

## US Navy Rim of The Pacific (RIMPAC) War Games, Coopting China, Isolating Russia?

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*The Rim of the Pacific biennial naval exercises taking place near Hawaii under the auspices of the US Navy have caused some comment due to the inclusion of China. However joint military exercises between the USA and China are part of a co-operation of long duration.*

The U.S. Navy states of the exercises: "Twenty-six nations, 45 ships, five submarines, more than 200 aircraft, and 25,000 personnel will participate in the biennial Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise scheduled June 30 to Aug. 4, in and around the Hawaiian Islands and Southern California." The theme is "Capable, Adaptive, Partners." "This year's exercise includes forces from Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Denmark, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, People's Republic of China, Peru, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Tonga, the United Kingdom, and the United States," with Brazil unable to attend." [1]



Notable is the exclusion of Russia, while Russia's BRIC partners were invited: Brazil, India, China. China has attended RIMPAC since 2014. Russia had participated in 2012 and 2013, but has not been re-invited. However, the USA had been urging China to participate since 2010. Indian analyst Vijay Sakhuja, although maintaining that the relationship between the USA and China is one of mutual suspicion, stated of 2014 RIMPAC and China's participation that the USA wanted to "enhance engagements with the People's Liberation Army Navy," dispel suspicions that there was a containment policy towards China, and to "enmesh the Chinese into multilateral naval engagements." [2]

So far from being seen as an enduring antagonist, the USA continues to regard China as a potential ally in the containment of Russia and a pivotal factor in a global economy, and

beyond that a world order. The USA's outlook towards China is different from its outlook towards Russia. The present Chinese regime is one that can be worked with, and even partnered.



“Regime change” in Russia is the contrasting aim of the USA. We have seen shadow boxing between the USA and China before, while pursuing a containment policy against Russia, or the USSR as it was then called. The efforts to woo China vis-a-via the USA and Russia will not be forsaken over other geopolitical issues that are trivial by comparison. Despite BRICS and the Shanghai Co-operation organization, China will remain open as to its course in regard to the USA and Russia. The relationship between Russia and China is as pragmatic as that between Hitler and Stalin. In the post-Soviet Russo-China accord China has had her own way continually, pushing Russia out of former spheres of influence. Despite the smiles and handshakes between the leaders, the Russian leadership is cognizant of China's designs on the Russian Far East and recently offered free land to Russians. A perceptive summary of Russo-Chinese relations, and the deeply embedded distrust, states:

In the long-term, however, the China-Russia relationship encounters almost insurmountable odds. History is one of the main culprits here, with Beijing-Moscow ties strained by a series of unequal treaties, like the 1858 Treaty of Aigun and the 1860 Convention of Peking, both with major territorial consequences on China that reverberate until this day. Then there was Mao's rejection of Soviet reforms after Stalin's death and the subsequent antagonism within the Soviet bloc, along with numerous Cold War-era border skirmishes, both in the Western part of the border near Xinjiang and in the Eastern part of the border, near Manchuria. Another important culprit is geography. The border in the East, approximately 3,645 kilometers long, is porous by nature and has few natural barriers to restrict traffic. Yet another important factor geography brings to the equation is demography, which is at the core of the Siberian question in the Far East.[3]

### **Thriving China Good for America**

What is of more significance than media focused cat and mice games of surveillance between Chinese and American ships and planes, is the strategic aims of the USA towards China expressed at high policy levels. In 2011 Hilary Clinton wrote a significant article for Foreign Policy, entitled “America's Pacific Century,” highlighting the focus of the USA on the region.[4] While the assumption might be made that U.S. interests will result in rivalry between China and the USA, Clinton unequivocally reiterated the long-held view among the policy-making establishment that regards China not as a rival but as a partner. She stated

this in a speech with the same title at the East-West Center the following month:

Our most complex and consequential relationships with an emerging power is, of course, with China. Some in our country see China's progress as a threat to the United States, while some in China worry that America seeks to constrain China. In fact, we believe a thriving China is good for China, and a thriving China is good for America. President Obama and I have made very clear that the United States is fundamentally committed to developing a positive and cooperative relationship with China.[5]

