

"Hi Andrii! I'm doing ok. Yes, definitely got some rest over the weekend. How about you?" Zentos wrote April 4, 2016 to Telizhenko from her official White House email account. "Survive the visit ok? Also, should we still plan for coffee this week? Maybe Wednesday or Friday? Hope all is well! Liz."

A month earlier, a planned beer outing with Zentos got changed. "Would you be up for doing coffee instead of beer though? I'm realizing that if I drink beer at 3 p.m., I will probably fall asleep while attempting to work afterward," Zentos wrote.

Zentos and Telizhenko also discussed the sensitive case of Burisma and its founder, Mykola Zlochevsky, in a July 2016 email exchange with the subject line "Re: Z," the shorthand Telizhenko used to refer to the Burisma founder. Their email exchange did not mention Hunter Biden's role in the company but showed the Obama White House had interest in the business dealings of Hunter Biden's boss.

"Hi Liz, Yes, It would be great to meet, tomorrow whatever works best for you 12:30pm or 6pm—I am ready," Telizhenko wrote the NSC staffer, adding a smiley face. Zentos eventually replied when he suggested a restaurant: "Ooh, that would be wonderful—thanks so much!"

Attached to Telizhenko's email was an org chart showing the structure of some foreign companies that had been connected at one point to Zlochevsky's business empire.

The memos show Zentos first befriended Telizhenko when she worked at the U.S. embassy as far back as 2014.

The memos show that officials at the Obama Justice Department, the NSC, and the State Department enlisted Telizhenko for similarly sensitive diplomatic matters dating to 2013 including:

Arranging for senior members of the Ukraine Prosecutor General's Office to travel to Washington in January 2016 to meet with NSC, State, DOJ and FBI officials to discuss ongoing corruption cases. At the time, the Ukraine prosecutors had an escalating corruption probe of Burisma, where Hunter Biden served on the board. Within weeks of the Washington meeting, Vice President Joe Biden had pressured Ukraine's president Petro Poroshenko to fire the lead prosecutor, Viktor Shokin.

Securing a meeting in February 2015 at the U.S. embassy in Kiev with a deputy Ukrainian prosecutor whom U.S. officials wanted to confront about a bribe allegedly paid by Burisma.

Facilitating a draft statement in November 2013 from members of the Ukrainian parliament to President Obama denouncing then-Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich, whom the Obama administration would help oust from power a few weeks later.

"We, people of Ukraine, appeal to you with request to support Ukrainian people in their standing for freedom, justice and democracy," the November 2013 draft statement from Telizhenko to the U.S. embassy in Kiev read. "The President of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich proved that he is not the guarantor of constitutional rights and freedoms of citizens, freedom of choice and right for free expression."

The draft statement was fielded by a military attache at the U.S. embassy who urged Telizhenko to get it to the embassy's political section for consideration. "The ambassador has not shared with me what the position of the US government would be on such a statement, other than his message yesterday morning," the attache wrote. "... I'm sure once you pass this statement to Ambassador Pyatt's political section, they will render a timely response."

Photos taken by U.S. and Ukrainian government photographers show Telizhenko facilitated meetings between 2014 and 2016 with key lawmakers in Washington, including Democrat Reps. Engel and Marcy Kaptur and then-GOP Sen. Bob Corker, as well as other U.S. agencies.

And the emails show U.S. embassy officials in Kiev routinely sought advice and insights from Telizhenko about happenings inside the Ukrainian government. "Andriy, we have heard that there may be a briefing today. Do you know the specifics?" embassy political officer Stephen Page asked in a January 2014 email.

Such contacts are normal in the diplomacy and national security business of the United States. But they take on significance now because they have been missing from the Democrats' attacks on Telizhenko and the GOP senators who have interviewed him in their probe of the Bidens. The question now is: If Telizhenko is so bad as Democrats claim, why did the Obama administration and Democrats so frequently engage him?

Sen. Wyden's recent statement ignored that issue. "While Democrats are pushing for more aggressive action against Russian assets interfering in our elections, Republicans are using their conspiracy theories to advance bogus investigations," he said.

U.S. intelligence officials tell *Just the News* that while they remain vigilant in fighting Russian interference in the 2020 election, they have no direct evidence Telizhenko is, like Derkach, connected to the Kremlin. However, they have extensive evidence he was welcomed by the U.S. government during the Obama years and that he assisted Trump lawyer Rudy Giuliani's probe of legal matters in Ukraine, including finding political dirt last year on the Bidens.

