



By: John Sipher

Trump's Whisper from Moscow: Coincidence or Destiny?



Following President Trump's harangue against Ukrainian President Zelensky during their 28 February Oval Office meeting, Trump has cut off funding and military support to Ukraine.

He appears determined to strike a deal with Putin, bypassing Europe and Ukraine. The cover of the popular French conservative news magazine "Le Point" even features a full-face photo of Trump with the headline "The Man from Moscow." His overtly pro-Russia comments and actions have reignited speculation about his connections to Moscow.

Why does a president who seems to have no firm convictions and whose opinions are so maddeningly unpredictable nonetheless maintain such a consistently positive stance toward Russia? Moreover, why does he systematically direct his rage and attacks against anyone who accuses him of involvement with Russia?

Social media is flooded with accusations that Trump is a Russian agent or that he is under the influence of Russian President Putin.

Similarly, journalists, researchers, and others have speculated about potential complicity between Trump and the Kremlin.

A series of striking allegations

The now-infamous **Steele dossier** made a series of striking allegations, charging direct collusion between the 2016 Trump campaign and Russian intelligence operatives.

While the Mueller report couldn't conclusively prove that the campaign "conspired or coordinated" with the Russian government, it did confirm Russian interference in the election and highlighted a troubling pattern of links between the campaign and Russian operatives. The FBI never seriously investigated the matter, largely due to pressure from Trump himself.

The latest **allegation** that Trump has been suborned by Moscow was outlined in a series of articles based on claims by former Soviet

KGB officer and head of the Kazakh security service Alnur Mussayev. Mussayev alleges that Trump was recruited in the 1980s as a source under the code name "Krasnov" by the KGB's 6th Directorate, which was responsible for recruiting businessmen from capitalist countries. Mussayev's claims, however, remain unverifiable without additional information.

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Journalists such as Craig Unger, Luke Harding and Seth Abramson have made similar allegations. Recently former CIA officer and writer Michael Sellers explored these allegations in his Substack reports.

While he admits that the new claims are not conclusive, he also notes that they are not easily dismissed. Trump's travels to the Soviet Union during that period would have almost certainly drawn KGB scrutiny, as was common for any Western visitor of significant stature.

Collusion or compromise

The crux of the accusations that Trump is tied to Moscow depends on one's definition of collusion or compromise. I have argued that it is unlikely Trump is (or was) a **Russian agent** in the sense that Western intelligence services define such sources. However, his pattern of behavior is so consistent and troubling that it is not unreasonable to assume some form of **compromise**.

There is enough circumstantial evidence—patterns, relationships, and logical inferences—to build a compelling counterintelligence case suggesting that Trump may be concealing key aspects of his relationship with the Kremlin.

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During his 2015 campaign, Trump promoted narratives closely aligned with those of Russia, Russian intelligence and WikiLeaks. Simultaneously, he and his team went to great lengths to conceal contacts with Russians and lied to the public about it.

Despite evidence from the intelligence community and a comprehensive Senate report, Trump remained unwilling to acknowledge the Russian attack on the election.

Illicit contacts

Even in 2015 and 2016, skepticism about the nature of his ties to Russia was reasonable. His longstanding ties to Russian organized crime, along with his lifestyle and business practices, made him uniquely vulnerable to blackmail and extortion by a country that is arguably the world's best at such dark arts.

His campaign team—carrying its own unusually shady ties to Russia—was willing to collaborate with a hostile foreign power and eager to accept stolen material from Americans (The New York Times documented at least 140 contacts with Russian nationals).

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None of them reported these illicit contacts to the authorities, and many were subsequently arrested. When news of Russian involvement surfaced, every one of them lied, obstructed justice and attempted to cover up their actions.

In response, Trump attacked the very institutions capable of holding him accountable and sought to obstruct investigations, eventually pardoning individuals who could potentially provide evidence of wrongdoing.

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Trump's puzzling affinity for Russia

As a candidate, Trump misled the American public about his business dealings in Moscow, even as he secretly negotiated to build a hotel there. Though this information was hidden from voters, Vladimir Putin and his security services were aware of Trump's deception, potentially providing the Kremlin with leverage for blackmail.



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As President, Trump sided with Putin even after his own Justice Department indicted specific Russian officials for direct

interference in the 2016 election – the hacking and release of Democratic Party emails. He also refused to acknowledge that Putin was responsible for poisoning Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny, to condemn Russian assassinations in Europe, or to take seriously reports of Russian bounties on American soldiers in Afghanistan.

Trump's puzzling affinity for Russia persisted throughout his presidency and continued in his 2024 campaign. Just last week, he made comments exonerating Putin's attacks on the 2016 election, claiming that Putin had to suffer through the "Russia, Russia, Russia hoax", and "[Putin] was accused of all that stuff, and he had nothing to do with it."

Perhaps the most perplexing element of Trump's apparent alignment with Putin is his refusal to provide any explanation for his admiration of Russia. A reasonable person could dispel much of the speculation by offering a coherent explanation. Instead, Trump continues to dismiss accusations by merely labeling them as a hoax.

As things stand, global anxiety over Trump's connections to Putin persists. Putin is a dictator, former spy, murderer and con artist. Trump, by contrast, seems easily manipulated. Under these circumstances, it is difficult to imagine how Trump's behavior would differ if he were indeed compromised by Russia. Until Trump offers a convincing explanation of innocence, he should not be given the benefit of the doubt.