Clinton referred to high level dialogue that had been taking place between the USA and China militarily, diplomatically and economically, referring to the Strategic and Economic Dialogue started in 2009 and the Strategic Security Dialogue. U.S. corporate interests have seen China as having the greatest potential as a market, and this outlook is not new. The ground was laid when Mao was alive, with Henry Kissinger's dialogue that had been long urged by globalist interests in such bodies as the Council on Foreign Relations, and the Trilateral Commission. The pro-China outlook among the globalist establishment has not dissipated. The economies have become symbiotic, and Clinton alluded to the desirability of this symbiosis in her speech:

On the economic front, the United States and China have to work together - there is no choice - to ensure strong, sustained, balanced future global growth. U.S. firms want fair opportunities to export to China's markets and a level playing field for competition. Chinese firms want to buy more high-tech products from us, make more investments in our country, and be accorded the same terms of access that market economies enjoy. We can work together on these objectives, but China needs to take steps to reform. In particular, we are working with China to end unfair discrimination against U.S. and other foreign companies, and we are working to protect innovative technologies, remove competition-distorting preferences. China must allow its currency to appreciate more rapidly and end the measures that disadvantage or pirate foreign intellectual property.[6]

What is required of China is reform, and indeed that is what China has been pursuing for decades, but not to the point of allowing the undermining of State authority. Such State stability is also in the interests of the USA to maintain, to avoid ensuing chaos and economic dislocation. That is why there is the aim of "reform" for China, as distinct from "regime change" demanded for Russia.

Clinton addressed the USA's attitude towards Chinese economic incursions into the small Pacific nations, which are often followed by a Chinese military presence. Such Chinese expansion is generally assumed as being seen by the USA as resulting in economic, diplomatic and military rivalry. This is not so. The question was asked by Derek Mane from the Solomon Islands, referring to "the economic leverage China is getting in the region," and alluding to Papua New Guinea and Fiji. Clinton replied:

"With respect to Chinese investment, the United States does not object to investment from anywhere, particularly in our Pacific Island friends, because we want to see sustainable growth. We want to see opportunities for Pacific Islanders. But as I said in my speech, we want also to see investment carried out by the United States, by China, by anyone, according to certain rules that will truly benefit the countries in which the investment occurs." [7]

Other than the USA and China there is no “anyone.” Clinton was stating that there is no rivalry between the USA and China in the region. Her allusions to the “rights” of anyone else are the necessary platitudes that have justified U.S. interference across the world since Woodrow Wilson. They have become nothing more than clichés.

A delegate from China, Mien Cui, asked Clinton about the role of foreign students, as the future policy makers, given that many of these future Chinese foreign policy makers are getting educated at American universities. Clinton replied, “We have a program to try to get 100,000 more students – more American students studying in China, more Chinese students coming to the United States,” along with other Asian states. Again we see a symbiosis between China and the USA, where the future elites of both nations are being culturally, politically and intellectually cross-pollinated.

### **“Enhancing the global good”**

Clinton, although no longer Secretary of State, but making a bid for the Presidency, was expressing what goes beyond the thinking of the Obama Administration or any other temporary Democratic or Republican presidency. It is the long held view of globalists towards China (and not solely those based in the USA), which coalesces in bodies such as the Trilateral Commission. Richard C Bush in a paper for the Brookings Institute, referred to the Clinton Foreign Policy article, a speech by Obama to the Australian Parliament and a talk by National Security Adviser Tom Donilon to the Center for Strategic and International Studies on the USA’s attention towards the RIMPAC region. Bush stated that “On the implication of rebalancing priorities for China, all three reiterated the U.S. desire to expand the areas on which Washington and Beijing could cooperate to enhance the global good.”[8] “Donilon stressed that re-balancing ‘does not mean containing China or seeking to dictate terms to Asia.’[9]

