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Trump: Putin's asset?



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1. INTRODUCTION

Since his rise to the presidency of the United States in 2016 and during his second term, Donald Trump has been the subject of countless speculations regarding his relationship with Russia and, in particular, with its leader, Vladimir Putin. The hypothesis that Trump could be an agent of Russia has been raised by both his detractors and political analysts and intelligence services. But what is this accusation based on? Is it an exaggerated interpretation or are there real indications that support it?

To answer these questions, we will use the Socratic method, a philosophical technique based on progressive questioning that allows us to arrive at a substantiated truth. Through a series of critical questions, we will analyse the possible reasons that explain Trump's behaviour towards Putin and the foreign policy of his administration regarding Russia.

2. SOCRATIC ANALYSIS

Trump said the tariffs were not just a negotiating tool, making it clear that they are, but that they are also a matter of national identity, according to Trump. This imposition of tariffs will be generalized and with specific purposes for each country that suffers them. Canada, Mexico or the European Union will have to find a way to satisfy the Trump administration according to the weapons that each one has.

2.1 What does it mean to be an "agent" of Russia

Before analysing whether Trump can be considered an agent of Russia, it is essential to define the term. An agent, in the world of intelligence and in a strict sense, is a person recruited by an intelligence service to act in its favour without being a member (official) of the agency. This agent must receive specific training from the service that recruited him and, in addition, has a contractual relationship with that service, meaning he receives compensation (which can take various forms) for his work.

Key question:

Are there any proofs that Trump has been recruited or directly funded by Russia?

Preliminary answer: To date, there is no conclusive evidence that Trump has received formal training as an agent or that he has been directly paid by the Russian government. However, this does not rule out the possibility that he has acted in favour of Russia for other reasons.

2.2 Trump's positions on the war on Ukraine

Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine in 2022, Trump has shown a sympathetic attitude towards Russia. Instead of openly condemning the

invasion, he has blamed Ukraine and suggested territorial concessions to Putin without including Europe or Kiev in the negotiations.

Key question:

Why would Trump adopt a favourable stance towards Russia in this conflict?

Possible answers:

Geopolitical strategy: Trump may believe that a strong Russia could serve as a counterbalance to China, his true geopolitical enemy.

Personal influence of Putin: There is a possibility that Putin has compromising information about Trump.

Ideological affinity: Both Trump and Putin reject multilateralism and promote nationalist and authoritarian policies

2.3 Admiration or dependence?

During his presidency, Trump was notably accommodating towards Putin. He accepted and accepts slights that he does not tolerate from other leaders and minimized accusations about Russian interference in the U.S. elections. Currently, he is clearly much more conciliatory towards Russia than towards Zelensky and more inclined to yield to Russia's demands than to those of Ukraine. Of course, it can be argued that with Russia, Trump would have less capacity to react than with Ukraine, although this is quite debatable. The United States has many tools to create more difficulties for Russia than it already has.

Key question:

Is this attitude a simple diplomatic strategy or does it indicate a real submission to Putin?

Analysis:

If it were a diplomatic strategy, one would expect mutual concessions, but Trump's decisions almost never benefit Russia, with no counterbalances. Furthermore, Russia and the United States are doomed to confront each other for many reasons ranging from interests in the Arctic, the South China Sea, or energy interests, to name a few fronts.

If it is a real submission, could it be due to blackmail?

2.4 The Steele dossier and the possibility of blackmail

In 2016, former MI6 agent Christopher Steele prepared a report detailing alleged compromising activities of Trump in Russia, including sexual scandals. Although part of the report has been verified, other parts remain controversial.

Key question:

Is it possible that Russia has compromising information about Trump?

Given that Trump has survived multiple sexual scandals without his voter base abandoning him, effective blackmail would have to involve something

more serious: financial corruption, treason, or acts that compromise national security. Something that Trump's voter base could not overlook, nor could his party.

2.5 Putin's Benefit: Why not reveal the information?

If Russia had proof that Trump is compromised with them, the logical question is: why has it not revealed it?

Key question:

Is it more beneficial for Putin to have Trump in a controlled position of weakness than to expose him?

Probable answer:

As long as Trump is influential at the head of the world's greatest power, Putin has an asset within the U.S. political system with the capacity to influence worldwide. He can disrupt the world order and the very capacity of the leading power.

If the information were made public, **Trump would lose credibility and cease to be useful for Russian interests.**

2.6 Internal obstacles in the U.S.

Despite his control over certain sectors of the government, Trump faces internal opposition: judges and some high officials have blocked some of his most radical initiatives. Despite this, Trump is purging the entire administration, including mid-level officials who are not aligned with his political line. The department led by Elon Musk, DOGE, is also conducting a purge of agencies that are eminently democratic by the very spirit of the agencies, with USAID being the most prominent example.

Key question:

Could Trump implement a fully pro-Russian policy without the resistance of the U.S. system?

Intermediate conclusion:

Although Trump has room for action, the institutional structure of the U.S. limits the possibility of total alignment with Russian interests.

3. CONCLUSIONS

After this Socratic process, we can conclude the following:

- **Trump does not appear to be a formal agent of Russia**, as there is no evidence of recruitment or direct payment.
- His policy favours Russian interests, whether due to ideological affinity, geopolitical strategy, or possible blackmail.
- **Trump's attitude towards Putin is abnormally submissive**, raising suspicions about a relationship of dependence.

- The Steele report suggests the possibility of blackmail, but there is no definitive evidence.
- **Putin would benefit from keeping Trump under his influence without exposing him.**
- **The U.S. system limits Trump's ability to benefit Russia without internal resistance.**

Therefore, although Trump cannot be categorically labelled as a "Putin agent," his relationship with Russia raises valid questions about his political independence and true loyalties.