

Believe it or not, Trump just told the truth

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I used to say that if you wanted to know whether President Trump was telling the truth, flip a coin. But it turns out I overstated the odds of Trumpian truthfulness.



The Post's [Fact Checker](#) reviewed all claims Trump made at his Montana rally last week and found that 76 percent of them were false or suspect. Therefore, assuming this proportion holds for all Trump utterances, the odds he is telling the truth are closer to the chance of drawing a spade at random from a 52-card deck.

So what happened Tuesday morning was, by definition, improbable: Trump emerged from the White House, stood on the South Lawn — and said something quite accurate.

Departing for meetings in Europe with NATO officials, British leaders and then Russian President Vladimir Putin, Trump [observed](#): “Frankly, Putin may be the easiest of them all. Who would think?”

Actually, we all would think — because Trump outlined it for us during that Montana rally.

Of Europeans, he said this: “They kill us on trade. They kill us on other things. . . . On top of that, they kill us with NATO. They kill us.” He went on to say that “we are the schmucks that are paying for the whole thing,” using a Yiddish word for male genitals.

But he said this of Putin: “I might even end up having a good relationship, but they’re going, ‘Will President Trump be prepared? You know, President Putin is KGB and this and that.’ You know what? Putin’s fine. He’s fine.”

So Putin is fine, but Europeans are killing us. Using this distinction, we can extrapolate a taxonomy:

Things that Trump thinks will kill us:

- Free markets.
- Free trade.

- Democracy.
- Free speech.
- Free press.
- Opposition parties.
- Independent courts.
- The rule of law.
- Human rights.

Things that Trump thinks are fine*:

(* from the April human rights report on Russia by Trump's State Department)

- Extrajudicial killings.
- Enforced disappearances.
- Torture.
- Arbitrary arrest and detention.
- Lack of judicial independence.
- Political prisoners.
- Severe interference with privacy.
- Severe restrictions on freedom of expression.
- Violence against journalists and bloggers.
- Blocking and filtering of Internet content.
- Severe restrictions on the rights of peaceful assembly.
- Increasingly severe restriction on freedom of association.
- Restrictions on freedom of movement.
- Severe restrictions on the right to participate in the political process.
- Restrictions on opposition candidates' ability to seek public office and conduct political campaigns.
- Widespread corruption at all levels and in all branches of government.

- Thousands of fatal incidents of domestic violence, to which the government responded by reducing the penalty for domestic violence.
- Thousands of fatal incidents of child abuse.
- Trafficking in persons.
- Institutionalization in harsh conditions of a large percentage of people with disabilities.
- State-sponsored as well as societal violence against LGBTI people.

As we have seen for some time during the Trump era, the good guys are the bad guys, and vice versa. The world has been upside down for so long that American toilets now swirl in the opposite direction.

Just a few weeks ago, Trump insulted his allies in the Group of Seven and called the leader of Canada weak and dishonest — and then flew off to Asia to hail North Korea’s Kim Jong Un as honorable. North Korea is now back to calling the Trump administration “gangster-like,” but Trump continues to have “confidence” in his new friend.

On his European trip this week, Trump isn’t merely drawing a verbal distinction between the European killers and the fine Putin. He is acting accordingly.

On the eve of his NATO meeting in Brussels, Trump kept up a steady attack on fellow members for failing to pay their share. Responding to European Council President Donald Tusk’s warning that the United States has few allies left, Trump on Tuesday dismissed the fraying NATO alliance by saying it “helps them a lot more than it helps us.”

After Belgium, Trump goes to Britain, where Prime Minister Theresa May helped limit Trump’s exposure to protests (including a giant balloon of a baby Trump in a [diaper](#)) and arranged an audience with the queen. Trump repaid her Tuesday by lavishly praising Boris Johnson, the Brexit leader whose resignation as foreign secretary has brought May’s government to the verge of collapse.

From there, Trump proceeds to Helsinki to meet Putin, whom Trump has already rewarded with a call for Russia to be readmitted to the G-7, a deepening rift in the transatlantic alliance and an acceptance of Putin’s claim that Russia didn’t interfere in U.S. elections.

The European killers will watch anxiously to see what gift Trump might bestow this time. Recognition of Russia’s annexation of Ukraine? A drawdown of U.S. troops in Europe?

It is probably true that hanging out with Putin is the “easiest” thing Trump will do in Europe. But such a fine man requires fine gifts.

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