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UNITED STATES SENATE

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

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INTERVIEW OF: :

AMOS HOCHSTEIN :

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Room SD-342 and via Webex
Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C.
Thursday, September 17, 2020
10:03 a.m.

INTERVIEW OF AMOS HOCHSTEIN

1 APPEARANCES:

2 For the Witness:

3 KELLY KRAMER, ESQUIRE

4 RICHARD BEN-VENISTE, ESQUIRE

5 Mayer Brown LLP

6 1999 K Street N.W.

7 Washington, D.C. 20006

8

9 For Senator Johnson:

10 JOSEPH C. FOLIO, III, Chief Counsel, HSGAC

11 SCOTT WITTMANN, Senior Professional Staff Member, HSGAC

12 BRIAN DOWNEY, Senior Investigator, HSGAC

13 LYDIA WESTLAKE, Senior Advisor, HSGAC

14 SARAH SMERLING, Professional Staff Member, HSGAC

15 WILLIAM SACRIPANTI, Professional Staff Member, HSGAC

16

17 For Senator Grassley:

18 JOSHUA FLYNN-BROWN, Deputy Chief Investigative Counsel,

19 Finance Committee

20 QUINTON BRADY, Investigative Counsel, Finance Committee

21

22

23

24

25

1 APPEARANCES (Cont.)

2

3 For Senator Peters:

4 ZACHARY SCHRAM, Minority Chief Counsel, HSGAC

5 ROY AWABDEH, Minority Senior Counsel, HSGAC

6 SOUMYALATHA DAYANANDA, Minority Senior Investigative

7 Counsel, HSGAC

8 VALERIE SHEN, Investigative Counsel, HSGAC

9

10 For Senator Wyden:

11 DAVID BERICK, Minority Chief Investigator, Finance

12 Committee

13 DAN GOSHORN, Minority Senior Counsel, Finance Committee

14 JOSH HEATH, Minority Investigator, Finance Committee

15 MICHAEL OSBORN-GROSSO, Minority Investigator, Finance

16 Committee

17

18 For the Department of State:

19 WILLIAM K. KILLION

20 Bureau of Legislative Affairs

21

22

23

24

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 MR. FOLIO: Good morning. This is a transcribed
3 interview of Amos Hochstein conducted by the Senate
4 Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and
5 the Senate Committee on Finance. This interview was
6 requested by Chairman Ron Johnson and Chairman Charles
7 Grassley as part of the Committees' investigation of whether
8 there were any actual or apparent conflicts of interest or
9 any other wrongdoing with regard to the Obama
10 administration's Ukraine policy or Burisma Holdings as well
11 as related matters.

12 On December 18, 2019, Chairmen Grassley and Johnson
13 requested Mr. Hochstein's appearance for a voluntary
14 transcribed interview and certain categories of documents.
15 In response, Mr. Hochstein through counsel notified the
16 Committees that there were no responsive documents for the
17 requested materials.

18 Mr. Hochstein, can you please state your name for the
19 record?

20 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Amos Hochstein.

21 MR. FOLIO: Good morning, Mr. Hochstein. My name is
22 Joseph Folio, and I am Chief Counsel for the Homeland
23 Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. I will first
24 introduce Chairman Johnson's staff in the room with me
25 today. Then I will ask staff for the additional members

1 participating in the interview to introduce themselves.

2 So for Chairman Johnson, in addition to myself, I am
3 joined in the room by Scott Wittmann, Brian Downey, Sarah
4 Smerling, and Will Sacripanti.

5 I will ask Chairman Grassley's staff to introduce
6 themselves.

7 MR. BRADY: Hello, Mr. Hochstein. I'm Quinton Brady.
8 I am an Investigative Counsel for Senator Grassley. I will
9 be joined by my colleague who is Deputy Chief Oversight
10 Counsel Joshua Flynn-Brown. He is currently with Senator
11 Grassley right now, and so at this point I'd like to
12 introduce Senator Grassley's opening statement as Exhibit 1.

13 [Hochstein Exhibit No. 1 was
14 marked for identification.]

15 MR. BRADY: Thank you.

16 MR. FOLIO: Thank you, Quinton.
17 Ranking Member Peters' staff?

18 MR. SCHRAM: Good morning, Mr. Hochstein. My name is
19 Zack Schram. I am Chief Counsel with Ranking Member Peters.
20 Thank you for your participation in today's interview. The
21 minority's participation today is not an endorsement of the
22 investigation. This investigation advances a Russian
23 disinformation effort and is intended to interfere in the
24 2020 Presidential election 47 days from today.

25 In March 2020, as Vice President Biden emerged as the

1 top Democratic contender, Chairman Johnson stated, "And if I
2 were a Democrat primary voter, I'd want these questions
3 satisfactorily answered before I cast my final vote."

4 Last month, in describing the investigation, Chairman
5 Johnson said, "I would think it would certainly help Donald
6 Trump win reelection and certainly be pretty good, I would
7 say, evidence about not voting for Vice President Biden."

8 On August 7th, the Director of National
9 Counterintelligence and Security Center, William Evanina,
10 issued an unclassified assessment of foreign election
11 threats, stating, "Russia is using a range of measures to
12 primarily denigrate former Vice President Biden. For
13 example, pro-Russia Ukrainian Parliamentarian Andrii Derkach
14 is spreading claims about corruption--including through
15 publicizing leaked phone calls--to undermine former Vice
16 President Biden's candidacy and the Democratic Party."

17 Last week, the Treasury Department sanctioned Mr.
18 Derkach. In a statement the Treasury Department said the
19 following: "From at least late 2019 through mid-2020,
20 Derkach waged a covert influence campaign centered on
21 cultivating false and unsubstantiated narratives concerning
22 U.S. officials in the upcoming 2020 Presidential election,
23 spurring corruption investigations in both Ukraine and the
24 United States designed to culminate prior to election day.
25 Derkach's unsubstantiated narratives were pushed in Western

1 media through the coverage of press conferences and other
2 news events, including interviews and statements. Between
3 May and July 2020, Derkach released edited audiotapes and
4 other unsupported information with the intent to discredit
5 U.S. officials, and he levied unsubstantiated allegations
6 against U.S. and international political figures. Derkach
7 almost certainly targeted the U.S. voting populace,
8 prominent U.S. persons, and members of the U.S. Government
9 based on his reliance on U.S. platforms, English language
10 documents, and videos and pro-Russian lobbyists in the
11 United States used to propagate his claims."

12 The Chairmen's investigation has provided the
13 committees as a platform to amplify the Russian attack on
14 our election described by the Treasury Department and Mr.
15 Evanina.

16 I would also note we are conducting this interview
17 remotely because we are in the midst of a pandemic that has
18 created an extraordinary public health crisis in the United
19 States. Since this investigation started, nearly 200,000
20 Americans have died of COVID. The Homeland Security and
21 Governmental Affairs Committee has jurisdiction over
22 pandemic preparedness and response, and yet this Committee
23 has now spent more than twice as much time on the record in
24 this investigation than it has devoted to all of its COVID
25 hearings combined.

1 As Chairman Johnson told a radio host on August 12th,
2 "Whether I'm in D.C. or not, I'm working on this almost
3 nonstop. Okay? So is my staff."

4 Ranking Member Peters believes that this investigation
5 is a misuse of Committee resources that does not advance the
6 health, safety, or economic security of Americans consistent
7 with our Committee's mission. Minority staff have a right
8 and responsibility to be here, and we will do our best to
9 ensure that you are treated fairly, that the record is
10 accurate and complete, and that the national security
11 interest of the United States is protected.

12 I am joined by my colleagues Soumya Dayananda, Roy
13 Awabdeh, and Valerie Shen.

14 MR. FOLIO: In response to the opening statement by
15 Ranking Member Peters' staff, I'll just note three things.

16 Any assertion that the investigation is used or is not
17 based on [inaudible] information is simply not based in any
18 fact, not one fact. And whether it's said 3 times or 300
19 times, that doesn't make it true.

20 What we are here to investigate is the undisputed facts
21 of the position that Hunter Biden took on the board of
22 Burisma at the time that his father was the U.S. head of
23 Ukraine policy and what conflicts, if any, that created for
24 U.S. Ukraine policy, which goes to the heart of the Homeland
25 Security and Governmental Affairs jurisdiction.

1 And, furthermore, I think I looked the other day, and
2 the Committee has held at least six if not seven hearings on
3 COVID, and I can't speak for how much work Ranking Member
4 Peters does in the background, but I know Chairman Johnson
5 has several dozen staff, and we work tirelessly on that day
6 in and day out.

7 Ranking Member Wyden's staff?

8 MR. BERICK: Hi, this is Dave Berick. I'm the Chief
9 Investigator for the Democratic staff on the Finance
10 Committee. I'm accompanied this morning by Josh Heath,
11 Michael Osborn-Grosso, and Dan Goshorn. We associate
12 ourselves with the remarks that Mr. Schram gave, and the
13 Senator has made public statements on this.

14 Thank you.

15 MR. FOLIO: Thank you, Dave.

16 Would the State Department officials on the line please
17 introduce themselves?

18 MR. KILLION: Bill Killion, Legislative Affairs.

19 MR. FOLIO: Thank you, Bill.

20 MR. KRAMER: Joe, before we get going, could I clarify
21 one thing? I wasn't sure if there was an opening statement
22 offered on behalf of Senator Grassley. We obviously didn't
23 hear anything. Was there some sort of piece of paper put
24 into the record here?

25 MR. FOLIO: There was. Quinton Brady offered an

1 opening statement by Senator Grassley and introduced it as
2 Exhibit 1 into the record. And I think [inaudible] just
3 gave me a heads up that it was emailed.

4 MR. KRAMER: Okay. So it's on the way to my email
5 account?

6 MR. FOLIO: That's my understanding, yes.

7 MR. KRAMER: Okay. Thank you.

8 MR. SCHRAM: So has the minority staff been copied on
9 that email?

10 MR. FOLIO: Yes.

11 MR. SCHRAM: Thank you.

12 MR. KRAMER: And just for the record, as of now I
13 haven't received it.

14 MR. FOLIO: I think it's being composed and sent right
15 now. And just to clarify, it was the opening statement by
16 Chairman Grassley's--Joshua Flynn-Brown, his Chief
17 Investigative Counsel.

18 MR. KRAMER: Understood. And, obviously, we reserve
19 the right to respond to it once we have a chance to read it.

20 MR. FOLIO: Yeah, and just to provide a sneak preview,
21 I think it's more so addressed at the opening statement of
22 Mr. Schram.

23 I'll now explain how the interview will proceed. The
24 Federal Rules of Civil Procedure do not apply to any of the
25 Committees' investigative activities, including transcribed

1 interviews.

2 The way questioning will proceed is that we will
3 alternate between the majority and minority staff for 1 hour
4 each. The majority staff will begin, proceed for 1 hour,
5 and the minority staff will then have an hour to ask its own
6 questions. Then we will rotate back and forth until there
7 are no more questions and the interview will be over.

8 During the interview we will do our best to limit the
9 number of people who are directing questions at you during
10 any give hour. That said, from time to time a follow-up or
11 clarifying question may be helpful. And so if that's true,
12 you may hear from other folks around the virtual table.
13 Because we are virtual, I'm going to ask everyone to please
14 speak up, take your time, and try not to speak over others.

15 The court reporter is going to create a verbatim record
16 of what we discuss today. With that in mind, Mr. Hochstein,
17 it's important that you respond to questions verbally. The
18 reporter cannot record nonverbal responses such as gestures.
19 Do you understand that?

20 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

21 MR. FOLIO: We encourage witnesses that appear before
22 the Committee to freely consult with counsel. Mr.
23 Hochstein, do you have counsel present with you today?

24 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I do.

25 MR. FOLIO: And, counsel, can you please state your

1 name for the record?

2 MR. KRAMER: My name is Kelly Kramer. I'm joined by
3 Richard Ben-Veniste.

4 MR. FOLIO: Thank you, Kelly and Richard.

5 Mr. Hochstein, we want you to answer our questions
6 today in the most complete and truthful manner possible, so
7 we're going to take our time. If you have any questions or
8 you do not understand what we're asking, please let us know
9 and we'll be happy to repeat or clarify. Do you understand?

10 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

11 MR. FOLIO: Great. This interview is unclassified, so
12 if any question we ask calls for a response that would
13 implicate classified information, please state that for the
14 record as well as any reason why you think the information
15 is classified. And once you've done that, we would ask you
16 to respond with as much classified information as possible.
17 If we need to address things in a classified session, we can
18 discuss how to do that later.

19 It's the Committees' practice to honor valid common law
20 privilege claims as an accommodation to a witness or party
21 when those claims are made in good faith and accompanied by
22 sufficient explanation so the Committees can evaluate the
23 claim. When deciding whether to honor the privilege, the
24 Committee weighs its need for the information against any
25 legitimate basis for withholding it.

1 This interview is occurring without prejudice to any
2 future discussions with the Committees, and we reserve the
3 right to request your participation in future interviews or
4 to compel testimony.

5 Mr. Hochstein, if you need to take a break, let us
6 know. We ordinarily will take a 5-minute break in between
7 the 1-hour questioning session. But if you need to take a
8 break before then or in between, just tell us.

9 Mr. Hochstein, you're required to answer questions
10 before Congress truthfully. Do you understand that?

11 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I do.

12 MR. FOLIO: This also applies to questions posed by
13 congressional staff in an interview, and specifically 18
14 U.S.C. Section 1001 makes it a crime to make any materially
15 false, fictitious, or fraudulent statement or representation
16 in the course of a congressional investigation, and this
17 statute applies to your statements here today. Do you
18 understand that?

19 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I do.

20 MR. FOLIO: Is there any reason, Mr. Hochstein, that
21 you are unable to provide truthful answers to the questions
22 we ask today?

23 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't believe so.

24 MR. FOLIO: Finally, Mr. Hochstein, we ask that you not
25 speak with anyone about what we discuss in this interview or

1 anyone else outside of the room in order to preserve the
2 integrity of our investigation, and we also ask that you not
3 remove any exhibits or other documents from this virtual
4 room. Do you understand and agree?

5 MR. KRAMER: Yeah, we don't agree to that.

6 MR. FOLIO: What is your problem with that?

7 MR. KRAMER: This isn't grand jury testimony. Mr.
8 Hochstein has a First Amendment right to express himself and
9 to say anything he wants about the process.

10 MR. FOLIO: Just to be clear, you have those same
11 rights in a grand jury.

12 MR. KRAMER: I understand that. [Inaudible] the press
13 conference on the steps of the grand jury, as you well know,
14 after testifying.

15 MR. FOLIO: I do. I just want to be clear that you're
16 reserving the right to do that. Again, our point is simply
17 that, you know, speaking about what we talk about today
18 outside of the interview is something that we're asking you
19 not to do, and the purpose is to protect the integrity of
20 our investigation. For example, if you were to tell other
21 people what you were testifying to, and then we were to
22 speak to those people as witness subjects, we'd be very
23 concerned about the integrity of our investigation and the
24 purpose for which you'd be speaking to other witnesses and
25 why you'd be telling them that or telling things to the

1 press. But I addressed, you addressed it.

2 MR. KRAMER: Yeah, just to be clear, Mr. Folio, we
3 intend to behave appropriately at all times, but we're not
4 willing to surrender any First Amendment rights.

5 MR. FOLIO: All right. Thanks, Kelly.

6 All right. Does anyone have any questions before we
7 begin?

8 [No response.]

9 MR. FOLIO: Let's start the clock for the majority's 1
10 hour.

11 Mr. Hochstein, can you please tell us what positions
12 you held in the State Department during the Obama
13 administration?

14 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I was the Deputy Assistant Secretary
15 for Energy Diplomacy followed by Special Envoy and
16 Coordinator for International Energy Affairs, and as that,
17 the Bureau of Energy Resources reported to me.

18 MR. FOLIO: Can you please tell us the time periods
19 that you held each of those positions?

20 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yeah, from 2011 until 2014 I was the
21 Deputy Assistant Secretary. From 2014 to 2017, I was the
22 Special Envoy and Coordinator and led the Energy Resources
23 Bureau.

24 MR. FOLIO: And for your position from 2011 to 2014, if
25 we were staring at the State Department org chart, which

1 part of the State Department did you fall within?

2 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I was in the E family.

3 COURT REPORTER: [inaudible].

4 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I am moving the computer a little bit
5 closer to me, so--the microphone, so hopefully this is
6 better.

7 COURT REPORTER: [inaudible].

8 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Sorry. I'll speak up.

9 MR. FOLIO: All right. So, Mr. Hochstein, maybe one
10 more time to be clear then. So from 2011 to 2014, can you
11 please state your title and the place you sat on the State
12 Department org chart?

13 MR. HOCHSTEIN: From 2011 to 2014, I was the Deputy
14 Assistant Secretary for Energy Diplomacy in the Bureau of
15 Energy Resources. The Bureau was part of the E section of
16 the State Department.

17 MR. FOLIO: And what position did you hold from 2014 to
18 2017?

19 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I was the Special Envoy and Coordinator
20 for International Energy Affairs, and as such I led the
21 Bureau of Energy Resources.

22 MR. FOLIO: And when you were in the Bureau of Energy
23 Resources, to whom did you report?

24 MR. HOCHSTEIN: When I was the Deputy Assistant
25 Secretary, I reported to the Special Envoy Carlos Pascual.

1 When I was the Special Envoy, I worked through the E family
2 of rows, the Under Secretary for Economic Affairs, but as
3 customary in the State Department, I reported directly to
4 the Secretary.

5 MR. FOLIO: And at that time, 2014 to 2017, who was the
6 Under Secretary?

7 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Cathy Novelli.

8 MR. FOLIO: So can you just explain, potentially
9 disaggregate your reporting structure? So you were under
10 Ms. Novelli, but you also reported directly to the
11 Secretary? How would that occur in practice?

12 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Assistant Secretaries with the State
13 Department by custom reported--have a reporting line
14 directly to the Secretary. That means that we write--we can
15 write notes and report directly to the Secretary without
16 going through the Under Secretary. However, we stayed in
17 close coordination with the Under Secretary.

18 MR. FOLIO: So to whom did you report most frequently?

19 MR. HOCHSTEIN: To the Secretary.

20 MR. FOLIO: What was your relationship with the Office
21 of the Vice President?

22 MR. HOCHSTEIN: The Vice President had taken an
23 interest in and a lead role in some areas that related to
24 energy security and international energy affairs. When he
25 asked for things and was interested in understanding more of

1 the subject or wanted to--or had travel related to the
2 subject, I was asked to brief him and accompany him on
3 trips.

4 MR. FOLIO: Can you please describe in a little more
5 detail the Vice President's interest and lead role in energy
6 security issues at that time?

7 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Well, there were a number of areas
8 around the world where energy played a critical role in
9 foreign policy and national security that the Vice President
10 had taken a lead role on, areas such as the Eastern
11 Mediterranean where we were working to ensure that
12 [inaudible] discovered, sorry Israel and Cyprus were used to
13 further U.S. goals, or in Europe where Russia at the time
14 was posing a real danger and a threat to certain European
15 countries, trying to leverage their energy resources
16 delivered and their monopoly status or near-monopoly status
17 in those countries or to leverage that to threaten those
18 countries and to divide Europe, to push them towards
19 supporting Russian activities.

20 The Vice President also took a lead role in areas in
21 the Caribbean and Central America. Venezuela was using a
22 similar tactic to use their corrupt practices to influence
23 countries in the Caribbean and Central America to vote and
24 act against U.S. foreign policy interests. I was asked to
25 [inaudible] that area as well. And after the Maidan, we

1 were seeking to root out corruption. Energy was an area
2 that [inaudible] corruption in Europe, in Eastern Europe, so
3 I was asked to help in rooting out the corruption in the
4 energy sector.

5 MR. KRAMER: And, Joe, I'm going to just suggest to
6 Amos, for the court reporter's benefit, if you could just
7 try to slow down just a little bit on answers, I think it
8 would probably make life easier for her.

9 MR. HOCHSTEIN: My apologies.

10 MR. FOLIO: I think if you have to tell Amos that, you
11 probably need to tell me that as well.

12 Who were your points of contact in the Office of the
13 Vice President?

14 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Over the years there were different
15 people as they were [inaudible] staff and depending on what
16 the subject was. I had dealt with his National Security
17 Adviser and Deputy National Security Adviser, his lead
18 points on the different regions. So in Europe, the Europe
19 region lead, the Latin America lead, Middle East leads, et
20 cetera.

21 MR. FOLIO: Can you please just identify those folks by
22 name? Who was his National Security Adviser?

23 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Jake Sullivan, Colin Kahl, Jeff
24 Prescott, Eli --

25 MR. FOLIO: Would you mind just tying the folks with

1 their titles, just so the record is clear?

2 MR. HOCHSTEIN: My apologies. National Security
3 Adviser for a short period of time was Jake Sullivan. His
4 successor was Colin Kahl. Their Deputies were Jeffrey
5 Prescott, Eli Lake, and then there were points of contact
6 for Europe, Michael Carpenter, and Anna Makanju, Juan
7 Gonzalez, and Dan Erikson were the points of contact for
8 Central America; and the Middle East--I forget--Dan Benaim
9 for a short period of time, and I forget his successor's
10 name.

11 MR. KRAMER: Joe, could I interrupt for just one
12 second? We're just having a technical thing here. I'm just
13 going to turn some of these things off.

14 MR. FOLIO: Sure. It's been a little clearer for me
15 since you asked him to move closer to the microphone, but
16 some of the names from my perspective were a little hard to
17 hear.

18 MR. KRAMER: We could dial in from the phone instead of
19 using the computer audio. Would you like that?

20 MR. FOLIO: Let me ask. I feel like that might be more
21 trouble.

22 [Pause.]

23 MR. FOLIO: Hey, Kelly?

24 MR. KRAMER: Yes?

25 MR. FOLIO: We might want to give that a try. So

1 obviously, just keep [inaudible] video perspective, and then
2 the two things that you would need to do, if you call in
3 from a conference phone, is you would not only need to mute-
4 -with a mute button, but if you go to audio-video,
5 [inaudible] second down, speaker and microphone settings,
6 you probably need to turn those to zero, and I think that
7 should kill the feedback.

8 MR. KRAMER: Just give us a second to sort of regroup
9 in the room.

10 [Pause.]

11 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I can repeat the names, and I'll go
12 slowly, and interrupt me, Mr. Folio, if that's what you want
13 me to do.

14 MR. FOLIO: Yeah, I think would be helpful. That's
15 great, thank you.

16 MR. HOCHSTEIN: The national security advisors were
17 Jake Sullivan for a short time, and Colin Kahl. Their
18 Deputy, Jeffrey Prescott and Eli Lake. The point people for
19 Europe at different times were--actually, the first person,
20 she left in, I don't remember when. There was somebody
21 before Michael Carpenter, and when she departed it was Anna
22 Makanju. On Central America and South America it was Juan
23 Gonzalez and then Erikson, followed by Dan Benaim. I think
24 in Middle East it was Dan Benaim followed by Mustafa Popal,
25 I think. Don't hold me to that name. And then different

1 communications people that were occasionally in touch, were
2 on trips.

3 MR. FOLIO: Did you report directly to the Office of
4 the Vice President?

5 MR. HOCHSTEIN: The Vice President of the United
6 States, ultimately if I was asked to brief him, and if he
7 asked for me to accompany. But my reporting structure was
8 always the [inaudible] Department.

9 MR. FOLIO: Sure. I know formally. But I guess in
10 practice it sounds like if they asked for something you
11 would provide it.

12 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes. As I [inaudible] other officials
13 at the rank of [inaudible], et cetera.

14 MR. FOLIO: Sure, no, I understand. And when you did
15 that, was that something that you ever coordinated through
16 Ms. Novelli or through the Secretary, or was it just more of
17 an, in practice, they would ask questions and you would
18 provide informational briefings?

19 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't believe that I would brief Ms.
20 Novelli on that. The Secretary was working closely with the
21 Vice President, on occasion, on what was going on, and were
22 his staff.

23 MR. FOLIO: And could you please provide us with some
24 sense of the frequency with which you were interacting with
25 the Office of the Vice President, either the Vice President

1 or his staff?

2 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I'm not sure that I can answer that
3 question.

4 MR. FOLIO: Were you speaking with them daily?

5 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

6 MR. FOLIO: Weekly?

7 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Some weeks, weekly. Sometimes
8 [inaudible] or every other week. It was really depending on
9 the intensity that were engaged in. So it could be a while
10 where we didn't speak at all, and there would be times where
11 more on a daily basis.

12 MR. FOLIO: Did your reporting structure, either
13 formally or informally, ever include Victoria Nuland?

14 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I did not report to Victoria Nuland.
15 She was my counterpart at the Bureau and we worked very
16 closely together.

17 MR. FOLIO: And can you describe the issues on which
18 you worked very closely together?

19 MR. HOCHSTEIN: She was the Assistant Secretary for
20 Europe, so really all things that had to do with Europe. So
21 whether it was--we did a lot of work together on the Cyprus
22 question, in Turkey, Eastern Europe, for a while in Bulgaria
23 and Croatia. There was a dispute between Hungary and
24 Croatia that I worked very closely on matters related to
25 Ukraine, other matters related to Russia's activities in

1 Europe and Azerbaijan. So wherever that energy related to
2 national security in Europe, foreign areas that Europe cared
3 about, including in the counter-ISIL efforts and ISIL,
4 taking away their revenues from oil and gas. We worked
5 together in the involvement of Turkey.

6 MR. FOLIO: So with regard to U.S.-Ukraine policy, what
7 were your roles and responsibilities?

8 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Well, just as in any other country, my
9 role was to look at what the energy--how energy played
10 within the U.S. relationship with the country. That was
11 before the Maidan, but intensified after that time. Ukraine
12 is a critical country for the rest of Europe, because the
13 way that the system works, because of the Cold War
14 infrastructure legacy, all gas from Russia that fed Eastern
15 Europe went through Ukraine. Well, most of it went through
16 Ukraine and some went through Belarus. So the two
17 pipelines, these massive pipelines through Ukraine, are the
18 artery through which Russia supplied gas to at least
19 Ukraine. That was a route that the Russians, in the past,
20 on different occasions, had cut off in order to punish
21 Europe, when the Baltics were declaring independence and
22 again in '08, and then again in 2014.

23 So my job was to do a few things. One, to ensure that
24 the security of supply for the rest of Europe was
25 maintained, and when that was threatened in [inaudible] we

1 did so successfully, through the reverse flows from Europe
2 into Ukraine, to ensure that Ukraine itself had a supply of
3 gas so that they didn't freeze in the winter. Gas is used
4 in Europe largely for heating and less so for [inaudible].
5 And after the Maidan, when corruption was such a huge issue,
6 I was asked to look in the energy sector and see what we
7 could do to reform it and to help the new Ukrainian
8 government, the reformists, to help them in their efforts to
9 clean up the energy sector.

10 MR. FOLIO: So with regard to particular issues that
11 would arise in Ukraine in a given moment, if you were
12 working on the issue, for example or hypothetically, who
13 were your primary points of contact? Who were you working
14 with to resolve those issues at State or in the White House?

15 MR. HOCHSTEIN: So I would work very closely with--we
16 worked very closely with the Europe Bureau, European Affairs
17 Bureau, Victoria Nuland, and my staff would work with staff
18 on that, coordinate, inform the Secretary of State who was
19 having a lot of meetings with heads of state, and inform
20 people at the NSC, as well as the Europe people at the NSC,
21 as well as the Vice President's National Security staff.

22 MR. FOLIO: We're a little familiar with the
23 interagency process as it was being right at that time.
24 Could you just provide us with a sort of brief, high-level
25 description of what was the interagency process and also

1 where did you fit into that process?

2 MR. KRAMER: And just to be clear, when you say "at
3 that time," were you talking post Maidan? Is that the--

4 MR. FOLIO: Yeah, in the 2014 to 2017 period.

5 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Okay. So there were structures at the
6 NSC that coordinated the different agencies. There was,
7 what was called at the time an IPC that was--my staff
8 participated in, that had different agencies as well as NSC
9 and OBP participated in that as well. And then there was a
10 deputies' structure, that the Deputy Secretary, or his
11 designee, would participate in. I would often either
12 accompany or participate with the deputies, and at times at
13 the IPCs. That's where we reported on what was going on in
14 the field, what we were proposing to do, and if there was no
15 consensus this would be elevated. Different bureaus in the
16 State Department participated in that. So when there were
17 discussions on Ukraine writ large I would probably
18 participate in those, but really only talk to the areas that
19 related to the corruption on the energy side, as others
20 would about military or intelligence areas.

21 And I would either accompany the deputy secretary if
22 the subject was primarily in my lane, or accompany the
23 deputy secretary or accompany somewhere else and address
24 just those areas at the deputies' meeting or a principals'
25 meeting.

1 MR. FOLIO: Who were your contacts at the National
2 Security Council?

3 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Geez. At the NSC it would have been
4 the Deputy National Security Advisor staff, but I don't
5 remember exactly who was the Europe--oh, Kupchan, Charlie
6 Kupchan was the senior director for Europe, for I think
7 Russia and some countries covering Ukraine. Elizabeth
8 Sherwood-Randall was the senior director for other parts of
9 Europe for a while, before she became the Deputy Secretary
10 of Energy. And [inaudible] who had changed on a regular--
11 fairly frequently, every year there was somebody else.

12 MR. FOLIO: So within the interagency process, was Mr.
13 Kupchan on the same level as you?

14 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I have no idea. It's not--it's apples
15 and oranges. I was Assistant Secretary and I don't know--I
16 don't know how to--I would talk to him--I guess from the
17 perspective that he and I would talk frequently, and his
18 staff would talk to my staff. So I guess you can say that.
19 But I don't know if that's technically accurate.

20 MR. FOLIO: So I guess my point is it sounds like you
21 have a staff, he has a staff, your staffs talk to each
22 other. Is that correct? And then you all talked to each
23 other.

24 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Fair enough.

25 MR. FOLIO: Did you ever speak with Elizabeth Zentos on

1 the National Security Council?

2 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

3 MR. FOLIO: Did you ever speak with Eric Ciaramella on
4 the National Security Council?

5 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I may have. I don't recall.

6 MR. FOLIO: Any other individuals under Mr. Kupchan
7 that would have been a primary point of contact for you on
8 the National Security Council?

9 MR. HOCHSTEIN: If you said the names I may be
10 familiar, but I can't off the top of my head.

11 MR. FOLIO: Okay. Thank you. At this point I'm going
12 to turn the questioning over to my colleague, Mr. Scott
13 Wittmann. Thank you.

14 MR. KRAMER: I'm sorry. Who is up next?

15 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Scott Wittmann.

16 MR. KRAMER: Scott Wittmann? Thank you.

17 MR. WITTMANN: Hi, Mr. Hochstein. Can you hear me?

18 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I can't hear you but I can't see you.
19 Oh, there you are.

20 MR. WITTMANN: Okay. Hello. I'll make it a little
21 louder on my end. Thank you for your time today, sir.

22 Were you aware that Hunter Biden served on Burisma's
23 board of directors in 2014?

24 MR. HOCHSTEIN: At some point in 2014 I became aware of
25 it, yes.

1 MR. WITTMANN: At some point, do you remember around
2 what time in 2014?

3 MR. HOCHSTEIN: It was in the press at some point, and
4 I don't remember. I believe it was in the spring, but I
5 don't recall. But, you know, I don't recall specifically.

6 MR. WITTMANN: So you're saying that you became aware
7 of it spring of 2014, because of press articles?

8 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Correct. That was how I first learned
9 of it.

10 MR. WITTMANN: And did you engage in any conversations
11 after learning about this, with any of your colleagues at
12 the State Department?

13 MR. HOCHSTEIN: At the time I don't believe that I
14 engaged in any specific conversations with my colleagues.

15 MR. WITTMANN: Did you have any particular reaction to
16 learning this news?

17 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't believe so.

18 MR. WITTMANN: At that time, did it raise any
19 particular concerns to you?

20 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

21 MR. WITTMANN: Okay. I want to enter into the record
22 Exhibit No. 2. Tab 1, please, Will.

23 [Hochstein Exhibit No. 2 was
24 marked for identification.]

25 MR. KRAMER: And Mr. Wittmann, was there a Bates number

1 or something?

2 MR. WITTMANN: Sure. Is this Kelly?

3 MR. KRAMER: Yes.

4 MR. WITTMANN: Yes. It's Bates 342 to 344.

5 MR. KRAMER: Okay. I will give it to Mr. Hochstein.

6 MR. WITTMANN: Sure, and Mr. Hochstein, it should
7 appear on your screen as well, if you want to take a look.

8 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yep, I can see it.

9 MR. WITTMANN: Whatever works for you.

10 On July 9, 2014, you forwarded this article to Melanie--
11 -my apologies if I mispronounce--

12 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Nakagawa.

13 MR. WITTMANN: --Nakagawa, titled "Ukrainian employer
14 of Joe Biden's son hires a D.C. lobbyist." In the email you
15 wrote, "FYI, per your email re: David Leiter." Who is David
16 Leiter?

17 MR. HOCHSTEIN: David Leiter is a lobbyist who
18 represented Burisma for a while, I believe.

19 MR. WITTMANN: And how did you become aware of Mr.
20 Leiter's representation of Burisma?

21 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I think it's in the article that you
22 just forwarded to me.

23 MR. WITTMANN: I'm sorry. Say that last part again.

24 MR. HOCHSTEIN: It's in the article on the screen.

25 MR. WITTMANN: Understood. When you wrote to Ms.

1 Nakagawa you said "per your email about Mr. Leiter." Did
2 you have a discussion with Ms. Nakagawa about Mr. Leiter
3 prior to receiving this article?

4 MR. HOCHSTEIN: It sure seems that way, but I can't
5 recall it. David Leiter was mentioned in this article. I
6 may have mentioned the article to her, but I really have no
7 idea.

8 MR. WITTMANN: Is there a reason why Mr. Leiter would
9 have come up in a discussion at the State Department, other
10 than flagging this particular article?

11 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't know.

12 MR. WITTMANN: Outside of his representation, Mr.
13 Leiter's representation of Burisma, did you know of Mr.
14 Leiter in any other way besides that?

15 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yeah. I had met him a couple of times
16 in the past before I was at the State Department. I knew
17 who he was.

18 MR. WITTMANN: And prior to his representation of
19 Burisma, what sort of professional relationship or
20 interactions did you have with Mr. Leiter?

21 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I really didn't. I knew who he was. I
22 believe he knew who I was. We had some mutual contacts.
23 And I may have had some casual conversations at a reception
24 with him but not much beyond that. I didn't really have a
25 relationship per se.

1 MR. WITTMANN: Why was it important for you to share
2 this article about Mr. Leiter?

3 MR. HOCHSTEIN: This is--I don't know the answer. This
4 is obviously six years ago. I really don't--I don't recall
5 this conversation.

6 MR. WITTMANN: Prior to joining or representing
7 Burisma, what roles did Mr. Leiter have, based on your
8 knowledge?

9 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I believe he was a senior staff or
10 maybe even chief of staff to Senator Kerry.

11 MR. WITTMANN: What was your reaction to this article?

12 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I probably raised an eyebrow that they
13 had a lobbyist, but I don't know that I had much more of a
14 reaction than that.

15 MR. KRAMER: So just to be clear, when they asked you
16 your reaction and your answer is "I probably," it sounds
17 like you may not remember a reaction at all. So try to just
18 stick with the question and not go beyond.

19 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Well, I don't remember what my specific
20 reaction was.

21 MR. WITTMANN: Okay. Did you make the connection at
22 the time that Mr. Leiter was joining the same firm that
23 Hunter Biden was also a member of the board?

24 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I mean, it's in the title of the
25 article. But I can tell you I don't know what my specific

1 thoughts were at the time.

2 MR. WITTMANN: Okay. On the second page of this
3 article, or I should say of this email chain, which is the
4 second page of the article, in the second paragraph it
5 mentions Mr. Devon Archer and also Mr. Christopher Heinz.
6 Do you know who Devon Archer is?

7 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I do not. Only from press reports.

8 MR. WITTMANN: Okay. And Mr. Heinz?

9 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I have never met Mr. Heinz.

10 MR. WITTMANN: Were you aware of any business dealings
11 involving Hunter Biden, Devon Archer, and Chris Heinz?

12 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

13 MR. WITTMANN: Outside of what's mentioned in this
14 article?

15 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I've read articles about these
16 individuals but I have no independent knowledge of any of
17 that.

18 MR. WITTMANN: I'm going to enter into the record
19 Exhibit No. 3. Tab 2, please, Will.

20 [Hochstein Exhibit No. 3 was
21 marked for identification.]

