

Trudeau Says Putin Behind 'Terrible Things,' Skirts Killer Label

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Trudeau's comments come hours after Ottawa announced sanctions against nine Russian officials over the poisoning and jailing of Russian opposition figure Alexei Navalny. **Adrian Wyld / The Canadian Press / TASS**

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said Wednesday Vladimir Putin is responsible for "terrible things," but wouldn't go so far as U.S. President Joe Biden in calling the Russian leader a "killer."

Trudeau, unaccustomed to criticizing other world leaders in public, was questioned during an interview on SiriusXM radio's The Bridge with Peter Mansbridge about Biden's remarks.

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"I'm sure (Putin) is responsible for all sorts of terrible things because his behavior continues to demonstrate that," he said.

He cited as examples Russia's annexation of Crimea, "significant cyber attacks he's responsible for and the attempts to destabilize our democracies."

Trudeau said his impression of Putin in their rare meetings at international forums over the past five years was that "he will look at you and say whatever is convenient to him at any given moment.

"He is not particularly interested in what the Western world or what Canada thinks of him," he added.

But when asked if he shared Biden's view of Putin as a killer, expressed last week in an ABC News interview, Trudeau responded: "I don't have the information to make that assertion."

"I certainly know he's not someone who is supportive or a friend of Canada or Canadians in any way shape or form," he concluded. "And we have to very much be wide-eyed and clear-eyed about how we approach (relations with Russia)."

Hours earlier, Ottawa announced sanctions against nine Russian officials to protest the poisoning and jailing of Russian opposition figure Alexei Navalny.

Navalny was immediately detained after returning in January from treatment in Germany, drawing widespread Western condemnation, with the U.S. and EU calling for his release.

The anti-corruption crusader was sentenced the following month and is now serving a two-and-a-half-year jail term in a penal colony outside Moscow for violating parole while abroad.

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