# Trump praises Elon Musk’s short-lived reforms at DOGE amid mixed results and UK defence spending doubts



Many newspapers recently captivated readers with striking imagery and critical developments. Notably, a cover image features Donald Trump presenting a ceremonial key to his close ally Elon Musk, marking the latter’s departure from his position at the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). As reported, Musk was praised by Trump for implementing significant reforms during his brief tenure, which lasted just over 130 days. His leadership was characterised by aggressive cost-cutting measures that aimed for savings of up to $2 trillion but yielded only $175 billion, subsequently attracting scrutiny over the efficacy and transparency of the initiative.

While Musk transitions back to his corporate roles with Tesla and SpaceX, the impacts of his time at DOGE remain a mixed bag. His restructuring efforts reportedly included substantial staff reductions and the dismantling of parts of USAID, raising concerns among researchers about potential global humanitarian consequences. The atmosphere of uncertainty surrounding the DOGE's future was palpable as Musk expressed optimism about its long-term effects, despite the entrenched government bureaucracies he had to navigate, which he likened to challenges in corporate reform.

In parallel, the UK government's impending defence review is drawing attention across various publications, with Defence Secretary John Healey confirming plans to increase defence spending to 3% of GDP by the year 2034. However, this announcement faces scepticism, as Healey indicated that the real-terms increase may represent only about £6 billion annually, a stark contrast to the higher figures touted by Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer. Critics have accused the government of manipulating figures to create an impression of robust investment in national security amidst rising global threats, particularly in light of Russian aggression.

This discourse on defence funding comes at a time when the UK grapples with a new era of security challenges, which experts assert has been significantly reshaped by advances in drone technology and artificial intelligence. The upcoming defence review is expected to unfold detailed strategies on how the UK plans to confront these evolving threats, even as the government seeks to reassure businesses and citizens about safety and stability.

Amid this dialogue, various media outlets have highlighted contrasting narratives. Some focus on the duality of government reforms and national security, while others report on more frivolous matters, such as Taylor Swift's high-profile acquisition of her music rights. Nevertheless, the broader themes of expenditure, efficiency, and accountability persist, resonating through public and political discourse.