Bush remarks that a “rising power” pursuing “revisionist” goals often leads to war with an “established power” (in this instance the USA). However he draws a distinction between popular perceptions and those of policy makers, stating that “To date, the Chinese leadership appears to believe that American intentions are benign, while the nationalistic and vocal public believes they are malign.” Bush is here drawing a distinction between popular perceptions and assumptions among the Chinese (and American) people, and attitudes at higher levels of policy making. It might be added that when U.S. Congress calls for weapons sanctions on China in relation to “human rights” for example, this does not necessarily reflect the outlook and aims of the globalist executives and policy analysts, such as Trilateralists, but politicians such as Clinton are obliged to give a certain amount of public lip service to such sentiments, before the real business of governing the world is conducted. Over the long term, Richard Bush writes on the possibility of friction over the “transition of power”:

The rebalancing policy of the United States is a measured response to East Asia’s new realities. It is not designed to contain China but it is the premise and basis for addressing China’s revival in ways that China will choose to play a constructive rather than disruptive role in regional and global affairs.[10]

### **Contrasting attitudes towards Russia and China**

In comparison, a Brookings Institute article by Michael E O’Hanlon, senior Fellow at

Brookings, specialising in military and security issues, and co-director of its Center for 21st Century Security and Intelligence, castigates Obama for what he considers the president's soft attitude towards Putin. Obama's "restraint" "does not hold water." The Cold War rhetoric towards Russia is revived:

More than an intellectual mistake, it is entirely unsustainable in American politics; there is no way the next president will maintain such a view. Even Trump would almost surely see his bromance with Putin fall apart ... since the Ukraine problem and other matters are unlikely to solve themselves and Putin is unlikely to take the initiative to solve them in good faith.[11]

O'Hanlon proceeds to call Putin a "thug" and refers to Russian "provocations" against NATO, neutral countries and the USA. It takes a wilful blindness to ignore the U.S./NATO provocations on Russia's border, and ground-floor interference in such issues as the Ukraine. O'Hanlan hopes that restraint will be sufficient, but sees the need for a military response as likely.

Fiona Hill, Director of the Center on the United States and Europe, and a senior Fellow at Brookings, testified to the House Armed Services Committee, February 10, 2016, that "Russia today poses a greater foreign policy and security challenge to the United States and its Western allies than at any time since the height of the Cold War." [12]

The differences in outlook towards China and Russia are reflected by veteran foreign policy analysts such as Kissinger and Brzezinski, and by plutocrats such as George Soros, David Rockefeller, and Goldman Sachs executives, the latter in recent years becoming a notable presence in such globalist think tanks as the Bilderbergers. Again the hope is of "reform" that will see China become an integral part of a world order, as distinct from the "regime change" demanded of Russia. Russia in contrast to China has proved a disappointing investment to the international banks, indicated by the recent drawback there by Goldman Sachs.[13] While Goldman Sachs is heavily involved in China, for his part Putin sees the bankers as part of the anti-Russian offensive. Putin regarded the recent leaking of the "Panama Papers" as part of an effort by the USA and Goldman Sachs to influence the Duma elections in September this year.[14] While Goldman Sachs had signed up to be the Kremlin's global PR firm in 2013 this seems to have come quickly unstuck. Putin's attack perhaps reflects Goldman Sachs having withdrawn the previous month from a deal to underwrite \$3 billion of Russia's debt.[15]

### **Continuation of CFR/Trilateral policy**

The machinations of globalist think tanks and investors are of more consequence than public shadow boxing and rhetoric from politicians. While the public sees and hears jibes between China and the USA and exaggerated reports of innocuous so-called confrontations at sea or over air space, all the while the economies of both continue in symbiosis, high level dialogue and even joint military manoeuvres continue, and Chinese analysts sit in conference with their counterparts at meetings of globalist think tanks. Of the latter, the Trilateral Commission (TC) was established by David Rockefeller whose family dynasty have been long-time friends of China. TC and Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) personnel were prominent in establishing official dialogue with China during the Nixon-Mao years, fronted by the omnipresent Henry Kissinger. Indeed, the CFR, a long running globalist think tank, touts its role in the development of Sino-US relations.[16]

