

**LEV PARNAS, RUDY GIULIANI ASSOCIATE, IS INTERVIEWED ON CNN's
"ANDERSON COOPER 360 DEGREES"**

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SPEAKERS:
LEV PARNAS, RUDY GIULIANI ASSOCIATE

ANDERSON COOPER, CNN HOST

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COOPER: Here's part one of tonight's "360" interview.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

COOPER: You loved President Trump? You --

LEV PARNAS, FORMER ASSOCIATE OF RUDY GIULIANI: I loved him. I mean, he -- I mean, when the FBI came to my house, it's a raid (ph), and my wife felt embarrassed because they said I had a shrine to him.

[20:05:08]

I mean, I had pictures all over. I mean, I idolized him. I mean, I thought he was the savior.

(LAUGHTER)

COOPER: Did you believe -- did you think you were friends?

PARNAS: Absolutely. I mean, again, I went from being a top donor, from being at all the events where we would just socialize, to becoming a close friend of Rudy Giuliani's, to eventually becoming his ally and his asset on the ground in Ukraine.

COOPER: The president has said, -- when you're arrested, the president of the United States said he didn't know you.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DONALD TRUMP, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: I don't know those gentlemen. Now it's possible I have a picture with them because I have a picture with everybody. I don't

know them.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

PARNAS: The truth is out now, thank God. Yesterday was a big day for us. I thank God every day. I was worried that day is not going to come. I thought they were going to shut me out, and make me look like the scapegoat and try to blame me for stuff that I wasn't done. But with God's help and a great legal team I have beside me, we were

able to get the information out. And now it's out there.

So, I welcome him to say that anymore. Every time he says that, I'll show him another picture.

COOPER: He's lying?

PARNAS: He's lying.

COOPER: Your attorney in a tweet had said there were two times in which you gave a message of a quid pro quo to Ukrainian officials. What were those two times?

PARNAS: I think there were probably a little more than two times. But the first quid pro quo again was when we met with President Poroshenko. That was --

COOPER: Former president?

PARNAS: Former President Poroshenko.

COOPER: So what was your message to Poroshenko?

PARNAS: To Poroshenko, is that if he would make the announcement, that he would get -- Trump would either invite him to the White House or make a statement for him, but basically would start supporting him for, you know, president.

COOPER: So that was the first quid pro quo, Poroshenko can come to the White House, get a meeting with Trump if he announces an investigation?

PARNAS: Correct.

COOPER: What was the next one?

PARNAS: You have to understand because this was a transition time. He was -- Zelensky just won, he was president-elect. And he -- the most -- the number one thing in their agenda was not even the transition. It was to get the inauguration because it was a big thing. He was a young president --

COOPER: To show the American backing of the new administration.

PARNAS: Of course, because he had no strength with Russia. I mean --

COOPER: So, Giuliani cancels his visit because there's a lot of bad publicity about it in the United States. He cancels his visit. You go have the meeting with a high level official in Zelensky's circle.

PARNAS: Correct.

COOPER: And what's the message you deliver?

PARNAS: I basically told them very strict, and very stern, several things. A, that he needed to make an announcement, to immediately make an announcement literally that night or tomorrow, that within the next 24 hours, that they were opening up an investigation on Biden.

COOPER: At that point, was there any mention of withholding of aid?

PARNAS: Yes. Well, if they didn't make the announcement, basically, there would be no relationship. Not just to -- it was no specific military, there was no way they were going to be assisted.

There was going to be no inauguration. Pence wouldn't be at the inauguration. And there would be no visit to the White House. There would be basically -- they would have no communications.

COOPER: So how, you told the top official in the Zelensky inner circle if they did not announce an investigation of the Bidens immediately and get rid of some folks around Zelensky who they believed were opposed to President Trump, that there wouldn't be any aid and Vice President Pence would not even come to the inauguration?

PARNAS: Correct.

COOPER: And what happened? What did they say?

PARNAS: I called Rudy, told them that I don't think it's going to -- there is going to be an announcement. And he said, OK, they'll see.

COOPER: They'll see?

PARNAS: They'll see.

COOPER: And what happened the next day?

PARNAS: I got called and said that they got a call from them, some -- basically some -- they found out that Pence is not going to be there, they got -- he got cancelled. They said that there was a scheduling problem or something.

COOPER: The day after you delivered that message --

PARNAS: Correct.

COOPER: -- of quid pro quo?

PARNAS: Right. On the -- it was Monday the 13th.

And then after that, like I think on the 16th or the 15th, I don't remember the exact dates, they had -- because they were flipping out what to do. They didn't want to be embarrassed. They didn't know if anybody at all was going to show up, you know, but they knew Pence wasn't coming, Trump wasn't coming.

