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**GROUND TRUTH**  
Shadow Diplomacy & Irregular Channels

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House Democrats and their supporters in the media continue to attack President Trump for what they describe as his “shadow diplomacy” in Ukraine. Further, witnesses testified to “irregular channels” of communication that involved Ambassador Kurt Volker, Ambassador Gordon Sondland, and Secretary of Energy Rick Perry. For example:

*“At the same time, however, there was an irregular, informal channel of U.S. policymaking with respect to Ukraine, one which included then-Special Envoy Kurt Volker, Ambassador Sondland, Secretary of Energy Rick Perry, and as I subsequently learned, Mr. Giuliani.” -Ambassador William Taylor*

The “shadow diplomacy” myth ignores the fact that Ambassadors Volker and Sondland were high level State Department officials appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. Secretary Perry was a cabinet level official also presidentially appointed and Senate confirmed.

The “shadow diplomacy” myth also ignores both current and past Presidential practices dating back to George Washington. As stated in a recent Real Clear Investigations article, *“While critics deride such efforts as “back-door,” “secret,” or “shadow” undertakings, many presidents have found it useful to dispatch people they trust, who can think and operate outside the constraints of official channels in handling delicate matters.”*

In fact, the State Department has frequently been bypassed by both Democratic and Republican Chief Executives. Importantly, all the individuals, except for Mayor Giuliani, held formal high-level positions in the Executive Branch with distinct Ukraine-related expertise and roles that ideally suited them to lead Ukraine policy implementation:

**Ambassador Kurt Volker**

- Ambassador Volker served as U.S. Special Representative for Ukraine Negotiations starting in July 2017, where he served as chief interlocutor with Ukraine for many years and was trusted by his Ukrainian counterparts.
- By Ambassador William Taylor’s own admission, Ambassador Volker “is a man of integrity.”

**Ambassador Gordon Sondland**

- Ambassador Sondland was confirmed by the U.S. Senate as the U.S. Ambassador to the European Union on June 28, 2018.

- Given current U.S. policy, which in-part seeks to encourage more European support to assist Ukraine, Ambassador Sondland was key to pushing the pro-U.S./Ukraine message to the European Union and facilitating increased EU support to Ukraine.

### **Secretary Rick Perry**

- Secretary Perry was confirmed by the U.S. Senate as the 14<sup>th</sup> U.S. Secretary of Energy on March 2, 2017.
- By Deputy Assistant Secretary of State George Kent’s own admission, Secretary Perry “had traveled to Ukraine, understood the issues, and energy was one of the top three issues that we were working with Ukraine.”

### **Mayor Rudy Giuliani**

- Mayor Giuliani had no role in U.S. foreign policy outreach to Ukraine but was a confidant of the President with knowledge of Ukraine. His use by the President as an informal advisor may be unconventional but is not unprecedented or inappropriate. The practice of using direct diplomacy, personal envoys and unofficial representatives by the President in the conduct of foreign policy has occurred since George Washington.