


Trump quotes Sondland quoting him: "I want nothing. I want no quid pro quo"

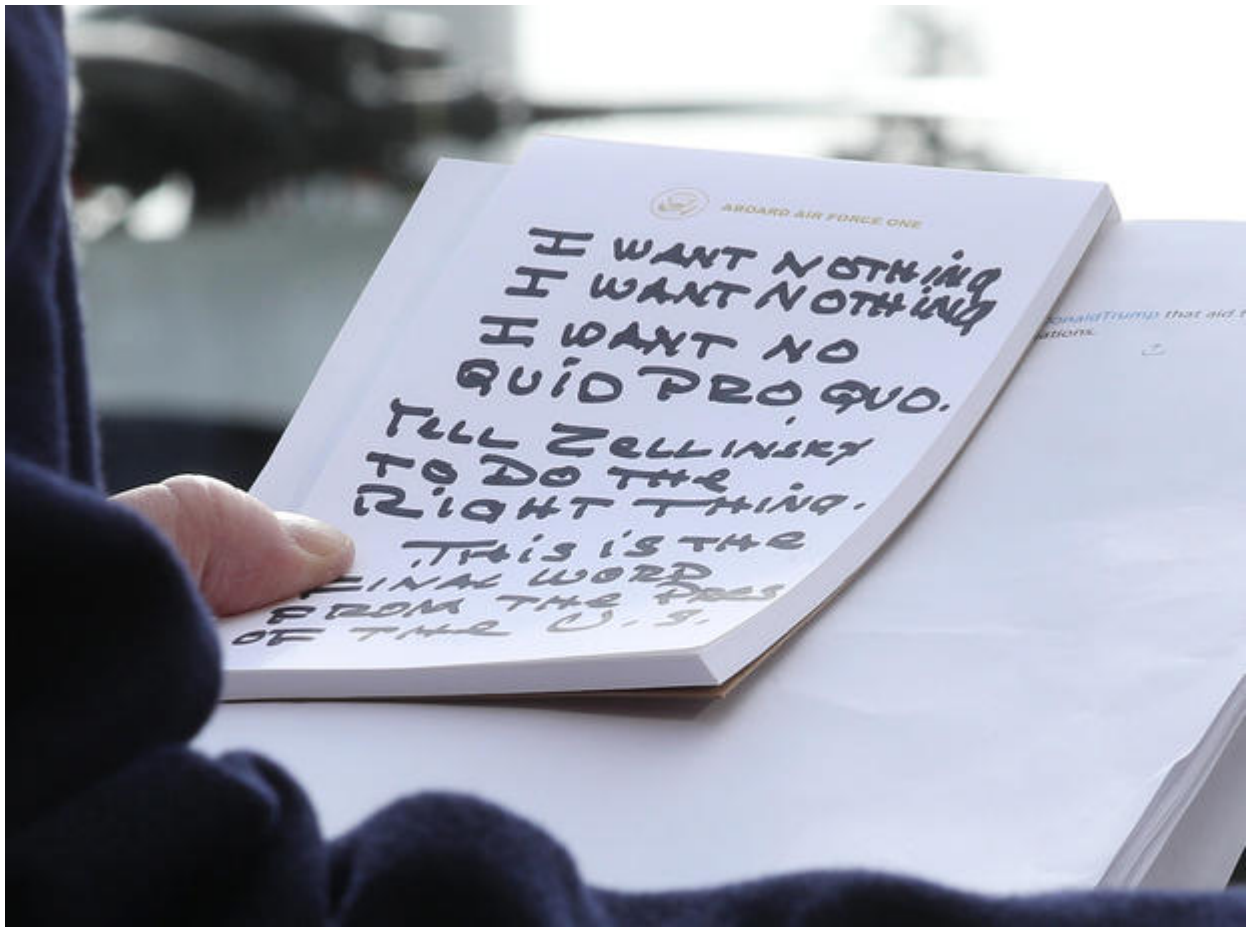
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President Trump quoted a portion of the testimony of U.S. Ambassador to the EU Gordon Sondland as he departed the White House Wednesday: "I want nothing. I want nothing," Mr. Trump read to reporters outside the White House. "I want no quid pro quo. Tell Zelensky — President Zelensky to do the right thing."

The quote referred to a September 9 conversation that Sondland depicted as "very short and abrupt." Mr. Trump disputed Sondland's characterization of him as having been in a bad mood — "I'm always in a good mood. I don't know what that is." He then suggested he was quoting Sondland saying, "This is the final word from the president of the United States: 'I want nothing.'"

As the president spoke, he could be seen holding handwritten notes with his statement scrawled in bold black ink on Air Force One notepaper: "I want nothing. I want nothing. I want no quid pro quo. Tell Zellinsky (sic) to do the right thing."



