



The New Republic

- [LATEST](#)
- [BREAKING NEWS](#)
- [POLITICS](#)
- [CLIMATE](#)
- [CULTURE](#)
- [MAGAZINE](#)
- NEWSLETTERS
- [PODCASTS](#)
- [GAMES](#)

The New Republic



The New Republic

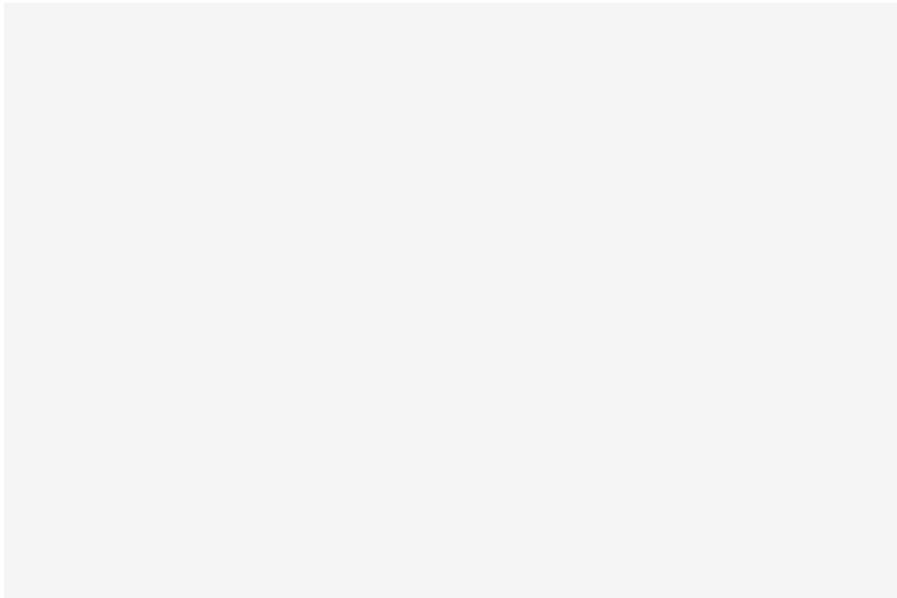
- [LATEST](#)
- [BREAKING NEWS](#)
- [POLITICS](#)
- [CLIMATE](#)
- [CULTURE](#)
- [MAGAZINE](#)
- NEWSLETTERS
- [PODCASTS](#)
- [GAMES](#)

The New Republic
Breaking News
Breaking News
from Washington and beyond

Most Recent Post
[Ellie Quinkan Houghtaling/](#)
February 14, 2025/11:09 a.m. ET
Share This Story



Trump Is Now Suggesting USAID Somehow Rigged the 2020 Election
Donald Trump continues to falsely insist that 2020 election was rigged.



Jabin Botsford/The Washington Post/Getty Images

The president of the United States is roping the nation’s humanitarian aid–focused agency into his election conspiracy.

During a joint Oval Office appearance Thursday with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, one particularly sycophantic individual identifying as press asked the U.S. commander in chief if he believed that USAID, which provides humanitarian assistance and funding for infrastructure and developmental tech in developing nations, had interfered in the 2020 and 2024 elections, the latter of which Trump won.

“President Trump, first of all, congratulations for a fantastic 24 days of your presidency. Historic and unprecedented decisions that you’ve made—” the reporter [said](#) before Trump interrupted: “I like her.”

“I’m particularly impressed by the exposé on USAID,” she continued. “And I would like you to share with us, if you think USAID had a role in election interference in the U.S. in 2020, and in the elections in 2024.”

To that, Trump said, “It could have had a role.”

“There were a lot of bad things that happened in 2020,” Trump said. “I think bad things happened in 2024, but it was too big. We won by a tremendous margin. And we want every swing state. We won the popular vote by millions of votes. So it was too big to rig.

“But yeah, I think they probably tried,” he continued. “We’re looking to go to a system now, much different, where one-day voting, voter ID, and just, we have to do that. And paper ballots, we want paper ballots. And when they do that, we’re gonna clean it up very, very well.”

Trump’s claim that the 2020 election was “stolen” from him has been roundly and thoroughly debunked. Ex–special counsel Jack Smith [wrote](#) in a January letter to former Attorney General Merrick Garland that he believed there was enough evidence to convict Trump should the January 6 case have gone to trial.

Meanwhile, Trump’s continued attacks on USAID have only served to weaken America’s soft power on the international stage.

The information obtained through the agency’s work immediately aids and shields American citizens. Data aggregated from aid missions around the world inform U.S. policy on issues ranging from public health to diplomacy. Earlier this month, news that there was an [Ebola outbreak](#) in Kampala, Uganda, was reported via a USAID mission, for example. Choosing to nix the agency would force the U.S. into an information dark age that could see the country caught off guard in future health crises.

Regardless, Trump’s right hand, Elon Musk, has made it a personal [mission](#) to dismantle USAID. In a string of recent tweets, Musk has slammed USAID—which distributed more than [\\$40 billion](#) in congressionally appropriated foreign aid in 2023 and has closed [\\$86 billion](#) in private-sector deals—as a “[criminal organization](#)” that is an “[arm of the radical-left globalists](#).”