22 MR. WITTMANN: And, Mr Kramer, this is Bates number
23 316.

24 MR. KRAMER: And Mr. Hochstein has a copy of that.

25 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yep, I see it.

1 MR. WITTMANN: Okay, great. On November 2, 2015, it
2 appears you agreed to arrange a meeting with Mr. Hunter
3 Biden based on this email. Does that refresh your
4 recollection?

5 MR. KRAMER: Yeah, I wouldn't--I don't think that I'd
6 accept that characterization, but you can ask him anything
7 you like.

8 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I can see the email, and it says here
9 that Hunter Biden called my office--or his office, sorry,
10 asked for a meeting with me on a Friday, and I agreed to the
11 meeting.

12 MR. WITTMANN: Okay. Why did you agree to meet with
13 Hunter Biden?

14 MR. HOCHSTEIN: He asked me for a meeting, and it
15 didn't--I don't--I don't know exactly why at the time I
16 agreed to meet, but I agreed to meetings.

17 MR. WITTMANN: Sure. Did you frequently meet with
18 Hunter Biden?

19 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

20 MR. WITTMANN: Did he frequently request meetings with
21 you?

22 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

23 MR. WITTMANN: Was it abnormal for him to request a
24 meeting with you?

25 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I would say--the only thing I can

1 answer that is by saying that I believe this was the only
2 time that he asked for a meeting.

3 MR. WITTMANN: Okay. At the time did you know him
4 personally?

5 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I had met Hunter Biden over the years.
6 Again, we were friends or--but I knew who he was, and we had
7 seen each other at events.

8 MR. WITTMANN: Did you communicate with him, emails,
9 phone calls?

10 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No, I don't believe so.

11 MR. WITTMANN: Did you and he discuss his business
12 dealings?

13 MR. KRAMER: What do you mean by "business dealings"?

14 MR. WITTMANN: Specifically, did you and he discuss his
15 association with Burisma?

16 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Are you asking in general?

17 MR. WITTMANN: In general or specific to this meeting.
18 You can answer both.

19 MR. HOCHSTEIN: The only time that I can think of that
20 we had a conversation where Burisma came up was during this
21 meeting.

22 MR. WITTMANN: I'm--during this meeting.

23 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

24 MR. WITTMANN: Okay. So there was a meeting around
25 this time period then?

1 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

2 MR. WITTMANN: What date did that meeting occur?

3 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't know. I don't remember details
4 outside of the email that you just showed me.

5 MR. WITTMANN: Was it the purpose of this meeting for
6 Mr. Biden to discuss Burisma with you?

7 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't recall if I was told what the
8 purpose of the meeting was beyond what I see in the email
9 here, which is generically asking for a meeting.

10 MR. WITTMANN: At this meeting did you discuss anything
11 else other than Mr. Hunter Biden's role in Burisma?

12 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yeah, if I recall correctly, we talked
13 a little bit about how he was doing. It had been a tough
14 several months on him, and I told him how worried I was
15 about him and his father and his family. So we talked a
16 little bit about that as well.

17 MR. WITTMANN: Do you know why Hunter Biden wanted to
18 meet with you to discuss Burisma?

19 MR. HOCHSTEIN: He had wanted to know what my thoughts
20 were.

21 MR. WITTMANN: Did you have thoughts about Burisma at
22 that time?

23 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I had--yes, I did.

24 MR. WITTMANN: And what were your thoughts?

25 MR. HOCHSTEIN: At that time--this is November of 2015-

1 -we were starting to plan and think about a trip for the
2 Vice President to Ukraine. We had been following the
3 increase in Russian propaganda in Ukraine in Russian media--
4 Russian language media outlets and pro-Moscow websites and
5 so on that were trying to create all kinds of separation
6 between U.K. and the United States, and his membership on
7 the board of Burisma had come up in the Russian propaganda
8 machine.

9 MR. WITTMANN: And in what way did that influence your
10 thoughts or perspective on Burisma?

11 MR. HOCHSTEIN: That did not influence my thoughts on
12 Burisma. But it is important to me--it was important to me
13 to always know what the lay of the land was and to know what
14 the--the Russians were using whatever they could whenever
15 they could, real or fictional, and sometimes a combination,
16 to undermine the U.S. relationship with Ukraine that had
17 been going on. That was primarily the cause for the
18 revolution itself in 2014. So I was following--so I
19 wouldn't say that this influenced me on Burisma. This
20 continued to strengthen my view that the Russians were a
21 nefarious actor in Ukraine.

22 MR. WITTMANN: At this time did you have a personal
23 perspective or view of Burisma?

24 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Burisma was a private energy company
25 and one where I was involved in trying to urge the

1 Government of Ukraine, forcefully trying to urge the
2 Government of Ukraine to cooperate with the prosecution in
3 the U.K. against its founder or its chairman. I forget
4 [inaudible].

5 MR. WITTMANN: Against its? I'm sorry. Say that last
6 part again?

7 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Its Chairman, Mr. Zlochevsky.

8 MR. WITTMANN: Mr. Zlochevsky. At this time did you
9 associate Burisma as a corrupt company?

10 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I certainly associated Burisma as
11 having a corrupt past that I believed needed to be
12 prosecuted.

13 MR. WITTMANN: And in what way was Burisma's past
14 corrupt?

15 MR. HOCHSTEIN: There was an active case in the U.K.
16 that the U.S. Government was supporting against Mr.
17 Zlochevsky. Unfortunately, the prosecutor's office in
18 Ukraine did not cooperate with the prosecutor's office in
19 the U.K., and that ultimately was a driving factor in
20 dismissing the case. So that's the actions I was referring
21 to.

22 MR. KRAMER: Just for clarity, what prosecutor's office
23 was that?

24 MR. HOCHSTEIN: The PGU. Mr. Shokin was the prosecutor
25 at the time.

1 MR. WITTMANN: At the time of the U.K. case?

2 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I believe so.

3 MR. WITTMANN: And what were the years in which that
4 case was active?

5 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't recall the exact years.

6 MR. WITTMANN: What were the years in which Mr. Shokin
7 served as the prosecutor general?

8 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't remember his exact tenure.

9 MR. WITTMANN: And in what way was the PGO's office not
10 cooperating with the U.K. case?

11 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Not providing documents that were
12 requested by the U.K., and I think there was a general --
13 again, it's been 5 years. I don't remember the details.
14 But at the time we were concerned about the office not
15 cooperating, and the Ambassador in Ukraine--our Ambassador
16 and embassy were very concerned about that, as were other
17 elements of the U.S. Government.

18 MR. WITTMANN: When were you made aware that the
19 prosecutor's office was not cooperating with the U.K. case?

20 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't remember exactly when that was.
21 You would have to--if there were documents in front of me, I
22 would review them, but I don't remember the timing.

23 MR. WITTMANN: Do you recall a year at least?

24 MR. KRAMER: So just to help orient you, the
25 Ambassador's speech--we talked about this issue--was in

1 September 2015.

2 MR. HOCHSTEIN: September.

3 MR. KRAMER: [Inaudible].

4 MR. HOCHSTEIN: So it would have been in the 2015--
5 earlier in 2015, maybe late 2014.

6 MR. WITTMANN: And do you know why the prosecutors were
7 not cooperating?

8 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't--I don't know for a fact why.
9 I would go to what they were thinking. The theory of the
10 case was that they were supporting Mr. Zlochevsky.

11 MR. WITTMANN: Why were they supporting Mr. Zlochevsky?

12 MR. HOCHSTEIN: That's a very good question.

13 MR. WITTMANN: Do you have any indication?

14 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I can only--I would only be able to
15 tell you what was the view of the U.S. Government at the
16 time, of different people in the U.S. Government, that he
17 was perhaps in a relationship with the prosecutor's office.
18 Untoward relationship.

19 MR. WITTMANN: Okay. Can you expand on that? In what
20 was it untoward?

21 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't know. We just know that we
22 wanted the Ukrainian Government to cooperate with the
23 investigation. We wanted there to be more attention to the
24 past activities of Mr. Zlochevsky as chairman and in the
25 time that he had, I guess, transitioned from Minister of

1 Ecology, I believe, earlier in the 2000s, to the company,
2 and while they had paid lip service to investigation, there
3 wasn't an actual one.

4 MR. WITTMANN: So the view of the State Department or
5 officials at the State Department was that the prosecutors
6 were not cooperating--that the Ukrainian prosecutors were
7 not cooperating with the U.K. case because of an untoward
8 relationship with Mr. Zlochevsky. Did anyone in the State
9 Department raise any specific allegations as to--or, I
10 should say, were you aware of anyone in the State Department
11 raising specific allegations relating to the reason behind
12 why these prosecutors did not cooperate or took steps to
13 inhibit the U.K. case?

14 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I'm sure there were State Department
15 officials who had theories of the case. I can't recall who
16 said what at that time.

17 MR. WITTMANN: Were you aware of State Department
18 officials raising concerns that these prosecutors may have
19 been bribed by Mr. Zlochevsky?

20 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't recall, again, exactly what
21 people were saying. There was some law enforcement traffic
22 on it at the time, but I can't recall exactly what that was,
23 and I probably wouldn't be able to share in this format if I
24 could.

25 MR. WITTMANN: Now, you mentioned law enforcement.

1 What law enforcement?

2 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Sorry. I mean there was a Justice
3 Department official or officials that had been supporting
4 the case in the U.K. But, again, I don't recall any
5 specific individuals' views on--or if there was a specific
6 view of what exact--how exactly the mechanism between Mr.
7 Zlochevsky and the prosecutor's office. I think that--I
8 think we all felt it was the right thing to do for the
9 Ambassador, as the Ambassador to Ukraine, to express some of
10 those views publicly, which I believe he did in that speech
11 that was mentioned before.

12 MR. WITTMANN: Just so I understand, the prosecutors in
13 the PGO's office at this time that were not cooperating and
14 that may have had an untoward relationship with Mr.
15 Zlochevsky, were these prosecutors, you know, sort of the
16 low-level prosecutors? Or was this the actual prosecutor
17 general?

18 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I think--it was my view at the time
19 that things--when the U.S. Government and the international
20 community--this was not just the U.S. State Department.
21 This was a coordinated effort with European Union, U.K.
22 Government, I believe some of the international financial
23 institutions such as the IMF, et cetera, that were
24 interested in this case, that when there's that much
25 attention to it, if it's not being responded to, it's

1 probably coming from a more senior level.

2 MR. WITTMANN: Okay. So by the time you met with Mr.
3 Hunter Biden in November 2015, this is now following
4 Ambassador Pyatt's September 2015 speech. So at this point
5 it appears you have the awareness of Burisma's corrupt past
6 as well as these concerns relating to Mr. Zlochevsky, its
7 owner. So is it fair to say that when you met with Mr.
8 Hunter Biden, you had awareness of Burisma's corrupt past?

9 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yeah, it was fairly well known. My
10 views were fairly well known. I had raised this with
11 official in Ukraine myself on a number of occasions, that
12 past activities of Zlochevsky should be ironed out and
13 should be prosecuted. So I think people knew what my
14 thoughts were about Mr. Zlochevsky's past.

15 MR. WITTMANN: So let me backtrack. Did you raise
16 these--you said your views were well known. Your views were
17 well known in the State Department?

18 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I think that it--yes, in the State
19 Department, at the embassy in Kyiv, and by Ukrainian
20 officials.

21 MR. WITTMANN: And who in the State Department would
22 you say was aware of your views regarding Burisma's
23 corruption?

24 MR. HOCHSTEIN: My guess is that the Ambassador in
25 Ukraine and his team, my staff, probably other bureaus, like

1 the European Bureau. I can't say for sure who else would
2 have known.

3 MR. WITTMANN: And how did you make your views known to
4 those people?

5 MR. HOCHSTEIN: When I visited--well, I met with
6 Ukrainian officials and urged them to cooperate with the
7 investigation earlier when it was still relevant. And I did
8 not do these meetings usually by myself, so there were
9 usually other folks there who communicated minutes of that
10 or general messages of that. So [inaudible].

11 MR. WITTMANN: Did you raise Burisma's corruption and
12 your other--the other information regarding the prosecutors
13 in Ukraine in frequent meetings at the State Department
14 relating to your responsibilities?

15 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No. Only when--I don't know how often
16 I raised them. And to be clear, we were looking--this was--
17 you know, separating out, we had work to do in Ukraine that
18 was current, and what we were trying to effect inside
19 Ukraine was--really the bulk of the effort was not around
20 this issue. There were much bigger, more important issues
21 for the present into the future. This was something about
22 clearing up the past, so prior to this period of time, there
23 were wrongdoings in the early 2000s that were being
24 investigated, and we thought--this wasn't a central piece of
25 our effort. It was part of as you make strides as a young,

1 new, renewed country after revolution and you want to come
2 to terms with your past, part of it is when there are cases
3 brought--and this was not a case brought by the U.S.
4 Government. The U.S. Government supported the case. It's
5 important to face those and to address those. So the bulk
6 of my time and my work was about how do we put new people in
7 place in the key areas to encourage the Ukrainians to put in
8 the kinds of people that have an expertise and who were
9 clean and known to be clean. That was not always easy.
10 Sometimes somebody who looked by resume and reputation clean
11 got into the job and turned out to be somewhat less so. And
12 how do we reform the system?

13 So that was the primary use of my time when it came to
14 Ukraine. And, as well, remember that during this time the
15 energy security of Europe was still considered to be under
16 threat. The Russians were threatening to cut off supply.
17 And I was supporting the Ukrainian effort in court against
18 Russia, against Gazprom, in an arbitration in Stockholm
19 which was very controversial at the time. And so that took
20 up a lot of time as well, and the Nord Stream 2 pipeline,
21 TurkStream. So there was plenty to do.

22 MR. WITTMANN: It sounds like it. Going back to what
23 you mentioned earlier about who you raised your concerns to,
24 you mentioned who you--at the State Department what
25 Ukrainian officials did you articulate your concerns

1 regarding Burisma's corruption as well as your concerns with
2 Mr. Zlochevsky?

3 MR. HOCHSTEIN: So there were probably a number. The
4 only two that I can recall that I know that I did--and there
5 are others that I can't recall right now--one was at the
6 time the Deputy Energy Minister. I believe his name was
7 Didenko. I did not trust the Energy Minister at the time.
8 I thought he was corrupt, or suspected such, so I did not
9 feel that it was the right thing to raise it with him. And
10 I believe I raised it with the Foreign Minister as well.

11 MR. WITTMANN: Do you remember the Foreign Minister's
12 name?

13 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Pavlo Klimpkin.

14 MR. WITTMANN: Klimpkin, okay.

15 MR. KRAMER: Can you spell that for the court reporter?
16 If you can.

17 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Didenko is D as in David-I-D as in
18 David--E-N as in Nancy-K-O. And Klimpkin is K-L-I-M as in
19 Mary-K-I-N as in Nancy.

20 MR. WITTMANN: Thank you, Mr. Hochstein.

21 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I think.

22 [Laughter.]

23 MR. WITTMANN: Understood. Can you tell us when you
24 raised these concerns to these two individuals? Did you
25 raise it--well, first, did you raise it multiple times to

1 these two individuals that you specifically remember? And,
2 second, do you remember when?

3 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Probably only a couple of times. The
4 embassy was handling that issue rather than myself. But I
5 did raise it a couple of times. I can't tell you much more
6 than that. And as far a timeline, again, it's so hard to
7 remember exact timelines. It could have been earlier in
8 2015, but I don't remember exactly.

9 MR. WITTMANN: And in your discussions with these
10 Ukrainian officials, did you--when you raised your concerns
11 relating to Burisma and Zlochevsky, in those discussions did
12 the fact that Hunter Biden was serving on Burisma's board,
13 did that fact come up in those conversations?

14 MR. HOCHSTEIN: It never did.

15 MR. WITTMANN: And in your conversations in the State
16 Department, did that fact come up as you raised these
17 concerns?

18 MR. HOCHSTEIN: It never did.

19 MR. WITTMANN: Do you know why not?

20 MR. HOCHSTEIN: From my end it was irrelevant.

21 MR. WITTMANN: Was it your understanding that people at
22 the State Department had awareness of Hunter Biden's role on
23 Burisma's board?

24 MR. HOCHSTEIN: It was in the press, so I couldn't say
25 more than that. It did not come up in my conversations.

1 MR. WITTMANN: Were press, news articles shared
2 regarding Hunter Biden's role on Burisma's board shared
3 amongst your colleagues at the State Department?

4 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I wouldn't know that. The only one
5 that I know is the one you showed me, that one of my staff
6 members sent it to me.

7 MR. WITTMANN: Okay. I believe there's another one
8 that we'll get to later on.

9 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Okay.

10 MR. WITTMANN: But the point was in the press, as you
11 said.

12 MR. HOCHSTEIN: It was.

13 MR. WITTMANN: Okay. So now I want to go back to the
14 meeting that you had with Hunter Biden on or around November
15 of 2015. So at this point you have awareness of Burisma and
16 Zlochevsky. Hunter Biden wants to meet with you. I think
17 you mentioned you didn't know why. Is that correct, when he
18 requested the meeting?

19 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Correct.

20 MR. WITTMANN: Okay. And then you met with him, and
21 you mentioned that you discussed Burisma. Correct?

22 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I'm sorry. Say that again?

23 MR. WITTMANN: Did you discuss Burisma with him, at
24 this meeting?

25 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

1 MR. WITTMANN: And could you expand on that? Why did
2 you discuss Burisma with him?

3 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Well, he asked me for a meeting. I
4 think he wanted to know my views on Burisma and Zlochevsky.
5 And so I shared with him that the Russians were using his
6 name in order to sow disinformation--attempt to sow
7 disinformation among Ukrainians.

8 MR. WITTMANN: And how did you know that Hunter Biden
9 wanted to get your opinion about Burisma?

10 MR. HOCHSTEIN: He asked me.

11 MR. WITTMANN: He asked you at the meeting, or prior to
12 the meeting?

13 MR. HOCHSTEIN: At the meeting.

14 MR. WITTMANN: Okay. Is it fair to say that it became
15 clear to you at the meeting that Hunter Biden wanted to
16 discuss Burisma with you?

17 MR. HOCHSTEIN: He asked me a question about it and
18 [inaudible].

19 MR. WITTMANN: Did anyone else attend this meeting?

20 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

21 MR. WITTMANN: Did Hunter Biden explain to you why he
22 asked--why he wanted your opinion?

23 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes, he did.

24 MR. WITTMANN: And what was the reason?

25 MR. HOCHSTEIN: He had heard that I had a conversation

1 with his father.

2 MR. WITTMANN: I'm sorry. Say that one--

3 MR. HOCHSTEIN: He had heard that I had a conversation
4 with his father.

5 MR. WITTMANN: Okay. And did you have a conversation
6 with his father about this?

7 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I did.

8 MR. WITTMANN: Okay. And when did that conversation
9 occur?

10 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't remember exactly but it would
11 have been sometime in October, thereabouts.

12 MR. WITTMANN: Where did the conversation take place?

13 MR. HOCHSTEIN: It was in the West Wing of the White
14 House.

15 MR. WITTMANN: And how did that--this conversation that
16 you had with Vice President Biden, how did that
17 conversation--why did that conversation occur?

18 MR. HOCHSTEIN: We were finishing a meeting on a
19 different issue and walking in the hall, and I had told him
20 that it was something that I--it was a conversation while we
21 were walking and I told him I wanted to raise something with
22 him, for his awareness. And we had it as we were walking in
23 the hallway, and we ducked into a corner and had a
24 conversation.

25 MR. WITTMANN: And just to confirm, this is October

1 2015?

2 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Correct.

3 MR. WITTMANN: Okay. And what specifically did you
4 want to raise with the Vice President at this time?

5 MR. KRAMER: And I'm going to ask a question here, that
6 I don't have any issue with you asking questions of Mr.
7 Hochstein as to what his purpose is, but I do not think it
8 would be appropriate for him to have a discussion about the
9 substance of the conversation with the Vice President. So
10 if you want to restate that question, that would be great.

11 MR. WITTMANN: One moment, please, Kelly.

12 MR. KRAMER: Mm-hmm.

13 [Pause.]

14 MR. WITTMANN: Hi, Kelly. Thank you for raising that.
15 So just so I'm clear with you, Mr. Hochstein, I'm asking
16 about from your perspective and what you raised.

17 MR. KRAMER: So again, "what you raised" is
18 problematic. If you'd like to ask Mr. Hochstein what his
19 purpose was in raising an issue with the VP, I'm fine with
20 [inaudible].

21 MR. WITTMANN: One moment, please.

22 [Pause.]

23 MR. FOLIO: Hi, Kelly. This is Joe. Could you please
24 be a little more specific. What is the problem?

25 MR. KRAMER: I'm sorry. What was that?

1 MR. FOLIO: So the question to Mr. Hochstein was what
2 did you tell the Vice President, and you said the answer to
3 that question would be problematic. My question to you then
4 was--

5 MR. KRAMER: I don't think I said "problematic." I
6 said inappropriate.

7 MR. FOLIO: Inappropriate. Okay. So what did that
8 mean?

9 MR. KRAMER: So if the question is, if you're trying to
10 understand the substance of a conversation with the Vice
11 President, that's not something that I think Mr. Hochstein
12 can appropriately disclose. If you'd like to know his
13 purpose in raising a point, that goes to his motivation and
14 his thoughts, I'm perfectly fine with him answering that
15 question.

16 MR. FOLIO: Why would it be inappropriate for Mr.
17 Hochstein to answer that question? Are you asserting a
18 privilege?

19 MR. KRAMER: I don't have a privilege to assert. It's
20 not my privilege.

21 MR. FOLIO: I think that's right.

22 MR. KRAMER: I don't know if it's a privilege or not a
23 privilege. But I think on the custom and practice of the
24 current administration is that we're not going to be in a
25 position to waive it, so isn't not an appropriate question,

1 is it?

2 MR. FOLIO: Again, are you saying you believe it a
3 privilege to [inaudible], even if not your own?

4 MR. KRAMER: You broke up. I apologize. What did you
5 say?

6 MR. FOLIO: So I think you've correctly acknowledged
7 that you do not have a privilege that you can raise. So my
8 question to you is then are you instructing Mr. Hochstein
9 not to answer because you believe that there is a privilege
10 that belongs to someone else?

11 MR. KRAMER: Yeah. I'm instructing Mr. Hochstein not
12 to answer, because I don't believe it would be appropriate
13 for him to disclose the substance and the conversation with
14 the Vice President.

15 MR. FOLIO: Yeah, so I guess my point is,
16 appropriateness is not proper grounds to instruct a witness
17 not to answer. So I'm asking for something more.

18 MR. KRAMER: Yeah, and I'm instructing the witness not
19 to answer.

20 MR. FOLIO: And again, just so we can make a record as
21 to why you're instructing the witness not to answer.
22 Inappropriateness is not a proper grounds to do that. Can
23 you please be more specific?

24 MR. KRAMER: Again, I don't know if there's a privilege
25 here. There's not a privilege here. It's not his, and I

1 want to make sure that if it's appropriate that it's
2 preserved. And so he's not in a position to answer that
3 question.

4 MR. FOLIO: So to be clear, you're instructing the
5 witness not to answer because you're not sure if a
6 privilege, for some mysterious third party, may or may not
7 exist.

8 MR. KRAMER: I don't think there's a privilege asserted
9 or there's not a privilege asserted. But my point is that
10 is not his to weigh, so we will not.

11 MR. FOLIO: So the question does not implicate like any
12 sort of policy issue, does it, right?

13 MR. KRAMER: I don't know what you mean by "some sort
14 of policy issue." If we're talking about Russian efforts to
15 interfere with U.S. foreign policy, it's very much a policy
16 question.

17 MR. FOLIO: So Mr. Hochstein, the answer would
18 implicate Russian efforts to interfere with U.S. policy?

19 MR. KRAMER: Again, I'm not in a position to waive a
20 privilege. I'm not going to. We can debate this all day.
21 If you guys want to use your time on this that's fine. But
22 he will not be answering the question.

23 MR. FOLIO: Yeah, no, what we need to do is we need to
24 create a record as to why you're instructing the witness not
25 to answer the question. So to be clear, the question was

1 about conversations with third parties, non-governmental
2 officials, right? So we're asking about--no, no, hold on
3 one second, Kelly. Let me finish.

4 MR. KRAMER: Excuse me. The conversation that you're
5 asking about is not about third-party, non-governmental
6 officials. You're asking about a conversation with the
7 Vice President. How is he a third party or a non-
8 governmental official?

9 MR. FOLIO: The initial question that sparked this line
10 was why did you want to meet and talk to Hunter Biden. He
11 said, "Hunter Biden wanted to talk to me about"--Kelly, can
12 I just finish?

13 MR. KRAMER: Go ahead.

14 MR. FOLIO: Thank you. And the response from Mr.
15 Hochstein that started this line of questioning was that
16 "Hunter Biden knew that I had a conversation with his
17 father." And then the next question was about Mr.
18 Hochstein's conversations with the Vice President. And now
19 the question that's pending to Mr. Hochstein is, what did
20 you tell the Vice President?

21 So what we're talking about, the subject matter, is
22 conversations with his son, not with another government
23 official, not in the development of policy. So it's hard
24 for me to understand what privilege, if any would apply, to
25 such a conversation. And you are pointing to a privilege, a

1 privilege that you can't identify, and now I'm pointing out
2 that the subject matter of the conversation is about
3 conversations with non-government employees, which take us
4 even farther afield from anything that you are hinting at,
5 that may or may not be, quote, "inappropriate." So I'm
6 asking you to clarify if you have any more details as to why
7 you're instructing the witness not to answer, because we
8 believe that your instruction is inappropriate.

9 MR. KRAMER: We have not asserted a privilege with
10 respect to the conversation we were having. Mr. Hochstein
11 has answered those questions. To the extent that you are
12 asking questions about a conversation with the Vice
13 President, I reject your premise. This is not a
14 conversation with a third party and not about a governmental
15 matter. So I just--I don't even understand the
16 characterization that you're making, Joe.

17 MR. FOLIO: The conversation is about the action of a
18 private citizen, third party, the decision of a Vice
19 President's son to join the board of Burisma.

20 MR. KRAMER: The conversation is not about the decision
21 of a Vice President's son to join. You have no idea what
22 the conversation is about. It was a conversation between
23 Vice President and one of his advisors regarding U.S.
24 policy. Period, full stop, he's not going to answer any
25 questions about that.

1 MR. FOLIO: So the record provides zero indication that
2 there's anything to do with anything related to policy and
3 every indication that it has to do with Hunter Biden's
4 position on the board of Burisma.

5 MR. KRAMER: Just to be clear, I offered if you wanted
6 to build out the record that you could ask what his purpose
7 was in raising it. We would provide the justification
8 you're saying we have not provided. So your interruption is
9 ill-timed and inappropriate in and of itself.

10 MR. FOLIO: No. We're just trying to make a record.
11 That's a different version of the word "inappropriate." It
12 does not [inaudible].

13 So we will ask that question in one second. Just so I
14 understand who--is that a colleague of yours in the
15 background, just so I understand, for the record?

16 MR. KRAMER: It's Mr. Ben-Veniste.

17 MR. FOLIO: Oh, sorry. I didn't see him before. Okay.
18 So I think that the question then is to Mr. Hochstein, but
19 what was the purpose of you having this conversation with
20 Vice President Biden?

21 MR. KRAMER: And so, Mr. Hochstein, you can explain
22 what the purpose was in raising the issue.

23 MR. HOCHSTEIN: We were starting to think about a trip
24 for the Vice President to Ukraine, and I, as I stated
25 earlier, we, the government, had seen increased traffic in

1 Russian language in pro-Moscow outlets that were trying to
2 create some kind of rift between the U.S. and Ukraine or to
3 undermine the U.S. efforts, and that they were using Hunter
4 Biden's name in those articles to sow that doubt. With the
5 Vice President traveling, we were starting to organize
6 towards traveling, I wanted to make my boss aware of what
7 was happening on the ground, so that he knows what the
8 Russian effort was.

9 MR. FOLIO: Was anything raised in those articles
10 untrue?

11 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

12 MR. FOLIO: What was untrue?

13 MR. HOCHSTEIN: The articles argued that the presence
14 of Hunter Biden was a conflict of interest. They were
15 trying to say that our government's efforts were
16 hypocritical. It followed a common line of Russian
17 propaganda, not just in Ukraine but that everything the
18 United States does is hypocritical, in Syria, from our
19 interventions in Eastern Europe. I was accused of hypocrisy
20 by the same outlets when we tried to [inaudible] the supply
21 chain. So these are the kinds. It's sort of par for the
22 course, and I just wanted to make the Vice President aware
23 that this effort was ongoing.

24 MR. FOLIO: Was the fact of Hunter Biden's position on
25 Burisma's board true?

1 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

2 MR. FOLIO: Was the fact that he was paid for that
3 position true?

4 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't know about his compensation.

5 MR. FOLIO: So why was it your assessment that this did
6 not present a conflict of interest, or put another way, why
7 was it your assessment that a claim it presented a conflict
8 of interest untrue?

9 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I didn't have that assessment. I knew
10 that for a fact. I was the person that was in charge of, or
11 leading part of the anticorruption effort. Specifically, I
12 was leading the energy sector, and I knew what I was doing
13 and I knew that Hunter Biden's seat on the board of Burisma
14 had nothing to do with anything I was doing and never
15 factored into my efforts. So I can tell you with certainty
16 that the claims were untrue.

17 MR. KRAMER: So this is a good time to take a break.
18 It seems like we're past the hour.

19 MR. FOLIO: Yeah, we are in the middle of this
20 questioning. I was hoping to round it out. But if it makes
21 sense to take a break we can just pick it up when I guess we
22 would come back and the minority would take over. It's up
23 to you. We can do continuity or we can take a break.

24 MR. KRAMER: Let's take a five-minute break. We'll
25 switch over and we'll go on to Round 2.

1 MR. FOLIO: All right. It's 11:30. Zack, you'll be
2 ready to start at 11:35?

3 MR. SCHRAM: Yes.

4 [Recess.]

5 MR. SCHRAM: Mr. Hochstein, Mr. Kramer, are you ready
6 to go back on the record?

7 MR. KRAMER: We are.

8 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I am.

9 MR. SCHRAM: On the record.

10 Mr. Hochstein, on December 18, 2019, majority counsel
11 emailed you that the purpose of the investigation is to
12 investigate, quote, "whether certain officials within the
13 Obama administration had actual or apparent conflicts of
14 interest or whether there was any other wrongdoing because
15 of Hunter Biden's role in Rosemont Seneca and related
16 entities and as a board member of Burisma Holdings."

17 What was your reaction when you first learned about the
18 purpose of the Chairmen's investigation?

19 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Well, beyond surprise. Look, I think
20 there had been a lot of propaganda over the previous year
21 about so-called wrongdoings that were all made up. I was
22 aware that Russia was trying to influence the U.S.
23 elections. I was aware that those same efforts were working
24 in concert with people that were close to the White House to
25 besmirch the reputation and record of the Vice President in

1 any way that they could. So I guess I felt regret that I
2 was getting pulled into an investigation that I thought was,
3 at that time seemed very familiar and resonated with
4 everything that had been going on, and efforts of my Russia
5 and pro-Russian forces to take fringe allegations and put
6 them into the mainstream.

7 MR. SCHRAM: What do you mean when you say it was
8 "familiar"?

9 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Well, when I was in the Obama
10 administration I worked a lot on anticorruption issues in
11 Ukraine and elsewhere, and when I left the administration I
12 continued to do some work on that. And so I was aware of
13 the things like with Mr. Derkach and Ukraine was doing and
14 some other oligarchs.

15 Ironically, many of the people who were raising some of
16 the issues we're discussing today were the same people that
17 we had in the Obama administration, and I participated in
18 some of that. These are the same people that we were trying
19 to undermine and to remove from centers of power in Ukraine,
20 because of their either affiliation with Moscow or because
21 of their overt corruption. And now these were the people
22 that were--these same people were now acting, to some
23 degree, in retribution to the people who went after them.

24 And so that's what I mean when I say "familiar." I had
25 heard these allegations before, except that they usually

1 came from noncredible sources. I was rather disappointed
2 and sad to see that it was coming from more mainstream, as
3 in the United States Senate, which I hold in great regard
4 and great esteem.

5 MR. SCHRAM: You referred to your time in the Obama
6 administration and experiencing these efforts. Can you
7 speak about when you first learned about Russia's efforts to
8 tarnish the reputation of Vice President Biden because of
9 Hunter Biden's position on the board of Burisma?

10 MR. HOCHSTEIN: So two separate timelines. One was
11 during the time that the Vice President was trying to lead
12 an effort to crack down on corruption in Ukraine. And I
13 think it's important to understand that when you crack down
14 on corruption it's not ephemeral. It's not--it has people
15 behind it and businesses. And when you go after corruption
16 there are people who--corrupt individuals who lose thousands
17 and millions, tens of millions of dollars. So when you root
18 out corruption and you fight against that machine, it's not
19 some organ. It's a human being that wants to fight back.

20 So when we fought against the machine in 2014, right
21 after the revolution, we were making a lot of progress. But
22 as time went by, that same machine of individuals or network
23 of corrupt individuals started fighting back, and that
24 effort was--one of the tactics was to go after the chief
25 architect of the anticorruption effort, which was Joe Biden

1 as Vice President, leading the anticorruption effort. So
2 you go after the accuser.

3 They targeted me. There were Russian websites that,
4 you know, attacked me. There was one article that appeared
5 in Russia, that within 48 hours appeared on the neo-Nazi
6 Party website in Italy and in Hungary and in Bulgaria, all
7 within two to three days, going after the exact same article
8 propagated across the board. So they have these efforts.

9 The second where this was happening, it came to my
10 attention, was in 2019, I guess it was, when I learned of
11 some of the efforts that were being done by Lutsenko and
12 others to dig up dirt against two people. One was Masha
13 Yovanovitch and one was Vice President Biden.

14 MR. SCHRAM: And who is Mr. Lutsenko?

15 MR. HOCHSTEIN: He was the successor to Mr. Shokin as
16 the Prosecutor General.

17 MR. SCHRAM: In your answer you mentioned "networks of
18 corrupt individuals," and I'm wondering if you could just be
19 a little more specific with respect to who you're referring
20 to.

21 MR. HOCHSTEIN: So some are in government. These are
22 people in government, such as Lutsenko or Shokin, and
23 ministers and deputy ministers, and energy was usually a
24 hotbed for that. And then oligarchs who profited as leeches
25 on the Ukrainian system. People like Mr. Firtash, who I

1 know during the Obama administration we tried to get him
2 extradited to the United States. That extradition request
3 is still pending. I don't believe any action has been taken
4 on it in a while. He is sitting in Vienna. But he is still
5 very active in the corruption business in Ukraine. Mr.
6 Grigorishin, Kolomoyskyi, and several others, including some
7 people inside--others in the government that I can't recall
8 their names right now.

9 MR. SCHRAM: So focusing on the first timeline you
10 identified, the timeline from when you were in government,
11 I'd like to mark as Exhibit A an email exchange. It's Bates
12 No. 325 through 332.

13 [Hochstein Exhibit A was
14 marked for identification.]

15 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Give me one second. Is this the email
16 chain from Mr. Pyatt, Ambassador Pyatt?

17 MR. SCHRAM: Yes. Correct.

18 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yeah.

19 MR. SCHRAM: Give you a moment to review it?

20 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes, please.

21 [Pause.]

22 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yeah.

23 MR. SCHRAM: So as you said, this is an email chain
24 that includes Ambassador Pyatt. It begins, if you go to the
25 very bottom, with an email on December 5th. It's at the

1 very bottom on page--Bates No. 330, from
2 lbi@lbicompany.com.ua to Kyiv Media Alerts.

3 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yeah. Yeah, I've got it.

4 MR. SCHRAM: And then on the 6th you were included in
5 the email chain.

6 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

7 MR. SCHRAM: What is this email about?

8 MR. HOCHSTEIN: This is about these Russian efforts I
9 was mentioning before to use the presence of Hunter Biden as
10 a member of the board to sow discord and skepticism of the
11 U.S. effort to targeting Ukrainians to believe that this was
12 problematic and that this showed hypocrisy. This was
13 provided in emails. Are you asking what the articles are
14 about or what the email on the 6th was about? Sorry.

