entirely possible -- and, again, I'm presuming that this is what you're all trying to get to the bottom of -- that many things were being put onto this set of issues. This is --

Q So it's not just one thing.

A This is a bundling of a number of issues.

Q So am I correct in understanding that there could be a number of different interests that are --

A My view, in looking at this, is that individuals, private individuals, like Mr. Giuliani and his business associates, are trying to appropriate Presidential power or the authority of the President, given the position that Mr. Giuliani is in, to also pursue their own personal interests.

Q But the President was willing to provide the Presidential power in that July 25th call.

A Well, that's the July 25th call, but before that it seems to me that there was a lot of usurpation of that power.

Q But you do agree that in that July 25th call the President was --

A That's what it seems to suggest.

Q Okay.

A And, again, I'm reading that in a context in which, you know, I've been looking at other information -- and I don't have a complete picture of what transpired between when I left and when the call was made -- and then subsequently to all the information that we're seeing out in the press as well. I'm learning things from the press, if indeed all of this is accurate, for the first time.

Q Right. I understand that.

And I guess the final question I have is, you indicated earlier on today that this was sort of your worst nightmare and that these requests for investigations appear to be political in nature. Is that accurate?

A Correct. My worst nightmare is the politicization of the relationship between the U.S. and Ukraine and, also, the usurpation of authorities, you know, for other people's personal vested interests.

Q Right. But whose --

A And there seems to be a large range of people who were looking for these opportunities here.

Q If the Ukraine -- I think you used this term -- dug up dirt on Joe Biden, whose political prospects would that assist?

A Well, depending on how it plays out, that could assist a wide range of people.

Q Potentially. Is it going to assist Rudy Giuliani's

political campaign, or is it going to assist President Trump's?

A Well, again, it depends on how this all plays out. At this particular -- look, this is now, kind of -- everybody could be damaged by all of this, which basically gets back to my point. Everybody's campaign could be severely damaged by how this plays out now. Or it could be benefited.

I think what you're saying is, was the intent to promote the campaign of President Trump. Yes. But you're asking the question, also, about how this might play out.

Q That was really just the former, but I understand what you're saying.

Can I have 1 minute?

All right. I think we're done here. I don't know if you guys have anything.

MR. CASTOR: Who was the staffer in the Exec Sec that brought up Kash Patel?

DR. HILL: I'll be honest, I actually can't remember.

MR. CASTOR: Okay.

DR. HILL: Because it was one of the front office --

MR. CASTOR: Thank you.

DR. HILL: -- staff, and it wasn't someone who -- it was just simply they were relaying to me a piece of --

MR. CASTOR: Thank you.

DR. HILL: -- information. And I honestly can't

remember.

MR. JORDAN: Doctor, who's on this distribution list that you reference? I don't know how that operates and how that works.

DR. HILL: Well, it's usually for, you know, meetings related to Ukraine. So if we're having one of these interagency meetings at the directors level or, you know, kind of, a political coordination committee, you would add on everybody who you thought would be, you know, related to this in some way.

MR. JORDAN: And would the individuals --

DR. HILL: So I asked them to parse through and see, you know, what individuals were on and then to see what it would be about follow-on materials.

So, just to be kind of clear about this, I mean, a lot of these distribution lists are on our classified system, not just on our unclass system. And sometimes they have attached to them a lot of background materials.

MR. JORDAN: That was my next question.

DR. HILL: And this gets back to our, you know, concerns about leaking in the past. I mean, you asked me about this question about CNN. Just an enormous amount of our material, before you've even had a meeting, is out on CNN or Politico or Buzzfeed. And I would lose my mind, sometimes, before routine meetings by the fact that, before I'd even started

the meeting, some of the background material with some of the deliberations already seemed to be somebody publishing it.

MR. JORDAN: Yeah. No, I've --

DR. HILL: So, you know, I mean, obviously, you've been familiar with that, and I'm sure it's an occupational hazard for people here as well.