Share This Story



Read more about USAID:

[Trump Fires USAID Watchdog One Day After He Dared Criticize Him](#)

Most Recent Post

[Malcolm Ferguson/](#)

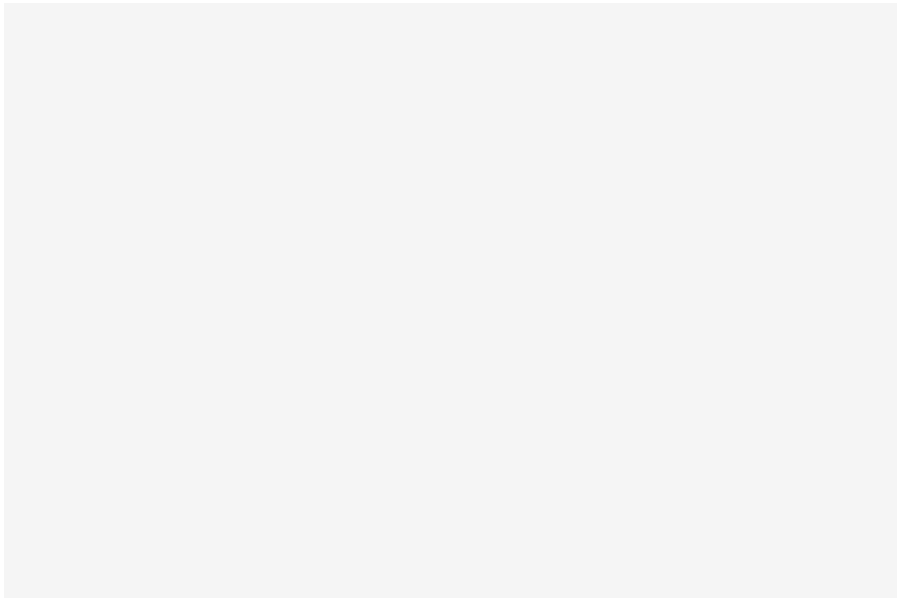
February 14, 2025/10:43 a.m. ET

Share This Story



Hegseth Invites Pizzagate Conspiracist to Join Him on Overseas Trip

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth has invited one of the most extreme conspiracy theorists to join him on a high-stakes overseas trip.



Omar Havana/Getty Images

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth thought it'd be nice to have white supremacist conspiracy theorist Jack Posobiec by his side on his first overseas trip, [according](#) to *The Washington Post*.

Trump's new defense secretary invited Posobiec ahead of his high-stakes trips to Europe this week, asking the far-right conspiracy theorist to join the "media" pool. It was unclear whether Posobiec accepted the invitation as Hegseth landed in Poland on Friday, but he has been documenting Hegseth's activities on X every day.

"What SecDef Hegseth accomplished on this trip is historic. He delivered hard truths that are necessary to set conditions for peace," Posobeic [commented](#) over a picture of Hegseth meeting with NATO on Thursday. "And he showed his true concern for the American soldier."

"Just a photo of [@PeteHegseth](#) doing proper pushups in the snow in Poland in winter with the troops," he [posted](#) again on Friday.

This decision has led defense officials to once again question Hegseth's judgment, given that he has the conspiracy theorist behind "Pizzagate" tailing him on a diplomatic trip. This trip is yet another early example of the Trump administration's willingness to go to war with the media. The only outlets traveling with Hegseth on his trip were Axios and three conservative outlets: Fox News, Newsmax, and Breitbart. Everyone else was sidelined.

Share This Story



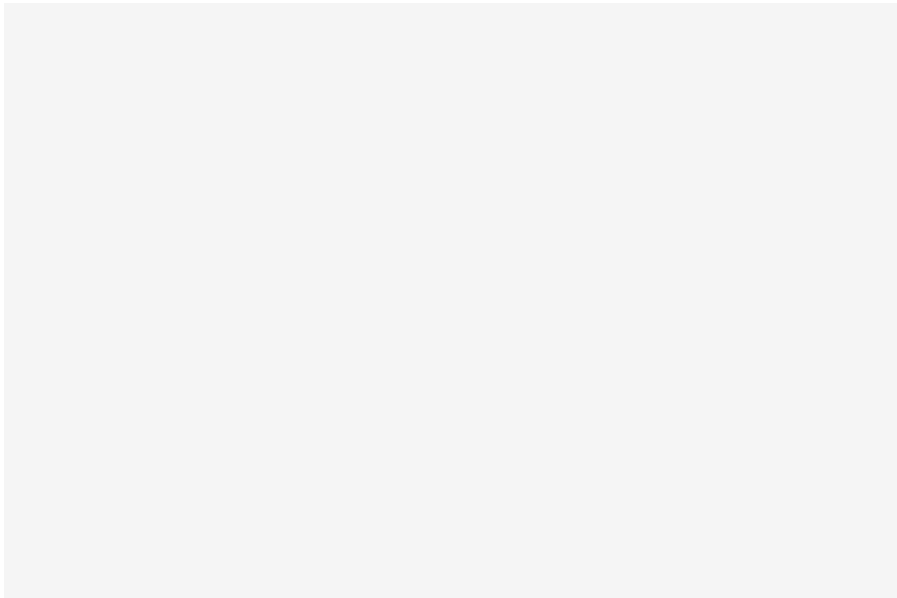
More on Hegseth:
[Pete Hegseth Crumbles When Asked What Russia Is Conceding to Ukraine](#)

Most Recent Post
[Edith Olmsted](#)/
February 14, 2025/10:12 a.m. ET
Share This Story



Trump's Border Czar Openly Threatens Eric Adams Over Dropped Charges

The Department of Justice allegedly dropped the charges against Adams in exchange for his cooperation in Donald Trump's immigration plans.



