

Funding the Future

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There are precedents for dictators making friendships of convenience until they decide to fall out, when the human cost of that happening is horrendous. Is that possible in the case of Putin and Trump?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m8vVwtOYQAg&si=M_jVotePmCtoDYJF

This is the audio version:

https://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?i=x23ra-1820dd3-pb&from=pb6admin&share=1&download=1&rtl=0&fonts=Arial&skin=f6f6f6&font-color=auto&logo_link=episode_page&btn-skin=c73a3a

This is the transcript:

Are Putin and Trump really friends? It's an important question to ask because frankly, I seriously doubt it, and I also don't trust relationships between people who act as dictators, which is what Putin undoubtedly is, and which is what I think Trump wants to be, which is why he admires Putin so greatly.

Let me explain why I don't trust those relationships and why when unlikely power pacts are created, they are probably bad news for the rest of the world.

The best example of what I'm talking about is a power pact that was created in August, 1939. It was between Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia as it then was, and it was called the Ribbentrop - Molotov Pact.

It was signed so that Germany could be sure that Russia would not react if Germany invaded Poland, which it did within days of this pact being agreed. They wanted Russia to be neutral for the time being, and so they agreed to carve up some territory in Eastern Europe, and a so-called non-aggression pact, which meant that Russia stood back whilst Germany tried to claim most of Poland for itself, with Russia claiming a part as well.

Now how long did that pact last? Two years. In 1941 we all know that Hitler turned on Soviet Russia and opened up an Eastern front, which did of course eventually lead to the collapse of the Nazi regime, but on the way, to the loss of tens of millions of lives. The pact between two power hungry people, Hitler and Stalin, was ultimately extraordinarily costly to the people of the countries that they governed and many others as well.

I don't see how the relationship between Putin and Trump is one that is sustainable. There are a number of reasons for saying that.

Let's be clear. It doesn't seem as though Trump is capable of sustaining a relationship with anyone. Just look at the people who served him during his first term in office. Most of them lasted little more than a year in the post to which they were appointed. Many of them are now bitter and angry about the way in which he treated them. He treats them as enemies. He's withdrawn the security for some of them quite deliberately so that he can expose them to risk for the actions they took on his behalf during the course of his first term of office. Trump is not a reliable friend.

I very much doubt in fact that he actually knows what friendship means because as he says, everything is to him a deal and there is no such thing as human empathy that even comes remotely close to his psyche.

Where is Putin? Well, probably very much in the same position. Having been the effective dictator of Russia for over 20 years, this man is so far removed from the people around him because of the imbalance of power between him and everybody else in Russia that people will live in fear of him, and that's not surprising. A lot of his former advisors appear to have had significant difficulty when they come near windows of late, and accidentally fall out of them, which is a strange coincidence. He is very clearly a man who is only concerned about his own hold on power.

These two psychopaths - and it's very hard to describe them as anything else - are unlikely buddies.

So, we have to ask the question, why suddenly is Trump aligning the USA with its long-term natural enemy? Is that because Trump has, as some suggest, been a Russian agent for decades? When Andrew Marr, who is an established journalist, discusses that possibility in real seriousness on LBC, as he has done very recently, we have to consider the possibility, and I think it's a perfectly tenable suggestion that during the

course of his visits to Russia, which he made in the 1980s and 1990s, Russia created what is called kompromat on him that has been used to basically bribe Trump into being a Russian agent ever since.

There are good reasons to think that he might have compromised the 2016 election with Russian assistance.

There are good reasons to think he might be doing the same now, but his behavior at this moment is what gives the clearest indication that in fact, he lives in fear of Putin more than anything else, and this is not then a relationship of equals.

This is a relationship of Trump having to do what he is told to keep his master happy. If that is what is going on here, we are in a deeply unstable situation. But my fear is that when Trump realises that he is actually unable to hold onto power because of the consequences of this relationship and how it will unfold over the next year or so, we end up with a very ugly situation, including the possibility that these two powers will fall out with all that that might lead to.

I hate to think about the possibility of war between the two because they are, of course, the two global nuclear superpowers and we would all suffer in that. And the two leaders are actually amongst the very few people who are mad enough to commit what has been called madness in the form of Mutually Assured Destruction - MAD for short.

So, we are in an exceptionally dangerous position because they have aligned for reasons that we do not understand, which make no sense, and which do suggest compromise in the sense of Trump being a Russian agent and there is risk that they will fall out.

The situation that we have to ask about is in that case, how long will this friendship last?

How stable is it and what will happen when this relationship fails?

Will it simply be that the USA walks away into isolation?

Might it be that the USA could in fact have a reverse coup and democracy in the US form - in which there are weaknesses - could be restored?

Could it be that actually there could be a peace despite the falling out, or do we face a real threat, which is war between the USA and Russia with Europe being the playground in which it is literally enacted, as of course has been the case in the past?

I genuinely don't know the answers to these questions. I put them on the table for good reason, because the current relationship between Trump and Putin is literally inexplicable without there being some other unknown factor, which some suggest to be Trump's Russian agency to explain what is going on.

But even that doesn't enable us to fully understand what might happen if that situation fails, as the agreement between Hitler and Stalin did in 1941. That's where the biggest risk is, and I don't know what to do about it. I don't know at the moment what to provide as answers with regard to the possibilities, but if there is a defence risk we need to consider, this is what our politicians should be talking about.