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| **Major Points/Claims** | **Simon Tisdale, “The New Cold War”, *The Guardian*, November 19 (Zander’s birthday!), 2014.** | **Connections to Project**  **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |
|  | The second decade of the 21st century offers little scope for a repetition. Following the Soviet implosion, the Warsaw Pact (Russia’s equivalent to NATO) was finished. Moscow now has few friends in eastern and central [Europe](http://www.theguardian.com/world/europe-news). In the wider world, Russia’s lack of overt allies is now even more evident. Developing countries such as Nigeria, Brazil, Indonesia, South Africa and Mexico have no need or wish for Moscow’s political or military backing. As the world’s largest democracy, India looks askance at Russia’s authoritarian system. For its part, China sees Russia primarily as a source of cheap energy and raw materials. As Beijing’s power and influence grows, Russia is more likely to be a future adversary [enemy] than an ally in a global contest with the west.  Similar considerations apply on the western “side”. When the Soviet Union collapsed, the US declared itself the victor, paid itself a peace dividend in the form of reduced military spending, and flattered itself that, with the end of superpower rivalry, a unipolar moment had arrived – meaning unchallenged US global hegemony. A quarter of a century later, that smug self-congratulation has disappeared, as has much international confidence in US leadership. Countries such as Brazil have no more interest in following the US lead on Russia than, for example, on national security and privacy laws, [the subject of angry exchanges following the Snowden revelations about illegal U.S. spying in Latin America](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/dec/17/edward-snowden-brazil-spying-asylum). In other words, if the US and Russia want a fight, they will each have far fewer supporters this time around. Indeed, China and the other 21st-century powers may well welcome the idea of the “old” superpowers wearing themselves out in a new slug-fest.  A new cold war would lack other key features that distinguished its forerunner. Ideologically speaking, the once definitive struggle between the rival systems of Marxist communism and free-market capitalism has largely evaporated for want of interest. It has been replaced by a contest of values, such as fair and open elections, respect for human rights, freedom of expression and movement, religious tolerance and the rule of law, as championed by the US and its west-European allies; and a system of managed democracy, oligarchic governance and limits on individual liberty in exchange for supposed economic benefits, as practiced in Putin’s Russia, one-party China, and other emerging states.  Likewise, some the worst excesses of the cold war period, such as the multi-billion-dollar arms races in nuclear and conventional weaponry, are now largely absent. Putin has increased spending on Russia’s nuclear and other arsenals, and the US still maintains a powerful strategic nuclear force. But the strategic arms reduction treaties have significantly reduced warheads and missiles on both sides. The paranoid days of MAD (mutual assured destruction) seem unlikely to return.  Looked at another way, it could be argued the cold war never went away, or at least, that there was merely a brief time-out in the 1990s that ended when Putin rose to power 15 years ago. Bilateral proxy contests for power and influence have continued, though in different forms. In Syria, Moscow’s strong support for the regime of Bashar al-Assad, which rents Russia a military base at Tartus on the Mediterranean, is one of the main reasons Assad has survived the civil war for as long as he has. In supporting Assad, Russia acts in deliberate, intransigent opposition to the US.  Spying, information theft, economic espionage and assassination also remain an important part of the dysfunctional US-Russia relationship. To crude violence have now been added the new weapons of the information age, including identity theft, cyber-warfare, computer hacking and ever more sophisticated disinformation techniques. Russia may not have changed that much since the Soviet days, but in terms of propaganda, disseminated through slick, sanitized media outlets, it has raised its game significantly.  Yet, more than anything else perhaps, the stridently toxic personality of [Vladimir Putin](http://www.theguardian.com/world/vladimir-putin) himself fits well in the “new cold war” scenario. Like the Soviet hardmen of old, such as Nikita Khrushchev, Putin appears by turns ruthless, charming and ultimately reckless. His passionate, single-minded belief in his nation’s greatness, owing as much to the Tsarist as to the Soviet legacy, drives his mission to project Russian power. His ability to ignore moral considerations, legal norms, and basic human compassion makes him both a dangerous and resourceful foe.  Since he first unexpectedly came to power as prime minister in 1999, western politicians, diplomats and generals have been asking the question: who is Vladimir Putin? Now they may have the answer. He is the man who put the cold war back in vogue [fashion]. |  |



