



Mulvaney links delay in Ukraine aid to DOJ investigation into 2016

BY STEFAN BECKET, GRACE SEGERS AND KATHRYN WATSON
UPDATED ON: OCTOBER 18, 2019 / 9:22 AM / CBS NEWS



Mulvaney says delay in Ukraine aid linked to ...

Key facts and latest news

- *At the White House, acting chief of staff Mick Mulvaney said a delay in aid to Ukraine was due to concerns about corruption in the country and tied the delay to Ukraine's cooperation with a Justice Department investigation.*
- *Later, Mulvaney issued a statement walking back his comments, claiming there was "absolutely no quid pro quo."*

- *Gordon Sondland, the U.S. ambassador to the European Union, told*

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Zelensky, Mr. Trump urged Ukraine to investigate Joe Biden.

Washington -- The acting White House chief of staff said a delay in hundreds of millions of dollars in aid to Ukraine over the summer was driven partly by a desire to pressure the country into cooperating with a Justice Department investigation into supposed Ukrainian involvement in the 2016 U.S. election.

Speaking to reporters at the White House on Thursday, Mick Mulvaney described conversations with President Trump, paraphrasing him as saying, "Look, this is a corrupt place. I don't want to send them a bunch of money, and have them waste it, have them spend it, have them use it to line their own pockets. Plus, I'm not sure that the other European countries are helping them out either."

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systems. "But that's it. That's why we held up the money."

Mulvaney reiterated the rationale later in the briefing: "I was involved with the process by which the money was held up temporarily, OK? Three issues for that: the corruption in the country, whether or not other countries were participating in support of the Ukraine and whether or not they were cooperating in an ongoing investigation with our Department of Justice. That's completely legitimate."

Other members of the president's staff tried repeatedly to convince him that the theory was "debunked" and had "no validity."

"It's not only a conspiracy theory, it is completely debunked," former homeland security adviser Tom Bossert told ABC News last month. He said he was "deeply frustrated with what he and legal team are doing in repeating that debunked theory to the president. It sticks in his mind when he hears it over and over again."

Later Thursday, the White House released a statement from Mulvaney seeking to clarify his remarks, blaming the media for misconstruing his remarks and claiming "there never was any condition on the flow of the aid related to the matter of the DNC server."

Earlier in the day, the U.S. ambassador to the European Union told lawmakers he was "disappointed" that Mr. Trump directed him and other diplomats managing U.S. policy toward Ukraine to work with Rudy Giuliani, his personal attorney.

"Please know that I would not have recommended that Mr. Giuliani or any private

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Sondland's testimony comes as Washington grapples with the death of Congressman Elijah Cummings, the Democratic chairman of the powerful House Oversight Committee and a key figure in the impeachment inquiry. The congressman, 68, had often clashed with Mr. Trump. -- *Stefan Becket*

Mulvaney issues new statement claiming "no quid pro quo"

6:00 p.m.: The White House has issued a statement from Mulvaney walking back his earlier comments:

Once again, the media has decided to misconstrue my comments to advance a biased and political witch hunt against President Trump. Let me be clear, there was absolutely no quid pro quo between Ukrainian military aid and any investigation into the 2016 election. The president never told me to withhold any money until the Ukrainians did anything related to the server. The only reasons we were holding the money was because of concern about lack of support from other nations and concerns over corruption. Multiple times during the more-than 30 minute briefing where I took over 25 questions, I referred to President Trump's interest in rooting out corruption in Ukraine, and ensuring taxpayer dollars are spent responsibly and appropriately. There was never any connection between the funds and the Ukrainians doing anything with the server - this was made explicitly obvious by the fact that the aid money was delivered without any action on the part of the Ukrainians regarding the server

regarding the server.

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Rick Perry resigning as energy secretary



In this May 9, 2019, file photo, Energy Secretary Rick Perry testifies before the House Energy and Commerce Committee on his future budget request, on Capitol Hill in Washington.

J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE / AP

5:11 p.m.: Energy Secretary Rick Perry, who played a key role in managing the U.S. relationship with Ukraine, notified the president he intends to resign, two administration sources familiar with the matter tell CBS News.

Read more [here](#).

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"The President's legal counsel was not involved in acting chief of staff Mike Mulvaney's press briefing," Sekulow said. -- *Paula Reid*

DOJ official: Mulvaney rationale for withholding Ukraine aid is "news to us"

2:53 p.m.: A senior Justice Department official said the department was not aware of any connection between aid to Ukraine and the department's investigation into the origins of the 2016 counterintelligence probe.