15 MR. SCHRAM: Let's take it a piece at a time. So what
16 is the article about that's included in this email exchange?

17 MR. HOCHSTEIN: The article is about--it's a pro-
18 Russian, pro-Moscow website that is trying to describe the
19 anticorruption effort by the United States as cynical
20 because of Hunter Biden's presence. The audience is not
21 American. The audience is--it is trying to affect Ukrainian
22 people to reject the anticorruption effort by the Biden
23 effort, by the Biden team.

24 MR. SCHRAM: Do you regard the content of this article
25 as disinformation?

1 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Completely.

2 MR. SCHRAM: Why?

3 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Because it is completely untrue. The
4 U.S. Government was, in fact, engaged in concert with the
5 World Bank, the IMF, the EBRD, the European Union, in
6 Brussels as well as several of the member states, at the
7 highest levels, in an anticorruption effort in Ukraine,
8 trying to help Ukraine emerge from a multi-decades of
9 corruption.

10 So I was asked to lead the effort on anticorruption in
11 the energy sector, so I knew for a fact that these articles
12 were just sowing disinformation.

13 MR. SCHRAM: Quoting from the article, was there any
14 merit to the allegations that the Biden family would begin,
15 quote, "a large-scale privatization in Ukraine"?

16 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

17 MR. SCHRAM: Or a, quote, "seizure of state
18 enterprises"?

19 MR. HOCHSTEIN: That's laughable. No.

20 MR. SCHRAM: What would be the purpose of promoting
21 those allegations?

22 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Sowing fear among the average Ukrainian
23 citizen that the United States is somehow going to do things
24 that were going to steal the assets of Ukraine and take
25 their--that the United States was involved in an effort that

1 would ultimately harm the everyday Ukrainian in their
2 pocketbook issues.

3 MR. SCHRAM: And why do you regard it as Russian
4 propaganda, specifically?

5 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Because these were--the websites and
6 the news outlets where these were published were--their
7 affiliation is relatively known. And not only that but as
8 the documents I think you shared, you're sharing on the
9 screen right now, exactly, there is an actual Russian
10 address on the website.

11 MR. SCHRAM: Why were you added to the email chain?

12 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I think this was during the trip to
13 Ukraine, and I was on the trip. And I think that--I don't
14 recall who added me, either the VP's staff or Ambassador
15 Pyatt. But I was involved in these anticorruption efforts
16 and I was on the trip.

17 MR. SCHRAM: And did you have a role in responding to
18 the allegations in this underlying article?

19 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I mean, yeah, we had discussions on the
20 talking points, since we knew that, or rather we thought it
21 could come up on the trip. And later on we knew that press
22 was asking for comments on it. So it's pretty normal for
23 the traveling party and people involved in the subject
24 matter to help with the preparation of the response.

25 MR. SCHRAM: In the talking points that are contained

1 as part of the response in this email, I just want to go
2 through those briefly. The first one--if I understand this
3 correctly, these are proposed talking points for the Vice
4 President?

5 MR. HOCHSTEIN: These are proposed talking points for
6 the Vice President, if he gets asked, and later if there
7 were any other communications with media.

8 MR. SCHRAM: So the first talking point says, "My son
9 is a private citizen. I am not going to get into discussing
10 his personal business. It has no impact on my work." Do
11 you regard that as accurate, that it has no impact on the
12 work on the Vice President?

13 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I totally agree.

14 MR. SCHRAM: The second talking point: "What I will
15 say, though, is that no one has been tougher in pushing
16 Ukrainian leaders to root out corruption than I have." Is
17 that accurate?

18 MR. HOCHSTEIN: A hundred percent.

19 MR. SCHRAM: "It has been my primary focus of my
20 discussions, both publicly and privately, for years, and I
21 think that you can see from the substance of this trip it
22 remains a major priority for me and for the U.S.
23 Government." Is that accurate?

24 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

25 MR. SCHRAM: "Important strides have been made. The

1 appointment of a special anticorruption prosecutor, the
2 establishment of an independent inspector general to
3 prosecute corrupt prosecutors are two good ones. But more
4 needs to be done and we will continue to encourage everyone
5 involved to commit to meeting full reforms." Is that
6 accurate?

7 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

8 MR. SCHRAM: This article, did you--is it--were there
9 other examples of Russian propaganda directed at the Vice
10 President and his anticorruption efforts in Ukraine?

11 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No. I mean, look. The Russians were
12 involved in a lot of propaganda against the Vice President
13 on a regular basis. One line was this corruption allegation
14 about his son. The other was that--and as mentioned, the
15 allegation that somehow the United States or the Biden
16 family was going to privatize and take over assets in
17 Ukraine.

18 The second one was that Vice President Biden, through
19 my efforts, was trying to steal gas from Ukraine, to change
20 the flows of gas into Europe, and to cause Ukraine to pay
21 more money, and to sell American gas to Ukraine. There were
22 all kinds of allegations. The Hunter Biden allegation was
23 one of a string and series of things that they would allege
24 against his involvement, that he was trying to harm the
25 average Ukrainian and that he did not have the benefit of

1 Ukraine as a primary source of his or the United States
2 actions.

3 MR. SCHRAM: And is this an issue that you raised with
4 the Vice President?

5 MR. KRAMER: Hold on. I don't think it's appropriate
6 for Mr. Hochstein to get into any specific conversations
7 with the Vice President. If you would like to ask him what
8 his motivations, his purpose in raising a topic, we can do
9 that.

10 MR. SCHRAM: I believe that's what I'm trying to do.
11 So I'd like to ask his purpose in raising this issue with
12 the Vice President. We have to establish that it has been
13 raised.

14 MR. KRAMER: Yeah. So again, I mean, I think a fair
15 question to ask would be did you have a discussion with the
16 Vice President? Yes or no. And what was your purpose in
17 raising this topic?

18 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Maybe I can answer it this way, Mr.
19 Schram. Over the years of the period of time that I was
20 working in government and was working with--sorry, for the
21 Vice President on these issues, we had, often, as staff and
22 State Department officials, White House officials, and the
23 Vice President, discussed the fact that the Russians were
24 using a variety of accusations in order to try to convince
25 Ukrainians that they were better off being loyal to Russia

1 than to have an alliance with the United States.

2 So this came up--and, by the way, this was not unique
3 to Ukraine. The Russians were very active in exactly the
4 same mechanism of accusing the United States, and
5 specifically Vice President Biden. They went after other
6 officials such as Assistant Secretary Nuland, myself, and
7 others in Latvia and Lithuania, in Croatia, in Bulgaria.
8 These were accusations that Vice President Biden
9 specifically was leading an effort to undermine issue X, Y,
10 or Z. It was always different.

11 But this was a consistent effort. So this is something
12 that we had raised on a regular basis with the Vice
13 President, to make him aware, in different places, of the
14 accusations against the United States.

15 MR. SCHRAM: And specific with respect to the
16 accusations against the United States related to policy work
17 in Ukraine, what would be your purpose in raising that issue
18 with the Vice President?

19 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I wanted to make sure that he was aware
20 of the specific Russian intentions and actions in Ukraine,
21 specifically ahead of a trip to Ukraine.

22 MR. SCHRAM: In the last round, the majority started to
23 discuss a meeting that you had with Hunter Biden. When
24 again was that meeting?

25 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I believe it was in early November of

1 2015.

2 MR. SCHRAM: And how long was your conversation with
3 Roger Biden?

4 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Probably 20 minutes or so.

5 MR. SCHRAM: And did you tell him about Russia's
6 disinformation efforts?

7 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I did.

8 MR. SCHRAM: And what was his response?

9 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I think he was--he was frustrated with
10 the Russian--Russian's narrative. He had specifically
11 mentioned that he had joined the board and was working on
12 issues that were present and future, and that these were
13 areas that had occurred in the past that he had no knowledge
14 of.

15 MR. SCHRAM: Did you have other meetings with Hunter
16 Biden about his position on the board of Burisma?

17 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I did not.

18 MR. SCHRAM: Did you change U.S. policy toward Ukraine
19 in any manner to assist Hunter Biden or Burisma?

20 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

21 MR. SCHRAM: Are you aware of any U.S. official who
22 changed U.S. policy toward Ukraine in any manner to assist
23 Hunter Biden or Burisma?

24 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

25 MR. SCHRAM: On August 14th of this year, Chairman

1 Johnson stated to One America News that there was, quote,
2 evidence of wrongdoing or illegal activity related to Vice
3 President and Hunter Biden. Do you agree with that
4 characterization?

5 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

6 MR. SCHRAM: Are you aware of any evidence to support a
7 claim of wrongdoing by Vice President Biden with respect to
8 his policy in Ukraine?

9 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

10 MR. SCHRAM: Do you remain concerned that Vice
11 President Biden is a target of a Russian disinformation
12 effort?

13 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

14 MR. SCHRAM: Why?

15 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Because I can see it on a regular
16 basis. I think this investigation is probably the
17 successful outcome of that effort.

18 Mr. Derkach had published a number of so-called "leaked
19 tapes." I don't know that I would have even seen them
20 originally, except that my name was mentioned in them. So
21 Google makes sure that you see them, and the accusations
22 are--my concern is that this is a classic pattern of Russian
23 operations to besmirch reputations where they choose
24 relatively, well, well-known characters who have no
25 credibility, like Mr. Derkach, and then make that--allow

1 that information to enter into the mainstream.

2 I was aware, made aware in 2019, early 2019 before it
3 was published, of efforts to undermine Vice President Biden.
4 I have seen no cessation of that effort. In fact, I've been
5 it grow over time, especially over the last several months.

6 MR. SCHRAM: Mr. Hochstein, are you aware that Mr.
7 Derkach had a press conference yesterday where he repeated
8 some of these allegations?

9 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I'm actually not aware of that.

10 MR. SCHRAM: Are you aware that this committee had a
11 business meeting yesterday?

12 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I am aware of that.

13 MR. SCHRAM: And that when the business meeting was
14 noticed, it included an item to vote on a motion with
15 respect to a subpoena for testimony of Ambassador Bridget
16 Brink on matters related to Burisma and Ukraine?

17 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I read about that in the press.

18 MR. SCHRAM: And although that was ultimately pulled
19 from the business meeting, it was in the original notice?

20 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I am aware.

21 MR. SCHRAM: Are you aware that the last time this
22 committee had a business meeting related to Burisma and
23 Ukraine on May 20th of this year that just hours before that
24 business meeting, Mr. Derkach also had a press conference in
25 which he released excerpts and recordings and transcripts of

1 conversations between Vice President Biden and President
2 Poroshenko?

3 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes, I was aware of those.

4 MR. SCHRAM: Is that a pattern that concerns you?

5 MR. HOCHSTEIN: The pattern that--yes. And the pattern
6 that concerns me is that it's the laundering of information
7 when someone who has no credibility in Ukraine, let alone
8 anywhere else, well known to be--and I had known of Mr.
9 Derkach for a long time. I've never had the pleasure of
10 meeting him, but he is a--comes from a long--from a KGB
11 family and a pro-Russian Ukrainian lawmaker.

12 The pattern that concerns me is that I don't really
13 care what he says in Ukraine. It doesn't bother me. Nobody
14 believes him in Ukraine. What bothers me is that it seems
15 that more people in the United States believe him than
16 people who know him in Ukraine believe him. There, he's
17 discredited, and here, his information, sometimes in a
18 direct leap and sometimes through a stop on the way, gets
19 into the mainstream discussions of U.S. policy. That
20 concerns me, and I think he is following the--I believe that
21 he has always followed the proceedings in the United States
22 and tried to influence that.

23 MR. SCHRAM: So who is Mr. Derkach?

24 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Mr. Derkach is a parliamentarian in
25 Ukraine who is from a pro-Russia political party. He was

1 trained--I think he was in one of the last classes of KGB
2 Academy. His father was a high-ranking KGB official in the
3 Cold War and transitioned with the end of the Cold War, with
4 the independence of Ukraine to being, I think, eventually
5 head of the local new-name version of the KGB. And so
6 that's--that's who he is, and he's well known in Ukraine as
7 a mouthpiece for--anything he says is essentially coming
8 from the pro-Putin parties and directed by Moscow itself.

9 MR. SCHRAM: Are you aware of the August 7th assessment
10 released by director of National Counterintelligence and
11 Security Center, William Evanina, that says, quote, Russia
12 is using a range of measures to primarily denigrate former
13 Vice President Biden; for example, pro-Russia Ukrainian
14 parliamentarian Andrii Derkach is spreading claims about
15 corruption, including through publicized and leaked phone
16 calls to undermine former Vice President Biden's candidacy
17 and the Democratic Party?

18 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I am aware.

19 MR. SCHRAM: And that last week, the Treasury
20 Department sanctioned Mr. Derkach stating, quote, that he
21 was a--was a, quote, active Russian agent for over a decade?

22 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yeah. I was--I'm happy to see that the
23 Trump administration believes that the allegations being
24 made by Mr. Derkach are false and are not only false but are
25 being directed by the cyber counter anti-U.S. efforts in

1 Moscow.

2 MR. SCHRAM: And you have been personally targeted by
3 Mr. Derkach's theories, correct?

4 MR. HOCHSTEIN: That is correct.

5 MR. SCHRAM: Can you elaborate?

6 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Mr. Derkach believes that when I was as
7 Vice President Biden's--as a U.S. official that worked and
8 traveled to Ukraine with Mr. Biden as Vice President and
9 afterwards that my anti-corruption efforts were somehow part
10 of a very elaborate scheme, and some of them were the
11 classic way of doing it. You take actions that we really
12 did do that were above board and were good actions to
13 support Ukraine and put a false narrative twist around them
14 to make them sound negative.

15 He used the fact that allegedly Vice President Biden on
16 a call that he released that--I don't know the authenticity
17 of the call, but that Vice President Biden mentioned my name
18 as a source for supporting the reformists in Ukraine.
19 Somehow supporting the reformists in Ukraine, the anti-
20 corruption measures, was turned into a negative.

21 MR. SCHRAM: You referred to recordings of
22 conversations between Vice President Biden and President
23 Poroshenko released--

24 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Alleged.

25 MR. SCHRAM: --by Mr. Derkach.

1 I'm sorry?

2 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I said alleged calls because the
3 authenticity has not been confirmed.

4 MR. SCHRAM: Are you aware that among the calls that
5 Mr. Derkach released on May 19th, 2020, that some of them
6 were responsive to a request made by Chairman Johnson and
7 Chairman Grassley to Secretary Pompeo in April that had a
8 response date of May 15th?

9 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I was not aware of that timeline.

10 MR. SCHRAM: Are you aware of Mr. Derkach's theory that
11 Vice President Biden demanded the removal of Viktor Shokin
12 in an effort to help his son?

13 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I am aware of the allegations.

14 MR. SCHRAM: Do you credit that allegation?

15 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

16 MR. SCHRAM: Why not?

17 MR. HOCHSTEIN: The removal of--for two reasons. One,
18 it's just not true. The removal of Mr. Shokin was being
19 sought not only by Vice President Biden but by the IMF, the
20 EBRD, the World Bank, the Vice President of the EU, the UK
21 government, the German government, the French government,
22 and by several reformists in pro-democracy and pro-
23 governance organizations inside Ukraine. All of those--this
24 was a--truly a friends-of-Ukraine effort the Vice President
25 was--the effort that he was pursuing was in concert with all

1 of those.

2 He was also delivering official U.S. policy towards
3 Ukraine that we believed that it would be in the best
4 interest of Ukraine to remove Mr. Shokin.

5 The second reason that I do not believe that it was--
6 that it is credible is because we believed that Mr. Shokin
7 was actually benefitting the chairman of Burisma. So an
8 action to remove him would have been detrimental to Burisma,
9 not benefit.

10 MR. SCHRAM: Are you aware of other U.S. officials who
11 are subject to accusations by Mr. Derkach with respect to
12 their role in Ukraine policy?

13 MR. HOCHSTEIN: If I just may add, Mr. Schram, I wanted
14 to mention that when I listed all the organizations,
15 governments, and institutions that were--wanted to remove
16 Mr. Shokin, it was a bipartisan effort in the United States
17 as well, and that there were members of the United States
18 Senate and House who had supported that effort as well.

19 So I apologize. Can you repeat the question again, the
20 second question?

21 MR. SCHRAM: Actually, let's expand on what you've just
22 said. How were you aware of the bipartisan support for
23 those efforts?

24 MR. HOCHSTEIN: There were--there was a letter, if I
25 recall correctly, that was signed by a number of Senators

1 supporting and calling for the removal of Mr. Shokin, and
2 there were briefings with Senators and House members.

3 Roy, can--I believe we have the letter you're referring
4 to, Mr. Hochstein. Roy, can you pull that up? And we'll
5 introduce it as Exhibit B.

6 [Hochstein Exhibit B was
7 marked for identification.]

8 MR. SCHRAM: Mr. Hochstein, take a moment to review
9 this, and let me know if this is the letter that you're
10 referring to.

11 MR. KRAMER: And, Mr. Schram, just for the record, I
12 don't have a copy of that. If you wouldn't mind emailing
13 that to me, I'd appreciate it.

14 MR. SCHRAM: Sure thing. We had not anticipated
15 introducing it.

16 MR. KRAMER: That's fine. You can do it at the break,
17 but I just would like to make sure I get it today.

18 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I keep trying to scroll. Sorry.

19 [Pause.]

20 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yeah.

21 MR. SCHRAM: Is this the letter that you're referring
22 to?

23 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I believe so.

24 MR. SCHRAM: Do you recognize the names of the members
25 of the Ukraine caucus?

1 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I do. I met with a number of them on
2 these issues.

3 MR. SCHRAM: Does that include Senator Johnson?

4 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I did not brief Senator Johnson, but I
5 do see his name on the letter that you're representing on
6 the screen.

7 MR. SCHRAM: What did you understand this letter to be
8 supporting?

9 MR. HOCHSTEIN: For President Poroshenko to take the
10 action that we were all calling for, which was to--I mean,
11 what it states, I believe, in the letter is to address
12 serious allegations against the corruption and misdeeds in
13 the prosecutor general's office at the time.

14 MR. SCHRAM: Was it your impression that Congress was
15 well informed of the Obama administration's policy with
16 respect to anti-corruption efforts in Ukraine?

17 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

18 MR. SCHRAM: And among those bodies of Congress that
19 were well informed, would that include the Senate Foreign
20 Relations Committee?

21 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

22 MR. SCHRAM: Would that include the Subcommittee on
23 Europe and Regional Security of the Senate Foreign Relations
24 Committee?

25 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I believe so.

1 MR. SCHRAM: Would it include that subcommittee's
2 chairman, Senator Johnson?

3 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I would presume so.

4 MR. SCHRAM: The question I had asked before we turned
5 to this letter was with respect to other U.S. officials who
6 were the subject or target of Mr. Derkach's disinformation
7 efforts--

8 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

9 MR. SCHRAM: --specific to anticorruption efforts in
10 Ukraine. What other U.S. officials would you include on
11 that list?

12 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I believe he was not a big fan of
13 Ambassador Yovanovitch, Victoria Nuland, I believe other
14 senior officials in the Obama administration's--I believe
15 Secretary Kerry had featured in some of his diatribes. Oh,
16 and I think he added the usual--he usually throws in the
17 normal anti-Semitic charges against us, against the United
18 States as well, and it includes Mr. Soros.

19 MR. SCHRAM: Did he include Mr. Kent, George Kent, in
20 his allegations?

21 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I believe so. Sorry.

22 MR. SCHRAM: What about Ambassador Pyatt?

23 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yeah. I think that was earlier in
24 time, but Mr. Pyatt was not popular among the pro-Russian
25 forces.

1 MR. SCHRAM: And are you aware that Mr. Kent,
2 Ambassador Nuland, and Ambassador Pyatt are also witnesses
3 in the Majority's investigation?

4 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I am.

5 MR. SCHRAM: Do you know who Andrii Telizhenko is?

6 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I've never met him, but I know who he
7 is.

8 MR. SCHRAM: Are you familiar with public reporting
9 that Mr. Telizhenko is responsible for amplifying Russian
10 disinformation theories that Ukraine interfered in the 2016
11 election?

12 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I am.

13 MR. SCHRAM: Are you aware that the Senate Intelligence
14 Committee published a bipartisan report that concluded that
15 the narrative that Mr. Telizhenko promotes about Ukraine's
16 2016 election interference originated with a Russian
17 intelligence officer, Konstantin Kilimnik?

18 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

19 MR. SCHRAM: Are you aware that Chairman Johnson met
20 with Mr. Telizhenko in July 2019?

21 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I believe I read that in the media.

22 MR. SCHRAM: Marking as Exhibit C, a letter from
23 September 27th, 2019, from Chairman Johnson and Chairman
24 Grassley to Attorney General Barr.

25 [Hochstein Exhibit C was

1 marked for identification.]

2 MR. KRAMER: Mr. Schram, again, I don't have that. So
3 if you could kindly email that to me, I'd appreciate it.

4 MR. SCHRAM: We'll email that to you at the break.

5 Mr. Hochstein, apologies for not flagging this in
6 advance. Please take as much time as you need, and just let
7 us know when to scroll.

8 [Pause.]

9 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yeah, you can scroll.

10 MR. SCHRAM: Kelly, you should have this in your inbox
11 now.

12 MR. KRAMER: Thank you.

13 MR. HOCHSTEIN: You can scroll.

14 [Pause.]

15 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yep, you can scroll.

16 [Pause.]

17 MR. HOCHSTEIN: You can scroll.

18 [Pause.]

19 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yeah, you can scroll.

20 [Pause.]

21 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yeah.

22 MR. SCHRAM: I'm just going to ask you about the block
23 quote that's on page 2 of this document. It quotes Andrii
24 Telizhenko from an article by John Solomon. Mr. Hochstein,
25 who is John Solomon?

1 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I think he is a--he is a--he's someone
2 who publishes right-wing reports on different U.S. websites,
3 usually--the ones that--I don't read a lot of them, but the
4 ones that I've seen have been filled with information that
5 comes from Russian forces.

6 MR. SCHRAM: And why do you say that?

7 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I said only the ones that I've read
8 regarding Ukraine have been ones where I would see things
9 and hear things in Kyiv or coming out of Russia, and I would
10 see them printed under his byline.

11 MR. SCHRAM: Can you give an example?

12 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I think that after the--a couple of
13 examples. After one of Derkach's press conferences, I think
14 the one in May, there was a follow-up article--I forget the
15 name of the websites--that he had written. Again, it only
16 came to my attention because my name was mentioned in it,
17 and in 2019 when I first started hearing what at the time
18 was a rumor, when I was being told what was happening
19 between Mr. Lutsenko and Mr. Giuliani, and I was told--I was
20 given a very specific narrative of how it was going to--a
21 timeline, like a tick-tock of how it was going to play out,
22 and I was told there was going to be an article that will
23 appear that will say all these things against Masha
24 Yovanovitch, and then it would be endorsed by other
25 officials, and that article was John Solomon. And the

1 people who were telling me this had heard it directly from
2 some folks in Ukraine. So it was a direct line between
3 their comments to me and his action--his reporting. Sorry.

4 MR. SCHRAM: Are you aware that an internal
5 investigation led by the editor-in-chief at The Hill
6 newspaper found that Mr. Solomon used unreliable and biased
7 sources amplifying an inaccurate narrative about the Vice
8 President?

9 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I was not actually aware of that, but
10 I'm not surprised.

11 MR. SCHRAM: Are you aware that Mr. Giuliani is one of
12 John Solomon's sources on these matters?

13 MR. HOCHSTEIN: That's pretty--I don't know about a
14 source. It's pretty clear that they are in coordination.

15 MR. SCHRAM: You mentioned that you've come up in Mr.
16 Solomon's reporting.

17 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I have.

18 MR. SCHRAM: How so?

19 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I believe, again, usually citing my
20 name in furthering the Vice President's actions.

21 MR. SCHRAM: And the information about you in John
22 Solomon's reporting, has it been accurate?

23 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

24 MR. SCHRAM: Do you regard him as a reliable source?

25 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I do not.

1 MR. SCHRAM: Why not?

2 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Because the information that I have--
3 for two reasons. The information I've read where I knew the
4 facts, they were--the reporting was inaccurate. And,
5 second, because of what I mentioned earlier, during the time
6 of the--in the early days of the efforts to get the
7 Ukrainian Government both straddling Poroshenko, the final
8 months of the Poroshenko administration into the early
9 months of the Zelensky administration, the reporting by him
10 was the--it was the method that was used by those efforts to
11 undermine Vice President, myself, Yovanovitch, and others,
12 it was his reporting that brought it into the United States.
13 That was the mechanism.

14 MR. SCHRAM: So I won't take your time going through
15 all of the letters that the Chairmen have issued in pursuit
16 of this investigation that rely on Mr. Solomon's reporting,
17 but I'll mention a few: November 6, 2019, letter to the
18 State Department; November 15, 2019, letter to the Treasury
19 Department; the November 21st letter to the FBI; November
20 21st letter to the National Archives. Are you aware that on
21 January 23rd Chairman Johnson sat for an interview with Mr.
22 Solomon?

23 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I am not aware.

24 MR. SCHRAM: In your view, are the actions of Mr.
25 Derkach, Mr. Telizhenko, and Mr. Solomon consistent with

1 malign influence, Russian malign influence operations?

2 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

3 MR. SCHRAM: In your words, what would you regard as
4 the purpose of their efforts?

5 MR. HOCHSTEIN: To undermine Vice President Biden's
6 candidacy and to ensure a Russian successful outcome in the
7 U.S. election.

8 MR. SCHRAM: Mr. Hochstein, in an open letter of August
9 10th of this year, Chairman Johnson wrote, "Many in the
10 media in an ongoing attempt to provide cover for former Vice
11 President Biden continue to repeat the mantra that there is
12 no evidence of wrongdoing or illegal activity related to
13 Hunter Biden's position on Burisma's board. I could not
14 disagree more."

15 Are you aware of any evidence of wrongdoing or illegal
16 activity by Vice President Biden related to Hunter Biden's
17 position on the board of Burisma?

18 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I am not.

19 MR. SCHRAM: Given your knowledge about the development
20 and execution of our foreign policy in Ukraine, do you
21 regard the Chairman's claim as credible?

22 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I do not.

23 MR. SCHRAM: Was the foreign policy that Vice President
24 Biden pursued in Ukraine intended to advance the interests
25 of the United States of America?

1 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

2 MR. SCHRAM: Are narratives that suggest otherwise
3 false?

4 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

5 MR. SCHRAM: Did a potential conflict of interest
6 related to Hunter Biden influence Obama administration
7 policy decisions with respect to Ukraine and Burisma
8 Holdings?

9 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Not at all.

10 MR. SCHRAM: You sound very confident in that answer.
11 Why?

12 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I was involved in one part of the U.S.
13 policy towards Ukraine. I accompanied Vice President Biden
14 to Ukraine. I traveled to Ukraine independently. I was in
15 close contact with other officials from the Department of
16 Defense, Department of State, and the White House on the
17 formulation of U.S. policy towards Ukraine in discussion
18 with the Secretary of State. And never was the word
19 "Burisma" raised. The presence of Hunter Biden on the board
20 of Burisma never factored into it. My charge and our charge
21 was to do what was best for Ukraine as emerging from its
22 previous regime post-revolution, to win the war in the East,
23 and to secure a transparent and open society. And never was
24 I deterred from it, nor was, to my knowledge, anyone else
25 ever given conflicting instructions other than that.

1 In fact, the biggest fear in Ukraine then and now among
2 the oligarchs and the corruption machine was Vice President
3 Biden and the team around him that was pursuing this effort.
4 He was always the bogeyman for both Russia and for
5 corruption, and those are different. Russia wanted control
6 in Europe, and Vice President Biden, and our team was--our
7 interagency team was feared, our intervention in Europe was
8 feared by the Russians as pulling the rest of Europe
9 together and to be aligned with Western values and with the
10 United States.

11 MR. SCHRAM: So in a word, was the foreign policy
12 pursued by Vice President Biden in Ukraine corrupt?

13 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

14 MR. SCHRAM: Did a potential conflict of interest
15 related to Hunter Biden influence the Vice President's
16 policy decisions with respect to Ukraine and Burisma
17 Holdings?

18 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

19 MR. SCHRAM: Did Vice President Biden alter United
20 States Government foreign policy concerning Ukraine to
21 assist Burisma or his son?

22 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

23 MR. SCHRAM: Did you witness any effort by any U.S.
24 official to shield Burisma from scrutiny?

25 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

1 MR. SCHRAM: Was the U.S. Government position
2 advocating for the removal of Prosecutor General Shokin part
3 of an effort to stop an investigation into Burisma?

4 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

5 MR. SCHRAM: Was it your view at the time that the
6 dismissal of Prosecutor General Shokin would actually
7 increase the likelihood that Burisma would be investigated
8 for corruption?

9 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

10 MR. SCHRAM: Was that the view of the U.S. Government?

11 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

12 MR. SCHRAM: Was the policy advocating for the
13 dismissal of Prosecutor General Shokin formulated by the
14 Vice President in an effort to assist his son?

15 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

16 MR. SCHRAM: Did the idea to condition aid to Ukraine
17 on anticorruption--did the idea to condition aid to Ukraine
18 related to anticorruption reforms, including reform of the
19 prosecutor general's office, originate with Vice President
20 Biden?

21 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't believe so.

22 MR. SCHRAM: Was it a whole-of-Government policy to
23 condition foreign aid in part on the removal of Prosecutor
24 General Shokin?

25 MR. HOCHSTEIN: To be honest, I was not involved in the

1 discussions about calling for the removal in the context of
2 the aid. That would have been done with--that wasn't in my
3 lane.

4 MR. SCHRAM: In your first hour of testimony, you said
5 that you had no reaction to learning about Hunter Biden's
6 appointment to the board of Burisma initially. Correct?

7 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

8 MR. SCHRAM: But did you have a reaction when you
9 learned that Russians were using Hunter Biden's position on
10 the board to undermine the credibility of Vice President
11 Biden as it related to U.S. policy toward Ukraine?

12 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes. I thought that was the--just a--
13 it was another data point that they were using against us
14 that we needed to be aware of.

15 MR. SCHRAM: Can you help us understand the distinction
16 between your concern--your lack of concern about Hunter
17 Biden's--your lack of reaction with respect to Hunter
18 Biden's appointment to the board versus your reaction to
19 learning that Russians were exploiting that for
20 disinformation purposes?

21 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Hunter Biden's presence on the board
22 did not affect my day-to-day work or anybody else's that I
23 came in contact with. We were--it was just something that I
24 learned, and it was a data point. But it did not affect
25 anything. Russians trying to create a perception of

1 something negative and nefarious between the United States
2 and in the United States' efforts in Ukraine on
3 anticorruption, that was something we needed to be aware of
4 in order to make sure that it was not listened to--not that
5 specific line, but just the generic attempt by the Russians.

6 MR. SCHRAM: Is it your understanding that this very
7 investigation is also trying to create the impression that
8 there was corruption with respect to the Vice President's
9 actions in the Ukraine related to Hunter Biden's position on
10 the board?

11 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I believe that this investigation,
12 regardless of motive, which I can't know, but in practice is
13 precisely what the Russian information campaign was hoping
14 to achieve, as well as several of the corrupt oligarchs.

15 MR. SCHRAM: That is all for now.

16 MR. GOSHORN: Before we move, if I could have time for
17 just one quick follow-up, if that's okay with everyone.

18 Mr. Hochstein, my name is Dan Goshorn. I'm a Senior
19 Investigator for Senator Wyden, and I just wanted to clarify
20 something you said earlier. I believe you said that the
21 Russian disinformation efforts related to Hunter Biden's
22 position on Burisma were just--that narrative was just one
23 of many that the Russians were using to discredit Vice
24 President Biden's work in Ukraine. Is that correct?

25 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Correct.

1 MR. GOSHORN: So if Hunter Biden had never joined the
2 board of Burisma or, you know, if there was no Hunter Biden,
3 would there still have been a Russian disinformation effort
4 to discredit Vice President Biden's work in Ukraine?

5 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

6 MR. GOSHORN: Thank you. That's all for me.

7 MR. KRAMER: Is this a good time to take a 5-minute
8 break, switch sides, and go to Round 3?

9 MR. FOLIO: Yeah, Kelly, I think that's good. Can we
10 plan to reconvene at 12:45? And just one logistical point.
11 Roy, can you keep the exhibit pen for a second? I'm going
12 to have one question on Exhibit B when we get back.

13 All right. See you guys at 12:45.

14 [Recess.]

15 MR. FOLIO: Roy, if you wouldn't mind just pulling up
16 Exhibit B, I have a question about the penultimate paragraph
17 on the first page. Thank you.

18 Can you just scroll down, please, to the bottom of the
19 first page, that penultimate paragraph.

20 Mr. Hochstein, the second paragraph from the bottom,
21 specifically the second sentence from the end, it reads, "We
22 similarly urge you to press ahead with urgent reforms to the
23 Prosecutor General's Office and judiciary." Other than that
24 sentence or anywhere else in this letter, did you see any
25 place in which the Senators, including Chairman Johnson,

1 called for the dismissal of then-Prosecutor General Shokin?

2 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I did not, in that letter or in that
3 paragraph.

4 MR. FOLIO: Mr. Hochstein, are you aware of Chairman
5 Johnson's support for the provision of lethal aid to Ukraine
6 during this time period?

7 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I believe I remember that.

8 MR. FOLIO: Were you aware of the half dozen or so
9 trips that Chairman Johnson took to Ukraine during this time
10 period?

11 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I'm sorry. It was hard for me to
12 understand.

13 MR. FOLIO: Were you aware of the half dozen or so
14 trips that Chairman Johnson took to Ukraine during this time
15 period?

16 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I was aware that [inaudible] to
17 Ukraine. I am not aware of the amount of [inaudible] trips.

18 MR. KRAMER: Joe, I'm sorry. You're coming through
19 really poorly. If somebody is not on mute and you're not
20 speaking, could you please mute. Other than you. There is
21 sound coming from other sources.

22 MR. FOLIO: I think we are all muted here so I'll just
23 try to speak loudly and more slowly.

24 Mr. Hochstein, are you aware of Chairman Johnson's
25 legislation regarding the Nord Stream 2 pipeline?

1 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I am.

2 MR. FOLIO: And what's your general understanding and
3 impression of that legislation?

4 MR. HOCHSTEIN: It calls for the sanctions to be placed
5 on the companies involved in the construction of the Nord
6 Stream 2 pipeline.

7 MR. FOLIO: Are you aware that on November 3, 2015,
8 Chairman Johnson held a hearing in his Foreign Relations
9 Subcommittee entitled "Putin's invasion of Ukraine and the
10 Propaganda That Threatens Europe"?

11 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't know that I'm aware of that
12 hearing.

13 MR. FOLIO: Are you aware that on June 14, 2015,
14 Chairman Johnson's subcommittee held a hearing entitled
15 "Southeast Europe: Strengthening Democracy and Countering
16 Malign Foreign Influence"?

17 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I'm not aware of that but I'm aware of
18 the effort.

19 MR. FOLIO: Are you aware that Chairman Johnson, along
20 with other Senators, has been blacklisted from Russia due to
21 their advocacy on behalf of Ukraine?

22 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I believe I was aware of that.

23 MR. FOLIO: So during the minority's questioning, they
24 asked you about your impression of our investigation, and
25 they wanted to chat about that for a minute. So with regard

1 to our investigation, I don't want to mischaracterize your
2 answer, but you said you seemed to be disappointed that we
3 were looking at this, and I'd just like to understand why.

4 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Because--and again, what I said during
5 the minority staff questioning was that regardless of motive
6 I believe that this investigation is being seen as a
7 successful outcome of what some oligarchs, corrupt oligarchs
8 and corruption forces were looking for, which is to take
9 accusations that were made in Ukraine against Vice President
10 Biden's efforts to tie our anticorruption efforts at the
11 time to the presence of his son on the board, or that he had
12 ulterior motives.

13 And my disappointment is because I was involved with
14 those efforts and I knew what the purpose of those efforts
15 were and where they were coming from, and I know what we
16 were trying to and succeeding, and sometimes failing to do
17 was truly an obstruction effort. So that's my
18 disappointment, that it gives rise to the [inaudible] about
19 anticorruption efforts in not only Ukraine but elsewhere.

20 MR. FOLIO: So is one way to combat these narratives
21 that you believe to be false is to speak with former U.S.
22 officials like yourself to understand exactly what did and
23 did not happen?

24 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I think that conversations that are
25 under the guise of investigation, that is based on these

1 kinds--on allegations of activities, not to go specifically
2 into areas that repeat narratives pursued by Moscow and by
3 nefarious actors in Ukraine, I think gives it credence.
4 When you do something as an investigation and you have a lot
5 of press reporting around the investigation that support the
6 outcome, I think that it has that effect.

