MR. WELCH: I'll be brief.

I just want to, first of all, thank you. But I've been listening all day and -- pretty much all day, and what I understand your testimony more or less is, succinctly -- and correct me if I'm wrong -- is: You have a longstanding interest in Ukraine; it's been the U.S. policy since 1991 to support Ukraine; that the policy has been internally for Ukraine to fight corruption, and we've been supportive of that, externally to resist aggression from Russia, and we were trying to be supportive of that; that when you were faced with this question of whether to return to public service at the request of Secretary Pompeo, you had a frank conversation where you made it clear that you had to be assured that you could defend what had been the consistent United States policy in both those respects; that if, in fact, you were unable to do that or the policy changed, you candidly said you would have to quit; that you then began your service on the understanding that the policy was to fight internal corruption and to resist external aggression; and that, as time developed, you started having questions as to whether there was a secondary channel for that policy; and, over time, you came to see that not only was there a secondary channel but that it included a policy variance from the traditional one of fighting aggression and corruption; that you had specific information from people who had talked

to President Trump, including Mr. Volker and Mr. Sondland, that what that policy was was essentially to extract an agreement from the President of Ukraine to do these investigations and that everything, not just the White House meeting but the aid itself, was conditioned on getting that agreement and that explicit statement; and, at the end, there was an effort to, quote, put President Zelensky in a box, which the public statement would make him do.

Is that a fair summary of what you've said?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Excellent summary, Congressman. The one thing -- the only clarification I would make is that, in the beginning, in late June and early July, in July, there was, in my view, my observation, not a conflict. There was not a conflict --

MR. WELCH: Right.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: -- between these two channels.

MR. WELCH: No. And you were clear that just having somebody outside of the normal State Department isn't necessarily a bad thing.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Correct.

MR. WELCH: Having two policies was the question.

But just a couple more, because I want to yield to my colleagues.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Welch, our time has expired.

MR. WELCH: Okay.

THE CHAIRMAN: We'll come back to you at the very top of the next.

MR. WELCH: Sure, Mr. Chairman. I yield.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Forty-five minutes to the minority.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q Where we last left off was a discussion of -- it was right around the time of this telephone call, July 25th.

A 25th, yes.

Q And the very next day, you had a meeting with President Zelensky.

A Correct.

Q And I think you told us that feedback from the call from the Ukrainians was positive, for the most part.

A Yes.

Q They had put out a statement --

A They had put out a statement. They'd mentioned investigations or -- I should look at that statement. But they had mentioned something that led me to believe that they were in the same meeting, that they were describing exactly that call.

Q Okay. So --

A Law enforcement, I think it was. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Q Was there any other discussion during that meeting that was a fallout from the call?

A Not that I recall. The bulk -- so it was Ambassador Volker, Sondland, and I were all there. And the bulk of the call, after the brief conversation about the -- I'm sorry. The bulk of the meeting after the brief conversation about the call was on how to solve Donbas.

Q Were you surprised when you read the whistleblower complaint? And, first of all, did you see the whistleblower complaint before it was public?

A No.

Q Okay. So it was made public, I think, on Thursday, September 26th.

A Okay.

Q Were you surprised when there was a discussion of this July 26th meeting in the whistleblower complaint?

A Mr. Castor, I remember reading that quickly, but I may have missed that July -- but can you remind me what the --

Q Sure.

A Yeah.

Q On page 4 of the complaint -- we can give you the complaint.

A I'm sure I have it somewhere, but that's okay.

Q You know, it states that Ambassadors Volker and Sondland reportedly provided advice to Ukrainian leadership about now to navigate the demands that the President had made

to Zelensky.

Does that ring any bells? Does anything of that sort --

A This is in the 26th meeting?

Q Yeah.

A Advice to Zelensky about how to navigate the --

Q Demands of the President.

A I was in that -- so the records of -- my records of that meeting are in the State Department, and they will come.

Q Okay.

A I don't recall that.

Q Okay. By that --

A Ah. Ah. Thank you, Counsel.

He did ask -- one thing that was in addition to the brief conversation about the call and Donbas, and it may have been at the end, President Zelensky still expressed his interest in the face-to-face meeting in the Oval Office.

Q Okay.

A Yeah. Thank you.

Q But by that point in time, from your limited knowledge of what had occurred on the call, you didn't know that the President had made any demands or there was anything to navigate.

A Correct.

Q Okay. So, to the extent the whistleblower complaint chronicles that -- and you were in the meeting, and

you don't remember anything of that sort.

A I don't remember that.

MR. MEADOWS: Steve, let me -- your response, that you don't remember that, is really an indication that you don't recall that happening. Is that correct?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes, sir.

MR. MEADOWS: Okay. I just wanted to clarify that.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes. Yes. Good point.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q Now, the various requests for the Ukrainians to open investigations that had been closed, did you have any opposition to the effort for Ukraine to investigate, you know, Ukrainians that had been engaged in wrongdoing that may have --

A Just in general? Was that the question? Or --

Q Right. You didn't have any objection to investigations being reopened that genuinely deserved to be reopened?

A So when President Zelensky comes into office -- well, even before that -- when he runs for President and then is elected and then takes office, again, his second priority was defeating corruption. And he said, I think in the call, in the July 25th call, he said he has a new prosecutor general, who is very good, by the way. And President Zelensky said, this man will do the investigations and, you

know, he will enforce the law.

Q Okay.

A And so, yes, he committed to have Prosecutor General Ryabshapka, and then again recently saying that he'll take a look at all these --

Q Uh-huh.

A -- take a look at all these cases.

Q Okay.

There was a reference to reaching out to the Justice Department. You mentioned Deputy Assistant Attorney General, which I assume is Bruce Swartz?

A It is.

Q Did you ask Ambassador Volker to reach out to Bruce Swartz?

A He volunteered to do that.

Q Okay. And what was the feedback from Swartz?

A I don't know that they ever connected.

Q Okay. And was there any followup effort to close the loop with the Justice Department?

A No. I thought the whole thing was a bad idea.

Q You thought it was a bad idea to reach out to Bruce Swartz?

A No. I thought the idea of the Americans asking the Ukrainians to investigate a violation of Ukrainian law was a bad idea.

Q Okay.

A But Kurt, for some reason, wanted to pursue that. And when he volunteered to take that question to Bruce Swartz, that was fine with me.

Q Okay. I mean, is it possible that Swartz's feedback on that issue would have been compelling to the group? Like, why didn't anyone follow up with Swartz?

A No idea.

Q Okay.

You called Counselor Brechbuhl on August 21st to engage about whether there was a change in U.S. policy.

A Yes.

Q And presumably that was on the heels of the security assistance being held up?

A Yes.

Q Was that the first time you had engaged Brechbuhl, you know, in the month of August?

A In the month of August?

Q Uh-huh.

A So I'd had a couple meetings with him before I left.

Q Right.

A I called him early on, I think in -- this may have still been July, about the security assistance, and then -- I think about security -- and then called him again.

Q Okay.
A Yeah.
Q So, on the 8/21 call that you mention on page 9 of your statement --
A Yep.
Q -- did you, at that time, alert him that you had concerns about the irregular channel?
A At that time? Let's see. At some point, I had a conversation with him about -- I wasn't calling it the irregular channel at this point. I was talking about Ambassador Sondland, Ambassador Volker. And it might have also been in this case.
Q Okay.
A But it was not the main thing.
Q Okay.
A The main thing was security assistance.
Q Okay. I'm just wondering, you know, during July and August, you're getting increasingly concerned, correct?
A Correct.
Q It culminates on August 27th when you wrote this first-person cable.
A I sent it in on the 29th.
Q Okay, but the end of August, right?
A Right.
Q And then by September 8th, you're discussing the

prospect that you might have to quit, right?

A I was discussing that even earlier. I was -- my cable on the 29th hinted at that as well.

Q Okay. And so, on the 21st, did you raise any of these concerns? I mean, you had him on the telephone, right?

A Yes. Yes. So when I asked him explicitly about a change in policy, he and I both remembered that a change in policy was what I was concerned about on May 28th. And this is why on a couple of times we've had that conversation. He knew exactly what I was talking about.

Q Okay. And did he give you any feedback or -- I mean, you're sounding -- are you sounding the alarm? Is that a fair characterization?

A I'm sounding the alarm on the 21st. I'm sounding the alarm on the 23rd. I had another conversation, oh, with Tim Morrison, I think, asking the same question. Is that -- am I getting these numbers right? Next day, yes, on the 22nd with Morrison, I asked him the same thing, had there been a change in policy.

Q Uh-huh.

A So, yes, I am getting increasingly concerned. I'm trying to get from Washington what's going on.

Q And did Brechbuhl give you any indication that he was going to talk to the Secretary or he hears you loud and clear --

A Hears me --

Q -- and he'll try to do something about it?

A He says, "I will check."

Q Okay.

A "I will check."

Q And did he check?

A I don't know. I didn't hear anything back from him.

Q Okay.

And then Ambassador Bolton comes to Ukraine on August 27th?

A Correct.

Q And did you discuss these issues with him at that time?

A At the end of -- yes. Yes. At the end of his -- he was there for, like, 3 days. And the second day -- he left the morning of the third day, early. The evening of the second day, which I think is maybe the 28th of September or so, I asked for a meeting with him to talk about this. And, again, this is the 28th.

September 29th is when the word leaks out in the Politico article, okay, there is a hold on -- so it wasn't out then, and, thus, it wasn't a topic of conversation with the Ukrainians. And he saw the full range of Ukrainians, including the President.

But I knew it. And I asked him at the end of his meeting, at the end of his visit, before he went to bed, if I could have a session with him. And I did, and I raised exactly this question. It was he who suggested then at that meeting that I write this note to Secretary Pompeo, which I did the next day.

Q Okay. Did he urge -- he didn't urge a telephone call or anything of that sort?

A No. He urged the first-person cable to get attention back there.

Q Okay. Did you ask him whether he was trying to work the issue from his vantage point?

A He indicated that he was very sympathetic. I had known from earlier conversations with people that he was also trying with the two Secretaries and the Director of the CIA to get this decision reversed. So he confirmed that and urged me to make my concerns known to the Secretary again.

MR. SMITH: Before we leave this, I think the Ambassador said the meeting was on September 27th. It was August 27th.

MR. CASTOR: Okay.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Correct. Oh, did I say September?

MR. SMITH: I think you did.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Thank you, Counselor.

MR. MEADOWS: So, Ambassador -- can I follow up with just one clarifying?

So, Ambassador, you said that you were aware of Ambassador Bolton's advocacy for this. You were aware of that how? From whom?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I was aware, Congressman, in the discussions that followed the meeting at the NSC where the hold was put on. And it rapidly went up the chain to Ambassador Bolton. And was told a couple of times by people at State and people at the NSC that the Secretary of Defense, Secretary of State, the National Security Advisor, and the head of CIA all strongly supported the resumption of this assistance.

MR. MEADOWS: Who told you that? That's what I'm trying to get at. I mean, who were the conversations with?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I'm sure they were with Deputy Assistant Secretary of State George Kent.

MR. MEADOWS: From the State Department standpoint.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: The State Department.

MR. MEADOWS: All right. From the NSC standpoint -- I mean, who would have direct knowledge of what Ambassador Bolton had done or was doing that conveyed that to you?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Congressman, again, what I know is those principals were trying to get together with the President to have this meeting. So, knowing that --

MR. MEADOWS: Right, but you said somebody told you about Ambassador Bolton's advocacy --

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: That's what I was referring to. I was referring to that I knew what his position was, because he wanted to get that group together to make the case.

MR. MEADOWS: So did he tell you he was getting the group together? Or who told you the group was getting together?

I guess I'm a little concerned on who at NSC would've been telling you about Ambassador Bolton. You felt like he was a kindred spirit on this. So who was telling you from the NSC that he was?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: It would've been either -- it would've been Tim Morrison. But I can't remember the specific phone call.

