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2
3 PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE,
4 joint with the
5 COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM
6 and the
7 COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
8 U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
9 WASHINGTON, D.C.
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13 DEPOSITION OF: JENNIFER WILLIAMS
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18 Thursday, November 7, 2019

19 Washington, D.C.
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21 The deposition in the above matter was held in Room HVC-304,
22 Capitol Visitor Center, commencing at 9:35 a.m.

23 Present: Representatives Schiff, Swalwell, Heck, Maloney, and
24 Demings.

25 Also Present: Raskin, Norton, Perry, Jordan, and Meadows.

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2 Appearances:

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5 For the PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE:

6

7 [REDACTED]

8 [REDACTED]

9 [REDACTED]

10 [REDACTED]

11 [REDACTED]

12 [REDACTED]

13 [REDACTED]

14 [REDACTED]

15 [REDACTED]

16 [REDACTED]

17 [REDACTED]

18 [REDACTED]

19 [REDACTED]

20 [REDACTED]

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23 For the COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM:

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25 [REDACTED]

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1 For the COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS:

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[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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8 For JENNIFER WILLIAMS:

9

10 EMILY DAMRAU

11 JUSTIN SHUR

12 CALEB HAYES-DEATS

13 ELIZABETH SAWYER

14 MOLOLAMKEN

15 600 New Hampshire Ave, N.W.

16 Washington, D.C. 20037

1 THE CHAIRMAN: We'll come to order. Good morning, Ms. Williams,
2 and welcome to the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence
3 which, along with the Foreign Affairs and Oversight Committees, is
4 conducting this investigation as part of the official impeachment
5 inquiry of the House of Representatives.

6 Today's deposition is being conducted as a part of the impeachment
7 inquiry. In light of attempts by the Office of the Vice President to
8 direct you not to cooperate with the inquiry, the committee had no
9 choice but to compel your appearance today. We thank you for complying
10 with a duly authorized congressional subpoena, as other current and
11 former officials from across the Federal Government have done.

12 Ms. Williams currently serves as the Special Adviser for Europe
13 and Russia in the Office of the Vice President. She has been detailed
14 to this position from the State Department since April 2019. Ms.
15 Williams is a long-serving career Foreign Service Officer, and
16 previously held posts at our embassies in the United Kingdom, Lebanon,
17 and Jamaica.

18 Ms. Williams, thank you for your service. We look forward to your
19 testimony today, including your knowledge of and involvement in key
20 policy discussions, meetings, and decisions on Ukraine that relate
21 directly to areas under investigation by the committees. This
22 includes developments related to the recall of Ambassador Yovanovitch;
23 the President's July 25, 2019, call with Ukrainian President Zelensky;
24 the hold placed on the President on nearly -- placed by the President
25 on nearly \$400 million of security assistance for Ukraine; and the Vice

1 President's meeting and phone call with President Zelensky in
2 September. We will also have questions about the Office of the Vice
3 President's response to the impeachment inquiry, including the
4 committee's request for documents, with which the Vice President has
5 refused to comply.

6 Finally, to restate what I and others have emphasized in our
7 interviews, Congress will not tolerate any reprisal, threat of
8 reprisal, or attempt to retaliate against any U.S. Government official
9 for testifying before Congress, including you or any of your
10 colleagues. It is disturbing that the Office of the Vice President,
11 in coordination with the White House, has sought to prohibit a public
12 servant, such as yourself, from cooperating with the inquiry and with
13 Congress and have tried to limit what you can say. This is
14 unacceptable. Thankfully, consummate professionals like you have
15 demonstrated remarkable courage in coming forward to testify and tell
16 the truth.

17 Before I turn to committee counsel to begin the interview, I
18 invite Ranking Member Nunes or, in his absence, a minority member of
19 the Foreign Affairs or Oversight Committees to make any opening
20 remarks.

21 MR. JORDAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

22 I just want to welcome Ms. Williams and thank her for her service
23 to our country.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Mr. Goldman.

25 MR. GOLDMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1 This is a deposition of Jennifer Williams conducted by the House
2 Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence pursuant to the impeachment
3 inquiry announced by the Speaker of the House on September 24th, 2019,
4 and affirmed by House Resolution 660 on October 31st, 2019.

5 Ms. Williams, if you could please now state your full name and
6 spell your last name for the record.

7 MS. WILLIAMS: Jennifer Williams. And, sorry, spell that as
8 well or --

9 MR. GOLDMAN: Common spelling?

10 MS. WILLIAMS: Common spelling, yes.

11 MR. GOLDMAN: Along with other proceedings in furtherance of the
12 inquiry to date, this deposition is part of a joint investigation led
13 by the Intelligence Committee, in coordination with the Committees on
14 Foreign Affairs and Oversight and Reform.

15 In the room today are majority staff and minority staff from all
16 three committees. And this will be a staff-led deposition. Members,
17 of course, may ask questions during their allotted time, as has been
18 the case in every deposition since the inception of this investigation.

19 My name is Daniel Goldman. I'm the Director of Investigations
20 for the Intelligence Committee's majority staff, and I want to thank
21 you, again, for coming in today.

22 Let me do some brief introductions. To my right here is Daniel
23 Noble. He's the Senior Investigative Counsel for the Intelligence
24 Committee's majority staff. Mr. Noble and I will be conducting most
25 of the interview for the majority.

1 deposition will be limited to the three committees in attendance.
2 Under the House deposition rules, no Member of Congress nor any staff
3 member can discuss the substance of the testimony that you provide
4 today. You and your attorney will have an opportunity to review the
5 transcript before it is released.

6 Before we begin, I would like to go over the ground rules for this
7 deposition. We will be following the House regulations for
8 depositions which we have previously provided to your counsel. The
9 deposition will proceed as follows: The majority will be given one
10 hour to ask questions, then the minority will be given one hour.
11 Thereafter, we will alternate back and forth between majority and
12 minority in 45-minute rounds until questioning is complete. We will
13 take periodic breaks, but if you need a break at any time, please let
14 us know.

15 Under the House deposition rules, counsel for other persons or
16 government agencies may not attend the deposition. You are permitted
17 to have an attorney present during this deposition and I see that you
18 have brought counsel.

19 At this time, if counsel could please state their appearances for
20 the record.

21 MR. SHUR: Justin Shur, Emily Damrau, and Caleb Hayes-Deats for
22 Ms. Williams.

23 MR. GOLDMAN: There is a stenographer taking down everything that
24 is said here today in order to make a written record of the deposition.
25 For that record to be clear, please wait until each question is

1 completed before you begin your answer, and we will wait until you
2 finish your response before asking you the next question. The
3 stenographer cannot record nonverbal answers, such as shaking your
4 head, so it is important that you answer each question with an audible
5 verbal answer.

6 We ask that you give complete replies to questions, based on your
7 best recollection. If a question is unclear or you are uncertain in
8 your response, please let us know. And if you do not know the answer
9 to a question or cannot remember, simply say so.

10 You may only refuse to answer a question to preserve a privilege
11 recognized by the committee. If you refuse to answer a question on
12 the basis of privilege, staff may either continue to proceed with the
13 deposition, or seek a ruling from the chairman on the objection. If
14 the chair overrules any such objection, you are required to answer the
15 question.

16 And finally, you are reminded that it is unlawful to deliberately
17 provide false information to Members of Congress or staff. It is
18 imperative that you not only answer our questions truthfully, but that
19 you give full and complete answers to all questions asked of you.
20 Omissions may also be considered as false statements.

21 As this deposition is under oath, Ms. Williams, would you please
22 stand and raise your right hand to be sworn.

23 Do you swear that your testimony provided here today will be the
24 whole truth and nothing but the truth?

25 MS. WILLIAMS: I do.

1 MR. GOLDMAN: Thank you. You may be seated.

2 And let the record reflect that the witness has been sworn.

3 Ms. Williams, if you have an opening statement or your attorneys
4 have any matters to discuss, now is the time.

5 MS. WILLIAMS: I do not have an opening statement today. Thank
6 you.

7 MR. GOLDMAN: Nothing from the attorney?

8 MR. SHUR: Nothing.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Noble is recognized for one hour.

10 MR. NOBLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

11 EXAMINATION

12 BY MR. NOBLE:

13 Q Ms. Williams, you were detailed from the State Department
14 to the Office of the Vice President in April of this year. Is that
15 correct?

16 A That is correct.

17 Q Can you just describe briefly your experience, your
18 government experience prior to being detailed to OVP?

19 A Sure. So I joined the Department of Homeland Security in
20 2005, shortly after graduating from university, and I served for
21 Secretary Michael Chertoff for nearly 1 year as a political appointee.
22 And then during that time, I took the Foreign Service exam and joined
23 the Foreign Service in 2006.

24 During my nearly 14 years in the Foreign Service, I've done tours,
25 as mentioned, in Jamaica, Beirut, Lebanon, worked on the Syria

1 humanitarian crisis for our Refugee Bureau for about 4 years, served
2 our Deputy Secretary of State covering Middle East and North Africa
3 policy, did a year of graduate school during that time as well, and
4 most recently, served for 3 years at our Embassy in London as a Public
5 Affairs Officer.

6 Q Did you go to the -- to OVP from the Embassy in the U.K.?

7 A Yes, I did.

8 Q And can you just describe briefly your roles and
9 responsibilities in OVP?

10 A Sure. I am one of the Vice President's Special Advisers on
11 his foreign policy team. I serve in the National Security Affairs
12 Office under the command of Lieutenant General Keith Kellogg, who is
13 the National Security Advisor to the Vice President. In my role, I
14 cover Europe and Russia issues.

15 So, in that regard, I keep the Vice President aware and abreast
16 of all foreign policy issues going on in that region, prepare him for
17 his foreign policy and foreign leader engagements, whether that's by
18 phone calls or in-person meetings here in Washington, as well as travel
19 overseas to the European region.

20 Q And does that include matters relating to Ukraine?

21 A It does.

22 Q What is the Vice President's role as it relates to U.S.
23 relations with our European allies, and Ukraine in particular?

24 A So the Vice President carries out the President's foreign
25 policy and is a key adviser to the President, as well as a representative

1 of the government overseas. He often has interactions with foreign
2 leaders, again, both here in Washington and overseas, often
3 participates in meetings with the President as well as holds his own
4 meetings with overseas leaders.

5 In the case of Ukraine, I can only speak to my time since starting
6 in April, but once President Zelensky was elected in April, the Vice
7 President elected to make a congratulatory call of his own to the new
8 leader in order to establish a good relationship with him.

9 And I've kept him up to date on developments in Ukraine throughout
10 the summer. And as -- as the committees are aware, the Vice President
11 was asked by the President to go to Poland in early September, where
12 the Vice President met with President Zelensky for the first time, and
13 so he -- and has spoken with him by phone after that as well.

14 Q And you prepped the Vice President for those phone calls and
15 meetings?

16 A That's right.

17 Q We'll go through those as we kind of go through the outline.
18 In your role, do you communicate directly with any Ukrainian Government
19 officials?

20 A Not often. Our Embassy in Kyiv really takes the lead on
21 that. I was in touch for logistical purposes at various points with
22 the Ukrainian Embassy here in Washington related to potential visits.

23 And there was a delegation of Ukrainian officials that came to
24 Washington in July. The group met with my boss, General Kellogg, on
25 July 9th, and so, I helped facilitate that meeting. But other than

1 that, I have limited engagement directly with Ukrainian officials.

2 Q And who do you typically interact with kind of in the
3 interagency on Ukraine matters? Who are your points of contact at
4 State, DOD, and the NSC?

5 A I work probably most closely with my NSC colleagues, with
6 Lieutenant Colonel Alex Vindman, who's kind of my counterpart on the
7 NSC, but also with his superiors as well. So previously, Dr. Fiona
8 Hill, more recently Tim Morrison. At the State Department, with the
9 Bureau of European Affairs and the office that covers Ukraine policy,
10 including Deputy Assistant Secretary George Kent, Assistant Secretary
11 Phil Reeker, and the Ukraine desk team. And then I'm often on email
12 correspondence with our Embassy colleagues in Kyiv, but not as much
13 in-person interaction.

14 Q And who typically do you correspond with at the Embassy in
15 Kyiv?

16 A I've been on email correspondence with Ambassador Bill
17 Taylor. I don't often reach out to him directly. It's usually more
18 I'm copied on email correspondence on developments going on from the
19 Embassy's perspective. And, you know, in the lead-up to various
20 engagements that the Vice President had with Ukrainian officials, I
21 was in contact with the Embassy during those times.

22 Q Okay. You referenced a call between President Trump and
23 President Zelensky in April. I think you said it was a congratulatory
24 call. Is that right?

25 A That's right.

1 Q That's the call on April 21st?

2 A The President's call was April 21st. The Vice President
3 called Zelensky 2 days later on April 23rd.

4 Q Okay. Did you -- were you involved in prepping the
5 President for his call on April 21st?

6 A I was not.

7 Q Did you listen in on that call?

8 A No.

9 Q Did you ever get a readout of that call?

10 A I saw the transcript of that call in preparation for the Vice
11 President's call 2 days later. We wanted to make sure the Vice
12 President was aware of what the President's conversation had been.

13 Q Do you recall the contents of that call transcript? Was that
14 like a memcon of the call?

15 A It was a transcript in terms of format very similar to the
16 one that's been released related to the July call. So similar format.

17 Q Do you recall the substance of the conversation between
18 President Trump and President Zelensky on April 21st?

19 A I do. It was a relatively brief call, I'd say maybe 10
20 minutes or so. It was really focused on congratulating President
21 Zelensky on his victory in the recent Presidential election which had
22 taken place that day, and looking forward to a good relationship with
23 him.

24 Q To your knowledge, was there -- or recollection, was there
25 any reference to any of the investigations into Burisma, the Bidens,

1 or 2016 during that phone call?

2 A There was not.

3 Q Did you prep the Vice President for his call on, I think you
4 said April 23rd. Is that right?

5 A I did.

6 Q And what -- did you participate in that call?

7 A I did.

8 Q Can you describe the conversation between Vice President
9 Pence and President Zelensky?

10 A Sure. It was similar. It was an offer of congratulations
11 for President Zelensky's recent victory, which was an overwhelming
12 victory in that race. They talked, again, also about the importance
13 of the U.S.-Ukraine relationship and how eager we were, the U.S. was,
14 to see President Zelensky take steps to implement the agenda on which
15 he had run, which was very much focused on anticorruption, and looking
16 to really bring Ukraine even closer to the trans-Atlantic and European
17 community. And there was discussion -- President Zelensky invited
18 President Trump initially, but there was discussion about Vice
19 President Pence as well, to his inauguration, but the date of that had
20 not yet been set.

21 Q Was there discussion -- sorry, going back to President
22 Trump's call on the 21st, was there any discussion of a possible White
23 House meeting for President Zelensky, or a meeting with Trump on that
24 phone call that you can recall?

25 A I don't recall that in that initial April 21st call. I

1 recall President Zelensky invited President Trump to attend his
2 inauguration in Kyiv. Again, the date hadn't been set, and the
3 President acknowledged the invitation without making a commitment on
4 the phone at that time.

5 Q And did Vice President Pence reference anything relating to
6 a meeting between President Trump and President Zelensky during his
7 April 23rd call?

8 A I don't believe so. Again, it was more focused at that time
9 on the issue of who might attend the inauguration. So President
10 Zelensky, in the Vice President's call, also extended the invitation
11 to President Trump or Vice President Pence if the President wasn't
12 available, and the Vice President looked forward to accepting that
13 invitation if the dates worked out.

14 Q In preparation for the Vice President's call with President
15 Zelensky, did anyone at the White House or National Security Council
16 provide any talking points or other input for the Vice President?

17 A I worked with Lieutenant Colonel Vindman, since he had
18 prepared the President's briefing papers for his call 2 days prior.
19 So I wanted to make sure that the substance was in line with U.S. policy,
20 but not the talking points, per se, for the conversation.

21 Q Following those phone calls and the invitation --

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Can you explain a little more about -- you
23 mentioned how you prepare the Vice President for the call. How did
24 you go about doing that?

25 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes, sir. So I prepare a briefing memo, providing

1 draft talking points or suggested talking points for the Vice President
2 along with background information. I also provided him with a call
3 of the President's call transcript from 2 days prior, a set of talking
4 point cards, and then we did a prebrief in person just before the call.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: And what generally were the points that you wanted
6 the Vice President to communicate during the call.

7 MS. WILLIAMS: First and foremost, congratulations on his
8 victory and how eager he was to establish a good working relationship
9 with President Zelensky and his new administration, his new cabinet;
10 how the Vice President looked forward to seeing President Zelensky
11 really implement the agenda on which he had ran, had run, related to
12 anticorruption reforms; talking about reforming the rule of law;
13 reforming the judiciary; taking steps to remove permanent immunity from
14 members of Parliament, for example, which had really led to a lot of
15 corruption in Ukraine over a long period of time; looking at ways to
16 reform the defense industry in order to really streamline and reduce
17 waste, and so that we could really increase and enhance our security
18 relationship; encouraging President Zelensky to continue to push back
19 against Russian aggression; and, you know, really supporting his
20 efforts to do so since he had spoken a lot about that during his
21 campaign. Along those lines.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: And what was the purpose of including the call
23 record from the President's call in the Vice President's binder?

24 MS. WILLIAMS: I thought it would be useful for the Vice President
25 to be aware of what the President had conveyed to Zelensky two days

1 prior.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Noble.

3 BY MR. NOBLE:

4 Q What role does General Kellogg play in helping prepare for
5 these types of calls?

6 A General Kellogg was present for the call as well as the
7 prebrief with the Vice President just before the call as well, and he
8 reviews the talking points and briefing memos that are put forward to
9 the Vice President.

10 Q That you prepare?

11 A That I prepare.

12 Q It goes to General Kellogg?

13 A That's right.

14 Q How frequently does General Kellogg speak with the Vice
15 President?

16 A Fairly frequently. I'm often not present for those
17 engagements, so I couldn't tell you very specifically, but I would say
18 at least on a daily basis, when the Vice President is not traveling.

19 Q And do you know does General Kellogg have direct
20 conversations with the President?

21 A I believe he does, but, again, I'm not present for those,
22 so I couldn't tell you how frequently or on what kind of topics they
23 discuss.

24 Q And why do you say that they do have direct communications?
25 How do you know that?

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1 A General Kellogg often will participate in meetings with the
2 President over in the Oval Office, whether those are more formal foreign
3 policy engagements or internal staff meetings, including the
4 President's intelligence briefings. Again, I've never been present
5 for those, so I can't really speak to what they discuss.

6 Q Does General Kellogg ever tell you about what happens in
7 those meetings?

8 A Not generally, unless there's some specific detail that
9 might relate to an upcoming engagement for the Vice President.

10 Q Now, the President and the Vice President's call took place
11 shortly before Ambassador Yovanovitch was recalled from Kyiv. Do you
12 recall that?

13 A That's right.

14 Q Is that right?

15 Did you have any sense about what was about to happen to Ambassador
16 Yovanovitch when those calls were taking place?

17 A I can't recall precisely when I first saw some of the media
18 reporting, the open source reporting about concerns about Ambassador
19 Yovanovitch's ongoing position in Ukraine, and how that overlaps with
20 the precise timing of those two calls, but I do recall seeing within
21 April, the April timeframe, the media reporting about Ambassador
22 Yovanovitch.

23 Q And do you recall the substance of the media reporting that
24 you were seeing at that time?

25 A I recall there being stories about -- about certain

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1 individuals expressing concerns, including Mr. Giuliani, about
2 Ambassador Yovanovitch and her loyalty to the Trump administration,
3 but, again, it was all just open source reporting.

4 Q Do you recall who else was speaking about Ambassador
5 Yovanovitch in the press? You mentioned other persons besides Rudy
6 Giuliani.

7 A I recall -- and I couldn't give you the precise date -- that
8 I believe the President's son, Don Jr., at one point retweeted a story
9 about Ambassador Yovanovitch, but I couldn't tell you the timeline.

10 Q Did you have the opportunity to work with Ambassador
11 Yovanovitch on Ukraine before she was recalled?

12 A Not directly. She participated in, I believe, a couple of
13 interagency policy committee meetings, in which I also participated,
14 and so she was on screen via video teleconference. And so I listened
15 to her updates from post, but I had never met, and still have never
16 met her in person.

17 Q Were you familiar with her work in Ukraine, particularly on
18 anticorruption efforts?

19 A Only vaguely. Before coming to this position in the Vice
20 President's office, again, I was in our embassy in London and very much
21 focused on those issues. So I wasn't tracking the Ukraine issue quite
22 as closely.

23 Q What date did you join OVP?

24 A April 1st.

25 Q Okay. In April, was there any concern within the Office of

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1 the Vice President or the White House more generally about Ambassador
2 Yovanovitch that you were aware of?

3 A Not that I was aware of.

4 Q Did you ever speak with the Vice President about Ambassador
5 Yovanovitch before she was recalled?

6 A No, I never had a conversation with the Vice President about
7 Ambassador Yovanovitch. I believe I included a written update just
8 reporting on when her final date at post was and some of the press
9 reporting about her situation in a regular nightly update to the Vice
10 President, but I never had an in-person conversation.

11 Q What about with General Kellogg, did you ever discuss the
12 situation with him?

13 A Around that time as well, and I think it was late April when
14 that news was coming out, I raised some of the media reporting in one
15 of our regular staff meetings to General Kellogg.

16 Q And what did he -- how did he respond?

17 A We didn't have a fulsome conversation. It was more of I was
18 just providing him with an update, and he acknowledged that. And
19 later, I provided him with, you know, a written summary of some of the
20 media reporting I had seen for his awareness.

21 Q Did you have any discussions with anyone else in the Office
22 of the Vice President or the White House about these media reports about
23 Ambassador Yovanovitch, that you can recall?

24 A Around that time -- and, again, I couldn't give you a precise
25 date -- I recall speaking with Fiona Hill, Dr. Hill, and Lieutenant

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1 Colonel Vindman about the situation before it was clear whether
2 Ambassador Yovanovitch was going to be recalled. She had been recalled
3 to Washington for consultations. At that time, it wasn't clear if that
4 meant she was going to be leaving her post.

5 So I had a conversation with Dr. Hill about the situation, but
6 basically, we were both just expressing that it was unclear what was
7 going to happen, and that it seemed like it was a shame that she was
8 going to be removed from the position.

9 Q And why do you say it was a shame?

10 A In -- I think Dr. Hill had worked more closely with
11 Ambassador Yovanovitch, so that was really more her opinion. But from
12 what I had known from State Department colleagues, Ambassador
13 Yovanovitch had served a very dedicated and upstanding career,
14 including in her time in Kyiv. So we were not aware of any reason that
15 she would need to be recalled for cause.

16 Q Were you generally familiar with Ambassador Yovanovitch,
17 having been in the Foreign Service for so long? Had you heard of her
18 or her reputation?

