



Donald Trump is dismantling the State Department.

Why you should care?

*The following answers are based on in-depth research, not "alternative facts". They are provided by the Bluegrass Activist Alliance research committee.*

Our Values: The Bluegrass Activist Alliance believes that diplomacy is even more important than armament in the defense of our country.

Q. Why does the state department do for you?

A. The U.S. State Department was the first Cabinet created by the founding fathers in 1889 and is recognized as the premiere diplomatic corps in the World. Today, embassies around the world help U.S. travelers if they lose their passports or become ill overseas. They assist with international adoptions and marriages. Embassy personnel help American businesses make contacts with their counterparts in specific countries and navigate that country's regulations and laws.

The State Department is the primary negotiating arm of the government in trade deals and other treaties. The state department is our first line of defense to prevent local skirmishes from becoming larger wars. Personnel in each country help

the U.S. military work with local police to quell unrest.

Q. Why is the State Department in trouble?

A. President Trump has cut the budget of the Department by 30%. Over 3000 trained personnel have been pushed out and key assistant secretaries who run the major bureaus have not been replaced. The President has dragged his feet in naming new ambassadors, and an unheard of 20 embassies, including South Korea, Pakistan, and Afghanistan have no ambassador as of this writing. Many Department bureaus are now being run by interim and less experienced staff.

The State Department's Operations Center, which coordinates government actions in times of crisis, has lost so many staff that it is not able to carry out its mission.

Q. What is the role of Secretary of State Rex Tillerson is dismantling the Foreign Service?

A. Tillerson, who had no experience in diplomacy before being named Secretary, is attempting to run our foreign policy with his own personal staff of 20, only one of whom has had any real experience. From day to day, he and the President send mixed messages about exactly what America's

foreign policy is. If America does not have a clear foreign policy, this leaves America and Americans incredibly vulnerable to foreign leaders, such as Vladimir Putin, with their own agendas.

Q. Why is the President doing this?

A. Republican presidents have traditionally believed the State Department was bloated and needed revisions, but none before Trump has had this level of hostility for our diplomatic corps. No one really understands why Trump feels this way, other than the his “America First” policies reject the idea that countries should work together and consider foreign aid (including humanitarian aid) are a waste of money. In a world ever more connected by the Internet and international travel and business, this seems incredibly naïve and shortsighted. It’s like we pulled out of a race and declared that we won, while the other racers left us in the dust.

Q. Does Andy Barr support the President’s attitudes toward foreign policy and the State Department?

A. Although Barr has made no specific statements about Trump’s foreign policy, when asked by BGAA, he has refused to stand up for the State Department. Barr votes with the Trump agenda 95% of the time.

To learn more about this issue, see BGAA’s research page under foreign policy and foreign aid.

<http://www.bluegrassactivistalliance.org/resistance-toolkit/research/>