But, again, the main reason I know where Ambassador Bolton was was that interest in getting it reversed, getting the decision reversed, and the way to do that was to get a meeting with the President. So that was my main source of information. And that came, as I say, from the State Department.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q And then you had a subsequent conversation with Morrison? It sounds like you're talking to Morrison pretty much every day during this time period?

A "Every day" is too strong, but -- let's see. Yeah. So Morrison is with Bolton.

Q Okay.

A So he's in Kyiv. He goes on to Warsaw with Bolton, and he and I have conversations from Warsaw.

Q Okay. What's Morrison's background? Where did he come from?

A He came -- so he took Fiona Hill's place, coming from another part of the NSC doing arms control, and I don't know what before that.

Q So you sent the first-person cable where you mention the term "folly."

A I did.

Q Did you get any feedback from the seventh floor on that cable?

A I got feedback from the sixth floor on that.

Q Okay. What feedback did you get?

A I got feedback saying, I'm glad you sent that cable.

Q Okay. Did you get any feedback from the Secretary or --

A I didn't. I didn't. As I say, I know he carried it with him to one of these meetings where they were going to try to reverse the decision, but no direct feedback.

Q Okay. How about from Mr. Brechbuhl?

A Nope.

Q Anybody else?

A Not -- no, again, other than the desk. I somehow made sure -- I think I sent an email to Ulrich Brechbuhl to ensure that he saw that cable, and he may have sent back an acknowledgement that he'd seen it.

Q Okay.

After the hold was lifted --

A Yes.

Q -- and the funds started to flow, was there any other activities that concerned you in the irregular channel?

A Not that I can remember.

Q Okay. I mean, you talked about the statement, the possible CNN interview, and some of these --

A Correct.

Q -- concerns from that channel.

A Correct. But that had been in train for -- so I was trying to be sure that the things from the other channel that had been put in place, like the CNN interview, didn't happen.

Q Okay.

A And then the focus was on UNGA, as we said, on the General Assembly. And that, of course, was back into the regular channels, I mean, all the preparations for that.

Q Did any of your conversations with Morrison reveal any concerns about the Giuliani-Sondland-Volker channel from that point on?

A Not that I recall.

Q Okay. Did you ever have any communications with Morrison after the aid was released where he indicated to you that the problem was solved and on to the next issue?

A No. No. His -- no. My conversations with Tim Morrison have been primarily, in particular since then, since the aid was released, on China. He was very concerned about China's investments in Ukraine, so we've had many conversations about that.

Q Okay. So you still talk with Mr. Morrison with some regularity?

A I do.

Q When did the fact that there was a complaint lodged about these matters come to your attention?

A I'm not sure, Mr. Castor.

Q The whistleblower complaint, when did that first come to your attention?

A The whistleblower complaint?

Q Yeah.

A I guess when I read it in the paper.

Q Okay. Which was towards the end of September or before it was made public?

A No, no, no. In the newspaper.

Q Okay. Did anyone try to contact you to find out any information, any firsthand information?

A No.
Q Okay.
A No.
Q How frequently do you have conversations with the DNI about these issues? Any?
A I think none.
Q Okay. Does a person by the name of Eric Ciaramella ring a bell for you?
A It doesn't.
Q So, to your knowledge, you never had any communications with somebody by that name?
A Correct.
Q After the aid was released, did you ever have a close-the-loop session with Volker and Sondland?
A About that topic?
Q Yes.
A I don't think so.
Q Okay. So, once the aid was released, it was sort of --
A That was my big concern.
Q Okay.
A Right.
Q The telephone conversation that Sondland relates, talking to the President, was pretty definitive, was it not?
A I think so. It is the one we're talking about that

he relates he had with the President --

Q Right.

A -- and then Morrison also reports on that same conversation, I think.

Q Right.

A That's right. Yes.

Q And Morrison's view of that conversation is slightly different than Sondland's, is it not?

A It could well be.

So I'm looking at, what, page 12 here. He described a phone call earlier in the day between Sondland and Trump. Sinking feeling from Ambassador Sondland.

So that may answer this question earlier about whether he was on it.

Q Yeah.

A According to Morrison, President Trump asking for a quid pro quo -- was not asking. Did insist that President Zelensky go to a microphone.

And then Sondland and I spoke on the phone. He said he talked to President Trump. Adamant Zelensky himself had to clear things up. The same comment about no quid pro quo. Sondland said he talked to the President and then he talked to Zelensky and Yermak after that.

Q Uh-huh.

A So it sounds like they're talking about the same

phone call.

Q What was the sinking feeling?

A This was a comment that Mr. Morrison made when he heard that there were a Sondland-President Trump phone call, and that gave him a sinking feeling. And I think what he meant by that was, he recognized that that channel -- that's the irregular channel I've been talking about all day -- has the potential to be counter to the regular channel. And whenever he heard that there was an activation of that irregular channel, you know, he was concerned.

Q Okay. How frequently, to your knowledge, was Sondland in discussion with the President?

A This is a good question. Ambassador Sondland will tell you, has told you, told me: frequently. Frequently. I mean, I can't -- I don't know.

I know for a fact that he can call the President directly and does. And I've known this has -- I have heard that on several occasions he had done that, so it's not just a one-off. I mean, he's done it a bunch -- a couple times that I know of.

Q Okay. So it's a regular enough occurrence that he's probably talked to the President 10, 20, 30 times?

A I have no idea of the number.

Q Okay.

There's a little bit of a disconnect between -- like,

right around this time period is when Sondland reports the President is pretty definitive, "I don't want anything. I want nothing." But right at the same time, Morrison is revealing that he has a sinking feeling.

And so I'm just curious as to how you piece those two together. Because, on one hand, the President says, I want nothing, then the aid's released; but, on the other hand, Morrison has the sinking feeling.

A Morrison's sinking feeling is anytime there is an activation of that kind of Giuliani-oriented channel.

Q Uh-huh.

A But it seems to me that they describe the -- it seems to me that they describe the same phone call. You're right, there was some variance.

Q Right.

A And both related that the President said no quid pro quo. But they also both related that President Trump did insist that Zelensky go to a microphone and open investigations of Biden and 2016, and President Zelensky should want to do it himself, and --

Q But that part's not from Sondland's readout of the call.

A This is Morrison telling me about a Sondland-Trump meeting --

Q Okay.

A -- phone call. Right? And then Sondland -- Gordon tells me the next day, on September 8th, that he talked to President Trump -- it must have been the day before -- and that Trump was adamant that President Zelensky himself --

Q Uh-huh.

A Because a week earlier, I had suggested to Gordon that maybe the prosecutor general could make this statement; it would be more logical than the President.

Q But, in any event, you're only hearing this from either Sondland or Morrison, and you have no idea whether these calls actually happened.

A I think they actually happened, just because I got two reports of what sounded like the same call.

Q Okay. But by --

A But it's true that I never talked to the President.

Q Okay. But by September 9th, there had been some -- I mean, it had become public, right, with the Politico story that the aid was being withheld?

A That was August 29th.

Q Right. So by September 9 --

A Correct, it was out there.

Q -- on the eve of the aid hold being lifted --

A Yep.

Q -- it had been public.

A For a week, week and a half.

Q Right.

A Yeah.

Q And, as we understand it, there were Senators, you know, calling the --

A Two Senators came up. Oh. Right, right. You're exactly right. Senators called the President. Yes.

Q Okay. So it's possible Sondland -- when Sondland says the President doesn't want anything, no quid pro quo, it's possible the President's reacting to the fact that he's getting some heat on this issue and he's about to lift the hold.

A I don't know.

Q Okay.

A Don't know.

MR. MEADOWS: So I wanted a few clarifications --

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Please.

MR. MEADOWS -- because sometimes my ears --

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I have the same problem. I have the same problem.

MR. MEADOWS: So are you saying you got a call about the Sondland-Trump phone call from Morrison --

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Correct.

MR. MEADOWS: -- before you did from Sondland?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Correct. I got the Morrison call on the 7th, and I got --

MR. MEADOWS: Is that unusual, I mean, that you would get a report from the NSC on a phone call between an Ambassador and the President of the United States before you got a readout from the Ambassador or to the President?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Congressman, it's just a matter of logistics of when you're on what call.

MR. MEADOWS: Yeah, but I guess the question I have is, does Morrison report on other phone calls between the President and other individuals to you? I just find that just interesting, that he would pick up the phone and call you and say "by the way" about this readout between a phone call and the President before Ambassador Sondland did that.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: It was before. There's no doubt it was before Ambassador Sondland did that. That's clear from the 7th and 8th of September.

But Tim Morrison and I have a lot of interactions that I just mentioned to Mr. Castor, and I may have called him with some other questions about, I don't know, China, and he may have related that. So it was not a regular -- I don't remember any other time when he related a conversation about the President.

MR. MEADOWS: So, obviously, this would've been a big deal, this phone call, I mean, with the President saying, no quid pro quo. Did you have a relief at that point that, well, gosh, since there's no quid pro quo, I guess the funds

are going to be released?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: That was not my reaction at the time, Congressman. My --

MR. MEADOWS: Well, what was your reaction? Because I guess I'm a little -- I mean, if this is such a big deal --

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: It is a big --

MR. MEADOWS: -- that you raised it with a Ukrainian official on September 1st --

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes.

MR. MEADOWS: -- why would you have not reacted in a more, I guess, exuberant manner?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: To the statement that I heard twice, that it was not a quid pro quo? Is that --

MR. MEADOWS: Right.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I should've been exuberant about that? Oh, because -- I'm just trying to understand your question. And so --

MR. MEADOWS: Yeah. No, that's the question. You understand it. I guess I find it that it was just very blase that you got a phone call --

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I --

MR. MEADOWS: -- when you had raised this, and you didn't --

THE CHAIRMAN: Please let the witness answer.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: The answer, Congressman, is that --

MR. MEADOWS: Adam, I have not interrupted you at all today.

THE CHAIRMAN: I know, but he's trying to answer three times in a row.

MR. MEADOWS: I'm trying to clarify my question. He's asked me two or three times.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: And I think I got the question now. Thank you.

MR. MEADOWS: Okay.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Thank you, Congressman.

So the answer is that, even after the statement that I heard both times from both recollections, recitations, descriptions of the phone call, after the quid pro quo, there is none, there is none, there is none, then it went on -- both conversations went on to say: But President Trump did insist that President Zelensky go to a microphone and say he is opening investigations of Biden and 2016, and President Zelensky should want to do this himself. That was the -- that's what Tim --

MR. MEADOWS: And that came from Morrison?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: That came from Morrison.

MR. MEADOWS: Okay.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: What came from Sondland when he told me this story was President Trump said it was not a quid pro quo. Ambassador Sondland said that he had talked to

President Zelensky and Yermak and told them that, although this was not a quid pro quo, if President Zelensky did not clear things up in public, we would be at a stalemate.

MR. MEADOWS: All right.

And so let me go back to one other thing, because I think you said -- you've said it twice now, and I want to make sure I understand you. You do not think it's appropriate for the Ukraine Government to investigate a violation of Ukrainian law. Is that what you said?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: No, no. I think it's perfectly appropriate for the Ukrainian Government to investigate a violation of Ukrainian law. I think it's --

MR. MEADOWS: Okay. All right. I thought so.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yeah, yeah.

MR. MEADOWS: All right.

So one other area. You talked about -- and I think it was Mr. Noble had asked you about the funds being withheld, and you said you believed that it was the aid and foreign military sales as well, all together in one bunch, in answer to his question.

And I want to remind you, actually, the talk of the Javelins and foreign military sales, it comes at a separate time. And I want to refresh your memory on that and perhaps allow you --

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: You're --

MR. MEADOWS: -- to correct the record. Because I think Mr. Noble asked the question and you lumped it all together and said it came at one time --

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: No --

MR. MEADOWS: -- and we know that that's not accurate.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Let me tell you what I think is accurate.

MR. MEADOWS: Okay.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: What I think is accurate is there was 250 million in something called the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative, USAI. And that --

MR. MEADOWS: Controlled by DOD.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: -- is owned by DOD, correct.

