

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

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Subcommittee on Delivering on Government Efficiency

“America Last: How Foreign Aid Undermined U.S. Interests Around the World”

February 26, 2025

Welcome to the Elon Musk chainsaw massacre, except this remake is hurting real people and its lead character still hasn’t shown up in front of the Committee or Congress at all. Also known as Project 2025 and the DOGE Subcommittee.

In today’s hearing on foreign aid, called by our colleagues in the GOP, you’re going to hear all kinds of wild conspiracy theories, accusations, and unfounded data. It’s designed to confuse you and provide cover for Donald Trump and Elon Musk and their reckless and illegal gutting of foreign aid and realignment of international affairs.

But before we dive into these details, we want to zoom out and provide some context and ask why this is happening, especially after the Administration has taken an abrupt about-face in international relations after sixty-four years of USAID, turning its back on its long-standing allies and now suddenly embracing and enabling the U.S.’s foreign adversaries.

So, let’s do a little oversight.

Last week, the Administration shocked the world as the Vice President took to the global stage and addressed European leaders and informed them that the Trump Administration believes the greatest threat to Europe is not the autocratic leader who invaded our western ally three years ago and committed war crimes and atrocities against the Ukrainian people and threatened western democracy, but instead the VP said it was a, “threat from within.”

He then snubbed our German allies and in an unprecedented move tacitly endorsed and then met with a far-right candidate for the German parliament who Elon Musk has spent months backing, and a party so extreme that even conservatives in Germany will not form a government with. Luckily, they did not win in spite of Musk’s interference.

Then, over the weekend, Donald Trump, in a wild rant on social media, embraced Vladimir Putin and repeated Russian propaganda trying to rewrite history and falsely claim that Ukraine started the war against its own people.

Then, on Monday, Trump had the United States of America vote with Russia, North Korea, and China as four of only eight countries in the world voting in the UN against a resolution supporting Ukraine and affirming Ukraine’s sovereignty.

It's really astonishing when you think about it.

That same day, which was only two days ago, the Administration announced they'd proceed with firing another 2,000 USAID workers, even as a court ruled that the Administration's dismantling of the aid organization is illegal.

Interestingly, one of the main opponents of USAID programs is Donald Trump's own buddy Vladimir Putin. Why? Because among the programs the U.S. was funding before these funds were frozen and dismantled was aid to Ukraine, including safe houses on the front lines and a free and open press to help keep people informed on what was going on. Not to mention refugee resettlement programs in the U.S.

USAID also was engaged in democracy building in Eastern Europe and the Balkans, especially after the fall of the USSR, which I am sure you can guess Vladimir Putin didn't like.

For the last five years, USAID has funded international aid to 212 countries around the world to promote international peace and security, which has helped to maintain stability since World War II.

For a fraction of the cost of defense and weapons, the U.S. is able to help promote national security, stop global pandemics, prevent hunger and mass migrations, and make the world and America a safer and more stable place.

And so, when we hear conservative affiliates and Trump allies repeat wild and unfounded claims about international aid, and we see a coordinated attack by conservative media, think tanks like those who are here today, members of Congress, and the Administration, we really have to ask ourselves what is really going on here?

Why are they so hell-bent on dismantling an organization that has been so vital to American interests and Western democracy for so long?

I mean it really does make you wonder.

Russia and China are moving in to fill the vacuum left by these cuts around the globe with reports that Putin and his allies are celebrating, and China has already moved in to provide aid in South Asia where funds were frozen.

So, as we listen to his hearing today, I hope that we can get to the bottom of what is actually going on here today.

And with that, I look forward to hearing the testimony.

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