

TRUMP'S BETRAYAL

THE TOLL ON OUR NATIONAL SECURITY

SUMMARY

President Trump's betrayal of his oath of office and the American people holds dangerous implications for our national security. He has effectively put our foreign policy up for sale to the highest bidder and made clear that he is unconcerned with the implications for our national security, the safety of Americans, the sanctity of our elections, and America's influence in the world—as long as his own political prerogatives are fulfilled.

- Trump has sent an unmistakable message to the world's strongmen that they can extract concessions from the United States by satisfying his own political and personal desires, rather than taking actions that benefit the American people.
- Trump has signaled that America's relationships with the world's democracies are contingent on their willingness to further his narrow political aims.
- His actions mortgage the personal security of individual Americans—and all of us, as a result—as well as the sanctity of our elections, a cornerstone of our democracy.
- His wrongdoing corrodes American power and influence, benefiting only our adversaries—a reality that we have already seen play out to Russia's advantage in Ukraine.

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President Trump has sent an unmistakable message to the world's strongmen that they can extract concessions from the United States in return for satisfying his political and personal desires. Armed with this knowledge, other leaders—especially the world's autocrats—have every incentive to orient their relations with the United States on advancing Trump's personal and financial interests, rather than accounting for America's national interests.

To our detriment, we have already seen this strategy in action:

- **Russia's** 2016 election interference provided a successful test case for the benefits of catering to Trump—and Trump alone. Despite strong bipartisan agreement on the imperative of rebuffing Russia's transgressions before and after 2016, Trump has publicly [defended](#) Putin over the U.S. intelligence community, [shared](#) highly classified intelligence with senior Russian officials, and [advocated](#) for Russia's re-inclusion in the G-7. He gave [the green light](#) to Russia to continue interfering in our elections in the Oval Office—all while administration officials [reportedly](#) tried to bury call transcripts between Trump and Putin. For Moscow, the investment in Trump has paid off handsomely.

- Trump has explicitly instructed **China** to mold its U.S. policy to cater to his interests. Trump in early October [publicly](#) called on China to investigate his domestic political opponents—after potentially privately raising his opponents on a June 18 call that his administration has since tried to [bury](#). In doing so, he openly [invited](#) Chinese espionage on Americans to benefit him personally—placing his interests directly over his own administration’s prior [warnings](#) of the threat from Chinese espionage.
 - The Chinese [reportedly](#) are seeking to determine if Trump’s instruction was serious, in response to which at least one Trump ally assured Beijing that such investigations entailed an effective way to earn goodwill with the President. That Trump’s invitation took place in the midst of ongoing trade negotiations only raises the likelihood that Trump would be willing to negotiate a worse deal if the Chinese were to benefit him personally.
- Trump’s long [financial ties](#) to **Saudi Arabia** and the Saudis’ [deliberate efforts](#) to double down on them during his Presidency have paid dividends to Riyadh. Trump’s first visit as President was to Saudi Arabia, and he has supported Crown Prince Mohamed bin Salman at every step of the way, even [siding](#) with him over the U.S. intelligence community regarding the brutal killing of Jamal Khashoggi. The fact that White House officials [reportedly](#) attempted to conceal Trump’s discussions with the Crown Prince on highly classified systems suggests there may be even more betrayal in this relationship.
- The President’s behavior has created a new top priority for countries **around the world**: Trump’s financial interests. That linkage was on display when Ukrainian President Zelensky used limited [call](#) time with President Trump to mention his stay at a Trump hotel. He joins at least [100 foreign officials](#) in staying at Trump properties and contributes to a long line of President Trump conflating his financial interests with U.S. foreign policy—at [Mar-a-Lago](#), the [G-7](#), and with [his personal businesses](#).

Trump has also made our relationships with our closest allies and partners contingent on their ability to cater to him. His extortive tactics only weaken our friends—directly, by withholding material assistance, and indirectly, by leveraging our significant influence to pressure them to corrupt their domestic institutions in the service of his petty political goals. The integrity of our democratic institutions, and those of our allies and partners, suffer as a result.

- In Ukraine, beyond misusing coercive diplomacy with a close partner on the frontlines of Russia’s aggression, Trump’s actions [empowered corrupt Ukrainian officials](#) to further his interests. For example, to protect an impending arms sale in 2018, Ukrainian officials [ceased](#) cooperating with the Justice Department’s investigation into Paul Manafort’s criminal dealings. They did so knowing it would curry favor with Trump.
- Ukraine’s [former](#) and [current](#) leaders tried to win President Trump’s favor by echoing his slander of the former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine, undermining the authority of U.S. Ambassadors around the world. President Trump also [urged](#) Zelensky to pursue a wild

conspiracy theory that it was Ukraine, not Russia, that interfered in our 2016 election—another of his fantastical and false charges that only benefits Russia.