MR. MEADOWS: That's correct.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Correct. And there's another 141 million of, I think it's FMF that's run by the State Department.

MR. MEADOWS: State Department.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: That is separate from -- those two things are separate from the purchase of Javelins by the Ukrainians with their own money --

MR. MEADOWS: That's correct.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: -- of about $29 million for about 150 Javelins, right? So those are three separate pieces. If I was not clear on that --

MR. MEADOWS: Yeah. Because they came in three separate tranches. And I used to be on Foreign Affairs, and when we talk about all of this stuff, there's a whole lot of things that hold up foreign aid.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes.

MR. MEADOWS: And so you're a career Foreign Service --

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I am actually not a career Foreign Service, but I've been in the State Department for a long time.

MR. MEADOWS: Well, you've been in the State Department for a long time.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: That's correct.

MR. MEADOWS: And so have you seen aid held up for a variety of reasons other than just a normal appropriations glitch? Have you seen Senators put a hold on foreign aid occasionally --

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes.

MR. MEADOWS: -- to get votes on things that --

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I don't know about getting votes on things. But, sure, there are certainly holds put on foreign assistance packages. There's no doubt about it.

MR. MEADOWS: That have nothing to do with our overall foreign policy initiative. Have you seen that?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I don't remember, but I would not be surprised. I would not be surprised.

MR. MEADOWS: All right.

MR. JORDAN: Ambassador, how many conversations and/or meetings did you have with Mr. Morrison in this relevant time period?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: "Relevant time" meaning all summer?

MR. JORDAN: Well, you said you had one -- you get there on June 17th and you had one conversation with the individual who held Mr. Morrison's position at NSC. You had one conversation in your first month there, and it was on July 19th.

So, between July 19th and the September timeframe when Mr. Morrison calls you to tell you about a call that Mr. Sondland had with the President of the United States, how many times between July 19th and September 9th, roughly, how many times did you communicate with Mr. Morrison? It sounds like it was a lot.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yeah. I was going to say 8, 10, 12. A good number. A lot.

MR. JORDAN: Yeah. So his predecessor you had one conversation with in this timeframe.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Well, no. I actually had -- before I went out, I sat down with Fiona and Alex -- actually, a couple times before I went out. And then had this meeting -- or had this call --

MR. JORDAN: Well, earlier, in a previous hour, when I

asked you how many conversations you had with Dr. Hill between June 17th and July 19th, you said one, and that was on July 19th.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: And I think that's correct. And what I'm saying is before I --

MR. JORDAN: And we tried to establish -- it sounded like it was on your calendar. She probably called you, but you weren't sure. Am I characterizing that accurately?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: That's correct.

MR. JORDAN: So you had one conversation with Dr. Hill in your first month on the job.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I think that's correct, yes.

MR. JORDAN: And now you've said you had multiple conversations with Mr. Morrison.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes.

MR. JORDAN: Okay. This one that was in your testimony, was this Mr. Morrison called you to tell you about that, or was it his previously scheduled call?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: We're talking about September 7th now, Congressman?

MR. JORDAN: Let me just go back and look. Yeah, the September 7th -- you described a phone conversation between Ambassador Sondland and President Trump. Did he call you?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: The way we do these phone calls is, to be secure, to be secure -- September 7th may be a -- was

it a Sunday? September 7th. It was a Saturday. So to have a secure call on a weekend, I go into the Embassy.

MR. JORDAN: Okay.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: And the way we arrange these calls is through unclass email. We say, Tim, you know, you got time? Or he may have sent me a note saying, do we have time? And I'd said, sure, I'll go into the Embassy at such and such a time.

So the short answer is I'm not sure who called whom.

MR. JORDAN: Okay. But you had multiple calls between July 19th and this call on September 7th.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes.

MR. JORDAN: And did you have a prior friendship or relationship working with Mr. Morrison prior to his time as coming in --

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: No, I had not met him before.

MR. JORDAN: So you'd never met him before.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Correct.

MR. JORDAN: He gets Dr. Hill's position.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Correct.

MR. JORDAN: And then you have multiple phone calls with him in this timeframe.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: That's correct.

MR. JORDAN: And I think you said some of it was relative to China. And Ukraine as well? The linkage --

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes.

MR. JORDAN: -- between China and Ukraine?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: No, China in Ukraine.

MR. JORDAN: I understand.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: China investing in -- yes.

MR. JORDAN: Okay.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yeah, he's very -- he and Dr. Kupperman and many people, as you are I'm sure aware, are concerned about the Chinese interest in buying up some of Ukrainian technology and a company called [redacted]. Yes. So we had many conversations about that.

MR. JORDAN: Okay. And of these multiple conversations, many conversations you had, do you think it's -- characterize it. Was it more Mr. Morrison reaching out to you to communicate information to you or the other way?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Both.

MR. JORDAN: Who initiated?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: It's both.

MR. JORDAN: Who initiated most? I'm just curious.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I'm just --

MR. JORDAN: You don't know?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Both. I don't know.

MR. JORDAN: Okay. Thank you.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: It's some of each.

MR. JORDAN: All right.

MR. MEADOWS: And so this phone call you had was on a Saturday.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: September 7th I think was a Saturday.

MR. MEADOWS: So how many times do you go in to make phone calls on urgent matters on a Saturday?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Not infrequently, sadly.

MR. MEADOWS: So you literally say, well, I need to go talk to Washington, D.C., and go in on a Saturday --

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: If it has to be secure, yes, I go into the Embassy. And the Embassy is 25 minutes away.

MR. MEADOWS: No, I get the secure nature, but --

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yeah.

MR. MEADOWS: So what you're saying is you go into the Embassy to make this phone call to talk about a phone call that he had with the President.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: That he had it --

MR. MEADOWS: Sondland had it with the President.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Right. Morrison is talking about a Sondland conversation with the President, correct.

MR. MEADOWS: Okay. And so, as you go in -- you don't recall what else you talked about?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: In that phone call?

MR. MEADOWS: Yeah.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I don't.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q You first learned you were going to be coming here today to answer questions last week? Or before?

A No, no, no. You sent me -- somebody sent me a note or an invitation to come probably 2 weeks ago?

Q Okay.

A Yeah.

Q But prior to today, have you had any communications with congressional staff about any of the issues that we've discussed here today?

A No.

Q Okay. And, you know, there was a report running yesterday about things that may or may not have occurred on a codel, and I just want to --

A Staffdel, maybe. Was it a staffdel?

Q Codel or staffdel.

A So I saw a report. Maybe this is what you're asking.

While I was in Kyiv -- this must've been -- maybe about the same time. I can't remember. In September. The Atlantic Council had one of its many visits, and the Atlantic Council invites congressional staff. Generally, they are fairly junior congressional staff. And I think there were probably 15 or so congressional staffers on this trip.

John Herbst, Ambassador Herbst organizes these. It was

a Sunday afternoon. They were just off the plane. They came to my residence, and I gave them a briefing. And it could've been that one of your staffers was on this, Mr. Chairman.

Q My question was just simply, you haven't had communications with --

A I have not.

Q -- congressional staff outside of what we're here doing here today?

A That's right. Other -- if the question is about that Atlantic Council one, there were a bunch of congressional staffers whom I gave a regular briefing to.

Q Okay. Fair enough.

What else -- what can you tell us about the Atlantic Council? Did you know they were funded in part by Burisma?

A You know, I didn't know that. I didn't know that. So I have great respect for the people -- I know a lot of the people at the Atlantic Council. And I know that -- and I know that they have to raise funds. I didn't know that Burisma was one of their funders.

Q Okay. But you learned that recently or --

A Maybe in the past week.

Q Do a lot of Ukrainian business enterprises contribute money to the Atlantic Council, to your knowledge?

A I don't know.

MR. CASTOR: Mr. Armstrong, did you have something you

wanted to --

MR. ARMSTRONG: Yeah, just briefly.

You were talking about the High Court of Anti-Corruption. And that was actually set up under Poroshenko, but it was inactive. And when Zelensky got elected, he brought it back, right?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes, sir. "Inactive" is probably -- well, it wasn't put into effect. It wasn't -- it didn't start. And the problem was, it didn't have a place to meet. And so -- under President Poroshenko. And so people were thinking that he was kind of dragging his feet.

MR. ARMSTRONG: Yeah.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: And then Zelensky gets in, and within, like, 2 weeks, the same fellow, this prosecutor general that I mentioned a minute ago, Ryabshapka, came up with a place, got them in, and they opened it on September 5th.

MR. ARMSTRONG: But earlier in your testimony, you said -- we had a comment about Parliament, and you said you can buy your way into Parliament. We asked about criminal justice. You can buy your way out of prosecution essentially is going on.

And there were actually -- you had talked earlier about concerns about Zelensky's relationship with a particular oligarch. There were concerns about the Naftogaz board, the

boards of state-owned banks, and, obviously, even outside of all of this, some questions about Burisma and what we just found out.

And corruption relating to oligarchs is not something new, correct?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Correct.

MR. ARMSTRONG: I mean -- and during this, we went through it. I mean, there was a parliamentarian, Leshchenko, who was investigated. You said he was an original supporter of Zelensky and then wasn't?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: So he was originally -- well, he started off as a journalist. He joined President Poroshenko's party and was elected to Parliament. And then, as a reformer, he was advising the Zelensky campaign, self-selected out of the Zelensky camp.

MR. ARMSTRONG: And people were excited about Zelensky's election, but also, at the same time -- and I'll get back to this in a second -- I mean, there was at least four current or former members of the Ukrainian Government that were, I mean, participating in our 2016 election. And I don't mean anything -- I mean, they were posting on Facebook, whether it was former Prime Minister Yatseniuk was posting on Facebook; Minister of Internal Affairs -- who is still a member of government, correct.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Correct.

MR. ARMSTRONG: -- Avakov, who has, I mean, said some pretty derogatory things about the President. Chaly, who was the Ambassador to Ukraine, coined an op-ed in The Hill during the campaign.

So we have a concern about a potential relationship with Zelensky. We have -- I mean, this is systemic, and it's gone on for a long time.

So, I mean, while we're excited and this is moving forward and some of these things are going on, you can see probably how this administration maybe had a little concern, particularly not only with corruption but also with direct relationship to what went on with --

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Congressman, the only thing I'd say is that the concern should not have been about the new team. Now, your point is a good one -- that is, they had one carryover from --

MR. ARMSTRONG: Well, let me ask you this. Because you weren't the Ambassador during the 2016 election.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: That's true.

MR. ARMSTRONG: But you were the Ambassador during the 2008 election.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I was.

MR. ARMSTRONG: And if four members of the Ukrainian Government were directly involved in the election of -- which ended up being President Obama, in your position of

Ambassador, how would you have handled that?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: What would I have done to -- so the scenario is --

MR. ARMSTRONG: Let me ask -- let's start here: Would that have concerned you?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Any interference of diplomats or of government officials in an election in another country would concern me.

MR. ARMSTRONG: So I'm assuming none of that happened in 2008.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Not that I know of.

MR. ARMSTRONG: Any Ukrainian officials that you're aware of.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Not that I'm aware of.

MR. ARMSTRONG: Okay. Thanks.

MR. CASTOR: I think our time has expired.

THE CHAIRMAN: Let's take a 5- or 10-minute break. We do have votes coming up. It would be my intention for staff to continue the interview during votes. And I don't think we have a lot more questions for you. I don't know where the minority is, but hopefully we won't go too much longer.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I'm at your service, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you, Ambassador.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Thank you.

[Recess.]

[5:31 p.m.]

THE CHAIRMAN: We're going to go back on the record to try to get to as many members as we can before votes. And let me start by recognizing Mr. Malinowski.

MR. MALINOWSKI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Ambassador, for your service and your patience with us today. I just wanted -- you've answered most of my questions, so I wanted to maybe try to sum things up a little bit. It seems to me from your testimony and from that of others that we've heard that there was a group of officials in the executive branch who were working on Ukraine and who cared about Ukraine across the interagency.

