

House GOP probing then-VP Biden's dodgy breakfast meeting with Kazakh bank official at official residence

By Miranda Devine

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As House Republicans move to impeach Joe Biden, congressional investigators are zeroing in on a breakfast the then-vice president hosted in the summer of 2015 at his official residence in Washington, DC, for his son Hunter Biden and two business partners.

Hunter's former best friend

in business, Devon Archer, mentioned the meeting in passing during his recent closed door testimony to the House Oversight Committee.

Archer attended the July 7, 2015, meeting at 8:30am, along with Marc Holtzman, chairman of Kazakhstan's largest bank, Kazkommertsbank.

Over orange juice, coffee, and pastries in a downstairs room of the historic Naval Observatory residence, the conversation revolved around Holtzman lobbying VP Biden to back his close friend, then-Kazakhstan Prime Minister Nur Otunbayev, at the United Nations.

The unspoken subtext of the conversation between the four men was that Hunter and Archer were acting on behalf of Burisma, the corrupt Ukrainian energy company that was paying them \$1 million apiece.

00:01



03:56

With Massimov's backing they would create a potentially lucrative new Kazakhstani subsidiary, Burisma Eurasia, and bring American drilling equipment overland through Russia to exploit the gas deposits.

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President Biden has denied any knowledge of his son's business dealings.

REUTERS

The then-VP hosted two of his son Hunter's business partners at the Naval Observatory in 2015.

Helping Holtzman get a favor for Massimov in return was the purpose of the breakfast, and Jill Biden stopped by their table at one point to say hello, says a source familiar with the discussion.

Biden listened to Holtzman's pitch: Massimov speaks five languages fluently, wrote a book on artificial intelligence, and was a China expert who had studied in Wuhan, China, Columbia University in New York, and Moscow State University.

But the then-VP told Holtzman it would be "tough" to advocate for Massimov to get the top UN gig in Russia.

Biden promised he would bring the proposal to President Obama when he next talked to him, according to a source familiar with the discussion.

Massimov never got the UN job, and it's unclear if Biden ever advocated for him.

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Conversation during the breakfast at the historic

Naval
Observatory
residence
revolved
around
Holtzman
lobbying VP
Biden to
back his
close friend,
Karim
Massimov, to
be
Secretary-
General of
the United
Nations.
AP

Biden already knew Massimov. Hunter had brought him along to two dinners at Georgetown's Café Milano in spring 2014, and April 2015, according to Archer's testimony and material on Hunter's abandoned laptop. Hunter also brought other overseas business partners from Russia and Ukraine to the dinners to meet his father, including Burisma executive Vadym Pozharsky.

Massimov currently is serving 18 years in jail in Kazakhstan after he was convicted this April on charges of high treason, attempting to seize power by force, and abuse of office and power, in what his allies claimed was a political prosecution.

In his congressional testimony, Archer explained that the 45-minute discussion over breakfast was "about who was going to be the next UN Secretary-General" and he was involved "because Mark Holtzman was lobbying for Karim Massimov. But ... obviously, that didn't happen."

Karim
Massimov,
right, was
hoping to
have
then-VP
Biden's
support to
be named
Secretary
General of
the United
Nations.
KIAR

Devon
Archer, left,
with Joe and
Hunter
Biden in
2014, a year
before the
breakfast at
the Naval
Observatory.
FOX
News/Tucker
Carlson
Tonight

Archer said that Burisma was trying to expand its businesses into the former Soviet republic, "so I leveraged the relationship [with Massimov] to introduce him to the company — the country and new equipment and technology and clean drilling."

Archer also testified that he was "a good friend" of Massimov.

A diary entry on Hunter's laptop shows "breakfast with Devon" from 8.30 to 9.30am on July 7, and then another 2:45pm meeting that day, again at his father's residence, "NAVOBS", with "dad, Steve, Mike and Ted", presumably Biden's long-term advisers Steve

A thank you email to Hunter sent by Holtzman the next day also appears on the laptop.

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Getty Images

"Dear Hunter, I can't begin to thank you for yesterday," Holtzman wrote on July 8. "Most of all and as I said to Devon, I look forward to deepening our friendship and to working more closely together. Sincerely, Marc."

Another related email appears on the laptop from Burisma's Pozharsky, dated July 7, at 4:12 am, addressed to Archer with the subject: "Burisma/Kazakhstan follow-up issues":

Pozharsky asks Archer to "follow up and discuss with our Kazakh partners" four items including a memorandum of understanding, "contract signing and deal closure", and "closer cooperation" between Burisma and KazMunayGaz, a Kazakh energy company.

An email
from
Vadym
Pazharskyi
asking
Hunter
Biden to
meet for
coffee
after
already
meeting
Joe Biden.

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Serge Ilin

He also asks Archer to get an "official answer" to a letter addressed to Massimov from an unknown person in Washington, DC, that had been "delivered" to the Kazakh PM at an earlier dinner.

The Naval Observatory breakfast meeting is significant to House investigators because it is one example of the access Joe Biden provided to his son's business partners to lobby for favors from the US government.

The breakfast with Biden was "far more than an illusion of access," said Rep. Marjorie Greene, R-Ga., a member of the Oversight committee, alluding to Democrats' attempts to downplay more than a dozen meetings and at least 20 speaker phone calls between Biden and his son's business partners.

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