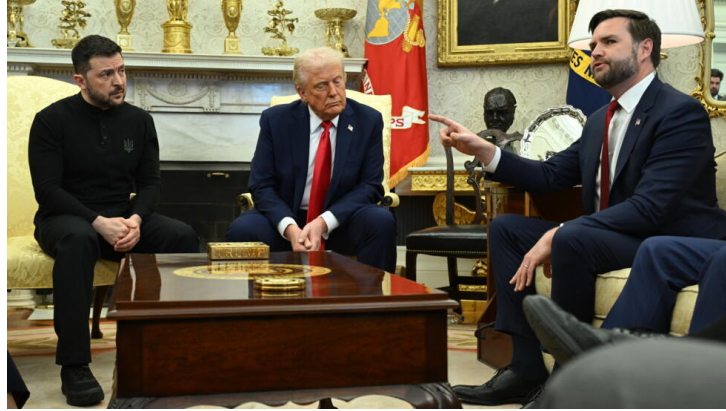

Vance's clash with Zelensky sparks diplomatic rift



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Washington witnessed a dramatic turn in its relations with Kyiv as U.S. Vice President JD Vance confronted Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky in a tense Oval Office exchange. The dispute, centered on Ukraine's perceived lack of gratitude for U.S. aid, has added uncertainty to the future of American support for the war-torn nation.

Vance, who previously criticized Zelensky for failing to acknowledge U.S. assistance, reiterated

his stance during the meeting. “Have you said thank you once?” he asked the Ukrainian leader, a moment the White House later highlighted in a social media post. His remarks escalated into a heated discussion, reportedly catching many officials off guard.

The meeting, initially intended to focus on a rare-earth minerals agreement, took an unexpected turn when Zelensky pressed for stronger U.S. security commitments. Sources indicate that both Vance and President Trump felt disrespected by the approach, shifting the discussion into a confrontation over Ukraine’s expectations.

Critics, including Democratic Senator Richard Blumenthal, accused Vance of staging an “ambush” to provoke a reaction. Meanwhile, Trump’s team embraced the vice president’s assertive stance, with White House aides praising his challenge to Zelensky’s demands.

Following the Oval Office clash, Vance faced backlash during a family trip to Vermont, where protesters, some waving Ukrainian flags, called him a “traitor.” The incident has fueled broader concerns about the administration’s evolving stance on Ukraine, particularly after Vance’s controversial speech at the Munich Security Conference, where he accused European leaders of failing on immigration and free speech.

As tensions mount, Vance’s rising influence within the administration signals a shift in U.S. diplomacy, leaving allies uncertain about Washington’s next moves in the ongoing conflict.