And at the start of this drama, all of you basically agreed on the objective, supporting Ukraine against Russia, fighting corruption, promoting democracy. You wanted a good relationship between the two countries. And then, at a certain point, you all learned that the President was in a different place, correct?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes. So, in the May 23rd, before I got out there, in his meeting with the delegation that came back enthusiastic about Zelensky, the President was less enthusiastic.

MR. MALINOWSKI: Right. And at that point, things -- that group of people, roughly speaking, split into two different camps. You all still had the same goals, but there

was one group of folks who felt that they didn't want to have anything to do with what Mr. Bolton reportedly described as the drug deal because it was wrong, it was unprincipled, we should not be operating that way.

And then there was a second group of people that may have included Kurt Volker, Ambassador Sondland, Secretary Perry, who decided that they had to somehow go along with this drug deal because they felt it was the only way to bring the President back, to get him to support the vision of the relationship that you wanted. Is that a fair assessment?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: It is, Congressman. And it was motivated, but as you said, toward a strong relationship. It was just a different -- they thought they had to take a different route through Giuliani to get there.

MR. MALINOWSKI: Right. And so the problem wasn't with either of those groups of people. The problem was the drug deal itself, in effect. It was this decision that, you know, you had to go through this path to get to that outcome. And so let me ask you, who was responsible for the drug deal? Who was responsible for setting all this into motion? Was it Mr. Sondland? Was it Ambassador Sondland?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I don't think so. I think the origin of the idea to get President Zelensky to say out loud he's going to investigate Burisma and 2016 election, I think the originator, the person who came up with that was

Mr. Giuliani.

MR. MALINOWSKI: And he was representing whose interests in --

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: President Trump.

MR. MALINOWSKI: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Krishnamoorthi.

MR. KRISHNAMOORTHI: Hello, Mr. Ambassador.

Thank you for your incredible service to our Nation.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Thank you, sir.

MR. KRISHNAMOORTHI: First of all, on page 12 of your statement, you talked about the meeting that you helped facilitate between Senators Johnson and Murphy with President Zelensky. Do you recall that meeting?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I do.

MR. KRISHNAMOORTHI: And in your statement, you say that they emphasized that President Zelensky should not jeopardize bipartisan support by getting drawn into U.S. domestic politics. What exactly were they referring to when they said he should not jeopardize bipartisan support by getting drawn into U.S. politics?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: The Senators were concerned -- the Senators could see that President Zelensky faced a dilemma, and the dilemma was investigate Burisma and 2016 or don't. And if they investigated, then that would be seen to be interfering on the side of President Trump's reelection; if

they didn't investigate, that would be seen to be interfering in favor of some of his -- of President Trump's opponent. So they told him: Just don't get involved, just don't get involved.

MR. MALINOWSKI: And both Senator Murphy and Senator Johnson said -- or expressed that sentiment, correct?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I want to be careful about quoting Members of Congress and Senators. This is why I was counseled by smarter people than I about how to phrase this. But that was spoken by Senator Murphy.

MR. MALINOWSKI: Okay. And, now, some folks might say that the beginning of those investigations was merely investigating corruption. Why was it your and their sentiment that it was actually getting Zelensky drawn into U.S. politics?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: It would get into U.S. politics if the Ukrainians were to go -- was to investigate the Burisma cases that were closed at the time when Vice President Biden was in town -- in Kyiv frequently making the point about anticorruption and when his son was on the board of Burisma. So it was that cluster of issues surrounding Burisma that would be highlighted by an investigation.

MR. KRISHNAMOORTHI: And you agreed with the sentiment expressed by the Senators, correct?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I did.

MR. KRISHNAMOORTHI: Now, let me turn your attention to page 8 for a second. There?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yep.

MR. KRISHNAMOORTHI: Ambassador Sondland said that -- I'm looking at the top of the page -- said that a call between President Trump and President Zelensky would take place soon. This is in the July timeframe. And Ambassador Volker said that what was, quote, most important for Zelensky to say that he will help investigation and address any specific personnel issues if there are any, closed quote.

What specific personnel issues are being referred to?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Congressman, I don't know. To this day, I don't know what he was referring to there.

MR. KRISHNAMOORTHI: Okay. And did Ambassador Sondland ever bring up personnel issues?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Not in my -- not that I know of.

MR. KRISHNAMOORTHI: Finally, Giuliani. You may or may not be aware of this, but Giuliani had a hand in trying to force out Ambassador Yovanovitch from her post as Ambassador. Are you aware of any attempts by Giuliani or anyone else to come back at you for some of the text messages that you had sent basically questioning the wisdom of Ukraine policy that was being pursued by Volker, Sondland, Giuliani, or anyone else?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: No, sir.

MR. KRISHNAMOORTHI: And did anybody ever question you directly about your statements and whether you were somehow out of line in making the statements that you made?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Not yet.

MR. KRISHNAMOORTHI: Okay. Thank you. I hope never.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Thank you.

MR. KRISHNAMOORTHI: Do me a favor though: Stay honest as you are. Thank you, sir.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Thank you, sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: Just one followup question before I go to my next colleague. Prior to the codel you mentioned with Senators Murphy and Johnson, Senator Johnson told The Wall Street Journal that Sondland had described to him a quid pro quo involving a commitment by Kyiv to probe matters related to U.S. elections and the status of nearly $400 million in U.S. aid to Ukraine that the President had ordered to be held up in July.

Apparently, Senator Johnson had told this to the Journal before the codel. Did he ever raise this with you during those meetings?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: He didn't raise that, no, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Representative Lynch. Then Maloney and Speier, if you have questions, Speier, Jackie Speier.

MR. LYNCH: Thank you. Thank you, Ambassador. I really appreciate your courage in coming forward, and thank you for your service.

I'd like you to focus on page 10 and 11 of your opening statement. And September 1st seems to be a red letter day, so to speak. You have a conversation -- excuse me, yeah, you have a number of conversations here that are very important.

One you had with Mr. Morrison, who described a conversation between Ambassador Sondland with Mr. Yermak at Warsaw, where Ambassador Sondland told Mr. Yermak that the security assistance money would not come until President Zelensky commits to pursue the Burisma investigation.

You also say that's the first time you've heard that security assistance, not just the White House meeting, was conditioned on the investigation. And then you text message Ambassador Sondland, and you're saying -- it's a question: We are now saying the security assistance and the White House meeting are conditioned on investigations, question mark, end quote.

There's also a statement here that you relate that Ambassador Sondland also told you that he now recognized he'd made a mistake by earlier telling the Ukrainian officials to whom he spoke that a White House meeting with President Zelensky was dependent on a public announcement of investigations, in fact. Ambassador Sondland said everything

was dependent on such an announcement, including security assistance.

He said the President -- Trump wanted President Zelensky, quote, in a public box, close quote, by making a public statement about ordering such investigations. This is a rich description. This is all one day, September 1st. And so I would like to know, is this a product of your memory, or is this something that you took contemporaneous notes, you know, at the time that this was occurring?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Contemporaneous notes, Mr. Lynch.

MR. LYNCH: They are. And that is your usual practice?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: It is, indeed.

MR. LYNCH: And did you surrender these notes to the State Department?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I did.

MR. LYNCH: You did?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I did.

MR. LYNCH: And do you have copies in your custody?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I do.

MR. LYNCH: You do. Okay. That's all I got. I yield back.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Maloney.

MR. MALONEY: Just a quick followup on that one point. Over here. My name is Sean Maloney. Ambassador Sondland, thank you for your testimony today.

Just to follow up on my colleague's question, along those same lines, when you use quotation marks in your opening statement, did you have a standard that you applied? In other words, would we find those phrases, those quotes in the notes you just described to my colleague, Mr. Lynch?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes, sir. If I had them -- if I put them in quotation marks, that means I can find them in my notes. And I took notes -- it would either be in a text message or WhatsApp message or notes that I took on my little notebook that I carry around, or a notebook that I keep in my office that I take notes on phone calls when I'm in the office. So the answer is, yes, if I've got quotes on them, I can find them.

MR. MALONEY: Thank you.

I want to direct your attention to page 10. I just have a couple of questions about the Warsaw meeting.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes.

MR. MALONEY: Now, we see towards the bottom of page 10 you describe the meeting that Vice President Pence had with President Zelensky. I believe that was on September 1st?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes.

MR. MALONEY: And in that fourth paragraph towards the bottom, you mentioned that while President Zelensky, and I'm quoting, had opened the meeting by asking the Vice President about security cooperation, you go on to say, the Vice

President did not respond substantively but said he would talk to President Trump that night.

Do you see where I'm reading from?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I do.

MR. MALONEY: Do you know whether the Vice President spoke to the President that night?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I don't.

MR. MALONEY: And then you also go on to say, the Vice President did not say the President wanted the Europeans to do -- excuse me, the Vice President did say that President Trump wanted the Europeans to do more to support the Ukraine and that he wanted the Ukrainians to do more to fight corruption.

In the next paragraph, however, you describe another meeting that's going on also in Warsaw, also the same day, as I understand it, between Ambassador Sondland and Mr. Yermak. Is that right?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: This is a report of a phone call I had with Mr. Morrison. I think it's the same one that we just -- I think he called me to tell me about or I called him to ask about the events in Warsaw on September 1st.

MR. MALONEY: And --

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I'm sorry, Congressman. This is the same phone call with Mr. Morrison. He went on to describe this subsequent conversation with Sondland, Yermak.

MR. MALONEY: I think I understand your answer, sir. But my question is, is in the phone call you're having with Mr. Morrison --

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: And he's describing a Warsaw meeting between Mr. Sondland and Mr. Yermak --

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes.

MR. MALONEY: -- which seems to have happened at the same time as the Vice President was meeting with President Zelensky. Am I correct?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: It was the same event, but probably -- I wasn't there, but what happens at these is there's a bilateral meeting between Vice President and the President with all the aides. And then, after that, the aides may get together separately, and that's what I imagine happened here.

MR. MALONEY: I understand. Do you know whether Ambassador Sondland ever spoke to the Vice President about his conversation with Mr. Yermak?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I don't know.

MR. MALONEY: I want to ask you about one other thing, sir, which is, on page 12 and on page 13, my colleague Chairman Schiff has taken you at some length through the various statements of conditionality and your view of that. And it's not my intention to go back into that. I just wanted to ask you about the wording you use at this point in

the sequence of events.

So, on September 8th, there is the call between Sondland and Volker and you, and you recount this expression about how when a businessman is about to sign a check to someone who owes him something, the businessman asks that person to pay up before signing the check. And then, of course, you mention that Ambassador Volker used the same term several days later. Do you see where I'm reading from the from in the middle of the page?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I do.

MR. MALONEY: And you go on to say that holding up security assistance for -- and you use the words "domestic political gain" was, quote, crazy. Do you see that?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I do.

MR. MALONEY: And the day before -- excuse me, the day after that, on September 9th, it comes before in your testimony a couple paragraphs up, but it's actually the next day is when you write the famous text: I think it's crazy to withhold security assistance for help with a political campaign. Do you see that?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I do.

MR. MALONEY: And so my question, sir, is, when you use phrases like "domestic political gain" or a "political campaign," I want to understand what you meant by that, because, of course, we're not just talking now about whether

or not an investigation was launched or whether or not it would be appropriate or not to do that. I'm curious about why you connected it up to, quote, a domestic political gain and, quote, a political campaign?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Because as I understood the reason for investigating Burisma was to cast Vice President Biden in a bad light.

MR. MALONEY: That would be the domestic political gain?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes.

MR. MALONEY: To cast Vice President Biden in a bad light?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Right.

MR. MALONEY: And the political campaign would be what political campaign?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: A political campaign for the reelection of President Trump.

MR. MALONEY: On page 2 of your testimony -- last question. On page 2 of your testimony, you say that Ukraine was special, which struck me. You talk about your many years of service and the extraordinary work you've done for our country, but in that third paragraph, you say: Ukraine is special for me. Do you see that? In fact, you say, across the responsibilities I've had in public service, Ukraine is special for me. It's in the third paragraph, halfway through.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes. Yes, sir.

