



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on February 6, 2025

Report: CIA, USAID Linked to First Trump Impeachment. AP's Take From Taxpayers Almost \$40M.

The first impeachment of President Trump in December 2019 appears to have been a rogue operation of the CIA and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

Independent journalists Alex Gutentag and Michael Shellenberger, who helped [blow the lid](#) off the “Twitter Files” scandal, [linked the two](#) to the get-Trump operation because the original “whistleblower” that instigated the impeachment was a CIA operative.

The operative cited a “journalism” outfit, funded by USAID and the State Department, four times in his whistleblower report to chairmen of the House and Senate Intelligence Committees.

Meanwhile, just how much money the federal government has fed to news organizations is becoming more clear. American taxpayers have funded The Associated Press to the tune of almost \$40 million through the years.

USAID's defenders say it's about charity and development in poor nations. It's not. It's a \$40 billion driver of regime change abroad. And now the evidence suggests that it, along with the CIA, were behind the 2019 impeachment of Trump — an illegal regime change effort at home. pic.twitter.com/6HxUPiVpFX

— Michael Shellenberger (@shellenberger) [February 5, 2025](#)

CIA-USAID-Impeachment

The impeachment got rolling when CIA “whistleblower” [Eric Ciaramella](#), a hate-Trump Obama holdover at the National Security Council, reported what he claimed was the gist of a phone call between Trump and Ukrainian dictator Volodymyr Zelensky.

[Trump had asked](#) Zelensky to work with then-advisor Rudy Giuliani to get to the bottom of the [Biden-Burisma influence-peddling scheme](#). In 2016, then-Vice President Joe Biden ordered Ukraine to fire a prosecutor who was investigating corruption at Burisma, an energy company that had inexplicably hired Biden's son, Hunter. If Ukraine didn't fire the prosecutor, it would lose \$1 billion in U.S. loan guarantees.

Ciaramella confessed that his report about the phone call [was mostly hearsay](#). “I was not a direct witness to most of the events described,” [he wrote](#).

But the CIA torpedo's long missive to Richard Burr (R-N.C.), chief of the Senate Intelligence Committee, and then-Representative Adam Schiff (D-Calif.), chief of the House Intelligence Committee,



Public Domain



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Shellenberger reported, also relied on material published by a little-known outfit called the [Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project](#) (OCCRP).

In July 2019, [it reported](#) that “two Soviet-born Florida businessmen — one linked to a Ukrainian tycoon with reputed mafia ties — are key hidden actors behind a plan by U.S. President Donald J. Trump’s personal attorney to investigate the president’s rivals,” as [Gutentag and Shellenberger explained](#).

Ciaramella’s letter cited OCCRP four times.

“The OCCRP story was crucial to the House Democrats’ impeachment claim, which is that Trump dispatched Giuliani as part of a coordinated effort to pressure a foreign country to interfere in the 2020 presidential election, which is why the whistleblower cited it four times,” the two wrote.

On Welfare

It turns out, however, that OCCRP is on government welfare. The State Department and USAID have showered the outfit with at least \$11.7 million since 2011. [It received](#) the loot under another name, [Journalism Development Network](#).

