

# TRUMP IS BEING IMPEACHED FOR HARMING AMERICA TO EXTORT CAMPAIGN HELP

There's a narrative solidifying among journalists that Democrats are conducting an impeachment inquiry (at least as it pertains to Ukraine) into whether Trump solicited foreign help for an election.

Even setting aside that on the call with Volodymyr Zelensky, Trump first asked Ukraine's president to provide "evidence" backing Russian disinformation about the *last* election, foreign election assistance is not (all) Trump is being impeached for. Trump is being impeached for pursuing US policies that serve to coerce his foreign partners into helping him win the 2020 election.

His demand that China start an investigation into the Bidens was separated from his assertion that "if they don't do what we want, we have tremendous power" by less than 30 seconds.

We're looking at a lot of things. China's coming in next week. We're going to have a meeting with them. We'll see. But we're doing very well. Some of the, uh, numbers are being affected by all of the nonsense, all of the politics going on in this country, but the Democrats, I call them the do-nothing Democrats because they do nothing for this country. They don't care about this country. But, uh, the numbers really are looking very good going into the future. So we'll see. I have a lot of options on China. But if they don't do what we want, we have tremendous power.

[comment on how he wants Zelensky to investigate the Bidens]

And by the way, likewise, China should start an investigation into the Bidens. Because what happened in China is just about as bad as what happened with uh, with Ukraine.

And a key part of the whistleblower's complaint is that,

On 18 July, an Office of Management and Budget (OMB) official informed Departments and Agencies that the President "earlier that month" had issued instructions to suspend all U.S. security assistance to Ukraine. Neither OMB nor the NSC staff knew why this instruction had been issued. During interagency meetings on 23 July and 26 July, OMB officials again stated explicitly that the instruction to suspend this assistance had come directly from the President, but they still were unaware of a policy rationale. As of early August, I heard from U.S. officials that some Ukrainian officials were aware that U.S. aid might be in jeopardy, but I do not know how or when they learned of it.

Trump held up the money, which had been appropriated by Congress, overruling John Bolton's and some other national security advisors' counsel (which may be why Bolton was excluded from the call), as well as that of some Republican Senators. At least some of the Ukrainians in the loop claimed to be blindsided by the freeze and talked about how the freeze made Ukraine more vulnerable vis a vis Russia. Trump restored the aid only after Congress forced him to, even as the whistleblower complaint was breaking.

In short, Trump was defying Congress' orders, and his excuses (that he was trying to get Ukraine to work on corruption) don't hold up.

Trump has a lot of leeway to set the foreign policy of the US (but not in defiance of Congressional budgetary guidance). But he has come very close to suggesting that he is setting the foreign policy priorities of the country in such a way as to get leverage over other countries to help him politically.

And DOJ, when receiving this whistleblower complaint, did not review whether this amounts to extortion or bribery, the latter of which is specifically enumerated as an offense demanding impeachment in the Constitution.

This is what impeachment is about: Trump is considering inflicting more damage on farmers and manufacturers and this summer helped an adversary (admittedly the one who helped him get elected the last time), all in an effort to coerce help from foreign leaders.

Update: Fox just obtained encrypted texts showing that temporary Ambassador to Ukraine William Brockenbrough Taylor Jr. said "it's crazy to withhold security assistance for help with a political campaign," which would appear to make the intent clear.