MR. MALONEY: Throughout the day, you've responded to our questions in a very professional manner. I take it this is your years of training as a diplomat. But I'm curious about your emotional reaction to these events. Ukraine, as you say, was special to you, and you witnessed this over the series of a couple of months this summer from June, I guess, through the present, but really to early September, especially. What was your emotional reaction to these events?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: It was a reaction based on the fact that, as I mentioned, either before or after that, just after that, that I think Ukraine is important objectively to the United States. That is not emotionally, but we can do some kind of analysis and determine why it's important for Ukraine to succeed as a state and why it's important for Russia not to succeed in its aggression. That's kind of the analytic piece.

The emotional piece is based on my time in Ukraine in 2006, 2009, when traveling around the country, I got to know Ukrainians and their frustrations and difficulties and those kind of things. And then coming back and seeing it now where they have the opportunity, they've got a young President, a young Prime Minister, a young Parliament, the Prime Minister is 35 years old. This new government has appealed to young

people who are so idealistic, pro-West, pro-United States, pro-Europe, that I feel an emotional attachment, bond, connection to this country and these people.

MR. MALONEY: You cared about it?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I cared about this country.

MR. MALONEY: And you didn't want to see it screwed up?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I didn't want to see it screwed up. I wanted to see it succeed.

MR. MALONEY: And you didn't want to see it screwed up by some political agenda coming from Washington. Is that fair to say?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Well, what I didn't want to do is have United States assistance to Ukraine blocked or suspended for no good reason that I could see. And there are some bad reasons that -- I didn't want to see that blocked. That was my concern, in this episode.

MR. MALONEY: Thank you, sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: Just one followup question before I go to Representative Speier. In Warsaw, Morrison relates to you there are two meetings going on. There is a meeting with a Vice President and President Zelensky, and then there's the separate meeting between Sondland and Yermak, correct?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Correct, and they're probably in sequence. They're probably not at the same time.

THE CHAIRMAN: And the meeting with the Vice President

and Zelensky was actually a big meeting with one or two dozen people. Am I right?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Probably. I was not there, but, yes. Normally that's the case.

THE CHAIRMAN: So, at a big meeting like that, it stands to reason they're not going to get into the specifics about that we want you to do this political investigation in order to get this. Am I right?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Correct.

THE CHAIRMAN: That takes place, in fact, in this small, private meeting between Sondland and Yermak?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes, without -- presumably without the Vice President.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Representative Speier.

MS. SPEIER: Thank you.

Ambassador, thank you for really a lifetime of service to our country. You're really a great American.

I've got a couple of kind of strings I'd like to just get some clarification on. You said that you met with Ambassador Volker and Mr. Yermak over dinner on the 14th of September after the money had been released. And Mr. Volker kept pushing, saying, do not investigate Poroshenko. Did you have a subsequent conversation with him as to why he was doing that?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: With Mr. Volker, no. I wouldn't

characterize it, Ms. Speier, as saying that he -- or he kept doing it. I mean, he raised it once, got a pretty emotional response or kind of, you know, a strong response from both Ukrainians at the table. And he didn't push --

MS. SPEIER: He backed off?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Kurt did not pursue it.

MS. SPEIER: But you didn't ask him afterwards why he was --

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I didn't.

MS. SPEIER: Okay. Did anyone in the Zelensky administration indicate to you a sense of confusion with what you have dubbed as the irregular policy channel?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Indirectly. So, in my conversations in the regular channel with President Zelensky and his team, they would, on occasion, express confusion or uncertainty about what direction they were getting from the United States because they were hearing, as I mentioned earlier, directly from Ambassador Sondland who could and would pick up the phone and call President Zelensky or President -- Assistant Yermak and give them advice outside of the normal channel -- outside of my channel, outside of the normal channel. So they were hearing different things from both -- from those two channels. And that's confusing.

MS. SPEIER: There's hardly any reference to Secretary Perry, who has been included as one of the tres amigos. Did

you have any contact with him?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I didn't.

MS. SPEIER: And he was never in any of your text messages?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: No, not in any text messages. He was in two phone calls, Ms. Speier. Early on the -- I think two phone calls. Certainly was in the June 28th phone call, and he might have been -- I'll check my notes to see if he were in the June 18 phone call. But those were the only two times that I heard him on the phone or had any interaction with him.

MS. SPEIER: Did you think it was peculiar that he was engaged in this?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: No. Secretary Perry is very interested in energy markets. Ukraine could be a big energy market. It would be -- Secretary Perry knows that there are a lot of companies, in particular in Texas, but I'm sure in other places, who would like to sell liquid natural gas, liquefied natural gas, LNG, to Ukraine or east Europe more broadly. So he had been interested in this, and I didn't think this was very unusual.

MS. SPEIER: So, on page 12, third paragraph, you reference that President Trump did insist that President Zelensky go to a microphone and say he is opening investigations of Biden and the 2016 election interference.

Was that specific reference to Biden and not Burisma?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I would check my notes, but I think the answer is yes.

MS. SPEIER: So it was very specific to an investigation of Biden?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes.

MS. SPEIER: All right. There was a lot of discussion after September 11th that it might be difficult to get all the money out to Ukraine -- by the September 30th end of the fiscal year. How much money actually got released?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I should know the answer to that. I don't know the answer to that. I know it's probably about 90 percent of -- that's rough, Ms. Speier, but roughly 90 percent.

MS. SPEIER: Okay. And my last question is, at one point, there was a reference made, I think it's on page 9, where Mr. Morrison references that the President doesn't want to provide any assistance at all. And that's in quotes.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yeah.

MS. SPEIER: Did that alarm you?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: It did.

MS. SPEIER: And coupled with that May 23rd, I think it was, meeting in the White House where everyone came back very excited and the President seemed very unexcited, what does that tell you about his interest in Ukraine?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Again, I have never -- I wasn't in that meeting. I've never had conversations with the President. Secretary Pompeo did tell me the same thing that the participants of that May 23rd meeting said, and that was the President was skeptical of Ukraine. And we've heard several descriptions of the skepticism. Some appear in this -- the Politico article. I mean, he was concerned about the allegations here. And that's as much as I know about the President's view.

MS. SPEIER: Okay. Thank you.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Representative Lieu.

MR. LIEU: All right. Thank you, Ambassador Taylor, for your service to our country. Thank you for serving in Vietnam with the 101st Airborne. I note for the record you jumped out of perfectly fine airplanes, so thank you for your courage.

I'd like to talk about U.S. national security. It's a fundamental principle, intent of U.S. national security to push back against Russian aggression, correct?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: [Nonverbal response.]

MR. LIEU: And Ukraine is one of the countries at the tip of the spear of pushing back against Russian aggression, correct?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: It is.

MR. LIEU: And on page eight of your statement, you write, Ambassador Volker and I could see the armed and hostile Russian-led forces on the other side of a damaged bridge across the line of contact. Over 13,000 Ukrainians had been killed in the war, one or two a week. More Ukrainians would undoubtedly die without the U.S. assistance.

But I want to make clear, U.S. security assistance to Ukraine isn't just to help Ukrainian national security. It's also to help U.S. national security. Is that right?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: It is. That's correct.

MR. LIEU: All right. And, in fact, that's why, as you said, the Department of Defense within a day came back with analysis saying: We need to give security assistance to Ukraine.

Isn't that right?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: That is correct.

MR. LIEU: Okay. When the President of the United States freezes aid to Ukraine, the Russians can detect weakness, isn't that right, between the U.S. and Ukrainian relationship?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: The Russians are very careful observers of Ukraine and the United States, and they would immediately -- my bet is they knew. They're very good. My bet is they knew that there was something up with the security assistance. So --

MR. LIEU: And if the U.S. doesn't give security assistance, it could in effect embolden the Russians to be even more aggressive towards Ukraine. Isn't that right?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Absolutely right.

MR. LIEU: Okay. So, when the President of the United States freezes security aid to Ukraine for months and months and months, that not only harms Ukrainian national security, it also harms U.S. national security. Isn't that right?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes, sir.

MR. LIEU: All right. Let me move on quickly to one other aspect. The public reporting on Ambassador Sondland's testimony is that he didn't remember a lot of stuff. You have a number of conversations here with Ambassador Sondland. I just want to make sure, in those conversations, there was no indication he was under the influence of alcohol, correct?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Correct.

MR. LIEU: He didn't slur his words, correct?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Correct.

MR. LIEU: There was no indication that he was under any medications that caused him short-term memory loss, correct?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Not that I know of.

MR. LIEU: Okay. And last couple questions. The State Department told you not to come here today. Is that fair?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: They did.

MR. LIEU: So did they tell you to also not give

documents and notes to Congress, your notes? Did they say you can't provide that to --

MR. BELLINGER: They did. We've been prohibited from providing documents directly to Congress.

MR. LIEU: Okay. Thank you. That's all I have.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Thank you.

MR. GOLDMAN: Thank you, Mr. Lieu.

BY MR. GOLDMAN:

Q Just a couple of sort of cleanup questions for you, Ambassador Taylor, and then I think, at least, on the majority side, we'll be finished.

You were asked by Mr. Jordan about the number of conversations that you had with Tim Morrison, the senior director on the NSC. Is it fairly common to speak regularly with members of the NSC who cover the country where you are the effective Ambassador or Charge de mission?

A Mr. Goldman, you know, a lot of it depends on the pace of activity in certain issues, and it certainly is the case in this one. So the role, of course, of the senior director is to be the interface between the President, National Security Advisor and the President, and the interagency.

And, often, they'll be in direct interactions with people in the field. In particular, I think it's the case that embassies or ambassadors will be in touch. I try to

keep my, you know, DAS Kent, the Deputy Assistant Secretary George Kent, advised on all of these things, but it's also very common for an NSC director or senior director to be directly in touch.

And when I said it was dependent to some degree on the issue, I think I mentioned that Tim Morrison, much more than Fiona Hill, Dr. Hill, was very interested in Chinese investment in Ukraine, continues to today. So our conversations, the vast bulk of the conversations I had with Tim Morrison concerned the Chinese attempts to buy a Ukrainian [redacted] manufacturer [redacted].

And he has been a -- Tim Morrison has been a driving force in Washington to try to prevent that, and we are on the front end of that. And so, you know, I go down to [redacted], and I visit and talk to people who are looking for alternative investors, and Ambassador Bolton, when he was there, and Tim was there for that visit.

The main focus of Ambassador Bolton's visit and conversations with all of these officials that he had in the Ukrainian Government was China. And, again, this was the day before Ukrainians knew that there was even a hold. But it was China and its attempt to buy [redacted].

So, when the question comes, how often are you talking to -- well, it depends on the issue. And if there's any --

so, for example, Fiona was focused on Russia. She's a Russia expert. And the Russia-Ukraine Donbas negotiations were stalled. So there was not much happening there. What was not stalled was the Chinese attempt -- well, what was not stalled was our attempt to block Chinese purchase of these [redacted]. So that's what -- Tim was on the phone a lot for those purposes.

Q You mentioned that you kept Deputy Assistant Secretary Kent as much up to date as you could.

A Yeah.

Q Did you speak -- during the last few months, since you arrived there in mid-June, did you speak at all with Assistant Secretary Phil Reeker?

A A couple of times. Phil Reeker has not focused very much on Ukraine. He relies heavily on George Kent as the DAS. And George, as we know, is -- you have had him. You know George, so he's great. He's an incredible resource on Ukraine and Thailand, by the way.

When I was there in 2006, 2009, he was the deputy political counselor. He then, of course, went back as the DCM. He then was pulled back to be the DAS, Deputy Assistant Secretary. He is a wealth of -- as you probably heard from him, he's a wealth of knowledge. So Phil Reeker relies on George Kent, and I'm in constant contact with George Kent. We have weekly -- we have regular weekly SVTC meetings.

Q Did you ever raise any concerns about the -- what you call the irregular policy path or track with Ambassador Reeker?

A I don't think so. I think it was primarily with George Kent.