7 MR. FOLIO: Do you think it's more helpful for us to
8 address these issues by speaking with you or not speaking
9 with you, to understand what happened?

10 MR. HOCHSTEIN: All of these matters that we are
11 discussing over the last few months, when you talk about the
12 Hunter Biden being on the board of Burisma, this, as I think
13 your colleague showed me an article that appeared about
14 Hunter joining the board, that was in 2015. The actions of
15 the the Prosecutor General, Mr. Shokin, was in 2015, I
16 believe, or 2016, sorry. And this was all debated and
17 reported on in the media, in the U.S. media, quite a bit.

18 And so when we look at it as an investigation five
19 years later, in the middle of a presidential campaign, that
20 is something that brings--it could cause folks to doubt the
21 motivations, and I think when a number of people related to
22 the investigation have stated in the press that it's about
23 the election and that it has to be done within an election
24 time frame, that also brings rise to the doubting of the
25 investigation itself.

1 MR. FOLIO: You know, we talked about the undisputed
2 fact that Hunter Biden taking a position and the money he
3 was paid to serve in that position. I'm interested in what
4 your perspective is. Are you saying you think it's
5 inappropriate for us to be looking at that, or are you
6 saying it's inappropriate for us to be looking at that at
7 this time?

8 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I think that it's a combination of the
9 two. Look, I don't presume to convince you in a debate
10 about whether or not you should have this investigation.
11 The facts are that you're having the investigation. I have
12 my views on it. You've asked me to participate. I have
13 chosen to do so without subpoena and to do this voluntarily.
14 And it is my personal view that regardless of the
15 Committee's intentions, which I will not presume, the
16 outcome of doing it in this timeline, in this time frame is
17 seen and reported on in other countries and in Russia and in
18 Ukraine, the success or the negative operations of
19 disinformation against Vice President Biden that are going
20 on more generally.

21 But again, I'm not trying to convince you.

22 MR. FOLIO: I just want to understand your answers you
23 provided to the minority questions. And I guess, you know,
24 what we're looking at is the fact that the Vice President's
25 son took a position on a company that the United States and

1 other foreign law enforcement entities were investigating
2 for corruption. So I just want to understand, from your
3 perspective, do you think that issue matters and was worth
4 investigating?

5 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I think--first of all, you're asking me
6 to have an out-of-body experience. I was working very
7 closely with the Vice President on corruption matters in
8 Ukraine. I was working in concert with other officials from
9 the U.S. Government. We were never working in isolation or
10 in a dark room. We were all discussing this on a regular
11 basis and coordinating our efforts and strategies.

12 So I know for a fact that these allegations are untrue.
13 When somebody says that the Vice President wanted to fire
14 Shokin to support his son, I know it's not true. Now I know
15 it because I was there. I was on that trip. I was in
16 meetings before. I know who else was calling for the firing
17 of Shokin. I know that it wasn't the Vice President's view
18 alone. I know that it was called for by other international
19 financial institutions, other governments.

20 So the idea that firing, or calling for reforms in the
21 Prosecutor General Office culminating in the removal of him
22 was a coordinated, multi-stakeholder effort, and therefore
23 the plausibility that that was somehow manipulated all for a
24 tiny little company called Burisma that Hunter Biden was on
25 the board of, for somebody like me that was there, I know

1 that it's not true. So you're asking me to give a
2 validation of whether or not it's appropriate to look at it.
3 That's for you to assess. I can tell you (1) I was there,
4 (2) it was multilateral, (3) it was an interagency, (4) it
5 had no material effect on Burisma itself or on Mr.
6 Zlochevsky.

7 And therefore, I think everything we did was above
8 board, and lastly, that it was well known. It was all in
9 the press. And if there was a real effort to have some kind
10 of conspiracy, it could have been discussed in 2015 or in
11 2014 or in 2016. But it's being discussed in 2020, ahead of
12 an election.

13 MR. FOLIO: You know, I think you're referring to the
14 new news articles that came out in 2015, but as you may be
15 aware in the letters that we sent that referred to you.
16 Obviously, that information wasn't made available until
17 recently. As you said, you were involved in the decision-
18 making, so that's precisely why we're trying to speak to
19 you.

20 And I think getting to that point, you know, the
21 testimony you provided to the minority, you said that Hunter
22 Biden's decision to join the board didn't affect anything.
23 So I understand that your testimony with regard to the
24 decision to seek the removal of then Prosecutor General
25 Shokin. But, you know, did Russia use the fact that Hunter

1 Biden's position on the board of Burisma to advance its own
2 narrative?

3 MR. HOCHSTEIN: It tried to, yes.

4 MR. FOLIO: So then it certainly affected something.

5 MR. HOCHSTEIN: So the question that I was asked was
6 when I learned in 2014 from the press that he had joined the
7 board did it have an effect. It did not. It did not
8 affect--and I specifically said it did not affect my job or
9 anything that we were doing in Ukraine.

10 About a year later it started popping up, or maybe
11 even--yeah, just about a year later it started popping up by
12 Russian propaganda and by some other oligarchs as
13 undermining the American message and the Vice President's
14 message. I would even argue then that it wasn't a
15 successful effort by Russia. I mean, it was an effort but
16 it wasn't successful. Ukrainian government officials never
17 bought into it, did not raise Hunter Biden, and our
18 discussions on corruption were always on the merits, even
19 when they were very difficult, and there were certain
20 moments where we were demanding and asking them to do things
21 they were uncomfortable with, because it upset some of the
22 politics in Kiev. And yet they never once, not to me or, to
23 my knowledge, to anyone else at a senior level, did they
24 say, "How you can you ask me this in spite of the fact that
25 you have the story?" So it wasn't a successful effort by

1 the Russians but it was an effort.

2 MR. FOLIO: Are you aware of whether Ukrainian
3 officials ever raised concerns with anyone else in the State
4 Department or the U.S. Government?

5 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I'm not aware.

6 MR. FOLIO: We looked at an email--I think the minority
7 introduced it as an exhibit, in which you and your team were
8 spending time responding to the Russian news reports.
9 Before Hunter Biden taking a position on the board you
10 wouldn't have had to do that, right?

11 MR. HOCHSTEIN: You mean the email chain? Yeah, we
12 write that we would have had spent that time creating other
13 talking points. That is correct.

14 MR. FOLIO: I mean, not all things are equal, right.
15 You looked at and discussed with the minority in the email,
16 part of that Russian article said that the Biden family will
17 begin a large-scale privatization in Ukraine. I mean, does
18 that have any basis in fact?

19 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

20 MR. FOLIO: Do the claims about Hunter Biden serving on
21 the board of Burisma have a basis in fact?

22 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

23 MR. FOLIO: So why give the Russians one more way to
24 potentially attack and undermine U.S. foreign policy on
25 Ukraine?

1 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I'm not sure what I'm being asked.

2 MR. FOLIO: So we're talking about your comment about
3 whether--what effect, if any, it's had on your work in U.S.
4 anticorruption policy. So you talked with minority, and
5 we're talking about now, is how the Russians were trying to
6 exploit his position, Hunter Biden's position, on the board
7 of Burisma to undermine U.S. foreign policy and to convince
8 Ukraine to [inaudible]. That's an effect on U.S. foreign
9 policy, right?

10 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No. Not necessarily. It would be an
11 effect on foreign policy if we changed our policy as a
12 result. But there was no change of American foreign policy
13 except for the fact that we had to spend probably a few
14 extra minutes, in doing the talking points, on how to
15 address it in the case that it may come up.

16 Again, I'm trying to stress this many times. Vice
17 President Biden was the boogeyman, not just for Russians in
18 Ukraine. He was boogie man for many oligarchs whose income,
19 our effort, Vice President Biden's effort directly affected.
20 And they wanted his reputation to be tarnished so that he
21 would not continue the efforts that cost them so much money.
22 That continues to this day, and partly their efforts today
23 is because of the return of the anticorruption movements
24 from the United States and Ukraine.

25 So did it affect U.S. foreign policy is the question

1 you keep asking me, and I keep telling you, was it up, was
2 it a data point? It was a data point to be aware of but it
3 never factored in. Could it have? I don't know.

4 MR. FOLIO: Isn't that the entire--isn't that the
5 primary purpose of conflicts of interest rules is to not
6 allow things like this to happen, not allow questions to be
7 drawn that potentially undermine the effectiveness of U.S.
8 policy?

9 MR. KRAMER: Are you saying that there's a conflict of
10 interest rule that applies in this circumstance?

11 MR. FOLIO: There are a variety of conflict of interest
12 rules, but rules aside, right, isn't it just sort of a
13 fundamental point, when you have something like this, the
14 appearance of or actual conflict of interest, like the
15 reason those rules exist is to try and remove doubt that
16 could be cast on an otherwise valid policy. Right?

17 MR. KRAMER: Again, are you trying to assert that there
18 is an exigent rule that prohibits this situation? If there
19 is, please tell us the rule and we can talk.

20 MR. FOLIO: There are a variety of conflicts of
21 interest rules that apply. I'm not referring to any
22 specific one. I don't have the impression that Mr.
23 Hochstein is an expert in those rules. But I'm just asking
24 from his position as a U.S. official, not that I am either.
25 It's just a general statement about a different area of law.

1 But from your position as a U.S. official, you had to deal
2 with these issues, but your understanding of, you know, why
3 you were told, and took training on the avoidances of
4 appearances of conflict, I mean, isn't the fundamental
5 purpose to avoid questions being drawn as to the motives or
6 otherwise on policy?

7 MR. HOCHSTEIN: It is true that I have taken courses,
8 you know, the obligatory courses in conflict of interest,
9 but I was never one that had to be implementing them or
10 supervising them in any way. My job was to--I saw the data
11 point that Hunter Biden was on the board. It kind of
12 appeared in the press, had a little flurry of activity in
13 early 2014. And I did not then see it come up again for a
14 while, and when it came up again it was trying to use it to
15 create an appearance and a perception. I believe that
16 effort failed because it was intended to influence Ukrainian
17 government officials to not follow our suggestions on
18 governance reform.

19 And the reason it never had a chance really of
20 succeeding is because the efforts of reform that the Vice
21 President was taking, that I was taking, and that others in
22 the U.S. Government were taking, were done in concert with
23 multilateral institutions, with the EU, et cetera. So
24 nobody serious ever considered it to be a conflict of
25 interest, because the facts always negated it.

1 MR. FOLIO: Was Mr. Zlochevsky being investigated
2 because he was alleged to have stolen assets from the
3 Ukrainian people?

4 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes. I don't know if that's exactly
5 what the prosecution [inaudible].

6 MR. FOLIO: The shorthand for--I mean, he was alleged
7 that he took wealth from the Ukrainian people in the form,
8 the licenses, the land grants.

9 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Correct.

10 MR. FOLIO: And it was part of the U.S. foreign policy
11 to try and recapture Ukrainian assets that folks believed
12 were wrongfully taken away from the country. Is that right?

13 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

14 MR. FOLIO: Was Mr.--

15 MR. HOCHSTEIN: The benefits of those assets, right?

16 MR. FOLIO: Right.

17 Was Mr. Zlochevsky ever successfully prosecuted?

18 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

19 MR. FOLIO: So across--during this time, certain people
20 within the U.S. government specifically called out Mr.
21 Zlochevsky as being corrupt and worthy of investigation, if
22 not prosecution, right?

23 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

24 MR. FOLIO: So across three different prosecutor
25 generals from this 2014 time period to 2016 time period,

1 despite the U.S., certain U.S. officials calling explicitly
2 for his investigation and prosecution, all the cases against
3 him were dismissed. Why do you think that happened?

4 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I think--well, so I don't know--I don't
5 know for--

6 MR. KRAMER: Hold on for one second. The premise that
7 all the cases were dismissed, I don't know if that's true.
8 If you know that that's true, then you can respond to it,
9 but if you don't know that's true, then you should just--

10 MR. HOCHSTEIN: The UK case was dismissed. The
11 Ukrainian cases were closed. That is--I can't say for
12 certain why we in the U.S. government suspected that he--
13 that--we wanted those cases to go forward, and expressed
14 those, that interest openly.

15 MR. FOLIO: So for whatever reason, the U.S. desire to
16 have those cases move forward in its message, it wasn't
17 received?

18 MR. HOCHSTEIN: That is correct--well, no. I think the
19 message--no, no, no. Sorry. The message was received. It
20 was received loud and clear for--

21 MR. FOLIO: It was never a factor?

22 MR. HOCHSTEIN: As I said before, in the fight against
23 corruption, you're--it's not--it fights back, and--

24 MR. FOLIO: Right. We understand and appreciate well,
25 but my--

1 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I'm just going to say that the lack of
2 prosecution--or sorry--the lack of successful prosecution
3 was more about the corruption in the Ukrainian system than
4 it was about anything else.

5 MR. FOLIO: And if it's such an uphill battle to fight
6 corruption, I guess I'm just not sure I understand your
7 testimony about how it--making it that much more difficult
8 by having the Vice President's son on the board doesn't
9 matter--in a couple emails?

10 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I'm--look, I was seen and perceived in
11 Ukraine--

12 MR. FOLIO: Right.

13 MR. HOCHSTEIN: --as someone who was State Department
14 and very close to Vice President Biden. That was how they
15 perceived my role.

16 They also knew that I was very hard against the
17 corruption in Ukraine. I was doing things that were
18 uncomfortable with--for corrupt individuals in Ukraine, and
19 they knew that I was called into the prosecution and the
20 cooperation of the prosecution of Zlochevsky.

21 So there is just no credibility in saying that anyone
22 in Ukraine thought that the Vice President or the people
23 that worked in the administration and the people that were
24 working closely with them in Ukraine were nothing--anything
25 but fully committed and serious in trying to prosecute

1 corrupt individuals in Ukraine.

2 MR. FOLIO: But sitting here today, do you have any
3 understanding as to why those efforts were not--to prosecute
4 Mr. Zlochevsky were not successful?

5 MR. HOCHSTEIN: My personal view was that Mr.
6 Zlochevsky was doing what many other corrupt individuals do
7 in Ukraine when it comes to avoid prosecutions, and that's
8 open their purse, but--

9 MR. FOLIO: I'm sorry. I'm going to--

10 MR. HOCHSTEIN: --I cannot prove that.

11 MR. FOLIO: I'm going to turn the questioning over to
12 my colleague, Brian Downey.

13 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I'm sorry? To who?

14 MR. FOLIO: Brian Downey.

15 MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Hochstein, can you hear me?

16 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I can.

17 MR. DOWNEY: So on October 8th, 2015, President Obama
18 announced his intent to nominate yourself as the Assistant
19 Secretary for Energy Resources at the Department of State,
20 correct?

21 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I trust that the date is correct. I
22 don't remember it, though.

23 MR. DOWNEY: Did you speak with Vice President Biden
24 about Hunter Biden's role on Burisma for that date?

25 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't believe so.

1 MR. DOWNEY: On October 21st, 2015, Vice President
2 Biden announced at the Rose Garden that he was not running
3 for President in 2016. Did you speak with Vice President
4 Biden about Hunter Biden and his position on Burisma's board
5 before that announcement?

6 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I couldn't be sure. I have no idea.

7 MR. DOWNEY: I didn't hear you, sir.

8 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I said I have no idea exactly which day
9 it was. It was sometime in late October.

10 MR. DOWNEY: And you met with Hunter Biden in or around
11 November 2nd, 2015.

12 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Is that a question?

13 MR. DOWNEY: Yes.

14 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Oh. Yes, I did. I mean, I see from
15 the email that you sent me that it would have been somewhere
16 a few days after that email.

17 MR. DOWNEY: So going back to your meeting with--or
18 your discussion with Vice President Biden in October of
19 2015, was there anyone else present when you had this
20 conversation with the Vice President?

21 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

22 MR. DOWNEY: Why did you decide to raise this issue
23 with Vice President Biden at that time?

24 MR. HOCHSTEIN: We were starting to think about a trip
25 to Ukraine, and I wanted to make sure that he was aware that

1 there was an increase in chatter on media outlets close to
2 Russians and corrupt oligarchs-owned media outlets about
3 undermining his message--to try to undermine his message and
4 including Hunter Biden being part of the board of Burisma.

5 MR. DOWNEY: So why did you do--why did you have this
6 conversation with the Vice President? Why didn't someone in
7 his press office have this conversation or someone else at
8 the State Department have this conversation? Why did you
9 discuss this issue with Vice President Biden in October of
10 2015?

11 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I was the International Energy Envoy.
12 I worked on energy issues around the world. I had been the
13 one who was working on energy issues in Ukraine. It wasn't
14 an anticorruption job, but it was part of a job. And we--I
15 had worked--that because of that, it called for me to spend
16 more time with the Vice President. I wanted to make sure
17 that he was aware of it.

18 He may have heard it from others. I wouldn't know who
19 else would have spoken to him, but I thought it was part of
20 my job to inform him.

21 MR. DOWNEY: Before having this conversation with Vice
22 President Biden in October 2015, did you bring up with other
23 individuals at the State Department that you were going to
24 raise this issue with Vice President Biden?

25 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I had not told anyone that I was going

1 to--the decision to inform him was as we were walking. I
2 don't believe that I had shared that decision.

3 MR. DOWNEY: Why not?

4 MR. HOCHSTEIN: This was a conversation of chance. You
5 know, we happened to be walking away from a meeting
6 together, and it was an opportune time to raise it with him.
7 It's not as though I scheduled a meeting or anything about
8 this. This was a conversation while we were walking.

9 MR. DOWNEY: So after this conversation with Vice
10 President Biden, did you debrief with Secretary Kerry or
11 other officials at the State Department about this
12 conversation?

13 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't remember. I may have mentioned
14 to--I don't remember. I may have said that I had a
15 conversation with him about what was happening on the ground
16 in--on what the Russians were trying to do via corrupt
17 oligarchs, but I can't be certain.

18 MR. DOWNEY: Had a conversation with who?

19 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I said I--you asked a question about--
20 sort of a generic, to anyone in the State Department. I
21 don't recall if I did or not. I may have.

22 MR. DOWNEY: What about to Secretary Kerry?

23 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't believe so.

24 MR. DOWNEY: During this conversation with Vice
25 President Biden, did you recommend to the Vice President

1 that Hunter Biden should leave Burisma's board?

2 MR. KRAMER: So, again, I'll instruct you not to--I'm
3 going to instruct you not to discuss the substance of the
4 conversation. I think it's fair for you to indicate like
5 what did you--the purpose in that meeting was to urge him to
6 recommend. It has to be all about your own personal--

7 MR. DOWNEY: So this will be, I believe, Exhibit 4 for
8 the Majority, which will be Tab 4, Will.

9 [Hochstein Exhibit No. 4 was
10 marked for identification.]

11 MR. KRAMER: What is the base, Mr. Downey?

12 MR. HOCHSTEIN: This is the news article by Adam Entous
13 of July 1st, 2019, entitled "Will Hunter Biden Jeopardize
14 His Father's Campaign?"

15 MR. KRAMER: Okay. I think we're familiar with the
16 document. We don't have it in front of us. So if you--

17 MR. DOWNEY: Yes.

18 MR. KRAMER: --would like to just manipulate it on the
19 screen.

20 MR. DOWNEY: Yeah. Will, can you go to page 8? There.
21 Right there is perfect.

22 I want to turn your attention, Mr. Hochstein, to the
23 paragraph that starts with "In December of 2015."

24 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes, sir.

25 MR. DOWNEY: So this article, I quote, In December

1 2015, as Joe Biden prepared to return to Ukraine, his aides
2 brace for a renewed scrutiny of Hunter's relationship with
3 Burisma. Amos Hochstein, the Obama administration's Special
4 Envoy for Energy Policy, raised the matter with Biden but
5 did not go as far as to recommend that Hunter leave the
6 board. As Hunter recalled, his father discussed Burisma
7 with him just once saying Dad said I hope you know what
8 you're doing, and I said I do.

9 Did you speak to Adam Entous for this article?

10 MR. HOCHSTEIN: He called me, and I would not confirm
11 and would not confirm or deny any parts of what he reported.

12 MR. DOWNEY: Was what he wrote about you not going as
13 far as to recommend that Hunter leave the board accurate?

14 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I did not--that quote does not come
15 from me.

16 MR. DOWNEY: Do you know who that would come from?

17 MR. HOCHSTEIN: You would have to ask Mr. Entous. I
18 did not--I did not discuss my conversation with Vice
19 President Biden with Adam Entous

20 MR. DOWNEY: Did you recommend that Hunter leave the
21 board to either Vice President Biden or to Hunter Biden
22 himself?

23 MR. KRAMER: You can answer that with respect to a
24 conversation with Hunter Biden. I instruct you not to
25 answer with respect to any conversation you may or may not

1 have with the Vice President.

2 MR. HOCHSTEIN: In my conversation with Hunter Biden, I
3 did not recommend that he leave the board.

4 MR. DOWNEY: Why not?

5 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't believe that was my place to
6 have that discussion, one way or the other.

7 MR. DOWNEY: How did Hunter Biden know you had a
8 conversation with Vice President Biden?

9 MR. HOCHSTEIN: He told me that the Vice President told
10 him that he had a discussion.

11 MR. DOWNEY: So in late October 2015, you have the
12 conversation with Vice President Biden about Hunter's
13 position on Burisma's board. He tells Hunter Biden, and
14 then sometimes in the beginning of November 2015, you
15 discuss Burisma with Hunter Biden?

16 MR. KRAMER: Again, we can't confirm or deny anything
17 about a conversation that may or may not have happened with
18 the Vice President. Otherwise, he can confirm that's an
19 accurate statement, if it is.

20 MR. HOCHSTEIN: It is true that I had--I raised the
21 matter with Vice President Biden. It is true that Hunter
22 Biden called me--or called--his office contacted my office,
23 and I did meet with him sometime after that.

24 MR. DOWNEY: And you met with him at the State
25 Department?

1 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

2 MR. DOWNEY: Where did you meet him?

3 MR. HOCHSTEIN: We met at a coffee shop in Georgetown,
4 I believe.

5 MR. DOWNEY: Was that his idea or your idea?

6 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I would not know. It was on the
7 schedule that way. Sometimes if I was speaking somewhere or
8 if I was coming from somewhere, just to coordinate the
9 schedules, I would--I was at the Four Seasons across the
10 street, I would--"Let's just meet in a coffee shop." It was
11 easier.

12 MR. DOWNEY: Biden did not want to meet you at the
13 State Department headquarters?

14 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No. I don't--I have no idea, but he
15 went--this request for a meeting went through--formally
16 through my office at the State Department. I don't think he
17 was trying to hide it.

18 MR. DOWNEY: And how long did this meeting with Hunter
19 Biden last?

20 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I couldn't tell you exactly. When is
21 it? Five years ago? But my guess from the past is that it
22 was somewhere in 20 minutes or so. It wasn't a long
23 meeting.

24 MR. DOWNEY: Did you often take meetings outside the
25 Department when you served at the State Department?

1 MR. HOCHSTEIN: On--it wasn't entirely unusual to have
2 lunch with people, with foreign ambassadors to--with others,
3 have coffee, or--I think that's a fairly normal practice
4 across all administrations. Just walk by any day on the
5 corner of--Peet's Coffee there on the corner of
6 Pennsylvania.

7 MR. DOWNEY: So you had meetings with other individuals
8 like the one you had with Hunter Biden in November of 2015?

9 MR. HOCHSTEIN: When you say meetings like that one,
10 what do you mean? Do you mean did I have meetings with
11 people outside the office?

12 MR. DOWNEY: How did you--remind me how you--what was
13 the meeting with Hunter Biden? Was it over coffee? Was it
14 at a restaurant? Do you recall?

15 MR. HOCHSTEIN: It was--I probably had a cup of coffee.
16 It was at a café across the street from the Four Seasons on
17 M Street.

18 MR. DOWNEY: After this meeting with Hunter Biden, did
19 you brief people in the State Department?

20 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

21 MR. DOWNEY: Why not?

22 MR. HOCHSTEIN: There was nothing to brief.

23 MR. DOWNEY: Why was there nothing to brief?

24 MR. HOCHSTEIN: We had a short coffee where we talked
25 about how he, his dad, and his sister were doing in the

1 aftermath of his brother's passing, and I repeated in
2 probably two sentences, my view of the fact that the
3 Russians were using his presence on the board as part of a
4 broad effort to undermine the United States anticorruption
5 efforts in the Ukraine.

6 MR. DOWNEY: And what was Hunter Biden's reaction to
7 that?

8 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Frustration. I believe I said it
9 earlier when your colleague asked me that. I think he was--
10 he had--I think the only thing he said was that he was
11 focused on the present and the future of the company and not
12 the allegations regarding the past and that he was
13 frustrated that this was--that this was happening.

14 MR. DOWNEY: Did you speak with members of Vice
15 President Biden's staff or to Vice President Biden after
16 meeting with Hunter Biden in November of 2015?

17 MR. KRAMER: So take that as a yes--you mean about the
18 meeting with Hunter Biden?

19 MR. DOWNEY: Yes, about the meeting with Hunter Biden
20 in November of 2015.

21 MR. KRAMER: Take that one, yes.

22 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

23 MR. DOWNEY: So I'm going to kind of transition here.
24 When you served at the State Department, were you familiar
25 with Blue Star Strategies?

1 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I became aware and familiar with them
2 at some point.

3 MR. DOWNEY: Did you know the firm's CEO, Karen
4 Tramontano?

5 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I actually did not know Karen. I knew
6 her by reputation, but I did not know her personally.

7 MR. DOWNEY: Did you know Blue Star's COO, Sally
8 Painter?

9 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I did.

10 MR. DOWNEY: How did you know Sally Painter?

11 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Our paths had crossed probably 20 years
12 earlier. I forget exactly where. I believe she worked for
13 a former Congressman that I knew back in the '90s, so
14 literally 20 years earlier. So I knew her in that way, but
15 I did not know Blue Star.

16 MR. DOWNEY: How did you communicate with Sally Painter
17 or Karen Tramontano?

18 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Sally contacted me. I don't remember
19 how, the first time. She may have called--but I don't
20 recall--and said they were working on something in Ukraine
21 and wanted to chat with me.

22 MR. DOWNEY: Do you recall when that conversation or
23 that request came in?

24 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Probably sometime in maybe late
25 November, maybe early December. I don't remember. I think

1 maybe late November, but I'm not 100 percent.

2 MR. DOWNEY: November 2015?

3 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yeah, yeah, sometime in that latter
4 part of November.

5 MR. DOWNEY: So when did you become aware that Blue
6 Star Strategies represented Burisma?

7 MR. HOCHSTEIN: When Sally, I think, and Karen came to
8 my office.

9 MR. DOWNEY: And this was either late November 2015,
10 early December 2015?

11 MR. HOCHSTEIN: It may have been December 2015. I
12 remember there was an issue. I was about to go to Ukraine;
13 we were going to meet before or after. But I don't remember
14 exactly. I don't [inaudible].

15 MR. DOWNEY: So this is around the same period Vice
16 President Biden is going to Ukraine in the first week of
17 December of 2015?

18 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I think that I didn't meet with them
19 until after, but I'm not 100 percent sure. But I don't--I'm
20 not sure. I may have met them before. Sorry.

21 MR. DOWNEY: So in December of 2015, you met with Karen
22 Tramontano and Sally Painter?

23 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yeah. I definitely met with Sally. I
24 don't remember if Karen participated in that particular
25 meeting.

1 MR. DOWNEY: Did the meeting occur at the State
2 Department?

3 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

4 MR. DOWNEY: Did anyone else attend that meeting with
5 Sally Painter from Blue Star's team?

6 MR. HOCHSTEIN: They may have. I don't remember.

7 MR. DOWNEY: John Buretta of Cravath ring a bell?

8 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I met with him more than once, and I
9 definitely remember that Mr. Buretta joined one of the
10 meetings, but not--I don't believe he joined the first one.

11 MR. DOWNEY: So in your first meeting with Blue Star
12 Strategies, did the topic of Burisma come up with you?

13 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

14 MR. DOWNEY: What was Blue Star seeking to learn from
15 you in that meeting?

16 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Blue Star informed me that--or I should
17 say Sally and her team informed me that they were looking
18 into--that they'd been hired by Burisma or by the Burisma
19 board--I don't remember which one; it may have been the
20 board--to look into the accusations against Mr. Zlochevsky
21 and Burisma and to give an assessment of the veracity of the
22 charges against Burisma--or, sorry, against Zlochevsky. And
23 they asked for my views on that, and they told me that they
24 were going to be traveling and they would be talking to a
25 number of people in order to get an accurate assessment and

1 to have an independent report. That is what they told me
2 when they first met me.

3 MR. DOWNEY: What did you provide to Blue Star during
4 that meeting?

5 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I told them that I believed that Mr.
6 Zlochevsky faced real and credible accusations; that I
7 believed that it was unfortunate that he wasn't being
8 prosecuted for them; and that I was still holding out hope
9 that there would be a cooperation by the Ukrainian
10 prosecutor's office to support these investigations; and I
11 urged them to--I was happy that they were looking into it
12 and hoped that they would produce a report that supported
13 those allegations.

14 MR. DOWNEY: During the meeting in December of 2015
15 with Blue Star Strategy officials, did they provide you any
16 briefing papers or documents regarding the company Burisma?

17 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Not in the first meeting, no.

18 MR. DOWNEY: What was the reaction to what you told
19 them during this December 2015 meeting that you thought the
20 allegations against Mr. Zlochevsky were serious?

21 MR. KRAMER: And, Brian, just real quickly, you keep
22 saying the December 2015 meeting, and Amos has said it was
23 somewhere around that, he is not positive of the date. I
24 think it's fine to keep doing it that way. I just want the
25 record to reflect that Amos said that he was not certain as

1 to exactly when that date was.

2 MR. DOWNEY: Understood.

3 MR. HOCHSTEIN: You asked what their reaction was to
4 my--to me, right?

5 MR. DOWNEY: Correct.

6 MR. HOCHSTEIN: They were pretty straight up. They
7 said, look, we are just at the beginning; we are looking
8 into this; we're going to want to talk to--to get a better
9 understanding, and we'd like your help in doing this, and
10 your support. And I said that if they were conducting this
11 investigation, I would be happy to be helpful if I can.

12 MR. DOWNEY: So Blue Star was conducting an
13 investigation? Did I hear you correctly?

14 MR. HOCHSTEIN: They said that they were hired to look
15 into this, and maybe they didn't use the word
16 "investigation." Maybe they were saying they were looking
17 into the accusation against Burisma and that they were going
18 to have an independent report that they were going to put
19 together for the board--or for the company. I don't
20 remember if it was the board.

21 MR. DOWNEY: So when you provided your view of the
22 allegations against Mr. Zlochevsky, were you speaking what
23 the State Department's position was, the U.S. Government's
24 position was, or just yourself?

25 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I was speaking as--I don't think that

1 one could have separated that. I was speaking as a U.S.
2 official, even telling them that that's what I believed as a
3 U.S. official, that was our view. And they were already
4 aware--it wasn't in doubt. In other words, they came in and
5 said we are aware that the U.S. Government has these
6 accusations; we want to hear what your thoughts were outside
7 of, you know, sort of chatter. Can you share--you know, is
8 it accurate? Are those impressions on the outside that the
9 U.S. Government has these views true? And I said they were,
10 and I expanded.

11 MR. DOWNEY: During this first meeting with Blue Star
12 officials, did you provide any insight of the months prior
13 in your discussions that you had with Vice President Biden
14 regarding Hunter Biden being on Burisma's board or the fact
15 that you discussed at the beginning of November of 2015
16 Burisma with Hunter Biden?

17 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I shared none of that.

18 MR. DOWNEY: Why not?

19 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I didn't think it was their business.

20 MR. DOWNEY: Did they mention the fact that Hunter
21 Biden served on Burisma's board during this meeting?

22 MR. HOCHSTEIN: They wanted to make sure that--they
23 told me that they were aware--I don't know how to
24 characterize it. They did mention that he was on the board
25 along with--that there was a new--relatively new board over

1 the last year or so that was established including Hunter
2 Biden and the former President of Poland and some guy from,
3 I think it was, Morgan Stanley or Goldman or some such.

4 MR. DOWNEY: Were you concerned that Hunter Biden
5 served on Burisma's board when there was such serious
6 allegations against its owner, Mr. Zlochevsky?

7 MR. HOCHSTEIN: My concern really was about how to make
8 sure that Mr. Zlochevsky was prosecuted, and that we--that I
9 conducted all the other efforts to pursue the goals of the
10 administration. So his seat on the board, as I said before,
11 whether it was with Blue Star or others, did not impact me
12 or impact my work.

13 MR. DOWNEY: During this first meeting with Blue Star
14 officials, did they discuss their upcoming trip to Ukraine?

15 MR. HOCHSTEIN: They mentioned that they were going to
16 Ukraine.

17 MR. DOWNEY: Did they provide any more detail to you?

18 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Not at that time. I think at some
19 point they asked me for help with securing a meeting with
20 Ambassador Pyatt, and I said that I would make a
21 recommendation.

22 MR. DOWNEY: So you did secure a meeting between Blue
23 Star and Ambassador Pyatt?

24 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No. I said that if they needed my
25 help, I would be happy to secure--to make a recommendation

1 that they meet with him, again, under the guise that they
2 were trying--at that time, my knowledge at the time was that
3 they were looking to conduct an independent report on
4 whether or not there was veracity to the wrongdoings by
5 Zlochevsky.

6 MR. DOWNEY: Do you know if Blue Star Strategies ever
7 completed that report?

8 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes, they did--I believe they did. I
9 did not see it, though.

10 MR. DOWNEY: Do you know who might have seen the
11 report?

12 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't know.

13 MR. DOWNEY: Do you know if Blue Star Strategies
14 provided that report to other State Department officials?

15 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't know. And I do want to say I
16 may--I may have received their--they may have showed me
17 their report, but I don't recall. They shared the
18 conclusions, but I don't know if I actually saw the physical
19 report.

20 MR. DOWNEY: And what were the conclusions of that
21 report?

22 MR. HOCHSTEIN: They told me that they believed that
23 Zlochevsky was tried, prosecuted, and the charges against
24 him were dismissed by the U.K. and, therefore, there was no
25 reason to hold him responsible since the judicial system

1 worked.

2 MR. DOWNEY: Did you agree with that report?

3 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I strongly disagreed with it.

4 MR. DOWNEY: Did you let Blue Star officials know that
5 disagreement?

6 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I was very clear about my views that I
7 disagreed--

8 MR. DOWNEY: And what--sorry. What was Blue Star's
9 reaction to your disagreement?

10 MR. HOCHSTEIN: They clearly did not agree with me, and
11 I expressed my disappointment.

12 MR. DOWNEY: Do you know how Blue Star had constructed
13 this report? What were their sources? What were their--
14 what was their factual evidence that obviously in the end
15 you didn't agree with?

16 MR. HOCHSTEIN: All I can tell you is what they told
17 me, and they had hired a well-respected former Department of
18 Justice career official, Mr. Buretta. I did not know Mr.
19 Buretta then or now, so I don't know--I can't speak to his
20 credentials. They claim that they had conducted a thorough
21 investigation but there was all accusations and mud-slinging
22 in Ukraine between all kinds of businessmen accusing each
23 other of things, and that the ultimate proof was that there
24 was a case and the judge--I forget the language that the
25 judge in U.K. used, but it said that there was no facts--

1 factual basis for it and threw it out, and they were largely
2 hanging their hat on that.

3 MR. DOWNEY: Okay. Well, we're going to go to--this
4 will be, I think, Exhibit 5, which is at Tab 13, and the
5 Bates number is 1125. If you could pull that up? Thank
6 you.

7 [Hochstein Exhibit No. 5 was
8 marked for identification.]

9 MR. DOWNEY: If you could scroll down. So on March 21,
10 2016, according to this State Department document, Blue Star
11 officials requested a meeting with you, Mr. Hochstein. In
12 this email, a Blue Star official wrote: "I understand you
13 have previously met with Sally Painter regarding energy
14 issues in Ukraine, and she is hoping to brief you on a
15 sensitive energy matter ahead of President Poroshenko's
16 upcoming visit to D.C. next week."

17 Did this meeting between you and Blue Star officials
18 occur in March of 2016?

19 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I believe this was the meeting where we
20 had our disagreement.

21 MR. DOWNEY: Did John Buretta attend this meeting?

22 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I believe so.

23 MR. DOWNEY: Who else attended this meeting?

24 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Karen Tramontano.

25 MR. DOWNEY: So it was Karen Tramontano, John Buretta,

1 and Sally Painter?

