

Politics

Giuliani Says Ukraine Efforts ‘Solely’ for Trump’s Legal Defense

By [Jordan Fabian](#)

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- ▶ Claim hurts White House argument he conducted foreign policy
 - ▶ Giuliani has said he was tapped by State Department on Ukraine
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Rudy Giuliani *Photographer: John Taggart/Bloomberg*

Rudy Giuliani said his controversial work with Ukraine -- now at the center of the House impeachment probe -- was done “solely as a defense attorney” for President Donald Trump,

undercutting the administration's claims that the former mayor was advancing U.S. foreign policy.

Giuliani's tweet on Wednesday offered one of his most direct statements thus far on the nature of his work in Kyiv that has come under scrutiny in the impeachment inquiry. Lawmakers have been interviewing current and former administration officials in efforts to clarify the nature of Giuliani's interactions with U.S. and Ukrainian officials.

Secretary of State Michael Pompeo in an Oct. 20 interview with ABC News disputed the notion that Giuliani had circumvented the State Department to conduct what Democrats have called a shadow foreign policy. "Private citizens often are part of executing American foreign policy," Pompeo said.

And Giuliani had previously denied bypassing official diplomatic channels in dealing with the government of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

"Well, I wasn't operating on my own," Giuliani said in a Sept. 26 interview with Fox News' Laura Ingraham. "I went to meet Mr. Zelenskyy's aide at the request of the State Department. Fifteen memos make that clear."

But former special envoy to Ukraine Kurt Volker said in House testimony that Giuliani's assertions in media interviews that he was acting at the behest of the State Department were not true. Volker said he arranged a meeting between Giuliani and top Zelenskyy adviser Andriy Yermak, but that it was not at the administration's direction.

"He was saying that we were directing him and that he was acting on the behest of the State Department to do things," Volker said. "Well, it's not the truth."

Earlier: Trump Impeachment Defense Erodes as Envoys Detail Giuliani Role

Gordon Sondland, Trump's ambassador to the European Union, described Giuliani's role in ambiguous terms, saying that he discussed with Pompeo that the former New York City mayor was simply "involved in affairs" related to Ukraine.

The secretary of State "rolled his eyes" and said it is something we have to deal with, according to Sondland.

But Sondland also tried to distance himself and his office from Giuliani.

“Let me be clear: Mr. Giuliani does not work for me or for my mission, and I do not know what official or unofficial role, if any, he has with the State Department,” he said in his opening statement. “To my knowledge, he is one of the president’s personal lawyers.”

Giuliani, who is under criminal investigation as part of work two of his associates did in Ukraine, also said Wednesday that he had hired three lawyers, including Robert Costello, who specializes in criminal litigation and municipal investigations.

Asked Oct. 25 whether he was concerned about the growing investigation into his personal lawyer, Trump said: “I don’t think so.”

“I think Rudy is a great gentleman. He’s been a great crime fighter. He looks for corruption wherever he goes. Everybody understands Ukraine has big problems in that regard,” Trump said.

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