Michael M. Santiago/Getty Images

Donald Trump’s administration is already holding the threat of prosecution over its newest puppet: New York City Mayor Eric Adams.

As Donald Trump’s so-called border czar Tom Homan sat on the couch next to Adams on *Fox & Friends* Friday morning, he [joked](#) that if Adams failed to carry out the administration’s crackdown on immigrants, the two would meet under much less friendly circumstances.

“If he doesn’t come through, I’ll be back in New York City, and we won’t be sitting on the couch, I’ll be in his office, I’ll be up his butt, saying, ‘Where the hell is the agreement we came to?’” Homan [said](#), laughing.

“I want ICE to deliver. I want ICE to deliver,” Adams interjected, briefly inventing a world in which he has any leverage over the administration.

“We are gonna deliver for the safety of this city,” Adams continued enthusiastically. Ultimately, Adams is something much worse than a puppet: He’s a shill, and a smiling one, who’s happily sold out his own constituents for a shot at not going to jail.

Thinly veiled Homan warning to Adams: “If he doesn’t come through ... I’ll be in his office, up his butt, saying, ‘Where the hell is the agreement we came to’”
pic.twitter.com/Pq0msJXZGb

— Emily Ngo (@emilyngo) [February 14, 2025](#)

The immigration squad’s creepy duo act is especially eerie considering that acting U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York Danielle Sassoon [resigned](#) Thursday, two days after acting U.S. Deputy Attorney General Emil Bove ordered federal prosecutors in New York to drop the charges against Adams, in return for Adams’s compliance in enforcing Trump’s immigration policies.

Bove claimed that the prosecution would hinder the mayor’s ability to target immigrants at Trump’s behest, but Sassoon, a Trump appointee with a strong conservative record, disagreed and said that Adams’s efforts [were](#) an “improper offer of immigration enforcement assistance in exchange for a dismissal of his case.”

In a letter, Sassoon wrote that Adams’s lawyers had specifically sought a quid pro quo from the Department of Justice, one which he clearly received. In the days after Trump’s election, Adams traveled to Mar-a-Lago, presumably to make a similar case for how he could be useful to the president’s agenda, in return for being spared from his [five damning public corruption charges](#) alleging that he’d sought out and taken bribes from the Turkish government.

Sassoon also [wrote](#) that her office had planned to file a superseding indictment against Adams that would add an obstruction conspiracy count, based on evidence Adams had destroyed and instructed others to destroy evidence.

Share This Story



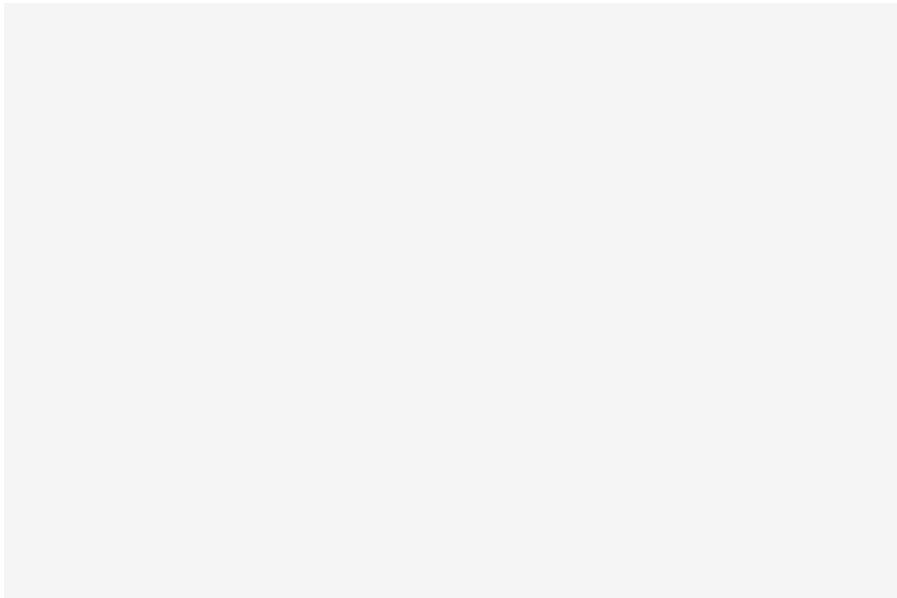
Read about the agreement:
[Trump Saved Eric Adams’s Butt More Than We Even Realized](#)

Most Recent Post
[Ellie Quinlan Houghtaling/](#)
February 14, 2025/9:55 a.m. ET
Share This Story



GOP Senator Bashes Pete Hegseth for Dumpster Fire NATO Speeches

Pete Hegseth struggled to convey Donald Trump’s policy for Ukraine.



Andrzej Iwanczuk/NurPhoto/Getty Images

Donald Trump may have given his defense secretary a pass on spelling out America’s negotiating position on Ukraine, but that doesn’t mean the rest of the Republican conference has been equally forgiving.