- Beyond Ukraine, Trump reportedly [pushed](#) the Australian Prime Minister to undermine the Mueller investigation, and dispatched his Attorney General to do the same in other [democracies](#), including the United Kingdom and Italy, for his political gain.

The President's actions put a target on the backs of American citizens. By asking foreign countries to investigate his domestic opponents, Trump sends a chilling message to all world leaders: American citizens are fair game for baseless investigations as long as the “dirt” benefits Trump’s political interests. That President Trump has previously [offered](#) to turn American citizens over to our adversaries, and [refused](#) to defend Americans with whom he might disagree from the retribution of dictators, should make this all the more haunting to all Americans.

- Because no country with an independent justice system would cater to Trump’s requests, his urgings will only sway autocrats—China, for example—or countries with corrupt justice systems, including Ukraine, to investigate or retaliate against Americans in baseless and potentially dangerous ways.

President Trump's actions are an open invitation to the world to undermine the foundation of American freedom: our elections. The President himself has repeatedly made clear—by [inviting Russia, China, Ukraine](#), and potentially others to interfere in our elections—that he will cast aside the integrity of our elections if doing so will help him emerge victorious.

- Armed with that signal, every country now knows that information on Trump’s political opponents gains them currency—creating a steady stream of “dirt,” regardless of its veracity, flowing into our politics to gain Trump’s favor.
- That corrupts our electoral process and undermines Americans’ faith in government—yet it is all the more likely to continue after Russia wrote the playbook for how to [successfully interfere](#) in an American election to elect Trump and walk away largely unscathed.

The cumulative effect of the President's betrayals corrodes American power, eroding our influence while benefiting our adversaries. American leadership for decades has been largely derived from the international perception that principles, interests, and values animate our foreign policy. Trump has undermined that, making America less able to exert power—whether to galvanize coalitions, address collective threats, deter adversaries, or pursue any other international objective.

- For decades, American strength has met less resistance than that of our adversaries because it was perceived as advancing objectives that applied broadly to our friends and allies. That goodwill has enabled us to grow stronger than we might have, and has

given us an ability to compel favorable behavior that has long-been unparalleled in global affairs.

- But Trump's subordination of our longstanding interests and widely-shared values to his own narrow interests could deal a potentially fatal blow to America's moral authority and credibility, undermining the very element of American might that makes us so powerful and that differentiates us from our adversaries.
- While our allies and partners will be left adrift, our adversaries will be all too happy to follow Trump's example. That's because they seek a world without an America-led value system to constrain their domestic and international wrongdoing. They are cheering Trump's fraying of our global alliances and partnerships, which paves the way for them to more freely bully their neighbors and bend international institutions to their will.
- Our adversaries can now operate with impunity confident that Trump is unlikely to retaliate against their transgressions around the world or in the United States. In fact, they know [from experience](#) that he is more likely to side with them than with our democratic partners, emboldening them and increasing the threat we face.

These effects have already played out in Ukraine, where no one has benefited from the President's actions more than Russia. After former Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich fled to Russia in 2014, Russia illegally occupied Crimea and invaded eastern Ukraine. U.S. security assistance has since been vital for Kyiv to resist further Russian aggression.

- The ongoing war in eastern Ukraine has taken over [10,000 lives](#), split a previously united country, and, as Russia hoped, hamstrung Ukraine's stability, prosperity, and prospects for integrating into democratic Europe. In addition, Crimea remains under illegal Russian occupation, which has exacerbated the risk of miscalculation and [conflict](#), given Russia dominance in the Black Sea—from which it [launches](#) much of its destabilizing global activity—and significantly reduced the size of Ukraine's [armed forces](#).
- Russia's aggression in Ukraine is a direct attack on the stability and territorial integrity of democratic Europe, a long-standing U.S. interest that hundreds of thousands of Americans have given their lives to protect.
- But Trump's actions—from withholding security assistance to peddling a debunked conspiracy theory that [absolves Russia](#) of wrongdoing in 2016—will embolden Putin's already increasingly aggressive incursions not just in Ukraine, but in Europe, the Middle East, and in multilateral institutions—a reality compounded by Trump's tacit [admission](#) to senior Russian officials in the Oval Office that he is not concerned by Russia's ongoing interference throughout the world.

TOPLINE MESSAGES

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He also made our relationships with our closest allies and partners contingent on their ability to cater to him. His extortive tactics only weaken our friends—directly, by withholding material assistance, and indirectly, by leveraging our significant influence to pressure them to corrupt their domestic institutions in the service of his petty political goals. The integrity of our democratic institutions, and those of our allies and partners, suffer as a result.

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No one has benefited more from the President's actions than Russia, which still illegally occupies Ukraine and has been given a green light to continue its aggression around the world.

A formal impeachment inquiry is imperative to protect our national security in the face of these repeated betrayals. The facts that we know, and those that may emerge, must guide Congress from here as it rightly signals to the world that U.S. national security is not up for sale.