2 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yeah.

3 MR. DOWNEY: Did Blue Star mention its meetings with
4 other State Department officials with you during this March
5 2016 meeting?

6 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't believe so. I'm not--but I
7 couldn't be--I cannot be certain.

8 MR. DOWNEY: Did Blue Star officials discuss with you
9 ever meeting with Ambassador Pyatt during this March 2016
10 meeting?

11 MR. HOCHSTEIN: They may have.

12 MR. DOWNEY: And what did they tell you about their
13 meeting with Ambassador Pyatt?

14 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I believe--

15 MR. KRAMER: Again, don't speculate about what you
16 think may have happened.

17 MR. HOCHSTEIN: All I recall is they were equally
18 frustrated with their meeting with Ambassador Pyatt, who had
19 repeated what he had said in public.

20 MR. DOWNEY: Why did you accept this meeting with Blue
21 Star Strategies in March of 2016?

22 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Because until that meeting I was still
23 under the impression from the first meeting that they were
24 looking to conduct a report. I was--I didn't have an issue
25 with meeting with them again and hearing where they were in

1 their process.

2 MR. DOWNEY: Was your view or the U.S. Government's
3 view of Burisma different from when Blue Star first met you
4 in December of 2015?

5 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

6 MR. DOWNEY: Did Blue Star officials or Mr. Buretta in
7 this March 2016 meeting discuss the prosecutor general
8 office with you?

9 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't recall.

10 MR. DOWNEY: Did Blue Star officials discuss Ukraine
11 President Poroshenko's planned March 2016 trip to D.C. with
12 you?

13 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I really have no idea. I don't
14 remember.

15 MR. DOWNEY: Did Blue Star--go ahead, sir.

16 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No, I just don't recall the details of
17 the conversation, I recall sort of the conclusion of what I
18 walked away from--what I walked away with from the
19 [inaudible].

20 MR. DOWNEY: And during this March 2016 meeting with
21 Blue Star officials, they provided you a report?

22 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't know if they provided me--as I
23 said earlier, I don't recall if they gave me a physical
24 report. I don't actually remember ever getting a report,
25 but I just can't be sure. They gave me a verbal view of

1 where they stood. I don't [inaudible] the conclusion.

2 MR. DOWNEY: Did Blue Star officials request anything
3 from you during this March 2016 meeting?

4 MR. HOCHSTEIN: They were unhappy with the rhetoric
5 from U.S. officials, myself included, regarding Mr.
6 Zlochevsky. But that's about it.

7 MR. DOWNEY: Did they discuss with you any upcoming
8 trips they had planned to Ukraine?

9 MR. HOCHSTEIN: In this meeting, in the March meeting?

10 MR. DOWNEY: Yes, sir.

11 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't--I don't know.

12 MR. DOWNEY: In this March 2016 meeting with Blue Star
13 officials, did you offer to do anything on Blue Star's
14 behalf?

15 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

16 MR. DOWNEY: Okay. I think we're close to our time
17 being up. I'm going to kick it over to Josh Flynn-Brown of
18 Chairman Grassley's office and then go from there.

19 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: Mr. Hochstein, can you hear me okay?

20 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I can hear you, but I cannot see you--
21 oh, now I can see you.

22 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: Let me move the camera. The camera
23 lens was blocked there. Good to go? Okay. Great.

24 Mr. Hochstein, do you know whether Burisma served as a
25 vehicle to enrich Ukrainian Government officials?

1 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't--I don't know.

2 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: Would it surprise you if it did?

3 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I just don't know.

4 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: Would you agree that Burisma is a
5 corrupt company?

6 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I would agree that Burisma was involved
7 in--that I believe that they probably did conduct--that they
8 were a corrupt company during a certain period of time. I
9 don't know about their activities post [inaudible].

10 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: So what period of time would you say
11 that they were a corrupt company?

12 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Again, I don't--I'm not a prosecutor,
13 but it was my view that during the time that Mr. Zlochevsky
14 left his office in government--and while he was in
15 government in the earlier 2000s when the leases were being
16 given to Burisma, I think that was a period of time in which
17 those transactions seemed questionable.

18 MR. KRAMER: So let me interrupt because we've been
19 going a little bit over an hour, so I think it's time just
20 to switch off, take a quick break, and then we can wrap this
21 thing up with Session 4.

22 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: I just have several questions here.
23 I'd like to finish the line of inquiry if it's okay with
24 you. But if you would very much prefer a break, we can take
25 5 minutes right now?

1 MR. KRAMER: Yeah, I would prefer the break. We talked
2 about this in advance. We agreed on the hour, the hour, the
3 hour, the hour, and that's what we'll do.

4 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: Okay, then we will--

5 MR. SCHRAM: Josh, how much time do you think you have
6 left on that specific line of questions?

7 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: You know, I think it's anywhere
8 between 5 and 7 minutes, no more.

9 MR. SCHRAM: Between 5 and 7 minutes?

10 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: Correct.

11 MR. SCHRAM: Okay. Why don't we take our break? And
12 if that wraps your period of questioning, I'd be fine to
13 have you take your 5 minutes and then we'll go.

14 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: Thank you. I appreciate that. So
15 we'll reconvene at 1:55.

16 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Okay.

17 [Recess.]

18 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: Okay. Let's go back on the record.
19 It's 1:56.

20 Did you have anything--I know we had to take a quick
21 break, but did you have anything to add to your answer with
22 respect to the timeline in which you believed Burisma was a
23 corrupt company?

24 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

25 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: So while Hunter Biden was a member of

1 the board, do you believe that Burisma was a corrupt company
2 at that time?

3 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I have no idea.

4 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: Was it the U.S. government's view
5 that Burisma was a corrupt company at that time when he was
6 on the board?

7 MR. HOCHSTEIN: The U.S. government is a euphemism. To
8 my knowledge and my recollection, we concentrated most of
9 our efforts on Zlochevsky at an earlier time, but I can say
10 for certain that that view is [inaudible].

11 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: That Hunter Biden was on the board of
12 Burisma, was it the State Department's view that Zlochevsky
13 was corrupt?

14 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I didn't mean up--is not about what you
15 do today or tomorrow. If you did it yesterday, you're still
16 a corrupt guy, and I think there was a dim view of him.

17 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: Can you repeat that?

18 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I think there was a dim view of Mr.
19 Zlochevsky.

20 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: And what was that dim view based on?

21 MR. HOCHSTEIN: The past actions when he was minister
22 of ecology and I think a frustration with the collapse of
23 the case in the UK.

24 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: Do you know whether Burisma served as
25 a vehicle to enrich Ukrainian political parties?

1 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yeah. You've asked me that before. I
2 really--I'm not--I don't--I don't know. I don't know that I
3 have any information about that.

4 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: Are you aware of whether or not
5 Burisma and Zlochevsky took directions from the Ukrainian
6 government or any Ukrainian government officials?

7 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Not to my knowledge. Look, the way the
8 Ukraine works is really complicated, and people that--you
9 know, there are all kinds--outsiders have a hard time
10 understanding some of the behind-the-scenes conversation.
11 So I can't say that I know specifically about his
12 relationships with Ukrainian government officials.

13 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: Given Mr. Zlochevsky's reputation,
14 would it surprise you if he did take directions from the
15 Ukrainian government or any Ukrainian government officials?

16 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Very little surprises me with Ukraine,
17 but I have no knowledge.

18 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: Are you aware of whether or not
19 Burisma and Zlochevsky took directions from any political
20 party?

21 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I'm not aware.

22 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: Would it surprise you if they did?

23 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I honestly don't know. Again, I think
24 things are not--in Ukraine, things are rarely linear if one
25 gives an instruction to the other. Things are really

1 complicated, and they're usually more than meets the eye.

2 But I don't know [inaudible].

3 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: Do you believe that Blue Star's
4 intents when they met with you and other State Department
5 employees was to alter or influence U.S. policy with respect
6 to Zlochevsky?

7 MR. HOCHSTEIN: That's a difficult question. I think
8 he certainly wanted me to know of the interview of Mr.
9 Zlochevsky and that they were frustrated with--did not agree
10 with the U.S. government officials' view of Mr. Zlochevsky.
11 Am I answering your question? Sorry.

12 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: Well, I'd like a more direct one, to
13 be honest with you.

14 [Laughter.]

15 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: I can restate the question if you'd
16 like.

17 MR. HOCHSTEIN: They did not like my answer, and they
18 tried to convince me otherwise.

19 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: Did you ever talk to Hunter Biden
20 about any of his other business associations, or was it just
21 limited to Burisma?

22 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I never had any other conversation with
23 Hunter Biden about his business activities.

24 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: Other than Burisma, are you aware of
25 Hunter Biden's business connections to other foreign

1 companies or foreign nationals?

2 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't believe that I am.

3 MR. FLYNN-BROWN: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Hochstein.

4 Zack, over to you.

5 MR. SCHRAM: Thanks, Josh. Dan Goshorn is going to
6 kick off this round for us.

7 MR. GOSHORN: Hello again, Mr. Hochstein.

8 So it's my understanding that you currently serve on
9 the board of Naftogaz; is that correct?

10 MR. HOCHSTEIN: That is correct. The supervisory-

11 MR. GOSHORN: Go ahead. Sorry.

12 MR. HOCHSTEIN: The supervisory board.

13 MR. GOSHORN: Can you describe what that means?

14 MR. HOCHSTEIN: During post Maidan, we were--we the
15 international community were concerned that a lot of money
16 from donors, i.e., the IFI's, international financial
17 institutions, the U.S. government, the Brussels, Germany
18 were giving money to Ukraine, and with a history of
19 corruption, we were concerned.

20 One of the ideas that I was involved with coming up
21 with was together with the EU and the EBRD and IMF.

22 For the court reporter, EBRD is the European Bank for
23 Reconstruction and Development.

24 That there would be a supervisory board to the--to
25 public state-owned entities, such as Naftogaz, where the

1 majority of the members serving on the board would be
2 international people, non-Ukrainians, and the others would
3 be appointed by the president and prime minister of Ukraine,
4 so a division between independent and dependent versus
5 dependent.

6 We set up that board where the EBRD and the IMF helps
7 with the selection of the members of the international, and
8 then the president and prime minister appointed them.

9 When the first crew if internationals resigned, I was
10 asked by--originally, it was by the EBRD and by the IMF if I
11 would join the supervisory board which has a dual purpose,
12 one to support Naftogaz and as a company, as any board would
13 do, and the second would be to support the management and
14 ensure that corruption was not taking hold in the company.
15 And therefore, no vote on that board can be taken unless a
16 majority of the internationals was in favor.

17 MR. GOSHORN: And in the Ukraine energy sector, how
18 does Naftogaz compare to Burisma in size and importance?

19 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Naftogaz is the incumbent. It is very
20 important. It is the--by far, the largest producer. It
21 also owns other assets and is state-owned. Burisma is a
22 relatively insignificant company.

23 MR. GOSHORN: So as you, I'm sure, know, last fall the
24 House of Representatives initiated an impeachment inquiry
25 against the President for using the Office of the Presidency

1 to pressure Ukraine President Zelensky to launch an
2 investigation into one of his political rivals, Vice
3 President Biden, much like the one you're currently
4 testifying in today.

5 Notably, the House of Representatives subpoenaed then
6 Energy Secretary Rick Perry during this inquiry over his
7 role in the President's pressure campaign against the
8 Ukraine. He refused to comply with the subpoena and instead
9 announced his resignation shortly thereafter.

10 Recent reporting has shed more light on Secretary
11 Perry's efforts in Ukraine, including the alleged misuse of
12 his office and Department of Energy resources, to pressure
13 Naftogaz to cut deals worth billions of dollars with
14 American companies in which he and his political donors held
15 financial interests. This investigation, however, is only
16 focused on Burisma, a private--as you said, much smaller
17 natural gas company operating in Ukraine.

18 Ranking Member Wyden has repeatedly requested
19 information from the Trump administration related to its
20 involvement in Ukraine, including as a part of this
21 investigation and including in its efforts to intervene in
22 the Ukraine natural gas industry. This information has not
23 been provided, although there is a substantial reason to
24 believe that these efforts and related means and
25 communications occurred.

1 In May of 2019, Secretary Perry traveled to Ukraine to
2 attend President Zelensky's inauguration. On that trip, he
3 reportedly personally handled President Zelensky a list of
4 names of American individuals, including Michael Bleyzer, a
5 longtime Perry donor, and Robert Bensch, another oil and gas
6 executive from Texas.

7 One month after Secretary Perry's visit, Mr. Bleyzer's
8 company won a license to develop oil and gas fields in
9 Ukraine potentially worth billions of dollars, and earlier
10 this year, President Zelensky also appointed Mr. Bensch to
11 the Naftogaz board.

12 Is that correct? Are you familiar with that?

13 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I'm familiar with all of it. It's
14 almost entirely correct. I think Mr. Bensch was appointed to
15 the board, but he has not taken his seat on the board just
16 yet. I have said that I would resign if he was able to take
17 a seat.

18 MR. GOSHORN: Okay. Are you aware of the Trump
19 administration's efforts to influence President Zelensky?

20 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

21 MR. GOSHORN: Can you describe those efforts?

22 MR. HOCHSTEIN: So within the--I was asked to meet
23 with--you want me to go through each of the instances, each
24 of the examples?

25 MR. GOSHORN: Sure.

1 MR. HOCHSTEIN: In May of 2019, I believe it was May
2 7th, I was asked on an urgent basis to come and see Mr.
3 Zelensky. He had won his election but had--was just a few,
4 couple weeks away from serving--of swearing in and taking
5 over as president.

6 I was invited to the meetings with him, his chief of
7 staff, and his number two. And I was there with the CEO of
8 Naftogaz. He wanted to cover two areas. One was the energy
9 corruption in Ukraine and the second to get my advice and
10 guidance on how to manage the legacy that was left behind
11 for him of pressure to investigate Mr. Biden.

12 We spent the time talking about how to respond to that,
13 how to respond to Mr. Giuliani's impending visit that he was
14 very concerned about.

15 There were--after the inauguration--I received the day
16 of the inauguration that was--the delegation from the U.S.
17 was led by Secretary Perry, Kurt Volker, and I forget. I
18 think Mr. Vindman, and I forget his name, the ambassador to
19 Brussels at the time. Sondland. I was called by a number
20 of people in Mr. Zelensky's orbit to say that Mr. Perry had
21 given a list of a couple of names that he would like to see
22 on the board of Naftogaz. He expressed his opposition to
23 the CEO of Naftogaz, someone who is apparently the top
24 anticorruption reformers in the country, and then that was
25 formally in the media. And then privately to a number of

1 officials said, "You need to replace Mr. Hochstein with Mr.
2 Bensch or Bleyzer."

3 MR. GOSHORN: Who? Who said that? I'm sorry.

4 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Mr. Perry allegedly had told that to a
5 number of officials saying that what he meant was that the
6 American on the board should not be the Obama-Biden guy. It
7 should be one of his guys, Mr. Bensch.

8 In September of 2019, at the summit in Poland, there
9 was an attempt by--the Ukrainian government was asked by the
10 U.S. Department of Energy officials to sign an MOU with a
11 company called LNGE, Louisiana Natural Gas Exports.
12 Naftogaz was asked by the government to do so. I was asked
13 by the CEO if I knew the company. I had never heard of
14 them. They were essentially a company with no assets
15 whatsoever, no money, no assets, no LNG, in fact, and we--I
16 said we--as a board member, I said we have to resist signing
17 such an MOU. And ultimately, there was also some--a former
18 conviction of corruption of the CEO. That pressure,
19 however, continued, and ultimately, earlier this year, the
20 government of Ukraine signed an MOU with LNGE, this company
21 that has no assets, which essentially was to pressure
22 Ukraine to buy LNG from the United States, despite the fact
23 that commercially that was a totally non-doable deal because
24 it was going to be way too expensive. And LNGE was
25 essentially corrupt.

1 It turned out that Robert Bensch who Secretary Perry was
2 pushing as a--his representative was related to this
3 company, and they were pushing for him to be on the board of
4 Naftogaz while also having his company secure a very
5 important contract with--Naftogaz with Ukraine.

6 Just as a reminder, Mr. Bensch was being supported so
7 thoroughly by the Department of Energy to this day, as
8 someone who was discovered by the Veterans Organization of
9 America for lying on his bio for 25 years saying that he was
10 a Special Forces winner of all kinds of medals when, in
11 fact, he never served outside the country ever.

12 So there were other areas of--I won't go through the
13 rest of the list, but there are a lot of areas where there
14 was pressure being placed on the Ukrainian government and on
15 Naftogaz to do things that were not in the commercial,
16 economic, or national interest of Ukraine.

17 MR. GOSHORN: I just want to clarify that. What you
18 just described in your words were--there was an effort by
19 the Trump administration to influence Ukraine to take
20 actions that were not in its financial or economic interest;
21 is that correct?

22 MR. HOCHSTEIN: That were not in its interest. That's
23 right.

24 MR. GOSHORN: And so after Secretary Perry gave--
25 reportedly gave this list to President Zelensky, one of his

1 associates was awarded a lucrative license for LNG, and the
2 other got a seat--is in a position to get a seat on the
3 board of Naftogaz?

4 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Just to clarify, Mr. Bleyzer's contract
5 that he was awarded was despite the fact that he was not
6 highest bidder in that process. Other company was--bids
7 were higher, and therefore, Ukraine chose a bid that paid
8 itself less.

9 MR. GOSHORN: Do you consider the actions of the Trump
10 administration officials in Ukraine to be potentially
11 improper?

12 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

13 MR. GOSHORN: Are you aware of any other actions of
14 Trump administration officials or associates in Ukraine that
15 you consider to be potentially improper?

16 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Well, as I alluded to before earlier in
17 the day, in 2019, I was told by Ukrainian officials about a
18 fantastical story that I did not believe for a second, and
19 that was that Mr. Lutsenko, the prosecutor general, had
20 flown to New York and met with Mr. Giuliani, and that they
21 were going to do all these--a dirt campaign on Mr. Biden. I
22 did not believe it, and they told me, "No, no. Here's how
23 it's going to work. There's going to be--they're going to
24 get rid of Masha Yovanovitch as ambassador." As I said, I
25 did not believe this until it played out exactly as

1 described.

2 So the efforts of--those efforts set the tone for the
3 next year and a half of pressuring Ukraine to--on the
4 government of Ukraine, successive governments of Ukraine in
5 a way that I think were against the interest of Ukraine but
6 also against the interest of the U.S.-Ukraine and the U.S.
7 interests in Europe and the former Soviet Republic areas.

8 MR. GOSHORN: If the chairmen running this
9 investigation were genuinely interested in looking for
10 American policymakers with conflicts of interest in Ukraine,
11 would you think this would be a good place to start looking?

12 MR. HOCHSTEIN: So, first, I do not want to address
13 motives of members of the United States Senate, and I will
14 just address the actions.

15 I think there is--the areas that you mentioned earlier
16 are merit for a review by the committees.

17 MR. GOSHORN: Thank you.

18 Zack?

19 MR. SCHRAM: Mr. Kramer, I know that we've gone over
20 the time you've allotted for this interview. I just wanted
21 to--I have only a few more minutes. Checking on timing on
22 your end.

23 MR. KRAMER: That's fine, yeah.

24 MR. SCHRAM: Mr. Hochstein, in the last hour, the
25 majority disputed that the letter Chairman Johnson signed

1 with the Ukraine Caucus in support of reforms of the
2 prosecutor general's office referred specifically to the
3 firing of Prosecutor General Shokin. I'm marking as Exhibit
4 D an article published in The Hill on October 3, 2019.

5 [Hochstein Exhibit D was
6 marked for identification.]

7 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I can see it. I can see it.

8 MR. SCHRAM: The headline is "GOP Senator says he
9 doesn't remember signing 2016 letter urging `reform' of
10 Ukraine prosecutor's office."

11 Drawing your attention to the quote that starts on the
12 bottom of the first page, "Johnson did acknowledge the
13 letter in an interview Thursday on WIBA's `The Vicki McKenna
14 Show,' saying `The whole world, by the way, including the
15 Ukrainian caucus, which I signed the letter, the whole world
16 felt that this that Shokin wasn't doing a [good] enough job.
17 So we were saying hey you've...got to rid yourself of
18 corruption."

19 Although Senator Johnson didn't recall signing the
20 letter, based on his own words, did you understand him to
21 have supported the policy of removing Prosecutor General
22 Shokin?

23 MR. HOCHSTEIN: It was our understanding at the time
24 that the Ukraine Caucus supported removing Shokin. I knew
25 that some of my colleagues from the State Department had

1 briefed the bipartisan group of Senators that cared about
2 Ukraine about this. I met with a number of members of the
3 caucus on both sides of the aisle at the time as well, and
4 we always felt that we had full support of the United States
5 Senate on this, on removing Shokin.

6 MR. SCHRAM: Mr. Hochstein, the majority asked you
7 several times today about the appearance of a conflict of
8 interest and its impact on U.S. policy. You have repeatedly
9 said that there was no impact on U.S. policy. Over the
10 course of their many questions, your answer remained the
11 same. You stated, "The facts negated the theory about the
12 conflict of interest."

13 For the last time, what facts negated the theory about
14 the conflict of interest?

15 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Vice President Biden was the lead
16 counter-Russian influence in Europe and counter-corruption
17 in Ukraine. I do want to stress we are talking today about
18 Ukraine as though it is an insulated policy item of the
19 United States when, in fact, Ukraine was--the whole point is
20 that it was part of Europe. We were trying--this was a
21 U.S.-Europe--we were trying to make Ukraine part of Europe.
22 It was physically interconnected. The gas pipelines were
23 the most obvious one, but there were more areas there. The
24 Russian efforts in Ukraine were not only in Ukraine. They
25 were in Hungary and in Bulgaria and in Romania and in

1 Croatia and throughout Eastern Europe.

2 So the facts were that the Vice President of the United
3 States was leading the effort against Russia's interests to
4 divide Europe and to pull countries through corruption
5 towards an alliance with Russia versus an alliance with the
6 United States and the West.

7 Number two, we cared deeply and the Vice President
8 cared deeply about the future of Ukraine and even gave sort
9 of an emotional speech on the floor of the Rada to the
10 parliament about this moment in time that he believed that
11 they had an opportunity to reform. We spent as an
12 administration a tremendous amount of effort on rooting out
13 corruption, putting in place mechanisms that would allow for
14 a new kind of business atmosphere and without corruption and
15 more transparent.

16 The Vice President led those efforts in the sense that
17 we did a lot of the work when I needed his help, as
18 evidenced by some of those phone conversations that were,
19 unfortunately, leaked where he used my name. I did bring to
20 his attention when I thought that it was rising to the level
21 where reformists were trying to get--were about to be thrown
22 out of their office by the Prime Minister or by the
23 President's people or others.

24 So the Vice President was deeply engaged in the
25 anticorruption movement and efforts. The fact that Hunter

1 Biden was on the board was known in Ukraine from 2014 until
2 the end of the administration, and yet the Ukrainian
3 Government never doubted the ferociousness of the Vice
4 President's caring about the corruption issue. It led at
5 one point to a real confrontation between the Vice President
6 and President Poroshenko that I was there for at the UN
7 General Assembly where it was heated, all about corruption.

8 So the facts are that we fought corruption, that we
9 continued to fight corruption, that everybody knew that
10 Hunter Biden was on the board, and nobody in the United
11 States or in Ukraine ever allowed it to affect either our
12 efforts or the Ukrainians' interactions with us. Quite to
13 the contrary. For that reason, the facts are that over the
14 last several years, since 2015 all the way to today, there
15 are two groups that are trying to undermine Vice President
16 Biden: one is Russia and its allies, and two are the very
17 corrupt oligarchs who fear his return. Those are the groups
18 that are going after him, going after me, going after a few
19 other people who they perceive as their enemies.

20 That is what I mean when I say the factual basis does
21 not support that anybody believed that there was a conflict
22 of interest.

23 MR. SCHRAM: The majority asked if the Russian
24 disinformation campaign that used Hunter Biden's presence on
25 the board of Burisma to insinuate wrongdoing by Vice

1 President Biden was successful. You said it was not
2 successful in Ukraine because Ukraine generally did not
3 believe those lies.

4 Let's look to a specific example of what Ukrainians
5 believe. Entering as Exhibit E a statement on the Ukrainian
6 American Strategic Partnership from the Kyiv Security Forum.

7 [Hochstein Exhibit E was
8 marked for identification.]

9 MR. SCHRAM: Take as much time as you need to review
10 this document.

11 MR. KRAMER: Mr. Schram, if you don't mind emailing
12 that to us, that would be helpful.

13 MR. SCHRAM: I believe you have it. If not, you'll
14 have it momentarily.

15 MR. KRAMER: Thank you.

16 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Can you just tell me--at the top it
17 says 23 May. Can you tell me what year this is?

18 MR. SCHRAM: 2020.

19 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Thank you. Yeah, you can scroll if you
20 need to.

21 MR. SCHRAM: I will ask you about the two paragraphs
22 that begin with "We call," "We oppose," and "We call" again--
23 -three paragraphs.

24 [Pause.]

25 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I've read it.

1 MR. SCHRAM: Just take a moment to look at the
2 signatories.

3 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

4 MR. SCHRAM: I won't make you go through the whole
5 list, but do you recognize any of the names?

6 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I recognize a number of the names, yes.

7 MR. SCHRAM: Is it fair to say that these names
8 represent pro-Western Ukrainians?

9 MR. HOCHSTEIN: For sure, yes.

10 MR. SCHRAM: This letter was dated May 23, 2020, and it
11 is notated as having been signed on May 22nd and May 23rd.
12 Again, reviewing the timeline, in April, in a letter to
13 Secretary Pompeo, Chairman Grassley and Chairman Johnson
14 requested documents, including records related to phone
15 calls between Vice President Biden and President Poroshenko.
16 The response date on that letter was May 15th. On May 13th,
17 Chairman Johnson noticed a markup to vote on a subpoena
18 related to Blue Star Strategies for documents and
19 information testimony. That subpoena was a consolation
20 prize. Related information was first sought from Andrii
21 Telezhenko, but the vote on the subpoena of Andrii
22 Telezhenko was pulled down under bipartisan pressure.

23 On May 19th, Andrii Derkach released transcripts and
24 recordings of Biden-Poroshenko phone calls. The Committee
25 voted on the Blue Star subpoena the following day, on May

1 20th. At that markup, Senator Peters made a motion to table
2 the vote until the Committee could be briefed by the FBI and
3 the intelligence community about national security concerns
4 and disinformation concerns related to the investigation.
5 That was defeated on a party line vote.

6 Then on May 22nd and May 23rd, this letter was signed
7 and sent from the Kyiv Security Forum by distinguished
8 Ukrainian politicians, diplomats, civil activists--civic
9 activists. So turning your attention to the paragraphs I
10 identified, the letter says:

11 "We call on American leaders to distinguish between the
12 position of new Ukraine, which stands for the unity of the
13 West and acts to unite democracies around the world, and
14 those forces that seek to turn the political developments in
15 our country into a toxic narrative to sow discord among our
16 partners."

17 "We oppose the dishonest attempts to use the political
18 controversies in the United States. We do not choose any
19 side, but support each of them in the same way that they
20 together help Ukraine's independence."

21 "We call on America's leaders to distinguish between
22 the position of our nation from the actions of politicians
23 instigated by Moscow."

24 Is this letter consistent with your impression of how
25 Ukrainians react to Russian disinformation campaigns?

1 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes. I believe that the fear in
2 Ukraine over the last couple of years is that Ukraine has
3 become a political football between the two parties, and as
4 a result, the relationship between Ukraine and the United
5 States is damaged and hurt and becomes a partisan issue.
6 And this is something they can't afford because they have--
7 at any time, at any time, Russia could turn the heat on in
8 the East and start--and re-engage in the combat operations
9 in the East. They could destabilize Ukraine. So the
10 support of the United States on a bipartisan basis is
11 something that's critical to anyone who's involved in the
12 economic and national security of Ukraine.

13 MR. SCHRAM: Do you share the concerns expressed in
14 this letter?

15 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I do, very much.

16 MR. SCHRAM: Do you consider this investigation to be a
17 successful outcome of a Russian disinformation campaign
18 because it brings Russian disinformation into the
19 mainstream?

20 MR. HOCHSTEIN: So I want to be clear. I want to--my
21 comments are not going to motive. I want to go in fact, so
22 I don't want to cast any doubt on any Senator or staff
23 motive on either side of the aisle--

24 MR. SCHRAM: And to be clear, the question is not to
25 motive. It is to consequence.

1 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yeah, but I do agree that, as I said
2 before, in fact, regardless of motive, this investigation is
3 seen as a success--or a successful outcome of the Russian
4 attempts and their operation. I think they regard this as a
5 successful operation, especially being done so close to the
6 election.

7 MR. SCHRAM: My colleague asked you about a meeting
8 that you had with President Zelensky.

9 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yes.

10 MR. SCHRAM: How did you advise Mr. Zelensky with
11 respect to the pressure he was facing?

12 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Well, he was--there was a lot of
13 pressure on him that he already knew was coming. This was
14 sort of in between the two phone calls with President Trump,
15 and he knew that he was facing the pressure and that Mr.
16 Giuliani was coming or trying to come to Ukraine. That trip
17 ultimately got pulled down once it became public.

18 I told him, I said, "Listen, you participating and
19 allowing yourself to become part of one party politics in
20 America, I don't know which party in America will win that
21 argument. I know you will lose. You need to have a working
22 relationship with President Trump and his administration
23 because he is the President of the United States, and you
24 need to have a strong and working relationship with the
25 Democrats in Congress because they are elected officials as

1 well." And what Ukraine needs is the full support of the
2 United States of America, and the emphasis on "united,"
3 because that's the only way that Ukraine, facing so many
4 challenges--my advice to him was if Democrats ask you to dig
5 dirt or if the Republicans ask you to get involved in
6 politics, resist it, make everything that you're asked
7 aboveboard, transparent, clear, and open to all. And if you
8 do that, they will stop asking you. But if you continue--if
9 you play ball on this with anyone and you get dragged into
10 it, you'll never get out of it, because of the previous
11 question you asked me about the Kyiv Security Forum and what
12 former Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk was saying, they
13 need to be--Ukraine needs to be an area of consensus in the
14 United States and not be asked to do unethical and non-
15 democratic--take non-democratic actions to support illicit
16 investigations into political opponents.

17 MR. SCHRAM: During your time in the Obama
18 administration, was Ukraine policy an area of consensus?

19 MR. HOCHSTEIN: As I said before, it very much was. We
20 briefed Republican Members of both the House and Senate on a
21 regular basis. I myself met several times with Republican
22 Senators and Republican Members of Congress. I testified on
23 the Hill. We wanted it to be a bipartisan effort. We
24 thought that is what would make the position so much
25 stronger vis-a-vis Russia but also sometimes even there was

1 some Ukraine fatigue in Europe and they were trying to take
2 the position of--the Russian position, and the fact that it
3 was bipartisan and consensus building was the strength of
4 the policy.

5 MR. SCHRAM: Are you surprised that it has become the
6 source of political controversy?

7 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I have a very warm part of my heart,
8 despite all the difficulties, for Ukraine. I feel for them.
9 And I would characterize it I am disappointed and saddened
10 by how this has turned out, and I think it not only weakens
11 Ukraine, it ultimately weakens the transatlantic alliance
12 into the future.

13 MR. SCHRAM: At the very beginning of the interview, I
14 read the statement of the Department of Treasury related to
15 Mr. Derkach. Treasury stated, "Derkach waged a covert
16 influence campaign centered on cultivating false and
17 unsubstantiated narratives concerning U.S. officials in the
18 upcoming 2020 Presidential election, spurring corruption
19 investigations in both Ukraine and the United States
20 designed to culminate prior to election day."

21 Earlier this week, according to the Milwaukee Journal
22 Sentinel, Senator Johnson told GOP activists during a video
23 call, quote, Stay tuned. In about a week, we're going to
24 learn a whole lot more of Vice President Biden's fitness for
25 office in reference to his investigation.

1 Having now sat through this interview for the past,
2 approaching, five hours, is it fair to say that the
3 chairmen's investigation--and again, this is not going to
4 motive. Is a, quote, corruption investigation in the United
5 States, quote, designed to culminate prior to election day?

6 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I think it would appear, based on
7 public comments and timing of this investigation, that it's-
8 -either by design or not, it is--it is impacting an
9 election, and I stated earlier that my concern is that I
10 would--I would have--when Mr. Folio asked me the question, I
11 would have a lot less issue if this was being conducted in
12 December of this year or at any time in the previous five
13 years.

14 I think the timing of this is extremely problematic and
15 plays into the hands of those who are trying to infiltrate
16 our election system and influence it from the outside.

17 MR. SCHRAM: In your view, is the chairmen's
18 investigation based on, again, to quote the Treasury
19 Department statement, a false an unsubstantiated narrative
20 concerning U.S. officials in the upcoming 2020 presidential
21 election?

22 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Again, my view is as someone who worked
23 with Mr. Biden in Ukraine and around the world. There is no
24 basis in fact for the allegations. I was there. I was in
25 the room. I was on the calls. I was doing the work, and

1 there is no basis in fact to suggest any conflict of
2 interest, not even a perception, successful perception.
3 Just maligned influencers from outside Ukraine and corrupt
4 oligarchs who feared the anticorruption efforts by the Vice
5 President and several of us working under his direction.

6 MR. SCHRAM: So then the investigation is in fact an
7 investigation of corruption designed to culminate prior to
8 the election day based on false and unsubstantiated
9 narratives concerning U.S. officials in the upcoming 2020
10 presidential election?

11 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I believe that the narrative that is
12 being used for this investigation is totally false, and it
13 is being done just ahead of an election.

14 MR. SCHRAM: That's all for us.

15 MR. KRAMER: Okay. We'd like to wrap this up, then.
16 We're a little bit past the time. We've been going for
17 about four and a half hours. So we're going to call it a
18 say. Thanks, everybody, for your courtesy and
19 professionalism.

20 MR. FOLIO: Hey, Kelly, this is Joe.

21 So we've been going through our materials, and I think
22 we have about 15 or--10 or 15 minutes left from questions
23 we've been cutting, and we will be all done. So we ask for
24 your indulgence for another 10 of 15 minutes.

25 MR. KRAMER: Joe, we've already gone well past the time

1 that you guys asked for and that we allocated. So we are
2 going to be calling it a day as of now.

3 MR. FOLIO: So, to be clear, Kelly, I think we had the
4 conversation last week and in the letter, and you suggested
5 that we agree to a four-hour deadline. And I've clarified
6 multiple times that we never did. We gave you our best
7 good-faith estimate as to how long it would take,
8 remembering that we get half of that time. I think we've
9 gone through four sessions. So we're pretty darn close, and
10 our request to you and to Mr. Hochstein is that we have 10
11 or 15 more minutes. And then we will feel that we've
12 completed and asked all the questions that we need to, and I
13 think it will leave us in a much better space than to
14 prematurely end so close to the goal one and leave those
15 questions open and lingering.

16 MR. KRAMER: So if you guys--Mr. Hochstein has
17 indicated that he's available for seven more minutes. So if
18 you'd like to take it, that's fine. Otherwise, we are done.

19 MR. FOLIO: Seven more minutes, not counting--

20 MR. KRAMER: Excuse me?

21 MR. FOLIO: I didn't see Mr. Hochstein indicate, so
22 maybe I missed a hand signal there. I mean, I appreciate
23 it. I mean, good faith. I'm not trying to put anyone in a
24 hard spot. I think we've all been operating in good faith.
25 I can tell you that behind the scenes, we've been going

1 through all of our questions and all the documents and
2 cutting out many of the things we planned to ask. So this
3 is a good-faith effort to try and get this as close as we
4 can to the four hours.

5 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Just give me one minute.

6 MR. FOLIO: And 15 minutes is more than enough.

7 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Just give me one minute.

8 [Pause.]

9 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Go ahead. Let's go for another 10
10 minutes, so--

11 MR. FOLIO: Thank you, Mr. Hochstein. I'm going to
12 turn it over to Brian.

13 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Sure.

14 MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Hochstein, with all the time and
15 effort focused on anticorruption with Ukraine, then why even
16 allow anything like Hunter Biden's position to detract from
17 that message?

18 MR. HOCHSTEIN: It was not for me to allow or not
19 allow. He was on the board. I read about it in a newspaper
20 article. I did not let it--or it did not affect my job.

21 MR. DOWNEY: Do you know when Hunter Biden left the
22 board of Burisma?

23 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Can you repeat the question?

