



[Fiona Hill and David Holmes Testify in Impeachment Inquiry](#)

Last Thursday, Fiona Hill and David Holmes testified in front of the House Intelligence Committee in the ongoing impeachment inquiry against President Trump. Dr. Hill is a former National Security Council official, and Holmes is a political counsellor for the United States Embassy in Ukraine. Mr. Holmes is a career foreign service officer who served under the Bush and Obama White Houses, and also held a position on the national security council for a time. The testimony of Hill and Holmes was the last of this round of the impeachment inquiry.

Fiona Hill was the top expert on Russia for the White House, and her testimony had been long awaited by lawmakers on Capitol Hill. Hill began her testimony by shredding conspiracy theories peddled by President Trump and some of his allies that Ukraine, not Russia, was involved in meddling with the 2016 election. Although she did not call the President out by name, Hill expressed her disdain for this belief, calling it a fictional narrative that was propagated by the Russian security services. She also warned that Russia and its proxies were preparing to interfere in the 2020 election, and requested that Members of Congress not promote politically driven falsehoods which promote Russian interests.

Dr. Hill also echoed the testimony from previous witnesses that there was in fact quid pro quo relating to a White House meeting for new Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. Hill said that it was “very clear” that the Washington meeting for Zelensky was dependent on other factors, namely an investigation into Hunter Biden. She also provided more insight into the role that Ambassador to the European Union, Gordon Sondland played in the affair. Hill testified that she had been angry with Ambassador Sondland because he wasn’t adhering to traditional communication methods for national security matters, but after hearing his testimony, she realized that he was being used for domestic political errands, and so he could not be apportioned blame.

David Holmes’ testimony centered around a phone call he had overheard between President Trump and Ambassador Sondland. Holmes told the committee that he heard Sondland assure President Trump that an investigation into Hunter Biden would be opened by Ukrainian President Zelensky. Holmes said that the call was so unique in his career in the foreign service that he recalled it perfectly. The committee also heard that in 2019, policy toward Ukraine shifted, specifically as Rudy Giuliani entered the scene. Giuliani and his associates allegedly had a direct line of communication with the White House, and they were working on a political agenda that went against the stated policy in Ukraine.

Both Holmes and Hill saw the pressure on Ukraine as being purely political, and without a foreign policy or national security justification. The pair are also some of the first career officials to testify, which suggests that President Trump’s political appointees are not as well versed as the staffers who have forged a career in foreign policy.