MR. JORDAN: It sure is.

DR. HILL: So I started to worry about, you know, kind of: Were materials that were just meant for the interagency, you know, for people, that were deliberative drafts of, you know, policy memorandum going backwards and forwards, you know, that weren't intended for, you know, kind of, other people, being distributed or information that was attached to that?

But, in actual fact, when I looked at this, there'd been very little information that we'd been sending out that wasn't, you know, kind of, fairly routine in these documents.

MR. JORDAN: Okay. That was my question. So the distribution list is not just to individuals telling them about a schedule or a meeting. It's also some material that is actually being transmitted --

DR. HILL: That's right, that they need to use to prepare for the -- and, often, it would be sent, you know, to individuals in different directorates to prepare their senior director or themselves, if they were just attending, you

know, to basically, like we're doing here, you know, exhibit A, the Politico thing, or the transcript, for example.

MR. JORDAN: Right. And was Mr. Patel on the distribution list that was receiving this information?

DR. HILL: In some cases, he was on the larger distributive list for his directorate.

MR. JORDAN: Okay.

DR. HILL: And, in some cases, he was there with a few other people from his directorate, perhaps because, again, if some of the meetings overlapped with things that he was working on, or there had also been a lot of changeover, again, in the directorate, so there were sometimes just two or three directors --

MR. JORDAN: So was he getting the information that -- he was getting the same information that everyone else was getting?

DR. HILL: From what I'm recalling, I think that was the case.

MR. JORDAN: Okay. So just like everyone else on the distribution list, he was getting that --

DR. HILL: That's right.

MR. JORDAN: -- exact same information --

DR. HILL: And, as I said, I went --

MR. JORDAN: -- at the exact same time in the

meetings --

DR. HILL: Correct.

MR. JORDAN: -- everything the same?

DR. HILL: But as you're looking back, you know, over -- and I'm looking back on my schedule, there weren't a lot of other -- there weren't a lot of meetings taken, but there's a lot of background materials. So I also wanted to know from Alex and others if there was some other distro list that they had for other communications for materials. Basically, you know, directors often have their own distro people that they're working with.

MR. JORDAN: I guess my concern was, you said -- I think a littler earlier you said you were concerned about the material he may have and may present to whomever he was presenting it to in whatever meeting. And I'm just trying to figure out, if he's on this same distribution list and he's getting it just like everyone else and he's getting the same material, why would you be concerned about the material he'd be presenting in April, May --

DR. HILL: Well, because I wasn't sure -- when they referred to materials, I thought, what on Earth materials could they be talking about? So I wanted to see, is there any way that any of these background materials that were being prepared -- updates on Ukraine, in other words -- could've been in the mix and then were being given off to

Exec Sec? Because they weren't being prepared for the Exec Sec or to be handed on, certainly, to the President. I mean, it would do something in a totally different nature if you're preparing a background briefing for the President or a background briefing for Ambassador Bolton. They do it in a very different way, if I'm preparing a background briefing --

MR. JORDAN: Okay.

DR. HILL: -- for a routine directors meeting, which might have, you know, all of the comments of the directors, you know, back and forth --

MR. JORDAN: Yeah.

DR. HILL: And I thought to myself, you know, what materials could this be?

MR. JORDAN: Yeah. So, just to be clear, though, Mr. Patel is on the same distribution list as everyone else on the list and getting the same material.

DR. HILL: That's correct.

MR. JORDAN: Okay.

DR. HILL: But then again, I'm trying to figure out, why would that material and what could that material be that could be getting --

MR. JORDAN: Thank you.

DR. HILL: -- you know, sent up to the President?

MR. ZELDIN: The next piece of evidence -- what's the next number?

DR. HILL: And, again, just to be very clear, I did not know what that material would be. I did not know at any time, I was not told, what that material was that was sent to the President.

MR. JORDAN: I wasn't asking about that. I was asking about what was sent to Mr. Patel was exactly what everyone else was getting.

