

# Trump's Ukraine call is helping Vladimir Putin spread his views on American corruption | Los Angeles Times

By Richard Stengel

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The reason President Trump's July 25 call with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky is so profoundly dispiriting — apart from its potential violation of federal campaign law — is that it runs counter to the United States' clear national interest: fighting corruption in Ukraine and ensuring the nation's future as an independent liberal democracy.

When Trump withholds aid to a foreign country while asking its leader for what appears to be a personal political favor, he becomes an advocate of corruption, not its enemy. The president's phone call has provided evidence for Russian President Vladimir Putin's longtime contention that Americans are hypocrites, that we preach the rule of law but abandon it when it's not in our interest.

[...]

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