19 A I had heard her name but, to be honest, I had been more focused
20 on Middle Eastern policy prior to going to London. So my understanding
21 is she's had more of a focus in Eurasia and Russia, so our paths really
22 hadn't crossed.

23 Q Okay. Around that time, had you ever heard of these
24 associates of Rudy Giuliani, Mr. Parnas, Lev Parnas? Had you heard
25 that name before?

1 A I had not, no.

2 Q What about Igor Fruman?

3 A No.

4 Q Were you familiar with any of their efforts to try to get
5 Ambassador Yovanovitch removed?

6 A No. I'd seen the broader media reporting, but I hadn't -- I
7 was not familiar with those two individuals.

8 Q Were you familiar, or did you have any awareness of this
9 dossier of material that was put together about -- it's derogatory
10 material of Ambassador Yovanovitch that was sent to the State
11 Department?

12 A I only became aware of that more recently through other
13 testimony and other discussions.

14 Q At the time you --

15 A No.

16 Q -- had no awareness that that had been compiled and sent to
17 the State Department?

18 A No.

19 Q Did you -- you said that you informed Vice President Pence
20 and General Kellogg about the removal of Ambassador Yovanovitch, is
21 that right, or were they already aware?

22 A Yes. I had provided a written update to the Vice President
23 in our regular daily report, just stating that Ambassador Yovanovitch's
24 last day at post, if I'm correct, was going to be May 6th and that -- and
25 provided some commentary about some of the media reports surrounding

1 her removal.

2 I was not aware of any other discussions or information outside
3 of those channels, and so, I did not provide those. And, again, I had
4 mentioned it to General Kellogg in a staff meeting.

5 Q Do you know whether Vice President Pence or General Kellogg
6 were otherwise aware of the situation involving Ambassador Yovanovitch
7 or that the President had concerns about her?

8 A I don't know. I'm not aware.

9 Q When did you first become aware of Rudy Giuliani's activities
10 in Ukraine?

11 A Through media reporting, I want to say probably early in
12 April, not long after I had started my position. I was aware of some
13 interviews that he had given regarding his concerns about corruption
14 and about things going on in Ukraine, but, again, it was all just from
15 open source reporting.

16 Q Were you aware of his tweets that he was sending out around
17 that time?

18 A I don't follow him on Twitter, so I hadn't seen them myself,
19 but I had seen them reported in the media.

20 Q And did you -- did there come a time when you became aware
21 that he was advocating for Ukraine to initiate certain investigations?

22 A I think the first media report I recall that was specific
23 to particular investigations was an interview he did with a Ukrainian
24 outlet towards the end of May. I want to say May 28th. And I saw that
25 in a written summary from our Embassy colleagues who do an English

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1 language translation of Ukrainian news on a daily basis.

2 And I noted that in that interview that Mr. Giuliani had given,
3 he referenced particular investigations that he would like to see the
4 Ukrainians undertake.

5 Q And which investigations were those?

6 A I believe they related to the 2016 election, and what role,
7 if any, Ukraine may have played in that, as well as looking into the
8 situation with former Vice President Biden's son and Burisma.

9 Q And you said that article you saw in late May. Prior to that,
10 were you aware that Giuliani was pressing for those investigations?

11 A That's the first time I recall seeing those particular
12 investigations mentioned by Mr. Giuliani in the press.

13 Q Do you recall a New York Times article in early May
14 that -- where Giuliani announced that he was going to be traveling to
15 Ukraine to try to meet with President Zelensky about these matters?

16 A I do. I recall that article. I just don't remember if those
17 particular investigations were mentioned in that article, but yes.

18 Q Okay. It seems like you followed the news about Ukraine
19 relatively closely after you started in the Office of the Vice
20 President. Is that fair to say?

21 A I do.

22 Q Did you ever discuss Rudy Giuliani's activities in Ukraine
23 with General Kellogg?

24 A Not -- not specifically. I had flagged the press coverage
25 of Mr. Giuliani's statements about what he wanted to see the Ukrainians

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1 do in the context of Ambassador Yovanovitch's removal, but other than
2 that had no specific discussions with General Kellogg about Mr.
3 Giuliani.

4 Q What about with the Vice President?

5 A No.

6 Q Did you flag those -- the news articles for the Vice
7 President?

8 A I had flagged the May 28th Ukrainian interview -- Ukrainian
9 media interview in a daily update for the Vice President, but had had
10 no personal conversations with him about it.

11 Q Okay. Did you become aware of Giuliani's interest in having
12 Ukraine investigate Burisma Holdings?

13 A I believe I became aware of it through that May 28th
14 interview. Again, I can't recall if it was also mentioned in the New
15 York Times interview -- or article from several weeks prior.

16 Q And from that article, did you become aware that Burisma was
17 connected to Hunter Biden at that time?

18 A I believe so, but the reason I hesitate is I still -- the
19 name Burisma hadn't really resonated with me at that time. I was
20 more -- I certainly recognized that he was interested in looking into
21 the role that former Vice President Biden's son had played on the board
22 of a company.

23 Q Okay. And sometime later, you made the connection that that
24 company was Burisma?

25 A That's right.

1 Q Did you know, you know, at whose direction Giuliani was
2 working on these matters in Ukraine?

3 A I did not.

4 Q Do you know the relationship between the President and
5 Giuliani?

6 A Only from what I can see in the press. I've never interacted
7 with Mr. Giuliani or seen him in person with the President.

8 Q And what was that relationship?

9 A According to press reporting, I understood Mr. Giuliani to
10 be working as the President's personal attorney.

11 Q Did you ever have any discussions with any of your colleagues
12 at the NSC about Giuliani's activities in Ukraine?

13 A Not specifically that I can recall. I think my colleagues
14 at the NSC were also tracking the press reporting about Mr. Giuliani's
15 interest in pushing the Ukrainians to undertake certain
16 investigations, but we never had really substantive conversations on
17 that issue specifically.

18 Q You never had -- you discussed concerns about what Giuliani
19 was up to in Ukraine with Lieutenant Colonel Vindman?

20 A I think if -- you know, if we're still in the context of
21 April-May, again, I spoke with Dr. Hill and Lieutenant Colonel Vindman
22 around the time of Ambassador Yovanovitch's removal, and we had no
23 specific information, but it seemed related to some of Mr. Giuliani's
24 statements about concerns about her performance and political leaning.

25 So, in that context, we discussed it. But, again, I don't recall

1 any really substantive discussions specifically about Mr. Giuliani.

2 Q Did it raise any kind of red flags for you that you had this
3 private citizen out in Ukraine, a country that you cover, pressing these
4 investigations, pressing for the removal of an Ambassador, and you're
5 kind of just learning about it in press reports?

6 A It wasn't clear at the time what exactly his role was and
7 how official it might be. Again, not being privy to the relationship
8 between Mr. Giuliani and the President, it really wasn't clear at that
9 time, or really throughout the course of the summer, what kind of role
10 he was playing and in what kind of capacity, and how that might overlap
11 with our official U.S.-Ukraine foreign policy.

12 Q Or not?

13 A Or not.

14 Q Did you -- do you know whether Vice President Pence ever had
15 any meetings or phone calls or other communications with Giuliani?

16 A Not to my knowledge.

17 Q What about General Kellogg?

18 A Not to my knowledge.

19 Q Aside from what Rudy Giuliani was up to in Ukraine, were you
20 aware of any other kind of unofficial or back channel lines of
21 information that were flowing to the President on Ukraine?

22 A No, no. And, again, for Mr. Giuliani was only through press
23 reporting.

24 Q Are you familiar with the May 13th meeting between President
25 Trump and Prime Minister Orban of Hungary?

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1 A Yes, I am. I believe the Vice President also participated
2 in that meeting, so I prepared the Vice President for that meeting as
3 well.

4 Q Do you know whether there was any discussion about Ukraine
5 during that meeting?

6 A I understood that there was from receiving a readout from
7 NSC colleagues afterwards, but I was not in the meeting.

8 Q You were not in the meeting?

9 A No.

10 Q Okay. Do you recall what the readout said about the
11 conversation relating to Ukraine?

12 A I recall NSC colleagues reporting that Mr. Orban had
13 expressed some concerns about Ukraine, but, to be honest, I don't really
14 remember specifics of his concerns.

15 Q Did you or General Kellogg ever participate in any calls or
16 meetings between President Trump and President Putin where the matter
17 of Ukraine came up?

18 A No. And I'm just thinking. I recall seeing a readout of
19 one of the President's calls with President Putin I believe also in
20 late May, in which Ukraine had come up, but General Kellogg and I were
21 not on the call or present for the call.

22 Q You saw a readout or a memcon of the call?

23 A That's right.

24 Q Do you recall what it said about Ukraine?

25 A I really don't. I'm sorry. I know that it came up in the

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1 context I think of wanting to see a resolution to the ongoing conflict
2 with Ukraine, but I don't recall the specifics of that part of the
3 conversation.

4 Q You don't recall anything about what President Putin may have
5 said to President Trump about Ukraine?

6 A I don't.

7 Q Anything about security assistance, U.S. security
8 assistance to Ukraine?

9 A In conversation with President Putin?

10 Q Yes.

11 A No.

12 Q Are you familiar with an NSC staffer named Kash Patel?

13 A No. I've seen his name come up more recently in press
14 reporting related to this inquiry, and I've seen -- I've been on email
15 chains with him. He works in a different directorate than the European
16 Bureau with whom I work most closely. So I knew his name, but I didn't
17 know him or what his role was.

18 Q Do you know whether he had any involvement in Ukraine matters
19 at the NSC?

20 A I was not aware that he had any. I've seen press reporting
21 since that time that indicate that he may have, but --

22 Q You have no personal knowledge of that?

23 A No.

24 Q Are you familiar of whether Mr. Patel ever traveled to Europe
25 in his current role as the counterterrorism Senior Director at the NSC?

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1 A I'm not aware.

2 Q So I'd like to turn to the inauguration of President Zelensky
3 in -- I believe that was on May 20th.

4 A Uh-huh.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Is there any more light you can shed on the
6 concerns that Orban expressed on Ukraine?

7 MS. WILLIAMS: Mr. Chairman, I'm trying to recall, but I honestly
8 don't really recall a lot of the detail of what exactly they discussed.
9 I understand -- I recall that Mr. Orban had some concerns about
10 Ukraine. There's an ongoing issue that Hungary has been blocking
11 ongoing NATO cooperation with Ukraine over a very specific issue
12 related to rights of Hungarians living in Ukraine to speak and be taught
13 Hungarian language.

14 So a fairly niche issue, but it's something that's important to
15 President Orban. So I believe that was part of the discussion. But
16 other than that, since I wasn't in the room, I don't know if there were
17 more -- you know, further discussion about Ukraine.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: And do you have any sense why Orban would bring
19 up Ukraine in a conversation with the U.S. President?

20 MS. WILLIAMS: I can't speak to what his motivations might have
21 been.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: As a general matter, does Mr. Orban take a very
23 pro-Russia perspective on issues of conflict between the U.S. and
24 Russia?

25 MS. WILLIAMS: I believe it's fair to say in our experience that

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1 President Orban does tend to -- yes, does tend to have more pro-Russia
2 views on certain issues.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: And that would include Ukraine?

4 MS. WILLIAMS: I believe that's fair to say.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: And do you know whether there were any commitments
6 made by the President to Mr. Orban during that conversation vis-a-vis
7 Ukraine?

8 MS. WILLIAMS: I'm not aware of any.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: And during the call between President Putin and
10 President Trump, were there any asks by President Putin vis-a-vis
11 Ukraine?

12 MS. WILLIAMS: I don't recall any.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Or any commitments made by the President?

14 MS. WILLIAMS: Not to my recollection.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Noble.

16 BY MR. NOBLE:

17 Q Was there any discussion in the White House or the Office
18 of the Vice President about Prime Minister Orban's concerns about
19 Ukraine?

20 A Again, to the best of my recollection, in preparation for
21 that meeting, we were tracking most closely Hungary's concerns about
22 the rights, as they would say, the rights of the Hungarian population
23 living in Ukraine. And the U.S. position is -- has always been to try
24 to encourage Hungary to stop blocking further NATO cooperation with
25 Ukraine.

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1 And so, for example, I had prepared the Vice President to speak
2 to that issue if Ukraine came up in the meeting. But, again, I wasn't
3 in the meeting, so I don't know exactly what was discussed.

4 Q Do you know whether the Vice President followed those talking
5 points --

6 A I don't know.

7 Q -- you provided for him?

8 A I don't know if the issue was raised.

9 Q Before we go to the inauguration, I want to go back to
10 Giuliani briefly. Did you ever discuss -- I asked you about your
11 colleagues at NSC, but how about the State Department? Did you ever
12 discuss with Mr. Kent or Mr. Reeker about Giuliani and what he was up
13 to in Ukraine?

14 A No.

15 Q No, okay.

16 Aside from President Putin, Prime Minister Orban, are you aware
17 of any other conversations President Trump had with any foreign leader
18 relating to Ukraine, aside from President Zelensky?

19 A In that particular timeframe?

20 Q Yeah. Or ever, since then, since you joined OVP.

21 A I mean, I would say that Ukraine is a shared priority country
22 for a number of our Western European allies. And so, I can't recall
23 specifically, but I believe that the President has spoken with
24 President Macron and the Prime Ministers of the U.K., at the time
25 Theresa May, more recently Boris Johnson, and others about, for

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1 example, European efforts to work towards, you know, implementation
2 of the Normandy process in order to find resolution to the ongoing
3 conflict in Ukraine. So I believe it's come up in that context with
4 other leaders, but I couldn't tell you specific dates or conversations.

5 Q Okay. So you said, during the April 21st call with President
6 Trump, April 23rd with Vice President Pence, President Zelensky raised
7 the invitation to come to his inauguration. Is that right?

8 A That's right.

9 Q Can you describe the -- kind of the followup from those phone
10 calls, leading up to the inauguration on May 20th, specifically, like
11 whether -- discussions about whether the President would attend,
12 whether Vice President Pence would attend, or who would represent the
13 United States at the inauguration?

14 A Sure. So shortly after the President's April 21st
15 conversation, I learned through email from our chief of staff that the
16 President had asked the Vice President to attend the inauguration.
17 Again, at that time the date of the inauguration had not yet been set.

18 Q Can I pause you for a second?

19 A Of course.

20 Q You mentioned chief of staff. Do you mean Mick Mulvaney or
21 the Vice President's chief of staff?

22 A The Vice President's chief of staff.

23 Q And who is that?

24 A Marc Short.

25 Q I'm sorry, I interrupted. I just wanted to get a name on

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1 the record.

2 A No, that's okay. That's fine completely.

3 So I learned from our chief of staff, Marc Short, that we should
4 start planning for the Vice President to possibly participate
5 if -- again, if the dates worked out.

6 One of the scheduling constraints that we were looking at was,
7 our understanding at the time, was that the Ukrainians were looking
8 to have the inauguration towards the end of May, maybe early June was
9 the best information that our Embassy colleagues in Kyiv had at the
10 time.

11 President Trump was going to be traveling overseas, both at the
12 end of May and early in June, so there was a very narrow window in which
13 the Vice President would be able to travel overseas, in order to avoid
14 a double absence.

15 So, from a scheduling perspective, we were planning, but it really
16 would depend on when the Ukrainians decided to nail down the specific
17 date. So we started that kind of planning process, just in
18 hypothetical terms, I suppose.

19 Q And do you know who recommended that Vice President Pence
20 attend the inauguration, whose idea it was?

21 A My understanding from our chief of staff, Marc Short, was
22 that the President asked the Vice President to attend shortly after
23 the President's phone call with President Zelensky on April 21st.

24 Q And was the Vice President amenable to that? Was he
25 enthusiastic about going to show support for Zelensky, or what was his

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1 attitude?

2 A I wasn't present when he was asked specifically, so I can't
3 really speak to that. But I can say that in the phone call that the
4 Vice President had 2 days later, obviously, the issue of the
5 inauguration came up as well, and the Vice President accepted that
6 invitation from President Zelensky, and looked forward to being able
7 to attend, again, if the dates worked out.

8 Q Can you explain why Vice President Pence did not attend,
9 ended up not attending?

10 A My understanding was on May 13th, at some time in the morning,
11 I received a phone call from our chief of staff's office from one of
12 my colleagues saying that the Vice President would not be attending
13 the inauguration.

14 Q And who was that colleague?

15 A I believe it was the chief of staff's assistant.

16 Q And why wasn't Vice President Pence going to attend? Had
17 he received further direction from somebody at the White House?

18 A My understanding from my colleague -- and, again, I wasn't
19 there for the conversation -- was that the President asked the Vice
20 President not to attend.

21 Q Do you know did that phone call from Mr. Short's office come
22 before or after the meeting with Prime Minister Orban that day? That
23 was May 13th, right, you said?

24 A It was. I don't recall precisely what time the Orban meeting
25 took place. I recall that I spoke to my colleague in the chief of

1 staff's office somewhere after 11 a.m., around that timeframe, maybe
2 11:15, 11:30. But I don't recall what time the Orban meeting was.

3 Q After it was decided that Vice President Pence was not going
4 to attend the inauguration, were you involved any further at that point
5 in helping prep the delegation that ended up going?

6 A So when I learned that the Vice President would not be
7 attending, I called my NSC colleagues. I called Lieutenant Colonel
8 Vindman to let him know that the Vice President was not able to attend,
9 since it was really the National Security Council's responsibility to
10 then form a U.S. delegation. So I wanted them to know that.

11 And then since we had already started making initial steps towards
12 the Vice President's travel to Ukraine for that possible event, I
13 alerted State Department and Embassy Kyiv colleagues that the Vice
14 President would not be attending, and then referred them to the NSC
15 for further discussion about a U.S. delegation.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: I'm going to just follow up. I just want to see
17 if I can go through the dates with you. What date was it that you
18 learned from Marc Short that the President wanted the Vice President
19 to attend the inauguration?

20 MS. WILLIAMS: April 21st.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: And what date did you learn from the assistant to
22 Mr. Short that the President now wanted him not to attend?

23 MS. WILLIAMS: May 13th.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: So at some point between April 21st and May 13th,
25 the directive from the President changed from wanting him to attend

1 to not wanting him to attend. Is that right?

2 MS. WILLIAMS: Those are the dates on which I was informed. I
3 can't really speak to the -- to what the directive may have been, but
4 it would appear so.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Were you ever given a reason for the President's
6 change of mind on this?

7 MS. WILLIAMS: No.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: And up until the directive was given for the Vice
9 President not to attend, were preparations being made for the Vice
10 President to attend?

11 MS. WILLIAMS: They were. We were making preparations. But,
12 again, since the date hadn't actually been selected, it was very
13 preliminary. We hadn't gotten very far.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: But it was the Vice President's intention,
15 assuming that it worked with his calendar, to follow the President's
16 recommendation that he attend?

17 MS. WILLIAMS: That's right.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Noble.

19 BY MR. NOBLE:

20 Q At that point, had you had any interactions with the
21 Ambassador to the EU, Gordon Sondland?

22 A I don't believe I had at that point, no.

23 Q And were you aware of how he came to be added to the
24 delegation?

25 A I saw his name on the final list of the delegation members,

1 but since at that point, the Vice President wasn't involved, I wasn't
2 personally involved in the discussions of who would be part of that
3 delegation.

4 Q After the trip, did you get a readout of the various meetings
5 that occurred in Kyiv from, like, Alexander Vindman or anyone else?

6 A I did. While the delegation was on the ground for the May
7 20th inauguration, Alex Vindman had sent some email updates regarding
8 their meetings, and it sounded like they had been very successful, that
9 the delegation, which ended up being led by Secretary Perry, had been
10 very impressed with President Zelensky. And I understood from that
11 communication that the delegation was eager to come back and meet with
12 the President to convey what they had heard from the Ukrainians.

13 Q Did Alex Vindman tell you about any conversations he had with
14 President Zelensky while he was on the ground in Kyiv?

15 A I'm sorry, conversations with whom?

16 Q Sorry. Yeah, I'll say it again. Did Alexander Vindman tell
17 you about any conversations that he had with President Zelensky during
18 the inauguration activities in Kyiv?

19 A Just the two of them?

20 Q The two of them, or in front of other people, the meetings
21 with Zelensky.

22 A The readout I received from Lieutenant Colonel Vindman was
23 describing the delegation's meeting with President Zelensky. So it
24 was really describing the conversation that the whole group had had.

25 Q Did he say anything about the issue of advising President

1 Zelensky to stay out of U.S. domestic politics come up?

2 A Whether that issue had come up?

3 Q Whether that had come up.

4 A I don't recall that coming up in the context of those meetings
5 in Ukraine for the inauguration. But, to be honest, I just don't recall
6 precisely.

7 Q So you got a readout from Lieutenant Colonel Vindman. How
8 about anybody else, any other members of the delegation?

9 A Not specifically. I'm trying to think if, perhaps, George
10 Kent had sent a separate email, but I don't believe so.

11 Q Just going back to the Vice President's potential trip there,
12 are you aware of whether Vice President Pence had any scheduling
13 conflicts that would have prevented him from attending the inauguration
14 on May 20th?

15 A Well, again, when the directive -- when the discussion on
16 May 13th took place, the date for the actual inauguration had not yet
17 been set. So it was not possible for us to say at that time whether
18 there was going to be a scheduling conflict. Once it was set 3 days
19 later, I just don't recall what was on the Vice President's schedule
20 for May 20th in the end, since we had already known that he wasn't going
21 to be attending.

22 Q Okay. Now, did you come to be aware -- I'm going to ask you
23 some questions about Ambassador Sondland. Did you come to be aware
24 that he was involved in Ukraine matters at some point?

25 A I recall -- I imagine -- I think my first awareness of

1 Ambassador Sondland's involvement would have been when I saw that he
2 was participating in the delegation to attend the inauguration.

3 Q Had you ever met or spoke with him before that?

4 A No.

5 Q And did you have an understanding of why Ambassador Sondland,
6 as the Ambassador to the EU, was now involved in Ukraine?

7 A I didn't know specifically, no.

8 Q Did you ever come to learn why?

9 A No.

10 Q Did that strike you as odd, or --

11 A I guess I assumed just because the EU is also very involved
12 in Ukraine, and has made it a foreign policy priority for the European
13 Union to also foster a good relationship with Ukraine, and were also
14 very eager to see the new President Zelensky administration come in,
15 I assumed it was related to that, but I didn't know specifically.

16 Q You weren't aware of whether he had been tasked by the
17 President to play some role in Ukraine?

18 A No.

19 Q Did you ever discuss Ambassador Sondland's role in Ukraine
20 with General Kellogg?

21 A No.

22 Q Or with the Vice President?

23 A No.

24 Q How about your colleagues at NSC?

25 A Not in terms of his role and why he was involved. More

1 related to, you know, again, that he was going to be part of the
2 delegation, and then also, a part of the debriefing with the President
3 after the return of the delegation after the inauguration, but no
4 specific conversations with them about Ambassador Sondland's role.

