

Elon Musk and Marco Rubio argue openly at White House meeting



Washington, March 9 (RHC)-- U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Elon Musk, the head of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), engaged in a heated argument during a White House cabinet meeting, according to The New York Times.

The reported clash erupted after Musk accused Rubio of failing to make enough staff cuts in his department, while Rubio was furious with the tech billionaire over his crusade against the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

According to the paper's sources, the "extraordinary" cabinet meeting took place last Thursday behind closed doors and in front of President Donald Trump and around 20 senior officials. Musk, seated across from Rubio, accused him of not slashing staff, saying: "You have fired nobody." Musk suggested that perhaps the only person Rubio dismissed was a member of the DOGE staff.

Rubio reportedly pushed back sharply, arguing that more than 1,500 State Department employees had already accepted early retirement buyouts. He asked Musk if he expects him to rehire and fire them again just to create the appearance of deeper cuts, before outlining his restructuring plans for the department, according to the report.

The NYT also claimed that Rubio's anger has been simmering for weeks due to Musk's campaign which effectively shut down USAID, Washington's primary agency for funding political projects abroad, which was transferred under his purview. The tech billionaire has accused the agency of inefficiency and rampant corruption.

However, Musk was reportedly unimpressed, dismissing Rubio as just being "good on TV." As the argument dragged on, Trump eventually intervened, saying the secretary of state is doing a "great job" and urging them to work together, the paper claimed.

The clash could be the first major sign that Trump is seeking to reign in Musk's authority, the New York Times said, adding that while senior officials generally support the campaign to reduce waste within the government, they have been frustrated with the billionaire's "chain saw approach."

Just before the argument with Rubio, Musk also sparred with Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy over funding and staffing for air traffic control systems, with Trump also intervening to defuse the tensions.

Trump has denied any conflict, telling reporters there is "no clash" between Musk and Rubio and calling the NBC journalist who asked the question a "troublemaker."

"Elon gets along great with Marco and they're both doing a fantastic job," Trump said.

[SOURCE: PRESS TV and NEWS AGENCIES]

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