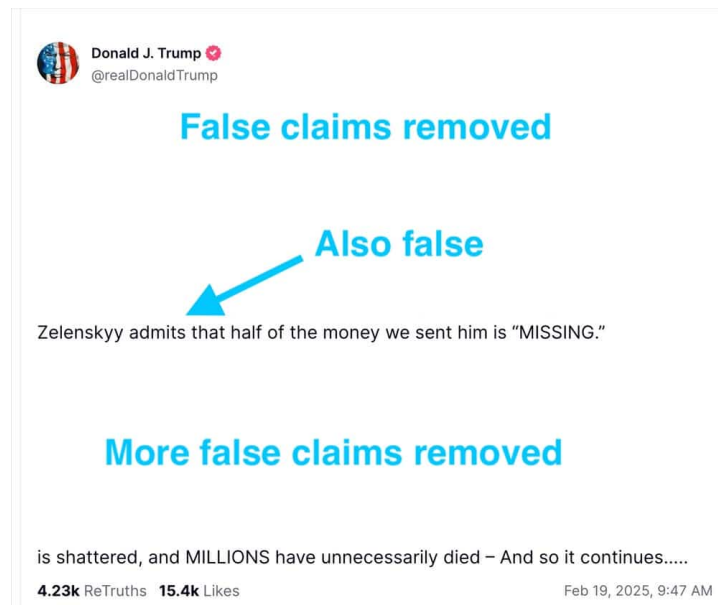


TRUMP FIRED THE PEOPLE WHO COULD DISPUTE HIS FALSE CLAIMS ABOUT UKRAINE AID

Trump is having a tantrum because Volodymyr Zelenskyy called out Trump for parroting Russia disinformation.

The President sent out a post riddled with false claims, including that Zelenskyy has admitted to losing half the money the US has given.



Politifact debunked that claim earlier this month (while catching Elon Musk in – gasp!! – a lie about it).

"One-hundred billion (dollars) of these 177, or 200, some people even say, we have never received," Zelenskyy said, according to the translation of the clip. "We are talking about specific things, because we got it not with money but with weapons. We got \$70 something billion worth of it. There is training, there is additional transport. There are not only prices for weapons, there were

humanitarian programs, social et cetera.”

It was not clear what exactly Zelenskyy was including in his accounting of the military support Ukraine has received, but his comments align with the public data on how Ukraine aid is being spent.

The money is not missing or laundered, as some posts claimed. It’s being spent as Congress intended: on U.S. weapons manufacturing, nonmilitary support in Ukraine and support elsewhere in the region.

I’m particularly interested in the disinformation that Trump and Elon are spreading about the money Ukraine has received (though this is not new – it’s one way Trump undercut support for funding last year).

As you know, I’ve been pretty obsessed (one, two, three) by the way that Trump and DOGE have repeatedly pointed to fraud identified by some of the Inspectors General that Trump fired to substantiate their claim there are hundreds of billions of dollars of fraud to find.

Effectively, DOGE is using Trump’s own mismanagement of COVID to justify their assault on the federal government.

But that’s not the only subgroup of Inspectors General Trump targeted on his fourth day on the job. By terminating State Department Inspector General Cardell Richardson and DOD Inspector General Robert Storch, followed weeks later by Paul Martin after he released a report showing the impact of cuts on USAID, Trump has fired the main people responsible for oversight of aid to Ukraine.

Indeed, both Richardson and Storch talked about how their firing will disrupt the work of tracking the aid to Ukraine.

In his declaration submitted with their wrongful termination lawsuit, Richardson emphasized that

by firing him, Trump has prevented him from continuing to supervise that oversight work.

4. The work of the OIG advances U.S. foreign policy objectives and the nation's national security. For instance, my office was responsible for overseeing programs that provided funding to support Ukraine in its war against Russia. Overseeing programs that fund initiatives in other countries makes OIG's work uniquely challenging.

5. This crucial work is ongoing, and my unlawful termination has prevented me from continuing to supervise it during my lawful term of office.

And Storch tied his role in supervising Ukraine funding to key national security interests. He specifically described the import of tracking "the most sensitive equipment and technology provided to Ukraine."

3. The work of DoD's Office of the Inspector General ("OIG") helps to safeguard U.S. national security. For example, as Inspector General, I was the Lead Inspector General, and then the congressionally-designated Special Inspector General for Operation Atlantic Resolve ("SIG OAR"), which operation includes U.S. assistance to Ukraine. I worked closely with colleagues from the Offices of Inspector General for the State Department, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and others from across the oversight community on this and the other two ongoing overseas contingency operations, which relate to countering ISIS and assisting local partners in Iraq and Syria (Operation Inherent Resolve) and to furthering U.S. policy goals in Afghanistan (Operation Enduring Sentinel).

4. As SIG OAR, I was responsible for all

oversight related to U.S. security assistance to Ukraine, and for coordinating and reporting on oversight of all aspects of U.S. assistance. One of many areas where my office's programmatic oversight has been particularly consequential is evaluating DoD's efforts to ensure the accountability of the most sensitive equipment and technology provided to Ukraine. As has been publicly reported, assistance to Ukraine became a highly partisan issue, and it was only because of the non-partisan nature of the OIG that we were able to do this impactful oversight and to do it authoritatively and credibly. All told, as of January 2025, during my tenure as Inspector General, my office had (1) issued approximately four dozen programmatic oversight reports covering all aspects of U.S. security assistance, and (2) coordinated with our oversight colleagues on dozens more, all as transparently reported on the public website whose development I led, www.UkraineOversight.gov.

Given Trump's abject capitulation to Putin and his overt efforts to replace Zelenskyy, I can't help but wonder whether blinding this oversight was part of the plan. As Storch alludes, the US sent a whole bunch of sophisticated tools to Ukraine, and I'm sure there are people who'd like to put them to uses other than helping Ukraine repel Russia's attack.

Whatever the case, when reporters push back on Trump's false claims about Zelenskyy, they might include a question about why, if he cared about oversight of the money spent with Ukraine, one of his first acts in office amounted to gutting it.

Update: Daniel Dale has a fact check of all the lies Trump is telling about Zelenskyy.