Senate Armed Services Chair Senator Roger Wicker torched [Pete Hegseth](#)’s speeches at the NATO conference in Munich this week, calling it a “rookie mistake” to tell the summit—and the world—that it would be “unrealistic” for Ukraine to return to its prewar borders.

Wicker said that the ex-Fox News co-host’s speech was akin to a Tucker Carlson monologue, whom he called a “fool.”

“Hegseth is going to be a great defense secretary, although he wasn’t my choice for the job,” Wicker, who nonetheless voted to confirm Hegseth, told [Politico](#) at the Munich Security Conference Thursday.

He slammed Hegseth’s decision to cede Ukraine’s border: “But he made a rookie mistake in Brussels and he’s walked back some of what he said but not that line.”

The staunch Ukraine supporter also said that he was “puzzled” and “disturbed” by Hegseth’s comments.

“Everybody knows ... and people in the administration know you don’t say before your first meeting what you will agree to and what you won’t agree to,” Wicker said.

The editor of the conservative *National Review* also trashed Hegseth’s “disappointing” performance. Even though Hegseth (sort of) walked back his Ukraine claims, Mark Antonio Wright [noted](#) in an editorial that that “doesn’t excuse Hegseth and his staff for the amateur-hour bungling of yesterday’s speech and policy declaration.”

NATO allies were left reeling Wednesday after Hegseth [pitched](#) that America would effectively end its role as the steward of European security. He revealed that the administration’s peace talks with Russia had taken several chips “off the table,” including Ukraine’s possible NATO membership (something the military alliance had promised in 2008), the possibility of a U.S. presence in Ukraine to enforce postwar security guarantees, and the end of NATO missions to Ukraine.

The defense secretary’s “unrealistic” comment also drew the ire of defense experts, who saw the admission as another lost chip that effectively forces Ukraine to cede territory to Russia.

It was a stunning show of inexperience for the former Fox News host, who apparently needed to walk back some of those brazen settlement terms while speaking before NATO on Thursday. Hegseth insisted that, despite his having already shown America’s hand, “everything is on the table” when it comes to arranging peace between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy.

“What he decides to allow or not allow is at the purview of the leader of the free world, of President Trump,” Hegseth [said](#) Thursday. “I’m not going to stand at this podium and declare what President Trump will do or won’t do.”

During an Oval Office press conference Thursday unveiling his new [“reciprocal tariff” plan](#), Trump denied telling Hegseth to walk back his comments, describing them as “pretty accurate.”

Share This Story



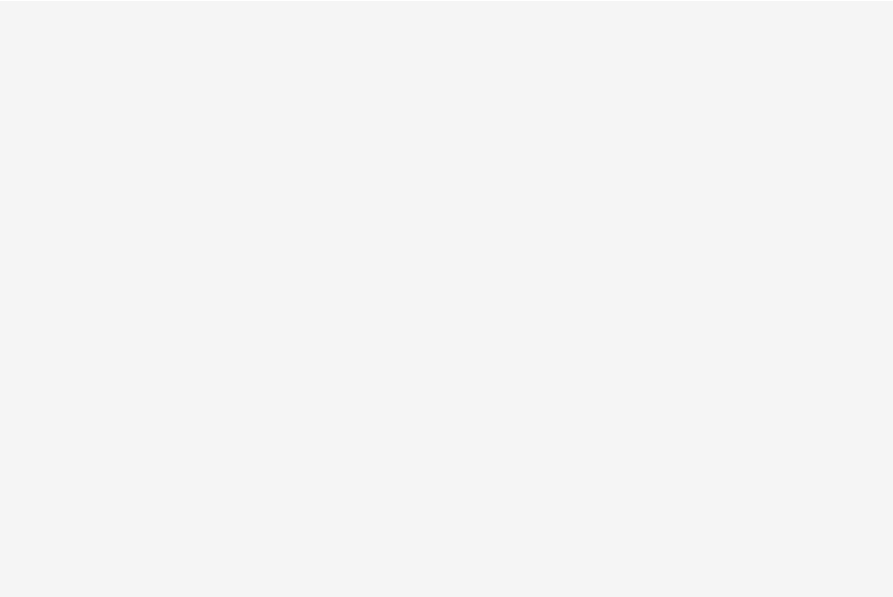
Read more about Hegseth:
[Pete Hegseth Crumbles When Asked What Russia Is Conceding to Ukraine](#)

Most Recent Post
[Hafiz Rashid/](#)
February 14, 2025/9:30 a.m. ET
Share This Story



Here’s How Much Money Trump Has Made Off the Presidency So Far

Donald Trump has turned the presidency into a total grift.



ALLISON ROBBERT/AFP/Getty Images

Donald Trump and his wife, Melania, have been making deals and raking in money ever since Trump won the election, including a cool [\\$40 million](#) to license Melania’s documentary about returning to the White House as first lady.

That’s just one of Trump’s numerous moneymaking schemes since his return to office, which have netted him and his family nearly \$80 million so far, according to a *Wall Street Journal* [analysis](#). That includes donations to his future presidential library and a hefty \$10 million settlement with Elon Musk’s X. That sum doesn’t include the [millions](#) the president and first lady have each netted from “[meme coin](#)” cryptocurrency ventures, a blatant means of scamming MAGA supporters.

