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Adam Taylor

## **Who's Losing the Moscow-Washington Fight? Ordinary Russians**

*Хто програє у битві Москви і Вашингтона? Звичайні росіяни*

*Ще у 2014 р. у відносинах США і Росії почався розкол, зумовлений вторгненням Росії в Україну, який проявився у виді санкцій щодо заборони імпорту американського м'яса, фруктів і овочів. Більшість з цих санкцій спрямовувалися проти конкретних осіб та фірм, пов'язаних або з діями в Україні, або з порушеннями прав людини - частково, щоб уникнути відчуження всього населення Росії. Завдяки санкціям Кремль виявив наслідки бездарного управління економікою, і обвинуватив Захід у всіх серйозних фінансових проблемах.*

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/russia-says-european-leaders-support-truce-in-east-ukraine/2017/08/22/d584a87e-8786-11e7-96a7-d178cf3524eb\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.4bd7d021cd18](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/russia-says-european-leaders-support-truce-in-east-ukraine/2017/08/22/d584a87e-8786-11e7-96a7-d178cf3524eb_story.html?utm_term=.4bd7d021cd18)

"If someone hoped for warming in US-Russian relations after the election of President Trump, he must be very disappointed." On Monday, the US Embassy in Moscow announced the temporary cessation of the issuance of all nonimmigrant visas in Russia and a sharp reduction in work with visas. This decision was made after Moscow at the end of July demanded that US missions in Russia cut their staff from 1,200 employees to 455, which became the largest forced reduction of the US diplomatic corps in Russia with the beginning of the Soviet era, "writes The Washington Post .

However, as usual, this response of the United States harms ordinary Russians rather than the Kremlin, the author of the article Adam Taylor believes. "Hundreds of thousands of Russians receive nonimmigrant visas to the United States each

year, some of them students studying at American universities, others may visit relatives, and now they will face significant delays and possibly large additional travel costs if they want a visa", He notes.

As Andrew Roth, the Washington Post journalist, explained last month, the reduction of the US representation in Russia by 755 people will not primarily affect American diplomats - for starters, there are not so many in the country. Instead, the cuts will fall on the support staff, most of whom are Russian citizens, the article says.

"For Russia, there is nothing new in responding to American measures to the detriment of its own citizens," the journalist said, recalling the response sanctions that banned the importation of a number of products to Russia and the ban on the adoption of Russian orphans by Americans.

"If you are interested in what Moscow can get, damaging the interests of its citizens, then it's worth considering how the story unfolded with American sanctions against Russia," the article reads. "Thanks to sanctions, the Kremlin was able to gloss over its own wrong management in the economic sphere and lay the blame for all serious financial problems on the West." Against the backdrop of the country's reforms and the Russian economy recovering, Putin appeared on television, saying that the sanctions had actually done "The country is stronger," the newspaper writes. As Alexander Baunov of the Carnegie Moscow Center said on Monday, the Kremlin now regards sanctions as "a bleak inevitability that weakly correlates with the country's foreign policy behavior" - so why not raise the rate? Of course, the predicament of ordinary Russians is not taken into account, Taylor concludes.