The officials also noted there is open source intelligence that Telizhenko actually engaged in a rivalry in the Ukrainian press with Derkach and derided the Ukrainian parliamentary member as a Russian operative just a few months ago. The open source information includes a BuzzFeed article quoting Telizhenko and social media posts, the officials said.

Ukraine is a country with much corruption and many mysterious characters. But one thing is clear: U.S. government memos corroborate Andrii Telizhenko was trusted by the Obama administration for many years before congressional Democrats turned on him.

Mr. JOHNSON. The same person they are saying is just this dangerous Russian agent, they were using extensively throughout the Obama administration to set up contacts. He actually had the ability to go to meetings in the White House, and he attended those. This is the person whom now they are saying, because we spoke to him and got a little bit of information from him, we are dealing in Russian disinformation.

If they had that level of concern, why did Democratic lobbying firm Blue Star Strategies employ him for over a year, and why did Democrats deal with him so frequently during the Obama administration?

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

CRIME

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, as we all know and as any American who has watched the news over the summer knows, there has been a terrible increase in crime in America's cities. As-

saults, shootings, murders have been higher this year, and my home State has not been safe from this trend. In fact, in St. Louis, MO, there were 55 murders in the month of July. That compares to 22 murders a year earlier in July, which we thought were way too many then. In Kansas City, MO, homicides in the first 6 months of this year were about 40 percent higher than they were last year.

One of the Kansas City victims was a 4-year-old boy named LeGenD Taliferro. He was murdered in the early hours of July 29 while he was asleep—a 4-year-old boy murdered while he was asleep—by a random shooting, violence going on outside his home. So early in July, the Justice Department launched an effort in Kansas City that has become a national effort, which they called Operation LeGenD, named for little LeGenD Taliferro. Under Operation LeGenD, Federal law enforcement officers are working alongside local police to solve crimes, to make arrests, to track down fugitives, and to prepare cases for trial so criminals can be held accountable. The key phrase there is "alongside." Federal agents aren't going in and taking over the police department; they are going in to add assistance to the police department.

On that topic, there was no immediate raid of trafficking centers or drug gangs or anything like that. I, frankly, thought the Justice Department was wrong in not announcing earlier to Federal officials and local officials what they were going to do and when they were going to do it, but I think we worked with them to see that that isn't going to continue to be the case. In fact, in early August, they made a similar determination to go into St. Louis.

One of the advantages of having Federal officers work with the local police in these cases is, one, they bring a whole lot more intensity to the moment. With the extra help, suddenly something becomes possible that wasn't possible before. Also, many of the people arrested can face Federal charges as well as other sentences.

Certainly in our State—in Kansas City and Missouri both—the two different U.S. attorney's offices have done a great job working with local officials before this but are even better able to look at what Federal charges might be faced to take some of that load off the local prosecutor and also look for another way to get these people off the street.

By September 1, in Kansas City, the operation had led to the arrest of 355 people suspected of serious crimes in Kansas City. More than 100 of those 355 people have been charged in Federal court. In St. Louis, where I said before that the government decided to bring Operation LeGenD—the Justice Department made that decision in early August, and by September 1, there were already 359 arrests, and 128 of those people arrested were looking at Federal charges as well.

In addition to St. Louis and Kansas City, the Department of Justice has launched Operation LeGend in seven other cities. This is not a Federal overreach. It is not the Federal Government, again, taking over local law enforcement. It is not the first step toward martial law. It is not a crack-down on peaceful protests. What it is, is a cooperative effort with cities that have been suffering from increases in violent crime.

Under this operation, officers have arrested, nationwide, more than 2,000 people, including 163 people for murder, and one of the people arrested was the alleged killer of 4-year-old LeGend Taliferro.

The rise of violence in cities this year—and particularly the cities I am talking about that have benefited, I think, from Operation LeGend—has been incredibly rapid and unbearably destructive, not to mention totally unacceptable. It has taken a toll on lives unlived, families torn apart, communities terrorized, people wondering what is going to happen when they or their children walk out the front door or play in the backyard or, like little LeGend, are sound asleep in their beds.

Nothing we do can fully heal the damage, certainly, that these victims of violent crime and their families have suffered, but we can get the justice that both the victim and people who care about them deserve.

We may have a lot of disagreements in the Congress, but I hope we can agree that violent criminals belong behind bars. I hope we can all agree that all parents deserve a safe neighborhood where they can raise their children. I hope we can all agree that the police do a difficult and dangerous job, and they deserve all the support and appreciation we can give them.