Q Any other conversations on the sub topics today with Ambassador Reeker that come to mind?

A No. So, let's see, Ambassador Reeker, I think, was in my -- I have to check my notes on this too -- I think was in my meeting with Secretary Pompeo, I'm pretty sure he was, on the 28th of May, before I decided -- as I was deciding. And Phil was there. And Phil Reeker travels a lot. He has got all the European countries, and so he's on the road more than average, I will say, and so hasn't focused a whole lot on Ukraine.

Q You said you received reaction to your cable on August 29th from the sixth floor. Who responded to you?

A It was actually George Kent, who may actually be on the fifth floor, but, you know, down one.

Q Okay. What about Under Secretary David Hale? Did you communicate at all with him?

A On occasion. I went to see him before I went out. And he had visited Kyiv before I got there, so I was hoping to have him come out, but he didn't. But only on occasion would I -- I may have tried to be sure that he got the cable,

the notice cable.

Q Okay. But you never spoke to him about it?

A No.

Q Did you ever speak to anybody other than George Kent about your -- at the State Department about your notice cable?

A Ulrich Brechbuhl, I believe, the counselor, just to be sure that he got it because I wanted to be sure that the Secretary got it.

Q Right. But you never received a response --

A I didn't.

Q -- in any meaningful way?

A I didn't.

Q Did you ever receive any indication when you relayed any concerns to the State Department about this irregular policy group that anyone in the Department actually took any steps to resolve anything?

A There was some discomfort within the State Department with Ambassador Sondland's role in Ukraine. Of course, Ukraine is not in the EU. But it was well-known that, in that famous May 23rd meeting in the Oval Office, that Ambassador Sondland was given direction, with Secretary Perry and Ambassador Volker, to focus on Ukraine, to do something with regard to Ukraine policy.

Q You testified a little bit earlier about a staffdel

or Atlantic Council trip --

A Yep.

Q -- where you met with a staff member from the Intelligence Committee, right? And you had no conversations about any of these issues --

A No.

Q -- with that individual?

A No.

Q Were you aware that there were also three staff members from -- Republican Members of Congress who were on the Foreign Affairs Committee on that trip as well?

A I knew the names and affiliations and members or committees that each of those members of the staffdel were on.

Q Did you have any conversations with any of those staff members about any of the issues here today?

A No. This was a briefing, as I say, in my residence. I gave them a briefing, and then we had an opportunity for questions and answers, and they hit it off.

Q Are you familiar with the individuals Lev Parnas and Igor Fruman?

A I only know them through the newspapers.

Q Or the indictments?

A Or the indictments in the newspapers.

Q So you were not -- but prior to the public reports

about their involvement in Ukraine and their association with Rudy Giuliani, you were not aware of them in any way?

A Mr. Goldman, looking back on this, I think back in like March or April someone had -- again, when I was at the Institute of Peace -- sent me some description of interference in -- what was this deal -- in maybe a natural gas -- I think there was a -- I think there was a proposal to sell natural gas to Ukraine.

And I think the person who was telling me this referenced these two names, which I didn't recognize at the time, and I didn't even register at the time. But now, you know, in the last, you know, now they're indicted or now they were picked up at -- then I now recollect that they were mentioned in this previous discussion.

Q Who were you having this conversation with?

A I got a note from a man named Dale Perry. He's a businessman.

Q Did you get an open letter from Dale Perry? Did you ever see that, or a memo of some sort?

A Yes. Yes. Which I then sent -- again, it meant nothing to me. I was at the Institute of Peace. I had no idea what he was talking about, but I sent it to George Kent and to Masha Yovanovitch.

Q Okay. Did you ever get a readout of the private meeting between President Trump and President Zelensky at

UNGA in New York after their press conference?

A Ambassador Volker gave me a description, I think, of that meeting. It was not too private. I mean, there were staffs on both sides, right. Okay. I think there's only one. So I think -- and Ambassador Volker, with not in great detail, he was in the meeting and said that it was a good meeting.

The President left pleased that they had finally met face to face. They discussed some connections between President Zelensky's cabinet or his government and several cabinet members on President Trump's team that they should connect.

Q Was there any discussion that you heard of, whether it was at the principal level or the staff level, about any of these investigations that we've been talking about?

A No.

Q Now, you said that the new prosecutor general --

A Yes.

Q -- confirmed that he is looking into the issues that were the subject of the --

A "Confirmed" may be too strong.

Q Sorry. Just for the record --

A Right. Right. Right. So what he said, I think fairly recently, last couple of weeks, was that he was going to take a look at all of the cases that had been closed over

the past several years to be sure they were done correctly.

Q And would that include a Burisma investigation?

A Could.

Q Or the 2016 election interference --

A Could.

Q -- investigation?

A Could.

Q So would you say that, at the end of the day, that President Trump got the investigations that he was pressuring Ukraine for?

A Hasn't gotten them yet, and, of course, President Zelensky didn't have to go in front of a mike and say this. But Mr. -- but the prosecutor general did say that he was going to take a look at any or all of these cases that may have been closed for no good reasons.

Q All right. So he's at least open to looking into this?

A He's at least open, yes.

Q Okay. I think -- all right. We are out of time anyway. So we'll yield to the minority.

MR. JORDAN: Thank you, Ambassador.

I want to go back to the phone calls you had with Mr. Morrison. In the last hour, when I asked you, you said that there were several -- just a few minutes ago when majority counsel asked you, you said that many of those calls

dealt with the issue of China and its influence or attempt to influence Ukrainian -- the country of Ukraine.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes.

MR. JORDAN: That's all fair?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes.

MR. JORDAN: But there were at least four calls where it wasn't about China because you reference four calls in your testimony?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Absolutely.

MR. JORDAN: Were there other calls that weren't about China that were about this subject that aren't reflected in your testimony?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Congressman, I don't think so. I tried, as I went through my notes, to pull out everything that I could on this topic. I think I got them all, but I -- I think I got them all.

MR. JORDAN: So you think any conversation you had with Mr. Morrison relative to the subject that we've been discussing all day are at least highlighted and referenced in your opening statement?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Congressman, that was my intent --

MR. JORDAN: That was your intent.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: -- and I hope I succeeded. Others have taken a look through these, and I think I'm okay on that.

MR. JORDAN: And it's not out of the -- well, let me ask it this way. Let's go to the first -- the first call is a couple days, 3 days after the call between President Trump and President Zelensky, and you get a readout from Mr. Morrison about President Trump and President Zelensky's call. Is that accurate? It's on page nine of your testimony at the top.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Page nine, let's see.

MR. JORDAN: Top of page nine.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: All right. Yes.

MR. JORDAN: That's your first readout of the call between President Trump and President Zelensky?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes.

MR. JORDAN: Okay. And why did Mr. Morrison call you? Did he call you to give you a readout of that call, or was there -- and/or some other reason?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: That will be in my notes. So what I did, Congressman, in preparation for this, I tried to pull out all relevant phone calls, meetings, et cetera, and within each of those phone calls, I wrote down the components of those or aspects of those that was relevant here, which means that I didn't write down, and so I'm not remembering what other topics. I know that there were other topics in many of these calls.

MR. JORDAN: Okay. You don't know about this one?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I don't --

MR. JORDAN: You know this was talked about, what you referenced in your testimony, that he gave you a readout of President Trump, President Zelensky's call.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I do.

MR. JORDAN: And there may have been something else on the call. You don't recall?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: There could have been other things on the call as well, yes.

MR. JORDAN: Who initiated this call?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: You asked me this before, and I probably told you that I couldn't remember. It's not clear to me from my notes here whether or not I did it or he did it. Again, I --

MR. JORDAN: Can you hazard a guess who likely initiated the call? Was it you calling him, or did he call you to talk about this? And was this his primary focus of the call, giving you a readout of President Trump, President Zelensky's call?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I can't hazard a guess.

MR. JORDAN: Okay.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Probably other issues on the call. Again, his main focus was not this; it was China.

MR. JORDAN: Okay.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: But I don't want to guess.

MR. JORDAN: Okay. Let's go to the next page.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes.

MR. JORDAN: Your second call with Mr. Morrison, it looks like the big paragraph about halfway down, on September 1st.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yep.

MR. JORDAN: And can you give me the particulars of this call? Did he call you? Did you call him? Was it a scheduled call?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Ah, so this was -- so he was in Warsaw on September 1st, yeah.

MR. JORDAN: You indicate at the bottom of the paragraph that he gives you a readout of the call that took place between President Zelensky and Vice President Pence. Is that accurate?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes. Yes. Yes.

MR. JORDAN: All right. And, again, how did this call come about?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Same way the others did, which is one of the two of us emails on an unclass system the interest in having a phone call. The other writes back and says: The time is good. Let's go it at such and such a time.

I go to a secure phone and get on it. So I can't hazard a guess on who initiated this one either, Congressman.

MR. JORDAN: Okay. And was it the primary focus to give

you a readout of the call between the President of Ukraine and the Vice President of the United States?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes.

MR. JORDAN: Okay. So now we have two calls that you get from Mr. Morrison, you initiate, he initiates. It's on the thing. Some of them are on the weekend. And both are readouts from Mr. Morrison giving you a readout between either the President's call with the President of Ukraine or the Vice President's call with the President of Ukraine?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Correct.

MR. JORDAN: Right. And then we have the third one, that we discussed earlier, which I think took place on the 7th. Is that right? Page twelve of your testimony.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Conversation with Mr. Morrison in which he describes -- yes.

MR. JORDAN: So now we have Mr. Morrison and you getting on the phone again, and Mr. Morrison is giving you a readout of a conversation that Ambassador Sondland had with President Trump?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Correct.

MR. JORDAN: And is this -- I guess, maybe it is. I don't know. Is it customary for the NSC to call up the Ambassador and give them readouts of the President and Vice President's phone calls?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: It's not unusual for the NSC to be

describing the policy steps that need to be implemented coming out of phone calls. That's not unusual.

MR. JORDAN: That's not what I asked. I asked --

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Sorry.

MR. JORDAN: -- is it unusual for the new guy at the NSC to call you three times in 5 weeks and give you a readout of the Vice President's call with President Zelensky, the President's call with President Zelensky, and the President's call with Ambassador Sondland? I'm asking, is that unusual?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Congressman, I'm trying to be responsive here. It doesn't seem unusual to me.

MR. JORDAN: Okay. Yeah. I mean, I read this, and it's like Mr. Morrison, new on the job, and he calls you four times relative to the subject matter that this committee is looking into.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yeah.

MR. JORDAN: And three of those four times is to give you a direct readout of the Vice President's conversation with someone else or the President, on two occasions the President of the United States talking with someone else. And you're saying that happens all the time?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Those meetings don't happen all the time, as we know. So it doesn't happen all the time.

MR. JORDAN: Is it customary for the person at the NSC to, when the President of the United States has a

conversation with someone and the Vice President of the United States has a conversation with someone, is it customary for someone at the NSC to call up the Ambassador and say, "Hey, I just want to let you know what the President said on his call"?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Congressman, my understanding is not unusual.

MR. JORDAN: Not unusual?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Not unusual.

MR. JORDAN: And the fact that you had three of those in this sort of time period, that's not unusual?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: The unusual aspect of that is that there were meetings of the President of the United States with someone having to do with Ukraine in that short period of time.

MR. JORDAN: Okay. All right.

MR. ZELDIN: And, by the way, Ambassador, just to follow up with one quick question on that, when did you first meet Mr. Morrison?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: In person, I met him when he came with Ambassador Bolton to Ukraine the end of August. That's when I first met him in person.

MR. ZELDIN: And so these phone calls from Tim Morrison to you, you hadn't even met Tim Morrison before?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: That's correct.

MR. ZELDIN: An Ambassador can be recalled by the President at any time with or without cause, correct?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I'm sure that's -- yes.

MR. ZELDIN: A lot of claims in your opening statement are without firsthand knowledge, and I just -- I wanted to ask about one of them. So, in your opening statement, you reference Burisma five times. You reference Biden twice. One of those references of Biden was just a reference to the July 25th call. The other reference was on page 12 of paragraph 3. And so, on September 7th, Ambassador Sondland has a call with the President, according to a conversation that you had with Tim Morrison, right?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: September 7th. Are we looking at the same paragraph?

