November 2013 interview with Thomas Roberts

I do have a relationship with him (Putin) and I think it’s very interesting to see what’s happened. I mean look, he’s done a very brilliant job in terms of what he represents and who he’s representing. If you look at what he’s done with Syria, if you look at so many of the different things, he has really eaten our presidents lunch, let’s not kid ourselves. He’s done an amazing job. He’s put himself, really as you know a lot of people would say, he’s put himself at the forefront of the world as a leader in a short period of time. Now in all fairness to Obama, I think he’s done the same thing with Bush, with President Bush. I think that Putin has done an amazing job of showing certain leadership that our people have not been able to match.

**March 2014** Conservative Political Action Conference

“You know, I was in Moscow a couple months ago, I own the Miss Universe pageant, and they treated me so great. Putin even sent me a present, beautiful present, with a beautiful note. I spoke to all of his people. And, you know, you look at what he’s doing with President Obama. He’s, like, toying with him. He’s toying with him.”

**May 2014** National Press Club

“I was in Russia, I was in Moscow recently. And I spoke indirectly — and directly — with President Putin, who could not have been nicer.”

**November 2015**

“But, as far as the Ukraine is concerned, and you could Syria — as far as Syria, I like — if Putin wants to go in, and I got to know him very well because we were both on ‘60 Minutes,’ we were stablemates, and we did very well that night. But, you know that.”

TWEET:

Do you think Putin will be going to The Miss Universe Pageant in November in Moscow - if so, will he become my new best friend?

[10:17 PM - 18 Jun 2013](https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/347191326112112640)

**News Conference in Doral, Florida**  
*July 27, 2016*

I never met Putin, I don't know who Putin is. He said one nice thing about me. He said I'm a genius. I said thank you very much to the newspaper and that was the end of it. I never met Putin.

I would treat Vladimir Putin firmly but there's nothing that I can think of that I'd rather do than have Russia friendly as opposed to the way they are right now

Wouldn't it be nice if we actually got along with people, wouldn't it be nice if we actually got along, as an example, with Russia?

And if it is Russia—which it's probably not, nobody knows who it is—but if it is Russia, it's really bad for a different reason, because it shows how little respect they have for our country, when they would hack into a major party and get everything. But it would be interesting to see—I will tell you this—Russia, if you're listening, I hope you're able to find the 30,000 e-mails that are missing. I think you will probably be rewarded mightily by our press. Let's see if that happens. That'll be next. Yes, sir...

*Question*. [*inaudible*] will you defend the Baltic states if they're invaded by Russia? According to...

…You know, somebody said, "but we have treaties." I said that's right. And in the treaties, they're supposed to pay. They're going to pay. And they will pay. They will pay.

 I think he does respect me. And I hope I get along great with him. It's possible that we won't, Jeremy. I hope that we get along great with Putin because it would be great to have Russia with a good relationship.

I think he's going to respect your president if I'm elected. And I hope he likes me.

No, I have nothing to do with Russia, John. How many times do I have say that? Are you a smart man? I have nothing to with Russia, I have nothing to do with Russia.

I said that Putin has much better leadership qualities than Obama, but who doesn't know that?

*Question*. [*inaudible*] you are the nominee. Has you or your campaign had any conversations with foreign leaders trying to build up a relationship should you win in November, that you don't have to hit the ground running [*inaudible*]?

*Donald Trump*. No, I think we—it's possible we have. But I'm not—I'm only interested in winning.

**July 29** THIS WEEK WITH [GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS](http://abcnews.go.com/topics/news/reporters/george-stephanopoulos.htm)

HOST GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: What exactly is your relationship with Vladimir Putin?

TRUMP: I have no relationship to — with him. I have no relationship with him.

STEPHANOPOULOS: But if you have no relationship with Putin, then why did you say in 2013, I do have a relationship. In 2014, I spoke …

TRUMP: Because he has said nice things about me over the years.

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STEPHANOPOULOS: Yet you said for three years, ’13, ’14 and ’15, that you did have a relationship with him.

TRUMP: No, look, what — what do you call a relationship? I mean he treats me …

STEPHANOPOULOS: I’m asking you.

TRUMP: — with great respect. I have no relationship with Putin. I don’t think I’ve ever met him. I never met him. I don’t think I’ve ever met him.