24 MR. DOWNEY: Do you know when Hunter Biden left the
25 board of Burisma?

1 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't. I don't know the exact date.
2 I'm sure you're going to refresh my memory.

3 MR. DOWNEY: So according to public reporting, Hunter
4 Biden left the board in April of 2019.

5 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Okay.

6 MR. DOWNEY: Do you know when Joe Biden announced his
7 run for President?

8 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I don't. But it was sometime in the
9 spring.

10 MR. DOWNEY: He announced he was running for President
11 April 25th of 2019.

12 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I believe you.

13 MR. DOWNEY: Do you think that timing is a coincidence?

14 MR. HOCHSTEIN: That's not for me to judge.

15 MR. DOWNEY: Do you believe if Hunter Biden stayed on
16 the board of Burisma past April 2019, it would be a
17 legitimate issue?

18 MR. HOCHSTEIN: We're sitting here today. There have
19 been many articles. I really can't speculate what would
20 have been different if he left earlier or two months later.
21 I really have no idea.

22 MR. DOWNEY: Okay. We're going to enter in Exhibit 6,
23 and Will can throw it up on the screen real quick. And we
24 can send this to you, Kelly. It is a June 27th, 2014,
25 letter to President Obama from Senators Markey, Senator

1 Wyden, Senator Shaheen, and Senator Murphy.

2 [Hochstein Exhibit No. 6
3 marked for identification.]

4 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Do you want me to read the whole thing?

5 MR. DOWNEY: Are you familiar with this letter at all?

6 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I am--I don't believe I am, but I'm
7 happy to read it.

8 MR. DOWNEY: Sure.

9 [Pause.]

10 MR. HOCHSTEIN: You can scroll.

11 [Pause.]

12 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yep.

13 [Pause.]

14 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yep.

15 [Pause.]

16 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yep. Yep.

17 The timing of this letter, this was right after the
18 inauguration of Poroshenko, but what was it exactly? June.
19 Yeah. Thank you.

20 MR. DOWNEY: After reviewing the June 27th letter, does
21 this look familiar to you?

22 MR. HOCHSTEIN: The letter doesn't necessarily look
23 familiar. It rings a bell, sort of, but I'm familiar with
24 the effort by Mr. Markey and others that talked to me about
25 this.

1 MR. DOWNEY: Okay. Can we pull up Exhibit 2 real
2 quick? We're going to go to page 3 of Exhibit--

3 [Pause.]

4 MR. DOWNEY: Actually, go on up, Will. A little more.
5 More. Stop right there.

6 So in this July 7th, 2014, Time news article by Michael
7 Scherer--

8 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yep.

9 MR. DOWNEY: --Mr. Scherer writes Markey's letter was
10 trumpeted by Burisma Holdings as a commendable move towards
11 securing the future security of Ukraine. Burisma Holdings
12 today applauded the range of U.S. legislative support for
13 development of the Ukraine's broad and untapped resources
14 and an increase in transparency and good governance to
15 companies said a statement on the day the letter was
16 released.

17 Did you discuss this letter with Hunter Biden or anyone
18 connected with Burisma?

19 MR. HOCHSTEIN: No.

20 MR. DOWNEY: Did you get the letter forwarded to you
21 from the White House or anyone from the White House staff to
22 the State Department?

23 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I'm fairly--I saw the letter as when I
24 was a Special Envoy, and I got it probably from Legislative
25 Affairs or from my staff. That would be normal. Yeah.

1 MR. DOWNEY: Did you take any action connected to this
2 letter from Senator Markey, Senator Wyden, Senator Shaheen,
3 and Senator Murphy?

4 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I think in general the sentiment that
5 is mentioned in this letter is supportive, was in concert
6 with what we were trying to do. I was at the time working
7 24 hours a day because we were facing a major crisis in
8 Europe and Ukraine. I think some of the proposals here were
9 part of a strategy for a long-term solution that I was
10 trying to weigh towards a short-term process, and--but by
11 and large, I mean, I don't disagree. There should be
12 efficiency in the energy market in Ukraine. We should have
13 more production. It was a big question that Burisma was not
14 actually the lead company on, they were relatively
15 insignificant to, and that was some of the privately owned
16 companies in Ukraine, including one that was quasi-American,
17 were concerned that there was not enough opportunity for
18 private companies to expand the production of gas in
19 Ukraine, that the incumbent, Naftogaz, was doing too much.
20 So I think all these efforts were there.

21 I didn't--you just asked me to read the letter. I read
22 the letter. I see Burisma trying to take advantage of the
23 letter, but I don't think it actually did anything to help
24 their cause, one way or the other.

25 MR. DOWNEY: Okay. One last question, and then I'll

1 turn it to Mr. Folio for the close.

2 Did Hunter Biden ever suggest to you, Mr. Hochstein,
3 that he might resign his position on Burisma to avoid
4 providing Russia with a basis to attack U.S.-Ukraine policy?

5 MR. HOCHSTEIN: We did not discuss that issue in our
6 conversation.

7 MR. DOWNEY: Hunter Biden never suggested that he might
8 resign in an effort to prevent the Russian disinformation
9 that you speak of?

10 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Not to my knowledge.

11 MR. DOWNEY: Thank you.

12 Mr. Folio?

13 MR. FOLIO: Mr. Hochstein, was Hunter Biden's position
14 on the board of a company that was under investigation for
15 corruption consistent with U.S. anticorruption policy?

16 MR. HOCHSTEIN: It was neither here nor there. We--our
17 job was to pursue corruption. Our job was to try to provide
18 financial and logistical and technical support in order to
19 root it out, and we did that, regardless of who was on which
20 board.

21 MR. FOLIO: Was Hunter Biden's position--

22 MR. HOCHSTEIN: It was a huge issue in Ukraine, and
23 Burisma, to be honest, was a fairly small, non-important
24 entity, but it just didn't play into that.

25 MR. FOLIO: I think I'm focused on the efforts by the

1 U.S. government, the UK government, and the Ukraine
2 government to prosecute--investigate and prosecute Burisma's
3 owner, Mr. Zlochevsky, the examples if which we discussed
4 earlier.

5 So was Hunter Biden's position on--Mr. Zlochevsky--the
6 board helpful for U.S. anticorruption, in the U.S.
7 anticorruption message?

8 MR. HOCHSTEIN: It was not unhelpful because--is sort
9 of didn't factor in. We really didn't discuss it. I know
10 it sounds to you from your questions--it sounds that that's
11 something you have a hard time believing, but it just didn't
12 play a--we didn't discuss it, and we did not--it didn't come
13 up in our discussion with neither Ukraine nor with our
14 allies.

15 MR. FOLIO: I'm just trying to square your answers with
16 what we see in the documents where you all are discussing
17 how to address it as a pressing policy matter and then also
18 your point that the Russians used the guide of his presence
19 on the board to raise issues not only about Burisma but then
20 to get into things that seem, you know, as you said, even
21 less true about the Bidens coming to the country and seeking
22 to privatize all the land. It seems to have had some
23 effect. I'm trying to understand the nature of that.

24 MR. HOCHSTEIN: I would say that it has--that on our
25 preparation of talking points and how to inference it

1 because we knew what the Russian effort was to create that
2 perception. If it would be successful, we would get a lot
3 of questions about it. To be honest, we didn't get a lot of
4 questions in bringing about it during the visit or during my
5 subsequent visits. We did get a few U.S. media outlets'
6 questions about it. They wrote about it. It was all above
7 board and open, and therefore was kind of just on that
8 issue, was something that everybody was aware of, but it
9 just didn't play a role in actually making that execution
10 policy.

11 MR. FOLIO: So earlier in your responses to the
12 Minority's questions, you said that there was no basis to
13 suggest that there was apparent or actual conflict of
14 interest. If that's right, then why did you raise the issue
15 with the Vice President?

16 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Why did I raise? Is that what you
17 asked?

18 MR. FOLIO: Yes.

19 MR. KRAMER: And just to be clear, that's not what--
20 that's not what Mr. Hochstein said. Mr. Hochstein, I think,
21 said that he raised the Russian topic.

22 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Yeah. Well, I raised what I was
23 looking and interested in what me in raising a matter with
24 the Vice President was to make him aware that the Russians
25 were trying to create a perception. Again, ultimately, we

1 found out that the effort by the Russians was unsuccessful,
2 but I've always been of the view that whether something is,
3 you know, burning or critical or not, it is important for a
4 principal to know what's happening on the ground.

5 MR. FOLIO: Just one minute, please.

6 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Sure.

7 [Pause.]

8 MR. FOLIO: Mr. Hochstein, as I noted at the outset in
9 trying to address this issue and understand what happened,
10 we focused our inquiry on collecting from U.S. government
11 agencies, current and former U.S. government officials like
12 yourself, to understand, as Chairman Johnson described, of
13 what did and did not happen.

14 So we very much appreciate you taking the time, being
15 generous of your time today and gave us 15 extra minutes and
16 counting. And we very much appreciate that. So I wanted to
17 thank you for doing that.

18 MR. HOCHSTEIN: Thank you very much.

19 MR. FOLIO: All right. Thank you.

20 MR. SCHRAM: Thank you, Mr. Hochstein. Thanks for
21 coming.

22 [Whereupon, at 2:54 p.m., the interview was concluded.]

23

24

25

Opening Statement of Joshua Flynn-Brown
Deputy Chief Investigative Counsel for Chairman Grassley
September 17, 2020

This is now the eighth interview that we've held in this investigation. In recent interviews, Senator Peters' staff have given an opening statement and asked questions that are filled with mischaracterizations and misrepresentations about the basis of this investigation. My colleague, Joe Folio, has easily rebutted those charges in other interviews. I appreciate his efforts to do so.

Such mischaracterizations and misrepresentations by the minority reflect badly on the two committees. The Chairmen are not engaged in a Russian disinformation campaign. This investigation is about good government oversight and rooting out potential and apparent conflicts of interest. It is not, and has never been, designed to interfere in the election. The record is clear about our scope of inquiry. In fact, if the Democrats didn't interfere so much in this inquiry we'd be done with it already.

Recently, Ranking Member Wyden's staff have associated themselves with that opening statement and have provided their own in one interview. In that interview, I provided a rebuttal.

Today, however, I want to address their opening statements more specifically.

First, my Democratic colleagues have, in some interviews, mentioned the number of COVID deaths as a political weapon to insinuate Chairman Grassley is not doing enough to use his Finance Committee to combat the pandemic. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Every death is a tragedy. We've lost mothers, fathers, grandparents, brothers, sisters, aunts, and uncles. The list goes on. We've lost members of our American family. Every life has value and meaning, including those not yet born.

Chairman Grassley has a robust oversight operation that isn't totally focused on this investigation. My colleagues are doing COVID oversight right now – as we speak. In addition, Chairman Grassley has health and tax policy staff that have worked tirelessly to assist the American people during the pandemic. Not to mention the legislation that the Chairman has drafted and the laws that he's helped pass to support, as one example, Unemployment Insurance. We can walk and chew gum at the same time.

Indeed, Chairman Grassley's oversight and policy actions include multiple oversight and policy hearings relating to the COVID pandemic, all of which are public record.

He is dedicated to supporting We the People in our fight against the virus. He is dedicated to supporting the U.S. financial system. Any insinuation, implication, or statement to the contrary is not rooted in fact.

Second, Democrats have said during the course of this investigation that Chairmen Grassley and Johnson are falling for Russian disinformation and undermining national security with this investigation. It's disappointing and it's wrong. This investigation is focused on Obama administration government records and records from a U.S. based Democrat lobby shop that hired Andrii Telizhenko, the same individual that had consistent contact and access with Obama administration officials.

Moreover, there is only one person here that has inserted Andriy Derkach's information into the record – Mr. Schram. Not me, not my majority colleagues.

So, when it comes to Russian disinformation, the Democrats own it.

Let's not forget about the inconvenient facts relating to the now-debunked Russian collusion investigation.

The Clinton campaign hired Fusion GPS to do opposition research against candidate Trump.

The Democratic National Committee did the same.

Fusion GPS hired Christopher Steele, a foreign national and a former British Intelligence Officer, to compile the "Steele Dossier."

That same Dossier factored heavily in the FBI's investigation against Trump. According to the Justice Department Inspector General, it was the "central and essential" document for the Carter Page FISAs.

Steele used Russian government sources for information in the Dossier, some were connected to the Russian presidential administration and supported Clinton.

Now, because information relating to the Dossier has been declassified thanks to the efforts of Chairmen Grassley and Johnson, we know that the Russians knew about Steele's anti-Trump research in early July 2016, prior to the FBI opening its investigation. That shows you that the Dossier was the perfect vehicle to use for disinformation and to sow chaos and discord here at home. The Democrats have done exactly that, they have created the domestic turmoil that the Russian government wanted.

We also know that government reporting, some from the U.S. Intelligence Community, indicated that the Dossier was filled with Russian disinformation. Specifically, in January 2017 and February 2017, the FBI received reporting that apprised the FBI of Russian disinformation infecting the Dossier. The FBI sat on that information.

It's a fact – not merely an allegation – that the Clinton campaign and Democratic Party used a foreign intelligence officer and information *from the Russian government and Russian disinformation* to undermine the Trump campaign and, later, his administration.

As Chairman Grassley has said before, so much for a peaceful transition of power.

Democratic Senators and Representatives have pushed the Dossier as gospel for years.

And now, they've gone silent about it after its defects have been made public but have tried to make this investigation a replacement for their previous failures.

It's no surprise then that the Democrats have failed to seek documents and information relating to how and why the now-debunked FBI investigation into Russian collusion started – because the Democrats would be front and center.

Let's also not forget about the Uranium One scandal where the Obama administration approved the sale of U.S. based uranium assets to the Russian government.

Let's not forget about President Obama telling Russian President Dmitry Medvedev that he will have "more flexibility" to deal with U.S./Russia issues after the presidential election.

If the Democrats want to talk about pandering to Russians and using Russian disinformation, they should look at themselves and the actions they've taken in the recent past.

From:Hochstein, Amos J
Sent:Wed, 9 Jul 2014 17:44:21 -0400
To:Nakagawa, Melanie Y
Subject:FW: Ukraine/Hunter Biden from Time.com website yesterday

FYI – per your email re David Leiter

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 08, 2014 8:48 AM
To: Hochstein, Amos J
Subject: Ukraine/Hunter Biden from Time.com website yesterday

Ukrainian Employer of Joe Biden's Son Hires a D.C. Lobbyist

[Martinez Mossivais](#)—AP

An obscure private Ukrainian natural gas company has been hiring friends and family of Secretary of State John Kerry and Vice President Joe Biden, while seeking to influence Congress

[by Taboola](#)

When Vice President Joe Biden's son, R. Hunter Biden, joined the board of a private Ukrainian oil and natural gas company this spring, he explained his new job as a legal one, disconnected from any effort to influence the Obama Administration. In a [press release](#), the younger Biden boasted of his abilities on issues like improving corporate transparency.

But the company, Burisma Holdings, did not disclose at the time the scope of their plans for influencing the U.S. government. Recently released documents show that Biden's hiring coincided with the launch of a new effort to lobby members of Congress about the role of the company in Ukraine and the country's quest for energy independence.

David Leiter, a former Senate chief of staff to Secretary of State John Kerry, signed on to work as a lobbyist for Burisma on May 20, 2014, about a week after Biden announced he was joining the company, according to lobbying disclosures filed this month.

Leiter's involvement in the firm rounds out a power-packed team of politically-connected Americans that also includes a second new board member, Devon Archer, a Democratic bundler and former adviser to John Kerry's 2004 presidential campaign. Both Archer and Hunter Biden have worked as business partners with Kerry's son-in-law, Christopher Heinz, the founding partner of Rosemont Capital, a private-equity company.

Biden's office referred questions to a Burisma spokesman, who says Biden has not been involved in contacting members of Congress or the Obama Administration about the company. "His role, like all board members, is to provide strategic guidance to Burisma," said Lawrence Pacheco, who works in Washington D.C. for FTI Consulting, a communications firm that is also employed by Burisma.

But Burisma is contacting officials in Washington through Leiter's lobbying firm, ML Strategies. "ML Strategies is working with Burisma to educate U.S. officials about the company and its role in creating a stable and secure energy future for Ukraine, not any specific policy or legislation," Pacheco said. "Burisma supports energy independence, economic growth, national sovereignty and regional stability and will engage as needed to encourage efforts to further these goals."

Some Democratic senators, meanwhile, have been working to secure more U.S. funding, either directly or through entities like the Export-Import Bank, to improve Ukraine's domestic energy production potential. On June 27, Sen. Edward Markey of Massachusetts, [wrote President Obama a letter](#) with three other Democratic senators calling for increased aid. "We should leverage the full resources and expertise of the U.S. government to assist Ukraine in improving its energy efficiency, increasing its domestic production, and reforming its energy markets," wrote Markey, who has also proposed legislation with about \$40 million in additional aid for Ukrainian energy development.

Markey's letter was trumpeted by Burisma Holdings as a [commendable move](#) towards securing the future security of Ukraine. "Burisma Holdings today applauded the range of U.S. legislative support for development of Ukraine's broad and untapped resources and an increase in transparency and good governance," the company said in a statement on the day the letter was released.

An aide in Markey's office told TIME that Leiter, Biden and Archer were not part of discussions that led to the drafting of the letter or the legislation. Staff for the other senators who signed the letter, Ron Wyden of Oregon, Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire and Christopher Murphy of Connecticut, also said they did not have contact with Leiter, who could not be reached for comment.

Burisma Holdings is owned by a Cypriot holding firm, Brociti Investments Limited, which is controlled Nikolai Zlochevskyi, a former Ukrainian government minister, according to Cypriot records. It controls government development licenses in three regions of Ukraine, and sells to industrial customers in the country, according to the company.

By taking a job with Burisma, the younger Biden has put himself in the middle of a struggle between the United States and Russia, which currently provides the bulk of the natural gas supplies to Ukraine. Both the White House and European nations have recently emphasized the strategic interest in making Ukraine less dependent on Russia.

Since Hunter Biden took the new job, his father, Vice President Joe Biden, has continued to serve as the Obama Administration's point person on Ukraine, traveling to the country as recently as June for the inauguration of President Petro Poroshenko and talking to Poroshenko by phone at least five times in the last month.

"I've spent a considerable amount of time in the last two months in Ukraine," the elder Biden said on June 19. "You see what the Russians are doing relative to using gas as a foreign policy tool to try to alter behavior. And so it's — around the world in varying degrees it's of significant consequence in terms of security, both economic and political security of a nation."

There is no legal barrier to prohibit Hunter Biden from working with a company that can be impacted by the policy decisions of his father, and the White House has maintained that the Vice President has not been influenced by his son's employment. "The Vice President does not endorse any particular company and has no involvement with this company," said his spokeswoman Kendra Barkoff.

But Hunter Biden's new job, along with the association with Burisma of other politically-connected businessmen, has raised concerns among some Ukraine watchers. "It's unhelpful when we are trying to get across to the Ukrainians to clean up corruption and special deals for special folks," said Ed Chow, a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a U.S. think tank. "It maybe sends the wrong message that Westerners are just hypocritical."

■
Senior Advisor
Bureau of Energy Resources
Room 4334A
Department of State
(202) 647-4535

From:Hochstein, Amos J
Sent:Mon, 2 Nov 2015 12:46:21 -0500
To: [REDACTED]
Subject:Re: Hunter Biden's office called

Yes

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 2, 2015 12:30 PM
To: Hochstein, Amos J
Subject: Hunter Biden's office called

He is requesting a meeting with you this Friday. Would you like me to arrange this?

A REPORTER AT LARGE JULY 8 & 15, 2019 ISSUE

WILL HUNTER BIDEN JEOPARDIZE HIS FATHER'S CAMPAIGN?

*Joe Biden's son is under scrutiny for his business dealings and
tumultuous personal life.*

By **Adam Entous**

July 1, 2019



An Obama White House aide said that “Hunter was on the loose, potentially undermining his father’s message.” Photograph by Philip Montgomery for The New Yorker

0:00 / 1:11:48

Audio: Listen to this article. To hear more, download Audm for iPhone or Android.

In today's political culture, people running for President may announce their candidacy on the steps of their home-town city hall or on "The View," but the full introduction comes with their book. Some candidates' memoirs tell stories of humble beginnings and of obstacles overcome; some describe searches for identity; some earnestly set out detailed policy agendas. Nearly all are relentlessly bland. In 2017, Joe Biden, a longtime senator from Delaware, Barack Obama's Vice-President for eight years, and now a candidate for the Democratic Presidential nomination, published an unusually raw memoir about the death, two years earlier, of his forty-six-year-old son, Beau, describing how it had threatened to undo him but ultimately brought his family closer. Beau, his father writes, was "Joe Biden 2.0," a war veteran, a prosecutor, and a promising politician who "had all the best of me, but with the bugs and flaws engineered out."

In the early months of the 2020 race, Joe Biden holds a lead over his many Democratic Party rivals, but he is hardly invulnerable. He is seventy-six and sometimes shows it. He often stumbles when defending his five-decade public history. Some voters will not easily overlook his support for the Iraq War, his treatment of Anita Hill and loose management of the Clarence Thomas confirmation hearings, his handsy, close-talking behavior with women, or his descriptions of his "civil" working relationships with segregationist lawmakers. Even his admirers concede that he is prone to senatorial bloviation. What often seems to redeem him with voters, as a former senior White House aide put it recently, is "how he's responded to tragedy and what he's learned from it."

Yet the family story that Biden tells in "Promise Me, Dad: A Year of Hope, Hardship, and Purpose" largely glosses over a central character in Biden's life. Biden writes, "I was pretty sure Beau could run for President some day, and, with his brother's help, he could win." Hunter Biden, who is forty-nine, is described as a supportive son and sibling. In speeches, Biden rarely talks about Hunter. But news outlets on the right and mainstream media organizations, including the *Times*, have homed in on him, reprising old controversies over Hunter's work for a bank, for a lobbying firm, and for a hedge fund, and scrutinizing his business dealings in China and Ukraine.

There is little question that Hunter's proximity to power shaped the arc of his career, and that, as the former aide told me, "Hunter is super rich terrain." But Donald J. Trump and some of his allies, in their eagerness to undermine Biden's candidacy, and possibly to deflect attention from their own ethical lapses, have gone to extreme lengths, promoting, without evidence, the dubious narrative that Biden used the office of the Vice-President to advance and protect his son's interests.

At the same time, the gossip pages have seized on Hunter's tumultuous private life. He has struggled for decades with alcohol addiction and drug abuse; he went through an acrimonious divorce from his first wife, Kathleen Buhle Biden; and he had a subsequent relationship with Beau's widow, Hallie. He was recently sued for child support by an Arkansas woman, Lunden Alexis Roberts, who claims that he is the father of her child. (Hunter has denied having sexual relations with Roberts.)

On May 17th, the day before Hunter planned to appear at one of his father's rallies, at Eakins Oval, in Philadelphia, Breitbart News published a story based on a Prescott, Arizona, police report from 2016 that named Hunter as the suspect in a possible narcotics offense.

Onstage at the rally, Jill Biden introduced her husband. "The Biden family is ready," she said. "We will do this as we always have—as a family." Seated in white chairs to the side of the stage were Ashley Biden, Hunter's half sister; Ashley's husband, Howard Krein; Beau's children, Natalie and Robert Hunter; Hunter's three daughters, Maisy, Finnegan, and Naomi; and Naomi's boyfriend, Peter. The last seat in the row, with a piece of paper on it that said "Reserved," remained empty.

In one of my early conversations with Hunter, he told me about his sadness at having missed his father's event. "Beau and I have been there since we were carried in baskets during his first campaign," he said. "We went everywhere with him. At every single major event and every small event that had to do with his political career, I was there. I've never missed a rally for my dad. The notion that I'm not standing next to him in Philadelphia, next to the Rocky statue, it's heartbreaking for me. It's killing me and it's killing him. Dad says, 'Be here.' Mom says, 'Be here.' But at what cost?"

Hunter speaks in the warm, circuitous style of his father. Through weeks of conversations, he became increasingly open about his setbacks, aware that many of the stories that he told me would otherwise emerge, likely in a distorted form, in Breitbart or on “Hannity.” He wanted to protect his father from a trickle of disclosures, and to share a personal narrative that he sees no reason to hide. “Look, everybody faces pain,” he said. “Everybody has trauma. There’s addiction in every family. I was in that darkness. I was in that tunnel—it’s a never-ending tunnel. You don’t get rid of it. You figure out how to deal with it.”

Hunter Biden was born in 1970, a year and a day after Beau and a year and nine months before their sister, Naomi. His father was twenty-seven, and won his first election, to the New Castle County Council, in November of that year. Two years later, in an immense leap of ambition, he decided to run for the U.S. Senate.

Biden pledged that, in order to avoid potential conflicts of interest, he would never own a stock or a bond. Whatever money he had, he spent on property. His father, Joseph Biden, Sr., managed a Chevrolet dealership in Wilmington, and Joe grew up in a house with his parents, his three siblings, his aunt Gertie, and two uncles. He tried to re-create this arrangement for his own family. He liked historic houses, and bought a center-hall Colonial, built in 1723, on a four-acre lot in the village of North Star, about thirty minutes west of Wilmington. “The large houses were a way for all of us, including aunts and uncles, to have something special,” Hunter said.

Joe Biden depended on his family to help staff his campaigns. His sister, Valerie, who taught at the Quaker day school Wilmington Friends, served as his campaign manager. His brother Jimmy oversaw fund-raising; Frankie, the youngest, helped organize volunteers. When the children were babies, Biden’s wife, Neilia, carried them to community meetings. In November, 1972, Joe Biden was elected to the Senate.

That December, while Biden was in Washington interviewing staff for his new office, Neilia took the children to Wilmington, to go Christmas-tree shopping. At an intersection, the family car collided with a truck. Neilia and Naomi were killed almost instantly. Beau sustained numerous broken bones, and Hunter suffered a severe head injury. Hunter has frequently said that his first memory is of waking up in a hospital bed next to Beau, who turned to him and said, “I love you, I love you, I love you.” On January 5, 1973, Biden was sworn in as a senator in his sons’ hospital room.

Valerie and Jimmy devoted themselves to the boys’ recovery while Biden took up his role in the Senate. In 1975, he sold the North Star property, and the family moved into a house in Wilmington that had once been owned by members of the du Pont family. Biden, on returning from Washington, often put on a hazmat suit and went into the basement to scrape asbestos off the pipes. He, Hunter, and Beau planted trees and painted the house. Hunter told me that his father would dangle him upside down from the third-floor windows so that he could reach the eaves with a brush. So many people came and went that Tommy Lewis, an old friend of Biden’s who became one of his Senate aides, nicknamed the house the Station. Hunter recalled, “No door was ever locked. The pool was everyone’s pool.” He and Beau were “communal property,” he said. “Everyone had a hand in raising us.” In 1977, Joe Biden married Jill Jacobs, a high-school teacher. (Hunter calls Jill “Mom” and refers to Neilia as “Mommy.”)

Biden frequently took the boys to Washington with him when Congress was in session. Roger Harrison, who worked in Biden’s office for seven years, recalled that one of them often sat on Biden’s lap during staff meetings. If he was busy on the Senate floor, another senator would take Hunter and Beau to his office to hang out. Sometimes, to entertain themselves, the boys would wander over to the Senate gym and sit in a corner of the steam room, eavesdropping on lawmakers.

Beau and Hunter were fiercely close. They attended Archmere Academy, the Catholic high school that was their father’s alma mater. Friends called Beau, a stickler for rules, the Sheriff. Hunter told me, “If we wanted to jump off a cliff into a watering hole, I would say, ‘I’m ready, let’s go,’ and Beau would say, ‘Wait, wait, wait, before we do it, make sure there aren’t any rocks down there.’” Brian McGlinchey, a friend of

Hunter's who attended Archmere with the brothers, said, "Beau tended to lead with his head. Hunter often led with his heart." At Archmere, Beau, with the help of Hunter, who distributed flyers, was elected student-body president. It was clear to family and friends that Beau would follow his father into politics. "Dad knew that is what Beau wanted," Hunter said.

Biden sold off some of the land at the Station to help pay for Beau to go to the University of Pennsylvania, in 1987. That year, Hunter and Beau encouraged their father to run for President, and they were crushed when he withdrew from the race over allegations of plagiarism. (He was accused of copying large portions of a law-review article as a student, and of mimicking a speech given by the British Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock.) Soon afterward, when Biden took his sons to a football game at the University of Pennsylvania, a group of hecklers started a chant about the plagiarism scandal. Hunter jumped to his feet, throwing punches, and his father and Beau had to pull him back.

Hunter enrolled at Georgetown University in 1988. He and Beau took out student loans to cover their university costs. Hunter worked odd jobs—parking cars at events and unloading sixty-pound boxes of frozen beef—to help pay for his room and board. Ted Dziak, a chaplain-in-residence in Hunter's freshman dorm, told me, "Hunter was always out there, doing something to gain a little bit of money."

In July, 1992, after graduating with a B.A. in history, Hunter began a year as a Jesuit volunteer at a church in Portland, Oregon. During that time, he met Kathleen Buhle, the daughter of a Chicago schoolteacher and a ticket salesman for the White Sox. Three months after they started dating, Kathleen got pregnant, and the two were married in July, 1993.

Beau attended Syracuse Law School, and began thinking about government service. Hunter imagined a more artistic career for himself. He admired Raymond Carver and Tobias Wolff; his favorite novel at the time was Charles Bukowski's debut, "Post Office." On a whim, he applied to, and was accepted into, the creative-writing program at Syracuse University, where Carver and Wolff had taught. He considered getting a joint M.F.A.-law degree at Syracuse, but, with a baby on the way, he decided to go straight to law school. He was rejected from Yale, his first choice, and enrolled at Georgetown Law. In December, 1993, his daughter Naomi was born.

After a year at Georgetown, Hunter transferred to Yale Law, where he completed his degree, in 1996. Then he returned to Wilmington with Kathleen and Naomi. Joe Biden was running for reelection in the Senate, and he appointed Hunter as his deputy campaign manager. Hunter rented an apartment close to his father's campaign headquarters, and also got a job as a lawyer with MBNA America, a banking holding company based in Delaware, which was one of the largest donors to his father's campaigns. At the age of twenty-six, Hunter, who was earning more than a hundred thousand dollars and had received a signing bonus, was making nearly as much money as his father. In January, 1998, the conservative reporter and columnist Byron York wrote, in *The American Spectator*, "Certainly lots of children of influential parents end up in very good jobs. But the Biden case is troubling. After all, this is a senator who for years has sermonized against what he says is the corrupting influence of money in politics."

Hunter shared his father's love of old houses. In 1997, he bought a dilapidated estate in Wilmington, the original structure of which dated to before the Revolutionary War. The previous owner, Anna Sasso, recalled, "They seemed like the perfect family. They were teen-agers, practically. They were so enthusiastic." That year, Beau started working as a federal prosecutor in the U.S. Attorney's office in Philadelphia, and moved in with his brother's family, taking over the third floor. Hunter was responsible for the mortgage and most of the expenses. In September, 1998, Hunter and Kathleen had their second daughter, Finnegan. On weekends, the house was a gathering place for friends, including a local woman named Hallie Olivere, whose parents owned a dry-cleaning business. Beau and Hallie married in 2002.

Hunter, by then an executive vice-president at MBNA, found the corporate culture stifling. "If you forgot to wear your MBNA lapel pin, someone would stop you in the halls," he recalled. In 1998, he contacted William Oldaker, a Washington lawyer who had worked on his father's Presidential campaign in 1987, for advice about how to get a job in the Clinton Administration. Oldaker called William Daley, the

Commerce Secretary, who had also worked on Biden's campaign. Daley, the son of the five-term mayor of Chicago, told me that, because of their shared experience growing up in political families, he empathized with Hunter, and asked his staff to evaluate him for a position as a policy director specializing in the burgeoning Internet economy. Hunter got the job, then sold the Delaware house for roughly twice what he'd paid for it and moved his family to a rental home in the Tenleytown neighborhood of Washington. Hunter and Kathleen sent Naomi and Finnegan—and later Maisy, who was born in 2000—to Sidwell Friends, one of Washington's most exclusive and expensive schools. Hunter's salary barely covered the rent, the school fees, and his family's living expenses. "I've pretty much always lived paycheck to paycheck," Hunter told me. "I never considered it struggling, but it has always been a high-wire act."

In late 2000, near the end of President Clinton's second term, Hunter again consulted Oldaker, who was starting a lobbying business, the National Group. Oldaker asked the co-founder of the firm, Vincent Versage, to teach Hunter the basics of earmarking—the practice of persuading lawmakers to insert language into legislation which directs taxpayer funds to projects that benefit the lobbyist's clients. In 2001, Robert Skomorucha, an old Biden family friend who worked in the government-and-community-relations department at St. Joseph's University, proposed that Hunter solicit earmarks for one of the university's student-volunteer programs, at an underprivileged high school in Philadelphia. Timothy Lannon, the university's president, who offered Hunter the contract, described Hunter to me as "like his dad: great personally, very engaging, very curious about things and hardworking," adding that he had "a very strong last name that really paid off in terms of our lobbying efforts."

Versage told me that the National Group had a strict rule: "Hunter didn't do anything that involved his dad, didn't do anything that involved any help from his dad." Oldaker advised Hunter to restrict his clients to mostly Jesuit universities. "He wasn't doing McDonnell Douglas or something," Oldaker told me. Still, Hunter's name appeared regularly in newspaper stories decrying the cozy relationship between lobbyists and lawmakers. An informal arrangement was established: Biden wouldn't ask Hunter about his lobbying clients, and Hunter wouldn't tell his father about them. "It wasn't like we all sat down and agreed on it," Hunter told me. "It came naturally."

Oldaker's office was across the street from the Bombay Club, an Indian restaurant that was popular with policymakers, lobbyists, diplomats, and journalists. The lounge there became an after-hours gathering place for Hunter, Versage, and a dozen of their colleagues. Irfan Ozarslan, the former general manager, said that he greeted Hunter at the door "at least three or four times a week." The bartender at the time, Norman, told me that he would have a cigarette waiting for Hunter at his seat.

Joe Biden grew up around relatives with alcohol problems, and at a young age he decided to abstain. Hunter—who spoke frankly to me about his struggles with addiction—started drinking socially as a teen-ager. When he was a student at Georgetown, in the early nineties, he took up smoking Marlboro Red cigarettes, and occasionally used cocaine. Once, hoping to buy cocaine, he was sold a piece of crack, but he wasn't sure how to take the drug. "I didn't have a stem," Hunter said. "I didn't have a pipe." Improvising, he stuffed the crack into a cigarette and smoked it. "It didn't have much of an effect," he said.

In 2001, Hunter, Kathleen, and their children moved back to Wilmington to be closer to the rest of the Biden family, and Hunter commuted to Washington on Amtrak, as his father did. Sometimes he missed the last train and stayed in a rental room at the Army and Navy Club. "When I found myself making the decision to have another drink or get on a train, I knew I had a problem," he said. In 2003, Kathleen and the girls returned to Washington. Hunter recalled that Kathleen told him to get sober, starting by not drinking for thirty days. "And I wouldn't drink for thirty days, but, on day thirty-one, I'd be right back to it," he said. That September, on a business trip, he looked up rehabilitation centers, and soon admitted himself to Crossroads Centre Antigua for a month. The day after his return, Beau accompanied him to his first Alcoholics Anonymous meeting, in Dupont Circle.

By the mid-two-thousands, a growing number of lawmakers were criticizing earmarking as a waste of taxpayer money and a boon to special interests. Hunter was concerned about his future as a lobbyist, and his financial worries increased in 2006, when he bought a \$1.6-million house in an affluent neighborhood. Without the savings for a down payment, he took out a mortgage for a hundred and ten per cent of the purchase price.

In 2006, Hunter and his uncle Jimmy Biden, along with another partner, entered into a twenty-one-million-dollar deal to buy Paradigm, a hedge-fund group that claimed to manage \$1.5 billion in assets. Hunter said that the deal sounded “super attractive,” but that it fell apart after he and Jimmy learned that the company was worth less than they thought, and that the lawyer they were working with was a convicted felon awaiting sentencing. Hunter and Jimmy, who together went on to buy a stake in the company, estimated that they lost at least \$1.3 million on the initial venture, which Hunter described as “a tragicomedy.” To help repay a law firm that had put up the money to initiate the transaction, Hunter obtained a million-dollar note against his house from Washington First Bank, which was co-founded by Oldaker. On January 5, 2007, two days before Biden announced his decision to run for President, Hunter and Jimmy were sued by their former partner in New York. The suit was settled but resulted in a flurry of headlines.

