

## Trump encourages Putin to attack America's allies

*Letter to the editor, [Brunswick Beacon](#), 02.22.24*

Trump called Putin's Ukraine invasion "wonderful," "genius" and "savvy." "I was the apple of his eye," gushed Trump about his relationship with Putin. Trump is vigorously polishing that apple again so Putin will again help Trump become president.

First, Trump sabotaged a bipartisan border security bill, supported by the Chamber of Commerce and Border Patrol Agents Union, that included military aid to Israel, Taiwan, and Ukraine.

Then, when the Senate considered a stand-alone military aid bill, Trump urged them to kill that, too.

Now, Trump has rolled out 2024's version of "Russia, if you're listening" (his 2016 plea for Putin to hack Hillary Clinton's emails). Trump has told NATO allies he would not help them if Russia attacks unless they pay: "No, I would not protect you. In fact, I would encourage [Russia] to do whatever the hell they want. You've got to pay."

NATO is an alliance, not a protection racket. Members don't owe us money. The only time NATO fought to protect a member country was after 9/11, when the same allies Trump threatened fought beside us in Afghanistan. Those allies lost over 1,000 soldiers protecting America. Poland's foreign minister Radek Sikorski notes: "Poland sent a brigade for a decade. We did not send a bill to Washington."

Willful ignorance might explain Trump's hostility to NATO. While Sen. Thom Tillis (R-NC) said "shame on his briefers" for not explaining NATO to him, Trump's Secretary of State Rex Tillerson called Trump "a fing moron" who "doesn't read briefing reports." Trump's National Security Advisor John Bolton said, "He's fundamentally ignorant, and he really doesn't care about the facts." Bolton said world leaders like Putin think of Trump as a "laughing fool."

Former House Speaker Kevin McCarthy offered another explanation in a June 15, 2016 recording listened to and verified by The Washington Post: "There's [sic] two people I think Putin pays: [former California congressman Dana] Rohrabacher and Trump."

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