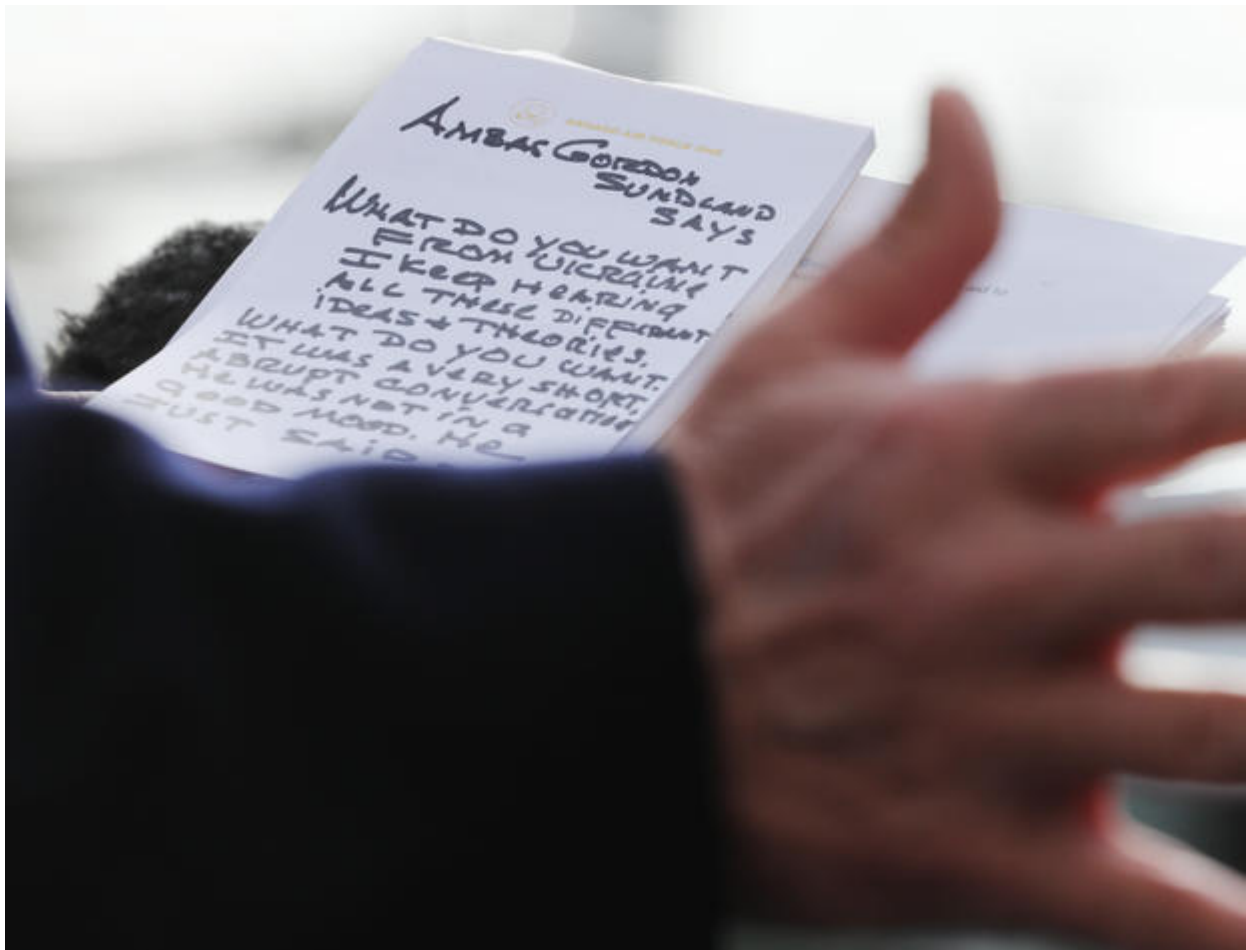
President Donald Trump holds notes saying "I want nothing. I want no quid pro quo," while speaking to the media about the testimony of Ambassador Gordon Sondland on November 20, 2019. Mark Wilson/ Getty Images

The date of that conversation between Sondland and Mr. Trump was September 9, the date that the House Intelligence Committee learned of the anonymous whistleblower's complaint at the center of the impeachment inquiry.

Later Wednesday, as Mr. Trump toured an Apple manufacturing plant in Austin with Apple CEO Tim Cook, he stopped to speak with reporters and again read the quotes from Sondland's testimony about their phone call. He called Sondland's testimony "fantastic" and declared, "Not only did we win today, it's over."

During his ongoing testimony before the House Intelligence Committee Wednesday, Sondland told the House Intelligence Committee, "It was a very short abrupt conversation. He was not in a good mood," Sondland said about his call with Mr. Trump. "He just said, 'I want nothing, I want nothing, I want no quid pro quo.'"

He went on to say that when he conveyed to Ambassador William Taylor that Mr. Trump had "no quid pro quo" demand, his intent was "not to defend what the president was saying, not to opine on whether the president was being truthful or untruthful, but simply to relay I've gone as far as I can, this is the final word that I heard."



President Donald Trump holds his notes about Ambassador Sondland's testimony while speaking to the media before departing from the White House on November 20, 2019. Mark Wilson / Getty Images

Mr. Trump said Wednesday that Sondland "seems like a nice guy" but added, "I don't know him well."

While the president is traveling, Sondland has been testifying in the impeachment hearings against Mr. Trump. Sondland, in his opening statement said that he, then-special envoy to Ukraine Kurt Volker and Energy Secretary Rick Perry worked with the president's personal lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, on Ukraine "at the express direction of the president." He also repeated his testimony on his understanding of a quid pro quo sought by the president, through Giuliani:

Mr. Giuliani's requests were a quid pro quo for arranging a White House visit for President Zelensky. Mr. Giuliani demanded that Ukraine make a public statement announcing investigations of the 2016 election/DNC server and Burisma. Mr. Giuliani was expressing the desires of the President of the United States, and we knew that these investigations were important to the President.

Sondland dismissed as "false" the idea that this was "rogue" diplomacy. He told the House Intelligence Committee that he has identified "State Department emails and messages" that show the leadership of the State Department and National Security Council was informed of these efforts from

May 23, 2019 until the aid was released in September.