5 Q Who did you discuss Ambassador Sondland's participation in
6 the delegation and the debrief with the President at NSC?

7 A It was in regular conversation with Lieutenant Colonel
8 Vindman about the -- the effort to put together the final delegation
9 list, just so I could keep my office informed of that process. And
10 then I flagged for Alex Vindman, upon the group's return, that if the
11 Vice President were available, he would probably want to be part of
12 that debrief since he hadn't been present for the meetings with
13 President Zelensky. I -- if I recall correctly, I don't believe the
14 Vice President was actually in that meeting in the end.

15 Q And that's the debrief that occurred on May 23rd?

16 A That's right.

17 Q Were you involved in the debrief at all?

18 A No.

19 Q You were generally aware that it was happening?

20 A I was aware that it was happening, yeah.

21 Q I mean, as somebody who follows Ukraine for the Vice
22 President, I mean, were you -- did you get a readout from the May 23rd
23 meeting what happened in the Oval Office?

24 A Not a detailed readout. Again, I was in regular contact with
25 Lieutenant Colonel Vindman about, you know, kind of next steps on our

1 Ukraine policy. And I understood that that meeting had taken place
2 and that the delegation had come back from Ukraine with a very positive
3 view of President Zelensky, but I didn't get a detailed readout of how
4 that meeting had gone.

5 Q Were you aware of whether Lieutenant Colonel Vindman
6 participated in the debrief in the Oval Office or not?

7 A I don't know, to be honest. I don't think he did, but I'm
8 not 100 percent sure.

9 Q Do you know why he did not participate?

10 A I don't.

11 Q Did you speak with anybody else about what happened in the
12 Oval Office on May 23rd?

13 A No. No conversations, no.

14 Q Were you aware of how President Trump reacted to the
15 delegation's recommendations upon their return?

16 A No. I never got a detailed readout of the meeting.

17 Q Did you ever have any communications with Ambassador Volker
18 relating to Ukraine?

19 A Not me personally. I was on some email chains in which he
20 was a part of those conversations as well, but no.

21 Q Did you ever participate in any meetings with Ambassador
22 Volker?

23 A I did. I don't recall the precise date, but I want to say
24 maybe early May, Ambassador Volker had a regular series of video
25 conferences with his French and German, maybe British, but I think

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1 mostly French and German counterparts to -- it was kind of a small group
2 that were all pushing towards progress in the Normandy process.

3 And so they were just kind of comparing notes on what each of those
4 countries had taken away from initial engagements with the Zelensky
5 administration. So I recall I joined one of those video conferences
6 that Ambassador Volker chaired at some point in May. I can't recall
7 the date.

8 Q But never had any direct conversations with him about matters
9 relating to Ukraine?

10 A No.

11 Q Did either Ambassador Volker or Ambassador Sondland ever
12 contact the Office of the Vice President or have any communications
13 with the Vice President, to your knowledge?

14 A Not to my knowledge.

15 Q What about with General Kellogg, either of the Ambassadors?

16 A Not to my knowledge.

17 Q Were you at all aware of Ambassador Volker and Ambassador
18 Sondland's communications with Rudy Giuliani --

19 A No.

20 Q -- beginning in or around July of 2019?

21 A No, I was not aware.

22 Q So you had no idea that they were talking to Rudy Giuliani
23 about Ukraine matters?

24 A No.

25 Q Did you ever have any interactions with Ambassador Bolton

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1 or Dr. Kupperman?

2 A About Ukraine?

3 Q Relating to Ukraine or -- or more generally, what was your
4 kind of -- you interacted with Alexander Vindman and you said
5 Mr. Morrison and Dr. Hill sometimes. Did you ever have any
6 interactions with kind of their superiors at the NSC?

7 A Not one-on-one interactions. I participated in several
8 meetings that either Ambassador Bolton or Dr. Kupperman chaired, but
9 no personal conversations with them. The closest I had was probably
10 when Ambassador Bolton participated in a prebrief with the Vice
11 President in -- on September 1st in Poland.

12 Q Okay. We'll talk a little bit about that when we get there.
13 Okay.

14 Now, you said you had -- you were at least on some emails with
15 Ambassador Taylor relating to Ukraine. Is that right?

16 A That's right.

17 Q Was anybody in the Office of the Vice President, you or anyone
18 else, in communication with Ambassador Taylor before he was sent back
19 to Kyiv in June?

20 A No, not prior to -- no.

21 Q Were you aware at all that he was going to be appointed Charge
22 d'affaires for Ukraine?

23 A I had heard his name. I couldn't tell you precisely when,
24 but I had heard that there was discussion of sending him out there.
25 And I had -- I didn't know him personally. I had heard that he was

1 a prior -- a previous Ambassador to Ukraine, and a very well-respected
2 foreign service officer, so -- but I didn't know him personally.

3 Q Following the delegation to the inauguration and the meeting
4 in the Oval Office on May 23rd, were you aware of a letter that President
5 Trump sent to President Zelensky, which included an invitation to come
6 visit the White House?

7 A Yes, I was aware of the letter.

8 Q Was that letter circulated in advance to the Office of the
9 Vice President?

10 A No. My understanding was that NSC colleagues had done an
11 initial draft of a letter, of a congratulations letter. I believe the
12 initial plan was that Secretary Perry would take the signed letter with
13 him to deliver it in person, but I believe it wasn't signed before they
14 left, so that hadn't occurred.

15 And I believe there was discussion in the Oval Office meeting on
16 the 23rd about the letter, but, again, I wasn't there so I don't know
17 what they discussed precisely.

18 Q Do you know how an invitation to the White House got added
19 to that letter?

20 A I don't. My understanding afterwards, after it was signed
21 from some email correspondence, was that Ambassador Sondland was
22 certainly supportive of extending an invitation to Zelensky in that
23 letter. But, again, I wasn't privy to the conversation, so I don't
24 know what the discussion was back and forth on that issue.

25 Q Did you ever have any discussions with General Kellogg or

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1 the Vice President about whether or not to support a visit for President
2 Zelensky to the White House?

3 A I don't believe so, no specific conversations with either
4 about that issue.

5 Q Were you familiar with whether or not they were supportive
6 of that idea or not supportive?

7 A I believe in general, they were supportive of fostering a
8 good strong working relationship with President Zelensky, but, to my
9 recollection, I don't recall ever having a specific conversation about
10 offering a White House visit to President Zelensky.

11 Q Did you take any steps to try to help schedule the meeting?

12 A I was not involved in that process. NSC really leads that
13 process. I was aware that NSC had, you know, through the normal
14 administrative processes put forward a scheduling proposal for that
15 to go -- to be considered by the schedulers. But the Office of the
16 Vice President was not involved in that process.

17 Q Were you, though, generally supportive of a meeting between
18 President Trump and President Zelensky?

19 A I was.

20 Q Were you aware of any role that Ambassador Volker or
21 Ambassador Sondland or Rudy Giuliani were playing in whether or not
22 to schedule a meeting with President Trump and President Zelensky?

23 A No, I was not.

24 Q At the time?

25 A At the time, no.

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1 Q Did you have any discussions with your colleagues at the NSC
2 about scheduling the meeting?

3 A I don't recall any specific discussions on that issue, other
4 than I was aware that they certainly were supportive of the meeting
5 being scheduled as well.

6 Within the course of our interagency policy coordination process,
7 our regular meetings on Ukraine with interagency colleagues, once the
8 letter -- once the President's letter had been signed that offered the
9 meeting, it was discussed on a number of occasions what would be the
10 most opportune date for a White House meeting to take place.

11 My recollection is that agencies were generally supportive of
12 waiting until after the Ukraine parliamentary elections on July 21st
13 were over, just to see how those went and to make sure that it wasn't
14 interfering at all with that political process. But other than that,
15 I don't recall any specific discussions about scheduling the meeting.

1 [10:35 a.m.]

2 BY MR. NOBLE:

3 Q Okay. You mentioned kind of interagency coordination on
4 Ukraine. Were you aware of a June 18th meeting and conference call
5 that was held from Secretary Perry's office on June 18th?

6 A No.

7 Q What about a June 28th conference call involving Ambassadors
8 Volker, Sondland, Taylor, and Secretary Perry?

9 A No.

10 Q Are you aware that they spoke with President Zelensky later
11 that day?

12 A I was not aware of that, no.

13 Q Are you at all familiar with Ambassador Volker's and Mr.
14 Kent's trip to Toronto on July 2nd and 3rd where they met with President
15 Zelensky?

16 A I am aware that they participated in the Toronto -- the
17 Ukraine Reform Conference that took place in Toronto on those dates,
18 yes.

19 Q Did you speak with either of them in advance of those
20 meetings?

21 A Not with those two individuals, no.

22 Q Did you ever get a read-out of what happened in Toronto?

23 A No, not precisely. There had been an original discussion
24 whether the Vice President would participate in that conference, but
25 he did not because of a scheduling conflict, so after that I really

1 wasn't involved in that process.

2 Q Why was the Vice President possibly going to participant in
3 the Toronto conference? Is that something that the Vice President
4 normally would attend? Is that that type of conference?

5 A Not normally, but we thought it might be a good opportunity
6 for the Vice President to meet President Zelensky in person since he
7 hadn't had a chance to do that at that time or at that point.

8 In the end, though, it really just didn't make sense logistically
9 since the Vice President had just been in Canada several weeks prior,
10 and the conference itself really wasn't at the Vice President's level,
11 it was a ministerial level.

12 Q Are you aware of whether Ambassador Volker had kind of a
13 one-on-one separate and apart with President Zelensky in Toronto? Did
14 you ever hear anything about that?

15 A I understood that they were planning to have a -- well, I
16 didn't know if it was a one-on-one -- but that the group that ended
17 up going to the conference planned to meet with Zelensky separate from
18 the conference, but I wasn't really involved in either the planning
19 for that or any of the read-outs afterwards.

20 Q Are you familiar with meetings that took place at the White
21 House on July 10th involving Ukrainian officials Andrey Yermak and
22 Oleksandr Danylyuk?

23 A I am aware of them because my boss, General Kellogg, met with
24 the group on the day before, on July 9th, but I was not involved at
25 all in the July 10th meeting.

1 Q Let's talk a little bit about the July 9th meeting. What
2 was the purpose of the meeting between General Kellogg and the
3 Ukrainians?

4 A Alex Vindman was helping coordinate the Ukrainian
5 delegation's engagements in Washington. So he had alerted me that the
6 group was coming, and we thought it would be a useful discussion for
7 General Kellogg to have, as well, to get to know the group, and to hear,
8 you know, the latest of what President Zelensky's administration was
9 doing on a range of issues. So I arranged a meeting to take place on
10 July 9th.

11 Q And where did that take place?

12 A In General Kellogg's office.

13 Q Who participated?

14 A For the U.S. side it was General Kellogg, Alex Vindman, and
15 myself.

16 Q And what was the discussion?

17 A It was a very positive discussion, probably about 30,
18 40 minutes, about the status. It was very security-focused,
19 obviously. Secretary Danylyuk was at the time the national security
20 advisor to President Zelensky. So it was more focused on the situation
21 with the conflict with Russia, you know, what steps the Zelensky
22 administration was considering in terms of making progress in those
23 negotiations, and, generally speaking, about the U.S.-Ukraine
24 relationship, but not about anything more specific than that.

25 Q Did a topic of a White House meeting for President Zelensky

1 ever come up in that meeting?

2 A Not to my recollection.

3 Q Anything about security assistance?

4 A Not security assistance --

5 Q U.S. security assistance to Ukraine?

6 A Right. Right. No, just broadly about kind of the
7 U.S.-Ukraine security assistance relationship, but not about any
8 specific assistance funding, if that makes sense.

9 Q Now, you said Danylyuk was the national security advisor to
10 President Zelensky. Are you aware he's since resigned --

11 A Yes.

12 Q -- or is no longer in that position?

13 A Yes.

14 Q Do you know the circumstances of that, why he is no longer
15 serving as national security advisor?

16 A I don't know specifically, and I can't recall exactly when
17 it was either. I want to say end of September.

18 Q Did you have any involvement in the meetings the next day,
19 on July 10th, with Danylyuk and Yermak?

20 A I did not.

21 Q You weren't in Ambassador Bolton's office?

22 A No.

23 Q Were you aware that there was a second meeting in the Ward
24 Room?

25 A No.

1 Q You know nothing about either of those meetings?

2 A No. I mean, I knew that they were coming in the next day
3 to meet with Ambassador Bolton, but I was not a part of them.

4 Q Did you ever speak with Alexander Vindman or Dr. Hill about
5 what happened in those meetings?

6 A No.

7 Q No.

8 A No. I assumed it would have been a similar conversation to
9 what we had had the day before, so I never reached out to get a specific
10 read-out.

11 Q And they never told you about what had happened?

12 A No.

13 Q Or that they had concerns about what had happened in those
14 meetings?

15 A No.

16 Q Okay. When did you first learn of the hold on Ukraine
17 security assistance -- U.S. security assistance to Ukraine?

18 A I believe it was July 3rd.

19 Q And how did you learn about it?

20 A I saw an email -- or, I suppose, a written update,
21 electronically, that was drafted by Alex Vindman,
22 reporting -- internally reporting that the State Department had
23 notified him that OMB was not clearing the latest round of congressional
24 notification documents to move the next tranche of security assistance
25 for Ukraine.

1 Q Do you recall who else was on that email?

2 A It was really an internal update that Alex had drafted that
3 I'm part of the distribution list for, but it was just within the NSC
4 Europe team.

5 Q Okay. And that's the distribution list, is the NSC Europe
6 team?

7 A Well, it's in preparation for a nightly update for the
8 national security advisor. So the national security advisor would
9 have eventually received it. But what I saw was an email just as the
10 product was being crafted for the day.

11 Q Okay. Prior to that July 3rd email, did you have any inkling
12 that the U.S. security assistance was going to be put on hold?

13 A No.

14 Q Had there been any discussions about it at the NSC to your
15 knowledge?

16 A No.

17 Q Had you heard anything about it from OMB?

18 A No.

19 Q No. So this kind of came out of the blue?

20 A It did.

21 Q In the email did Alex Vindman provide any reason or relay
22 any reason as to why OMB hadn't cleared the State funds?

23 A No. At that time it was unclear. I believe that the
24 note -- the update indicated that OMB was holding the assistance in
25 order to conduct a further review to ensure that the security assistance

1 was still in line with administration priorities.

2 Q Is that what it said in the email?

3 A That's what it said in the email.

4 Q And did Alex Vindman say where he got that information from?

5 A I believe the State Department had reported it to him because
6 that's what OMB had told the State Department. I don't know which
7 individuals were involved in that.

8 Q And you said that email was in preparation for a nightly
9 update to the national security advisor?

10 A That's right.

11 Q That's John Bolton?

12 A Correct.

13 Q Would you also prepare a nightly update for General Kellogg
14 or for the Vice President and include such information?

15 A We do a daily product. I chose not to include that update
16 on that date because it just wasn't really clear at that time what the
17 reason might have been for the hold, whether it was maybe just more
18 of an administrative or technical issue. And, generally speaking, I
19 don't keep the Vice President informed of that level of detail.

20 MR. NOBLE: Okay. I think my time is up, so I'll turn it over
21 to my Republican colleagues.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: One hour for the minority.

23 MR. CASTOR: Thank you.

24 BY MR. CASTOR:

25 Q When was the inauguration date finally set by the Ukrainian

1 Parliament --

2 A May 16th.

3 Q -- the Rada?

4 A Sorry. May 16th.

5 Q And the inaugural was on May 20th?

6 A That's right.

7 Q So there were 4 days in between the --

8 A Yes. Yes. It was a very short notice turnaround in the end.

9 We had been told essentially it was because the Ukrainian Parliament
10 needed to come back into session in order to officially confirm the
11 inauguration date, and it wasn't clear what date President Zelensky
12 would end up recommending to the Parliament. We had been told that
13 they were looking at the end of May window, but in the end they decided
14 to move it up to May 20th.

15 Q Between the time period of April 21st, when you first learned
16 that the VP may be going to the inaugural, and the date of the inaugural,
17 what types of communications had you been having with the folks in Kyiv?

18 A Just regular email correspondence just to hear what they were
19 hearing from the Ukrainians about what dates were maybe under
20 consideration.

21 But we all recognized that we would not have a final date
22 determined until, I believe it was the week of May 13th when the
23 Ukrainian Parliament came back into session. So it was speculation
24 based on their communications with the Ukrainian officials.

25 Q Okay. So you knew it would be May 13th?

1 A Yes, but we would have to wait until that week to know for
2 sure when the inauguration date would be set.

3 Q You mentioned the President was traveling. I believe he was
4 in Japan and then he was going to Europe.

5 A That's right.

6 Q You said that you were trying to fit the VP into that space
7 when the President would be in the U.S. Is that correct?

8 A That's correct. So we had informed the Ukrainians that if
9 they wanted the Vice President to attend, the ideal dates for us would
10 have been May 29th, May 30th, or June 1st, and if it wasn't one of those
11 dates it would be very difficult or impossible.

12 Q Knowing that you wouldn't have certainty until May 13th or
13 14th or 15th or 16th, did the VP's office take any affirmative steps
14 to plan the trip?

15 A We did. I had been in touch with our advance colleagues,
16 the team that manages the Vice President's travel, so that they could
17 at least have initial conversations with their embassy counterparts
18 on, you know, logistical arrangements in terms of hotel availability
19 and security and those type of things. But it was still very much
20 preliminary since we didn't have a date.

21 Q Do you know if they reserved any hotels or made --

22 A I believe -- I can't speak to the specifics since I was not
23 involved, but from the email chains that I saw, I believe they were
24 exploring availability of hotel dates. I don't know what steps were
25 taken to make any reservations.

1 Q Do you know if the Secret Service deployed for their advance
2 work?

3 A The main conversation I was having with our advance
4 colleagues at that time was they were very eager to send out Secret
5 Service and other advance colleagues as soon as possible so they could
6 do proper planning. And so that was the ongoing discussion up until
7 May 13th, was when can we send out the advance team since we just didn't
8 know.

9 Q Do you know if the advance team deployed?

10 A I don't know. I don't believe they did in the end, but I'm
11 not 100 percent confident.

12 Q You don't know if any hotels were actually booked or
13 reserved?

14 A I believe they were just exploring availability of hotels
15 since we still didn't have a firm date.

16 Q Okay. Would the Vice President have been able to attend on
17 May 20th?

18 A As I mentioned, I don't really recall at this time what was
19 on his schedule for May 20th. Obviously, in the end, it was a very
20 short notice, so it would have been difficult, particularly since we
21 hadn't sent out the advance team, as far as I recall. But I just don't
22 recall what was on his schedule that day.

23 Q But the window you had provided to the Ukrainians was May
24 29th, 30th, 31st?

25 A That's correct, right, and June 1st, because that was the

1 window we were expecting them to be aiming for.

2 Q Okay.

3 A To be honest, we hadn't really looked that closely at the
4 Vice President's schedule before the President's trip at the end of
5 May just because we weren't expecting the Ukrainians to look at that
6 timeframe.

7 Q Okay. And when you -- you mentioned that you heard from Marc
8 Short, one of Marc Short's staffers?

9 A That's right.

10 Q And what did that person tell you on May 13th?

11 A It was a phone call, so I don't recall the precise language.
12 But I recall being advised that the Vice President would not be
13 attending the inauguration. I recall -- I believe I asked, why not?
14 And I was told that the President had told him not to go.

15 Q Okay. But you never had any firsthand knowledge from
16 anybody other than this person?

17 A Correct, I never had --

18 Q What function does this person perform?

19 A She is an assistant to Marc Short, our Chief of Staff, and
20 is very much involved in the scheduling of the Vice President's
21 schedule.

22 Q Okay. Did you ever have any follow-ups with anybody about
23 the decision of the VP not to travel?

24 A The only conversation I had was, immediately after learning
25 that information, I called my NSC counterparts to let them know just

1 so they could start planning next steps.

2 Q But did you have a conversation with General Kellogg?

3 A No. I don't recall. I probably let him know what I had
4 heard, because I don't believe he was involved in that conversation
5 either.

6 Q Okay.

7 A But no followup discussion as to the reason why.

8 Q Okay. Any other communications with any other VP office
9 staff?

10 A Around that same time of the initial phone call, I also was
11 in touch with our head of advance to let him know, since he needed to
12 turn off the trip planning process and alert his colleagues.

13 Q Okay. And then did you also communicate back to Kyiv that
14 the VP was unable to --

15 A I did later that day. I sent an email to State Department
16 and Embassy Kyiv colleagues to let them know that the Vice President
17 would not be attending.

18 Q And do you know what you said?

19 A I believe my language was that the Vice President would not
20 be able to attend. And then I put them in touch with NSC colleagues
21 for further steps on who would be included in the U.S. delegation once
22 the date was set.

23 MR. PERRY: Ma'am, if I could ask -- down here at
24 the -- Representative Perry from Pennsylvania. What's the normal, if
25 there is a normal lead time or a bracket of a normal lead time for a

1 Vice Presidential visit overseas?

2 MS. WILLIAMS: Sir, obviously, the more notice the better.

3 MR. PERRY: Sure. I get that.

4 MS. WILLIAMS: I will say, for example, when the Vice President
5 very recently went to Turkey, we got notice of that 48 hours out. So
6 it's possible to obviously do these on short notice.

7 But, on the other hand, for the Vice President's trip in early
8 September, which originally was meant to be the U.K., Iceland, and
9 Ireland, we had started that planning process months in advance.

10 So ideally, obviously, the more notice the better.

11 MR. PERRY: Okay. Thank you.

12 MS. WILLIAMS: Of course.

13 BY MR. CASTOR:

14 Q Turning to the July 25th call between the President and
15 President Zelensky. You were in the Situation Room?

16 A Yes, sir.

17 Q Present for that call?

18 A That's right.

19 Q And do you remember who else was in the room with you?

20 A I recall my boss General Kellogg was there, Lieutenant
21 Colonel Vindman, and Tim Morrison, the Senior Director for Europe for
22 NSC. I recall there were maybe one or two other NSC colleagues present,
23 but I honestly don't remember which ones. We had a number of calls
24 that week, and I just don't recall who exactly was in that one.

25 Q And was that the first time you had been on a Presidential

1 phone call?

2 A No.

3 Q Okay. And how many calls have you participated in?

4 A Oh, probably a dozen since I started in April.

5 Q Okay. And do you know how the transcript is prepared?

6 A I don't know the mechanics behind how it's prepared, no.

7 Q Okay. What do you know about it?

8 A I mean, we the Vice President's office, will get a copy of
9 the transcripts after -- once it's prepared so that we can provide a
10 copy to the Vice President. But I don't know anything about the process
11 of preparing that transcript.

12 I imagine it's similar to how we receive transcripts for the Vice
13 President's calls. In that instance our office, our administrative
14 team will receive the electronic draft from the White House Situation
15 Room and look at it for -- mainly to mark the classification levels
16 of the paragraphs, but also to check for accuracy.

