

1 media with respect to Ukraine. My recollection is that Ambassador Sondland stated,
2 quote, "Dammit, Rudy. Every time Rudy gets involved, he goes and [F's] everything up."

3 The inauguration took place on May 20th, and I took notes in the delegation's
4 meeting with President Zelensky. During the meeting, Secretary Perry passed President
5 Zelensky a list that Perry described as, quote, "people he trusts." Secretary Perry told
6 President Zelensky that he could seek advice from the people on this list on issues of
7 energy-sector reform, which was the topic of subsequent meetings between Secretary
8 Perry and key Ukrainian energy-sector contacts. Embassy personnel were excluded
9 from some of these later meetings by Secretary Perry's staff.

10 On May 23rd, Ambassador Volker, Ambassador Sondland, Secretary Perry, and
11 Senator Ron Johnson, who had also attended the inauguration, though not on the official
12 delegation, returned to the United States and briefed President Trump. On May 29th,
13 President Trump signed a congratulatory letter to President Zelensky, which included an
14 invitation to visit the White House at an unspecified date.

15 It is important to understand that a White House visit was critical to President
16 Zelensky. President Zelensky needed to show U.S. support at the highest levels in order
17 to demonstrate to Russian President Putin that he had U.S. backing as well as to advance
18 his ambitious anticorruption reform agenda at home.

19 President Zelensky's team immediately began pressing to set a date for that visit.
20 President Zelensky and senior members of his team made clear that they wanted
21 President Zelensky's first overseas trip to be to Washington, to send a strong signal of
22 American support, and requested a call with President Trump as soon as possible.

23 We at the Embassy also believed that a meeting was critical to the success of
24 President Zelensky's administration and its reform agenda, and we worked hard to get it
25 arranged.