JOURNALISM DEVELOPMENT NETWORK INC

Also known by 1 other name ▶

Overview

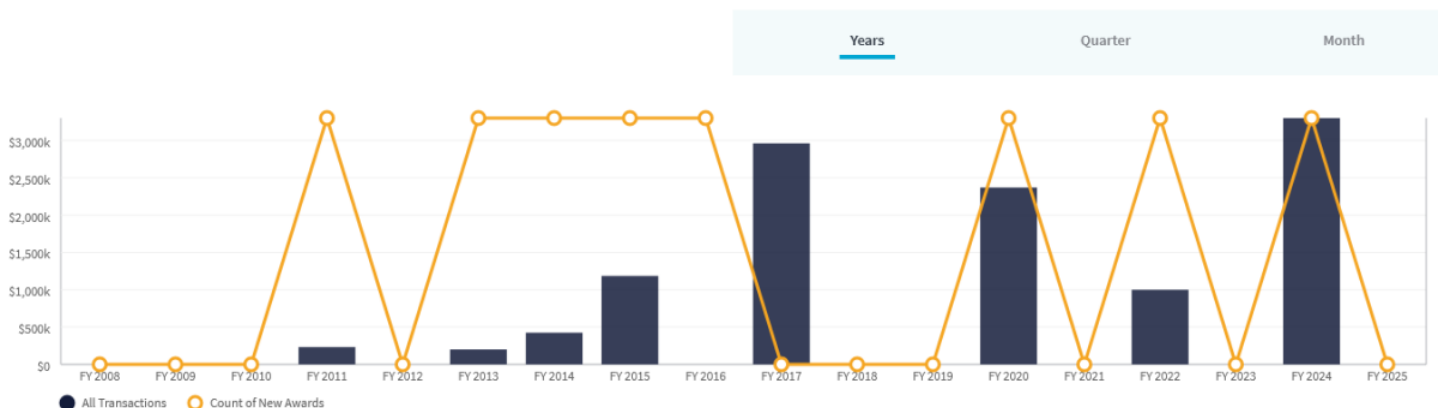
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CHILD RECIPIENT

Total Awarded Amount

\$11.7 Million

from 15 transactions





Awarding Agencies

Name	Obligations	% of Total
1. Department of State (DOS)	\$9.67M	82.87%
2. Agency for International Development (USAID)	\$2.00M	17.13%

In 2024, Shellenberger wrote, a documentary from German television broadcaster NDR reported that USAID “approves OCCRP’s ‘annual work plan’ and approves new hires of ‘key personnel.’”

NDR killed the broadcast, however, [Mediapart reported](#), “after US journalist Drew Sullivan, the co-founder and head of the OCCRP, placed pressure on the NDR management and made false accusations against the broadcaster’s journalists involved in the project.”

Continued [Gutentag and Shellenberger](#):

On December 16, Drop Site’s Ryan Grim posted a link on X to the 26-minute-long [documentary](#). “NDR, Germany’s public broadcaster, is facing a censorship scandal and has defended itself by saying it never killed a news report about OCCRP and its State Department funding — b/c no report was ever produced to kill,” said Grim. “That was absurd — and dozens, maybe hundreds, of journalists knew it to be false, and now of course, someone has leaked it.”

The journalistic collaboration [revealed](#) that OCCRP’s original funding came from the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs of the State Department, and quotes a USAID official who says, “Drew’s just nervous about being linked with law enforcement,” referring to Sullivan. “If people who are going to give you information think you’re just a cop, maybe it’s a problem.”

Amazingly, the two reported, OCCRP’s “[Sullivan told](#) NDR that his organization had ‘probably been responsible for five or six countries changing over from one government to another government ... and getting prime ministers indicted or thrown out.’”

This group attacking [@elonmusk](#) claims to be independent but it's not. USAID funds it & requires approval of its senior hires. [@OCCRP](#) admits it contributed to "regime change" in 5-6 nations, proof that USAID turned foreign counter-insurgency tactics against the American people. <https://t.co/E16SdZoJrf>

— Michael Shellenberger (@shellenberger) [February 4, 2025](#)

So a “journalism” outfit overthrows governments with help from USAID and the State Department.

“It appears that CIA, USAID, and OCCRP were all involved in the impeachment of President Trump in ways similar to the regime change operations that all three organizations engage in abroad,” Shellenberger concluded:

The difference is that it is highly illegal and even treasonous for CIA, USAID, and its



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contractors and intermediaries, known as “cut-outs,” to interfere in US politics this way.

Last year, Shellenberger, Gutentag, and Matt Taibbi revealed that the CIA enlisted foreign governments to spy on Trump, which helped trigger the FBI’s “Russian Collusion Hoax” probe.