17 Q Okay. So the White House Situation Room personnel prepares
18 the initial draft?

19 A I don't know precisely, but that's who we receive it from.

20 Q Okay. You don't know if they have court reporter-type
21 devices --

22 A I don't know.

23 Q - or how they do it?

24 A I'm not sure.

25 Q And do you know if they're recorded or not?

1 A I don't know, honestly.

2 Q So in the room, that you recall, General Kellogg, Colonel
3 Vindman, Tim Morrison, and how many other NSC colleagues?

4 A I can't say precisely, but I want to say one or two others.

5 Q Okay. Was Dr. Kupperman there?

6 A I believe so, but I couldn't tell you 100 percent.

7 Q And when you received the transcript of the call, were you
8 involved with the editing process?

9 A For that particular call?

10 Q Yes.

11 A I did not receive a hard -- a copy of that particular call
12 transcript. My colleagues who help prepare the Vice President's daily
13 briefing book for his evening reading received the hard copy of that
14 particular transcript. And, generally speaking, we are never involved
15 in the editing process of the President's phone calls, we only have
16 responsibility for the Vice President's calls.

17 Q So you're in the Situation Room. Did you take notes?

18 A I did.

19 Q But when the initial drafts of the transcript came through,
20 you didn't have an opportunity to check your notes to the transcript,
21 suggest edits --

22 A No.

23 Q -- or that type of thing?

24 A No.

25 Q Did you have any communications with anybody in the room

1 about the editing process of the transcript?

2 A No.

3 Q Okay. So you didn't have a conversation with General
4 Kellogg about whether the transcript was accurate?

5 A No. No. I never saw that particular transcript, so no
6 reason for me to have that conversation.

7 Q Based on being in the room and taking notes and then reading
8 the transcript, was it accurate and complete?

9 A I never saw the transcript until the publicly released
10 version that the White House released in September. So I read that
11 transcript. And at a first reading it looked substantially accurate
12 to me.

13 Q Okay. As accurate as can be, given your experience as a
14 participant on Presidential phone calls?

15 A I didn't do a word-for-word comparison. I didn't get out
16 my notebook from July at that point and look carefully.

17 When I read it for the first time in September, it generally
18 matched my recollection from the call, but, again, not looking at it
19 word-for-word.

20 Q So it's as complete as it can be to the best of your
21 experience?

22 A Yes, not knowing -- not looking carefully at the specific
23 words.

24 Q Did you ever compare your notes to the transcript?

25 A More recently I went back to look when I had heard that there

1 was other testimony through this process that -- I believe Lieutenant
2 Colonel Vindman had noticed a couple of small discrepancies.

3 My notes did reflect that the word Burisma had come up in the call,
4 that the President had mentioned Burisma. I hadn't noticed that when
5 I first read the transcript.

6 Q Which President?

7 A I'm sorry. President Trump.

8 Q Okay.

9 A But I had not looked that carefully back in September when
10 the transcript was first released to notice that detail.

11 Q Did you come to learn through public reports or direct
12 communications with Colonel Vindman his discrepancies?

13 A Only through the public reporting of this inquiry process.
14 I have not had any conversations with Alex Vindman about this.

15 Q And what was to, the best of your knowledge, what were his
16 issues?

17 A I would have to refer to the public record in terms of what
18 precisely he said.

19 Q But you said something about Burisma?

20 A I recall that one of the issues he had noted was that the
21 transcript released did not include the word Burisma. But on looking
22 back at my notes, I do see that Burisma was mentioned by name in the
23 call.

24 Q Okay. And do you know whether Colonel Vindman's issue with
25 Burisma was related to something President Zelensky said or President

1 Trump said?

2 A I don't know what Colonel Vindman's issue was. When I went
3 back to check my notes, I had written that President Trump had raised
4 Burisma. I don't know if that reflects what Colonel Vindman said as
5 well.

6 Q Do you remember when during the call he mentioned that?

7 A Not precisely. I mean, later on in the call, but I don't
8 know precisely when.

9 Q Okay. Later on in the call?

10 A Yes.

11 Q Like, do you remember where in your notes it appears?

12 A I don't have my notes, so I can't really refer to them right
13 now.

14 Q Have you referred to your notes recently?

15 A Within the last week.

16 Q Okay. You have?

17 A Yes.

18 Q Okay. But you just don't remember as you sit here today
19 where --

20 A I mean, not having it in front of me, not precisely where,
21 no.

22 Q Any other issues with the call that you flagged?

23 A Not that I noticed.

24 Q Okay. Were you aware of any other issues Colonel Vindman
25 had flagged?

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1 A Not precisely. Again, I wasn't present for his testimony,
2 so I don't know exactly what he --

3 Q Okay. But you read some news accounts about it?

4 A That's right.

5 Q Okay. Have you been following along in the news as witnesses
6 have been appearing here?

7 A I have.

8 Q Okay. And which witnesses have you read news accounts
9 about?

10 A Probably all of them.

11 Q Okay. Have you been reading the opening statements that
12 have been -- some have been released?

13 A I have.

14 Q Okay. Completely?

15 A Probably not all of them, but, yes.

16 Q At any point in time between July 25th and the release of
17 the call transcript on September 25th, did you have any communications
18 with Vindman about the call?

19 A No.

20 Q Okay. When the transcript was made available to the VP's
21 office, do you remember when that occurred?

22 A My colleagues -- I can't remember the precise time, but
23 before the end of the day that day my colleagues who help prepare the
24 Vice President's briefing book received a hard copy of the transcript
25 from the White House Situation Room to include in that book. I didn't

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1 personally see it, but I understood that they had received it because
2 we wanted to make sure the Vice President got it.

3 Q On the 25th or 26th?

4 A It was on the 25th.

5 Q Okay. Was that the final version? Or don't you know?

6 A I don't know. I mean, it's the version that we provided to
7 the Vice President.

8 Q Okay. So that went into his briefing book?

9 A That's right.

10 Q And do you know if he ever reviewed the call?

11 A I don't know.

12 Q So nobody told you one way or another whether the Vice
13 President was able to read it, whether it be General Kellogg or some
14 other VP staffer?

15 A That's right. I just don't know if he read it.

16 Q Do you know how frequently the VP reads his briefing book?

17 A We provide him with a daily briefing book of various updates
18 on foreign policy matters. I'm not present when he reviews that, so
19 I really -- I'm not in a position to say.

20 Q Okay. So you have no idea one way or another whether it's
21 his regular practice to read the book or not read the book?

22 A I'd like to think that he reads the book, but I don't know
23 if he reads them every day. We don't normally have follow-on
24 conversations with him about it afterwards.

25 Q And was there any follow-on conversation about the content

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1 of the 7/25 call?

2 A No.

3 Q Okay. So he didn't task anybody, such as Marc Short or
4 General Kellogg, to do anything or get any additional information about
5 the call?

6 A Not to my knowledge. He didn't task me.

7 Q During the period of 7/25 to September 25th, did you have
8 any communications with anybody about the content of the transcript?

9 A No.

10 Q Or the content of the call?

11 A No.

12 Q Okay. So after the call occurred, did you talk with General
13 Kellogg about it?

14 A No. He was in the room during the call as well, so I didn't
15 feel a need to have a conversation with him.

16 Q Did you write up a memo or anything to anyone else on the
17 VP staff?

18 A I had included an update in the Vice President's daily report
19 that evening for that same briefing book, mentioning that the President
20 had had a call that day with President Zelensky and kind of providing
21 a broad overview of the call and noting that the transcript was also
22 included in the book.

23 Q Do you remember what else you included in that description?

24 A It was very general. I didn't mention anything specific.
25 I'm trying to remember if there was another Ukraine update that day.

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1 Oh, yes, sorry. Coincidentally, the Vice President's office had
2 received a letter from Senator Lankford expressing the Senator's
3 support for Ukraine. I believe he had written it on July 18th, but
4 it was received by our office on July 25th, so I thought that was
5 something that the Vice President would want to receive and read.

6 So the update I included was referencing that letter, and then
7 also mentioning that, since it was also Ukraine-related: For your
8 awareness, the President, President Trump had also had a call that day
9 with President Zelensky; that call transcript is included in your book
10 as well.

11 Q Okay. But you didn't flag anything noteworthy about the
12 call?

13 A That's right.

14 Q So you had no discussions with anybody from 7/25 to 9/25 about
15 what happened on the call?

16 A No.

17 Q So if you had any concerns, you didn't raise them with General
18 Kellogg?

19 A I never discussed the call with General Kellogg, and never
20 specifically referenced that call beyond flagging it for the Vice
21 President's attention in his book that evening.

22 Q Okay. So it wasn't until the call became public that it
23 reemerged on your radar of issues to think about?

24 A I think that's fair to say.

25 Q After the call transcript was made public, did you have any

1 communications with anybody about it, such as General Kellogg?

2 A About the accuracy of the transcript or just in general?

3 Q No, just about what happened on the call. There's some
4 renewed focus, obviously --

5 A Sure.

6 Q -- once September 25th comes around.

7 A Of course. Not specific to the call. I think we all, in
8 our office, anyway, the Vice President's office, were reading the news
9 and, you know, the updates related to that call and concerns about
10 Ukraine. But I don't recall any specific conversation with General
11 Kellogg or others kind of going back to the original call and what was
12 in it.

13 Q By the time September 25th comes around, everybody is
14 talking about, you know, Biden and Burisma and Rudy Giuliani and all
15 that stuff. Did you ever circle back with General Kellogg and sort
16 of revisit, you know, what were you thinking when you heard this?

17 A No, we never had a follow-on conversation about the call
18 specifically.

19 Q Okay. Were you surprised by the attention that those
20 aspects of the call received once it became public --

21 A No.

22 Q -- in September?

23 A No, I was not surprised.

24 Q Okay. Did you expect that at some point it would?

25 A Yes.

1 Q Okay.

2 A Sorry, just to clarify. It's not that I expected that the
3 call would someday become public, but once it was released I was not
4 surprised that that was a focus.

5 Q Okay. The trip to Warsaw, you traveled with the Vice
6 President on that?

7 A Yes, sir.

8 Q For that bilateral meeting the Vice President had with
9 President Zelensky?

10 A I did.

11 Q You were on the whole trip?

12 A Yes.

13 Q And what was the date, do you remember, of the VP's meeting
14 with President Zelensky?

15 A September 1st.

16 Q Okay. And maybe just walk us through the chronology of that
17 trip?

18 A Sure.

19 Q To the extent you remember?

20 A Absolutely. I had been working on that trip for many months
21 up until that point.

22 So we had been originally planning for the Vice President to
23 travel to the U.K., Iceland, and Ireland in early September. The date
24 of that was really hooked to an event that he participated in in London
25 related to trade.

1 When Hurricane Dorian was approaching the United States,
2 obviously, as I think everyone here knows, the President decided to
3 stay back in Washington and asked the Vice president to travel to Poland
4 in his place.

5 That trip was revolving around a World War II commemoration event
6 that took place in Warsaw, also on September 1st. And the plans for
7 the President had been also to engage in a number of bilateral and
8 multilateral meetings on the margins of that.

9 So I hadn't been closely tracking the plans for the President's
10 trip because we were kind of busy with our own trip planning, but once
11 we found out on August 29th that the Vice President would be going,
12 I spoke with my NSC colleagues to get a better understanding of what
13 was on the President's agenda for the trip so that we could start
14 preparing the Vice President to take that on. So we walked through
15 the range of different engagements planned and then proposed for the
16 VP.

17 We had to scale it back a little bit just since we were basically
18 tacking the Poland component onto our existing trip. So we were trying
19 to make it as tight as possible. But, obviously, one of the engagements
20 that remained on the schedule was the meeting with President Zelensky.

21 Q Okay. And what were the briefings that occurred for the Vice
22 President in advance of the bilateral meeting with President Zelensky?

23 A So we had very limited time, obviously, to prepare for the
24 Poland component of the trip. So I relied heavily on the NSC briefing
25 papers that they had already prepared for the President's

1 participation, which are not the same format as ours, but we were in
2 a pinch so we used those, and I prepared separate talking points based
3 on that information for the Vice President. So that kind of comprised
4 his written briefing materials.

5 Q Okay.

6 A Prior to leaving, General Kellogg had asked, at the request
7 of the Vice President, for an update on the status of the security
8 assistance that was at that time still on hold. In that same timeframe,
9 there had been a Politico article that had come out referencing the
10 hold on U.S. security assistance to Ukraine, so we anticipated that
11 President Zelensky would want an update on that. So that was part of
12 the preparation process.

13 Once we got on the ground in Warsaw there was a pre-brief meeting
14 just before the meeting with President Zelensky in which Ambassador
15 Bolton, General Kellogg, our Chief of -- the Vice President's Chief
16 of Staff, Marc Short, and myself, and I believe a couple of other OVP
17 colleagues briefed the Vice President before meeting President
18 Zelensky.

19 Q Okay. So there was written briefing materials that you sent
20 through General Kellogg?

21 A That's right, and we added to our overall trip book. Yeah.

22 Q Okay. So the VP gets the written materials, and then there's
23 a briefing. And you said -- who was the main speaker during the
24 briefing?

25 A In that briefing, Ambassador Bolton had just been in Ukraine

1 several days prior and had had a series of very in-depth engagements,
2 including with President Zelensky, so he really took the lead in that
3 pre-brief to prepare the Vice President for the meeting.

4 Q And do you remember what Ambassador Bolton communicated to
5 the VP?

6 A He basically provided a read-out of his meeting. He had had
7 very positive engagements and had been impressed by President
8 Zelensky's reform agenda in the sense that their parliamentary process
9 had just started. So the election had been held just previously, and
10 I think they had just come into session.

11 And one noteworthy item was that the Zelensky administration
12 already had hundreds of bills ready to go, and so Ambassador Bolton
13 provided an overview of some of those. And then in terms of the
14 security assistance, because that Politico story had just come out
15 2 days prior, Ambassador Bolton kind of outlined that, you know, what
16 that security assistance was for and the need -- they agreed on the
17 need to get a final decision on that security assistance as soon as
18 possible so that it could be implemented before the end of the fiscal
19 year.

20 Q At the time, was the general mood that -- the hope was that
21 the security assistance would be delivered?

22 A Yes.

23 Q And so the idea that the security assistance would be
24 permanently withheld wasn't as much of a serious consideration?

25 A I think I sensed everyone wanted to avoid that scenario.

1 Q Okay. And was it your impression during that briefing that
2 Ambassador Bolton was genuinely impressed with the authenticity of
3 President Zelensky?

4 A I believe so, yes.

5 Q That he ran on a reform agenda?

6 A Uh-huh. Yes.

7 Q And so the conclusion, at least at that point, was he's headed
8 in the right direction?

9 A Yes.

10 Q And he's a genuine reformer?

11 A Correct.

12 Q And his anticorruption initiatives were legitimate?

13 A Yes. I mean, I think that, you know, there's still ongoing
14 concern about what kind of limitations Zelensky may face given the
15 ongoing influence of oligarchs in Ukraine. But I think we were all
16 impressed by his efforts and wanted to support them.

17 Q Okay. And during that pre-briefing -- where did the
18 briefing occur?

19 A The pre-brief?

20 Q Yeah.

21 A It was in a hotel room, in the hotel where we were staying.

22 Q So it was in Warsaw?

23 A In Warsaw.

24 Q The hotel in Warsaw?

25 A That's right.

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1 Q Was Ambassador Sondland there?

2 A Not in that briefing, no. He was on the trip, but not on
3 that briefing.

4 Q Was he in any other briefings with the VP?

5 A I believe he had been in a briefing earlier in the day, right
6 after our arrival, which was more of a general briefing, and an
7 intelligence update for the Vice President since we had been flying
8 all night.

9 Q All right.

10 A But I was not in that briefing, so I don't know exactly what
11 was discussed.

12 Q Were you in and around that briefing?

13 A I was nearby that briefing. I had helped to make sure that
14 they got to the room.

15 Q And you saw Ambassador Sondland enter the briefing?

16 A Correct.

17 Q Do you know if he was a scheduled participant in that
18 briefing?

19 A I believe he requested to be added to that briefing. But,
20 frankly, everything about this trip was short notice. So there wasn't
21 really a scheduled -- or a formal list of participants in advance.

22 Q And do you know if he was ever, you know, on the official
23 list for that briefing?

24 A Again, there wasn't really a formal list for that particular
25 pre-brief, so I can't say one way or the other whether he was a scheduled

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1 participant.

2 Q Okay. So there was an intelligence briefing with the VP in
3 the morning. You didn't go to that one but Ambassador Sondland did?

4 A Correct.

5 Q And you were nearby, you said?

6 A Yes.

7 Q And then the briefing in advance of the bilateral meeting
8 occurred later in the day?

9 A Correct. It occurred after we -- the delegation -- the Vice
10 President and the delegation had returned from the World War II
11 commemoration event back to the hotel. And the meeting with Ukraine
12 was happening just after that, and so the pre-brief happened just before
13 the meeting with Zelensky.

14 Q Okay. Was Ambassador Sondland in that one?

15 A No.

16 Q Okay. And you said Ambassador Bolton did most of the
17 talking?

18 A He did.

19 Q Did the call come up, the 7/25 call between President Trump
20 and Zelensky, come up during that briefing?

21 A No, not to my recollection.

22 Q So nobody flagged for the VP, "Hey, the President had a call
23 with President Zelensky"?

24 A No. No. It really didn't come up.

25 Q Okay.

1 A Yeah. No, it was really focused on Ambassador Bolton's much
2 more recent engagements with President Zelensky that had taken place
3 a couple days prior.

4 Q But to the best of your recollection, no one flagged for the
5 VP that President Zelensky may be on alert to talk about investigations?

6 A Correct. There was no discussion of that whatsoever.

7 Q Okay. In hindsight, does that surprise you?

8 A No, not really. I think the more immediate concern was the
9 Politico story that had just broken 2 days prior about the security
10 assistance hold. And so I think the group anticipated that that would
11 be first and foremost on President Zelensky's mind, and we wanted to
12 prepare the VP to be able to respond to those questions.

13 Q Is there anything else from that briefing? Did anybody else
14 have a speaking role other than Ambassador Bolton?

15 A I added a few points on other agenda items that might come
16 up, but not in great detail.

17 Q Okay. Is there any other detail you can remember at the
18 meeting worth telling us about?

19 A I don't think so. It was pretty focused on the security
20 assistance.

21 Q Okay. And then the next event is the bilateral meeting?

22 A Correct.

23 Q And can you recollect generally what the Vice President
24 communicated to President Zelensky --

25 A Sure.

1 Q -- during that meeting?

2 A Yes. So it was a good meeting. So it started off, as most
3 of these foreign engagements do, with a press spray. So each principal
4 made comments on camera for a number of minutes.

5 Once the cameras left the room, the very first question that
6 President Zelensky had was about the status of security assistance.
7 And the VP responded by really expressing our ongoing support for
8 Ukraine, but wanting to hear from President Zelensky, you know, what
9 the status of his reform efforts were that he could then convey back
10 to the President, and also wanting to hear if there was more that
11 European countries could do to support Ukraine.

12 Q Okay. Did the VP express the President's overall outlook
13 on foreign aid?

14 A Not specifically. I think in terms of discussing the role
15 of European countries, I think it was meant to make that point in terms
16 of the President's -- President Trump's expectations that other
17 countries would also step up to provide more support. It was more in
18 those terms.

19 Q Separate from that, are you aware of the President's view
20 on foreign aid?

21 A Yes.

22 Q That he has a skeptical view of foreign aid?

23 A I think that's fair to say.

24 Q Are you aware that he's commissioned a review across
25 government of all U.S. foreign assistance?

1 A I'm aware there have been a number of reviews of foreign
2 assistance. I'm not sure of the specific one that you're referencing.

3 Q But it's certainly a well-established fact that President
4 Trump is extremely skeptical of U.S. foreign aid?

5 A I think that's fair to say.

6 Q And he wants to make sure U.S. taxpayer dollars are spent
7 in the right way?

8 A Sure. Correct.

9 Q And we're getting a good return on that investment, correct?

10 A That's what I've heard him express, yes.

11 Q So the Vice President -- coming back to the meeting, the Vice
12 President's meeting with President Zelensky, and he raises the prospect
13 that the U.S. hopes or at least President Trump hopes that our European
14 allies step up and contribute more?

15 A That's correct. That was part of what the Vice President
16 conveyed to President Zelensky.

17 Q And what was President Zelensky's reaction?

18 A President Zelensky agreed in the sense that I think he
19 certainly would welcome more support from all allies and partners.

20 He made the point, though, that as important as the funding itself
21 was, that it was the strategic value of -- the symbolic value of U.S.
22 support in terms of security assistance that was just as valuable to
23 the Ukrainians as the actual dollars.

24 Q Okay.

25 A He was making the point that, you know, any hold or appearance

1 of reconsideration of such assistance might embolden Russia to think
2 that the United States was no longer committed to Ukraine.

3 Q Okay. And what was the Vice President's reaction to that?

4 A He assured President Zelensky that there was no change in
5 U.S. policy in terms of our full -- full-throated support for Ukraine
6 and its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and assured that he
7 would convey back to President Trump what he had heard from President
8 Zelensky in terms of Zelensky's good progress on reforms, so that
9 hopefully we could get a decision on the security assistance as soon
10 as possible.

11 Q So the Vice President signaled to President Zelensky that
12 the reform efforts that he had implemented to date were encouraging?

13 A He did. He didn't make a concrete promise on a decision,
14 but expressed a positive view of what President Zelensky had conveyed
15 and promised to convey that back to the President.

16 Q Okay. And did he -- how did he communicate that? Did he
17 give a specific timeframe or --

18 A For a decision?

19 Q For communicating back with the President?

20 A He told President Zelensky that he would speak to President
21 Trump before the end of the day.

22 Q Okay. So it was a relatively --

23 A Short timeframe.

24 Q Okay. And specific. The VP committed to talk to the
25 President about this?

1 A That's right.

2 Q And during the course of the meeting there was no discussion
3 of any investigations that the Ukrainians were to do?

4 A No specific investigations, no.

5 Q Okay. Like the 2016 election didn't come up?

6 A It did not.

7 Q CrowdStrike didn't come up?

8 A No.

9 Q Okay. Former VP Biden --

10 A No.

11 Q -- didn't come up? The name wasn't uttered?

12 A Not once.

13 Q And the name Burisma never came up?

14 A No.

15 Q And you weren't surprised by that?

16 A No, I wasn't expecting those specific issues to necessarily
17 come up.

18 Q And Ambassador Sondland, he was in that meeting?

19 A He was.

20 Q To the extent you can remember, who were the other U.S.
21 officials staffing the VP at the bilateral meeting?

22 A It was a big meeting, so forgive me if I miss a name or two.
23 But, obviously, the Vice President was the lead. We had Secretary
24 Perry. We had Ambassador Sondland. Tim Morrison.

