

The disturbing links between Donald Trump, Russian Oligarchs and Putin

By <https://twitter.com/@ironstowe>

1). **Paul Manafort**, who ran Trump's campaign, helped orchestrate Putin's intervention in Ukraine. Originally in Ukraine to work for billionaire Rinat Akhmetov, he eventually supported one of Akhmetov's political cronies, the pro-Russian strongman Viktor Yanukovich who was competing with pro-Western opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko, who was poisoned by dioxin during the campaign. Later, the Ukraine parliament issued a warrant for Manafort client's arrest, accusing him of "mass killing of civilians." In January 2015, Interpol placed Yanukovich on its wanted list (he has since been removed). Yanukovich was and remains a close Putin ally and a friend of Manafort.

2. **Carter Page**, Trump's Europe Policy adviser has deep ties to Russia and owns stock in Gazprom, the Putin government-controlled firm that is a major source of the Kremlin's financial and economic power. In Russia, Page developed relationships with executives at Gazprom, the former Soviet gas ministry that was partially privatized in the 1990s. By the time Page arrived, Putin was consolidating his grip on the country's economy, and in 2005 the government boosted its stake so that it again owned a majority of the stock. Page says he advised Gazprom on its largest deals during this period, such as buying of a stake in the Sakhalin oil and gas field in the Sea of Okhotsk. He also helped the company court Western investors, assisting in setting up the first regular meetings with shareholders in New York and London. Before he moved back to New York in 2007, he brags, many of Putin's top officials showed up at his going-away party, at a restaurant near the Kremlin.

3. Michael Caputo An adviser who helped run Trump's efforts in the New York primary, Michael Caputo, lived in Russia in the 1990s and had a contract for several months in 2000 with the Russian conglomerate Gazprom Media to improve Putin's image in the United States. Caputo declined to comment but told the Buffalo News, his hometown paper, that he was "not proud of the work today."

4. Michael Flynn, another Trump adviser, appears regularly on RT, a Russian government-funded television network (brand of "TV-Novosti") and has refused to answer questions about whether he is paid to do so. The creation of RT was a part of a larger public relations effort by the Russian Government that was intended to improve the image of Russia abroad. RT was conceived by former media minister Mikhail Lesin, and Putin's press spokesperson Aleksei Gromov. RT debuted World Tomorrow, a news interview programme hosted by Wikileaks founder Julian Assange. The first guest on the program was Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah. Assange said that if Wikileaks had published Russian data, his relationship with RT might not have been so comfortable. Putin says of RT "Certainly the channel is funded by the government, so it cannot help but reflect the Russian government's official position on the events in our country and in the rest of the world one way or another." As for Assange's support of Trump, when asked by ITV's Robert Peston if this potentially damaging information will only serve to add to the likelihood of positive gains for Trump and the Republican party, Assange refused to be pinned down. His only reply, "Trump is a completely unpredictable phenomenon."

5. **Putin** - Trump praised Putin and defended his alleged murder of journalists on Morning Joe with Joe Scarborough:



Trump on Putin's alleged killing of journalists: 'At least he's a leader'

“He’s running his country, and at least he’s a leader, you know unlike what we have in this country,” he says. Politico.com

6. Post-bankruptcy Trump has been highly reliant on money from Russia, most of which has over the years become increasingly concentrated among oligarchs and sub-garchs close to Vladimir Putin. Since the 1980s, Trump and his family members have made numerous trips to Moscow in search of business opportunities, and they have relied on Russian investors to buy their properties around the world. “Russians make up a pretty disproportionate cross-section of a lot of our assets,” Trump’s son, Donald Jr., told a real estate conference in 2008, according to an account posted on the website of eTurboNews, a trade publication. “We see a lot of money pouring in from Russia.” In his 2008 speech, Donald Jr. announced that he had traveled to Russia six times in the previous 18 months.

7. One example of Putin-linked investment is the Trump Soho development in Manhattan, one of Trump's largest recent endeavors. The project was the

hit with a series of lawsuits in response to some typically Trumpian efforts to defraud investors by making fraudulent claims about the financial health of the project. Emerging out of that litigation however was news about secret financing for the project from Russia and Kazakhstan. Most attention about the project has focused on the presence of a twice imprisoned Russian immigrant with extensive ties to the Russian criminal underworld. But that's not the most salient part of the story. As the Times put it, they “brokered a \$50 million investment in Trump SoHo and three other Bayrock projects by an Icelandic firm preferred by wealthy Russians “in favor with” President Vladimir V. Putin, according to a lawsuit against Bayrock by one of its former executives. Not the only Trump business deal to have convicted felons involved.



[Yet Another Trump Debacle, by Celina Durgin, National Review](#)

[Add another line to the list of Donald Trump's many business failures.](#)

nationalreview.com

8. In 2013, Trump found a new Russian partner for a Moscow real estate project, Aras Agalarov, an Azeri-born real estate developer who is sometimes called the “Trump of Russia” The Agalarov’s are wealthy developers who have received several contracts for state-funded construction projects, meaning close to Putin Shortly after the pageant, Putin awarded the elder Agalarov the “Order of Honor of the Russian

Federation. The Trump Tower deal never moved past preliminary discussions. But Agalarov said the family is interested in a possible future venture.

9. Over the course of the last year, Putin has aligned all Russian state controlled media behind Trump.



[How Donald Trump Became the Kremlin's Candidate](#)

In the 2016 election, Putin's propaganda network is picking sides.

[Politico.com](#)

10. The Trump campaign worked behind the scenes to make sure the new Republican platform won't call for giving weapons to Ukraine



[Trump campaign guts GOP's anti-Russia stance on Ukraine](#)

Campaign chairman Paul Manafort lobbied for years for the country's Russia-backed former president. [Washingtonpost.com](https://www.washingtonpost.com)

11. Trump has been dismissive of calls for supporting the Ukraine government as it fights an ongoing Russian-led intervention.

12. In 2013, Trump brought his Miss Universe pageant to Russia for a much-anticipated Moscow debut. Trump was especially eager for the presence of another honored guest: Russian President Vladimir Putin. Trump tweeted Putin a personal invitation to attend the pageant, and a one-on-one meeting between the New York businessman and the Russian was scheduled for the day before the show. Putin canceled at the last minute, but he sent a decorative lacquered box, a traditional Russian gift, and a warm note, according to Aras Agalarov, a Moscow billionaire who served as a liaison between Trump and the Russian leader. Still, the weekend was fruitful for Trump. He received a portion of the \$14 million paid by Agalarov and other investors to bring the pageant to Moscow. Agalarov said he and Trump signed an agreement to build a Trump Tower in the heart of Moscow — at least Trump's fifth attempt at such a venture. And Trump seemed energized by his interactions with Russia's financial elite at the pageant and a glitzy after-party in a Moscow nightclub. "Almost all of the oligarchs were in the room," Trump bragged to Real Estate Weekly upon returning home.

13. Since the 1980s, Trump and his family members have made numerous trips to Moscow in search of business opportunities.

14. Russia has signaled a deep interest in the U.S. election and in Trump, in particular. The Russian ambassador to the United States, breaking from a tradition in which diplomats steer clear of domestic politics, attended

Trump's April foreign policy speech in which he called for ending "this horrible cycle of hostility" between the two nations.

15. Trump has said in the past that he "would not care that much" whether or not Ukraine was allowed to join NATO.

16. Putin and Trump have praised each other in public. "He's a really brilliant and talented person, without any doubt," said Putin. Trump has returned the compliments, saying he would get along "very well" with Putin.