As the landscape continues to shift, both in the United States and the UK, stakeholders across the political spectrum will undoubtedly monitor these developments closely, contemplating the implications for governance, security, and global relations.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cm26yjd15vjo), [[2]](https://apnews.com/article/e09ac9f31cb2eb2e2d815a66cdffb7ba), [[3]](https://www.reuters.com/world/us/trump-lauds-musk-oval-office-billionaires-turbulent-tenure-ends-2025-05-30/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[2]](https://apnews.com/article/e09ac9f31cb2eb2e2d815a66cdffb7ba), [[3]](https://www.reuters.com/world/us/trump-lauds-musk-oval-office-billionaires-turbulent-tenure-ends-2025-05-30/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[4]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/john-healey-gdp-keir-starmer-paul-johnson-vladimir-putin-b1213340.html), [[5]](https://www.shropshirestar.com/uk-news/2025/02/26/healey-suggests-defence-spending-increase-something-over-6bn-not-134bn/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[6]](https://www.johnhealeymp.co.uk/smaller-firms-to-benefit-from-increased-defence-spending/), [[7]](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2024-12-02/uk-looks-to-bolster-military-supply-chain-ahead-of-2-5-goal)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cm26yjd15vjo> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://apnews.com/article/e09ac9f31cb2eb2e2d815a66cdffb7ba> - On May 30, 2025, President Donald Trump held an official farewell in the Oval Office for Elon Musk, who is stepping down from his role leading the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). Musk, who will now refocus on managing Tesla, SpaceX, and social media platform X, was praised by Trump for instigating "colossal change" in federal operations. During his tenure, Musk led sweeping government reforms marked by massive staff cuts and restructuring, including the dismantling of parts of USAID, which researchers estimate contributed to significant global humanitarian impacts. Despite ambitious cost-cutting targets of $1–2 trillion, DOGE reported just $175 billion in savings, with its data credibility in question. Musk, wearing a "The Dogefather" shirt, accepted a ceremonial key and joked about an injury caused by his son. While Trump hinted Musk may remain involved unofficially, attention in Washington appears to be shifting. Musk, Trump’s top campaign donor in the previous year, has announced his intent to reduce political contributions. Though his position was temporary, Musk had speculated about continuing part-time. Despite uncertainties about DOGE’s future, Musk expressed optimism, likening the initiative to a lifelong philosophy.
3. <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/trump-lauds-musk-oval-office-billionaires-turbulent-tenure-ends-2025-05-30/> - U.S. President Donald Trump and billionaire Elon Musk presented a united front as Musk ended his 130-day tenure leading the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). During his brief but impactful stint, Musk spearheaded major federal government downsizing efforts, eliminating thousands of jobs and slashing billions in spending, including foreign aid. Despite ambitious goals to cut $2 trillion, DOGE has only saved an estimated $175 billion, with verified reductions closer to $19 billion—less than 0.5% of total federal expenditures. Musk’s aggressive style and controversial decisions drew internal criticism, sparked protests, and alarmed shareholders of his companies like Tesla and SpaceX. He has announced plans to scale back political donations and refocus on his businesses but affirmed he would remain a Trump adviser. At a White House farewell, Trump praised Musk’s patriotic service and gifted him a symbolic golden key. Musk acknowledged the challenges of government reform, citing entrenched bureaucracy, but remained optimistic about DOGE’s future impact.
4. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/john-healey-gdp-keir-starmer-paul-johnson-vladimir-putin-b1213340.html> - Defence Secretary John Healey has suggested that the real-terms increase in defence spending year on year will be only around half the £13.4 billion figure cited by Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer. Healey stated that in real terms, the figure "would be something over £6 billion" and claimed that "the definition of defence numbers can be done in different ways." Ministers have been accused of playing "silly games with numbers" over their assertion that the increase in defence spending to 2.5% of GDP by 2027 would mean £13.4 billion more would be spent on defence every year. Sir Keir Starmer announced the increase in defence spending from its current 2.3% to 2.5% in response to "tyrant" Russian leader Vladimir Putin and amid uncertainty over the US’s commitment to European security.
5. <https://www.shropshirestar.com/uk-news/2025/02/26/healey-suggests-defence-spending-increase-something-over-6bn-not-134bn/> - Defence Secretary John Healey has suggested that the real-terms increase in defence spending year on year will be only around half the £13.4 billion figure cited by Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer. Healey stated that in real terms, the figure "would be something over £6 billion" and claimed that "the definition of defence numbers can be done in different ways." Ministers have been accused of playing "silly games with numbers" over their assertion that the increase in defence spending to 2.5% of GDP by 2027 would mean £13.4 billion more would be spent on defence every year. Sir Keir Starmer announced the increase in defence spending from its current 2.3% to 2.5% in response to "tyrant" Russian leader Vladimir Putin and amid uncertainty over the US’s commitment to European security.
6. <https://www.johnhealeymp.co.uk/smaller-firms-to-benefit-from-increased-defence-spending/> - Thousands of small businesses in the UK will receive new government support to ensure they benefit from the historic decision to increase defence spending to 2.5% of GDP. This investment will protect UK citizens from threats at home, but also create a secure and stable environment in which businesses can thrive, supporting the Government’s number one mission to deliver economic growth. It’s as the government announced its plans to launch a new hub to provide small and medium enterprises (SMEs) with better access to the defence supply chain and a commitment to set direct SME spending targets for the Ministry of Defence by June this year. It follows the Government’s historic uplift in defence spending to 2.5% of GDP by April 2027, with a commitment to hit 3% in the next Parliament.
7. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2024-12-02/uk-looks-to-bolster-military-supply-chain-ahead-of-2-5-goal> - The UK will “war-game” how well its domestic supply chain and military can withstand future shocks, as the government prepares a clearer commitment on when it will increase defense spending. Defense Secretary John Healey announced plans for a new Defense Industrial Strategy, promising to bring jobs to “every nation and region of the UK” as Britain lifts annual defense spending to 2.5% of gross domestic product. The strategy will explore how to sustain forces on the front line through scenarios including a protracted conflict and various supply-chain disruptions.