COOPER: How did you have the authority to say the vice president of the United States will not attend the inauguration if you don't do what I say?

PARNAS: I mean, that's what I was told to do. COOPER: Who told you to do that?

PARNAS: Rudy Giuliani.

COOPER: This letter that you gave to the House, the first line in it which is a letter from Rudy Giuliani to President-elect Zelensky.

It says: I am private counsel to President Donald J. Trump. Just to be precise, I represent him as a citizen not as president of the United States. This is quite common under American law. Duties and privileges of a president and private citizen are not the same.

So, he -- he is making a very clear point that he's not representing the interests of the United States writ large, of American national security. He's representing the interests of Donald J. Trump.

[20:10:02]

PARNAS: That was always a point.

COOPER: That was? That was always made?

PARNAS: That was always clear. He always made it clear that he doesn't represent -- wherever we went, he said, I don't represent the government, I represent the president of the United States.

COOPER: So anything Rudy Giuliani wanted the government of Ukraine to do, that wasn't official U.S. policy, that was a personal benefit to the president of the United States?

PARNAS: Well, you know when I was doing it, I thought it was all in the same. But, obviously, now, as I can see -- with the situation the way it is, I mean, it was strictly for him. But again, I thought he was the -- our leader. He's the chief, he's the president and it was all about 2020, to

make sure he had another four years.

And I didn't (ph) --

COOPER: But that's how you personally viewed it, that this is about 2020, to help him get the next four years?

PARNAS: That was way everybody viewed it. I mean, that was the most important thing is for him to stay out in front another four years and keep the fight going. I mean, there was no other reason for doing it.

COOPER: Did the president care about corruption in Ukraine?

PARNAS: You'd have to ask him, but as far as I know, our -- the only thing we cared about and we were part -- we were the team was to get Zelensky or Poroshenko or somebody to make a press release, an announcement into the Biden investigation.

COOPER: In terms of who knew about what you were doing in Ukraine, did Vice President Pence know?

PARNAS: Of course. COOPER: Because, I mean, his office has said he was unaware of -- you know, that he had met with Zelensky after not going to the inauguration, but he wasn't delivering a message of a quid pro quo.

PARNAS: Look, again, like I said I'm not here to debate. I'm here to get the truth out. I got my records. I brought (ph) --

COOPER: But how do you know the vice president would have known what Giuliani was up to? What you were up to?

PARNAS: Because we would speak every day. I knew everything that was going on. I mean, after Rudy would speak with the president, or come from the White House, I was the first person he briefed.

I mean, we had a relationship. We were that close. I mean, the -- I mean, we were together from morning to night. I mean, he took me -- I mean --

COOPER: So --

PARNAS: -- in the interview he would do, I would be sitting there while he was doing interviews. I mean --

COOPER: So, Giuliani knew everything you were doing?

PARNAS: Everything, Anderson.

COOPER: You're saying Vice President Pence knew?

PARNAS: Well, I don't if the vice president knew everything we were doing. I'm sure he was --

(CROSSTALK)

PARNAS: But he was in the loop.

COOPER: But he knew about the quid pro quo.

PARNAS: Of course, he knew -- everybody knew. Everybody that, quote, was close to Trump knew that this was a thorn in the side and this was a serious situation.

COOPER: Bolton?

PARNAS: Bolton.

COOPER: Mulvaney?

PARNAS: Mulvaney.

Bolton, I don't think agreed with it. I think there are certain people agreed with it and then agreed with it --

COOPER: He called it a drug deal, according to Fiona Hill?

I think Bolton is a very important witness because I think between me and Bolton, we could fit in all the dots, I think, because I was on the ground there and he was over here. I mean --

COOPER: And you'd be willing to testify?

PARNAS: I would be very willing to testify.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

COOPER: A few moments ago, you heard President Trump say that he didn't know Lev Parnas.

Vice President Pence says the same, telling reporters, quote, I don't know the guy. Pence also said it was, quote, completely false that he was aware that dirtying up Joe Biden was the goal of the pressure on Ukraine.

We reached out for comment from Rudy Giuliani and got no response.

However, he did say this about his former associate Lev Parnas, to "The Associated Press", I'm quoting now: I feel sorry for him. I thought he was an honorable man. I was wrong.

Next in part two of our conversation, why Lev Parnas believes that senators are afraid to call him as a witness. Also ahead, the legal implications of Parnas' allegations, as well as the GAO striking conclusion that the White House broke the law.

Tat and more when we continue on this history-making day.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

[20:18:14]

COOPER: Before the break, you heard Lev Parnas say he is, quote, very willing to testify at the Senate impeachment trial.

Part two of our conversation, he talks about why that might not happen.