THE FACTS OF TRUMP'S BETRAYAL IN UKRAINE

President Trump used all of the power and resources of his office, including taxpayer dollars, to pressure a foreign leader to manufacture dirt on a domestic political opponent by threatening to withhold vital U.S. security assistance until Ukraine fulfilled his wishes.

- Ukraine has become [dependent](#) on U.S. assistance—which has totaled approximately [\\$1.5 billion](#) since 2014 and accounts for more than [90](#) percent of Ukraine's foreign security assistance—both to sustain its armed forces in its war against Russia, and as a strong signal of U.S. commitment to Ukraine, a key deterrent to further Russian aggression.
- The longstanding bipartisan support for, and [insistence on](#), maintaining U.S. security assistance—which had flowed uninterrupted until Trump withheld aid from July 18 to mid-September—also underscores Ukraine's importance to our security interests.
- But Trump directed his senior advisers to withhold nearly [\\$400 million](#) of congressionally approved security assistance until Ukraine investigated his political rivals to generate political "dirt" that would only help him—and to investigate a long-debunked conspiracy that it was Ukraine, not Russia, that was responsible for attacks on our elections in 2016.
- Trump had every reason to believe his pressure tactics would sway Ukraine, given its dependence on the aid—and its 2018 decision to [cease](#) investigations into Paul Manafort to avoid angering Trump in the final stages of an impending U.S. arms sale.

President Trump, Attorney General Barr, Secretary of State Pompeo, Vice President Pence, and Trump's personal lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, participated in this conspiracy.

- President Trump urged Ukrainian officials to meet with Giuliani, who has had [heavy personal involvement](#) in Ukraine. Giuliani made clear he serves his "[client](#)" above all else, including U.S. interests. Giuliani's [backchanneling](#) in Ukraine dangerously circumvented the national security decision-making process and undermined our diplomats—especially our former Ambassador to Ukraine, who Trump [undermined](#), [recalled](#) and [disparaged](#) to buoy a [political fantasy](#)—who foreign leaders now know can be sidelined by linking them to one of the President's conspiracy theories.
- President Trump also repeatedly [urged](#) Zelensky to speak with Attorney General Barr for political reasons—a clear violation of Trump's oath of office, and [another data point](#) that Barr, purportedly our country's top law enforcement official, has repeatedly set his oath aside to help the President try to rewrite the facts of the 2016 election and win in 2020.
- Contrary to his initial suggestions, Pompeo [listened](#) in on the Zelensky call, and admitted the State Department was "[at the center](#)" of withholding aid to Ukraine. He has made [excuses](#) for the President's behavior, [suggested](#) an investigation into the President's political opponents is warranted, [has repeatedly refused](#) to admit enabling Giuliani to

circumvent his own [demoralized](#) State Department, and has not defended the [recalled](#) former Ambassador to Ukraine, despite the [pleas](#) of ambassadors and lawmakers.

- Lurking in the shadows is Vice President Pence; Trump even [encouraged](#) reporters to speak to Pence given Pence's meetings with Zelensky. In a meeting with Zelensky in September, Pence [strongly suggested](#) Zelensky would need to tackle the "corruption" President Trump had identified to receive military aid. Previously, Pence had canceled his May trip to Zelensky's inauguration, [allegedly](#) because Trump was waiting to see whether Zelensky was willing to "play ball" on investigating Trump's political opponents.

The Trump administration has sought to cover up its wrongdoing at every turn. This is all the more grave considering this scandal deals with matters of intelligence and national security, where the Executive's authorities under the Constitution are greatest and where the importance of oversight by a co-equal branch of government, the Congress, is most critical.

- Immediately after the July 25 phone call, White House officials [confirmed](#) that they stored the transcript on a server [typically](#) reserved for extraordinarily sensitive matters, namely covert action, instead of on the standard Top Secret system.
- When the whistleblower complaint surfaced, the Acting Director of National Intelligence [transmitted](#) it first to the White House and Department of Justice without transmitting it to Congress—in direct contravention of the law stating he "[shall](#)" transmit it to Congress, and despite the obvious conflicts of interest for the President and Attorney General.
- After receiving the whistleblower complaint from the Acting Director of National Intelligence, the administration [withheld it](#) from the public by contradicting the Inspector General's [assessment](#) that the complaint was "urgent" and "credible."
- Before reluctantly releasing the transcript to Congress and in a matter of just a few days, Attorney General Barr—instead of recusing himself given the clear conflict of interest—[exonerated](#) the President of any violation of campaign finance law resulting from the contents of the whistleblower complaint.
- Mike Pompeo has [refused](#) to comply fully with the impeachment [inquiry](#), hypocritically citing the very concerns he deemed illegitimate during the Benghazi hearings, even as senior officials of his State Department come forward with [incriminating evidence](#).