"If the White House was withholding aid in regards to the cooperation with any investigation at the Department of Justice, that is news to us," the official said.

A person familiar with the reaction inside the department said officials were "utterly confused" and "angry" at Mulvaney for saying the aid was withheld in connection to an investigation. -- *Clare Hymes*

Mulvaney links delay in Ukraine aid to 2016 investigation

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White House acting chief of staff Mick Mulvaney answers questions from reporters during a press briefing at the White House in Washington, D.C., on October 17, 2019.

JIM WATSON

1:38 p.m.: Mulvaney said hundreds of millions of dollars in U.S. aid to Ukraine was delayed because of concerns about corruption and a desire to get Ukraine to cooperate with an internal Justice Department investigation into the origins of the 2016 U.S. counterintelligence probe into election interference.

Mulvaney, who was involved in delaying the aid package in July shortly before the president's call with the leader of Ukraine, told reporters at the White House that the aid was contingent on Ukraine ensuring the money wouldn't be squandered by corruption and said the president had raised a conspiracy theory about a DNC email server. He also said the U.S. wanted other European countries to contribute more to Ukraine's security.

"President Trump is not a big fan of foreign aid. Never has been, still isn't. Doesn't like spending money overseas, especially when it's poorly spent," Mulvaney said. "And that is exactly what drove this decision."

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own pockets. Plus, I'm not sure that the other European countries are helping them out either."

"Did he also mention to me in the past, the corruption related to the DNC server? Absolutely. No question about that. But that's it. That's why we held up the money," Mulvaney said. The aid was eventually released in September under pressure from lawmakers.

Asked by ABC News' Jonathan Karl to clarify whether the demand to investigate 2016 activities was part of the reason for withholding the aid, Mulvaney said, "the look back to what happened in 2016 certainly was part of the thing that he was worried about in corruption with that nation. And that is absolutely appropriate."

"What you just described is a quid pro quo," Karl replied. "It is, funding will not flow unless the investigation into the Democratic server happened as well."

"We do that all the time with foreign policy," Mulvaney said, adding, "I have news for everybody: Get over it. There's going to be political influence in foreign policy ... That is going to happen. Elections have consequences." -- *Stefan Becket*

Pelosi says impeachment process is separate from the campaign

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House Speaker Nancy Pelosi gestures while speaking during a news conference on Capitol Hill on Thursday, October 17, 2019.

PABLO MARTINEZ MONSIVAIS / AP

11:30 a.m.: House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said in her weekly press conference that she believed the impeachment process should be separate from the campaign.

"Impeachment is about the truth and the Constitution of the United States," Pelosi said, adding that she disagreed with the assessment that voters should decide whether or not to remove Mr. Trump from office in the 2020 election.

"Voters are not going to decide whether we honor our oath of office," Pelosi said. She said she does not know the timeline for the impeachment inquiry, despite Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's prediction that the process would conclude by the end of the year.

She also said she did not believe Mr. Trump's policy decisions in Syria were impeachable offenses, noting that she declined to begin an impeachment inquiry

against President George W. Bush over the war in Iraq.

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Next week's interviews in the impeachment inquiry

11:06 a.m.: The committees leading the impeachment inquiry have a packed schedule of interviews next week. Here is their plan, according to a source familiar with the inquiry.

- **Tuesday, October 22:** William Taylor, charge d'affaires in Ukrainian embassy
- **Wednesday, October 23:** Philip Reeker, acting assistant secretary of European and Eurasian affairs
- **Thursday, October 24:** Alexander Vindman, director of European affairs for the National Security Council
- **Friday, October 25:** Suriya Jayanti, foreign service officer in Kiev, and Timothy Morrison, top Russia adviser for the National Security Council --
Rebecca Kaplan

Sondland claims he barely interacted with Giuliani

9:30 a.m.: In his opening statement before the joint House committees conducting the impeachment inquiry, Sondland is expected to say that he barely interacted with Giuliani, according to a copy of the testimony obtained by CBS News. Sondland will also claim that he, Energy Secretary Rick Perry and former U.S. special envoy to Ukraine Kurt Volker were "disappointed" by Mr. Trump's directive to work with Giuliani.

"Secretary Derry, Ambassador Volker, and I were disappointed by our May 22

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U.S. Ambassador to the European Union Gordon Sondland, center, arrives for a joint interview on Capitol Hill in Washington on Thursday, October 17, 2019.

