

Putin Says KGB Past Prepared Him for Presidency

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Russian President Vladimir Putin says his past as a KGB agent prepared him for public office during a visit to state media's news program "Vremya."

Putin appeared on state-run Channel One's "Vremya" on New Year's Day to congratulate the show on its 50-year anniversary. In a short interview, he [fielded](#) questions on the media, his role in history and his private life. He also mingled and sipped champagne with the program's staff.

Asked whether he had adjusted his behavior since becoming president, Putin said: "As strange as it sounds, no."

"Yes, I'm in the limelight, but in my previous life I always tried to act as if I was constantly being watched," he said. "It's strange, but that's how it worked out, perhaps because of my previous work."

Putin served in the KGB between 1975 and 1991, rising to the rank of lieutenant colonel.

Link: <http://old.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/tmt/255000.html>

Putin pointed out the appearance of the Tu-144 Soviet supersonic civilian aircraft as one of the most memorable news events of the past half-century. "It felt at the time and continues to feel like some sort of science fiction," he said. "Even more so back then, it was something unimaginable."

The state-funded Channel One is often accused by critics of spreading fake news and toeing the government line. But Putin praised the news program for being "not only rich in information, but it pretty much always was and remains the standard-bearer of reliability."

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