The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Vladimir Putin Wants to Know If America Is Just Some 'Banana Republic'

October 27, 2016



Kremlin Press Service

Vladimir Putin has spoken at the Valdai International Discussion Club again. This was his 13th appearance at the annual event, where scholars and entrepreneurs from throughout Russia and the West come together to assess political, economic, and social developments. As he's known to do, the president made several headline-grabbing remarks, particularly about the United States, the West's interventionism, and Syria. The Moscow Times summarizes the main points below.

On the U.S. election

Putin denies that the Russian government has made any effort to interfere in the upcoming U.S. presidential election, calling such allegations "hysteria." "Correct me if I'm wrong," the president said, "but America is a great nation — not some banana republic."

"Trump presents himself as just an average guy," Putin said.

According to Putin, claims that Russia is meddling in the presidential race are merely an effort to distract American voters from the candidates' failure to address the concerns of the electorate. He blames the hostility aimed at Russia on the propaganda of the U.S. news media.

“I'd like to have the same kind of propaganda machine they've got in the West. But we don't have anything as influential as CNN, for instance, so we don't have these capabilities!” the president added.

On relations with the West

Putin says the West’s current political problems stem from bad decisions made in the 1990s, when, he claims, the West wanted to “impose its own culture” on other nations, citing wars in Yugoslavia and Iraq.

“The West uses non-existent threats for its own benefit, such as presenting Russia as an aggressor,” he said.

“Russia's so-called aggression was invented and is not based in reality,” he added.

On Syria

Putin says Russia and the U.S could have cooperated in Syria, but “forces in Washington” derailed this outcome, in favor of working with extremists in pursuit of various geopolitical aims.

“Extremists are clever,” Putin warned, “but by flirting with them, you'll end up on the losing side.”

On Ukraine

"I still believe that Russians and Ukrainians are one people," Putin said, adding that he hopes "common sense" prevails.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2016/10/27/putin-speaks-at-valdai-club-in-sochi-a55912