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Second whistleblower adds to impeachment peril

By Eric Tucker, Richard Lardner and Jill Colvin
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A second whistleblower has come forward with information about President Donald Trump's dealings with Ukraine, adding to the impeachment peril engulfing the White House and potentially providing new leads to Democrats in their unfurling investigation of Trump's conduct.

Attorney Mark Zaid, who represents both whistleblowers, said in a text message to The Associated Press that the second person has spoken to the intelligence community's internal watchdog and can corroborate information in the original whistleblower complaint. That document alleged that Trump pushed Ukraine's president to investigate Democratic presidential can-

didate Joe Biden's family, prompting a White House cover-up. Crucially, the new whistleblower works in the intelligence field and has "firsthand knowledge" of key events, Zaid said.

The emergence of the second whistleblower threatened to undermine arguments from Trump and his allies to discredit the original complaint. They have called it politically motivated, claimed it was filed improperly and dismissed it as unreliable because it was based on secondhand or third-hand information.

A rough transcript of Trump's call with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, released by the White House, has already corroborated the complaint's central claim that Trump sought to pressure Ukraine to investigate the Bidens. The push came even

though there was no evidence of wrongdoing by the former vice president or his son Hunter, who served on the board of a Ukrainian gas company.

Text messages from State Department officials revealed other details, including that Ukraine was promised a visit with Trump if the government would agree to investigate the 2016 election and Ukrainian gas company Burisma — the outline of a potential quid pro quo.

Rep. Jim Himes, D-Conn., a member of the House Intelligence Committee, said word of a second whistleblower indicates a larger shift inside the government.

"The president's real problem is that his behavior has finally gotten to a place where people are saying, 'Enough,'" Himes said.

turn to WHISTLEBLOWER, page 2A



The Associated Press/Evan Vucci

President Donald Trump talks to reporters on the South Lawn of the White House on Friday in Washington.



For The Independent/Lauri Shultz

TOP: Ken Stein takes passengers on a ride in this 1927 White truck during the annual Prairie Loft Harvestfest on Sunday. ABOVE LEFT: Callan Stroman, 4, of Hastings plays in the corn bin. ABOVE RIGHT: Michael Littlefield demonstrates shearing a 6-month-old ewe during the annual Prairie Loft Harvestfest. Sheep-shearing demonstrations were one of the many attractions.

Prairie Loft's Harvestfest entertains, educates folks about agriculture

By Robert Pore
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HASTINGS — After 12 years, Prairie Loft's Harvestfest continues to both educate and entertain the public about agriculture.

Harvestfest was held Sunday. The land where Prairie Loft sits was once part of a farm operation that was part of the state mental hospital once known as Ingleside, and later as the Hastings Regional Center. At its peak, the farm housed cattle, dairy cattle, horses, hogs, chickens and ducks. Produce ranged from acres of cabbage to banana trees in the greenhouse.

Now, Prairie Loft is a non-profit facility for a year-round agricultural education center that draws thousands of visitors from throughout the U.S. each year.

For the last 12 years, Amy Sandeen, Prairie Loft executive director, said they have held Harvestfest as a fun fall family activity. It also allows the public to visit the center to learn more about their vision and goals.

This year's festivities had activities for all ages. In the kids' areas, young people were able to take part in farm-based activities, games, art and other fun things.

Educating both young and old at Harvestfest were FFA members from Adams Central High School. At their display, students showed people all the uses for corn, which the main crop of Adams County.

Chance Mignery is the president of the FFA chapter.

turn to HARVESTFEST, page 2A



For The Independent/Lauri Shultz

Brynzley Sheets, 2, of Hastings takes a turn "driving" the tractors on display during Harvestfest.

GM-UAW talks take turn for worse

By Tom Krisher
AP Auto Writer

DETROIT — Contract talks aimed at ending a 21-day strike by the United Auto Workers against General Motors have taken a turn for the worse, hitting a big snag over product commitments for U.S. factories, a union official wrote in an email to members.

The letter from UAW Vice President Terry Dittes casts doubt on whether there will be a quick settlement in the contract dispute, which sent 49,000 workers to the picket lines on Sept. 16, crippling GM's factories.

Dittes' letter says the union presented a proposal to the company Saturday. He said GM responded Sunday morning by reverting back to an offer that had been rejected and made few changes.

The company's proposal did nothing to address a host of items, Dittes wrote, specifying job security for members during the term of the four-year contract.

Normally in contract talks, the union bargains for commitments from the company to build new vehicles, engines, transmissions and other items at U.S. factories represented by the union.

"It did nothing to provide job security during the term of this agreement," Dittes wrote. "We, in this union, could not be more disappointed with General Motors who refuse to recognize the experience and talent of our membership."

In a statement, GM said it continues to negotiate in good faith "with very good proposals that benefit employees today and builds a stronger future for all of us."

The company said it is committed to talking around the clock to resolve the dispute.

But Dittes wrote that while both sides had made progress on important issues two days ago, the talks now "have taken a turn for the worse."

Dittes also sent a sharp letter to GM's vice president for labor relations Sunday, saying: "You didn't even have a professional courtesy to explain why you could not accept or why you rejected our package proposal for each item we addressed."

A person briefed on the talks said Sunday that the union voiced concerns about GM increasing production in Mexico, where it now builds pickup trucks, small cars and two SUVs. The person, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the talks are private, said both sides are far apart on guarantees of new products in U.S. factories.

GM leads all companies in automobiles produced in Mexico at just over 833,000 last year, according to LMC and the Center for Automotive Research, a think-tank based in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Of GM vehicles sold in the U.S., 22% are produced in Mexico.

GM's U.S. factories have been shut down since the workers walked out Sept. 16. Parts shortages also have forced the company to close plants in Mexico and Canada.

Industry analysts say GM is losing more than \$80 million a day as the strike continues. Workers earn \$250 per week in strike pay while they're on the picket lines, about one-fifth of what they normally make.

Wages and pensions are among the issues that remained unsettled.

Striking workers have said they want a bigger share of the more than \$30 billion in profits that GM has made during the past five years. But the company wants to cut its labor costs so they are closer to those at U.S. factories run by foreign automakers, mainly in the South.



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