But we begin with his account of the campaign to get rid of Marie Yovanovitch, the ambassador to Ukraine, and his very -- according to him -- big role in it.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

COOPER: Did you want Yovanovitch removed?

PARNAS: Me personally?

COOPER: Yes.

PARNAS: I mean, I have not personal motives.

COOPER: Did you know her?

PARNAS: No, I don't know her.

COOPER: Did you have -- you didn't have an opinion about her at all?

PARNAS: First of all, I mean, my opinion came from the crowd I was in, and over the time, it grew more, more, more, more, more, more, and more that eventually, I felt like, yes, look, I hated her because, you know, everybody hated her and she, I mean --

COOPER: You said the crowd, you mean Ukrainians or Giuliani?

PARNAS: It's primarily our Trump crowd.

COOPER: Why did they hate her?

PARNAS: Because she was supposed to be a Soros left -- she was supposed to be a leftover from

the Obama-Soros-Democrat era, and that she was --

COOPER: That's what you were told?

PARNAS: That's what I was told, and she's not a Trumper. And to my knowledge, he -- the president fired her at least four times, maybe even five times. I mean, once in my presence.

COOPER: Yes, explain that. You said that he fired her in front of you?

PARNAS: Correct.

COOPER: What happened?

PARNAS: That was the first interaction about her. We had -- it was a dinner at the -- a private dinner, for a super PAC in Washington, D.C. at the Trump Hotel. In the conversation, the subject of Ukraine was brought up and I told the president that our opinion that she is bad- mouthing him and that she said that he's going to get impeached, something like that. I don't know if that's word for word, but that she was --

COOPER: You said that at the table?

PARNAS: Correct.

COOPER: Where the president was?

PARNAS: Correct, correct. And his reaction was, he looked at me like he got very angry and basically turned around to John DeStefano and said, fire her.

[20:20:06]

Get rid of her.

COOPER: You've been described -- the position you ended up with Giuliani, you've described as a fixer for Giuliani in his efforts to dig up dirt on the Bidens. Is that accurate?

PARNAS: I don't know what you call a fixer. I mean, I was --

COOPER: Arrange meetings, conduct meetings --

PARNAS: Yes. I mean, that's exactly what I did. I mean, I was the middleman between two worlds.

Here I was, I had a partner in Igor Fruman that grew up in Ukraine, had extensive business there. And because of his businesses, he knew all kinds of people that were, you know, politicians --

COOPER: He had -- he had the contacts.

PARNAS: It was all his contacts. I didn't have any contacts in Ukraine. I don't have any contacts in Ukraine.

COOPER: For a guy who does not have contacts in Ukraine, you were able to get meetings with a lot of very important people in Ukraine. Why was that?

PARNAS: Well, I mean, if the president of the United States tells them to meet with you, I think anybody will meet with you.

COOPER: Everybody you met with knew you represented Rudy Giuliani and by association, the president.

PARNAS: It was -- I mean, it was more than that. I mean, the protocol would be, when I would meet like -- I give you an example, when I first met Ivan Bakanov, who was a close -- one of the close --

COOPER: Aides to Zelensky.

PARNAS: -- aides to Zelensky and now is the head of the (INAUDIBLE).

COOPER: He's now the head of the intelligence?

PARNAS: Intelligence.

So, when we first met, he was the first person we met in the Zelensky camp. And when I met him, the first thing I did is I said, I represent Rudy Giuliani and he -- I'm going to put him on the phone. I put him on speakerphone and Rudy at that time told him that I represent the president of the United States and that everything I say that to be taken with that authority.

COOPER: Rudy Giuliani said on speakerphone, to the man who now runs Ukrainian intelligence, that you represent Giuliani and the president?

PARNAS: Absolutely. Not the president directly.

(CROSSTALK)

COOPER: He represents the president?

PARNAS: Correct. And that's why they spoke to me and that's why they -- that's why I got out of there alive. COOPER: You can say, with 100 percent certainty, that everything Rudy

Giuliani did in Ukraine was done with the president's blessing, whether or not he had foreknowledge or was told about it afterward. But Giuliani and the president were in frequent communication?

PARNAS: Beyond frequent. Several times a day.

And Rudy wouldn't do anything without the president -- just like I would not do anything without Rudy's.

COOPER: The argument made by a lot of Republicans during the congressional hearings was not only that the president cares deeply about the corruption in Ukraine, so this wasn't just about, you know, a personal benefit for the president, but that Zelensky himself has come forward and said, I didn't feel any pressure, there was no quid pro quo.

You've met with a whole host of people in his inner circle throughout the government --

PARNAS: That's a lie. That's a total lie.

They -- they're still -- I mean, they're still rocked to this day. They're still not recovered and I don't know of when they will.

