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# Trump Envoy Said Calling Europeans ‘Pussies’ Helped Win Lukashenko Over

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Alexander Lukashenko. **Kremlin Press Service**

U.S. President Donald Trump’s special envoy to Belarus said he gained the trust of Belarusian leader Alexander Lukashenko by echoing his disdain for Europe, including by calling Europeans “pussies.”

Speaking at a panel hosted by the McCain Institute this month, John Coale described his first meeting with Lukashenko last year as critical for understanding the strongman’s communication style.

Around 30 to 45 minutes into their conversation, Coale recalled, the Belarusian president began complaining about European leaders.

“This is kind of crude — and I’m sorry for the language — but I said to him, ‘Yeah, they’re a bunch of pussies,’” Coale said.

“I had him in my hand from then on,” the envoy added. “He loves to cuss, so you cuss back.”

Coale, who admitted during the panel that he had not known where Belarus is located when he was first approached for the role, described Lukashenko as a talkative leader.

Their first meeting, focused on the release of U.S. citizens jailed in Belarus, stretched into a two-hour lunch, Coale said, during which he discreetly poured shots of vodka onto the floor to avoid becoming intoxicated.

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Coale, a lawyer who previously represented Americans released during the 1979 Iran hostage crisis, was officially appointed to the Belarus role in November, though he had negotiated prisoner releases before that as deputy Ukraine envoy.

Belarus has released hundreds of political prisoners in exchange for sanctions relief, in what appears to be a cautious effort by Lukashenko — a close ally of Russian President Vladimir Putin — to improve ties with the United States since Trump returned to the White House.

Last week, Lukashenko ordered the release of 250 prisoners under an agreement with Washington. Coale said the United States would lift sanctions on two Belarusian state banks and the finance ministry, as well as remove major potash producers from a sanctions list.

Belarus still holds hundreds of political prisoners in its jails, many of whom were arrested after the disputed 2020 presidential election that triggered widespread protests.

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