
THAWING THE PERMAFROST WITH RUSSIA

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27.01.2017

Washington Post January 26, 2017

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There are good reasons to work with Vladimir Putin against a shared threat

How much should be read into a new presidents Oval Office decor is impossible to say, but much may hang on the meaning of Donald Trumps. I refer not to the fresh gold drapes but to the restoration of the Churchill bust that so famously went missing during the Obama years.

It could be its reinstatement is merely a nod of thanks from President Trump to Nigel Farage or a gesture of goodwill toward his Scots-born mothers homeland. Perhaps it is meant as a foot-high bronze ice-breaker for Theresa May, the British Prime Minister, who visits today.

Yet those of us who believe the future of global security depends on Mr. Trump thawing the permafrost with Russia will prefer to see it as a ray of tentative sunshine in a very dark sky.

Winston Churchill was no more an unreconstructed admirer of the Soviet Union than Mrs. May □ who apparently plans to warn Mr. Trump against dealing with Vladimir Putin □ is of modern Russia. The man who described Russia as a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma and later foresaw a curtain of a baser metal than gold falling across Europe, was no naif. But he was willing to form an alliance with Stalin to overcome an existential threat.

Today, the democratic world faces its gravest existential threat since the Cold War. Or, if you believe the danger of thermonuclear annihilation was exaggerated, since the rise of the Axis Powers.

While some progress has been made in disrupting the Islamic State (ISIS) in Syria, only last week it carried out mass executions amid the desecrated ancient ruins of Palmyra. It and its affiliates will not be easily erased. Its poison seeps far beyond the Middle East.

Kaynak/Source: