

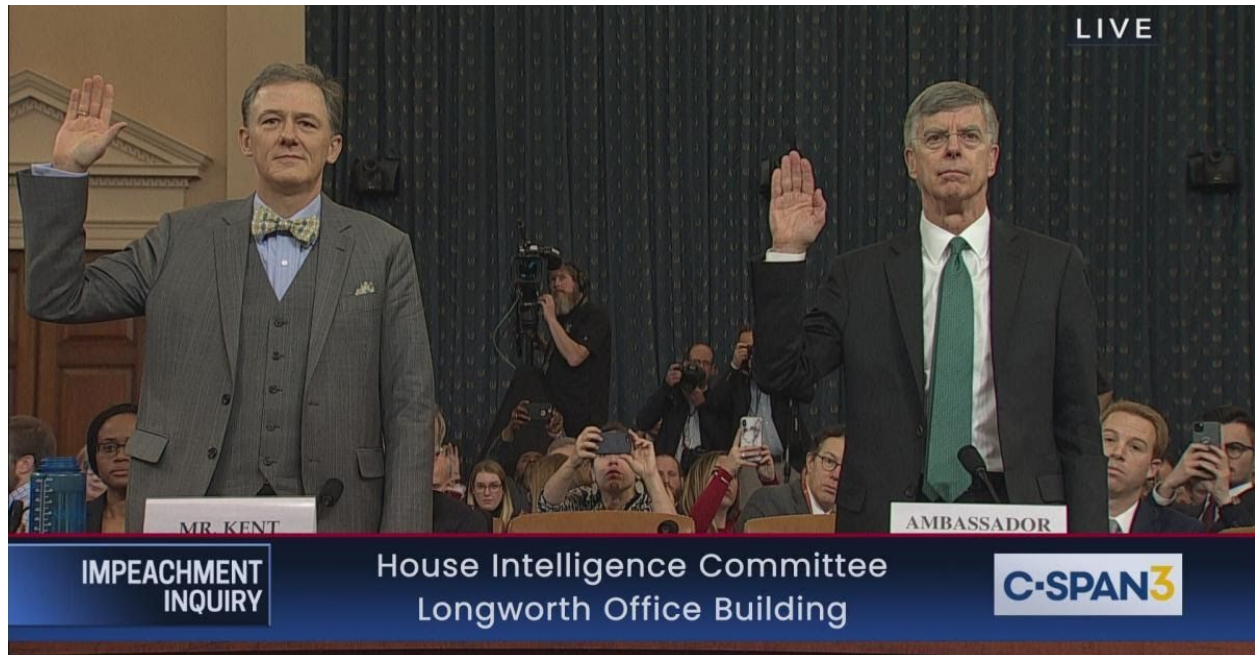
Madeline K Sullivan

Story 2 “speech or news conference or meeting”

12/10/19

Rewrite

First Public Impeachment Hearings



Acting Ambassador of Ukraine William Taylor, a Vietnam veteran and former State Department official, and George Kent, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State testified today in front of House Intelligence Committee to contribute to the impeachment hearings against President Donald J. Trump. After about six hours of questioning from Democrats and Republicans, there was some new information. Some thought the hearings would be just a live version of the testimonies given in private.

We learned:

- William Taylor told the House that one of his staff came forward with information about an overheard phone call that linked Trump directly to the scandal.
- George Kent came forward affirming the allegations that Mr. Giuliani was smearing the then-Ukrainian ambassador

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Marie L. Yovanovitch and pushing for political investigations.

- Republicans use the main argument of hearsay to combat the evidence put forward.

Mr. Taylor in his opening statement to the House revised his opening to include new information for the public hearing. Between now and the day he privately testified, one of his staff came forward with evidence further linking Trump to the investigations. European Ambassador Gordon D. Sondland was on an unsecured phone call with President Trump in a Ukrainian restaurant. The staff overheard the conversation and reported that "The Ukrainians were ready to move forward".

The staff asked the ambassador what the president thought of Ukraine and Mr. Sondland "responded that President Trump cares more about the investigations of Biden, which Giuliani was pressing for." This directly links Trump to this investigation and adds to the piling evidence of bribery/quid pro quo.

Mr. George Kent also came forward with evidence regarding Rudy Giuliani, President Trump's private lawyer. It was suspected that Giuliani was acting as an unofficial foreign policy keeper in Ukraine pushing for Ukraine to conduct Biden investigations. Mr. Kent confirmed this saying that Giuliani's efforts "were now infecting U.S. engagement with Ukraine, leveraging President Zelensky's desire for a White House meeting." Kent also made clear that Giuliani was working a "smear campaign" against Ambassador Marie L. Yovanovitch in order to remove her from office, which was eventually successful. This was to ensure she wouldn't interfere with the investigations. She will be testifying Friday.

Republicans, confronted by all this evidence, used the argument that a majority of the evidence put forward is hearsay and cannot be linked directly to the case. Representative Jim

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Jordan was a notable questioner and pushed the notion that all the evidence was second hand and did not prove Trump was holding the aid from Ukraine. -30-