In the lead-up to the January, 2008, Iowa Democratic Presidential caucuses, Hunter drove from Washington to Des Moines to campaign with his father. “I’m like his security blanket,” Hunter said. “I don’t tell the staff what to do. I’m not there giving directions or orders. I shake everybody’s hands. And then I tell him to close his eyes on the bus. I can say things to him that nobody else can.” Biden did poorly in Iowa, and soon dropped out of the race. On August 23, 2008, Obama, the Democratic nominee, publicly introduced Biden as his running mate. He praised Beau, who had recently become Delaware’s attorney general and was getting ready to deploy to Iraq with his National Guard unit.

Hunter had heard that, during the primaries, some of Obama’s advisers had criticized him to reporters for his earmarking work. Hunter said that he wasn’t told by members of the Obama campaign to end his lobbying activities, but that he knew “the writing was on the wall.” Hunter told his lobbying clients that he would no longer represent them, and resigned from an unpaid seat on the board of Amtrak, a role for which, Hunter said, the Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid had tapped him. “I wanted my father to have a clean slate,” Hunter told me. “I didn’t want to limit him in any way.”

In September, 2008, Hunter launched a boutique consulting firm, Seneca Global Advisors, named for the largest of the Finger Lakes, in New York State, where his mother had grown up. In pitch meetings with prospective clients, Hunter said that he could help small and mid-sized companies expand into markets in the U.S. and other countries. In June, 2009, five months after Joe Biden became Vice-President, Hunter co-founded a second company, Rosemont Seneca Partners, with Christopher Heinz, Senator John Kerry’s stepson and an heir to the food-company fortune, and Devon Archer, a former Abercrombie & Fitch model who started his finance career at Citibank in Asia and who had been friends with Heinz at Yale. (Heinz and Archer already had a private-equity fund called Rosemont Capital.) Heinz believed that Hunter would share his aversion to entering into business deals that could attract public scrutiny, but over time Hunter and Archer seized opportunities that did not include Heinz, who was less inclined to take risks.

In 2012, Archer and Hunter talked to Jonathan Li, who ran a Chinese private-equity fund, Bohai Capital, about becoming partners in a new company that would invest Chinese capital—and, potentially, capital from other countries—in companies outside China. In June, 2013, Li, Archer, and other business partners signed a memorandum of understanding to create the fund, which they named BHR Partners, and, in November, they signed contracts related to the deal. Hunter became an unpaid member of BHR’s board but did not take an equity stake in BHR Partners until after his father left the White House.

In December, 2013, Vice-President Biden flew to Beijing to meet with President Xi Jinping. Biden often asked one of his grandchildren to accompany him on his international trips, and he invited Finnegan to come on this one. Hunter told his father that he wanted to join them.

According to a Beijing-based BHR representative, Hunter, shortly after arriving in Beijing, on December 4th, helped arrange for Li to shake hands with his father in the lobby of the American delegation's hotel. Afterward, Hunter and Li had what both parties described as a social meeting. Hunter told me that he didn't understand why anyone would have been concerned about this. "How do I go to Beijing, halfway around the world, and not see them for a cup of coffee?" he said.

Hunter's meeting with Li and his relationship with BHR attracted little attention at the time, but some of Biden's advisers were worried that Hunter, by meeting with a business associate during his father's visit, would expose the Vice-President to criticism. The former senior White House aide told me that Hunter's behavior invited questions about whether he "was leveraging access for his benefit, which just wasn't done in that White House. Optics really mattered, and that seemed to be cutting it pretty close, even if nothing nefarious was going on." When I asked members of Biden's staff whether they discussed their concerns with the Vice-President, several of them said that they had been too intimidated to do so. "Everyone who works for him has been screamed at," a former adviser told me. Others said that they were wary of hurting his feelings. One business associate told me that Biden, during difficult conversations about his family, "got deeply melancholy, which, to me, is more painful than if someone yelled and screamed at me. It's like you've hurt him terribly. That was always my fear, that I would be really touching a very fragile part of him."

For another venture, Archer travelled to Kiev to pitch investors on a real-estate fund he managed, Rosemont Realty. There, he met Mykola Zlochevsky, the co-founder of Burisma, one of Ukraine's largest natural-gas producers. Zlochevsky had served as ecology minister under the pro-Russian government of Viktor Yanukovich. After public protests in 2013 and early 2014, the Ukrainian parliament had voted to remove Yanukovich and called for his arrest. Under the new Ukrainian government, authorities in Kiev, with the encouragement of the Obama Administration, launched an investigation into whether Zlochevsky had used his cabinet position to grant exploration licenses that benefitted Burisma. (The status of the inquiry is unclear, but no proof of criminal activity has been publicly disclosed. Zlochevsky could not be reached for comment, and Burisma did not respond to queries.) In a related investigation, which was ultimately closed owing to a lack of evidence, British authorities temporarily froze U.K. bank accounts tied to Zlochevsky.

In early 2014, Zlochevsky sought to assemble a high-profile international board to oversee Burisma, telling prospective members that he wanted the company to adopt Western standards of transparency. Among the board members he recruited was a former President of Poland, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, who had a reputation as a dedicated reformer. In early 2014, at Zlochevsky's suggestion, Kwaśniewski met with Archer in Warsaw and encouraged him to join Burisma's board, arguing that the company was critical to Ukraine's independence from Russia. Archer agreed.

When Archer told Hunter that the board needed advice on how to improve the company's corporate governance, Hunter recommended the law firm Boies Schiller Flexner, where he was "of counsel." The firm brought in the investigative agency Nardello & Co. to assess Burisma's history of corruption. Hunter joined Archer on the Burisma board in April, 2014. Three months later, in a draft report to Boies Schiller, Nardello said that it was "unable to identify any information to date regarding any current government investigation into Zlochevsky or Burisma," but cited unnamed sources saying that Zlochevsky could be "vulnerable to investigation for financial crimes" and for "perceived abuse of power."

Vice-President Biden was playing a central role in overseeing U.S. policy in Ukraine, and took the lead in calling on Kiev to fight rampant corruption. On May 13, 2014, after Hunter's role on the Burisma board was reported in the news, Jen Psaki, a State Department spokesperson, said that the State Department was not concerned about perceived conflicts of interest, because Hunter was a "private citizen." Hunter told Burisma's management and other board members that he would not be involved in any matters that were connected to the U.S. government or to his father. Kwaśniewski told me, "We never discussed how the Vice-President can help us. Frankly speaking, we didn't need such help."

Several former officials in the Obama Administration and at the State Department insisted that Hunter's role at Burisma had no effect on his father's policies in Ukraine, but said that, nevertheless, Hunter should not have taken the board seat. As the former senior White House aide put it, there was a perception that "Hunter was on the loose, potentially undermining his father's message." The same aide said that Hunter should have recognized that at least some of his foreign business partners were motivated to work with him because they wanted "to be able to say that they are affiliated with Biden." A former business associate said, "The *appearance* of a conflict of interest is good enough, at this level of politics, to keep you from doing things like that."

In December, 2015, as Joe Biden prepared to return to Ukraine, his aides braced for renewed scrutiny of Hunter's relationship with Burisma. Amos Hochstein, the Obama Administration's special envoy for energy policy, raised the matter with Biden, but did not go so far as to recommend that Hunter leave the board. As Hunter recalled, his father discussed Burisma with him just once: "Dad said, 'I hope you know what you are doing,' and I said, 'I do.'"

Hunter was not always at ease as the son of the Vice-President. He asked that the Secret Service stop deploying agents to accompany him, a request that was eventually granted. He also became offended when he felt that his father wasn't treated respectfully enough by Obama and his advisers. In 2012, Biden, responding to a question about same-sex marriage on NBC's "Meet the Press," said that he was "absolutely comfortable" with all couples having the "exact same rights." Obama had yet to publicly take a similar stance, and Biden's statement upset some White House officials. Hunter thought that Obama and his advisers should have acknowledged his father's good political instincts.

Hunter said that he limited his social interactions with Biden's White House colleagues, because he didn't want to be in a situation "where I'm playing golf with the President or one of his aides and look at my phone and see another headline that reads 'PRESIDENT MAKES JOKE ABOUT BIDEN.'" Kathleen felt differently about the White House. Their daughter Maisy was in the same class at Sidwell Friends as Sasha, the Obamas' younger daughter. The two girls became close, and Kathleen and Michelle Obama became friends, attending SoulCycle and Solidcore exercise classes together almost every day. Some evenings, they went out to dinner or had drinks at the White House. Kathleen went on vacations with Michelle, mutual friends, and their daughters.

Hunter saw himself as a provider for the Biden family; he even helped to pay off Beau's law-school debts. But he often wished that, like his father and his brother, he could contribute more to society. Through his business, he got to know an Australian-American former military-intelligence officer named Greg Keeley, who regaled him with stories about his career in the Royal Australian Navy. After moving to the United States, at forty, Keeley had obtained an age waiver to join the U.S. Navy as a reservist. While on reserve duty at a U.S. military base in southern Afghanistan on September 11, 2011, he and members of his unit watched Vice-President Biden deliver a speech at the Pentagon about the attacks of 9/11. After the speech, Keeley sent an e-mail to Hunter to tell him that members of his unit thought the Vice-President's message was "spot on." Hunter passed the note on to his father, who wrote Keeley an e-mail. "Keep your heads down," it said. "You are the finest group of warriors in all of history."

Keeley helped convince Hunter that it wasn't too late for him to join the Navy Reserves. He told me, "My message to him was: If you feel the call to serve, which I encouraged, it doesn't really matter what your rank is and what's on your shoulder board—it is that you're serving your country. Hunter took that message to heart and acted upon it." With a letter of recommendation from Keeley, Hunter applied for an age waiver, which the Navy granted. The service has a zero-tolerance drug-and-alcohol-abuse policy, and states that all recruits will be asked "questions about prior drug and alcohol use." Hunter disclosed that he had "used drugs in the past," but said that he was now sober, and the Navy granted him a second waiver.

Hunter had suffered his first relapse, after seven years of sobriety, in November, 2010, when he drank three Bloody Marys on a flight home from a business trip to Madrid. He continued to drink in secret for several months, then confided in Beau and returned to Crossroads Centre. He had another relapse in early 2013, after he suffered from a bout of shingles, for which he was prescribed painkillers. When the prescription ran out, he resumed drinking.

On May 7, 2013, he was assigned to a Reserve unit at Naval Station Norfolk. He had hoped to work in naval intelligence, but was given a job in a public-affairs unit. In a small, private ceremony at the White House, Hunter was sworn in by his father. Later that month, the night before Hunter's first weekend of Reserve duty, he stopped at a bar a few blocks from the White House. Outside, Hunter said, he bummed a cigarette from two men who told him that they were from South Africa. He felt "amped up" as he was driving down to Norfolk, and then "incredibly exhausted." He told me that he called Beau and said, "I don't know what's going on." Beau drove from Delaware to meet Hunter at a hotel near the naval station. "He got me shipshape and drove me into the base," he said. On his first day, Hunter had a urine sample taken for testing.

A few months later, Hunter received a letter saying that his urinalysis had detected cocaine in his system. Under Navy rules, a positive drug test typically triggers a discharge. Hunter wrote a letter to the Navy Reserve, saying that he didn't know how the drug had got into his system and suggesting that the cigarettes he'd smoked outside the bar might have been laced with cocaine. Hunter called Beau, who contacted Tom Gallagher, a former Navy lawyer who had worked with Beau at the U.S. Attorney's office in Philadelphia. Gallagher agreed to represent Hunter pro bono, but it became clear that, given Hunter's history with drugs, an appeals panel was unlikely to believe the story that he had ingested cocaine involuntarily, and that appealing the decision would require closed-door hearings and the testimony of witnesses, increasing the likelihood of leaks to the press. Hunter decided not to appeal. Navy records show that Hunter's discharge took effect on February 18, 2014.

Hunter did not tell anyone except his father and his brother about the reason for his discharge, and he tried to get his drinking under control. In July, 2014, he went to a clinic in Tijuana that provided a treatment using ibogaine, a psychoactive alkaloid derived from the roots of a West African shrub, which is illegal in America. Hunter then drove to Flagstaff, Arizona, where he met with Thom Knoles, a practitioner of Vedic meditation, who said that he advised Hunter to meditate twice a day, to help keep "his cravings for alcohol at bay." Knoles said that Hunter struck him as "just a good man." He was "nearly clean," Knoles said. "But, to be honest, there is such a thing as a dry drunk. I could see that he was in a very delicate position." Knoles said that Hunter told him about how much he relied on Beau for support and confessed that "his relationship with his other great, deep partner in life, his wife, had been brutalized by him through his loss of control."

That fall, Hunter went to Big Sur, California, to attend a twelve-step yoga retreat at the Esalen Institute. Toward the end of his week there, a reporter from the *Wall Street Journal* contacted the Vice-President's office, seeking comment on Hunter's discharge from the Navy. At San Francisco International Airport, Hunter was waiting for his flight home when he saw the story on the front page of the *Journal*. "I was heartbroken," he said.

In the summer of 2013, Hunter, Beau, and their families took a vacation together on Lake Michigan. During the trip, Beau became disoriented and was rushed to the hospital. He'd had a health scare in May, 2010, when—six months after he returned from Iraq—he suffered a stroke. He had appeared to recover quickly, and continued to work as Delaware's attorney general, but he struggled to remember certain words, and sometimes talked about hearing music playing when there was none.

Soon after Beau's admittance to the hospital, doctors identified a mass in his brain. It was glioblastoma multiforme, a type of brain tumor. Patients who receive similar diagnoses tend to live no longer than two years. As Beau received radiation treatment, his motor and speech skills started to decline. In the spring of 2015, he underwent an experimental procedure in which an engineered virus was injected directly into the

tumor, but it was unsuccessful. In late May, doctors removed Beau's tracheostomy tube, telling the family that he would likely die within a few hours. Beau kept breathing on his own for almost a day and a half before he died, surrounded by his family.

On June 6, 2015, thousands of people paid their respects at a service at St. Anthony of Padua Church, in Wilmington. The next day, President Obama, Ashley Biden, and Hunter, who was fearful of public speaking, delivered eulogies. On the drive back to Washington, Hunter—moved by the outpouring of support for him and his family at the funeral—told Kathleen that he was thinking about running for public office. She pointed out that he had only recently been discharged from the Navy after testing positive for cocaine. They rode the rest of the way home in silence. (Kathleen declined to comment for this article.)

In couples therapy, Hunter and Kathleen had reached an agreement: if Hunter started drinking again, he would have to move out of the house. A day after their twenty-second anniversary, Hunter left a therapy session, drank a bottle of vodka, and moved out. Later that month, Zlochevsky, the Burisma co-founder, invited him to Norway on a fishing trip. Hunter brought along Maisy and Beau's nine-year-old son, Robert. Hunter said that, every night, he and his colleagues on the trip drank a single shot of liquor before going to bed. Kathleen found out and was angry. Hunter began to confide in Hallie, whom he was growing closer to.

Hunter said that, in July, 2015, "I tried to show Kathleen: I want back in." He enrolled as an outpatient in the Charles O'Brien Center for Addiction Treatment, at the University of Pennsylvania, where he was prescribed two drugs, one to lessen his cravings and another to make him feel nauseated if he drank. He then enrolled in an inpatient program for executives at Caron Treatment Centers, where he used the pseudonym Hunter Smith. On returning to Washington, he began a program that required him to carry a Breathalyzer with a built-in camera.

That summer, Ashley Madison, a dating service for married people—which used the slogan "Life is short. Have an affair"—disclosed that hackers had breached its user data. In late August, Breitbart reported that it had found a "Robert Biden" profile among the leaked files. Hunter denied that the account belonged to him, but Kathleen was deeply embarrassed by the story. Two months later, Hunter and Kathleen agreed to formally separate. On October 21, 2015, Joe Biden appeared in the White House Rose Garden, flanked by Jill and Obama, and announced that he would not run for President in 2016, talking about the time that it had taken the family to recover from Beau's death.

Until mid-December, Hunter practiced yoga daily. A teacher from his yoga studio told me, "I don't think I've ever seen a person try as hard to heal as he did." When Hunter stopped coming to class, the teacher went to his apartment, near Logan Circle, and knocked on the door. Hunter told me that he pretended not to be at home. For weeks, he said, he left the apartment only to buy bottles of Smirnoff vodka at Logan Circle Liquor. Several times a day, his father called him, and Hunter assured him that he was O.K. Eventually, Biden showed up unannounced at the apartment. Hunter said that his father told him, "I need you. What do we have to do?"

In February, 2016, Hunter went back to the Esalen Institute, and then spent a week skiing by himself at Lake Tahoe. When he returned to Washington, he enrolled in yet another addiction-treatment program, run by the Kolmac Outpatient Recovery Center. On his way to Kolmac, he passed several homeless people, including a middle-aged woman who went by the name Bicycles, because of the bike she took with her everywhere. Later, whenever Hunter saw Bicycles near his apartment, he would give her a twenty-dollar bill to buy him a pack of Marlboro Reds and tell her to keep the change. One rainy night, Hunter said, he offered Bicycles his spare bedroom, and she stayed for several months.

In 2016, Hunter was consulting for five or six major clients. Once or twice a year, he attended Burisma board meetings and energy forums that took place in Europe. He said that, in June, 2016, while in Monte Carlo for a meeting, he went to a hotel night club and used cocaine that a stranger offered him in the bathroom. He told his counsellors at Kolmac about his relapse but refused to take a drug test, out of concern that the results could be used against him and published in the press. When Kolmac's staff insisted that he take the test, he decided to leave the program.

In August, Hunter and Hallie went to the Hamptons with Hallie's children. They texted constantly after getting back, and Hunter started to spend most nights in Delaware, at Hallie's house, watching television until very late. "We were sharing a very specific grief," Hunter recalled. "I started to think of Hallie as the only person in my life who understood my loss."

That fall, Hunter made plans to go to the Grace Grove Lifestyle Center, in Sedona, Arizona. During a layover at Los Angeles International Airport, before his connecting flight to Phoenix, he went to a nearby hotel bar and realized that he had left his wallet on the plane. It had belonged to Beau and still contained his attorney-general identification badge, and also Hunter's driver's license, without which he couldn't board his flight. Using a credit card he had in his pocket, Hunter checked into a hotel in Marina del Rey, where he waited for the airline to return the wallet.

Instead of going to Grace Grove, Hunter stayed in Los Angeles for about a week. He said that he "needed a way to forget," and that, soon after his arrival in L.A., he asked a homeless man in Pershing Square where he could buy crack. Hunter said that the man took him to a nearby homeless encampment, where, in a narrow passageway between tents, someone put a gun to his head before realizing that he was a buyer. He returned to buy more crack a few times that week.

One night, outside a club on Hollywood Boulevard, Hunter and another man got into an argument, and a group of bouncers intervened. A friend of one of the bouncers, a Samoan man who went by the nickname Baby Down, felt sorry for Hunter and took him to Mel's Drive-In to get some food, and to his hotel to pick up his belongings. Early on the morning of October 26th, Baby Down dropped Hunter off at the Hertz rental office at Los Angeles International Airport.

Hunter said that, at that point, he had not slept for several days. Driving east on Interstate 10, just beyond Palm Springs, he lost control of his car, which jumped the median and skidded to a stop on the shoulder of the westbound side. He called Hertz, which came to collect the damaged car and gave him a second rental. Later, on a sharp bend on a mountainous road, Hunter recalled, a large barn owl flew over the hood of the car and then seemed to follow him, dropping in front of the headlights. He said that he has no idea whether the owl was real or a hallucination. On the night of October 28th, Hunter dropped the car off at a Hertz office in Prescott, Arizona, and Grace Grove sent a van to pick him up.

Zachary Romfo, who worked at the Hertz office in Prescott, told me that he found a crack pipe in the car and, on one of the consoles, a line of white-powder residue. Beau Biden's attorney-general badge was on the dashboard. Hertz called the Prescott police department, and officers there filed a "narcotics offense" report, listing the items seized from the car, including a plastic baggie containing a "white powdery substance," a Secret Service business card, credit cards, and Hunter's driver's license. Later, according to a police report, Secret Service agents informed Prescott police that Hunter was "secure/well." Subsequent test results indicated that the glass pipe contained cocaine residue, but investigators didn't find any fingerprints on it. Public prosecutors in the county and the city declined to bring a case against Hunter, citing a lack of evidence that the pipe had been used by him. Jon Paladini, Prescott's city attorney, told me that he was not aware of any requests by officials in Washington to drop the investigation into Hunter. "It's a very Republican area," he said. "I don't think political favors, necessarily, would even work, had they been requested."

After a week at Grace Grove, Hunter checked into a resort spa called Mii Amo, and called Hallie, who flew to meet him. During her stay, Hunter said, they decided to become a couple. When they returned to Delaware, they tried, unsuccessfully, to keep their relationship secret.

On December 9, 2016, Kathleen filed for divorce, and on February 23, 2017, she filed a motion in D.C. Superior Court seeking to freeze Hunter's assets, alleging that he "created financial concerns for the family by spending extravagantly on his own interests (including drugs, alcohol, prostitutes, strip clubs, and gifts for women with whom he has sexual relations), while leaving the family with no funds to pay legitimate bills." The motion was leaked to the *New York Post*, along with the revelation that Hunter and Hallie were dating.

Kathleen told friends that she felt ostracized by the Biden family. Hunter denied hiring prostitutes, and said that he hadn't been to a strip club in years. But, he said, the evening the story was published, "I went directly to a strip club. I said, 'Fuck them.'"

The first that Biden heard of the relationship was when the *Post* asked his office for comment. Hunter issued a statement saying that he and Hallie were "incredibly lucky to have found the love and support we have for each other in such a difficult time." Hunter told me he appealed to his father to make a statement, too: "I said, 'Dad, Dad, you have to.' He said, 'Hunter, I don't know if I should. But I'll do whatever you want me to do.' I said, 'Dad, if people find out, but they think you're not approving of this, it makes it seem wrong. The kids have to know, Dad, that there's nothing wrong with this, and the one person who can tell them that is you.'" A former Biden aide confirmed that Biden agreed to issue a statement because of concerns about Hunter's well-being. Biden told the *Post*, "We are all lucky that Hunter and Hallie found each other as they were putting their lives together again after such sadness. . . . They have mine and Jill's full and complete support and we are happy for them." The *Post* ran the statement under the headline "BEAU BIDEN'S WIDOW HAVING AFFAIR WITH HIS MARRIED BROTHER."

In August, Hunter rented a house in Annapolis, Maryland, where he, Hallie, and her two children hoped to have some privacy, but, several months later, they split up. "All we got was shit from everybody, all the time," Hunter said. "It was really hard. And I realized that I'm not helping anybody by sticking around." (Hallie declined to comment.) In early 2018, he moved to Los Angeles. The idea, he said, was to "completely disappear."

Hunter said that, in divorce proceedings, he offered to give Kathleen "everything," including a monthly payment of thirty-seven thousand dollars for alimony, tuition, and child-care costs for a decade. Hunter told me that he was living on approximately four thousand dollars a month; he was hardly poor, but it was an adjustment. On occasion, transactions on his credit cards were declined.

One of Kathleen's motions contains a reference to "a large diamond" that had come into Hunter's possession. The motion seems to imply that it was one of Hunter's "personal indulgences." When I asked him about it, he told me that he had been given the diamond by the Chinese energy tycoon Ye Jianming, who was trying to make connections in Washington among prominent Democrats and Republicans, and whom he had met in the middle of the divorce. Hunter told me that two associates accompanied him to his first meeting with Ye, in Miami, and that they surprised him by giving Ye a magnum of rare vintage Scotch worth thousands of dollars.

Hunter was on the board of the World Food Program USA, a nonprofit that generates support for the U.N. World Food Programme, and he had hoped that Ye would make a large aid donation. At dinner that night, they discussed the donation, and then the conversation turned to business opportunities. Hunter offered to use his contacts to help identify investment opportunities for Ye's company, CEFC China Energy, in liquefied-natural-gas projects in the United States. After the dinner, Ye sent a 2.8-carat diamond to Hunter's hotel room with a card thanking him for their meeting. "I was, like, Oh, my God," Hunter said. (In Kathleen's court motion, the diamond is estimated to be worth eighty thousand dollars. Hunter said he believes the value is closer to ten thousand.) When I asked him if he thought the diamond was intended as a bribe, he said no: "What would they be bribing me for? My dad wasn't in office." Hunter said that he gave the diamond to his associates, and doesn't know what they did with it. "I knew it wasn't a good idea to take it. I just felt like it was weird," he said.

Hunter began negotiating a deal for CEFC to invest forty million dollars in a liquefied-natural-gas project on Monkey Island, in Louisiana, which, he said, was projected to create thousands of jobs. "I was more proud of it than you can imagine," he told me. In the summer of 2017, Ye talked with Hunter about his concern that U.S. law-enforcement agencies were investigating one of his associates, Patrick Ho. Hunter, who sometimes works as a private lawyer, agreed to represent Ho, and tried to figure out whether Ho was in legal jeopardy in the U.S. That November, just after Ye and Hunter agreed on the Monkey Island deal, U.S. authorities detained Ho at the airport. He was later sentenced to three years in prison for his role in a multiyear, multimillion-dollar scheme to bribe top government officials in Chad and Uganda in exchange for business advantages for CEFC. In February, 2018, Ye was detained by Chinese authorities, reportedly as part of an anti-corruption

investigation, and the deal with Hunter fell through. Hunter said that he did not consider Ye to be a “shady character at all,” and characterized the outcome as “bad luck.”

Joe Biden is hardly the first politician to have faced scrutiny for the business dealings of a family member. In 1973, during the Watergate investigation, the *Washington Post* reported that Richard Nixon had the phone of his brother Donald tapped for at least a year, because he feared that Donald’s “various financial activities might bring embarrassment to the Nixon administration.” In the late seventies, the F.B.I. investigated President Jimmy Carter’s younger brother, Billy, after it emerged that he was on the payroll of the Libyan government. In an extensive report on the affair issued by the Senate Judiciary Committee, of which Biden was a member, Billy was quoted as saying that “he did not need anyone in Washington telling him how to conduct his private business.” Carter said that he had tried, unsuccessfully, to “discourage Billy from making any other trip to Libya” and “to keep him out of the newspapers for a few weeks.”

Hunter Biden and Melissa Cohen on the roof deck in L.A. where they were married. Photograph by Philip Montgomery for The New Yorker

Biden's approach was to deal with Hunter's activities by largely ignoring them. This may have temporarily allowed Biden to truthfully inform reporters that his decisions were not affected by Hunter. But, as Robert Weissman, the president of the advocacy group Public Citizen, said,

“It’s hard to avoid the conclusion that Hunter’s foreign employers and partners were seeking to leverage Hunter’s relationship with Joe, either by seeking improper influence or to project access to him.”

It is clear that Hunter and Biden’s decades-old decision not to discuss business matters has exposed both father and son to attacks. (Biden declined to comment for this article.) In March of last year, Peter Schweizer, a conservative researcher and a senior editor-at-large at Breitbart, published “Secret Empires: How the American Political Class Hides Corruption and Enriches Family and Friends.” Schweizer is best known for “Clinton Cash: The Untold Story of How and Why Foreign Governments and Businesses Helped Make Bill and Hillary Clinton Rich,” which was released in May, 2015. Research for that book was funded by the Government Accountability Institute, which Schweizer co-founded, in 2012, with Stephen Bannon. Under the law, the G.A.I. is a nonpartisan organization. But, as Joshua Green wrote, in “Devil’s Bargain,” his book about Bannon’s role in Trump’s rise, Bannon saw “Clinton Cash” as “the key to orchestrating Hillary Clinton’s downfall.” It was, Green writes, “the culmination of everything Bannon learned during his time in Goldman Sachs, Internet Gaming Entertainment, Hollywood, and Breitbart News.”

As Bannon and Schweizer had hoped, investigative journalists from the mainstream press followed up on Schweizer’s many examples of the Clintons’ purported conflicts of interest. In April, 2015, two weeks before Schweizer’s book came out, the *Times* published a front-page article, by Jo Becker and Mike McIntire, that cited Schweizer’s research alongside Becker’s own reporting from 2008. The article singled out a Canadian mining magnate, Frank Giustra, who donated tens of millions of dollars to the Clinton Foundation. The story suggested that the donations of Giustra and others might have created conflicts of interest, at a time when the Obama Administration was negotiating to allow the Russian state nuclear corporation Rosatom to gain control of a swath of America’s untapped uranium deposits by purchasing the Canadian company Uranium One. The *Times* was criticized for building on Schweizer’s work, and, two years later, Eileen Sullivan, in another *Times* article, wrote, “There has been no evidence that donations to the Clinton Foundation influenced the Uranium One deal.” Still, “Clinton Cash” did exactly what Bannon hoped it would do, Green writes, “sully Clinton’s image in a way that she never fully recovered from.”

“Secret Empires,” which details Hunter’s activities in China and Ukraine, focusses on what Schweizer calls “corruption by proxy,” which he defines as a “new corruption” that is “difficult to detect” and that, though often legal, makes “good money for a politician and his family and friends” and leaves “American politicians vulnerable to overseas financial pressure.” Schweizer often relies on innuendo to supplement his reporting. At one point, he describes “one of the few public sightings” of Hunter in Beijing, when Hunter, “dressed in a dark overcoat,” followed Biden into a shop to buy a Magnum ice cream. “Intentionally or not,” Schweizer writes, “Hunter Biden was showing the Chinese that he had *guanxi*”—connections.

Schweizer asserts that “Rosemont Seneca Partners had been negotiating an exclusive deal with Chinese officials, which they signed approximately ten days after Hunter visited China with his father.” In fact, the deal had been signed before the trip—according to the BHR representative, it was a business license that came through shortly afterward—and Hunter was not a signatory. Hunter and Archer said that they never met with any Chinese officials about the fund. And the deal wasn’t with Rosemont Seneca Partners but with a new holding company, established solely by Archer; Christopher Heinz was not part of the BHR transaction. Schweizer also asserts that the Chinese fund was “lucrative” for Hunter, but Hunter and his business partners told me that he has yet to receive a payment from the company.

In October, 2017, the special counsel [Robert Mueller](#), investigating Russian interference in the 2016 Presidential election, indicted Paul Manafort, Trump’s former campaign chairman, on twelve counts, including committing conspiracy against the United States by failing to register as a foreign agent of Ukraine. (Manafort pleaded guilty to that charge in September, 2018.) Making a case that Hunter had his own Ukrainian scandal, Schweizer implies that Joe Biden had been consulted in advance about Hunter and Archer’s work with Burisma. On April 16, 2014, he notes, shortly before the announcement that Hunter and Archer had taken seats on the company’s board, Archer made a “private

visit to the White House for a meeting with Vice-President Biden.” Hunter, Archer, and Archer’s son Lukas, who is now twelve, told me that the visit was arranged by Hunter for Lukas, who was working on a model of the White House for a grade-school assignment. Afterward, Lukas posted a picture on Instagram of himself shaking the Vice-President’s hand. Hunter and Archer said that Burisma was never discussed.

Rudolph Giuliani, Trump’s personal lawyer, has also aggressively promoted what he has called the “alleged Ukraine conspiracy” in interviews and on social media. Giuliani told me that, in the fall of 2018, he spoke to Viktor Shokin, Ukraine’s former prosecutor general. Shokin told him that Vice-President Biden had him fired in 2016 because he was investigating Burisma and the company’s payments to Hunter and Archer. Giuliani said that, in January, 2019, he met with Yuriy Lutsenko, Ukraine’s current prosecutor general, in New York, and Lutsenko confirmed Shokin’s version of events.

On April 1, 2019, John Solomon, an opinion contributor to *The Hill*, wrote about Shokin’s claim that he had been conducting a corruption probe into Burisma and Hunter when he was dismissed. A month later, the *Times* reported that Hunter “was on the board of an energy company owned by a Ukrainian oligarch who had been in the sights of the fired prosecutor general.” The story, by Kenneth P. Vogel and Iuliia Mendel, provoked some Democrats to express concern that the *Times* was again lending credence to allegations made by Schweizer and other Trump allies. Giuliani retweeted the article, and Trump called for the Justice Department to investigate. Jon Favreau, a former speechwriter for President Obama, tweeted, “Zero lessons have been learned from 2016: 1. Mainstream outlet credulously accepts Trump conspiracy about opponent 2. Trump propaganda machine uses story to spread the conspiracy on social media and through digital ads 3. Voters believe it, ignoring subsequent fact checks.”

There is no credible evidence that Biden sought Shokin’s removal in order to protect Hunter. According to Amos Hochstein, the Obama Administration’s special envoy for energy policy, Shokin was removed because of concerns by the International Monetary Fund, the European Union, and the U.S. government that he wasn’t pursuing corruption investigations. Contrary to the assertions that Shokin was fired because he was investigating Burisma and Zlochevsky, Hochstein said, “many of us in the U.S. government believed that Shokin was the one protecting Zlochevsky.” In May, Giuliani scheduled a visit to Ukraine, and told the *Times* that he would look into Hunter’s involvement with Burisma, “because that information will be very, very helpful to my client,” but then abruptly cancelled the trip, amid reports that Ukraine’s President-elect was unwilling to meet with him. A week later, on May 16th, Lutsenko appeared to shift his position on Burisma, telling Bloomberg News that he saw no evidence of wrongdoing by Biden or his son, and that “a company can pay however much it wants to its board.” The reasons for his reversal were unclear, but Daria Kaleniuk, the head of the Anti-Corruption Action Center, in Kiev, speculated that Lutsenko, in talking with Giuliani, had been trying to “pump his political muscle,” a strategy that had proved ineffective in the new political climate.

That month, Hunter declined Burisma’s offer to serve another term on the board, believing that the controversy had become a distraction. But he said that he was proud of his work there, and that he thought the criticism was misplaced. “I feel the decisions that I made were the right decisions for my family and for me,” he told me. “Was it worth it? Was it worth the pain? No. It certainly wasn’t worth the grief.” He went on, “I would never have been able to predict that Donald Trump would have picked me out as the tip of the spear against the one person they believe can beat them.”

And yet, to many voters, the controversy over Hunter’s business dealings will appear to have been avoidable, a product of Biden’s resistance to having difficult conversations, particularly those involving his family. Hunter said that, in his talks with his father, “I’m saying sorry to him, and he says, ‘I’m the one who’s sorry,’ and we have an ongoing debate about who should be more sorry. And we both realize that the only true antidote to any of this is winning. He says, ‘Look, it’s going to go away.’ There is truly a higher purpose here, and this will go away. So can you survive the assault?”

In early May, Hunter met a thirty-two-year-old South African woman named Melissa Cohen, a filmmaker who was working on a series of documentaries about indigenous tribes in southern Africa. A few days after their first date, Hunter had the word “shalom” tattooed in Hebrew letters on the inside of his left bicep, to match a tattoo that Cohen has in the same spot. On May 15th, less than a week after they met, he proposed. The next morning, she accepted, and he bought the simplest gold wedding bands he could find, then called a marriage service, which sent over an officiant.

A month later, on the roof deck of Cohen’s apartment, off the Sunset Strip, Cohen sat on a bench next to Hunter, who was wearing jeans and a T-shirt emblazoned with the slogan “BE FUCKING NICE.” Hunter recalled that, after the ceremony, “I called my dad and said that we just got married. He was on speaker, and he said to her, ‘Thank you for giving my son the courage to love again.’” Hunter paused, his eyes filling with tears. “And he said to me, ‘Honey, I knew that when you found love again that I’d get you back.’” Cohen rubbed his shoulders. He went on, “And my reply was, I said, ‘Dad, I always had love. And the only thing that allowed me to see it was the fact that you never gave up on me, you always believed in me.’”

Hunter told me that, on a recent evening, he had seen reports on Twitter that Trump was calling for him to be investigated by the Justice Department. Then Hunter noticed a helicopter overhead. “I said, ‘I hope they’re taking pictures of us right now. I hope it’s a live feed to the President so he can see just how much I care about the tweets.’” He went on, “I told Melissa, ‘I don’t care. Fuck you, Mr. President. Here I am, living my life.’” ♦

A previous version of this article misspelled Brian McGlinchey’s last name and mischaracterized the New York *Times*’ interaction with Peter Schweizer and its reporting on Uranium One.

Published in the print edition of the July 8 & 15, 2019, issue, with the headline “Father and Son.”



Adam Entous became a staff writer at The New Yorker in 2018. He was a member of a team at the Washington Post that won the Pulitzer Prize for national reporting.

