

# Elon Musk Is a National Security Risk Says Army General Who Sounds Alarm in Scathing New York Times Op-Ed

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*(Kyodo via AP Images)*

Retired Lt. General **Russel L. Honoré** is sounding the alarm on **Elon Musk's** potential security risk in his newfound role as close advisor to President-elect **Donald Trump**.

Honoré took to the op-ed pages of the *New York Times* to explain in significant detail why he believes the leader of DOGE (the Department of Government Efficiency) and holder of multiple federal contracts with the United States industrial space and military complex may be beholden to China over massive loans he received from the foreign government in years past. He opens by citing past comments from his DOGE deputy, **Vivek**

**Ramaswamy**. Honoré writes:

According to numerous interviews and remarks, Mr. Musk's Department of Government Efficiency co-leader, Vivek Ramaswamy, once appeared to believe he was. In May 2023, Mr. Ramaswamy went so far as to publicly state, "I have no reason to think Elon won't jump like a circus monkey when Xi Jinping calls in the hour of need," a reference to China's leader. In a separate X post targeting Mr. Musk, he wrote, "the U.S. needs leaders who aren't in China's pocket."

Mr. Ramaswamy has since walked back his numerous public criticisms of Mr. Musk, but he was right to raise concerns. According to news reports, Mr. Musk and his rocket company, SpaceX, face federal reviews from the Air Force, the Defense Department's Office of Inspector General and the under secretary of defense for intelligence and security for failing to provide details of Mr. Musk's meetings with foreign leaders and other potential violations of national-security rules.

These alleged infractions are just the beginning of my worries. Mr. Musk's business ventures are heavily reliant on China. He borrowed at least \$1.4 billion from banks controlled by the Chinese government to help build Tesla's Shanghai gigafactory, which was responsible for more than half of Tesla's global deliveries in the third quarter of 2024.

China does not tend to give things away. The country's laws stipulate that the Communist Party can demand intelligence from any company doing business in China, in exchange for participating in the country's markets.

Honoré is just getting started. What follows is a fairly compelling argument that the wealthiest individual in the world, with remarkably close relationships with global leaders of America's fiercest enemies like China and Russia, has remarkable power as Trump's close advisor, and offers that insight with little background checks and oversight. And he does so without having ever received a single American vote.

“The fact that Mr. Musk spent a quarter of a billion dollars to help re-elect Mr. Trump does not give the incoming White House the license to look the other way at the national security risks he may pose,” Honoré concludes. “If Mr. Trump and his appointees mean what they say about getting tough on America's adversaries, then they will act on this matter without delay. There is too much at stake to ignore what's right in front of them.”

Read the full column in the *New York Times*.

## **Germany accuses Elon Musk of trying to influence its election**

Story by Reuters

BERLIN (Reuters) -The German government accused U.S. billionaire Elon Musk on Monday of trying to influence its election due in February with articles supporting

the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party, even though it suggested they amounted to "nonsense".

Musk, who is set to serve Donald Trump's new administration as an outside adviser, endorsed the AfD as Germany's last hope in a guest opinion piece for the *Welt am Sonntag* newspaper that prompted the commentary editor to resign in protest.

"It is indeed the case that Elon Musk is trying to influence the federal election" with X posts and the opinion piece, a German government spokesperson said.

Musk is free to express his opinion, the spokesperson said, adding: "After all, freedom of opinion also covers the greatest nonsense."

Musk, the world's richest person, has defended his right to weigh in on German politics because of his "significant investments", and has praised the AfD's approach to regulation, taxes and market deregulation.

His intervention has come as Germans prepare to vote in a parliamentary election on Feb. 23 after the collapse of the coalition government led by Chancellor Olaf Scholz. Musk also called for Scholz's resignation after a car rammed into a crowd at a Christmas market on Dec. 20, killing five people.

The AfD is currently in second place in opinion polls behind the main opposition conservatives, and might be able to thwart a centre-right or centre-left majority in the election. Germany's mainstream parties have pledged not to work with the AfD at the national level.

The government spokesperson said Musk's endorsement of the AfD was "a recommendation to vote for a party that is being monitored (by domestic intelligence) on suspicion of being right-wing extremist and which has already been recognised as partly right-wing extremist".

German politicians have excoriated Musk for his endorsement of the AfD, with the co-leader of Scholz's Social Democrats (SPD) comparing him to Russian President Vladimir Putin.

"Both want to influence our elections and specifically support the AfD's enemies of democracy. They want Germany to be weakened and plunged into chaos," Lars Klingbeil told the Funke news group on Monday.

Friedrich Merz, leader of the opposition Christian Democrats and current favourite to succeed Scholz as chancellor, told Funke that Musk's comments were "intrusive and pretentious".

(Reporting by Friederike Heine, editing by Thomas Seythal and Gareth Jones)