Not long ago, LeGend Taliferro's mother spoke about her son and the pain of losing him. She said: "He was a ball of joy, and I want his legacy to live on and I want us to continue to fight against violence and get justice for my son and others." That is the end of that mother's quote, but it is not the end of a life that mother will now live without her son or the life he didn't get to live. And there are too many lives that didn't get to be lived, too many lives lost through needless violence.

Operation LeGend gives local law enforcement the valuable support they need to get violent criminals off the street. Again, it was named for an innocent 4-year-old boy. It could have been named for any of the thousands of other victims of violent criminals in dozens of other cities this year. It could have been named for St. Louis Police Officer Tamarris Bohannon, who was killed in the line of duty last month. It could have been named for the two officers in California who had a sneak attack as they were sitting and trying to secure the local transportation center just in the last couple of days. It is a tragedy that it had to be named for anyone.

While some people have sought to defund the police and to disparage the police, Operation LeGend is successful because it supports the police. These are some of the hardest jobs in America, second only to the families of people who care deeply about their loved ones who have decided to serve in that job to protect us all.

American communities are safer because of Operation LeGend. They will be safer as we continue to work toward greater and more effective community policing. They will be safer when people who are violent criminals are no longer walking around to perpetuate further violence.

I salute the Justice Department for their efforts and the local departments that have reached out and taken advantage of the moment to get something done that they were not able to get done by themselves.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

ISSUES FACING AMERICA

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, when I was growing up, I was raised to believe in the American dream. My mom taught me that we were blessed because God and our Founders created the greatest country ever, where anything was possible. We weren't allowed to complain. Debt, Big Government, socialism, and communism were bad. College was for a better paying job. Church on Sundays was absolutely not optional.

While I didn't always appreciate my tough-love, my-way-or-the-highway mom growing up, I now thank God every day for my mom and this country. She gave me the opportunity to experience every lesson this country had to offer before I was 20.

Sadly, the values that I grew up with are becoming a way of the past, but I believe these values, these virtues, can and should be part of our country's future. The left has worked hard over the last 50 years to discredit the values of the America I was raised with and the values of the America I want my grandkids to grow up with.

In recent weeks, we have seen the Democrats try hard to paint our President and the entire Republican Party as "darkness," but let me tell you what darkness would actually look like in America.

What if our country turned the keys over to the far left and turned away from capitalism in favor of socialism? The data is already in on that. The result would be the same as it has been throughout history: Socialism would destroy our economy and cause widespread poverty and oppression. Darkness.

What if our country just gave up on the battle to protect innocent human life and agreed with the political party that proudly embraces the killing of the unborn at any time, for any reason? Darkness.

What if we decide to change our First Amendment, editing out our freedom of

speech and freedom of religion, forcing Christians and Jews to retreat from the public square and silencing any who dare to speak up? Darkness.

What if America did what every authoritarian government in history has done and must eventually do—disarm the American people? Darkness.

What if we defunded our police forces across the country, even just partially? What would happen to public safety? How would life in our cities be affected? Turn on your TV for the answer. Darkness.

What if we allowed people to throw homemade bombs at police and burn down police stations and then pretended that these violent demonstrations are peaceful? Darkness.

What if we enacted the Green New Deal? Literal darkness.

What if we let China—a Communist country that systematically imprisons and murders its own citizens—take advantage of American workers and put them out of work? Darkness.

What if we teach our kids that America is a bad country with an evil history that must be erased and that America is fundamentally a morally bankrupt country? Darkness.

Republicans are fighting for issues that the American public care about. People want good jobs, a good education for their kids, and they want to live in safe communities. Republicans are working to defend our law enforcement, invest in our military, secure the border, and stop illegal immigration. Republicans are standing up to dictators in Latin America and to Communist China, after the Democrats have appeased them for decades.

Here is the fundamental difference between Democrats and Republicans: Democrats want to control your life; Republicans want to give you a life. Republicans want to give every American the opportunity to live their version of the American dream. Governments don't do that. Politicians don't do that.

The American people are dreamers, and if we get government out of their way, the innovation, determination, and entrepreneurial spirit of the American people and American business will shine bright.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the dangerous path that national Democrats are spiraling on down and to caution our countrymen not to follow them. Radicals on the far left have hijacked an otherwise righteous cause and are in command of a once proud political party that traces its heritage back to Jefferson and Madison.

The violence the radicals have unleashed threatens lives. The cancel culture they imposed curtails liberty. And their misguided means of creating economic equality endangers the pursuit of happiness.

Joe Biden, NANCY PELOSI, and their hand-picked Democratic candidates are