

# Russophobia: Is Vladimir Putin “Enemy Number One” of the West

By [Giulietto Chiesa](#)

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*Is Russia's Vladimir Putin Enemy Number One of the West or the West's Last Hope?*

By now it is clear: the crisis in which the West is struggling does not resemble anything known. It is a crisis of values, democracy, economic, financial, environmental, an unprecedented political crisis.

All paradigms are collapsing, the US leadership is no longer invincible: clearly it is in serious danger. And when power feels weak, it looks for an enemy to target: somebody to blame, somebody to frighten people with. All is grist for the mill. Instead of an admission of the truth, namely that the crisis is inside the west, is a by-product of the West, instead of an admission that resources are running out and the system is marching toward collapse, Russia is made the enemy. So it was in the past, so it is today.

The obsession returns in updated form. Russia with its strongman Vladimir Putin is the new “enemy number one”. Reviving Cold War slogans, they (the West, the USA), are reproducing the idea of the Evil Empire, and Putin is a monster to feed the imagination of the masses, systematically depicted as a psychopathic tyrant, responsible for massacres, cynical weaver of imperialistic plots. The war in Ukraine, the economic sanctions, even the denial of the Russian role in the defeat of Nazism: everything is pushing in that direction. But is it really so, or is the “Putinophobia” that is being touted by the bulk of the media just a big mirror in which the West sees its own shortcomings and troubles reflected?

Things are changing. The resolute intervention of Russia against the Daesh terrorists unmasked ambiguities in Turkish and Saudi Arabian policy. The West as a whole was stunned. Russophobic propaganda went into panic mode. Slowly and steadily another truth is coming out and being glimpsed. The winners of the Cold War were already convinced that Russia was defeated and colonized.

They were looking to China as the next enemy to be destroyed or reduced to submission. They have been taken by surprise. Putin's Russia, the phoenix reborn from its ashes, is the only superpower that can derail the train that is hurtling towards catastrophe. But it may be also the last hope for the West too. If, obviously, the West can bring itself to understand that it is not, in any case, going to be able to rule over seven billion people.

*Giulietto Chiesa is one of the best known Italian journalists. He was Moscow correspondent for twenty years for “L'Unità” and “La Stampa”. He worked with all major Italian television channels, from the TG1 to TG3 and TG5 and is currently political analyst for major Russian television channels. He is the only Italian journalist to be repeatedly mentioned in the*

*autobiography of Mikhail Gorbachev, whom he has repeatedly interviewed. He writes a blog for "Il Fatto Quotidiano". His own blog is <http://www.megachip.info/>. He is founder and director of Pandoratv.it web tv. An expert in international politics and communications scholar, he founded the political-cultural movement "Alternativa".*

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