COOPER: You have no doubt they felt this pressure. This was a --

PARNAS: Oh, my God, of course. Absolutely.

COOPER: This was an existential threat to the survival?

PARNAS: Well, the main reason my life was threatened because of that.

(LAUGHTER)

PARNAS: I mean --

COOPER: Why do you think Zelensky says, oh, no, there was no pressure, I didn't feel any pressure?

PARNAS: They are on an awkward position, I understand them. I'm not here to call them out and put them in the worst position.

COOPER: The offered position is if Zelensky says whatever he actually feels, he still needs aid from the Trump administration.

PARNAS: Obviously. And they -- listen, my opinion is this, you know, loyalty goes so far, but I think there's a lot of people in the Republican Party that don't agree -- they're good people that don't agree with what he is doing, but they're scared.

He gets away with everything and I would -- you know, especially with the Attorney Bill Barr on the side in the Justice Department.

COOPER: And --

PARNAS: I mean, a lot of people are scared. They don't want to get investigated.

COOPER: People are scared of being investigated by the Justice Department on behalf of President Trump, you're saying?

PARNAS: I think so.

COOPER: Does that scare you?

PARNAS: It scares me a lot. And I pray every day that, you know, that's not the case or, you know, God has a way. That's why I was hopeful to get this information out and now, you know, I'm ready to deal with whatever it is because if I did something wrong, I will take my responsibility.

Like I said, what I was charged with has nothing to do with what we are discussing right now. I think this is important for a national security. And I think it's important for the country to find out the truth, exactly what happened.

And one of the things you say, Anderson, you have to understand, when these congressional hearings -- I watched them very well. And they made all kinds of arguments but there was no proof to back it up. I mean, they sit there and they talk all this stuff, oh, this and that, but they didn't bring one evidence.

The Democrats brought all this proof, all this evidence, all this testimony. Show me one witness that came out.

[20:25:01]

If you really look at it, I should be their best witness. I should be their number one witness because I'm the one that got all the dirt, supposedly.

Why aren't they calling me to testify -- why do they need Biden? Call me. Ask me what Biden did wrong.

COOPER: Do you think they're afraid of calling you?

PARNAS: I think they're very afraid of me. I think they're afraid of me because I think they made a mistake by, you know, trying to do what they did to me.

COOPER: If you could say anything to the president, what would you say?

PARNAS: He needs to understand he's not a king. He needs to understand that there is a democracy. There's rules. You know, even if you don't like them, you know? Even if you don't agree with them.

You know, it's all fun and dandy going to these rallies and standing up in the rally, I was there. I was front stage. I was the first one at the Trump (INAUDIBLE).

But it's scary if he wins another four years. I think -- I don't know what will happen. I don't know what will happen to me because I guess I'm enemy number one right now.

So, you know, I pray that I have good counsel and that I will be protected and that we'll fight this.

But I'm glad the truth is out. I feel good. I feel good that I was able to do my civil duty in front of Congress, and I'm here to help the Senate, Congress.

And, hopefully, I want to look at the GOP senators to let them know that I'm here. I'm, you know -- not just Republicans, the Democrats, you should know the truth. You could validate it. You have all my information. Call me. We can sit down and I'll tell you everything.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

COOPER: Lev Parnas.

Just ahead as the Senate impeachment trial gets under way, a top Democrat on the Foreign Relations Committee, Ed Markey, joins me to talk about the allegations that you heard tonight from Lev Parnas.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

[20:31:15]

ANDERSON COOPER, CNN HOST: Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer was asked today about the allegations and evidence given by Lev Parnas and whether Democrat should call Mr. Parnas as a witness given the opportunity. Senator Schumer said upon these allegations have helps strengthened the push for witnesses and that if allowed to call him as a witness, "it's something we wouldn't rule out." As you heard a few moments ago, Parnas says he is hoping to get that call.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

LEV PARNAS, FORMER ASSOCIATE OF RUDY GIULIANI: If you really look at it, I should be their best witness. I should be their number one witness, because I'm the one that got all the dirt supposedly. Why aren't they calling me to testify? Why do they need Biden? Call me. Ask me what Biden did wrong.

COOPER: Do you think they're afraid of calling you?

PARNAS: I think they're very afraid of me.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

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COOPER: From my interview with Lev Parnas, we discussed the Senate impeachment trial and who should testify. One name he mentioned, the President's former National Security Adviser John Bolton. Take a look.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

PARNAS: I think Bolton is a very important witness, because I think between me and Bolton we could fit in all the dots, I think, because I was on the ground there and he was over here.

COOPER: And you'd be willing to testify?

PARNAS: I would be very willing to testify.

(END VIDEO CLIP)