**Thick Questions From *The Guardian* article**

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“The United States will not be imprisoned by the past — we’re looking to the future. I’m not interested in having battles that frankly started before I was born. The Cold War has been over for a long time.”

-Barack Obama on new relations with Cuba, April 2015, Summit of the Americas

“I welcome as a positive step [Obama’s] recent announcement that he will soon decide on Cuba's designation in a list of countries sponsor of terrorism, a list in which it should have never been included, imposed by the government of Ronald Reagan.”

-Raul Castro, April 2015, Summit of the Americas

No matter how desperately the U.S. may roar, it is nothing but roar of a toothless wolf. The incarnation of all sorts of evil, the empire of devils, is bound to grow old and go to ruin. This is the law governing the historical development.

-December 22, 2014 NK State Media

We have already declared solemnly that all the aggressor forces to be involved in the military bases in south Korea and overseas, White House, Pentagon, and other bases of aggression and provocation would become the targets of the strategic and tactical rockets and other high-performance ultramodern ultra-precision fire strike means of the revolutionary armed forces of the DPRK.

If a war breaks out on the Korean peninsula, it will not be limited to the peninsula, and it is a matter of time that the strongholds of aggression and provocation will be reduced to ashes. It is no empty word.

August 19, 2014 NK State Media

[As economic globalization gathers momentum, China and the United States have become highly interdependent economically. Such economic relations would not enjoy sustained, rapid growth if they were not based on mutual benefit or if they failed to deliver great benefits to the United States.](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/x/xijinping487314.html)

[Xi Jinping](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/x/xijinping487314.html)  
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[Why did the Soviet Union disintegrate? Why did the Soviet Communist Party collapse? An important reason was that their ideals and beliefs had been shaken.](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/x/xijinping487324.html)

[Xi Jinping](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/x/xijinping487324.html)

[The sovereign right to help a person who felt remorse after finding out how the United States was using technology to spy on the whole world, and especially its European allies](http://www.quotetimes.com/people/18569/daniel-ortega;jsessionid=hec18rzgc29rmailba192uiz#this)

July, 6 2013

-Daniel Ortega, Nicaragua

[The people of Nicaragua were suffering oppression. This made us develop an awareness which eventually led us to commit ourselves to the struggle against the domination of the capitalists of our country in collusion with the U.S. government, i.e. imperialism.](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/d/danielorte212803.html)

-Daniel Ortega, Nicaragua, 1980s

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I’m also happy to note that economic trade ties continue to stay at the heart of bilateral relations, serving both as the cornerstone of and an engine for the overall relationship. The United States is now a leading economic trade partner and the largest export market of Vietnam. The potentials for cooperation in science, technology, education, and healthcare have been better tapped into. Our two countries have continued to maintain dialogues on issues of mutual interest, including human rights. Through dialogues, we have achieved better mutual understanding, particularly about each other’s approach and distinct cultural and historical circumstances. Vietnam has been making sustained efforts to protect and promote human rights so that the people can benefit from the finest results of the reform process which is going on.

President Sang, Vietnam

[Whoever does not miss the Soviet Union has no heart. Whoever wants it back has no brain.](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/v/vladimirpu452527.html)

“They [the United States] act as they please: here and there, they use force against sovereign states, building coalitions based on the ‘If you are not with us, you are against us.’ To make this aggression look legitimate, they force the necessary resolutions from international organizations, and if for some reason this does not work, they simply ignore the UN Security Council and the UN overall.”

-Vladimir Putin, Russia