25 I believe we also had Wells Griffith, who is the Energy Senior

1 Director for NSC; [REDACTED]

2 [REDACTED]; myself. We had [REDACTED]

3 [REDACTED].

4 I probably am missing a name or two. Forgive me.

5 Q Was Ambassador Volker there?

6 A I'm trying to recall.

7 Probably. I apologize, I just really don't remember. It was
8 what we call a six plus six. So there were six front-benchers and six
9 back-benchers on each side. But I just don't recall.

10 Oh, sorry, Ambassador Bolton was there. He had to leave partway
11 through the meeting to catch his flight, but he was there for at least
12 part of the discussion.

13 Q And after the meeting ended, were you aware of any of
14 Gordon's -- Ambassador Gordon Sondland, any of his activities with the
15 Ukrainians?

16 A I wasn't aware, no.

17 Q Okay. It's been reported, and you may have read this in some
18 of the news accounts, that he conferred with some of President
19 Zelensky -- at least one of President Zelensky's aides?

20 A I've read that, but I wasn't aware at the time.

21 Q Okay. So you didn't witness Ambassador Sondland pull aside
22 any Ukrainians?

23 A I did not, no.

24 Q And did that fact come to light or come to your attention
25 during the trip?

1 A No, not until the more recent press reports of that.

2 A After the Zelensky meeting, the Vice President went on with his
3 schedule. We had an evening dinner event that evening. And kind of
4 the Ukraine component of our trip concluded and we moved on to the rest
5 of our itinerary.

6 Q Okay. So you left with the VP's delegation?

7 A That's right. So the next day we had bilateral engagements
8 with the Government of Poland, with the President, with President Duda,
9 and several other events, a quick engagement with the Prime Minister
10 of Poland, and then flew onward to Ireland, I believe.

11 Q Okay. Did anyone relate to you -- I think you said the answer
12 is no, but I'll just double back -- no one related to you that Sondland
13 had a communication with Yermak?

14 A No. Not -- no.

15 Q So you never talked about that with Colonel Vindman --

16 A No.

17 Q -- or Tim Morrison?

18 A No.

19 Q Did Morrison stay for the whole meeting or did he leave with
20 Ambassador Bolton?

21 A He stayed, because he also joined us for the Poland
22 engagements the next day.

23 Q Okay. At this point in time -- and you've seen the news
24 accounts about whether there were any conditionality for White House
25 meetings -- did that topic come up at all? Were you aware that

1 Ambassador Sondland was pressing this?

2 A In terms of scheduling a White House meeting?

3 Q Right, some of this conditionality with --

4 A I wasn't aware of Ambassador Sondland's particular role in
5 that. I was aware that President Zelensky was very eager to get a
6 scheduled meeting at the White House. And we expected actually that
7 Zelensky may raise that with the Vice President in his meeting as well.
8 But I wasn't aware of any, like, discussions behind the scenes, so to
9 speak, of scheduling that meeting.

10 Q Did you know Ambassador Volker had been working with Mr.
11 Yermak?

12 A I was not aware, no.

13 Q Okay. So at the time you had no awareness that there was
14 this concept of the Ukrainians looking into the 2016 election or opening
15 up any other sort of investigation?

16 A The only reference I had heard to that was on the July 25th
17 call.

18 Q Okay.

19 At any point during this trip, you know, you went on to meet -- the
20 Vice President went on to meet with, I think you said --

21 A Poland and, like, the rest of the trip?

22 Q Right. Went on -- did he travel to Poland or was the
23 meeting --

24 A Well, we stayed in Poland an extra day to do the Polish
25 engagements and then flew onward to Ireland, Iceland, and the U.K.

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1 Q So you met with the Prime Minister of Poland?

2 A We did. It was a bilateral meeting with the President of
3 Poland and then a brief meeting with the Prime Minister to sign an MOU
4 on 5G, and then we flew onward to Ireland.

5 Q In the meeting with President Duda, did anything come up with
6 about Biden or Burisma?

7 A No.

8 Q There was a press availability, I think, between the VP and
9 Duda.

10 A That's right.

11 Q Do you remember whether anything came up during that press
12 availability?

13 A Yes. One of the U.S. reporters, I can't remember which one,
14 I believe asked the Vice President about that issue, I believe, whether
15 it had come up in the Ukraine meeting the day before, since it was the
16 Vice President's first press engagement since the Zelensky meeting.

17 Q So this is on September 2nd?

18 A Correct.

19 Q A reporter asked the Vice President whether -- what exactly
20 had come up?

21 A My recollection is that the U.S. reporter asked the
22 President -- sorry, the Vice President -- whether the issue of former
23 Vice President Biden or Burisma had come up in his meeting with
24 President Zelensky the day before.

25 Q And what was Vice President Pence's reaction to that?

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1 A He said no.

2 Q Okay. Was he surprised that it was raised?

3 A I don't know. I don't know if he was surprised by it. But
4 it hadn't come up, so it was easy for him --

5 Q It was easy for him to say no?

6 A Yes.

7 Q Okay. During this time period, in discussions with the NSC
8 staff, whether Colonel Vindman or Tim Morrison, had you had any
9 discussions with them about Biden, Burisma, 2016 investigations?

10 A No.

11 Q Okay. Had you had any discussions with NSC staff at this
12 point about the role of Ambassador Sondland or Rudy Giuliani?

13 A No. We had never had discussions about that. The only
14 instance in which Ambassador Sondland's name came up was when the Vice
15 President assumed the role of the President in the trip to Poland and
16 I learned that Ambassador Sondland was scheduled to be part of the
17 delegation. That was it.

18 Q You told us earlier that you did have one conversation with
19 Dr. Fiona Hill that involved Giuliani?

20 A Much earlier on, in May, with regards to Ambassador
21 Yovanovitch's removal.

22 Q From that point forward had you had any other conversations
23 about the Giuliani component relating to Ukraine --

24 A No.

25 Q -- with anyone?

1 A No. I'm trying to think if there was even any specific press
2 reporting kind of more in the July-August timeframe. I don't recall
3 any related to Giuliani's role in Ukraine. But we never -- I never
4 had any internal conversations about his role.

5 Q Okay. And through this whole process, have you had any
6 discussions with Tim Morrison about Giuliani's role or the concept of
7 these investigations?

8 A No.

9 Q How about with Colonel Vindman?

10 A No.

11 Q The security assistance hold, you mentioned you first
12 learned about that on July 3rd?

13 A That's right.

14 Q So that was about 2 weeks before the July 18th sub-PCC
15 meeting?

16 A Correct.

17 Q And was the hold at that point on July 3rd known outside of
18 the complex? The complex meaning the EEOB?

19 A Sure, the EEOB.

20 Yes, in the sense that the report that I had seen was the State
21 Department reporting to NSC that OMB had told them about the hold. So
22 at least OMB and State knew about it.

23 Q Okay. And then did anything happen between that email
24 exchange that you told us about and the July 18th sub-PCC meeting?

25 A Not that I saw. I don't know if other agencies or

1 individuals had further discussions about the status of the assistance.

2 Q And were you involved with the July 18th meeting?

3 A I did not attend that meeting because I was on pre-advance
4 travel for the Vice President's trip that week. So my first meeting
5 that I attended on that issue was the following week, the July 23rd
6 PCC.

7 Q Okay. And did you get a read-out of the July 18th meeting?

8 A I did.

9 Q What do you recall about the security assistance hold?

10 A I read the summary of conclusions from that meeting that NSC
11 had prepared, and it discussed the fact that the interagency was made
12 aware, for those who weren't already aware, of the hold on the security
13 assistance. And State and DOD and other agencies expressed support
14 for lifting that hold as soon as possible and that the reason behind
15 the hold was because OMB was conducting a further review.

16 Q Okay. And then the next event was the PCC?

17 A Correct.

18 Q And what date was that again?

19 A July 23rd.

20 Q Okay. And you attended that meeting?

21 A I did.

22 Q And what do you remember from that meeting about the hold?

23 A It was a very similar discussion. Essentially, it was just
24 one level up, at the assistant secretary level, all the agencies
25 supporting -- expressing their support for lifting the hold. And the

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1 OMB representative conveyed that they had been directed by the Chief
2 of Staff, the White House Chief of Staff, to continue holding it until
3 further notice.

4 Q And was the hope generally at that point that the assistance
5 would be released?

6 A Yes.

7 Q And did you participate in any other meetings --

8 A I did.

9 Q -- with regard to the security assistance?

10 A Yes. The next meeting was a Deputies Committee meeting on
11 July 26th, so 3 days later.

12 Q Okay.

13 A And, again, it was a very similar discussion with all
14 agencies, deputy secretaries expressing support, and OMB expressing
15 that the hold would continue until further notice.

16 Q Okay. Was there any discussion that with the new Ukrainian
17 Government, with the new -- President Zelensky and the new Rada, whether
18 that was part of the hold?

19 A It was not discussed in those terms. OMB never -- did not
20 provide a detailed explanation for the reason behind the hold.

21 Q Okay. And anything else notable about the 7/26 Deputies
22 meeting?

23 A I guess I would just say this whole process of meetings was
24 meant to kind of do the due diligence of working the issue up the chain,
25 the policy chain, in order to prompt the scheduling of a Principals

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1 Committee meeting at which Cabinet-level secretaries would provide
2 guidance on whether to lift the hold.

3 Q Okay. So after the 7/26 meeting, what was the next scheduled
4 meeting?

5 A My understanding was NSC colleagues were looking to schedule
6 a Principals Committee meeting, but it was never scheduled.

7 Q So the 7/26 meeting, to the best of your knowledge, is the
8 last one?

9 A Correct.

10 Q And what can you tell us between July 26th and
11 September 11th, when the aid was released? Did you come into any
12 firsthand facts?

13 A Behind the hold and what the status was?

14 Q Yes.

15 A Not specifically. Because there was no Principals
16 Committee meeting scheduled during that timeframe, it wasn't high on
17 my radar, other than the fact that it continued to be held.

18 And then towards the end of August once the Vice President
19 inherited the trip to Poland and we knew he'd be meeting with President
20 Zelensky, he requested information about the status of the hold so we
21 could prepare for those meetings. So I provided an update to General
22 Kellogg, who passed that to the VP.

23 Q And do you remember when the news of the hold became public?

24 A I believe it was August 29th or 30th --

25 Q Through the Politico story?

1 A Right.

2 Q And are you aware of anything in particular that happened
3 once you got back from the Warsaw trip, between that date and
4 September 11th? Do you know if the Principals Committee ever
5 convened?

6 A I don't believe that there was ever a Principals Committee
7 convened. My understanding is that the Vice President had spoken with
8 the President directly after his meeting with President Zelensky on
9 September 1st, but I wasn't privy to that conversation, so I don't know
10 exactly what was discussed and whether they had a further conversation
11 about it upon the Vice President's return after his trip.

12 Q Did you get a read-out of that call?

13 A I did not.

14 Q So between July 26th and September 11th there were no
15 meetings or communications that you were a part of?

16 A I recall that -- I believe right before we left on the trip
17 on, I guess it was August 30th, the Friday, that I learned through our
18 Chief of Staff that there had been a small group discussion, not a formal
19 meeting, I believe involving Dr. Kupperman and Marc Short, our Chief
20 of Staff, and I don't know who the others were, related to the status
21 of Ukraine security assistance, but I was not present for that meeting.

22 Q Okay. And anything you know about what happened up to
23 September 11th from September 1st?

24 A I will say that also in the lead-up to our trip, to the Vice
25 President's trip to Poland, Senator Johnson had reached out to try to

1 speak with the Vice President because he was also traveling to Ukraine
2 shortly after. I don't believe that call ever connected, but I believe
3 he also wanted to discuss the status of security assistance. But other
4 than that, I'm not aware of any formal meetings or other discussions
5 that took place.

6 Q Okay. Do you remember when Senator Johnson's trip was,
7 roughly?

8 A It was a few days after the Vice President saw Zelensky in
9 Poland, so I want to say it was probably September 3rd or 4th, something
10 like that.

11 Q And who else was on that trip? Any other Senators?

12 A I believe so, but I honestly don't remember. We were on our
13 trip in other parts of Europe, so I wasn't tracking it closely at that
14 point.

15 Q Okay. And do you know if the Senators had a view on the aid?

16 A My understanding was that they were supportive of getting
17 the hold released as soon as possible.

18 Q And do you know if any other Senators had weighed in at this
19 point?

20 A I understood that Senator Portman also was interested in the
21 status of the security assistance, and that around the time -- I'm not
22 sure the precise day, I want to say September 9th, 9th or 10th -- that
23 Members of Congress had opened an inquiry, possibly two inquiries, into
24 the status of the security assistance and to try to find the reason
25 for the hold.

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1 Q Okay. Any other Senators that you haven't identified?

2 A Not to my knowledge. There probably were, but not that I
3 was aware of.

4 Q Okay. How did you know about Senator Portman's interest?

5 A I had seen press reporting that he was interested in the
6 status of the hold.

7 Q Do you know if any Senators contacted the Vice President?

8 A Other than back in July, Senator Lankford writing a letter,
9 and Senator Johnson reaching out around the time of our trip to Poland,
10 I'm not aware of any other Senators reaching out directly to the Vice
11 President.

12 Q Since your -- have you had any discussions with any of the
13 folks that have been before us, you know, before or after their
14 appearance here, about the content of what the committees are looking
15 into?

16 A Not about the content of these discussions, these
17 testimonies, no.

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1 [11:35 a.m.]

2 BY MR. CASTOR:

3 Q Okay. Outside your lawyers, like who have you discussed
4 your testimony with?

5 A No one.

6 Q Okay. When was the last time you spoke with Tim Morrison?

7 A That's a good question. I'm trying to remember when he
8 appeared. Last week, right?

9 Q He was here on Halloween?

10 A Convenient.

11 Q I remember that.

12 A Okay. Before then. I -- honestly, I don't recall
13 precisely. I mean, I would see him on a fairly regular basis for
14 meetings.

15 Q Okay. But you haven't spoken with --

16 A No.

17 Q -- Mr. Morrison --

18 A No, not since then.

19 Q -- since Halloween?

20 A No. Yeah.

21 Q When is the last time you spoke with Colonel Vindman?

22 A I saw him in the hallway yesterday. I had a meeting with
23 him on last Friday, I believe, with the [REDACTED] Ambassador to the
24 United States, since he has a large -- our portfolios overlap. And
25 so we participated in a meeting together with the [REDACTED] Ambassador.

1 Q Okay. And what do you remember Colonel Vindman telling you
2 at that meeting or before the meeting, after the meeting?

3 A About?

4 Q About anything.

5 A Well, that meeting, obviously, we were focusing on our U.S.
6 policy --

7 Q Right.

8 A -- towards [REDACTED] and looking at what next steps might be
9 and the reforms in the [REDACTED] Government towards becoming a stronger
10 democracy. So it was very focused on that.

11 Q Did Colonel Vindman tell you anything about his testimony?

12 A He did not, no.

13 Q Okay. Did he tell you that he mentioned your name during
14 his testimony?

15 A He told me that he had been asked, but we did not discuss
16 the testimony beyond that.

17 Q Okay. So what exactly did he tell you?

18 A He said that he had been asked who was on the call and that
19 my name was mentioned, but that was it.

20 Q Okay. And he affirmatively brought that up to you?

21 A Yes.

22 Q Was that in the context of -- like what was that in the
23 context of?

24 A I think he just wanted me to be aware that my name had been
25 introduced. That was it. We didn't discuss the testimony beyond

1 that.

2 Q Okay. At that point, did he know that you were scheduled
3 to come in?

4 A No, I don't believe so. I don't know that any of us were
5 aware of who was going to be part of this process.

6 Q Okay. So as of last Friday, you didn't know that you were
7 coming in today?

8 A As of last -- I got called by the committee last Friday
9 evening, so not before then.

10 Q That was the first time? Being in the minority --

11 A Sure.

12 Q -- we're not part of the scheduling process --

13 A Not before then, no.

14 Q -- among other processes.

15 A Noted.

16 Q So you found out on Friday night that the committee had an
17 interest in speaking with you?

18 A Correct.

19 Q Okay. And when you saw Colonel Vindman at the [REDACTED]
20 meeting, that was the first time you'd talked to him since he had
21 testified?

22 A I believe so, yes. Yeah.

23 Q Okay. And he mentioned to you that he had identified -- he'd
24 been asked and identified your name as being on the call?

25 A Correct.

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1 Q And did he say anything else to you, or is that --

2 A No, we didn't talk about it further. I was advised not to.

3 Q Okay. Did he give you any recommendations, like you should
4 get a lawyer, anything of that sort?

5 A I had already retained counsel well before then, so --

6 Q Okay. Because you had an expectation the committees might
7 be interested in your testimony?

8 A I retained counsel in early October thinking that it may come
9 up at some point.

10 Q And I'm not trying to get into any --

11 A No, understood.

12 Q -- attorney-client privilege matters. That's not what
13 we're seeking here.

14 A No. It was well before then.

15 MR. CASTOR: Okay. Before our time is almost up, I want to make
16 sure -- anything?

17 MR. MEADOWS: Ms. Williams, I want to say thank you for your
18 service. Yeah, these are trying times, and it's not fun for anybody
19 to come here, even us. And so --

20 MS. WILLIAMS: It's a long process.

21 MR. MEADOWS: And so I want to thank you for your service. I want
22 to clarify two things: I believe you said that it was actually on the
23 President's schedule to go to Warsaw, and that was canceled, and the
24 Vice President took his place. Is that correct?

25 MS. WILLIAMS: That's correct.

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1 MR. MEADOWS: And then in all of your prep for the Vice President,
2 it sounds like you're a pretty thorough individual when it comes to
3 prepping people. Is that correct?

4 MS. WILLIAMS: I do my best, sir.

5 MR. MEADOWS: All right. So in all of your prep, as it relates
6 to the aid, the Ukrainian aid that this whole impeachment process seems
7 to fold into, the aid and seven words on a phone transcript that we're
8 now spending unbelievable time and effort, but in any of that, was there
9 ever any briefing with the Vice President that says, by the way, you
10 know, you need to bring up these investigations, or you need to be
11 cautious about the investigations, one way or the other?

12 MS. WILLIAMS: No, not at all.

13 MR. MEADOWS: And so as someone who's advising the Vice President
14 of the United States, would it be fair to say that investigations into
15 any 2016, Burisma, Biden, was not a consideration that was a top
16 priority for the Vice President of the United States as you prepped
17 him for his meeting with President Zelensky?

18 MS. WILLIAMS: That's correct.

19 MR. MEADOWS: And so, as we go even further, in terms of the
20 readouts and, in terms of what I think your nomenclature is, due-outs,
21 there was no due-out that would suggest that there had to be any
22 conditionality to releasing the aid, other than what Ambassador Bolton
23 brought up in terms of real aggressive anticorruption measures that
24 I guess happened in late August. Is that correct?

25 MS. WILLIAMS: I guess I would say, I did not know the motivation

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1 behind the hold in the first place.

2 MR. MEADOWS: Right.

3 MS. WILLIAMS: So I was not aware of any conditionality or what
4 the reason for the hold was, and what that might be dependent on. It's
5 only later on through this process that I understand there were other
6 conversations happening outside of what we would consider to be
7 official diplomatic channels.

8 MR. MEADOWS: And you've learned that through --

9 MS. WILLIAMS: Press reporting.

10 MR. MEADOWS: -- open-source press reporting?

11 MS. WILLIAMS: Correct.

12 MR. MEADOWS: So everything that you know about any nefarious
13 purpose actually came through press reports, no official channels?

14 MS. WILLIAMS: That's correct, and we had no understanding of
15 what the actual reason for the hold was.

16 MR. MEADOWS: Okay. And so, Ambassador Bolton, the end of
17 August, says, Listen, I had a great meeting with President Zelensky.
18 I think it's been described to us they were up all night passing these
19 anticorruption measures. Is that accurate?

20 MS. WILLIAMS: That is what he conveyed to the Vice President in
21 the pre-brief, correct.

22 MR. MEADOWS: And so a very positive message from Ambassador
23 Bolton. Then the Vice President of the United States has a very
24 positive meeting with President Zelensky where they talk about their
25 mutual respect and desire to work together. Is that correct?

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1 MS. WILLIAMS: That's correct.

2 MR. MEADOWS: So a positive meeting, a positive meeting, a phone
3 call, and then intervention from at least one or two Senators, I guess
4 Senator Johnson and Senator Portman. Is that correct?

5 MS. WILLIAMS: I was not involved --

6 MR. MEADOWS: And Lankford, Senator Lankford, I guess, three
7 different --

8 MS. WILLIAMS: I was aware that those Senators had expressed
9 interest in the issue. I wasn't privy to what those discussions were.

10 MR. MEADOWS: And so, in terms of a due-out, would you -- is it
11 your belief, your sworn testimony here today, that your belief was that
12 Vice President Pence would give a favorable recommendation to the
13 President of the United States to release the aid and move forward?

14 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes.

15 MR. MEADOWS: I thank you. I yield back.

16 MS. WILLIAMS: Thank you, sir.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Why don't we take our lunch break now and
18 resume at 12:30. We are in recess.

19 [Recess.]

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1 [12:35 p.m.]

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

3 Ms. Williams, I just had a couple followup questions before I give
4 it back to Mr. Noble or Mr. Goldman. In response to some of the
5 questions from minority counsel, you described the efforts made to
6 advance a potential Vice Presidential visit to the inauguration, the
7 effort to see if rooms were available and the like?

8 MS. WILLIAMS: Uh-huh. Yes, sir.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: I take it once the message was passed down that
10 the President did not want the Vice President to attend, any further
11 effort to make those arrangements also came to an end?

12 MS. WILLIAMS: That's correct.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: The Vice President wasn't going to countermand the
14 President and go even though the President didn't want him to?

15 MS. WILLIAMS: I can't speak for the Vice President, but I was
16 instructed to stop the trip planning at that point.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. And you never learned the reason for the
18 President's change of mind on the Vice President's attending the
19 inauguration?

20 MS. WILLIAMS: No, sir.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: This is no slur on the Secretary of Energy, but
22 I think you said one of the roles of the Vice President is to attend
23 high-level meetings that the President cannot attend?

24 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes, sir.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: And that's viewed with a certain status by foreign

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1 governments having a Vice Presidential visit, not as good as the
2 President but maybe number two?

3 MS. WILLIAMS: I believe so.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: And the decision to send the Vice President
5 somewhere would be viewed in Ukraine as a signal of U.S. support for
6 this new President, his inauguration?

7 MS. WILLIAMS: That's right.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Now, I think you mentioned -- and this is along
9 similar lines, that one of the points that President Zelensky made in
10 Warsaw is it's not just getting military assistance that's important,
11 it's the fact that it's coming from the United States that's also
12 important. Is that right?

13 MS. WILLIAMS: That's correct.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: And that's important, both in terms of assuring
15 Ukrainians that the United States has its back, but also in deterring
16 Russian aggression, is it not?

17 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: And the same might be said for the status of a
19 Presidential or Vice Presidential visit to an inauguration?