Melania’s upcoming Amazon documentary may be one of the most obviously corrupt deals. The *Journal* [reports](#) that the first lady, the president, Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, and his fiancée, Lauren Sánchez, all had dinner at Mar-a-Lago in December, where Melania sold Bezos on her movie. Two weeks after that dinner, Amazon agreed to shell out the \$40 million, nearly three times as much as the next best offer and the most the company has ever spent on a documentary.

The first lady is reportedly getting over 70 percent of the \$40 million, and her agent is trying to sell “sponsorships” to executives and billionaires for the movie, with \$10 million as the starting price. In return, these sponsors would get thanked in the credits and be invited to the premiere.

Some of Amazon’s competitors weren’t even interested in the film. Netflix and Apple declined to field offers, while Paramount only bid \$4 million on distribution rights. The only other company that showed some interest was Disney, but their offer was just \$14 million.

According to an Amazon spokesperson, “We licensed the upcoming Melania Trump documentary film and series for one reason and one reason only—because we think customers are going to love it.”

That seems hard to believe. Amazon and Bezos are shelling out money not because they love the documentary but because they are cozying up to the president to stay on his good side and hopefully get some favorable decisions from the Republican-controlled government. In Trump’s second term, it’s all about cash for favors, with no concern about appearing corrupt.

Share This Story



Most Recent Post

[Malcolm Ferguson/](#)

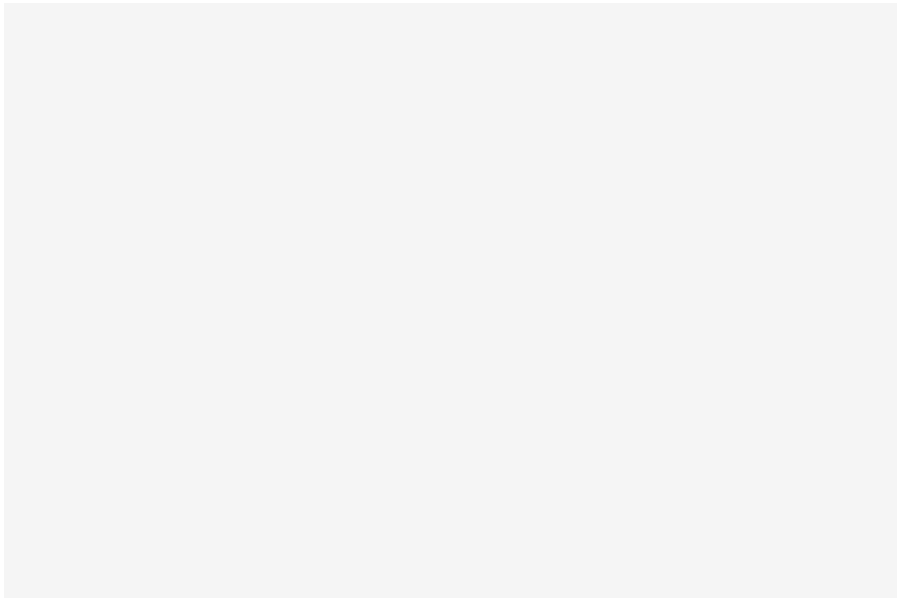
February 14, 2025/9:01 a.m ET

Share This Story



Elon Musk’s DOGE Website Is Already Getting Hacked

The DOGE.gov website is such a coding disaster that pretty much anyone can take over.



Andrew Hamik/Getty Images

The DOGE website is wide open and vulnerable to hackers, according to [reporting](#) from 404 Media. Two coders had already infiltrated the site and left their own messages on it at the time of 404’s reporting on Thursday evening: “THIS is a joke of a .gov site,” [said one](#), and “THESE ‘EXPERTS’ LEFT THEIR DATABASE OPEN -roro” [said](#) another.

This will be unsurprising to anyone who has visited the DOGE.gov website since its inception—it looks like a high schooler could’ve made it. 404’s Jason Koebler previously [referred to it](#) as “just a Wordpress theme placeholder page.”

Anonymous experts told 404 Media that the DOGE.gov website is supported by a Cloudflare page outside of government servers, making it easily accessible to third-party hackers.

“Feels like it was completely slapped together,” one of the sources said. “Tons of errors and details leaked in the page source code.”

Musk has yet to comment on the hacks as he continues promising “transparency.”

Share This Story

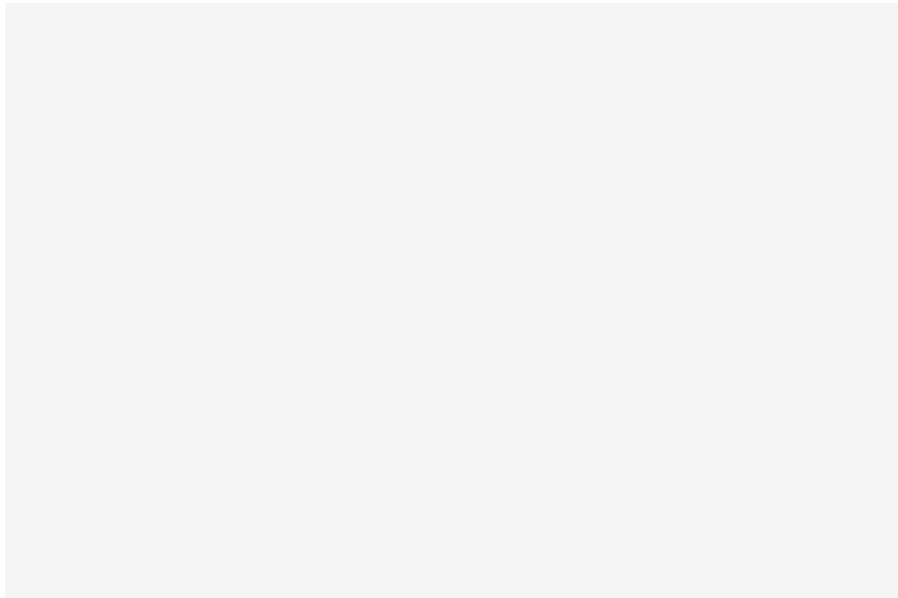


Unfortunately More on Elon:
[How John Roberts Teed Up Elon Musk’s War on the Court](#)

