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Putin Rails Against 'Monstrous' West in Valdai Speech

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Russian President Vladimir Putin launched a tirade against Western values in his speech at the annual Valdai Discussion Club in Sochi late into Thursday evening.

Putin outlined his view of Russia's ideology as a counterbalance to what he derided as cancel culture, reverse racism and the "monstrous" forcing of transgenderism onto children.

Here are some quotes from his speech.

— 'Monstrous' West

"We're surprised to see things happening in countries that see themselves as flagships of progress... The struggle for equality and against discrimination turns into aggressive dogmatism verging on absurdity."

"Opposing racism is a necessary and noble thing, but the new 'culture of abolition' turns into

‘reverse discrimination’...Here in Russia the absolute majority of our citizens don’t care what color a person’s skin is.”

“People who dare to say that men and women still exist as a biological fact are almost ostracized... Not to mention the simply monstrous fact that children today are taught from a young age that a boy can easily become a girl and vice versa.”

“Let's call a spade a spade: This simply verges on crimes against humanity under the banner of progress.”

— ‘Reasonable conservatism’

“We will be guided by the ideology of healthy conservatism...”

“In the coming era of global readjustment, which may last quite long and whose final outlook is unknown, moderate conservatism is the most reasonable line of conduct.”

“Our society has developed a ‘collective immunity,’ as they say now, to extremism that leads to upheavals and social and political collapse.”

“Our conservatism is the conservatism of optimists... And of course, we’re ready to work with our partners for the sake of common noble goals.”

— Vaccine tourism

“Maybe the opposite occurs, but I’ve repeatedly heard the following: European citizens come here to get vaccinated with Sputnik V and buy a certificate [in Europe] saying they’re vaccinated by Pfizer. Seriously, this is what European doctors say. They believe that Sputnik is more reliable and safer.”

“I’m not saying this to propagandize Sputnik. I’m talking about the ease with which you can evade [vaccine mandates]... So it seems to me we should not mandate, but instead convince and prove that vaccination is better than the disease.”

— U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan

“I think [U.S. President Joe Biden] did the right thing by deciding to withdraw troops... But since they’ve started this ‘mess,’ they should not shed responsibility for what’s taking place and for the future.”

“The first thing they should do, in my opinion, is to unfreeze Afghan holdings and enable Afghanistan to solve the most important social and economic problems.”

“For our part, we have specific major projects that can be implemented there... Our special services are in contact with the relevant structures in Afghanistan.”

“We will continue to actively work with China on a bilateral basis... allocating the needed resources and creating the conditions for the citizens of our countries to feel safe regardless of what’s happening in Afghanistan.”

— Recognizing the Taliban

“These decisions were made at the level of the United Nations. Our expectation is that these people, the Taliban, that now clearly control Afghanistan, will see that the situation develops in a positive way. If that happens, we would decide to take them off the list of terrorist organizations.”

“I think we’re coming to that, and Russia’s position will be to move in this direction.”

“We’re doing everything to ensure that the expectations of the people we’re in contact with are also taken into account... We’d like acceptable compromises to be found... and that the interests of women are taken into account.”

“We now see that the Taliban is trying to fight extreme radicals like Islamic State, an organization that absolutely no one doubts has terrorist aspirations. Yes, we understand that they were momentary fellow travelers, but now they’re attacking the Taliban.”

— Foreign agents

“You said that [the status of being a foreign agent] isn’t decided in court. But in the U.S. it’s not decided in court either — it’s done by the Justice Department. Go ask Russia Today what they do to them. You know how severe it is? Up to criminal prosecution. We have nothing like that...[our] law doesn’t even prevent them from continuing with their political activities.”

“Simply the money they receive from abroad, from over there, should be flagged, and Russian society should know that someone has such-and-such a position, a particular view of domestic politics or something like that, but that he gets his money from abroad.”

“As far as I know, there is no indiscriminate registration of foreign agents. I think that the danger of this is being really exaggerated.”

The Taliban is a terrorist organization banned in Russia.

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