CIA Had Foreign Allies Spy On Trump Team, Triggering Russia Collusion Hoax, Sources Say

United States Intelligence Community targeted 26 Trump advisors for foreign spy agencies to “reverse target” and “bump”

by [@Shellenberger](#) [@mtaibbi](#) and [@galexibrane](#)
President Barack Obama... pic.twitter.com/XHSrCFPI57

— Michael Shellenberger (@shellenberger) [February 13, 2024](#)

Three years ago, [Shellenberger revealed](#) that the FBI paid Twitter more than \$3 million to censor material the bureau didn’t like.

Your Tax Dollars at Work

Also feeding at the federal trough is The Associated Press. The once-respected news organization [has collected](#) \$37.5 million from myriad government agencies since 2008.

In return, taxpayers have received a steady stream of hate-Trump stories, as have Trump supporters.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Also known by 2 other names ▶



Overview

This recipient is a child of [THE ASSOCIATED PRESS](#)

CHILD RECIPIENT

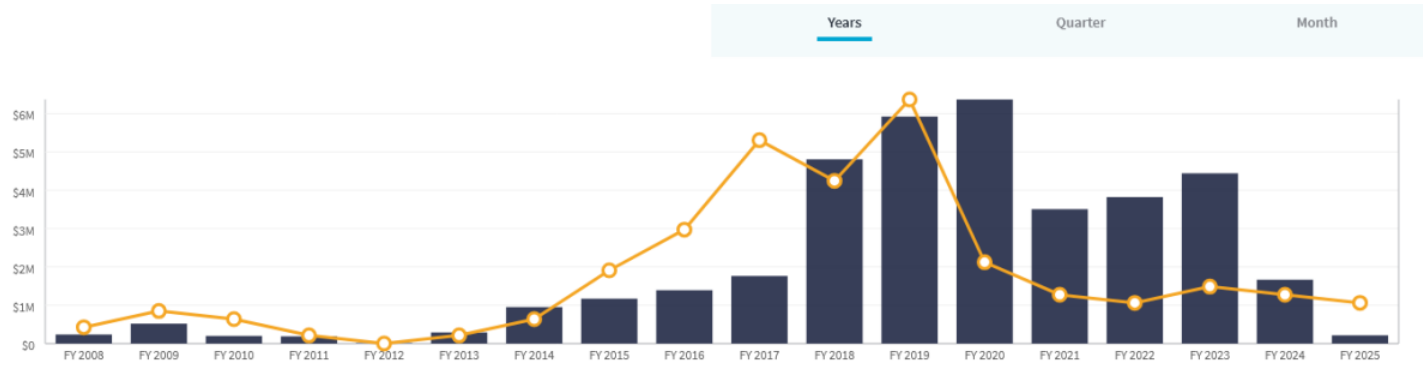
Total Awarded Amount

\$37.5 Million

from 325 transactions



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“The Associated Press has morphed into a Berkeley-style left-wing rag,” National Journalism Center’s [Becket Adams](#) wrote for *The Hill* in March. “The key difference is that The Associated Press plays to a global audience of millions.”

Adams recounted how AP covered the U.S. Supreme Court’s 9-0 ruling that Colorado couldn’t keep Trump off the 2024 presidential ballot: “Supreme Court restores Trump to the ballot, rejecting state attempts to hold him accountable for attack on Capitol in 2021.”

AP also targeted GOP Representative James Comer (Ky.), chief of the House Oversight Committee, [which has investigated](#) the Biden Mafia and the millions of dollars it pulled in from overseas, by claiming he “has his own shell company and complicated friends.”

AP also went after [Chaya Raichik](#), foundress of the wildly popular Libs of TikTok X feed, which counts 4.1 million followers.

Asked Raichik, “Wait, so you’re telling me that my tax dollars funded hit pieces against me?”

Wait, so you're telling me that my tax dollars funded hit pieces against me?

pic.twitter.com/7mWBBFty8w

— Libs of TikTok (@libsoftiktok) [February 5, 2025](#)

And yesterday, the BBC explained that [American taxpayers provided](#) 8 percent of its 2023-24 budget through USAID.



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