Most Recent Post
[Edith Ohnsted/](#)
February 13, 2025/5:52 p.m. ET
Share This Story



Trump Saved Eric Adams’s Butt More Than We Even Realized
The Department of Justice ordered New York prosecutors to drop charges against the embattled mayor.



Michael M. Santiago/Getty Images

It seems like New York Mayor Eric Adams got exactly what he wanted from Donald Trump’s Department of Justice—and then some.

Acting U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York Danielle Sassoon [resigned](#) Thursday, two days after acting U.S. Deputy Attorney General Emil Bove ordered federal prosecutors in New York to drop the charges against Adams. Bove claimed that they hindered the mayor’s ability to target immigrants at Trump’s behest.

In a scathing eight-page letter announcing her resignation, Sassoon [revealed](#) that her office was preparing to hit Adams with a superseding indictment from a new grand jury.

“We have proposed a superseding indictment that would add an obstruction conspiracy count based on evidence that Adams destroyed and instructed others to destroy evidence and provide false information to the FBI, and that would add further factual allegations regarding his participation in a fraudulent straw donor scheme,” Sassoon wrote.

Sassoon, who has a [strong conservative record](#) and clerked for late Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, warned that dismissing the case against Adams would amplify—rather than abate—concerns about weaponization in the Department of Justice.

Adams was previously hit with a [57-page indictment](#), including five damning public corruption charges, [alleging](#) that he’d sought out and taken bribes from the Turkish government. The indictment refers to “a senior official in the Turkish diplomatic establishment” who “facilitated many straw donations” to Adams on behalf of foreign nationals and businesses.

Sassoon’s letter revealed that Adams’s attorneys were up to a similar gambit during his negotiations with the Justice Department. During a meeting on January 31 with Bove, Adams’s lawyers, and members of the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of New York, “Adams’s attorneys repeatedly urged what amounted to a *quid pro quo*, indicating that Adams would be in a position to assist with the Department’s enforcement priorities only if the indictment were dismissed,” Sassoon wrote, in a footnote of her letter.

“Mr. Bove admonished a member of my team who took notes during that meeting and directed the collection of those notes at the meeting’s conclusion,” Sassoon said, indicating that Bove didn’t wish for a record of Adams’s request to exist. It seems that Adams got exactly what he wanted from Trump’s DOJ.

In her letter, Sassoon criticized the rationale behind dismissing the charges, arguing that Bove and the DOJ had “reached this conclusion without assessing the strength of the evidence or the legal theories on which this case is based.” Instead, Bove argued that dismissal was necessary on policy grounds because the “pending prosecution has unduly restricted Mayor Adams’ ability to devote full attention and resources to the illegal immigration and violent crime that escalated under the policies of the prior administration.”

Sassoon pointed out that “Adams has already seized on the memo to publicly assert that he is innocent and that the accusations against him were unsupported by the evidence and based only on ‘fanfare and sensational claims.’”

“Confidence in the Department would best be restored by means well short of a dismissal,” she added.

Share This Story



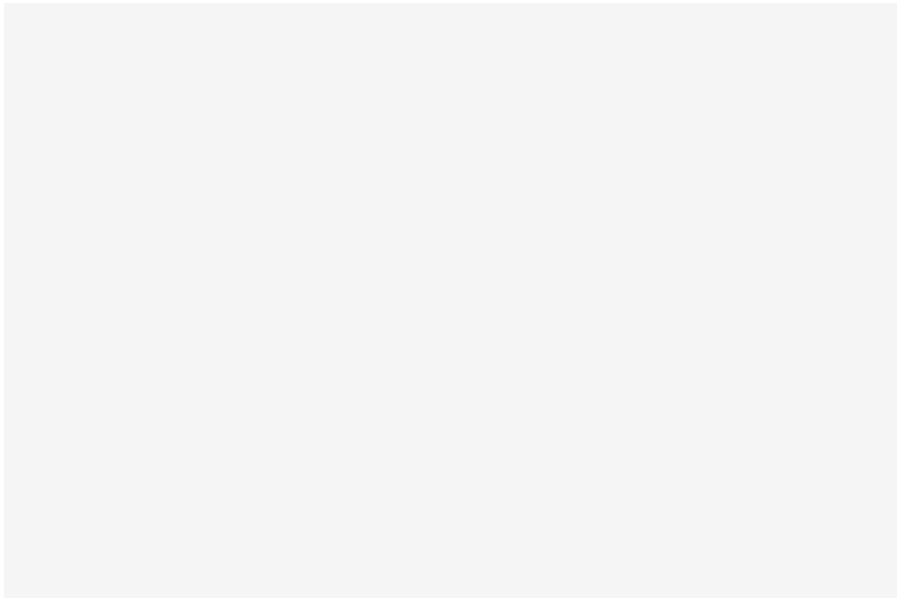
Read more about Trump coming to Adams’s rescue:
[Trump’s Eric Adams Decision Sparks Stunning Chain of Resignations](#)

Most Recent Post
[Hafiz Rashid/](#)
February 13, 2025/4:55 p.m. ET
Share This Story



Trump’s Eric Adams Decision Sparks Stunning Chain of Resignations

A top federal prosecutor has just resigned after being ordered to drop the charges against Eric Adams. And she’s not alone.



