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Putin Opens Up About Parents' World War II Experience

By The Moscow Times

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Russia's President Vladimir Putin has written a magazine column about his parents' struggles and hardships during World War II, but said they did not hate Nazi Germans — unlike his own generation that did.

"There wasn't a family who didn't lose someone [during the war]. But they was no hatred toward the enemy, and that's what was amazing" Putin said of his parents in a column published Thursday in Russian Pioneer magazine.

The Russian leader singled out his mother for particular praise, noting that she did not blame German soldiers for the war and told him: "They are the same working folks as us. They simply were forced to go to the front."

In contrast, Putin's own generation "was brought up on Soviet books, films... And we hated [the enemy]]," he added in the column.

Putin also recalled his father's injuries in the column, writing that "he lived all his life with [shrapnel] fragments in his leg, they could not remove them all." He also detailed the family's struggles to find food for Putin's older brother, who died of diphtheria during the war.

The Russian leader enjoys a long-standing relationship with the Russian Pioneer magazine having published columns for them in previous years, TASS cited Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov as saying.

The magazine is headed by Andrei Kolesnikov, a Kremlin pool reporter for the Kommersant business daily who has reported on the Russian president for years.

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