DR. HILL: That's correct.

MR. JORDAN: Got it.

[Minority Exhibit No. 5
Was marked for identification.]

MR. ZELDIN: Dr. Hill, we're passing around exhibit No. 5. This is -- I'll wait for a second until it gets distributed.

This is a May 4th, 2018, letter sent to Mr. Lutsenko from three Democratic United States Senators. Are you familiar with this letter?

DR. HILL: I'm not, actually.

MR. ZELDIN: You have never seen this letter before?

DR. HILL: I don't believe that I have, no.

MR. ZELDIN: Okay. This is a letter that three Democratic United States Senators sent to the prosecutor general at the time in Ukraine, demanding that Ukraine assist with the Robert Mueller probe targeting the President.

DR. HILL: Was this letter made public? Was it sent to

the NSC and the public offices?

MR. ZELDIN: I don't know the distro of the letter, which is --

DR. HILL: Right. Because I --

MR. ZELDIN: -- one of the reasons why I wanted to ask.

DR. HILL: -- have not seen this letter before.

MR. ZELDIN: Okay.

Did any of the people in the NSC ever articulate to you any anti-Trump political positions?

DR. HILL: They did not, no.

MR. ZELDIN: Do you believe that it was appropriate for the Clinton campaign and the DNC to hire Christopher Steele to create the dossier against the Trump campaign?

DR. HILL: As I understand, they didn't hire him directly. I don't have any personal knowledge about how he was hired. I don't know that he was hired directly by the DNC. Was he?

MR. ZELDIN: Well, they hired a law firm, Fusion GPS. It was through an intermediary, but the money originated from the Clinton campaign and DNC.

But if you're not familiar with the source of funding, let's put that aside.

DR. HILL: No, I'm not. I'm not familiar with that.

MR. ZELDIN: Funding aside, do you think it is appropriate for Christopher Steele to have been hired as a

foreign spy to be collecting information from foreign governments to gain an advantage against the Trump campaign?

DR. HILL: Well, he's a former foreign spy. But, nonetheless, a foreign national. I don't believe it's appropriate for him to have been hired to do this. And, again, I think I already expressed my shock and surprise when I learned that he had been involved in this.

MR. ZELDIN: We've spoken about Burisma a lot today. Are you familiar with the fact that Hunter Biden was paid for this position with Burisma?

DR. HILL: I remember seeing the reports about this when he was first taken onboard. I was still at the Brookings Institution, and I remember there were press reports about this.

MR. ZELDIN: Has his employment with Burisma come up at all in any of your official government positions?

DR. HILL: It did not, apart from the discussion with Amos Hochstein where he informed me that some of these discussions in Ukraine were centered around Burisma, and he reminded me that Burisma was the company that Hunter Biden sat on the board of. And, as you may also recall, Amos Hochstein had expressed concern about that when that appointment went through in the course of his own official duties.

MR. ZELDIN: Do you know Hunter Biden?

DR. HILL: I do not.

MR. ZELDIN: Are you aware of any experience or qualifications that he would have for that position?

DR. HILL: I am not aware. I don't know him.

MR. ZELDIN: And you worked with Vice President Joe Biden at all in any of your official capacities?

DR. HILL: When I was the National Intelligence Officer for Russia and Eurasia in the first year of the Obama administration, yes, I mean, in the same context as I worked with Vice President Cheney for the 3 years of the Bush administration that I was NIO. I was often asked to do briefings.

MR. ZELDIN: When did your official interactions with Vice President Biden end?

DR. HILL: In November of 2009 when I returned to Brookings after spending my time as the National Intelligence Officer.

MR. ZELDIN: So the remainder of the Obama administration you were out of the United States Government.

DR. HILL: That's correct. I was, as an expert, invited to a couple of dinner briefings on Russia hosted by Vice President Biden, but that's the totality of my interactions.

