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Pompeo Took Part in Ukraine Call, Official Says

Secretary of State listened in on July 25 Trump-Zelensky contact that is center of impeachment inquiry



Secretary of State Mike Pompeo was among officials who reportedly listened in on the July 25 call. PHOTO: AL DRAGO/REUTERS

By Courtney McBride and Sadie Gurman

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Secretary of State Mike Pompeo was among the administration officials who listened in on the July 25 phone call between President Trump and Ukraine’s president, a senior State Department official said Monday, a disclosure that ties the State Department more closely to the House impeachment inquiry.

Mr. Pompeo’s participation on the call, which hadn’t been previously reported, was one of several developments related to the controversy that centers on Mr. Trump’s repeated urging that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky cooperate with Rudy Giuliani, Mr. Trump’s personal attorney, and Attorney General William Barr on investigations into Mr. Trump’s political opponents, including Democratic rival Joe Biden.

Also Monday, House committees subpoenaed Mr. Giuliani to turn over documents related to his


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Rudy Giuliani, personal lawyer to President Trump, also has been subpoenaed by House committees in the Ukrainian matter.
PHOTO: FLORION GOGA/REUTERS

the impeachment inquiry. Mr. Giuliani said on Twitter that the subpoena “will be given appropriate consideration,” noting that the subpoena was “signed only by Democrat Chairs who have prejudged this case.”

The impeachment inquiry is focused on Mr. Trump’s dealings with Ukraine. Lawmakers are focusing on a whistleblower complaint by a person identified as an officer at the Central Intelligence Agency and a record of the call between the two presidents that was released by the administration. If the Democrats approve articles of impeachment, the matter would move to trial in the Senate, which Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell confirmed Monday he would hold.

“I would have no choice but to take it up,” the Kentucky Republican said on CNBC. He added: “How long you are on it is a different matter, but I would have no choice but to take it up based on a Senate rule on impeachment.”

The scrutiny of the call with Ukraine—which came at a time when Mr. Trump had ordered U.S. aid to Ukraine put on hold—has prompted a wider examination of efforts by the Trump administration to engage foreign leaders in assisting with issues important to the president.

Mr. Barr has asked Mr. Trump to make introductions to a number of foreign officials he believes may have information relevant to the Justice Department’s review of the origins of the Russia investigation and has held overseas meetings with some of them, a Justice Department official said Monday. Mr. Trump recently called Australia’s prime minister at Mr. Barr’s request, two government officials said, to ask him to help with the inquiry.



Mr. Barr in May tapped John Durham, the top federal prosecutor in Connecticut, to lead the review. It focuses on the counterintelligence investigation that became special counsel Robert Mueller's probe into Russian election meddling. Since then, Mr. Durham has been exploring what role if any various countries including Ukraine played in the counterintelligence probe. The Justice Department has revealed that "certain Ukrainians who are not members of the government" had volunteered information to Mr. Durham.

The department official wouldn't say from which other countries Mr. Barr is seeking information. The attorney general was in Italy last week speaking to government officials in connection with Mr. Durham's review.

The official described Mr. Barr's request that Mr. Trump speak to Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison as standard, saying "It is typical protocol for one leader to contact another leader" for such a request.

"The Australian government has always been ready to assist and cooperate with efforts that help shed further light on the matters under investigation," according to a statement from the Australian government. "The PM confirmed this readiness once again in conversation with the president."

In a May 28 letter to Mr. Barr, the Australian ambassador to Washington offered to help with the examination of the Russian inquiry, saying "we stand ready to provide you with all relevant information to support your inquiries."

White House spokesman Hogan Gidley on Monday said: "The DOJ simply requested that the President provide introductions to facilitate that ongoing inquiry, and he did so, that's all."

Mr. Trump and his Republican congressional allies have long alleged that his associates were unfairly targeted for surveillance, and that investigators in the Justice Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation were politically prejudiced against Mr. Trump in a way that could have affected their work. Mr. Trump has said he believes Mr. Durham's review will show crimes were committed by his political opponents.

Mr. Pompeo was scheduled to depart for a European trip later Monday. He said last week that he hadn't yet read the whistleblower's complaint in its entirety, but said that to his knowledge, actions by State Department officials had been "entirely appropriate and consistent" with administration efforts to improve relations with Ukraine.

In those comments, during the United Nations General Assembly meeting, he didn't mention his own participation in the call, but said the complaint was filed by "someone who had



Several days earlier, Mr. Pompeo said that he opposed releasing the record of the Trump-Zelensky call. He told “Fox News Sunday” in a Sept. 22 interview that he would defer to the White House on whether to do so.

“Those are private conversations between world leaders, and it’s not often that those are released,” he said in the interview. And when they’re [released], it’s done when the White House deems it appropriate.” Mr. Pompeo dismissed a question about details of the call, saying, “There’s a lot going on in the world.”

Three House committees—Foreign Affairs, Intelligence and Oversight — on Friday subpoenaed Mr. Pompeo for documents related to the inquiry; he has until Oct. 4 to produce them.

The committees plan to depose former U.S. ambassador to Ukraine Marie Yovanovitch ; U.S. special envoy to Ukraine Kurt Volker ; Deputy Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs George Kent; counselor Ulrich Brechbuhl ; and U.S. Ambassador to the EU Gordon Sondland.

Mr. Volker resigned his post last week. Mr. Sondland said he planned to attend the deposition. The State Department did not respond to questions about plans by other officials who were asked to appear.

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In Ukraine, Mr. Zelensky said Monday that his administration wouldn’t release a transcript of the July phone call with Mr. Trump, while also saying he is open to investigating any alleged violation of Ukrainian law.



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said his administration wouldn't release a transcript of the July phone call with

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Does Mike Pompeo's involvement change your view on President Trump's call with Ukraine? Why or why not?



President Trump's phone call with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky is at the center of an impeachment inquiry in the House of Representatives. PHOTO: ERIN SCOTT/REUTERS

At the White House on Monday afternoon, Mr. Trump told reporters: "We're trying to find out about a whistleblower." He didn't expand on that, and the White House didn't immediately respond to a question about the comment.

Mr. Trump has said he deserved to confront the whistleblower and anyone who provided him information and has suggested they are spies who committed treasonous acts. House Democrats are eager to hear testimony from the whistleblower—though in a way that will protect his identity.

Shortly after Mr. Trump's comment, Andrew P. Bakaj, a lawyer who represents the whistleblower, wrote on Twitter: "The Intel Community Whistleblower is entitled to anonymity. Law and policy support this and the individual is not to be retaliated against. Doing so is a violation of federal law."

The Republican-led Senate is considered unlikely to convict Mr. Trump in any impeachment trial. Removing the president requires approval by two-thirds of the 100-member Senate.

Some Senate Republicans have voiced concern over the allegations outlined by a whistleblower



—*Rebecca Ballhaus and Natalie Andrews contributed to this article.*

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Corrections & Amplifications

Former Sen. Trent Lott (R., Miss.) was the Senate majority leader when the Senate was considering whether to remove President Clinton from office. In an earlier version of this article, the late Sen. Robert Byrd (D., W. Va.) was incorrectly identified as the Senate majority leader at the time. (Sept. 30, 2019)

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