

President’s legal team makes case against the relevance of Bolton’s testimony

By ERIC TUCKER,
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Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump’s legal team argued forcefully against the relevance of testimony from John Bolton Tuesday as they concluded their impeachment trial defense and the

Senate braced for debate on whether to summon Trump’s former national security adviser and other witnesses into the trial.

“This should end now, as quickly as possible,” White House counsel Pat Cipollone declared, capping a defense presentation that painted Trump as a victim and took dismissive swipes at Bolton,

the potential witness who has scrambled Republican hopes for a swift end to the trial.

A day after the defense team largely brushed past Bolton, attorney Jay Sekulow addressed the controversy head-on by dismissing his manuscript — said to contradict a key defense argument about Trump’s dealings with

Ukraine — as “inadmissible.” The argument was meant to dissuade Republicans from pursuing witnesses including Bolton, who writes in a forthcoming book that Trump told him he wanted to withhold military aid from Ukraine until it helped with investigations into Democratic rival Joe Biden.

“It is not a game of

leaks and unsourced manuscripts,” Sekulow said.

The argument built on a separate one Monday night from Trump attorney Alan Dershowitz, who said that nothing in the manuscript — even if true — rises to the level of an impeachable offense. Sekulow also sought to undermine the credibility of Bolton’s book by noting that Attor-

ney General William Barr has disputed comments attributed to him by Bolton.

The legal team, in hours of arguments, delved into areas that Democrats see as outside the scope of impeachment, alleging law enforcement bias and seizing on surveillance errors the FBI has acknowledged making in its Russian election interference probe.



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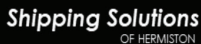
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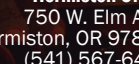
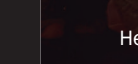
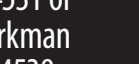
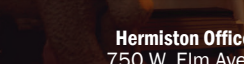
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