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Donald Trump in recording says 'get rid' of Ukraine ambassador: report

Lev Parnas, an indicted associate of Mr Trump's personal attorney Rudy Giuliani, has leaked bombshell audio from the US President.

AFP

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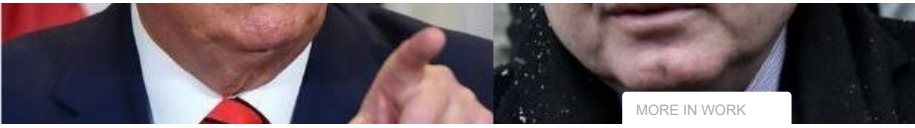


Donald Trump, left, and Rudy Giuliani associate Lev Parnas. Picture: Supplied Source: Supplied

US President Donald Trump demanded the dismissal of Marie Yovanovitch, the ambassador to Ukraine and a key figure in his impeachment trial, according to a video recording released to the media on the weekend.

The footage was reportedly taken during an April 2018 donor dinner at a hotel and released to news outlets by an attorney for Lev Parnas, an indicted associate of Mr Trump's personal attorney Rudy Giuliani.

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Thing that could sink Joe Biden



Bizarre element of US voting explained



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Fiery shouting match at voting booth

Donald Trump, left, and Rudy Giuliani associate Lev Parinas. Future. Supplied. Source:Supplied

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Parnas and his business partner Igor Fruman are key players in Mr Trump's alleged campaign to pressure the government of Ukraine to dig up dirt on Joe Biden, a potential election opponent for the president.

The issue is central to Mr Trump's ongoing impeachment trial in the US Senate. His order to fire the ambassador came after Parnas told him that Yovanovitch was an impediment, and claiming that she had privately disparaged the president.

"Get rid of her!" Mr Trump says on the tape, reportedly addressing a White House aide at the dining table.

"Get her out tomorrow. I don't care. Get her out tomorrow. Take her out. OK? Do it."



Former US Ambassador to the Ukraine Marie Yovanovitch testifies before the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence as part of the impeachment enquiry into US President Donald Trump, on Capitol Hill on November 15, 2019 in Washington DC. Picture: Saul Loeb / AFP Source:AFP

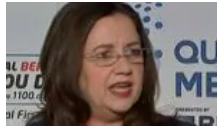
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This undated image released by the House Judiciary Committee from documents provided by Lev Parnas to the committee in the impeachment probe against President Donald Trump, shows a photo of Lev Parnas with Rudy Giuliani. Picture: House Judiciary Committee via AP Source:AP

In TV interview with MSNBC News last week, Parnas said Mr Trump “knew exactly what was going on” with his and Fruman’s efforts to pressure Ukrainian authorities to investigate Biden.

His appearance came after Democrats released documents that showed Giuliani worked with Parnas to pressure Kiev to investigate Biden.

Both Parnas and Fruman were charged with violating US campaign finance laws in October.

The documents also showed the pair, working with Ukrainian officials, trying to force out Yovanovitch, a respected career diplomat who Mr Trump eventually removed in May 2019.

Saturday’s recording corroborates much of what Parnas said in his TV interview, including that he knew Mr Trump - something the president has denied.



This undated image released by the House Judiciary Committee from documents provided by Lev Parnas to the committee in the impeachment probe against President Donald Trump, shows a photo of Lev Parnas with Trump in Florida. Picture: House Judiciary Committee via AP Source:AP

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In October Yovanovitch testified to Congress that she was recalled due to “unfounded and false claims by people with clearly questionable motives.” Joseph

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The release of the tape increases pressure on US senators to subpoena witnesses for the impeachment trial. a move several polls show has str MORE IN WORK on the US



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They have argued that the president did nothing wrong in his dealings with Ukraine and that US voters - not Congress - should decide his fate.

Mr Trump's lawyers will resume his defence on Monday.



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