More: [Joe Biden](#) [Sons](#) [Presidential Candidates](#) [2020 Election](#) [Drugs](#) [Hunter Biden](#)

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tue, 22 Mar 2016 10:43:00 -0400
To: Hochstein, Amos J
Subject: RE: Requesting meeting with Special Envoy Hochstein - Sally Painter/Karen Tramontano

Confirmed for *this* Thursday at 11:00.

From: Hochstein, Amos J
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2016 12:29 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Requesting meeting with Special Envoy Hochstein - Sally Painter/Karen Tramontano

From: Sean Keeley [<mailto:Sean.Keeley@bluestarstrategies.com>]
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2016 11:55 AM
To: Hochstein, Amos J; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]; Sally Painter; Karen Tramontano
Subject: Requesting meeting with Special Envoy Hochstein - Sally Painter/Karen Tramontano

Dear Mr. Hochstein,

I am writing on behalf of Sally Painter and Karen Tramontano at Blue Star Strategies to request a meeting this week. I understand that you have previously met with Sally regarding energy issues in Ukraine, and she is hoping to brief you on a sensitive energy matter ahead of President Poroshenko's upcoming visit to DC next week.

Sally and Karen, schedule permitting, would be accompanied by John Buretta of Cravath, who is assisting us with this particular energy case. The best times for his schedule are this Tuesday before noon or Thursday before 1:30pm. If either day is possible for a quick meeting, we would be greatly appreciative. Please let us know what might work with your schedule this week and thank you for your consideration.

Best,
Sean Keeley
Associate, Blue Star Strategies

Sean Keeley
Blue Star Strategies
888 17th Street NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20006
(+1) 202-833-1281 office
(+1) 202-650-5464 direct
(+1) 202-822-9088 fax
sean.keeley@bluestarstrategies.com
www.bluestarstrategies.com

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 27, 2014

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Ukraine's successful presidential election on May 25 demonstrated the resolve and fortitude of the Ukrainian people, and offered reason to be hopeful that a strong, stable, and democratic Ukraine will emerge from Russia's assault on its sovereignty. We commend Vice President Biden for attending President Poroshenko's inauguration in Kiev on June 7, and we welcome his announcement of additional U.S. assistance to Ukraine.

As President Poroshenko takes office, we must work closely with Ukraine to confront the urgent challenges posed by separatist violence and economic instability, while also addressing Ukraine's dangerous reliance on Russian energy supplies. Ukrainian and Russian officials have been in gridlocked negotiations over trade in natural gas since March, when Russian state-controlled oil giant Gazprom raised the price of natural gas to Ukraine by 80 percent and threatened to cut off supplies. Last week, Gazprom followed through on those threats and cut off natural gas supplies to Ukraine, heightening energy security concerns in Ukraine and across Europe. Nothing could transform Ukraine's strategic position in the region more fundamentally than major advancements in energy independence. Toward that end, we urge you to make energy efficiency measures, and the development of Ukraine's domestic energy resources, centerpieces of your early engagements with the new leadership.

Ukraine is the second-least energy efficient country in the world. According to the International Energy Agency, if Ukraine were only as energy efficient as the average country in Europe, Ukraine could reduce natural gas consumption by more than 50 percent, essentially eliminating its dependence on natural gas imports from Russia. Ukrainians are asking for this type of support. In April, a coalition of 35 Ukrainian mayors sent a letter urgently requesting assistance in increasing the energy efficiency of their buildings, district heating systems, and transportation networks in order to reduce dependence on imports of natural gas from Russia.

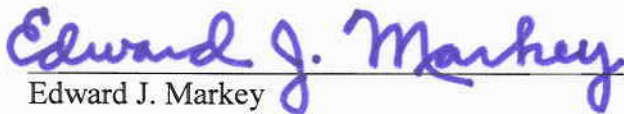
At the same time, Ukraine has massive untapped natural gas deposits of its own – their shale gas resources are the third-largest in Europe – and domestic production has the potential to double over the next decade.

The \$17 billion loan package approved by the International Monetary Fund to help stabilize the economy of Ukraine requires reforms of energy markets in Ukraine and elimination

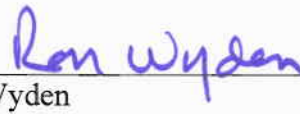
of energy subsidies, which currently make up eight percent of the country's gross domestic product. Eliminating these subsidies will raise retail natural gas rates by 56 percent in 2014, 40 percent in 2015, and 20 percent in 2016 and 2017. While these reforms are critical to rooting out corruption and increasing market transparency, they have the potential to undermine support for the new government if not coupled with aggressive measures to help Ukrainian households cope with these higher energy costs. A focused effort on improving energy efficiency has the potential to provide broad-based economic benefits that might not be provided otherwise without a substantial expansion of the country's social safety net.

We should leverage the full resources and expertise of the U.S. government to assist Ukraine in improving its energy efficiency, increasing its domestic production, and reforming its energy markets. The United States is well-positioned to lead an international coalition to help Ukraine accelerate its progress on this agenda. The State Department, USAID, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, the Export-Import Bank, and the U.S. Trade and Development Agency all have relevant technical expertise and financing tools that can be brought to bear on the problem. We look forward to working with your Administration to ensure we are using every tool at our disposal to address this important challenge.

Sincerely,



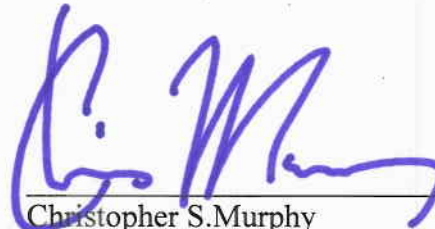
Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator

From:Pyatt, Geoffrey R
Sent:Sun, 6 Dec 2015 11:13:00 -0500
To:Bedingfield, Kate J. EOP/OVP;Carpenter, Michael;Kahl, Colin H. EOP/OVP;Hochstein, Amos J;Nuland, Victoria J
Subject:Re: Podrobnosti.biz : The Ukrainian scam of the Biden family (information on the website included)

I'd adjust the last sentence to change our desired end state. Something like "...begin rooting out the cancer of corruption that has done so much over the years to hold back economic growth and sap the confidence of Ukrainians in those who govern them."

I assume all have the DoJ background on Zlochevsky. The short unclas version (in non lawyer language) is that US and UK were cooperating on a case to seize his corrupt assets overseas (which had passed through the US). The case fell apart when individuals in the PGO acted to thwart the UK case.

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone.

From: Bedingfield, Kate J. EOP/OVP
Sent: Sunday, December 6, 2015 6:04 PM
To: Carpenter, Michael; Pyatt, Geoffrey R; Kahl, Colin H. EOP/OVP; Hochstein, Amos J
Subject: RE: Podrobnosti.biz : The Ukrainian scam of the Biden family (information on the website included)

Proposed TPs for the VP if he gets asked after the stories break in the next few days. Especially interested in your feedback on how to answer the third Q if he gets asked. He is not currently slated to take any questions from reporters on the record on the trip, but he will talk to our traveling press at length off the record and will need to be prepared to answer these kinds of questions.

TALKING POINTS

- My son is a private citizen and I'm not going to get into discussing his personal business, it has no impact on my work.
- What I will say, though, is that no one has been tougher in pushing Ukrainian leaders to root out corruption than I have. It has been a primary focus of my discussions, both publicly and privately, for years. And I think you can see from the substance of this trip it remains a major priority for me and for the US government.
- Important strides have been made – the appointment of a Special Anti-Corruption Prosecutor and the establishment of an independent Inspector General to prosecute corrupt prosecutors are two good ones. But much more needs to be done and we will continue to encourage everyone involved to commit to meaningful reforms.

Q: Have you asked Hunter to step down from the board? Has he discussed that with you?

A: I'm not going to discuss private conversations with my family. Hunter is a private citizen and does independent work.

Q: Do the optics of this situation undermine your credibility when you're pushing the Ukrainians to clean up their own house?

A: No. I have long pushed and will continue to push for the Ukrainian government to root out corrupt practices. My record on this speaks for itself. I have called on Ukrainian leadership to root out corruption, encouraged civil society reformers to remain focused on this and push the government themselves, and I welcome the news that the government will appoint a Special Anti-Corruption Prosecutor. Important steps have been taken, but there is so much left to be done. Corrupt officials must be brought to justice and reformers must work together to ensure this happens

Q: Do you think Zlochevsky is corrupt?

A: I'm not going to get into naming names or accusing individuals. We have been working consistently to push the Ukrainian leadership to make meaningful changes in the Prosecutor General's office and across the government to help ensure that the Ukrainian people are represented fairly and fully.

-----Original Message-----

From: Carpenter, Michael [<http://redirect.state.sbu/?url=mailto:>]
Sent: Sunday, December 6, 2015 6:23 AM
To: 'PyattGR' < >; Kahl, Colin H. EOP/OVP < >;
Bedingfield, Kate J. EOP/OVP < >
Subject: Re: Podrobnosti.biz : The Ukrainian scam of the Biden family (information on the website included)

Ugh.

+ Kate, CK

From: Pyatt, Geoffrey R [<http://redirect.state.sbu/?url=mailto:>]
Sent: Sunday, December 06, 2015 01:45 AM
To: Carpenter, Michael
Subject: FW: Podrobnosti.biz : The Ukrainian scam of the Biden family (information on the website included)

A really nasty Russian outlet on the same issue

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

From: lbi@lbicompany.com.ua [<http://redirect.state.sbu/?url=mailto:lbi@lbicompany.com.ua>]
Sent: Saturday, December 05, 2015 7:05 PM
To: Kyiv, Media Alerts
Subject: Podrobnosti.biz : The Ukrainian scam of the Biden family (information on the website included)

this web site is very similar (stile, shrifts etc) to Ukrainian Podrobnosti that belongs to Inter TV Channel - the same name as its TV summary news block at 8pm

but we checked contacts and there is a Russian address there

Podrobnosti.biz

The Ukrainian scam of the Biden family

05.12.2015

Author: Eugene Prosvirin

The news that the son of the US Vice President Joe Biden was appointed to the board of directors of the Ukrainian gas company Burisma Holdings, for the first time appeared in media last spring.

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>http://redirect.state.sbu/?url=http://redirect.state.sbu/?url=http://redirect.state.sbu/?url=http://podrobnosti.biz/news/12432-ukrainskaya-aferra-semeystva-bayden/?_utl_t=vk<

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With best regards,
LBI Team

><http://redirect.state.sbu/?url=www.lbicompany.com.ua><
(044) 501 58 41



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With best regards,
LBI Team

><http://redirect.state.sbu/?url=www.lbicompany.com.ua><
(044) 501 58 41



From: Bedingfield, Kate J. EOP/OVP
Sent: Sun, 6 Dec 2015 16:03:27 +0000
To: Carpenter, Michael R. EOP/OVP; 'PyattGR [REDACTED]'; Kahl, Colin H. EOP/OVP; hochsteinaj [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Podrobnosti.biz : The Ukrainian scam of the Biden family (information on the website included)

Proposed TPs for the VP if he gets asked after the stories break in the next few days. Especially interested in your feedback on how to answer the third Q if he gets asked. He is not currently slated to take any questions from reporters on the record on the trip, but he will talk to our traveling press at length off the record and will need to be prepared to answer these kinds of questions.

TALKING POINTS

- My son is a private citizen and I'm not going to get into discussing his personal business, it has no impact on my work.
- What I will say, though, is that no one has been tougher in pushing Ukrainian leaders to root out corruption than I have. It has been a primary focus of my discussions, both publicly and privately, for years. And I think you can see from the substance of this trip it remains a major priority for me and for the US government.
- Important strides have been made – the appointment of a Special Anti-Corruption Prosecutor and the establishment of an independent Inspector General to prosecute corrupt prosecutors are two good ones. But much more needs to be done and we will continue to encourage everyone involved to commit to meaningful reforms.

Q: Have you asked Hunter to step down from the board? Has he discussed that with you?

A: I'm not going to discuss private conversations with my family. Hunter is a private citizen and does independent work.

Q: Do the optics of this situation undermine your credibility when you're pushing the Ukrainians to clean up their own house?

A: No. I have long pushed and will continue to push for the Ukrainian government to root out corrupt practices. My record on this speaks for itself. I have called on Ukrainian leadership to root out corruption, encouraged civil society reformers to remain focused on this and push the government themselves, and I welcome the news that the government will appoint a Special Anti-Corruption Prosecutor. Important steps have been taken, but there is so much left to be done. Corrupt officials must be brought to justice and reformers must work together to ensure this happens

Q: Do you think Zlochevsky is corrupt?

A: I'm not going to get into naming names or accusing individuals. We have been working consistently to push the Ukrainian leadership to make meaningful changes in the Prosecutor General's office and across the government to help ensure that the Ukrainian people are represented fairly and fully.

-----Original Message-----

From: Carpenter, Michael [[http://redirect.state.sbu/?url=mailto:\[REDACTED\]](http://redirect.state.sbu/?url=mailto:[REDACTED])]
Sent: Sunday, December 6, 2015 6:23 AM
To: 'PyattGR [REDACTED]' <[REDACTED]>; Kahl, Colin H. EOP/OVP <[REDACTED]>;
Bedingfield, Kate J. EOP/OVP <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: Podrobnosti.biz : The Ukrainian scam of the Biden family (information on the website included)

Ugh.

+ Kate, CK

From: Pyatt, Geoffrey R [[http://redirect.state.sbu/?url=mailto:\[REDACTED\]](http://redirect.state.sbu/?url=mailto:[REDACTED])]
Sent: Sunday, December 06, 2015 01:45 AM
To: Carpenter, Michael
Subject: FW: Podrobnosti.biz : The Ukrainian scam of the Biden family (information on the website included)

A really nasty Russian outlet on the same issue

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

From: lbi@lbicompany.com.ua [<http://redirect.state.sbu/?url=mailto:lbi@lbicompany.com.ua>]
Sent: Saturday, December 05, 2015 7:05 PM
To: Kyiv, Media Alerts
Subject: Podrobnosti.biz : The Ukrainian scam of the Biden family (information on the website included)

this web site is very similar (stile, shrifts etc) to Ukrainian Podrobnosti that belongs to Inter TV Channel
- the same name as its TV summary news block at 8pm

but we checked contacts and there is a Russian address there

Podrobnosti.biz

The Ukrainian scam of the Biden family

05.12.2015

Author: Eugene Prosvirin

The news that the son of the US Vice President Joe Biden was appointed to the board of directors of the Ukrainian gas company Burisma Holdings, for the first time appeared in media last spring.

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With best regards,
LBI Team

><http://redirect.state.sbu/?url=www.lbicompany.com.ua><
(044) 501 58 41



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LBI Team

><http://redirect.state.sbu/?url=www.lbicompany.com.ua><
(044) 501 58 41

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 12, 2016

H.E. Petro Poroshenko
President of Ukraine
Presidential Administration of Ukraine
11 Bankova Street
Kyiv, Ukraine 01220

Dear President Poroshenko,

As members of the U.S. Senate Ukraine Caucus and strong supporters of your government, we write to express our concern regarding the recent resignation of Minister of Economy Aivaras Abromavičius and his allegations of persistent corruption in the Ukrainian political system.

During the past year, Mr. Abromavičius and his team implemented tough but necessary economic reforms, worked to combat endemic corruption, and promoted more openness and transparency in government. He was known to many of us as a respected reformer and supporter of the Ukrainian cause. Minister Abromavičius's allegations raise concerns about the enormous challenges that remain in your efforts to reform the corrupt system you inherited.

We recognize that your governing coalition faces not only endemic corruption left from decades of mismanagement and cronyism, but also an illegal armed seizure of territory by Russia and its proxies. Tackling such obstacles to reforms amidst a war and the loss of much of southeastern Ukraine's economic productivity is a formidable challenge -- one which we remain committed to helping you overcome.

Succeeding in these reforms will show Russian President Vladimir Putin that an independent, transparent, and democratic Ukraine can and will succeed. It also offers a stark alternative to the authoritarianism and oligarchic cronyism prevalent in Russia. As such, we respectfully ask that you address the serious concerns raised by Minister Abromavičius. We similarly urge you to press ahead with urgent reforms to the Prosecutor General's office and judiciary. The unanimous adoption by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Basic Principles and Action Plan is a good step.

We very much appreciate your leadership and commitment to reform since the Ukrainian people demonstrated their resolve on the Maidan two years ago, and we look forward to continued cooperation in the future.

Sincerely,

Rob Portman

Senator Rob Portman

Dick Durbin *Jeanne Shaheen*

Senator Richard J. Durbin

Senator Jeanne Shaheen

Ron Johnson

Senator Ron Johnson

Chris Murphy *Mark Kirk*

Senator Chris Murphy

Senator Mark Kirk

Richard Blumenthal

Senator Richard Blumenthal

Sherrod Brown

Senator Sherrod Brown

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 27, 2019

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

The Honorable William Barr
Attorney General
Department of Justice

Dear Attorney General Barr:

We write to follow up on Senator Grassley's July 20, 2017 letter, which highlighted brazen efforts by the Democratic National Committee and Hillary Clinton campaign to use the government of Ukraine for the express purpose of finding negative information on then-candidate Trump in order to undermine his campaign.¹ That letter also highlighted news reports that, during the 2016 presidential election, "Ukrainian government officials tried to help Hillary Clinton and undermine Trump" and did so by "disseminat[ing] documents implicating a top Trump aide in corruption and suggest[ing] they were investigating the matter[.]"² Ukrainian officials also reportedly "helped Clinton's allies research damaging information on Trump and his advisers."³

At the center of this plan was Alexandra Chalupa, described by reports as a Ukrainian-American operative "who was consulting for the Democratic National Committee" and who reportedly met with Ukrainian officials during the presidential election for the express purpose of exposing alleged ties between then-candidate Donald Trump, Paul Manafort, and Russia.⁴ *Politico* also reported on a *Financial Times* story that quoted a Ukrainian legislator, Serhiy Leschenko, as saying that Trump's candidacy caused "Kiev's wider political leadership to do something they would never have attempted before: intervene, however indirectly, in a U.S. election."⁵

The July 20, 2017 letter further noted that the Democratic National Committee encouraged Chalupa to work with Ukrainian embassy staff to "arrange an interview in which Poroshenko [the president of Ukraine] might discuss Manafort's ties to Yanukovich."⁶ In March 2016, Chalupa met with Valeriy Chaly, Ukraine's ambassador to the U.S., and Oksana Shulyar, a top aid to the Ukrainian ambassador, to share her alleged concerns about Manafort. Reports state that the purpose of that initial meeting was to "organize a June reception at the embassy to promote Ukraine." However, another Ukrainian embassy official, Andrii Telizhenko, told

¹ Letter from Hon. Charles E. Grassley, Chairman, Senate Committee on the Judiciary, to Hon. Rod J. Rosenstein, Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice (July 20, 2017), *available at* <https://www.grassley.senate.gov/sites/default/files/constituents/2017-0720%20CEG%20to%20DOJ%20%28Ukraine%20DNC%20FARA%29.pdf>.

² *Id.*

³ Kenneth P. Vogel & David Stern, *Ukrainian efforts to sabotage Trump backfire*, *POLITICO* (Jan. 11, 2017), <https://www.politico.com/story/2017/01/ukraine-sabotage-trump-backfire-233446>.

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ *Id.*

Politico that Shulyar instructed him to assist Chalupa with research to connect Trump, Manafort, and the Russians. He reportedly said, “[t]hey were coordinating an investigation with the Hillary team on Paul Manafort with Alexandra Chalupa” and that “Oksana [Shulyar] was keeping it all quiet...the embassy worked very closely with” Chalupa.⁷ In a May 2019 article, Telizhenko was quoted as saying,

[Chalupa] said the DNC wanted to collect evidence that Trump, his organization and Manafort were Russian assets, working to hurt the U.S. and working with [Russian President Vladimir] Putin against the U.S. interests. She indicated if we could find the evidence they would introduce it in Congress in September and try to build a case that Trump should be removed from the ballot, from the election.⁸

Reportedly, Telizhenko was instructed by the Ukrainian government to meet with an American journalist about Paul Manafort’s ties to Ukraine.⁹ In addition, in May 2016, Chalupa emailed a DNC official stating that she met with 68 Ukrainian investigative journalists about Manafort and that there would be “[a] lot more coming down the pipe.”¹⁰ Less than a month later, the “black ledger” identifying payments made to Manafort from Ukrainian politicians was publicly released.¹¹ And finally, Nellie Ohr, the wife of Justice Department official Bruce Ohr, stated during a congressional interview that Fusion GPS used Serhiy Leschenko, a Ukrainian politician that admitted Ukraine intervened in the 2016 election, as a source for derogatory material against then-candidate Trump.¹²

After two years, more than 2,800 subpoenas, approximately 500 search warrants and witness interviews, and \$30 million in taxpayer money, Robert Mueller reported that then-candidate Trump did not collude with the Russians or any other foreign government to interfere with the 2016 presidential election.¹³ In contrast, however, the Clinton campaign and Democratic National Committee hired Fusion GPS to conduct opposition research against candidate Trump, which included, among other efforts, the hiring of former British Intelligence Officer Christopher Steele to compile the “Steele Dossier” that reportedly used Russian government sources for information. These facts continue to raise concerns about foreign assistance in the 2016 election that have not been thoroughly addressed.

⁷ Kenneth P. Vogel & David Stern, *Ukrainian efforts to sabotage Trump backfire*, *POLITICO* (Jan. 11, 2017), <https://www.politico.com/story/2017/01/ukraine-sabotage-trump-backfire-233446>

⁸ John Solomon, *Ukrainian Embassy confirms DNC contractor solicited Trump dirt in 2016*, *The Hill* (May 2, 2019), <https://thehill.com/opinion/white-house/441892-ukrainian-embassy-confirms-dnc-contractor-solicited-trump-dirt-in-2016>

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ Jack Gillum et al., *Manafort firm received Ukraine ledger payout*, *AP* (Apr. 12, 2017), [available at https://www.apnews.com/20cfc75c82eb4a67b94e624e97207e23](https://www.apnews.com/20cfc75c82eb4a67b94e624e97207e23).

¹² Transcript of Nellie Ohr Interview, Executive Session House Committee on the Judiciary joint with the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight (Oct. 19, 2018), [available at https://dougcollins.house.gov/sites/dougcollins.house.gov/files/10.19.18%20Nellie%20Ohr%20Interview.pdf](https://dougcollins.house.gov/sites/dougcollins.house.gov/files/10.19.18%20Nellie%20Ohr%20Interview.pdf).

¹³ See generally DEP’T OF JUSTICE, OFF. OF SPECIAL COUNSEL, REPORT ON THE INVESTIGATION INTO RUSSIAN INTERFERENCE IN THE 2016 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION (Mar. 2019), <https://www.justice.gov/storage/report.pdf>.

According to the Justice Department, U.S. Attorney John Durham is “exploring the extent to which...Ukraine, played a role in the counterintelligence investigation” during the 2016 election.¹⁴ However, the Justice Department has yet to inform Congress and the public whether it has begun an investigation into links and coordination between the Ukrainian government and individuals associated with the campaign of Hillary Clinton or the Democratic National Committee. Ukrainian efforts, abetted by a U.S. political party, to interfere in the 2016 election should not be ignored. Such allegations of corruption deserve due scrutiny, and the American people have a right to know when foreign forces attempt to undermine our democratic processes. Accordingly, please provide an answer to two questions from the July 2017 letter related to the Democrats’ collusion with Ukrainian officials:

1. Are you investigating links and coordination between the Ukrainian government and individuals associated with the campaign of Hillary Clinton or the Democratic National Committee? If not, why not?
2. Why hasn’t the Justice Department required Alexandra Chalupa to register as a foreign agent under FARA?

In addition, information has surfaced that raises new questions. A recent report described a note purporting to memorialize a meeting in Kiev between the Ukrainian Acting Prosecutor General, Yuriy Sevruk, and Burisma’s American legal team.¹⁵ Yuriy Sevruk was the temporary replacement for the Prosecutor General that Vice President Biden demanded be fired, Victor Shokin. The note, reportedly written by Sevruk, states that “[t]he purpose of their visit was an apology for dissemination of false information by U.S. representatives and public figures on the activities of the Prosecutor General’s Office of Ukraine [Shokin] in regards to the investigation of criminal activities of Zlochevshy [Oligarch owner of Burisma Holdings].”¹⁶

The article also reports that Ukrainian prosecutors have unsuccessfully been trying to get information to Justice Department officials since the summer of 2018, possibly including “[h]undreds of pages of never-released memos and documents ... [that] conflict with Biden’s narrative”¹⁷ that his actions in Ukraine had nothing to do with his son’s connections to Burisma. In light of this reporting, has the Justice Department obtained or been offered documents from Ukrainian officials related to these matters? If so, what were those documents?

We respectfully request that you respond to all of these questions no later than October 14, 2019.

¹⁴ Jeff Mordock, *John Durham investigating Ukraine in Trump-Russia origins probe*, The Washington Times (Sept. 25, 2019), <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2019/sep/25/john-durham-probing-ukraine-as-part-of-trump-russi/>

¹⁵ John Solomon, *These once-secret memos cast doubt on Joe Biden’s Ukraine story*, The Hill (Sept. 26, 2019), <https://thehill.com/opinion/campaign/463307-solomon-these-once-secret-memos-cast-doubt-on-joe-bidens-ukraine-story>.

¹⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷ *Id.*

We anticipate that your written reply and most responsive documents will be unclassified. Please send all unclassified material directly to the Committee. In keeping with the requirements of Executive Order 13526, if any of the responsive documents do contain classified information, please segregate all unclassified material within the classified documents, provide all unclassified information directly to the Committees, and provide a classified addendum to the Office of Senate Security. Although the Committees comply with all laws and regulations governing the handling of classified information, they are not bound, absent their prior agreement, by any handling restrictions.

Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to these matters. Should you have any questions, please contact Joshua Flynn-Brown of Chairman's Grassley's staff at (202) 224-4515 or Brian Downey or Scott Wittmann of Chairman Johnson's staff at (202) 224-4751.

Sincerely,

Charles E. Grassley
Chairman
Senate Finance Committee

Ron Johnson
Chairman
Senate Homeland Security
and Governmental Affairs



GOP senator says he doesn't remember signing 2016 letter urging 'reform' of Ukraine prosecutor's office

BY ZACK BUDRYK - 10/03/19 06:00 PM EDT

Just In...

California family frustrated governor, Harris used fire-damaged property for 'photo opportunity'

STATE WATCH — 8S AGO

FBI chief says Russia is trying to interfere in election to undermine Biden

CYBERSECURITY — 3M 10S AGO

FBI director calls Antifa 'a real thing'

NATIONAL SECURITY
— 8M 27S AGO

House passes resolution condemning anti-Asian discrimination relating to coronavirus

HOUSE — 17M 32S AGO

Chamber to lay off a dozen employees, expand advocacy efforts amid coronavirus pandemic

BUSINESS & LOBBYING
— 17M 39S AGO

Patients are dying unnecessarily from organ donation policy failures

OPINION — 22M 20S AGO

University of Georgia reverses, will allow on-campus early voting

STATE WATCH — 28M 24S AGO

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Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.) told reporters Thursday he did not recall signing a letter urging reforms in the office of the Ukrainian prosecutor President Trump has alleged former Vice President Joe Biden improperly had ousted, [The Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel](#) reported.

Trump has repeatedly alleged Biden used his office to have Prosecutor General Viktor Shokin fired and prevent him from investigating a gas company whose board included Biden's son Hunter.

CNN on Thursday reported that three Republican senators, including Johnson, Sen. Rob Portman (R-Ohio) and then-Sen. Mark Kirk (R-Ill.) [signed a 2016 letter](#) urging "urgent reforms to the Prosecutor General's office and Judiciary."

"I send out all kinds of oversight letters ... I don't know which 2016 oversight letter you're referring to so I will look at that and then we'll issue a press release, statement, or something — but I don't engage in hypocrisy. I'm looking at getting the truth," Johnson said when asked about the letter.

Johnson did acknowledge the letter in an interview Thursday on WIBA's "The Vicki McKenna Show," saying "The whole world, by the way, including the Ukrainian caucus, which I signed the letter, the whole world felt that

DHS opens probe into allegations at Georgia ICE facility

ADMINISTRATION — 30M 24S AGO

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Senate Republicans signal openness to...



this that Sholkin wasn't doing a [good] enough job. So we were saying hey you've ... got to rid yourself of corruption."

In the first interview, Johnson also said there was no misconduct in Trump's call on Thursday for China to investigate Biden and his son.

"If there's potential criminal activity, the President of the United States is our chief law enforcement officer. We have proper agreements with countries to investigate potential crimes so I don't think there's anything improper about doing that," he said.

Even as he endorsed investigations by both China and Ukrainian officials, Johnson denied the July 25 call between Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky at the heart of a whistleblower complaint represented Trump pressuring Zelensky to investigate the Bidens.

"I look at that transcript and I go, it's Trump being Trump," Johnson said, according to the Journal-Sentinel.

In a statement, Andrew Bates, rapid response director for the Biden campaign, told The Hill: "'The United States, the European Union, the I.M.F., and Ukraine's leading reform figures were all pressing for Viktor Shokin to be removed from office because he was one of the biggest obstacles to fighting corruption in the entire country. This was a bipartisan goal in Congress as well."

"It is unfortunate that Senator Johnson seems to have forgotten a time when he put the country's values over his own politics, but perhaps re-reading his well-articulated words whole-heartedly agreeing with Joe Biden's push to move the anti-corruption cause in Ukraine forward will help him on his journey back to intellectual consistency," Bates added.

Updated: 9:35 p.m.

TAGS DONALD TRUMP RON JOHNSON ROB PORTMAN JOE BIDEN MARK KIRK

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TWEET



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Statement On the Ukrainian-American Strategic Partnership

23 May, 20:11

Kyiv Security Forum expresses gratitude to the distinguished Ukrainian politicians, diplomats and civic activists for their support of the appeal to the American leaders and society on the importance of protecting the Ukrainian-American strategic partnership.

Statement On the Ukrainian-American Strategic Partnership

We, the representatives of Ukrainian politics, civil society, and the expert community, are deeply concerned to watch a campaign to involve Ukraine in the political competition in the United States unfold with renewed vigor.

Ukraine greatly appreciates the steadfast support of the American people for our independence, security, and Western course.

Our nations share the common values of national and human freedom.

The combined efforts of the two largest political parties in the United States and all concerned Americans to defend Ukraine are a major historical contribution to the creation of a united Europe and a just world order.

We call on American leaders to distinguish between the position of new Ukraine, which stands for the unity of the West and acts to unite democracies around the world, and those forces that seek to turn the political developments in our country into a toxic narrative to sow discord among our partners.

We oppose the dishonest attempts to use the political controversies in the United States. We do not choose any side, but support each of them in the same way that they together help Ukraine's independence.

We call on America's leaders to distinguish between the position of our nation from the actions of politicians instigated by Moscow.

We condemn hostile provocations aimed at alienating our nations.

We believe in the strategic partnership between Ukraine and the United States.

Let us not allow mutual distrust and doubt to erode this great and lasting relationship.

Let us stand together in times of great trials.

Signed on May 22-23, 2020

* * *

Arseny Yatsenyuk, Chairman of the Kyiv Security Forum, Prime Minister of Ukraine (2014-2016).

Oleksandr Turchynov, acting President of Ukraine, Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (2014), National Security Advisor (2014-2019).

Oksana Zabuzhko, writer, National Taras Shevchenko Prize laureate.

Joseph Zissels, member of the First of December Initiative Group, member of the Strategic Council of the Movement against Capitulation.

Myroslav Marynovych, Vice-Rector of the Ukrainian Catholic University, political dissident and prisoner of conscience under the Soviet occupation, member of the First of December Initiative Group.

Yevhen Zakharov, Chairperson of the Kharkiv Human Rights Group, Head of the Board of the Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Group, member of the First of December Initiative Group.

Leonid Finberg, Director of the Research Center of the History and Culture of Eastern European Jewry at the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Editor-in-Chief of the “Dukh i Litera” Publishing house.

Ihor Kozlovsky, prisoner of the Russian occupation regime in Donbas, President of the Center for Religious Studies, member of the First of December Initiative Group.

Lilia Hrynevych, Minister of Education of Ukraine (2016-2019).

Volodymyr Vasylenko, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Judge of the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia (2001-2005), Representative of Ukraine to the UN Human Rights Council (2006-10).

Volodymyr Ohryzko, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine (2007-2009).

Danylo Lubkivsky, Deputy Foreign Minister of Ukraine (2014), member of the Board of Open Ukraine Foundation.

Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze, Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Ukraine’s integration into the EU, European Solidarity faction, Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine (2016-2019).

Yuriy Shcherbak, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine to Israel (1992-1994), the United States (1994-1998), Canada (2000-2003).

Oleksandr Motsyk, First Deputy Foreign Minister of Ukraine (2004-2005), Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine to the United States (2010-2015).

Valeriy Chaly, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine to the United States (2015-2019), Chair of the Board of the Ukrainian Crisis Media Center.

Hanna Hopko, civic activist, Chairwoman of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs (2014-2019).

Roman Bezsmetny, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Vice-Prime-Minister of Ukraine (2005).

Natalia Popovych, Co-Founder of the Ukrainian Crisis Media Center, Founder of One Philosophy Group.

Ivan Vasyunyk, Head of the Supervisory Board of the International Foundation for the Development of the Holodomor Victims’ Memorial, Vice-Prime-Minister of Ukraine (2007-2010).

Solomiia Bobrovska, member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of IX convocation, Holos / Voice faction.

Ostap Semerak, Minister of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine (2014), Minister of Ecology of Ukraine (2016-2019), member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of VI and VIII convocations.

Iryna Geraschenko, member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of IX convocation, Co-Chair of the European Solidarity faction, First Deputy Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (2016-2019).

Serhiy Kvit, Minister of Education of Ukraine (2014-2016), professor at the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy.

Svitlana Voitsekhivska, member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of VIII convocation, member of the Board of Open Ukraine Foundation.

Maksym Burbak, Minister of Infrastructure of Ukraine (2014), member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of VII and VIII convocations.

Iryna Friz, member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of VIII and IX convocations, European Solidarity faction, Minister of Veterans Affairs (2018-2019).

Mykola Kniazhytskyi, journalist, member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of VIII and IX convocations.

Maria Ionova, member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of VIII and IX convocations, European Solidarity faction.

Mykola Ryabchuk, Honorary President of the Ukrainian PEN-Club.

Myroslava Barchuk, journalist, member of the Ukrainian PEN-Club.

Vitaliy Portnykov, journalist, writer.

Volodymyr Yermolenko, philosopher, Chief-editor of UkraineWorld Initiative, analytics director at Internews Ukraine.

Vakhtang Kebuladze, philosopher, professor at the Kyiv Taras Shevchenko National University.

Taras Lyuty, philosopher, professor at the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy.

Mykhaylo Basarab, civic activist, Coordinator of the Movement against Capitulation.

Victoria Ptashnyk, member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of VIII convocation.

Viktor Yelensky, member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of VIII convocation.

Borys Potapenko, Head of International Council in Support of Ukraine.

Serhiy Vysotsky, journalist, member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of VIII convocation.

Andriy Levus, civic activist, Coordinator of the Movement against Capitulation, member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of VIII convocation.

Oleksandr Sochka, member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of VI, VII and VIII convocations.

Mykhaylo Khmil, member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of VIII convocation.

Myroslav Hai, civic activist, Chairman of the Peace and Co Charitable Foundation.

Yevhen Bystrytsky, philosopher.

Kateryna Smagliy, Director of the International Cooperation Department at the Diplomatic Academy of Ukraine's Foreign Ministry.

Mykola Horbal, poet, political prisoner under the Soviet occupation.

Volodymyr Dubrovsky, economist.

Borys Zakharov, Director of "Human and Right" Charitable Foundation.

Hennadiy Kurochka, member of the Board of the Ukrainian Crisis Media Center.

Oleksiy Panych, philosopher, member of the Ukrainian PEN-Club.

Valeriy Pekar, Lecturer of Kyiv-Mohyla Business School.

Kostyantyn Sigov, philosopher, civic activist, Chair of the Center of the European Humanitarian Studies at the National University of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy.

Hennadiy Buryak, Deputy Director of the National Institute of the History of Ukraine.

Oleksandr Skipalsky, Lieutenant General, Honorary President of the Veterans Society of the Intelligence Community.

Anatoliy Podolsky, Director of the Ukrainian Center of the Holocaust Studies.

Ukrainian Crisis Media Center.