STEPHANOPOULOS: You would know it if you did.

TRUMP: I think so.

TEPHANOPOULOS: But I just want to clear this up, because you did say on three different occasions you had a relationship with him. Now you say there is none.

TRUMP: Well, I don’t know what it means by having a relationship. I mean he was saying very good things about me, but I don’t have a relationship with him. I didn’t meet him. I haven’t spent time with him. I didn’t have dinner with him. I didn’t go hiking with him.

**Remarks at the KI Convention Center in Green Bay, Wisconsin**  
*August 5, 2016*

 I don't know Putin, folks. I don't know. I hope I like him, I hope he likes me because I'd love to get along with Russia. OK?

Our military is depleted. We're going to build up our military, we are going to get others with us. Believe me, we're going to get plenty of others with us. And speaking of others, wouldn't it actually be wonderful if we could get along with Russia? Wouldn't that be nice?

Wouldn't that be great? We get along with Russia, we go out together with others and we knock the hell out of ISIS, wouldn't that be great?

**Remarks at Youngstown State University in Youngstown, Ohio**  
*August 15, 2016*

 I also believe that we could find common ground with Russia in a fight against ISIS. Wouldn't that be a good thing? Wouldn't that be a good thing? [*applause*] They, too, have much at stake in the outcome in Syria, and have had their own battles with Islamic terrorism just as bad as ours. They have a big, big problem in Russia with ISIS.

 The Russians warned us about the Boston bombers, here on political asylum, and the attackers were even twice interviewed by the FBI. Very sad.

**Remarks at the Union League of Philadelphia in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**  
*September 7, 2016*

Russia has defied this Administration at every turn. Putin has no respect for President Obama or Hillary Clinton.

**Remarks to the 11th Annual Values Voter Summit in Washington, DC Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington, D.C.**  
*September 9, 2016*

My administration, on the other hand, will work with any country that is willing to partner with us to defeat ISIS and halt radical Islamic terrorism. And by the way, that includes Russia.

**Remarks at a Rally at the Pensacola Bay Center in Pensacola, Florida**  
*September 9, 2016*

Unlike Clinton and Obama, we will negotiate with Russia from a position of strength – not weakness. And weakness is all we get from President Obama and Hillary Clinton.

 A future where America can find common ground with countries like Russia and China is a better future for our children.

The difference between me and my opponent on Vladimir Putin, and in all negotiations, is that I negotiate by creating leverage so I can extract a good deal for the United States. Hillary Clinton negotiates but never gets anything of value for the United States. Putin laughs at our leaders, and takes them to the cleaners again and again.

**Remarks at the Southeastern Livestock Pavilion in Ocala, Florida**  
*October 12, 2016*

You ever notice anything that goes wrong, they blame Russia. Russia did it. They have no idea. We're being hacked because we have people that don't know what they're doing. They have people. But they always blame Russia and then they say, "Donald Trump is friends with Putin." I don't know Putin, folks. I promise. I don't know Putin. What the hell do I have to do with Putin?

**Remarks at the Champions Center Expo in Springfield, Ohio**  
*October 27, 2016*

And the way she talks about Putin. She's always said she has no idea, but she's always saying Wikileak, it's Russia, and Donald Trump I have nothing to do with Russia. She said maybe Donald Trump is involved in projects with the Russians. The answer's no, no. But what she does, she says Donald Trump and Russia. Look, look, she speaks so badly of Putin, nuclear country, she speaks so badly, I say and she uses it to keep trying to get votes. I said to myself you know, how do you speak so badly of somebody, I mean how are they going to ever get along? Wouldn't it be great if we actually got along with Russia and other countries?

But she speaks very badly of Putin, and I don't think that's smart, you know. You can be very tough, but you shouldn't be doing what she's doing.

**Remarks at Radisson Armory in Manchester, New Hampshire**  
*October 28, 2016*

Not it's not about the sale of the uranium that nobody knows what it means I know what it means to Russia. Then she talks to me about Russia. 20 percent of the uranium in our country to Russia.

**Remarks at the Central Florida Fairgrounds in Orlando, Florida**  
*November 2, 2016*

Russia is heavily armed, doesn't like her. Putin does not respect her, doesn't like her. What are we doing, folks?