MR. ZELDIN: It's been widely reported that he doesn't have Ukraine experience, he doesn't have energy experience --

DR. HILL: Who are we referring to?

MR. ZELDIN: Hunter Biden.

DR. HILL: Oh, Hunter Biden.

MR. ZELDIN: Sorry. Hunter Biden --

DR. HILL: Yeah.

MR. ZELDIN: -- it's been widely reported he doesn't have any energy experience, doesn't have any Ukraine experience, but was hired by Burisma, which is a -- let me digress a minute.

From your knowledge of Burisma, are they a corrupt company?

DR. HILL: I don't know a lot about Burisma, I'll be frank.

MR. ZELDIN: Are you familiar with Zlochevsky?

DR. HILL: I'm not very familiar with him either, just more in a general sense.

MR. ZELDIN: Are you familiar with the investigations into Burisma or Zlochevsky?

DR. HILL: I was aware that there were investigations underway, yes.

MR. ZELDIN: And these were corruption investigations into Burisma and Zlochevsky?

DR. HILL: And into the particular individual. So, again, the fact that there is investigations into corruption in the energy sector in Ukraine, as well as Russia or many other countries, is not a surprise.

And, also, on this point, I have to also say there were an awful lot of people with political connections and not expertise on particular issues that were being hired by all kinds of entities.

MR. ZELDIN: It's been widely reported, as I started to state, with regards to a lack of energy experience --

DR. HILL: Right.

MR. ZELDIN: -- with a lack of Ukraine experience, he was paid at least $50,000 a month. There are reports that his company -- he has a partner -- were paid a substantially higher figure.

Vice President Joe Biden was the point man for the Obama administration with Ukraine. Being the point man for the Obama administration, what power comes with that, as far as pursestrings, as far as funding that United States provides to Ukraine?

DR. HILL: The Vice President didn't have a role in that. I mean, this is, again, the determination of Congress and also of the State Department and Defense Department and others. I mean, the Vice President has no role in determining the pursestrings. The Office of Management and Budget do as well.

MR. ZELDIN: Are you familiar --

DR. HILL: And Vice President Pence also wanted to play a role on Ukraine in this administration.

MR. ZELDIN: To that point, are you familiar with a video from January 2018 where Vice President Biden spoke about his efforts to have Prosecutor General Shokin fired? Have you seen that video?

DR. HILL: I have not seen that video.

MR. ZELDIN: Okay. That video -- I won't ask a question directly to that. I'll ask a different question. But for background, that video, Vice President Biden is speaking about his efforts, threatening Ukraine with the loss of $1 billion if they didn't fire Shokin, and then they instantly fired Shokin.

But the question is, you're saying that the Vice President doesn't have the ability to be delegated any authority from a President to make those types of threats?

DR. HILL: To make those types of threats? You were talking about money earlier.

MR. ZELDIN: Does a Vice President have the power to make a threat to a foreign government of the loss of United States support?

DR. HILL: If he is being asked to do that on the behalf of the government, on behalf of the President or the State Department and others.

So, when I was working in the Bush administration, Vice President Cheney was the heavy on all of these issues. And he certainly issued plenty of threats to a whole range of

countries, including Russia, that, you know, I was privy to, at the direction or the request of other parts of the government.

So I think, you know, putting forward the idea that, you know, there could be forfeited an assistance and that Vice President Biden was conveying that information on behalf of the government, well, yes, of course, he could do that. But he does not make the determination about funding.

MR. ZELDIN: Do you have any concerns about any member of the United States Government being delegated the authority to make a threat if their son is receiving $50,000 a month from --

DR. HILL: I think you might be --

MR. ZELDIN: -- a company targeted by an open --

DR. HILL: -- starting to go into some very dangerous territory --

MR. ZELDIN: I'm sorry. Let me finish the question.

DR. HILL: -- at the moment for everybody.