PABLO MARTINEZ MONSIVAIS / AP

"Please know that I would not have recommended that Mr. Giuliani or any private citizen be involved in these foreign policy matters. However, given the President's explicit direction, as well as the importance we attached to arranging a White House meeting between Presidents Trump and Zelensky, we agreed to do as President Trump directed," Sondland continues.

Sondland also says that he did not know about Giuliani's desire for Ukraine to

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doing, they never shared those misgivings with me, then or later."

However, a source familiar tells CBS News that Hill raised concerns to Sondland "to his face." -- *Grace Segers and Margaret Brennan*

Read [Sondland's full opening statement here](#).

Sondland arrives on Capitol Hill for closed-door deposition

9:06 a.m. Gordon Sondland, the ambassador to the E.U., arrived on Capitol Hill at 9:05 a.m. for his closed-door deposition with the House Intelligence, Foreign Affairs and Oversight committees.

It's unclear how long the deposition will last.

Former Russia adviser says she heard Sondland offer a quid pro quo

7:54 a.m.: Mr. Trump's former Russia adviser, Fiona Hill, flagged to the White House counsel that she heard Sondland say to Ukrainian officials at the White House that he had a deal to get Zelensky a meeting with Mr. Trump if the Ukrainians opened an investigation into Burisma, the Ukrainian gas firm with ties

to Hunter Biden. A source familiar told CBS News that the name Burisma was

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House lawyers. A source familiar with the matter told CBS News that she raised the issue with Sondland it "to his face" on July 10 in the basement of the White House, a detail first reported by NBC News. -- *Margaret Brennan*

Elijah Cummings, key figure in the impeachment inquiry, dies at 68

6:07 a.m.: House Oversight Committee Chairman Elijah Cummings died early Thursday morning due to ongoing health complications. Cummings was one of the key figures in Democratic efforts to conduct an impeachment inquiry

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Volker said diplomats were "uncomfortable" with Giuliani's work

6:00 a.m.: In his October 3 testimony, Volker told the committees that longtime State Department officials were "uncomfortable with [Giuliani] being active" in Kiev, and said he made it clear to his Ukrainian counterparts that Giuliani did not represent the U.S. government, sources said. He testified he did not have the impression that Giuliani was relaying messages from the president to the Ukrainians.

"I believed he was doing his own communication about what he believed and was interested in," Volker said, according to sources. Giuliani had given interviews raising questions about Ukraine's role in the 2016 U.S. election and Hunter Biden's business dealings.

Much of Volker's testimony focused on a proposed statement from the Ukrainian government that was never sent. Volker said Giuliani wanted Zelensky to release a statement specifically mentioning Ukraine's commitment to investigating 2016 election interference and Burisma, a Ukrainian energy firm that appointed Hunter Biden to its board.

"I wouldn't say I thought it was necessary to have it in there because I thought the

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Schiff says he'll release transcripts of closed-door interviews

Wednesday, 6:48 p.m.: Adam Schiff, the House Intelligence Committee chairman, wrote a letter to his Democratic colleagues with an update on the impeachment inquiry.

"While we have a great many interviews to come, it is worth taking stock of what we already know," Schiff wrote. "We are already in possession of the call record which lays plain the President's efforts to abuse his office for political gain, as well as text messages among State Department employees that show the degree to which the apparatus of the Department was pressed into the service of the President's illicit aim of digging up dirt on his political opponent."

He said the committees will release transcripts of their closed-door interviews "at a time that it will not jeopardize investigative equities" and with appropriate redactions.

"We also anticipate that at an appropriate point in the investigation, we will be taking witness testimony in public, so that the full Congress and the American people can hear their testimony firsthand," Schiff said. -- *Stefan Becket*

Pelosi says impeachment didn't come up at heated White House meeting

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Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer walk out of the White House after meeting with President Trump on October 16, 2019.

BRENDAN SMIALOWSKI / AFP

Wednesday, 4:39 p.m.: House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said the topic of impeachment didn't come up at a meeting of congressional leaders and administration officials at the White House on the situation in Syria.

Pelosi and Democratic leaders said the meeting devolved into chaos, with the president insulting them and calling Pelosi a "third-grade politician."

"What we witnessed on the part of the president was a meltdown, sad to say," Pelosi told reporters on the White House driveway after the meeting.

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A source familiar with McKinley's testimony said he testified that he was upset there was no statement or letter supporting Yovanovitch, a respected career diplomat. Another source said McKinley also testified about political targeting at the State Department and the mistreatment of career diplomats beyond Yovanovitch. -- *Rebecca Kaplan and Margaret Brennan*

First published on October 17, 2019 / 6:00 AM

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