

# Go to McDonalds? Not Yet.

By Reg P. Wydeven  
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One of my favorite new TV shows is 'The Americans.' Set in 1981, the period drama focuses on Philip and Elizabeth Jennings, a typical middle class couple living in the Washington D.C. suburbs with their two kids. They own a travel agency and appear as American as apple pie. Only they aren't.

Philip and Elizabeth were actually born in Russia and work for the KGB. They moved to America to spy on our government during the height of the Cold War. The show is unbelievably suspenseful, as Philip and Elizabeth are always on the verge of getting found out, especially when FBI counter intelligence agent Stan Beeman moves in across the street from them.

The show is awesome, and has lots of nostalgic touches. Philip and Elizabeth's son has 'Star Wars' sheets on his bed and the family talks about going to 'Raiders of the Lost Ark.' The series also reminds me of the paranoia and fear during the Cold War.

While I'm sure it was a myth, as kids we talked about the Fox Valley being the 4<sup>th</sup> target of a Soviet nuclear attack after Washington D.C., New York and L.A. Crippling the paper industry would purportedly set back America's war effort.

Unfortunately, the paranoia and fear of the Cold War may not be as nostalgic as we hoped.

As you know, last month a Malaysian Airlines plane crashed in eastern Ukraine that killed nearly 300 passengers. The plane was purportedly shot down by pro-Russian rebels with a surface-to-air missile that was allegedly provided by Russia.

In response, America is pulling its Cold War plans out of the mothballs. General Martin Dempsey, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, recently said that, "We're looking inside our own readiness models to look at things that we haven't had to look at for 20 years, frankly, about basing and lines of communication and sea lanes." In addition, the U.S. is also having "conversations with our NATO allies about increasing their capability and readiness."

Dempsey explains that "NATO was created... to increase stability, offset Soviet aggression at the time, but maintain a stable Europe. And we've been successful at that for 60 years."

But the latest threat to American ideals is the fact that Russia is trying to shut down McDonald's. Rospotrebnadzor, a Russian consumer rights watchdog organization, sued the fast food chain, claiming their food contains more fat, protein and carbohydrates than allowed by the country's "technological norms."

The foods in question are McDonald's cheeseburgers, Royal Cheeseburgers (the equivalent of a quarter-pounder for countries that use the metric system, as explained in 'Pulp Fiction'), Filet-o-Fish sandwiches, Chicken Burgers, milkshakes and ice cream with fruit toppings.

McDonald's insists it produces its food according to Russian official standards. A court date will likely be set this month.

All this nostalgic talk about the 1980s and the Cold War reminds me of the lyrics from Sting's 1985 pop hit 'Russians':

We share the same biology,  
Regardless of ideology.  
Believe me when I say to you,  
I hope the Russians love their children, too.

And can still buy them Happy Meals.

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