MR. ZELDIN: I'm sorry. Do you think that it would be appropriate for a -- do you have any concern with a Vice President being delegated the authority to make a threat like that if their son is receiving $50,000 a month from an entity of that foreign country being targeted by having an open investigation?

DR. HILL: I think that there is a problem with

perceptions of conflicts of interest and ethics for any child of any senior official to be involved in anything that their parents are involved in, period. So this goes not just to Hunter Biden and Vice President Biden but across the board.

And I think, getting back to the question that Congressman Raskin asked about before about corruption and perceptions of it, this is exactly the problem we have right now in our politics. The rank and file have to sign all kinds of ethical agreements to make sure that members of our family are not involved in anything that we are involved in or to recuse ourselves.

And across the board, Members of Congress, the Senate, I mean, this is what you spend your time looking at. Vice Presidents, Presidents, Secretaries of State, Secretaries of Commerce, Secretaries of Transportation, Secretaries of Interior -- I could just go on -- should not have their children involved in anything that they're involved in as well.

And that's why I'm saying it's a dangerous territory, because I'm not going to start on giving the long list of things that I personally think are a real problem.

MR. ZELDIN: There was an open investigation into Burisma at the time of that trip that Vice President Biden made to Ukraine and that President Trump was concerned with. Are you aware of that?

MR. GOLDMAN: Do you have any support --

DR. HILL: I wasn't aware of the information too. I wasn't in the government.

MR. WOLOSKY: Congressman, she wasn't in the government.

DR. HILL: No, and I'm --

MR. ZELDIN: Actually, the question was -- I'm sorry. Excuse me. The question was, are you aware of that? And if the answer is no, then --

DR. HILL: The answer is no. Because I'm also not aware of all of this timeline, in terms of the issues that you're raising here.

MR. ZELDIN: Okay.

DR. HILL: I was not -- I will be, you know, quite open. I was not monitoring and following exactly what Vice President Biden and Hunter Biden were doing in this time period.

MR. ZELDIN: Well, let me ask you what you do know. With regards to Burisma, do you know when that investigation was closed?

DR. HILL: I do not. And as I said, when Amos Hochstein came in to talk to me again about this and mentioned Burisma, I had to get him to remind me again about why Burisma was significant. In the back of my mind, I knew that there was some issue with Burisma, but it had not come up, up until then, at any point in the work that I was doing in the

administration.

MR. ZELDIN: Okay. Do you know if the case against Burisma was closed at any time?

DR. HILL: From what I have read and been told, that the case was closed or dropped or that the case stopped.

MR. ZELDIN: What do you know about when that case was --

DR. HILL: I don't know when that was stopped. I mean, again, I'll just say that I had to be reminded by Amos Hochstein about why Burisma was significant. I remembered, from when I was at the Brookings Institution, reading about Hunter Biden being appointed, thinking this was not a bright idea, and then I did not continue to follow this issue for a long period of time.

So it came up again in the context of all the things that we're discussing basically around the time that Masha Yovanovitch was removed from her position. My knowledge is more general, about the state of the Ukrainian energy sector. My knowledge in depth is really about Russia and Russia's energy sector.

MR. ZELDIN: Are you aware of the case -- the criminal investigation against Zlochevsky?

DR. HILL: I was aware that there had been one. But, again, I didn't ask for any details of this in the position that I was in, because it did not seem relevant to the work

that we were doing.

And, again, in the NSC, my job was to coordinate. And the real action was being taken, in terms of our Ukrainian policy and implementation, by the State Department, the Embassy, the Defense Department, and the Department of Energy.

MR. CASTOR: I think we're all done.

DR. HILL: You're sure?

MR. CASTOR: Thank you so much.

DR. HILL: You don't want to continue?

MR. GOLDMAN: Dr. Hill, on behalf of Chairman Schiff, I'd just like to thank you again for coming in and answering all of our questions.

DR. HILL: Thank you. Thank you.

MR. GOLDMAN: We are adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 7:55 p.m., the deposition was concluded.]