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Russia's 7 Weirdest Congratulations for President-Elect Trump

Moscow's heart bursts for the man who said 'I know nothing about Russia'

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Pixabay. Edited by The Moscow Times.

The United States may find itself more bitterly divided today than at any point in modern history, but it is party time for many Russians — especially members of the Moscow political establishment. The endorsements and congratulations for Donald Trump have been pouring in from Russia, where a legion of politicians and personalities is suddenly draping itself in the American flag, after more than a decade of condemning Washington and contemporary Western society.

1. Communist leader Gennady Zyuganov

One of the strangest welcomes Trump has received is probably the one he got on Thursday from Gennady Zyuganov, the long-time leader of Russia's Communist Party. In a statement today, he heralded the billionaire's win as "confirmation of the growing instability of global capitalism." Zyuganov, who has promoted post-Soviet Russian Communism as compatible with the Russian Orthodox Church, argued that Trump's presidency means the defeat of globalization and a return to protectionist economics that he believes are good for job creation.

2. Patriarch Kirill, head of the Russian Orthodox Church

Russia's top Communist wasn't alone in celebrating Trump's election: Zyuganov was joined by Patriarch Kirill, the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, who wished the new U.S. president-elect divine guidance, fortitude, and success. "The choice made by the American people demonstrates the high confidence placed in you by those who have hope that you will develop the country and bring change to domestic and foreign policy," Patriarch Kirill said in a public statement.

Read: The Art Of The Deal: Russia Is Keen For Trump's Ad Hoc Diplomacy⊠The Kremlin cedes the crown of irrationality to Washington

3. Nationalist leader Vladimir Zhirinovsky

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Vladimir Zhirinovsky, the founder and long-time leader of the misleadingly-named Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, stumped for Trump well ahead of the Republican candidate's victory. After the votes were in, Zhirinovsky hosted a party at Russia's parliament building, reportedly ordering more than 130 bottles of champagne, and raising a glass to America's president-elect. The Russian nationalist leader told a crowd that Trump's upset presents the first chance for real U.S. cooperation with Russia since 1949, when President Truman supposedly spoiled the post-war peace by devising a contingency plan for a possible nuclear war with the USSR, codenamed "Operation Dropshot."

4. Vitaly Milonov, author of St. Petersburg's law banning "gay propaganda"

Vitaly Milonov, the former St. Petersburg city councilman who joined the State Duma this September, says he feels "spiritual intimacy" with Trump, calling the billionaire "a sufficiently principled man" who doesn't try to "hide his thoughts." Milonov, who has called Hillary Clinton a "witch," and says he saw in her "the mark of Satan," is best known for pioneering one of the first laws in Russia that banned "gay propaganda" in public.

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5. Yelena Mizulina, federal lawmaker who took the "gay propaganda" ban national

"The American people turned out to be wiser [than I thought], acting in accordance with their traditional values and rejecting the progressive ideology of Hillary Clinton," Yelena Mizulina said after Donald Trump's victory was announced, adding that she feared Clinton would win, thanks in part to support from "influential circles" and the LGBT community.

Read: A Short-Lived Honeymoon: Russia Curbs Its Enthusiasm For Trump Presidency▣Moscow's Excitement Gives Way To Caution in Face of Trump's Still-Unknown Foreign Policy

6. Taxi vans in Omsk

In the past, it wasn't unheard of to find crude messages addressed to President Obama posted inside Russian stores and public transportation. This week in Omsk, there are reports on social media that some local taxi vans are letting people ride for free, if they've "got Trump with them." It remains unclear if drivers insist that Trump must physically appear to wave a passenger's fee, or if a portrait will suffice.

7. A polar bear in Krasnoyarsk

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Few sociologists gave Donald Trump much of a chance to win the U.S. presidential election, but Felix the Polar Bear at the Krasnoyarsk zoo didn't care what the polls said, and he picked the Republican candidate to take the race (by grabbing a photograph of Trump off a pumpkin containing frozen meat and fish).

While this wasn't strictly a congratulations addressed to Donald Trump, Felix was rewarded this Thursday for his accurate prognostication with a watermelon carved to look like Trump, again filled with meat and fish. This time, zookeepers even made sure to add Trump's iconic hair to the offering, in the form of cabbage. "Felix gobbled up Trump with pleasure," the zoo's representative wrote on Facebook.

Read: What Trump's Unexpected Victory Means For U.S.-Russia Relations: Trump May Have Spoken Highly Of Putin On The Campaign Trail, But Will It Translate To Better Relations?

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