

John Oliver's half hour show on USAID's demise. *Devex Newswire*, 10 March 2026

You can click on link at end of this short article to see half hour show
The sting of satire

We almost always highlight our own work in this newsletter, but I'm making an exception today to spotlight a searing piece of commentary on [USAID](#)'s demise that was **featured on "Last Week Tonight with John Oliver,"** a show that blends satire and news (though full disclosure, some of our reporting was referenced in the segment).

USAID proponents will cheer it. USAID opponents will hate it. Some in the middle might be curious to learn more about the defunct agency. But wherever you are on the political spectrum, you can't deny that Oliver holds nothing back.

For over 30 minutes, Oliver eviscerates a parade of administration figures who led — and rejoiced in — [the rapid shuttering of USAID](#). In a way, he feeds them through Elon Musk's proverbial wood chipper, sparing no one.

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio is seen repeating his controversial claim that no one has died because of the U.S. aid cuts, juxtaposed with a speech of his praising USAID. Even more jarring is the animated meme that the White House created of President Donald Trump, Vice President JD Vance, and Musk as pallbearers carrying a coffin with the USAID logo on it.

Later in the show, we see the real-life video of the coffin of a boy being lowered into the ground. He died after his USAID-funded health clinic closed.

Yes, the monologue is one-sided. And again, Oliver doesn't hold back, though to be fair, neither did the officials who eliminated a decades-old, once 10,000-strong operation — regardless of whether you think that operation saved millions of lives, wasted billions of dollars, or served as a front for the CIA.

The fact that Oliver intersperses his diatribe with lighter (and profanity-laden) moments is, hate him or love him, a testament to his comedic skill.

But that levity comes with hard-hitting opinion, as Oliver delivered at the end: "I know the Trump administration's constantly spitting out disasters. I really do, and I'm sure they'd like nothing more than for people to move on from this, but it is

crucial not to let what they've done be forgotten, because while the numbers of those hurt or killed by these cuts can be genuinely hard to wrap your head around, the individual people aren't. **USAID was not perfect, but it was working miracles**, and this government **decided to retract those miracles** on purpose. This is a man-made disaster.”

To watch the show, [click here](#).