

Summary of István Dobozi op-ed in the Hungarian daily Magyar Nemzet of December 27, 2016: “A túlértékelt Putyin”

In his op-ed "The Overrated Putin", Coalition member István Dobozi argues that there has been a systematic tendency in the West to exaggerate the power of the Russian president on the world stage. For example, the Forbes magazine has named him again as the most powerful person of the world in 2016 despite the fact that Mr. Putin presides over a weak two-crop (oil and gas) economy of the size of Australia's GDP.

Apparently, President Putin is the indirect beneficiary of Barack Obama's largely unsuccessful foreign policy and the weaknesses of Europe's leaders, including German Chancellor Merkel's erroneous immigration policy that has deepened the EU's ongoing crisis.

Mr. Putin's alleged meddling in the U.S. presidential elections through hacking and leaking emails and documents of the Democratic Party and other officials just adds to the power mystique of the Russian president. The author notes that evidence for the hacking and Mr. Putin's direct involvement has yet to be provided. In this connection, he recalls the past tendency on the part of U.S. intelligence agencies to exaggerate the "Russian threat" to justify domestic agendas, including military build-ups. In terms of alternative theories of explanation for the hacking scandal, the author flags a possible attempt on the part of some within the Democratic Party to delegitimize the elections and question the legitimacy of Donald Trump's victory. Given these concerns, the ongoing inquiry into the Russian hacking action must provide the maximum disclosure possible.