Yuki Iwamura/Bloomberg/Getty Images

Danielle Sassoon, right, has resigned as acting U.S. attorney for the southern district of New York.

Three senior Justice Department officials [resigned](#) Thursday rather than drop corruption charges against New York City Mayor Eric Adams.

On Monday, acting U.S. Deputy Attorney General Emil Bove ordered federal prosecutors in New York to [drop the charges](#) against Adams, claiming that they limited Adams’s ability to help President Trump’s crackdown on immigrants. Apparently, that did not sit well with the acting U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York, Danielle Sassoon, who opted to [resign](#) instead.

After her office refused to drop the charges against Adams, the DOJ then sought to move the case over to the agency’s Public Integrity Section in Washington, D.C., which handles all federal public corruption cases. But then, the section’s acting head, John Keller, left his position rather than drop the charges.

As a result, Adams’s case went to the DOJ’s criminal division, which oversees every federal criminal case in the country. Kevin Driscoll, the division’s acting head, didn’t want to drop the charges either, and he then resigned.

Of all three, [Sassoon’s resignation](#) is the most surprising, considering that she has a strong conservative resume. A member of the influential [Federalist Society](#), she once clerked for Supreme Court Justice and conservative stalwart Antonin Scalia. More recently, she captured the national spotlight for prosecuting cryptocurrency fraudster Sam Bankman-Fried.

The stunning sequence of events evokes memories of the “[Saturday Night Massacre](#)” of 1973, when President Nixon tried to fire special prosecutor Archibald Cox, who was tasked with investigating the infamous Watergate scandal, causing the top two officials in the DOJ to resign instead. It was only the third ranking DOJ official at the time, conservative Robert Bork, who finally agreed to carry out the firing.

The Trump administration appears to be doing Adams a favor for [cozying up](#) to the president, ignoring the [multiple counts](#) of fraud and bribery against Adams for actions going back to 2014, when he was Brooklyn borough president. It seems that some of the DOJ’s prosecutors can see the corruption coming from on high, even those with right-wing backgrounds.

Share This Story



More on the Eric Adams decision:

[DOJ Admits It’s Fully Corrupt With Dismissal of Eric Adams Charges](#)

Most Recent Post

[Edith Ohnstedt/](#)

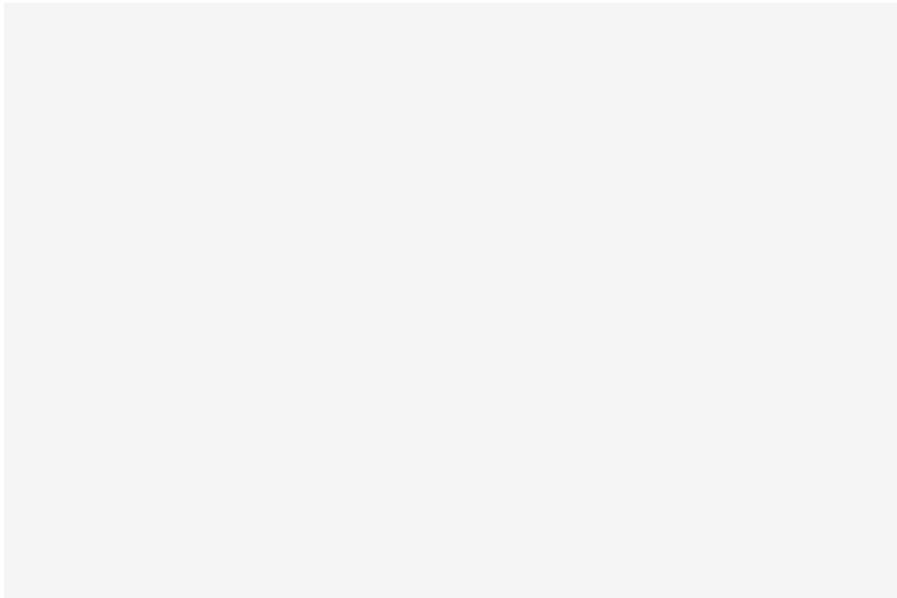
February 13, 2025/4:26 p.m. ET

Share This Story



Mexico’s President Threatens to Sue Google for Bowing to Trump

Google has changed the name of the Gulf of Mexico to “Gulf of America.”



Carlos Santiago/Eyepix Group/LightRocket/Getty Images

Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum threatened Thursday to sue Google after it changed the name of the Gulf of Mexico in its maps, in compliance with Donald Trump’s superficial executive order.

Google [announced](#) Tuesday that it had updated the name of the body of water on its maps system, keeping with the standards set by the federal Geographic Names Information System. In the U.S., the name would appear as the inane “Gulf of America”; in Mexico, the “Gulf of Mexico”; and everywhere else would see a monstrous “Gulf of Mexico (Gulf of America).”

During a press conference Thursday, Sheinbaum said that her government had exchanged letters with Google about the issue but that the company had not resolved the complaints.

“Who we have a dispute with is Google,” Sheinbaum said, [according](#) to Bloomberg. “If they keep insisting, we’ll consider a lawsuit.”

Sheinbaum argued that Trump’s vanity project could remain but that it needed to be limited to a small section of the gulf, saying that “the only place it was effective was where [the U.S.] has sovereignty, or up to 22 nautical miles from the coast,” [according](#) to Reuters.

It’s worth noting that Google CEO Sundar Pichai was among those [invited](#) to flank Trump at the inauguration, cementing just how important the administration’s ties to Silicon Valley are and just how much these pitiable tech bros hope to stay in the pocket of the president.

Share This Story



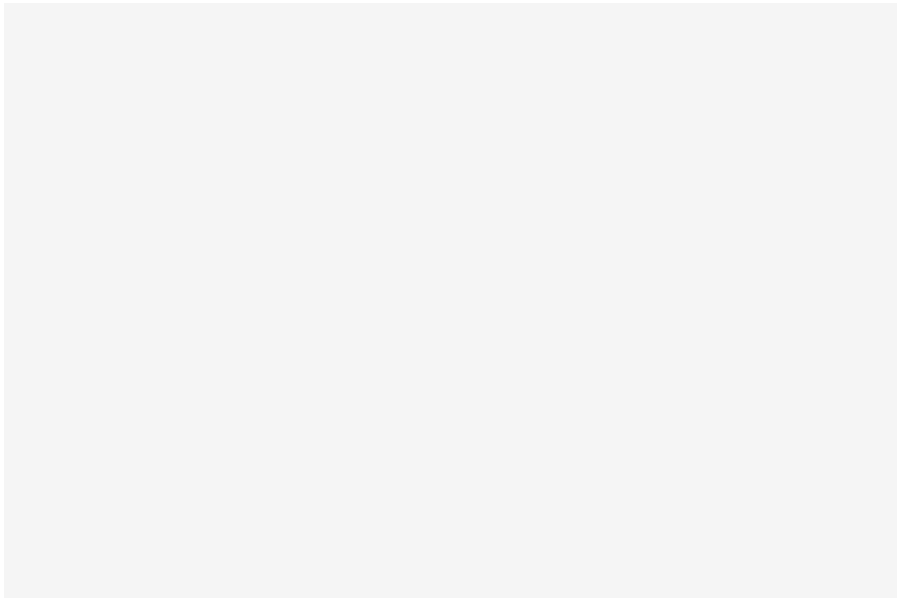
Read more about inane renaming:
[Trump’s Efforts to Take Over Greenland Somehow Got More Embarrassing](#)

Most Recent Post
[Malcolm Ferguson/](#)
February 13, 2025/3:47 p.m. ET
Share This Story



Trump Wants This Amazon Exec to Head a Key Worker Protection Group

Donald Trump is revealing just how little he cares for the work OSHA does.



Andrew Hamik/Getty Images

Trump wants a former Amazon executive to lead the country’s workplace safety agency.

On Wednesday, the president [nominated](#) David Keeling to serve as head of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, which is tasked with maintaining safe and humane working conditions for American workers. Keeling previously oversaw safety at Amazon and UPS.

Both of those companies have been cited for various workplace safety violations by the very agency Keeling is set to control, if confirmed by the Senate. In 2019, OSHA cited UPS for forcing its drivers to work in “excessive heat” with no air conditioning. That same year, UPS was also cited for fire hazards at packaging facilities. Amazon has been cited numerous times for the dangerous, high-pressure environments in its warehouses, as well as the long hours its employees are forced to spend in them. Just last year, Amazon paid a [\\$145,000](#) settlement over OSHA violations.

Keeling worked as director of safety compliance for UPS from 2011 to 2018 before serving as the vice president of global health and safety from 2018 to 2021, overlapping with OSHA’s 2019 safety citations. The [same](#) can be said for Amazon, where he worked from 2021 to 2023—a time when Amazon had one of the [highest](#) warehouse injury rates in the country.

Share This Story



More on Trump’s cabinet nominees:

[Trump’s Education Pick Refuses to Answer One Very Easy Question](#)

[View More Posts](#)

Read More:

[Politics](#), [Law](#), [Supreme Court](#), [Constitution](#), [Foreign Policy](#), [Health Care](#), [Economic Inequality](#), [Taxes](#), [Washington](#)

- [BREAKING NEWS](#) /
- [POLITICS](#) /
- [CLIMATE](#) /
- [CULTURE](#) /
- [MAGAZINE](#) /
- [PODCASTS](#) /
- [GAMES](#)

- [Events](#)
- [Travel](#)
- [Bookstore](#)
- [Donate](#)
- [Advertise](#)
- [FAQ](#)
- [Press](#)
- [Jobs](#)
- [Submissions](#)

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

- [Subscribe to The New Republic](#)
- [Sign Up for Our Newsletters](#)

- [Terms and Conditions](#)
- [Privacy Policy](#)

- [Cookie Settings](#)
- Copyright 2025 © *The New Republic*. All rights reserved.