20 MS. WILLIAMS: Correct.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Now, at the meeting in Warsaw, I think you said
22 it was a big meeting. It was a six-plus-six. Is that right?

23 MS. WILLIAMS: That's right.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: And that means that there were essentially six
25 U.S. principals and six staff people behind them?

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1 MS. WILLIAMS: Correct, and then the two principals in the front
2 of the room, so President Zelensky and the Vice President.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: I see. And then on the Ukrainian side of the
4 table, they would have their own six-plus-six?

5 MS. WILLIAMS: Correct.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: So there would be essentially around two dozen
7 people at that meeting?

8 MS. WILLIAMS: That's right.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: And so in this meeting with two dozen people, the
10 Vice President did not bring up what the President said on the July 25
11 phone call in terms of the President's desire for investigations of
12 the Bidens, Burisma, or 2016?

13 MS. WILLIAMS: Correct, he did not raise that.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Now, you've seen, I'm sure, a press report about
15 what Ambassador Sondland said happened just after that meeting. Have
16 you not?

17 MS. WILLIAMS: I've seen the press reports, yes.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: And if Ambassador Sondland's new affidavit is
19 accurate and he spoke with Mr. Yermak immediately thereafter, still
20 at the same meeting, but in a pull-aside, and conveyed that military
21 assistance was tied to doing these investigations, that would have an
22 influence on how Ukraine would perceive what the Vice President meant
23 when he was talking about corruption. Would it not?

24 MS. WILLIAMS: I would imagine that they would take that
25 conversation into account, but obviously, I can't speak for the

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1 Ukrainians on how they would interpret that.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: But you would certainly expect that a top adviser
3 to President Zelensky, who sat in on the Vice Presidential meeting,
4 would very quickly convey to President Zelensky what he had heard in
5 the private discussion with Ambassador Sondland immediately
6 thereafter?

7 MS. WILLIAMS: I would imagine so.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Now, I think you said that, in anticipation for
9 the Vice President's call to congratulate President Zelensky on his
10 inauguration, which followed President Trump's call, that you included
11 the call record of President Trump's call for the Vice President?

12 MS. WILLIAMS: That's correct.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: And I think you said that after the July 25 call
14 between President Trump and President Zelensky you also included that
15 call record in the Vice President's daily briefing book?

16 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes, in his daily briefing book that same day, on
17 July 25.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: And we heard other testimony that the Vice
19 President was quite diligent in reading his Presidential -- or Vice
20 Presidential daily briefing books. Was that your experience as well?

21 MS. WILLIAMS: He receives them every evening, so I have to admit,
22 I've never personally witnessed his process of reading them. I presume
23 he does, but I can't confirm if he reads every item every day.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: But in your conversations with the Vice President
25 following up on the briefing materials that you give him, does he seem

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1 familiar with what you had briefed him in writing?

2 MS. WILLIAMS: Generally, but I don't see him on a daily basis,
3 so it's hard for me to be very precise in terms of what items he will
4 have read each night.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, even though you don't see him on a daily
6 basis, on the opportunities you do see him and you discuss things that
7 you briefed him about in writing, he seems familiar with what you
8 provided him, does he not?

9 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes, sir.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: And in the briefing book prior to his visit with
11 President Zelensky in Warsaw, would the July 25 call record have been
12 in that briefing book as well?

13 MS. WILLIAMS: I don't believe it was. We don't normally include
14 call transcripts in trip briefing books.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: So his familiarity with the call would have been
16 around the time it occurred from the original briefing book?

17 MS. WILLIAMS: That would have been the only opportunity that I'm
18 aware of that he would have had that transcript.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Now, I think you testified that Senator Johnson
20 was trying to reach the Vice President. About when did -- when was
21 that effort made?

22 MS. WILLIAMS: I received an email from my Vice President's
23 office colleague who covers legislative affairs connecting me with one
24 of Senator Johnson's staff members just before we left for Warsaw, I
25 believe it was August 30, on that Friday, and we departed that Saturday.

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1 It may have even been that Saturday, either August 30th or 31st.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: So August 30th or 31st was when Senator Johnson
3 was trying to reach the Vice President?

4 MS. WILLIAMS: My understanding from Senator Johnson's staff was
5 that the Senator was looking to have a phone call with the Vice
6 President, either before the Vice President went to Warsaw to talk about
7 Ukraine or, if that wasn't possible, possibly right after the Vice
8 President had met with Zelensky that Sunday because Senator Johnson
9 was traveling out to Kyiv the following week. And so, it would be an
10 opportunity for them to compare notes and for the Vice President to
11 convey what he had heard from Zelensky before Senator Johnson saw
12 Zelensky.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Are you familiar with The Wall Street Journal
14 article, dated October 4, in which Senator Johnson told The Wall Street
15 Journal that Ambassador Sondland had described to him a quid pro quo
16 involving a commitment by Kyiv to probe matters related to U.S.
17 elections and the status of nearly \$400 million in U.S. aid to Ukraine
18 that the President had ordered to be held up in July? Are you familiar
19 with that article?

20 MS. WILLIAMS: I'm not, no. No, sir.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: The article indicates that the Senator was told
22 this by Ambassador Sondland in August. Do you know whether this was
23 the subject which Senator Johnson sought to discuss with the Vice
24 President?

25 MS. WILLIAMS: I don't know specifically. What I understood

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1 from Senator Johnson's staff member was that the Senator wanted to
2 discuss the status of security assistance, so I took that to mean the
3 status of the hold. But I didn't know what -- any more detail than
4 that.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. Mr. Noble.

6 BY MR. NOBLE:

7 Q Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

8 You testified earlier that you first learned that there had been
9 a hold placed on the Ukraine assistance on July 3 in the email from
10 Colonel Vindman. Is that right?

11 A That's correct.

12 Q And then on July 9 you had the meeting in General Kellogg's
13 office with the Ukrainian National Security Advisor Danylyuk?

14 A Correct.

15 Q So, at that point, you were aware that there had been this
16 freeze placed on the Ukrainian assistance. Is that right?

17 A At that point?

18 Q Yes, as of July 9.

19 A I had seen -- correct. I mean, I had seen the update that
20 OMB had decided or had conveyed to the State Department that they were
21 not clearing these particular congressional notifications. I don't
22 believe it was clear, even as of July 9, what exactly was behind that
23 in terms of was this a, you know, long-term hold or what was the
24 motivation behind it. But I was aware that there was a problem with
25 clearing the assistance, yes.

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1 THE CHAIRMAN: And I apologize, Counsel. There were a couple
2 other questions I'd forgotten I wanted to ask just to follow up on the
3 questioning by minority counsel.

4 I take it from what you said earlier that in terms of Ambassador
5 Sondland's conversation with Mr. Yermak on the sidelines of the Warsaw
6 meeting between President Zelensky and Vice President Pence, that you
7 were out of the loop on any discussion Ambassador Sondland had about
8 the conditioning military aid on the investigations that were described
9 previously by the President in the July 25 call?

10 MS. WILLIAMS: Correct. I was not present at that meeting, and
11 I was not aware that it had taken place.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: And were you -- and so you had the -- you may have
13 seen this described in various ways, as an official track and an
14 irregular track. You were in the official track hearing the official
15 message from the Vice President of what the United States wanted Ukraine
16 to do. Is that right?

17 MS. WILLIAMS: Correct.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: But in terms of the unofficial track represented
19 by that conversation on the sideline between Ambassador Sondland and
20 Mr. Yermak, you were not part of that irregular track?

21 MS. WILLIAMS: No, sir.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: And in terms of efforts by those in that irregular
23 track to get President Zelensky to commit to the investigations the
24 President described in that July 25 phone call, you were not privy to
25 those conversations either, not part of that track?

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1 MS. WILLIAMS: No, sir.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: So efforts to get Ambassador -- well, efforts to
3 get President Zelensky to make a public commitment to pursue these two
4 investigations into the Bidens and Burisma and this debunked conspiracy
5 theory about 2016, prior to getting the White House meeting, you were
6 not part of those discussions, you were out of that loop as well?

7 MS. WILLIAMS: Correct.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: You weren't aware of efforts that Ambassador
9 Volker or Ambassador Sondland were making to get President Zelensky
10 to announce these investigations?

11 MS. WILLIAMS: No, sir.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: And I take it that neither Ambassador Volker nor
13 Ambassador Sondland nor anyone else brought you into their confidence
14 about efforts to get President Zelensky to go on CNN, even as the aid
15 was withheld to publicly announce these investigations that President
16 Trump wanted?

17 MS. WILLIAMS: No, sir, I was not aware of those efforts.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Mr. Noble.

19 BY MR. NOBLE:

20 Q So going back to that July 9 meeting, prior to that meeting,
21 had you had any discussions with General Kellogg about the freeze on
22 the Ukraine assistance?

23 A I don't believe so, because, again, when I learned about it
24 on July 3, it was a very brief paragraph, and it wasn't entirely clear
25 what more to the story there was. So I don't believe I raised it to

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1 General Kellogg's attention at that particular time.

2 I believe I did raise it with him for his awareness before the
3 July 9 meeting just in person. Actually, yes, I did. I recall now.
4 As I was preparing him for that meeting, I did provide some briefing
5 materials on a range of, you know, policy matters that we expected
6 Danylyuk would raise. And I believe I briefed him verbally just for
7 his awareness about this issue with OMB holding the assistance just
8 in case it came up.

9 Q Why did you think it might come up in the meeting with
10 Danylyuk?

11 A I had no reason to believe that the Ukrainians were aware
12 of it at that time, but I just wanted General Kellogg to be aware just
13 in case.

14 Q In case it did come up?

15 A Correct.

16 Q To your knowledge, was when you briefed General Kellogg about
17 the freeze, based on Vindman's email, was that the first time that he
18 was learning that a freeze had been placed, or do you think he was
19 previously aware?

20 A I don't really recall his reaction, to be honest, so I can't
21 really say one way or the other whether it was the first time he was
22 hearing of the information or not.

23 Q And did you and General Kellogg have a substantive discussion
24 about that topic, or was it just kind of one way, you briefed him and
25 that was it?

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1 A It was one way. It was a fairly brief pre-brief, so to speak,
2 so it was not a lengthy conversation about it. And, again, even at
3 that point, this was about a week after I had first learned of it, it
4 still wasn't entirely clear what was behind the issue, whether it was
5 still -- OMB's rationale, I had learned, was to determine whether the
6 aid was still in line with administration priorities. But I still had
7 not seen any clarification of what exactly that meant, and if this was
8 going to be a long-term process.

9 Q And I believe you testified -- and during that July 9
10 meeting, I'm assuming this topic did not come up with the Ukrainians,
11 the freeze?

12 A Correct, it did not come up.

13 Q I believe you testified that OMB was tasked with doing some
14 kind of policy review, or OMB said that there was going to be a policy
15 review of the assistance provided to Ukraine. Is that right?

16 A In the brief update that I had seen on July 3, I don't recall
17 precisely how it was described. But what I recall was State Department
18 was conveying to NSC that they were told by OMB that they were going
19 to continue holding these congressional notifications pending further
20 review to make sure that the assistance was in line with administration
21 priorities. It was not specific in that short paragraph what exactly
22 that review would entail.

23 Q And did you get any more color on that at the July 23 PCC
24 meeting that you attended?

25 A Not really. The OMB representative at that meeting

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1 essentially just conveyed to the group that the guidance they had
2 received from the White House chief of staff was to continue to hold
3 the assistance without further explanation.

4 Q But the unanimous view of all the agencies that participated
5 in the PCC was that the hold should be lifted and the aid should flow
6 to Ukraine?

7 A That's correct.

8 Q Okay. Now, I believe Mr. Castor asked you some questions
9 that suggested that President Trump may have been concerned about,
10 like, a return on investment for these funds. You remember that line
11 of questioning?

12 A I recall we discussed President Trump's, you know, broad view
13 on the effectiveness of foreign aid.

14 Q But at that point in time, hadn't the Department of Defense
15 already certified that the assistance was, in fact, effective and
16 should be provided to Ukraine?

17 A Yes, they did.

18 Q Yeah. I mean, Ukraine had been invaded by Russia. They
19 were literally fighting a hot war against Russia, and this military
20 assistance was going directly to help Ukraine fight the Russians.
21 Isn't that accurate?

22 A Correct. And DOD also made the point that this assistance
23 primarily goes to U.S. defense contracting companies to implement.

24 Q So the money was not only benefiting Ukraine, but it was also
25 indirectly benefiting U.S. companies, which is also a concern of

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1 President Trump, correct?

2 A That was a message that DOD was conveying to help make their
3 point.

4 Q And so every -- basically, every dollar that is being spent
5 on this Ukraine assistance, the U.S. is seeing returns to both the
6 national security of Ukraine, the national security of the United
7 States, and to essentially the pockets of defense contractors?

8 A That was certainly DOD's point of view.

9 Q So that seems like a pretty good investment from your
10 perspective?

11 A I believe so.

12 Q And until this freeze that kind of came out of the blue, from
13 your perspective, on July 3, President Trump had previously supported
14 assistance to Ukraine, didn't he?

15 A I believe that President Trump had been supportive of our
16 overall U.S.-Ukraine foreign policy. I don't know that I had any
17 specific insight into his particular views on the security assistance
18 per se.

19 Q But, again, all of the agencies at that point in time, as
20 of July, all these interagency meetings that minority counsel asked
21 you about, the view was unanimous that the aid should be provided to
22 Ukraine?

23 A Correct, except for OMB's clarification on why they were
24 holding it.

25 Q And that view never changed, correct?

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1 A No, sir.

2 Q Did you receive any instruction from Vice President Pence
3 or General Kellogg about the position that you should take in the
4 interagency meetings that you participated in? Did you discuss that?

5 A No, I did not. I prepared General Kellogg for his
6 participation in the Deputies Committee meeting on July 26, but prior
7 to that, I was kind of participating at my own level and then briefing
8 General Kellogg afterwards.

9 Q Can you tell us about how you prepped General Kellogg for
10 the -- was that the deputies' meeting?

11 A That's right. I prepared some talking points for General
12 Kellogg's participation in the July 26 Deputies Committee meeting and
13 provided him some background on how the previous meetings, the sub-PCC
14 and the PCC, had gone so that he was aware of the status of the discussion
15 and where the interagency stood on the issue of security assistance.

16 Q And did he react in any way to your briefing, your
17 preparation?

18 A He seemed to agree that, you know, OVP should take the
19 position to also support the lifting of the freeze.

20 Q And are you aware whether Vice President Pence supported that
21 position at that time?

22 A I'm not aware because we didn't have a specific conversation
23 during that timeframe about it.

24 Q Are you familiar with a Presidential decision memorandum
25 that was dated on or about August 15 about lifting the freeze on

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1 security assistance?

2 A I don't believe so, no.

3 Q Okay. So you don't recall ever receiving a copy of that?

4 A I can't say that I didn't receive a copy in my email traffic
5 at one point. I took some leave around that timeframe, so I may have
6 missed it.

7 Q When did you take leave?

8 A Around that timeframe, in mid-August.

9 Q Yeah. I mean, that's a usual time of year --

10 A Yeah. Apologies if I missed it, but, yeah.

11 Q No worries. But I was just -- my question was going to be
12 if you knew whether General Kellogg or Vice President Pence ever got
13 a copy of that memorandum, and whether they concurred in it or Vice
14 President specifically concurred in it?

15 A I don't know. I just don't know.

16 Q Okay. Are you familiar with -- you may have been on leave,
17 but are you familiar with a meeting that the President had with advisers
18 at Bedminster in New Jersey on August 16?

19 A I'm not aware of that meeting, no.

20 Q Or whether Vice President Pence attended that meeting?

21 A I'm not aware. He may have, but I don't recall.

22 Q Are you familiar with another PCC meeting that was held on
23 July 31?

24 A Yes. I was in that meeting.

25 Q Okay. Can you tell us what happened in that meeting? Or

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1 let's maybe -- what was --

2 A I'll try.

3 Q What was the purpose of that meeting? Was it focused on
4 Ukraine, or was it about something else?

5 A It was a Ukraine PCC, and as I recall, it was focused on kind
6 of the, quote/unquote, normal range of agenda items that comprise our
7 Ukraine policy. So we discussed efforts on the security track, on the
8 economic track, and kind of the assistance track and where all those
9 stood.

10 But I recall that because before that, the week before, you know,
11 the Deputies Committee meeting had taken place and essentially had
12 resulted in the same conclusion that all agencies except for OMB had
13 recommended that the hold be lifted.

14 The next step in that process, there needed to be a PC, a
15 Principals Committee meeting, and that was still pending. So when the
16 PCC met the following week there was no resolution to the issue of the
17 security assistance hold, and so essentially, the group just went back
18 to talking about the normal agenda items. And essentially, the
19 security assistance freeze was the elephant in the room that we just
20 skipped over, because that was still trying to move forward working
21 towards a Principals Committee meeting.

22 Q Okay. So in the July 23 PCC, the July 26 deputies, or the
23 July 31 PCC meeting -- I believe you participated in all of those,
24 right?

25 A Yes, sir.

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1 Q Did the issue of the legality of the hold ever come up? Did
2 anybody ever raise questions about whether this was legal or not?

3 A Yes, actually. I think it may have been in the 31st meeting.
4 I can't recall if it was the 23rd or the 31st, but there were
5 discussions --

6 MR. SWALWELL: Counsel, can we just get the dates on that, just
7 which month?

8 MR. NOBLE: Oh, July.

9 MS. WILLIAMS: Oh, sorry. July.

10 MR. SWALWELL: Just for the record, thanks.

11 MS. WILLIAMS: July 23 or July 31, both at the PCC level, there
12 were discussions about -- raised I believe both by State Department
13 and DOD, essentially trying to work out if there was no lifting of the
14 hold, and we were getting closer to the end of the fiscal year, how
15 those agencies would need to go back to Congress to remedy the situation
16 with unspent funds, and what would be the legal recourse for either
17 requesting a rescission of those funds or, you know, what steps would
18 need to be taken to address that before the end of the fiscal year.

19 BY MR. NOBLE:

20 Q And are you aware that ultimately after the freeze was
21 lifted, on September 11, DOD did have to come back to Congress and
22 Congress did have to write an amendment to effectively allow the funds
23 to be spent after the September 30 deadline?

24 A I was not aware of that, but I wasn't tracking it that closely
25 at that time.

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1 Q During this course of time, when the security assistance hold
2 was being considered in the interagency, did you have further
3 discussions with General Kellogg about what the Office of the Vice
4 President should or could be doing to try to get the freeze lifted?

5 A No specific discussions other than my briefing him before
6 the Deputies Committee meeting on July 26, which would have been his
7 primary opportunity of engagement on that issue. I would have done
8 the same if there had been a Principals Committee meeting sometime in
9 August, but after the Deputies Committee meeting, since no meeting was
10 scheduled, I didn't have a specific conversation with him about it.

11 Q Okay. How about in the early part of August, before you
12 started preparing for the Warsaw meeting, when I know the security
13 assistance came up again --

14 A Right.

15 Q -- did you have any further conversations with General
16 Kellogg or anybody else at OVP about what are you going to do about
17 this hold that was on -- hold in place?

18 A No specific conversations. I was kind of tracking the
19 process to see if a Principals Committee meeting would be scheduled
20 at some point. I have to say also during the timeframe of the month
21 of August, we were still preparing for the Vice President's trip to
22 Europe, to the U.K., Ireland, and Iceland, so that really consumed a
23 lot of my time. So I was aware of the pending issue, but not working
24 it myself on a day-to-day basis.

25 Q Okay. Are you aware of whether the Ukrainians learned of

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1 the hold prior to it becoming public through that Politico article on
2 August 28?

3 A I'm not aware.

4 Q One way or the other?

5 A One way or the other.

6 Q So I do want to ask some more questions about the July 25
7 call, but it might make sense just to kind of finish with Warsaw and
8 the security assistance.

9 A Sure.

10 Q In preparing for the bilat between Vice President Pence and
11 President Zelensky, I believe you testified that the Vice President
12 had asked for an update on the hold on the security assistance. Is
13 that right?

14 A That's correct.

15 Q And that General Kellogg tasked you to gather information
16 and an update for the Vice President?

17 A Correct.

18 Q Can you explain to us what you did to get the update that
19 was provided to General Kellogg and the Vice President?

20 A Sure. I had seen a recent similar update prepared by Colonel
21 Vindman, my NSC colleague, that really laid out the status of the
22 security assistance and what would be the necessary timings in order
23 to get the assistance implemented by the end of the fiscal year, how
24 much was being held, just really the basics of where it stood. So I
25 used that information to craft an update for General Kellogg to provide

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1 to the Vice President.

2 Q And how far in advance of the September 1st bilat did you
3 provide the update?

4 A I was asked to provide that on that Friday, which I believe
5 is August 30, so it was --

6 Q Right before?

7 A -- right before, because we only found out about the trip
8 the day before that.

9 Q And in the course of gathering this information, were you
10 able to determine why the hold had been put in place and any insight
11 into whether or not it was going to be lifted?

12 A At that point, it had been held since July 3. I was still
13 not aware of what the motivation behind the hold was, but I knew that
14 General Kellogg was also aware of the hold since he had participated
15 in the July 26 Deputies Committee meeting, and I wasn't aware of any
16 change in the status over the course of August. So I did not address
17 that -- the issue of why in my update. It was really just focused on
18 how much funding, what was the timeline looking like to -- if it was
19 going to be released, and, you know, what would it provide.

20 Q Okay. And I believe you testified that you anticipated that
21 President Zelensky would raise the issue of the hold after it had become
22 public with the Vice President and that you and others may have prepped
23 the Vice President on how to respond. Is that right?

24 A Correct. Ambassador Bolton really took the lead in that
25 pre-brief conversation right before the meeting with President

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1 Zelensky, since he had just seen Zelensky a few days prior. But I
2 believe his meeting was before the Politico article had taken place,
3 so Ambassador Bolton had not discussed the hold with Zelensky, is my
4 understanding.

5 But Ambassador Bolton and the Vice President in the small group
6 discussed how to respond to that question. And obviously, that group
7 did not have a precise answer to provide to Zelensky in terms of when
8 a decision might be made, but they talked about, you know, obviously
9 a decision would need to be made before the end of the fiscal year,
10 which was very quickly approaching. And they talked about -- a bit
11 about, you know, what other European countries could do to help support
12 Ukraine in the meantime.

13 Q Was there any discussion of the reason for the hold in that
14 small group?

15 A No.

16 Q No. I mean, it seems a little odd that there's this hold
17 in place that's been in place since July 3, as you said, the entire
18 interagency supports lifting the hold, the Vice President anticipates
19 getting questions about it from President Zelensky, but there's no
20 discussion of like why are we even doing this, like why is this hold
21 in place?

22 A That's correct.

23 Q Okay. Are you familiar with a firsthand or first-person
24 cable that Ambassador Taylor drafted and sent to Secretary Pompeo, and
25 that we believe was further distributed possibly to the White House?

