Opinion
Guest Voices
Zelenskyy and Trump

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and U.S. President Donald Trump gesture as they meet at the White House in Washington Feb. 28. Thomas C. Fox calls the meeting, during which Trump berated Zelenskyy for not expressing his gratitude for U.S. aid for the war with Russia, an "Oval Office debacle." (OSV News/Reuters/Brian Snyder)



by Thomas C. Fox

View Author Profile
tfox@ncronline.org

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Everyone I know is depressed. Our country, they say, is going to hell, the unconscionable work of President Donald Trump and Elon Musk, his top campaign contributor turned senior advisor.

It's odd, but I feel myself clinging to an unexpected sense of hope. It is not hope born out of any victory or noble act but from the sheer weight of Trump's betrayal, one so burdensome that it seems destined to collapse under its hubris.

In light of the Feb. 28 Oval Office debacle during Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's visit, the president has clarified his alliances. By openly siding with Russia and showing disdain for NATO, he didn't just turn his back on Americans — he

turned his back on everyone who fought to uphold the values of democracy and freedom worldwide. I think about family — three uncles on Mom's side and four on Dad's side — who stood against tyranny during World War II.

Their sacrifices were not abstract; they were real, lived and hard-won experiences. Yet, in a grotesque display of ignorance and arrogance, Trump and Vice President JD Vance blatantly dismissed countless acts of bravery and self-sacrifice from family members — some living and some deceased — on behalf of our nation's ideals. All gone in minutes, lost in uncontrolled tirades against a Ukrainian war hero far superior to them.

> Damn the cruelty and the utter lack of moral compass.
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This abomination follows another, equally grotesque incident: the time when Trump and Musk cut USAID funds, terminating thousands of life-giving programs worldwide while turning their backs on the poorest among us. They revealed their true characters, ripping scraps from starving children to amass funds to cover the billions required for disgraceful tax cuts benefiting the wealthiest and most pampered in our nation. Damn the cruelty and the utter lack of moral compass.

I acknowledge that America has never entirely realized its ideals — our constitution and Bill of Rights were created in a nation already scarred by genocide and slavery. Yet within them exists the foundation for something greater: a journey toward justice, an arc bending, albeit slowly, toward equality.

Trump has betrayed that journey, affecting not only our generation but also those of the past and the unborn yet to come.

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Alas, in doing so, he has overwhelmed himself. He is waging war not just on the living but also on history itself. That's why I believe he will fail. Had he committed merely one of these indignities — betraying fundamental values or ordering massive injustice — he might have achieved a modicum of success. But both? At once? The weight of betrayal is too heavy for anyone to bear — such clarity. There is no hiding,

no refuge anymore.

We're already witnessing it. People are rising. Congress members are dodging constituents. The energy, defiance and determination to ensure this moment doesn't pass without action is snowballing. We, Americans, out of the womb of democracy, are stepping up and will increasingly reject the moral void Trump symbolizes.

So, yes, I feel more hopeful today than just a few days past. My hope doesn't come from the idea that danger has faded — it hasn't — but from the fact that the betrayal is now so visible, widespread and undeniable that it's bound to collapse.

When it does, we will be here, continuing the legacy of the best values of our ancestors, and we will once again say, "We are proud to be Americans."

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