

## Conversations with GARRY KASPAROV

In his three conversations with Bill Kristol, Kasparov has discussed chess and politics in the Soviet Union, Russia since the end of the Cold War, and America and American politics, as seen in the midst of the 2016 campaign. Below are some notable quotes from his conversations:

**On his own intellectual and political journey**, Kasparov says: Most people who were critical of the Soviet regime believed that it was not due to the rotten nature of socialism and communism but due to bad implementation. The popular myth of a "good Lenin and bad Stalin" dominated the intellectual circles in the Soviet Union. I have to confess that I was hostage to those views for quite awhile. Only in the mid-80s did I realize it had nothing to do with bad implementation [of a good idea]. It's gulags, and concentration camps, the purges, famine, it's suppression of freedom. With communism, no matter how you play the moves, you end up with the same result. But it took some time [for me to realize it.] *From Conversation I*

**On whether Putin's rule resembles chess or poker**, Kasparov says: I was always annoyed hearing that "Putin plays chess, and leaders of the free world play checkers." Chess is not a game for dictators...Chess is very much a strategic game, so you have to think long-term. Dictators don't think long-term. Dictators, especially those who are in power for as long as Putin has been, work on survival mode. It's all about today, maybe tomorrow morning...The game that defines dictators much better is poker. It's about bluffs! It doesn't matter whether you have a strong hand or weak hand. You can have a weak hand but if you're comfortable bluffing, raising stakes, and if you can read your opponent... I have to give [Putin] credit. He's quite a shrewd KGB guy who can read his opponent. He proved it many times dealing with George W. Bush 43, that he could find a way of building communication and getting what he wanted. And playing poker means that you have to read your opponent. Today Putin knows that no matter what kind of hand he has, the opposition, whether it's Obama or European leaders, will fold their cards. Syria, the classic example, the moment of Obama's infamous red line, what did Putin have? A pair of 5s. But he acted as if he had a royal flush. Obama went in with a full house and just folded the cards. *From Conversation II*

**On Trump and Sanders**, Kasparov says: Trump and Sanders are two sides of the same coin. It's an indicator the body [politic] is sick. You can see the signs on both sides of the political spectrum. Sanders revived the word socialism as part of the mainstream debate and it's much more dangerous than people think. Trump is just an individual... I think [the situation is] very dangerous. But the long term threat comes from the Left. *From Conversation III*

**On the need for entrepreneurship and risk taking**, Kasparov says: Building America's greatness is not "bringing jobs back." It sounds ridiculous to me. America doesn't bring jobs back. America creates new jobs. It's about creating something that doesn't exist today, from [Artificial Intelligence] to space exploration. [It's about] leading the world. And of course just being

strong...There is so much that can be done but it should not be done by the state. The state can lead the way, [but] the government must let people use their energy, creativity, and entrepreneurship to build a new America in the 21st century. *From Conversation III*

### **Garry Kasparov Conversations:**

[Garry Kasparov III](#) (On Trump, Sanders, Clinton, Obama, and America)

[Garry Kasparov II](#) (On Russia Since the End of the Cold War)

[Garry Kasparov I](#) (On Chess and Politics in Soviet Russia)