MR. ZELDIN: Third paragraph down on page 12.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Right, in which he described a phone conversation with Sondland and President Trump, yes, sir.

MR. ZELDIN: This is the only reference in your opening statement to Biden other than your one reference to the July 25th call. And this isn't firsthand. It's not secondhand. It's not thirdhand. But if I understand this correctly, you're telling us that Tim Morrison told you that Ambassador Sondland told him that the President told Ambassador Sondland that Zelensky would have to open an investigation into Biden?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: That's correct.

MR. ZELDIN: Is it possible that somewhere in that chain of events that the President spoke to President Zelensky about Burisma? Probably assume President Trump spoke to Ambassador Sondland about Burisma?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I don't know, Congressman.

MR. ZELDIN: Yeah. It's just -- it's hard when we -- I mean, it's one thing if you have firsthand information, but a lot of what you're saying in your opening statement is not firsthand information. That's one example. And it happens to be the only reference at all in your opening statement to Joe Biden.

You testified that the goal requesting investigations into the 2016 election in Burisma was to influence the U.S. election. Is that correct?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I'm sorry. Say that again, Congressman.

MR. ZELDIN: I believe you testified earlier that the goal of requesting investigations into the 2016 election and Burisma was to influence the U.S. election. Is that an accurate reflection of your testimony from earlier?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I don't think so.

MR. ZELDIN: Would you like to tell us what your position is on it? What was the goal of requesting investigations into 2016 election and Burisma?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: As I understand it from one of the -- maybe the article in The New York Times about Mr. Giuliani's interest in Burisma, in that article, he describes, and I think he quotes Giuliani at some length, that article indicates that Giuliani was interested in getting some information on Vice President Biden that would be useful to Mr. Giuliani's client. I think that's what he says. He says he's got one client, and he's useful to the client.

MR. ZELDIN: And then it's your inference that Mr. Giuliani's goal would be the President's goal?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes.

MR. ZELDIN: And your source is The New York Times?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes.

MR. ZELDIN: So do you have any other source that the President's goal in making this request was anything other than The New York Times?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I have not talked to the President. I have no other information from what the President was thinking.

MR. ZELDIN: Is it possible that requesting an investigation, for example, into the 2016 election wasn't to influence a future election?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I'm sorry. Can you say that one again?

MR. ZELDIN: Is it possible that the request to investigate interference with the 2016 election was not to influence a future election?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I don't know, Congressman.

MR. ZELDIN: Well, you just told us what you inferred based off of what The New York Times told you Rudy Giuliani was thinking, which inferred what the President was thinking. I'm asking you to answer a question that, is it possible that the request to investigate the 2016 election was for a reason other than influencing the 2020 election? Is that possible?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I don't know if it's possible.

MR. ZELDIN: I remember you testified a little earlier that you're familiar with the Robert Mueller investigation.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I said I'd heard of the Robert Mueller investigation, yes, sir.

MR. ZELDIN: And the investigation was still ongoing at that time, correct?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I suppose -- yes.

MR. ZELDIN: Was your understanding of the Robert Mueller investigation that Robert Mueller was investigating foreign interference in the U.S. election --

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes.

MR. ZELDIN: -- from 2016?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes.

MR. ZELDIN: As far as Burisma and Zlochevsky, when did

you first become familiar with this corruption case?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: With Burisma, I think this summer when it became -- when it was an item in the press.

[6:30 p.m.]

MR. ZELDIN: And can you give us a rough idea of when that might have been?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I can't.

MR. ZELDIN: A month?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: July.

MR. ZELDIN: And you wrote in your opening -- you testified in your opening statement, it's on page 6, paragraph 2, quote: By mid-July it was becoming clear to me that the meeting President Zelensky wanted was conditioned on the investigations of Burisma and alleged Ukrainian interference in the 2016 elections.

So that was mid-July. Is it -- had you back familiar with this case before mid-July?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: As I say, I don't remember exactly when I became familiar with that case.

MR. ZELDIN: I'm having trouble understanding how you would have concluded it was clear to you by mid-July that the meeting President Zelensky wanted conditioned on the investigations of Burisma if you can't even testify now that you had even heard of the Burisma case by then.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I think I said it was sometime this summer. And I don't know exactly when it was.

MR. ZELDIN: So it's possible that you did hear Burisma before mid-July?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes.

MR. ZELDIN: And then in mid-July it, as you testified, became clear to you that the meeting that President Zelensky wanted was conditioned on an investigation into Burisma and alleged Ukrainian interference in the 2016 U.S. elections. Obviously you would be identifying at that point that it's important to the President, that investigation, if you were reaching that conclusion?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: No. What I know is what -- what Ambassador Sondland was able to tell me about those investigations and Ambassador Volker. I don't know what was in the President's mind.

MR. ZELDIN: So where was this condition coming from if you're not sure if it was coming from the President?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I think it was coming from Mr. Giuliani.

MR. ZELDIN: But not from the President?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I don't know.

MR. ZELDIN: And you testified earlier that Mr. -- you were interpreting Rudy Giuliani's advocacy as the position of the President?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: What I said -- what I said, I think, was the President was Giuliani's client.

MR. ZELDIN: And by Rudy Giuliani -- you believe in mid-July, when you reached this conclusion, that Rudy

Giuliani wants an investigation into Burisma. Are you believing at all that the President wants an investigation into Burisma or no?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I don't know. What I know is that the direction was coming from Giuliani.

MR. ZELDIN: Okay. Well, it's important to point out then, because your opening statement has leaked because that's what's been happening during these depositions, so everyone outside has read your opening statement, but what they haven't read obviously is that you're testifying now that you're not even sure if that condition came from the President. You don't even know where it came from. You're guessing maybe Rudy Giuliani and you're not sure whether or not it came from the President. Is that what you're saying?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: What I'm saying is that I'm describing conversations that I heard. I didn't hear it from the President. I can't say what the President was thinking. I can -- I can say what Kurt Volker and Ambassador Sondland told me.

MR. ZELDIN: Did you have any firsthand knowledge that confirms that the President was conditioning an investigation into Burisma and alleged election -- Ukrainian interference in the 2016 elections with a meeting with President Zelensky?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Again, I had no conversations with the President.

MR. ZELDIN: So did you have any firsthand knowledge at all to support that?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Firsthand meaning -- firsthand meaning had I talked to the President? No, I've never talked to the President.

MR. ZELDIN: Or any other firsthand knowledge, other than a communication directly with the President.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: No communication with the President.

MR. ZELDIN: And no communication with Rudy Giuliani.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: There was none with Giuliani, only with Sondland and Volker.

MR. ZELDIN: Why wouldn't you want to get more familiar with the case on its merits at this time?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I'm sorry, Congressman, say it again.

MR. ZELDIN: Why wouldn't you want to get more familiar with the case on its merits at that time?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I am trying to do U.S. foreign policy. I am trying to stay out of U.S. domestic policy and politics. So I'm not looking to get involved in that.

MR. ZELDIN: Did the merits of the case matter to you -- did the merits of the case matter to you in taking that position?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: The merits of the case matter by taking the position of staying out of domestic politics.

MR. ZELDIN: But the merits of whether or not there was actual corruption was not part of your decisionmaking process at that time?

As part of your decision -- in mid-July you make this conclusion of a condition. And I'm just asking if part of that decisionmaking process of what to do next included any analysis of this particular corruption case on its merits.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I did not investigate the Burisma case on its merits.

MR. ZELDIN: Were there any meetings at that time at the embassy to discuss the case on its merits?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: What we did at the embassy, as I mentioned, is we are focused on institutions, not on specific cases. We're looking to fight back against corruption and to help the Ukrainians fight back against corruption by improving their courts and their judicial system. That's -- not on individual cases.

MR. ZELDIN: And if you did take the time to analyze the case on its merits and you were to determine that it, in fact, had merit, that this was a corruption case impacting parties from both the Ukraine and the United States, wouldn't you possibly conclude differently with regard to an answer you gave earlier where you said this was not in the U.S. interest?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Can't answer that one. Don't know.

MR. ZELDIN: If the case had merits, maybe it would be in the U.S. interest.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Don't know, Congressman.

MR. ZELDIN: And I believe you might have testified earlier, U.S. law conditions aid to Ukraine based off of their efforts to make progress in fighting corruption, correct?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Some of the security assistance has conditions in the Defense Authorization Act every year that has conditions on their -- having to do with civilian control of the military and those kinds of things. And it may well have some language about governance in contracting.

MR. ZELDIN: If the President believed that looking further into Ukrainian interference in the 2016 election and Burisma had merit where would he have gone if you aren't going to even look into it? What other way does he have to look into these two cases?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: He has -- he has a lot of resources, Congressman, as you know. In the Justice Department I think he's suggested or directed further investigations of 2016 and related things. So he's got many ways to investigate.

MR. ZELDIN: But you weren't one of those resources?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: That's correct.

MR. ZELDIN: So before you send your text on September 1st, it appears that there were two things that you come in

contact with, one being the Politico story that we spoke about earlier and on page 10 a September 1st conversation between Ambassador Sondland and Mr. Yermak in Warsaw.

With regards to that September 1st reference in your opening statement, the source of your information is Tim Morrison, correct?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I'm looking for your cite here.

MR. ZELDIN: The bottom of page 10.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: The bottom of page 10, right.

During the same phone call I had with Mr. Morrison, he went on to describe a conversation Ambassador Sondland with Yermak.

Yes, it was with Morrison.

MR. ZELDIN: Tim Morrison. Is he your only source of information?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes.

MR. ZELDIN: Was he in that meeting? Was he part of that conversation with -- between Ambassador Sondland and Mr. Yermak?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I don't know.

MR. ZELDIN: Well, how would Mr. Morrison know that information if he wasn't in the meeting?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Because he could have talked to Ambassador Sondland. I don't know which of those two.

MR. ZELDIN: Okay. So that conclusion, again, it's not

firsthand or secondhand?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: It could have been firsthand. I don't know. First or second --

MR. ZELDIN: But it's not your firsthand. So best case scenario it's your secondhand information, but maybe it's thirdhand information.

On your call with Tim Morrison after the July 25th call between President Trump and President Zelensky, did he tell you anything in his readout other than the reference to -- anything else specifically from the call other than the reference to fire Lutsenko?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes. He mentioned -- I think it was he who mentioned -- that there had been discussion of the previous ambassador.

Did I mention that? I think I did. Let's see here.

Yes, here we are. Yes, he said, fire Lutsenko. Talked about the previous ambassador. He mentioned Giuliani. And he mentioned -- and he mentioned that Gordon had -- Gordon Sondland had called the President before and after the meeting -- the phone call.

MR. ZELDIN: But as far as what was on the July 25th phone call, other than a reference to fire Lutsenko, what else was specifically said on the call?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Again, I just said that he also talked about the previous ambassador, Ambassador Yovanovitch.

He mentioned Giuliani. And that's all I have written down.

MR. ZELDIN: After the text on September 1st, you then had a conversation with Ambassador Sondland, correct?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: September 1st, you're going to go back to that one.

MR. ZELDIN: Yes, we're going back to that.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Hang on here. So -- this is when -- are you looking at page 13, Congressman?

MR. ZELDIN: Well, you do talk about it on page 10. At the bottom is the reference to Ambassador Sondland's meeting with Yermak that you heard from Tim Morrison. And then it goes through, as you go into the next page, the following paragraphs are leading you into your conversation that you had with Ambassador Sondland. The first full paragraph on page 11 is your text, and then you get into specifics about the phone call in the following paragraph.

In that conversation between you and Ambassador Sondland, did you ask him about the meeting he had with Mr. Yermak that Tim Morrison told you about?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I did not.

MR. ZELDIN: So the basis of your information, secondhand or thirdhand, that there was a link between money and an investigation into Burisma, you then have an opportunity to talk to the person who was in the meeting and you don't even ask him whether or not that meeting happened

or if this was discussed?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I was -- there's no doubt that the meeting happened. And I didn't ask him further about the conversation with Yermak.

And those are -- you know, all I'm reporting -- all I'm reporting is firsthand knowledge of my phone call with people or my texts with people.

MR. ZELDIN: Right.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: But you're right, those are often about other conversations.

MR. ZELDIN: But it seemed like that would have been a good opportunity to ask Ambassador Sondland about the meeting with Mr. Yermak, correct?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: And I didn't take the opportunity.

MR. ZELDIN: How long was that phone call, if you remember, between you and Ambassador Sondland on September 1st?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I don't remember.

MR. ZELDIN: Maybe -- any idea? Like a couple minutes or 30 minutes? Was it a short call, a long call?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Let's see here. So we're talking about the phone call on 11, on page 11. Is that right?

MR. ZELDIN: On page 11.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yeah, yeah. Right. Asked me to call him, which I did. During that phone call, right.

Sondland told me he now recognized he made a mistake.

So probably, I don't know, 15 minutes, 20 minutes.

MR. ZELDIN: And here you have a -- so the reference on the phone call is to Burisma, not the Bidens, is that --is that correct? That's what's -- that's what's in your opening statement?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: During the phone call Ambassador Sondland told me that President Trump told him he wants President Zelensky to state publicly investigate Burisma and alleged --- is it that the one you're talking about?

MR. ZELDIN: Yeah.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: On the second paragraph?

MR. ZELDIN: Yes.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yes.

MR. ZELDIN: And nothing linking that to aid, correct?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: No, the next paragraph describes how it's linked to aid.

MR. ZELDIN: Where -- where did -- where did -- where did Ambassador Sondland --

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Link it to aid? So --

MR. ZELDIN: Go ahead.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Yeah. So Ambassador Sondland on this phone call tells me that he now recognizes that he'd made a mistake when he told the Ukrainians that the only thing they had to do in order to -- the only thing they had

to do -- only thing they would get if they -- if they announced these investigations was a meeting. Said that was a mistake.

MR. ZELDIN: That was never actually communicated to Ukraine, correct?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: No, I think that is what he communicated to Yermak.

MR. ZELDIN: According to a conversation that you had with Tim Morrison about what Ambassador Sondland spoke to Mr. Yermak?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: That's on the previous page, that's correct.

MR. ZELDIN: You had this conversation with Ambassador Sondland and you didn't ask him?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Did you just ask that? Is that the same question? I just want to be sure I'm getting this.

Yeah, I did not ask him.

MR. ZELDIN: Go ahead.

VOICE: No, I'm just confused as to which call.

[6:46 p.m.]

MR. ZELDIN: We are talking about the September 1st phone call. I believe the Ambassador is testifying that Ambassador Sondland had communicated this to Mr. Yermak. But that information is not from Ambassador Sondland; that information is from Tim Morrison, who may or may not have been in that meeting with Ambassador Sondland and Mr. Yermak.

And then when Ambassador Taylor then sent this text and had a call, during the call with Ambassador Sondland, he didn't even raise that meeting at all with Mr. Yermak.

I just want to understand --

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Got it. Got it. Right.

MR. ZELDIN: -- that chain. Is that all correct?

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: I didn't raise the Yermak meeting. What I raised was the concern about linking the security assistance to the investigation. That was the concern.

MR. ZELDIN: Right, but you didn't confirm, though, that that was actually communicated. You didn't ask Ambassador Sondland that.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: If he'd communicated it to the Ukrainians? No, I asked him about the linkage.

MR. ZELDIN: Right.

Okay, Steve.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q Looking back on these events, would you have

handled anything differently in terms of your communications with the seventh floor of the State Department?

You sent your cable. You know, you had a couple phone calls with Mr. Brechbuhl. But it doesn't seem like your concerns penetrated.

A Mr. Castor, I don't think that's true. I think that, first of all, they shared my concerns. Second of all, they got my cable. Third of all, based on the concerns and the cable, Secretary Pompeo went to the White House, probably on a couple of occasions, you know, in trying to have these meetings, and attempted to get the decision changed. So I'm comfortable --

Q Okay.

A -- that I got a response.

Q Okay. So, looking back on things, you wouldn't have handled anything different?

A Correct.

Q Okay.

MR. CASTOR: I'd just note for the record we haven't seen a copy of the subpoena and we haven't made it a part of the record. Is that still on the table as an option?

MR. GOLDMAN: We're happy to show you a copy of the subpoena.

MR. BITAR: We're more than happy for you, Mr. Castor, to also make sure that the seal is authentic and that the

signature is authentic. No worries. I'll get it for you now.

MR. GOLDMAN: And apparently you have an email in your inbox with the --

MR. CASTOR: Oh, okay. Yeah, I mean, I don't have my email.

BY MR. CASTOR:

Q You would agree that, if Burisma -- if their motivation for engaging Hunter Biden for their board was not related to his corporate governance expertise but, in fact, was hoping to buy some protection, you would agree that that's worthy of investigating, right?

A Mr. Castor, I don't know why Burisma got him on the board.

Q But if Ukrainians were engaged in misdeeds or wrongdoing with regard to putting Hunter Biden on their board, that could be something that could be worth investigating, right?

A I don't know. I don't know. I don't know the relationship that he had with the board. I don't know.

Q Okay. And, at the time, the Vice President had a, you know, policy supervision of Ukraine on some respects.

A He was very interested in policy with Ukraine, yes.

Q Okay. So do you see a perceived conflict of interest there?

A I'm a fact witness. I'm not giving opinions on --
Q Okay.
A -- this thing, but -- so I --
Q Is it reasonable to see a perceived conflict of interest there, or is that crazy?
A I've said other things are crazy.
Q A reasonable person could conclude that there is a possible perceived conflict of interest there, right?
MR. BELLINGER: You asked him that question earlier, at the beginning, about 7-1/2 hours ago. It was one of the first questions you asked him. He's already answered it.
MR. CASTOR: So he's not going to answer it?
MR. BELLINGER: He's already answered it.
BY MR. CASTOR:
Q Have you had any communications with other witnesses or likely witnesses before this investigation, such as Mr. Morrison? Presumably he's sort of on the docket next to come in. Have you had any conversations about your testimony with other possible witnesses?
A Not about testimony. Again, he's very interested in China, and we continue to talk about China --
Q Okay.
A -- but nothing about --
Q With Mr. Reeker?
A No.

Q With some of the others?
A No.
Q You didn't have any communications with some of our previous witnesses?
A No. Nothing on the substance of the testimony.
Q And just one other item. The State Department, they didn't order you to not appear under subpoena, right?
A Correct.
MR. CASTOR: I think that's all I've got. I'm out of members, so -- I'm almost out of time.
BY MR. GOLDMAN:
Q Ambassador Taylor, you've been here a long time. I just wanted to address one thing --
A Please. Please.
Q -- which was brought up in the last --
A Yep.
Q It will just be a couple minutes. But we understand you're tired and it's been a long day, and we --
A No, no. I am tired, but it's okay.
Q We appreciate it. This won't be long.
A Not a problem.
Q So I think you testified earlier today that you drafted your statement based on, in part, a review of your notes and the various WhatsApp and text messages that you are in possession of, right?

A Correct.

Q And so is it accurate that the statement, the opening statement, that you gave is based on your very best recollection after reviewing your own notes?

A It is correct.

Q Okay. And so is that the most accurate recitation of events that you can remember today? Is --

A It is.

Q -- that right?

A It is.

Q When Mr. Zeldin was questioning you, he was talking about the connection -- he was sort of conflating a couple things between Mr. Giuliani, Mr. Trump, and the New York Times article. I just want to clarify a couple of things for now.

You did see that May 9th New York Times article, which I believe is exhibit 1, right?

A I did.

Q And so you understood from that article that Mr. Giuliani was interested in pressing Ukraine to conduct investigations into Biden and the 2016 election?

A Correct.

Q And that was before you took the job.

A It was.

Q Okay.

A It was one of the hesitations about taking the job.

Q Right. I believe you expressed in your text messages your concerns about Rudy Giuliani and Biden in those text messages. Do you recall that?

A I do.

Q And were you aware of other public statements, either on Twitter or on television, that Rudy Giuliani was making frequently on this topic, about these investigations?

A Not on Twitter or television, because I rarely do either of those. But in the general press, I think this is pretty well-described.

Q Okay.

And then you also testified, right, that at that May 23rd Oval Office meeting you understood that President Trump directed Ambassadors Sondland, Volker, and Secretary Perry to consult with Rudy Giuliani in order for a White House meeting to occur?

A That was my understanding.

Q That was your understanding.

A Yes.

Q And then after that point, you had many conversations with Ambassadors Sondland and Volker about Rudy Giuliani's interest in the investigations in Ukraine. Is that accurate?

A Mr. Goldman, I don't remember many conversations

with those two about Rudy Giuliani's specific interest, but certainly with the interest that they were expressing, presumably coming from Giuliani, in having these investigations proceed.

Q Right. And you say presumably coming from Rudy Giuliani because you, A, understood that Rudy Giuliani was interested in these investigations and, B, understood that the President had directed them to discuss Rudy Giuliani's concerns before scheduling a White House meeting.

A A and B both correct.

Q Okay.

And then you had a telephone call with Tim Morrison on July 28th where he gave you a brief readout of the President's call with President Zelensky.

A Yes.

Q And I believe you testified that you understood also that Ambassador Sondland spoke to President Trump both before and after that call?

A Tim Morrison said that, that he had -- in that call. He said -- yes.

Q Okay. And then when you actually read the call transcript, Tim Morrison's readout was accurate, correct?

A It was.

Q It wasn't complete --

A It wasn't complete, but what he said was accurate.

Right. Yes.

Q And, subsequently then, you in early September had two separate phone calls, right, with Tim Morrison and Ambassador Sondland about a phone call between Ambassador Sondland and President Trump?

A Correct. And both --

Q Right?

A Yes.

Q And both of those conversations, so what Ambassador Sondland told you about his own conversation with President Trump and what Tim Morrison told you about Ambassador Sondland's conversation with President Trump, were pretty consistent.

A They were pretty consistent.

Q Right. And you understood that President Trump was insisting and conditioning the White House meeting on, I think, quote, "everything," which was both the security assistance and the White House meeting.

A That's what Ambassador Sondland said. He said that they were linked. They were linked.

Q Right.

A I don't remember him saying President Trump said that they had to be linked.

Q Right. But you understood Ambassador Sondland was speaking regularly --

A Having just gotten off the phone call with President Trump, and he was then relaying it to Yermak and me.

Q Right.

And then you also had your own conversations with Ukrainian officials about Rudy Giuliani, right? And if I could refresh you, because it's late, you, I think, testified that on July 10th, when you had your meeting with the Chief of Staff and the Defense Minister, they relayed to you that they understood that Mr. Giuliani had said that there would not be a phone call.

A Ah. Yes. Yeah, that's exactly right. And that came through the Prosecutor General Lutsenko. Yes.

Q Right. And they certainly understood that Mr. Giuliani represented President Trump, correct?

A They did.

Q Because why else would they care what Rudy Giuliani thought?

A Correct.

Q And just to be clear, who ultimately decides whether or not there is a White House meeting between the President of the United States and any other foreign leader? Is it Rudy Giuliani, or is it the President of the United States?

A It's the President of the United States.

Q Okay.

MR. GOLDMAN: Just 1 minute.

All right. I think we are done. I don't know if the minority has a couple followup questions?

MR. CASTOR: Thank you for coming in today. We appreciate your cooperation.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Glad to be here.

THE CHAIRMAN: I can tell my timing is good.

MR. GOLDMAN: Chairman Schiff has arrived to adjourn the proceedings.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Unless he has questions.

THE CHAIRMAN: No, no. We are adjourned. And I want to thank you, Ambassador.

AMBASSADOR TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[Whereupon, at 7:00 p.m., the deposition was concluded.]