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1 A I am. I've read the cable.

2 Q Were you on the distribution of the cable?

3 A I received it, I believe, from State Department colleagues,
4 but not on the original distribution, since it was a limited cable that
5 went straight to the Secretary's office.

6 Q Do you remember who sent it to you or how you got it?

7 A I don't recall, to be honest. It might have been from NSC
8 colleagues.

9 Q Do you recall what the cable said?

10 A It was a cable outlining Ambassador Taylor's rationale on
11 the importance of our U.S. security assistance to Ukraine, and why it
12 was important for the security assistance to continue to flow.

13 Q Do you recall him saying that the hold was folly?

14 A Yes.

15 Q Do you recall anything else that he said, or any other
16 recommendations that he made?

17 A It was a lengthy cable. I don't remember it verbatim, but
18 I thought it was a very persuasive case.

19 Q Do you remember approximately when you received a copy of
20 it, or obtained a copy of it? Was it before the Warsaw bilat?

21 A It was certainly before the Warsaw trip, because I recall
22 reading it in the process of preparing for the trip. I don't recall
23 the precise date, but it would have been around that timeframe, end
24 of August.

25 Q Did you use it in preparing the Vice President for the bilat

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1 when you pulled together the materials that General Kellogg asked you
2 to do relating to the hold on the assistance?

3 A I'm trying to recall, because I found it a very persuasive
4 cable, whether I actually included it in the trip book or not. I
5 believe I, at least, provided a copy to General Kellogg. I can't recall
6 for certain whether I put it in the Vice President's trip book or not.

7 Q Okay. So you don't know one way or the other whether Vice
8 President Pence ever saw that memo -- or cable, rather?

9 A I don't recall. I know I found it significant, but I
10 couldn't say definitively whether I put it in the book or not. I may
11 have. I just can't recall.

12 Q You've used words "significant, persuasive." Why did you
13 think Ambassador Taylor's memo was both significant and persuasive?

14 A I thought he laid out a very strong case for the effectiveness
15 of U.S. security assistance to Ukraine, as we've discussed before, not
16 just because of the actual physical and substantial support that it
17 provides, but also the symbolic value of it; and that at this particular
18 critical moment in Ukrainian politics and security environment, that
19 any signal of wavering U.S. support would send the wrong message to
20 President Zelensky just as he was trying to implement his reform agenda.

21 Q And you said you recall Ambassador Taylor writing that he
22 thought the freeze was -- the hold was folly. Did you agree with that
23 assessment as well?

24 A Yes.

25 Q And you said President Zelensky, when he met with Vice

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1 President Pence, noted the symbolic value, not just the monetary value
2 of the assistance, right?

3 A Right, he did.

4 Q Did he raise the symbolic value of a White House meeting or
5 a meeting with President Trump as well?

6 A I'm trying to recall. The reason I'm hesitating is I know
7 he raised it in the public remarks he made with the President -- with
8 President Trump at the meeting on the margins of the U.N. General
9 Assembly not long after, so I don't want to conflate the two.

10 Q Yeah, I think he made a joke about --

11 A He did.

12 Q -- the fact that the White House meeting still had not being
13 scheduled?

14 A That we had forgotten to give him the dates for the visit.

15 Q Yeah?

16 A I just -- I can't recall specifically if he also raised it
17 in the meeting with the Vice President.

18 Q But you would agree that a meeting with the President at the
19 White House, or elsewhere, also carries symbolic value and could be
20 valuable to the Ukrainians. Even though it may not have a monetary
21 value, it's valuable in showing that the U.S. has the full -- or Ukraine
22 has the full support of the United States, particularly when they're
23 battling Russia?

24 A Yes, I agree.

25 Q Okay. Do you recall whether -- going back to the

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1 cable -- Ambassador Bolton ever raised the cable in the pre-brief for
2 the Vice President in Warsaw?

3 A No, I don't believe he did, not specifically. The topic was
4 discussed, but I don't believe there was reference to the cable.

5 Q Okay. So I think I want to go back to the July 25 call, and
6 I know you were asked questions about this from minority counsel but
7 I had a few others. First, on the issue of Burisma, the company coming
8 up, does the word "Burisma" actually appear in your notes that you
9 reviewed recently?

10 A Yes.

11 Q So you wouldn't have written that down if it hadn't come up
12 during the call. Is that right?

13 A Correct.

14 Q Do you recall whether it was President Trump who said
15 Burisma, or might it have been President Zelensky who said Burisma?
16 Do your notes say one way or the other?

17 A In looking again at my notes, I believe it was President Trump
18 who raised Burisma.

19 Q Okay. Do you know why the word "Burisma" doesn't appear in
20 the MEMCON that was released publicly?"

21 A I don't know why.

22 Q Okay. You weren't involved in the editing process, right?

23 A No, sir.

24 Q And I believe you testified that prior to the July 25 call,
25 you had listened in on about a dozen other calls between President Trump

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1 and other foreign heads of state. Is that right?

2 A Probably, around that number.

3 Q Okay. During the July 25 call, did you have any concerns
4 about the conversation that you heard between President Trump and
5 President Zelensky?

6 A I certainly noted that the mention of those specific
7 investigations seemed unusual as compared to other discussions with
8 foreign leaders.

9 Q And why were they unusual?

10 A I believed those references to be more political in nature
11 and so that struck me as unusual.

12 Q Were you involved in preparing talking points for President
13 Trump for that July 25 call?

14 A No.

15 Q Okay. Did you see the call package or talking points in
16 advance of the call?

17 A No.

18 Q So you just -- you learned about the call and were asked to
19 participate in it?

20 A Correct.

21 Q Okay. As you were sitting in the Situation Room and you were
22 taking notes, did you notice whether other people were taking notes?

23 A Yes, others were taking notes as well.

24 Q Do you recall who took notes during the call?

25 A I believe everybody in the room was taking notes, yes.

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1 Q Okay. Prior to the July 25 call, you said that these things,
2 the investigations that you said were political and unusual, had you
3 ever heard President Trump or anybody else in the Office of the Vice
4 President or the White House raise the issue of CrowdStrike or the
5 Ukrainian server?

6 A No.

7 Q I mean, or the DNC server?

8 A No.

9 Q So that was -- that struck you as -- that was something new?

10 A I had never heard the word "CrowdStrike" before, so that's
11 why it struck me as noteworthy.

12 Q Okay. And what about the -- President Trump's raising the
13 issue of the 2016 election during the call? Had there been discussion
14 in the Office of the Vice President or the White House, to your
15 knowledge, about concerns about possible Ukrainian interference in the
16 2016 U.S. Presidential election? Had you heard anything --

17 A No, not to my knowledge.

18 Q Okay. So that wasn't anything that was part of the official
19 U.S. policy channel?

20 A No.

21 Q What about investigating the Bidens?

22 A I had never heard discussion of that issue prior to that phone
23 call.

24 Q Okay. Do you recall what language President Zelensky was
25 speaking during the phone call?

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1 A I don't. My understanding, he's more comfortable in
2 Russian. But not speaking either Ukrainian or Russian, I can't confirm
3 that.

4 Q Well, was he speaking English --

5 A No.

6 Q -- the whole time?

7 A No. The call was interpreted on both sides.

8 Q So in your other calls with -- that you listened in on between
9 President Trump and foreign heads of state, had any other issues that
10 you would describe as political been raised, or domestic political
11 issues been raised in those calls?

12 A No.

13 Q How did General Kellogg react when President Trump raised
14 these political issues on the July 25 call?

15 A I didn't sense any reaction. We were all really just focused
16 on taking notes.

17 Q Did you notice a reaction from anyone in the room?

18 A No. Honestly, we were all pretty busy taking notes in the
19 moment, and we didn't have any follow-on conversations about it.

20 Q And I believe you testified you never spoke to General
21 Kellogg about the call afterwards?

22 A I did not.

23 Q Did you speak to anybody about the fact that you found
24 these -- the call unusual or that political issues had come up in a
25 call with a foreign leader?

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1 A No, I did not.

2 Q Were you aware of whether Ambassador Volker or Ambassador
3 Sondland had prepared the Ukrainians to expect President Trump to raise
4 these political issues on the call? Were you aware of that?

5 A I was not aware of that.

6 Q So you weren't aware of like text messages and phone
7 conversations they were having with Andrey Yermak behind the scenes?

8 A No.

9 Q Okay. Were you aware, after the Warsaw bilat in September,
10 of a proposal to have President Zelensky do a televised interview during
11 which he would announce the investigations into 2016 election
12 interference, Burisma, or the Bidens? Were you aware of that?

13 A No, I was not aware of that.

14 Q So there was no discussions of that in the official Ukraine
15 policy -- policymaking channel?

16 A No.

17 Q No, okay.

18 Now, I believe minority counsel had asked you that -- or maybe
19 it was Mr. Meadows had asked about the fact that after the bilat in
20 Warsaw, Vice President Pence was going to call President Trump to relay,
21 I guess, the positive feedback he got from President Zelensky. Did
22 you participate in that phone call that night?

23 A No, I didn't.

24 Q Okay. Do you know that a phone call did occur though between
25 the Vice President and the President?

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1 A I believe he did have a phone call with the President, but,
2 again, I don't know what topics they discussed.

3 Q Okay. But President Trump didn't -- after that phone call
4 did not immediately release the hold on the security assistance, did
5 he?

6 A No.

7 Q It wasn't until about 10 days later that the hold was lifted?

8 A That's correct.

9 Q And I believe you testified that it was on September 9, so
10 2 days before the hold was lifted, that you became aware that the
11 Congress had launched an investigation into the freeze and the
12 Ukrainian issues more generally. Is that right?

13 A I believe so. I can't recall if it was the 9th or the 10th,
14 but, yes, it was before the hold was lifted.

15 Q Was that investigation discussed within the Office of the
16 Vice President?

17 A No.

18 Q Did you have any discussions with General Kellogg about the
19 investigation?

20 A No. I'm trying to remember where I learned of it, but, no,
21 I didn't have any conversations.

22 Q Yeah. Do you recall how you learned about it?

23 A Not really. Apologies. I don't, honestly. I don't recall
24 if it was through open-source reporting, or if there was some sort of
25 internal update, but I don't recall having any conversations with

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1 General Kellogg about it.

2 Q Okay. And not sticking even just within this timeframe, but
3 more generally, did you ever become aware of a document request that
4 these committees had sent to the Office of the Vice President for
5 documents relating to Ukraine?

6 A I believe I saw a letter issued that was publicly released
7 requesting documents, yes.

8 Q Was there ever any discussion about that request in the
9 Office of the Vice President that you were involved in?

10 A I'm not sure how to answer related to document requests.

11 MR. SHUR: Could you repeat the question?

12 MR. NOBLE: Sure. The question was, was there any discussion
13 within the Office of the Vice President of the document request that
14 the committee sent to the Vice President's office?

15 MR. SHUR: The concern, I think, is that the answer is going to
16 call for privileged communications with lawyers in the Vice President's
17 office.

18 MR. NOBLE: I think she can say whether, yes or no, there was
19 discussion or not without -- is the privilege attorney-client
20 privilege? Is that --

21 MR. SHUR: Yes.

22 MR. NOBLE: Okay. But I think she can answer whether or not there
23 was a discussion without getting into the content.

24 MS. WILLIAMS: Okay. Yes.

25 MR. NOBLE: Now, all of these documents that you've been talking

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1 about today, did you turn those over to anybody? Like your notes and
2 the emails relating to Ukraine? The notes of the July 25 call? The
3 copy of Ambassador Taylor's cable and the other documents that you've
4 referenced in your testimony?

5 MR. SHUR: I guess, I think, same objection in the sense that it's
6 arguably work product in terms of what she was asked to collect and
7 provide to counsel.

8 BY MR. NOBLE:

9 Q Oh, well, okay, maybe I can ask it this way: Those documents
10 still exist within the Office of the Vice President. Is that fair?

11 A Correct.

12 Q Okay. And do you recall about when the discussion of the
13 committee's request for documents was held? Do you remember when that
14 occurred?

15 A Not precisely. I'd have to go back and look at when
16 precisely the letter was issued versus when we started collecting
17 documents.

18 Q Okay. Are you aware of the call between Vice President Pence
19 and President Zelensky on September 18?

20 A Yes.

21 Q What was the purpose of that call?

22 A The purpose was to follow up on his successful meeting with
23 President Zelensky on September 1, and to reiterate the news that the
24 security assistance hold had been lifted, and that the security
25 assistance would be provided. We knew at that point that President

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1 Zelensky was already aware that the security assistance would be
2 released. But because the Vice President had a successful meeting with
3 President Zelensky, it was a good opportunity for them to have a
4 follow-on conversation.

5 Q And did you listen in on the call?

6 A Yes.

7 Q Can you describe the conversation for us?

8 A Sure. It was a very positive discussion, again, kind of
9 following up on their successful meeting from September 1, as well as,
10 at that point, I believe it was just prior to President Trump's first
11 meeting with President Zelensky in New York, which, I believe, took
12 place the following week.

13 So it was a good opportunity to kind of bridge that gap and to
14 convey that the President -- President Trump was looking forward to
15 meeting President Zelensky in New York the following week, and the Vice
16 President reiterated the news that the security assistance had been
17 released.

18 Q Was there any discussion about the July 25 call between
19 President Trump and President Zelensky --

20 A No.

21 Q -- during that call?

22 What about the investigations that we've been talking about
23 today?

24 A No.

25 Q No. Oh, sorry, I think my time is up.

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1 THE CHAIRMAN: Forty-five minutes to the minority.

2 MR. CASTOR: We have just a few questions. It might make sense
3 to just keep going on your end and then --

4 MR. NOBLE: Yeah, I think we're almost done.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah. And we want to go to our members too, but
6 I don't think we're going to be that long. So do you want us to wrap
7 up and then you can go and --

8 MR. CASTOR: Right. Like, I mean, I could go for 5 minutes or
9 something, but it might just make more sense to finish what you're doing
10 and then we'll --

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah. Let's do that.

12 MR. NOBLE: Okay. Great. Thanks, Steve.

13 BY MR. NOBLE:

14 Q Did the topic of President Zelensky doing a televised
15 interview that I asked you about, did that come up during the Vice
16 President's call with President Zelensky?

17 A No.

18 Q Were you aware of whether that was still under consideration
19 at the time?

20 A I was still not aware of that at all at that point.

21 Q Did Vice President Pence give President Zelensky any advice
22 on how to approach or how to deal with President Trump at the upcoming
23 United Nations General Assembly?

24 A Nothing specific, other than just to -- that the
25 President -- President Trump would be eager to hear about President

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- 1 Zelensky's progress in his reform agenda.

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1 [1:28 p.m.]

2 BY MR. NOBLE:

3 Q On -- reform agenda on what, on corruption?

4 A Broadly, on anticorruption reforms, on reforming the
5 judiciary, and the legislative action that his administration was
6 undertaking, but there was no discussion of any specific
7 investigations.

8 Q Did Vice President Pence give President Zelensky any kind
9 of talking points or phrases or keywords to use with President Trump
10 during their meeting?

11 A No.

12 Q Going back to September 11th, just quickly, are you aware
13 of a meeting that evening at which the hold on security assistance was
14 discussed, on September 11?

15 A No. I'm trying to remember was -- I learned about the
16 lifting of the hold, I believe, on September 11th, but I thought I
17 learned about it in the morning. So no, I'm not aware of a meeting
18 that took place that evening.

19 Q So you're not aware of whether the Vice President or General
20 Kellogg participated in a meeting with President Trump at which the
21 question of whether to lift the hold was discussed on that day?

22 A I recall around that timeframe, September 10th-11th, there
23 was discussion with NSC about trying to have a discussion on the status
24 of the hold with the President, but I'm not -- I was not aware of when
25 it occurred, and I don't believe that General Kellogg or the Vice

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1 President were a part of it, although I can't confirm that. I'm not
2 certain.

3 Q To your recollection, though, you didn't have any
4 conversations with General Kellogg in advance of that, of such a meeting
5 or after such a meeting?

6 A No. I mean, at that point, the issue of the security
7 assistance hold had been ongoing, so I didn't feel there was anything
8 I needed to brief him on.

9 Q Are you aware of whether Ambassador Bolton ever called over
10 to OMB around the time that he departed the White House to urge them
11 to lift the hold on security assistance?

12 A I'm not aware.

13 Q Did you participate in the U.N. General Assembly?

14 A No.

15 Q Do you know if Vice President Pence or General Kellogg
16 participated?

17 A The Vice President was up in New York for about a day and
18 a half, I believe, but he did not participate in the President's meeting
19 with President Zelensky.

20 Q Okay. Did you do any prep work for the Vice President's trip
21 to UNGA?

22 A No. I don't believe he had any engagements related to my
23 region, so I did not.

24 Q You watched the presser between the President and President
25 Zelensky?

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1 A I did.

2 Q Okay. Did you get any readouts from anybody about the
3 private meeting that the two Presidents had?

4 A I believe I did receive a readout later from Tim Morrison
5 about the meeting.

6 Q Do you recall what Morrison relayed?

7 A I don't recall a lot of detail, to be honest. It sounded
8 like it had been a very positive meeting. I just don't recall the
9 specifics of it.

10 Q Are you aware of any conversations that the Vice President
11 had with either Secretary of State Pompeo or Secretary of Defense Esper
12 relating to the security assistance?

13 A I'm not aware of any. I can't say that it didn't come up
14 in inside conversations, but I'm not aware of any, no.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: I just had one question, then I'm going to hand
16 it to my colleagues.

17 You mentioned at the Warsaw meeting between President Zelensky
18 and Vice President Pence that President Zelensky made clear his
19 interest in the military assistance. Did President Zelensky raise at
20 that meeting his continued interest in a meeting with President Trump
21 as well?

22 MS. WILLIAMS: I'm trying to recall. I honestly don't recall if
23 that specific issue came up.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: His number one priority was getting the military
25 assistance and -- for its own right, and what it would say to the

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1 Russians about the U.S. having Ukraine's back militarily?

2 MS. WILLIAMS: That's right.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Swalwell.

4 MR. SWALWELL: Thank you, Chairman.

5 Thank you, Ms. Williams.

6 On the April 21 congratulatory call between President Trump and
7 President Zelensky, did you hear President Trump mention corruption
8 at all?

9 MS. WILLIAMS: I only read the transcript, so I wasn't listening
10 to the call.

11 MR. SWALWELL: I'm sorry. Did you read corruption?

12 MS. WILLIAMS: I believe it may have come up in the context of
13 our overall foreign policy objectives for Ukraine to address the issue
14 of anticorruption reforms.

15 MR. SWALWELL: And I understand that those were the objectives
16 of the team, but what President Trump actually said to President
17 Zelensky, did he ever use the word "corruption"?

18 MS. WILLIAMS: I would have to refer back to the transcript to
19 be 100 percent certain. I haven't looked at it in quite a long time.

20 MR. SWALWELL: And you would agree in the July 25 call that
21 President Trump never used the word "corruption"?

22 MS. WILLIAMS: Again, I'd have to look at the transcript to be
23 100 percent certain. I believe he did talk about corruption in that
24 call, but --

25 MR. SWALWELL: You recall hearing the word "corruption" from

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1 President Trump?

2 MS. WILLIAMS: To be honest, I'd have to review the transcript.

3 MR. SWALWELL: After the April 21st call, you said the Vice
4 President reviewed the call memorandum to be prepared for his call to
5 President Zelensky. Do you recall that?

6 MS. WILLIAMS: I provided the transcript to him.

7 MR. SWALWELL: For him to review?

8 MS. WILLIAMS: Correct.

9 MR. SWALWELL: And I think you described the purpose of that as
10 being so the Vice President was prepared and could carry out the
11 President, President Trump's foreign policy objectives when he spoke
12 to President Zelensky -- or President-elect Zelensky?

13 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes. I wanted him to be familiar with the
14 conversation that President Trump had had with President Zelensky 2
15 days prior.

16 MR. SWALWELL: And would you say that Vice President Pence was
17 consistent with the message that President Trump delivered on April
18 21?

19 MS. WILLIAMS: I believe the two messages were consistent, yes.
20 They both congratulated President Zelensky and looked forward to a good
21 working relationship.

22 MR. SWALWELL: So fast-forward to July 25. After that call
23 memorandum is produced, you, again, provide that to the Vice President
24 in his briefing materials?

25 MS. WILLIAMS: Correct.

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1 MR. SWALWELL: And the next time the Vice President talks with
2 President Zelensky after July 25 is in Warsaw. Is that right?

3 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes. The Vice President had not spoken to
4 Zelensky since April 23rd until September 1st, yes.

5 MR. SWALWELL: And so, how would you describe the consistency
6 between President Trump's foreign policy objectives in the July 25 call
7 with how Vice President Pence interacted with President Zelensky in
8 their Warsaw meeting?

9 I guess my question is, April 21, President Trump expresses
10 foreign policy objectives. It sounds like Vice President Pence stays
11 pretty consistent with those in his followup call.

12 MS. WILLIAMS: Correct.

13 MR. SWALWELL: Now take the July 25 call between President Trump
14 and President Zelensky. How would you describe Vice President Pence's
15 consistency with President Trump's objectives?

16 MS. WILLIAMS: I would say that the Vice President's meeting on
17 September 1st in Warsaw was consistent with U.S. foreign policy
18 objectives.

19 MR. SWALWELL: But I asked about President Trump's objectives.

20 MS. WILLIAMS: I understand. I understand. I would say that,
21 as I've spoken about earlier, that I did find a couple of the references
22 in the President's July 25th call unusual, and more of a political
23 nature, and that is not something that the Vice President has ever
24 raised with the Ukrainians.

25 MR. SWALWELL: You would agree that the President of the United

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1 States sets the foreign policy objectives for the United States?

2 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes, sir.

3 MR. SWALWELL: And in the July 25 call, the priorities for
4 President Trump were for the Ukrainians to look into CrowdStrike and
5 to investigate the Bidens?

6 MS. WILLIAMS: That is what he raised.

7 MR. SWALWELL: And were those priorities of the President of the
8 United States raised by the Vice President when he met in person with
9 President Zelensky?

10 MS. WILLIAMS: No.

11 MR. SWALWELL: Why weren't they raised by the Vice President?

12 MS. WILLIAMS: It was never part of any of the preparation for
13 that meeting, and certainly not part of our -- the message that the
14 Vice President intended to convey to President Zelensky. It never came
15 up.

16 MR. SWALWELL: You described it as unusual when you heard those
17 priorities raised on the July 25 call. How did they make you feel as
18 you heard those words expressed by the President of the United States
19 to the President of Ukraine?

20 MS. WILLIAMS: As I mentioned, I think I found them to be more
21 political in nature and, in the context of a foreign policy -- or an
22 engagement with a foreign leader, to be more political than diplomatic.

23 MR. SWALWELL: On the July 9 meeting between the Vice President's
24 team and the Ukrainians that you were part of, was Rudy Giuliani
25 mentioned at all in that meeting?

