

TRUMP'S BETRAYAL

TRUMP'S HOLLOW DEFENSES FOR HIS BETRAYAL IN UKRAINE

As incriminating facts continue to surface surrounding Trump's betrayals in Ukraine, Trump and his henchmen are doubling down on two paltry defenses: that the President sought to root out Ukrainian corruption, and that he sought to place pressure on our European allies to shoulder more of the burden in supporting Ukraine.

The facts that we already know have made clear the President's real motives in Ukraine, but when taken at face value, these defenses crumble under the slightest scrutiny.

Try as he might, Trump cannot escape the truth: that he used the presidency to advance his personal interests at the expense of America's.

THE "CORRUPTION" DEFENSE

Trump and his henchman have repeatedly claimed that they withheld security assistance from Ukraine on the legitimate concern that the money would be used corruptly.

- **Donald Trump:** "We want to make sure that country is honest. It's very important to talk about corruption. If you don't talk about corruption, why would you give money to a country that you think is corrupt?" [[NBC](#), 9/23/19]
- **Mick Mulvaney:** "Did he also mention to me in [the] past the corruption related to the DNC server? Absolutely ... No question about that. But that's it, and that's why we held up the money ... The look-back to what happened in 2016 certainly was part of the thing that he was worried about in corruption with that nation." [[Press Conference](#), 10/17/19]

But the facts come nowhere close to supporting that view, and instead show exactly the opposite: that Trump has never been concerned with corruption in Ukraine or anywhere else, except when it directly relates to furthering his petty political interests.

- **In 2017, Trump approved the sale of lethal defensive weapons to Ukraine, a significant increase in the gravity of aid provided.** Rather than express any concern over corruption at the time, Trump instead touted that he supplied better security assistance than his predecessor, [calling](#) Obama's aid package "pillows and sheets."
- **If Trump was really concerned with corruption in Ukraine, he would know that the country continues to make significant strides.** The country has undertaken significant internal anti-corruption reforms, and President Zelensky was elected this April on an anti-corruption platform in a landslide victory over former President Poroshenko, widely thought to be too lax on fighting corruption among Ukraine's oligarch class.

- **Moreover, coordination with the United States -- and specifically the Pentagon -- has played a key role in encouraging Ukraine to tackle its internal corruption.**
 - The Pentagon [certified](#) that Ukraine had improved its anti-corruption measures, thanks in part to U.S. security assistance, noting that “the Government of Ukraine has taken substantial actions to make defense institutional reforms for the purposes of decreasing corruption, increasing accountability, and sustaining improvements of combat capability enabled by U.S. assistance.”
 - The Pentagon also emphasized the importance of U.S. assistance and cooperation in helping Ukraine advance its institutional reforms, stressing that U.S. advice and mentoring will continue to contribute to the maturity of the Ukrainian security forces and their ability to defend Ukrainian territory.
- **The Trump administration has approved nearly \$3 billion in security assistance to countries more corrupt than Ukraine as measured by Transparency International.**
 - Mexico, Nigeria, Kenya and Iraq all rank as more corrupt than Ukraine -- but each of these countries has received Trump’s approval for U.S. weapons sales.
 - Of the 36 countries receiving U.S. counterterrorism aid, 24 posed serious corruption risks, according to a 2019 [report](#) by the Security Assistance Monitor.
 - Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Jordan all continue to receive U.S. security assistance -- despite the atrocities that aid enables, the risk of corruption in each country, and the urgings of Congress to cease the aid.

THE “EUROPE MUST DO ITS FAIR SHARE” DEFENSE

On his call with Zelensky and since, Trump has fallen back on one of his favorite lines: that Europe has played America for the sucker and must now pull its weight.

- **Donald Trump:** “Very simple! I was looking for Corruption and also why Germany, France and others in the European Union don’t do more for Ukraine. Why is it always the USA that does so much and puts up so much money for Ukraine and other countries? By the way, the Bidens were corrupt!” [[Tweet](#), 9/30/19]

But the EU and its member states give Ukraine more overall aid than the United States does, exposing the hollowness of Trump’s claims. The EU is Ukraine’s largest donor, and has granted more than \$710 million [annually](#) to Ukraine since 2014. Additionally, [Germany](#) has provided

Ukraine with \$1.3 billion of bilateral financial aid since 2014. Through NATO's Comprehensive Assistance Package to Ukraine, the UK has trained nearly 10,000 Ukrainian troops. And Germany and France have taken on a significant role in peace talks between Russia and Ukraine, working to arrange the 2015 Minsk agreement.