The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Putin Bites Back After Canada's G8 Barb

June 21, 2015



Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper said earlier this month that Putin was no longer welcome among the remaining parties.

After Canada voiced its staunch objection to the prospect of Russia's return to the Group of Eight (G8), President Vladimir Putin responded with a gibe.

"I don't want to offend anyone, but if the United States says Russia should be returned to the G8, the [Canadian] prime minister will change his opinion," The Canadian Press quoted Putin as saying Friday.

The G8 became the G7 following Russia's ouster in connection with the ongoing crisis in Ukraine.

Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper said earlier this month that Putin was no longer welcome among the remaining parties.

"We are having a discussion on the shared interests of the Western democratic world. Mr. Putin, who is in no way part of that, has no place at the table, and I don't believe there's any

leader who would defend Mr. Putin having a place," Harper said in comments carried by CBC news agency.

The Canadian Press reported that Russian officials at last week's St. Petersburg International Economic Forum implied that Putin could attend the group's next summit after missing two consecutive meetings.

Russia's membership in the group was put on hold last March in response to the country's annexation of Crimea. At the time, Russian officials dismissed the decision and said that Russia would nonetheless keep interacting with members of the group.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said last month that Russia would only be welcomed back into the group were Moscow to adhere to the G7's values, which include freedom, democracy and the respect for the territorial integrity of nations, Reuters reported at the time.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/06/21/putin-bites-back-after-canadas-g8-barb-a47549