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1 MS. WILLIAMS: No.

2 MR. SWALWELL: Were you a part of any discussions about releasing
3 the July 25 call record and making it public?

4 MS. WILLIAMS: No.

5 MR. SWALWELL: Was the Vice President a part of any discussions
6 to make it public?

7 MS. WILLIAMS: Not to my knowledge.

8 MR. SWALWELL: Can you describe for us, from your interactions
9 with the Ukrainians, what the security assistance meant to them as far
10 as life and death in the eastern part of their country?

11 MS. WILLIAMS: My only personal interactions with the Ukrainians
12 were on July 9th, and again on September 1st, in the meetings that we've
13 discussed.

14 MR. SWALWELL: And did you get a sense of what it meant to them
15 to have that assistance?

16 MS. WILLIAMS: In both contexts, both Secretary Danylyuk on July
17 9th, and certainly President Zelensky and Secretary Danylyuk at that
18 time on September 1st in Warsaw, conveyed quite seriously and
19 emphatically the importance of U.S. security assistance to Ukraine,
20 in terms of, again, not just the physical support provided, but the
21 symbolic value of that support.

22 MR. SWALWELL: Thank you.

23 I yield back.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Raskin.

25 MR. RASKIN: When the hold was finally lifted on the security

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1 assistance on September 11th, what was your understanding at that point
2 of why the hold was lifted?

3 MS. WILLIAMS: I never received any readout of a discussion with
4 the President on how that decision was made, so I'm really not in a
5 position to comment on what the rationale was.

6 MR. RASKIN: So you got no readout from the President on that
7 issue, but was there any discussion on the Vice President's staff of
8 what motivated the lifting of the hold?

9 MS. WILLIAMS: No. I found out from a colleague that morning,
10 I believe that morning, that the President had made the decision to
11 lift the hold, but with no further discussion as to the rationale.

12 MR. RASKIN: So between July 3rd, when you first learned of the
13 hold, and September 11th, when you learned it was lifted, you never
14 came to understand why the hold was imposed on the security assistance?

15 MS. WILLIAMS: That is correct.

16 MR. RASKIN: And were you curious about it, or you just accepted
17 it?

18 MS. WILLIAMS: I was certainly curious about it, but I didn't have
19 any firsthand knowledge as to the reasoning.

20 MR. RASKIN: Okay. And you stated that you took notes of the
21 mentions of the political conditions in the July 25th call because you
22 thought that they were improper, because they were more political than
23 diplomatic. Is that right?

24 MS. WILLIAMS: I think that's how I would characterize those two
25 references to specific investigations on that call, yes.

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1 MR. RASKIN: Some people would say that diplomacy itself is
2 inherently political, and so everything diplomatic is, by definition,
3 political also, but you had a strong reaction to that. Can you spell
4 out what you saw as improperly political about those mentions?

5 MS. WILLIAMS: I believe I found the specific references to
6 be -- to be more specific to the President in nature, to his personal
7 political agenda, as opposed to a broader --

8 MR. RASKIN: Do you mean related to a campaign?

9 MS. WILLIAMS: Potentially, as opposed to a broader foreign
10 policy objective of the United States.

11 MR. RASKIN: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Representative Heck and then Representative
13 Demings.

14 MR. HECK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

15 Ms. Williams, thank you again very much for being here. I
16 actually want to briefly follow up on a question that Congressman
17 Swalwell asked. He asked you how it made you feel when you heard the
18 President in the July 25th call invoke the specter of investigations
19 for which you've now characterized as personal political interest.

20 And your response to that was that you found them unusual and
21 political. But the question was how did it make you feel? Given that
22 what you've just said, would it be fair to infer that it made you
23 uncomfortable?

24 MS. WILLIAMS: I guess I would say, as a diplomatic professional,
25 I try to keep my own personal feelings out of, you know, the day-to-day

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1 work, but --

2 MR. HECK: You had no personal feeling response to that, given
3 how you've characterized it?

4 MS. WILLIAMS: Again, I would say that it struck me as unusual
5 and inappropriate.

6 MR. HECK: Ms. Williams, that's not the question. How did it
7 make you feel?

8 MS. WILLIAMS: I guess for me it shed some light on possible other
9 motivations behind a security assistance hold.

10 MR. HECK: Well, I asked three times and didn't get there, so I
11 guess I'm going to let it go at that.

12 I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Congressman Maloney.

14 MRS. MALONEY: Thank you very much for your service.

15 MS. WILLIAMS: Thank you ma'am.

16 MRS. MALONEY: We've been discussing these telephone calls in
17 great detail. Do you keep tapes of these telephone calls?

18 MS. WILLIAMS: I do not, and I'm not aware of any.

19 MRS. MALONEY: You're not aware of any?

20 MS. WILLIAMS: I'm not aware of any recordings.

21 MRS. MALONEY: Are you positive there's no recordings?

22 MS. WILLIAMS: I don't know how the White House Situation Room
23 produces the transcripts of calls, so I'm really not in a position to
24 say.

25 MRS. MALONEY: Well, I'll tell you how we do them in Congress.

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1 We have a tape of it, and then we have it transcribed, and then they
2 put the tape with the words and you have an official record. And so,
3 people have joked in the press and Members talking that, of course,
4 Putin is listening to these phone calls, given his former profession
5 as the head of the KGB. [REDACTED]

6 [REDACTED]

7 Right now many of us are in elections, and when you're in a
8 contested election, you never say anything unless it's taped, because
9 your opponent may try to mix your words up or whatever. So we always
10 have a tape.

11 And something as important as this, don't you think when you're
12 talking to a foreign government, that there's got to be a tape someplace
13 of this?

14 MS. WILLIAMS: I'm really not in position to say. I don't know.
15 I know we receive the written transcripts afterwards for our own
16 internal records. It's really above my pay grade to determine whether
17 there's a tape or not.

18 MRS. MALONEY: Where could I go to get this question answered?
19 Who would tell me whether or not there's a tape? Who could tell me?

20 MS. WILLIAMS: My understanding is the White House Situation Room
21 handles the processing of those transcripts. So they would --

22 MRS. MALONEY: Can you give me a name?

23 MS. WILLIAMS: I couldn't, honestly. I -- there's a generic
24 email address that we communicate with them, and it's a very large team.

25 MRS. MALONEY: Who's in charge of the White House Situation Room?

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1 MS. WILLIAMS: I don't personally know. I apologize.

2 MRS. MALONEY: Can you find out for us?

3 MS. WILLIAMS: I certainly can.

4 MRS. MALONEY: Thank you.

5 Now, what I find very confusing is I'm a former bureaucrat in State
6 Government of New York. And the governors change all the time, but
7 the bureaucrats stay, and we work for whoever it is. We're working
8 for the State with a specific job.

9 It's the same for the professionals, not the political
10 appointees, but the professionals are working for the President,
11 whoever the President is, right?

12 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes, ma'am.

13 MRS. MALONEY: That's it. And so the chain of command is the
14 President to the Secretary of State down to whoever has that
15 responsibility, correct?

16 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes, ma'am.

17 MRS. MALONEY: Well, what I find, if I were in your position or
18 others, so confusing is that you have this chain of command from the
19 President through the State Department. Then you have another chain
20 of command coming from the President through Giuliani. Now, anyone
21 who knows their relationship, they're very close friends. And if
22 Giuliani told me he's speaking for the President, I'd believe him. I'd
23 believe he's probably speaking for him when he's not saying it.

24 So here how, as a professional, you have this and what was being
25 told was separate, was different. You had Giuliani saying the

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1 President wants this, and then coming down here, the State Department
2 saying the President -- they've come in here and testified about this.

3 So have you ever seen that before, or heard of two chains of
4 command coming into the State Department?

5 MS. WILLIAMS: Not in that way, no, ma'am.

6 MRS. MALONEY: But am I describing it correctly? Was it
7 confusing to professionals? You were probably a political appointment
8 working for the Vice President or maybe you're -- are you a political
9 appointment or are you professional with the State Department?

10 MS. WILLIAMS: I'm a career foreign service officer.

11 MRS. MALONEY: So you're a career officer, so you're working for
12 the government.

13 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes, ma'am.

14 MRS. MALONEY: How do you -- he was saying, did that make you feel
15 uncomfortable? Did it make you feel uncomfortable and confused that
16 a chain of command from the State Department was saying one thing and
17 then you had a chain of command from the, I'll call it the friendship
18 channel, I don't know what it is, coming in, and you're sitting there,
19 both coming from the President. How do you -- how did you and your
20 colleagues handle that?

21 MS. WILLIAMS: Well, I personally was not aware of a lot of the
22 discussions that were going on with Mr. Giuliani and others until more
23 recently through this inquiry process. The first reference I had
24 personally heard related to Mr. Giuliani was on the July 25th phone
25 call.

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1 So until that time, I really wasn't aware of what other
2 engagements the Ukrainians may have had with other U.S.
3 representatives, whether official or not.

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1 MRS. MALONEY: Well, reading the papers, it was clear that there
2 was a conflict between the interpretation of the professionals at the
3 State Department and what was coming in through the very powerful
4 friendship channel.

5 Now, I'm very sensitive to how women are treated professionally,
6 and I followed very closely Ambassador Yovanovitch. But she was, by
7 all accounts, by everyone, both sides of the aisle, they all said
8 beautiful things about her: a professional, a mentor, she inspired
9 me, we turned to her for advice.

10 And I see a pattern of the State Department sort of controlling
11 the situation and saying: Hey, all this stuff isn't true, maybe we
12 should stand behind our professional.

13 Isn't it the State Department's position usually to back up the
14 American representatives if they factually know they're correct? What
15 I heard is everybody was backing this Ambassador, she's absolutely
16 correct. And wouldn't you say that's true?

17 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes, ma'am.

18 MRS. MALONEY: And then there was a change. Now, the change
19 seemed to come after the Mueller report came out. Did you see a
20 difference?

21 It seemed to me that there was a difference in how her situation
22 was treated and that State Department officials did not stand behind
23 her when she pled for them to support her. Is that a correct assessment
24 of what came out?

25 MS. WILLIAMS: I don't recall precisely when the Mueller report

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1 was released, but it seems that it was around that timeframe. I'm not
2 in a position to make a linkage between the two. But I was aware of
3 the situation with Ambassador Yovanovitch towards the end of April,
4 when she was recalled from Kyiv for consultations.

5 MRS. MALONEY: Well, all I can say is, if every candidate has a
6 tape to make sure that their record is portrayed accurately, I've got
7 to think that the great country of America has got to have a tape to
8 counter everybody else's tape that's out there.

9 I mean, everybody is saying -- [REDACTED]

10 [REDACTED]

11 [REDACTED]

12 And it's just common sense that we would have a record.

13 And I would -- what's your -- what's your -- I guess this is not
14 an appropriate question for you.

15 I just want to thank you for your service.

16 And I yield back.

17 MS. WILLIAMS: Thank you, ma'am.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Back to the minority.

19 BY MR. CASTOR:

20 Q Thank you for your service and for appearing here today and
21 answering our questions. This is, indeed, not a comfortable
22 environment. So to the extent you have sat here all day and answered
23 questions, thank you.

24 A Thank you.

25 Q I just have a couple of followup questions --

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1 A Of course.

2 Q -- which should be hopefully brief.

3 A No worries.

4 Q Were there any -- after you returned from Poland, did the
5 VP have any further interactions with President Zelensky, to your
6 knowledge?

7 A Not until the September 18th call.

8 Q Okay. And could you just refresh my recollection of what
9 occurred on the September 18th call?

10 A Sure. So we had proposed that the Vice President make a
11 followup call to President Zelensky to follow up on their very positive
12 discussion from September 1st. It seemed like good timing, because
13 not only could they discuss the fact that the security assistance hold
14 had been released, but also it was about a week before President Trump
15 would see President Zelensky in New York.

16 So that's why the call took place, and it was very -- again, a
17 very positive call, you know, with the Vice President reiterating the
18 release of the funds and asking a bit more about, you know, how
19 Zelensky's efforts were going.

20 Q Okay. And on that call, there wasn't any mention of
21 investigations?

22 A No.

23 Q Any --

24 A No specific investigations, no.

25 Q Not 2016, not --

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1 A No.

2 Q -- Burisma?

3 A No.

4 Q Not Biden?

5 A No.

6 Q Not CrowdStrike?

7 A No.

8 Q Okay. How often do you interact with the Vice President?

9 Like how frequently are you briefing him and --

10 A It depends on the week. It's not a very concrete answer.
11 It's according to his engagements with issues in my portfolio, which
12 is Europe and Russia. So whether that's in preparation for a meeting
13 with a foreign leader or a phone call. So I would say, you know, at
14 least once a week, but it depends on the week.

15 Q And ordinary briefings with the Vice President, what's the
16 roster of staff that participates?

17 A In his foreign leader engagements or just in general?

18 Q The briefings that you're involved with. What's your
19 typical understanding or your typical recollection of the type of staff
20 that is involved?

21 A Well --

22 Q I mean, you're not briefing him one-on-one, correct?

23 A Sure. No, no, no, of course.

24 So when I've been involved in briefings with him, it's -- almost
25 always General Kellogg is part of that discussion as well, and often

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1 his Chief of Staff.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: If I can just interrupt, and this may or may not
3 be an issue. We try to be very careful not to allow questions to probe
4 or seek to identify the whistleblower. And so I just put that caveat
5 out there, that if your answers would tend to give any indication one
6 way or another, then you should not go there.

7 And, with that caveat, I will allow the counsel to proceed.

8 MR. CASTOR: I didn't realize I was anywhere close to that.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: I don't know if you are. When we started getting
10 into tell me all the names you know, then that's when I took interest.

11 BY MR. CASTOR:

12 Q No, I'm just trying to understand, when you brief the Vice
13 President are there 10 staffers there, is it 5, is it just you, Kellogg,
14 and --

15 A Usually -- it's usually a small group. It's usually General
16 Kellogg, Marc Short, our Chief of Staff, and myself. Sometimes our
17 Deputy National Security Advisor as well.

18 Q Okay. And in terms of the briefing books the Vice President
19 gets, you know, like any senior executive, I mean, is it your
20 understanding he reads the briefing books every night or he reads it
21 sometimes and not sometimes -- or not other times, excuse me?

22 A I honestly don't know. We provide it daily.

23 Q Okay.

24 A Yeah.

25 Q But you have no way of knowing whether or not the Vice

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1 President reads a particular briefing book? I mean, he might have a
2 very busy calendar. He might have things at night. It just might not
3 happen.

4 A Correct.

5 Q And there's just no way of knowing.

6 A Correct.

7 Q And so the briefing book that the Vice President received
8 on July 25th, you said it included the call transcript.

9 A That's right.

10 Q And to the best of your knowledge, that was the only briefing
11 book or set of materials provided to the Vice President relating to
12 that call?

13 A Correct.

14 Q And you genuinely just don't know if the Vice President read
15 that information?

16 A That's right. I just don't know.

17 Q Okay.

18 The concerns that you've outlined about the call, have you
19 communicated your concerns at any point to anyone inside the Vice
20 President's office?

21 A No. My boss, General Kellogg, was on the call as well. And
22 I knew that the Vice President had access to the transcript from his
23 briefing book that evening. But given my role as Special Adviser to
24 the Vice President, I considered that something related to the
25 President in that manner was really outside my purview.

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1 Q Now that you're here testifying in Congress, that there's
2 a transcript that could be made public, before you came up here did
3 you communicate to the Vice President's -- to General Kellogg and the
4 rest of the staff that you're coming up here and you're planning to
5 tell Congress about the concerns you had?

6 A I didn't discuss my testimony with anyone in the office.

7 Q So it's possible General Kellogg, the other staff in the Vice
8 President's office, this might be the first they're hearing of your
9 concerns about the 7/25 call?

10 A That is possible.

11 Q The information you received from Marc Short's assistant on
12 May 13th -- was that the day?

13 A Correct.

14 Q You were told by Marc Short's assistant that the VP was not
15 going on the trip?

16 A Correct.

17 Q And did the assistant -- I think you said it was a she, right?

18 A Yes.

19 Q Did she explain why or how she came to learn that?

20 A My best recollection is that she informed me that the VP would
21 not be traveling to Ukraine for the inauguration. And I asked her,
22 why not? And my best recollection is that she then let me know that
23 the President had determined that the Vice President should not go.

24 Q Okay.

25 A But I was not privy to that conversation.

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1 Q Okay. And it was a telephone conversation?

2 A Correct.

3 Q And you didn't ask any followup questions?

4 A I took that to be the guidance and then moved on with stopping
5 the trip preparation.

6 Q So as you sit here today, you don't know how she learned that
7 information?

8 A Correct, I don't.

9 Q Okay. Have you had any further discussions with her since
10 May 13th about that conversation? Have you --

11 A No. We don't really talk about policy issues. I generally
12 engage with her related to scheduling issues.

13 Q So you didn't go back to her and try to refresh your
14 recollection about exactly how you came to learn this information?

15 A No. No, I refreshed my memory just from looking at my own
16 internal documents.

17 Q Okay. And to the best of your knowledge, between May 13th
18 and today, you haven't ever discussed that with her, right?

19 A Not with her, no.

20 Q And I think you said this morning that once the VP's trip
21 to Kyiv was not going to happen you never had any discussions with
22 General Kellogg or Mr. Short or anyone on the VP's staff about why?

23 A No. No, I conveyed that information to NSC colleagues and
24 let them take it from there.

25 Q So your information about the why solely comes from

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1 Mr. Short's assistant, right?

2 A That's right.

3 Q I forget if you indicated to us, but how many interactions
4 have you had with Ambassador Sondland?

5 A A handful. I'm trying to be more precise than that. He was
6 obviously part of the delegation in Warsaw, so I saw him a couple times
7 there. I had seen him at some point in the summer at another meeting
8 related to, I believe, other EU issues. So not a lot, four or five.

9 Q Okay. And have you had any discussions with other staffers
10 that you work with about Ambassador Sondland and his role in some of
11 these issues?

12 A In his role in Ukraine issues in particular?

13 Q Yes.

14 A Not specific discussions. I mean, I think his name came up
15 in various discussions about Ukraine, and so I deduced from that that
16 obviously he was involved. I didn't know if he had a -- some sort of
17 formal designation to do that or if it was just his interest in it.

18 Q Did you know whether or not Ambassador Sondland represented
19 to people that he frequently communicated with the President?

20 A Can you rephrase? That he represented --

21 Q Do you know whether Ambassador Sondland had represented to
22 other people in your circle of, you know, working these staff issues,
23 represented to those people that he had frequent communications with
24 the President?

25 A I don't know. I didn't have enough personal interaction

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1 with Ambassador Sondland to be able to say.

2 Q Okay. So it was never communicated to you that part of his
3 value proposition here is that he's close to the President?

4 A Again, you know, I'm only now becoming aware of some of the
5 engagements that he may have had with Ukrainians and others, so I don't
6 know how he characterized himself in those discussions.

7 Q The communication that he had with Mr. Yermak in Warsaw, you
8 only learned about that in the press?

9 A That's right. I was not aware of it at the time.

10 Q And were you tracking what happened yesterday? He submitted
11 an addendum, I think it is.

12 A I've seen that.

13 Q An addendum? Was that what it was, an addendum to his
14 testimony?

15 A I've seen it.

16 Q Did you see that?

17 A I've seen the reports, yes.

18 Q Okay. And did you track what was in the addendum?

19 A I haven't read it yet. I've just seen the news reporting
20 about it.

21 Q Do you know whether the addendum included an account of the
22 Warsaw --

23 A I don't know, I haven't read it yet. But I understand I think
24 he was describing his meeting with Mr. Yermak. But, again, I wasn't
25 part of that meeting in Warsaw.

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1 Q Okay. But the -- Morrison, Bolton, nobody communicated to
2 you about the Sondland-Yermak communication?

3 A Correct.

4 Q You just read about it in the press?

5 A Yes. I was not aware of that until this week.

6 MR. CASTOR: Okay.

7 That's all I have.

8 Mr. Jordan?

9 MR. JORDAN: So the concerns you had, Ms. Williams, with the July
10 25th call, I just want to make sure I heard what you said earlier. You
11 didn't share any concerns with anyone?

12 MS. WILLIAMS: No, sir, that's right.

13 MR. JORDAN: Okay. Not with General Kellogg, not with the Vice
14 President?

15 MS. WILLIAMS: Correct.

16 MR. JORDAN: Okay. And the Vice President had the three
17 interactions with President Zelensky. He had the call in April, he
18 had the face-to-face in Warsaw September 1st, and then the followup
19 call a few weeks later.

20 MS. WILLIAMS: September 18th, yes, sir.

21 MR. JORDAN: September 17th, 18th?

22 MS. WILLIAMS: Correct.

23 MR. JORDAN: 18th. Okay. And Mr. Castor asked you about what,
24 you know, the things that weren't discussed there and what was discussed
25 there.

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1 Did the Vice President talk with any other high-ranking Ukrainian
2 officials in this timeframe?

3 MS. WILLIAMS: No. There were other Ukrainian officials
4 obviously involved in the September 1st bilat meeting, but that's it.

5 MR. JORDAN: But the focus was always the Vice President and
6 President Zelensky, talking with --

7 MS. WILLIAMS: Correct.

8 MR. JORDAN: -- our Vice President talking with their top -- top
9 official?

10 MS. WILLIAMS: That's right.

11 MR. JORDAN: Okay. Thank you.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.

13 Ms. Williams, thank you for your testimony. Thank you for your
14 service to the country.

15 That concludes this deposition, and we are adjourned.

16 [Whereupon, at 1:57 p.m., the deposition was concluded.]

UNCLASSIFIED



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November 11, 2019

The Honorable Adam Schiff
Chairman
Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: Correction to the transcript of Jennifer Williams's deposition testimony

Dear Chairman Schiff:

We write on behalf of Jennifer Williams under Rule 8 of the 116th Congress's Regulations for Use of Deposition Authority. Ms. Williams has reviewed the transcript of her deposition testimony from November 7, 2019, and wishes to amend it as described below.

At her deposition, Ms. Williams was asked whether the Ukrainian company Burisma was mentioned by name during the call between President Trump and President Zelensky on July 25, 2019. She testified that it was. Tr. at 66-67, 129. She was then asked who had mentioned it and whether she had taken notes. Ms. Williams testified that she had taken notes, and that she believed her notes reflected that President Trump had referenced Burisma. *Id.* At the time of her testimony, that was Ms. Williams's recollection.

Following the deposition, Ms. Williams reviewed her notes again and discovered that her recollection had been incorrect. Her notes reflect that President Zelensky mentioned Burisma during the July 25 call. They do not indicate that President Trump did so. Accordingly, Ms. Williams wishes to amend her response to the question discussed above so that it accurately reflects what she recorded during the call.

We thank the Committee for considering this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'J. Shur'.

Justin V. Shur
Emily K. Damrau
Caleb Hayes-Deats
Counsel to Jennifer Williams

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Jennifer Williams'.

Jennifer Williams