

Commentary

“Putin 4, Trump 0”

By Musafir



Russia may not have won the World Cup of soccer but it certainly beat the United States squarely during the summit between President Trump and President Putin in Helsinki, Finland. Putin, a seasoned politician and a trained KGB operator manipulated and dominated over a novice politician and a successful real estate magnate, Donald Trump. I am an independent thinker and am independent in my political views. Knowing the quality of leaders and their hidden agendas in both the political parties, I consider clinging to any one party as an insult to my intellect.

One of the many reasons I voted for then candidate, Donald Trump was his stance on a

strong America and because he came across to me as someone who would not be compromising when it came to America's interest. Disappointingly, Mr. Trump not only looked enervated coming from a tough European tour, I never saw his picture so filled with ennui before. In terms of a soccer game Putin beat him 4-0.

Goal 1: Mr. Trump declined to side with US intelligence over Putin: "I have great confidence in my intelligence people, but I will tell you that President Putin was extremely strong and powerful in his denial today," Trump said during a joint news conference. Trump's statements amounted to an unprecedented

refusal by a US president to believe his own intelligence agencies over the word of a foreign adversary and drew swift condemnation from across the partisan divide.

Goal 2: President Trump sounded flattering to Putin whereas the latter was steadfast and restricted in his views about his relationship with The US. Here are the excerpts for comparison.

In answer to a reporter's question, "Do you hold Russia at all accountable or anything in particular?" This is what Trump said, "Yes I do. I hold both countries responsible. I think that the United States has been foolish. I think we've all been foolish. We should have had this dialogue a long time ago, a long time frankly before I got to office. And I think we're all to blame."

He further added, "I think that the United States now has stepped forward, along with Russia, and we're getting together and we have a chance to do some great things, whether it's nuclear proliferation in terms of stopping, have to do it, ultimately that's probably the most important thing that we can be working on."

When a reporter asked the following question to Putin, "If I could follow up as well. Why should Americans and why should President Trump believe your statement that Russia did not intervene in the 2016 election, given the evidence that U.S. intelligence agencies have provided? Putin answered, "As to who is to be believed and to who is not to be believed, you can trust no one – if you take this — where did you get this idea that President Trump trusts me or I trust him?"

He defends the interests of the United States of America. And I do defend the interests of the Russian Federation.

Goal 3: "Well our militaries do get along." Instead of criticizing Russia over supporting the Assad regime's massacre of 400,000 adults and

children in Aleppo, Syria, Mr. Trump seemed pandering to Putin with these words, "In fact our military is actually have gotten along probably better than our political leaders for years but our militaries do get along very well and they do coordinate in Syria and other places. Ok? Thank you."

Goal 4: Annexation of Crimea was not discussed: Russia in 2014 annexed Crimea from Ukraine, eliciting widespread international condemnation. The U.S. and European Union enacted sanctions against Russia for its role in the annexation and Russia was removed from the Group of Eight, now Group of Seven (G-7), over the move.

However, Crimea was not mentioned in the press conference by either leader because Peskov, a Russian diplomat said Putin may be willing to compromise on other issues but not Crimea. Prior to the summit Mr. Trump had implied the U.S. could discuss recognizing Russia's annexation of Crimea during the summit in Helsinki, but Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Crimea is off the table.

In conclusion, Putin got what he wanted – prestige at home and a world audience. The fact that Putin made Trump wait for an hour before the summit started, and that the American spoke in glowing terms about their future relationship—without mentioning Crimea, election meddling, or the Novichok poisoning—makes Putin seem in control. While Putin put America down mentioning the assassinations of Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr. and by condemning police brutality against minorities (One-on-one with Chris Wallace), Mr. Trump appeared as a sycophant at his best.