In 2006 the TC issued its second post-Soviet report on Russia. As one would expect they had seen hope in the first Yeltsin years, which soon turned chaotic. From late 2003 Putin started reversing policies. The Trilateral position is to maintain dialogue rather than push Russia towards isolation, with the aim of subverting Russia. Business is seen as the force for “dynamic change.” “It attracts the young elite and interacts with the outside world; in a growing number of companies, it requires conformity with international standards of law, accountancy and governance.”[17] That is to say, economics is the most effective manner of subverting a state’s traditional values. It is the revolutionary character of capitalism, exemplified by George Soros. “The young elite” is an emerging class of trans-national, trans-cultural nomads; it is a global elite (what might be called “rootless cosmopolitans” in Stalinist parlance) or what G Pascal Zachary approvingly called the “Global Me” in a book of that name. Tourism, travel and scholarships are seen as means by which Russians can be influenced by foreign methods and thinking; or what critics might more cynically call “infection.” NGOs are also listed as an important factor. Since then Putin has also recognised this and the Duma took steps to eradicate the influence of the type of NGOs that have been funded by OSI, National Endowment for Democracy, et al, instrumental in creating “color revolutions” first of all in the ex-Soviet bloc states.

It is of interest that China is represented on the Executive of the Trilateral Commission by Chen Naiqing, Vice President of the Chinese People’s Institute of Foreign Affairs, Beijing. In addition there are Chinese members of the TC’s “Asia Pacific Group”: Li Zhaoxing, Former Foreign Minister of RPC, Beijing; Lu Shumin, Executive President of the Chinese People’s Institute of Foreign Affairs, Beijing; Ruan Zongze, Executive Vice President of China Institute of International Studies, Beijing; Sio Chi Wai, Member of the Legislative Assembly of the Macau Special Administrative Region; Wu Jianmin, Member of the Foreign Policy Advisory Group of the Chinese Foreign Ministry, Senior Research Fellow of Counsellors’ office of the State Council, Member and Vice President of the Wuropean Academy of Sciences, Beijing; Wu Xinbo, Director of the Center for American Studies and Executive Dean of the Institute of International Studies, Fudan University, Shanghai; and Yang Wenchang, President of the Chinese People’s Institute of Foreign Affairs, Beijing.[18]

That proportion of Chinese members of the TC is more than a token representation. They could not be members without approval from the State.

### **Co-operation or confrontation?**

High level co-operation is not new. Dr David Finkelstein, in a paper for the Center for Naval Analyses stated that co-operation on security and international issues was taking place before the normalization of relations in 1979:

We recall that during the height of the Cold War the two nations demonstrated that when a pressing and shared security concern (in that case, the former Soviet Union) presented itself, Washington and Beijing were capable of working together, extant differences notwithstanding. Security consultations and sometime security cooperation between the two countries continue today. But as the record of security cooperation is reviewed, one comes to the conclusion that, for the most part, U.S.-China security cooperation has been mainly of a political nature and operationalized at a high level of strategic policy coordination.[19]

Dr Finkelstein, vice president for the Center for Naval Analyses and director of CNA China

Studies, explains of the last point that “Security cooperation between the two nations has been largely the purview of U.S. and Chinese civilian officials and diplomats, not generals and admirals.” That is surely where it matters. Generals and admirals do not run most states. One might also add that also where it matters perhaps even more so than the words and actions of official and diplomats, is among the corporate executives, NGO directors, and think tank analysts than meet together at the Bilderberg and Trilateral gatherings. He states that “sound military-to-military” cooperation between China and the USA is lacking. Finkelstein refers to the previous extensive military co-operation with China enabled by that great crusader against the USSR, Ronald Reagan.

Over the next half-decade, China acquired a series of American weapons systems. It paid \$22 million for American help in modernizing its factories to produce artillery ammunition and projectiles. China spent an additional \$8 million for American torpedoes, \$62 million for artillery-locating radar and more than \$500 million for American help in modernizing its jet fighters...China also entered into several commercial transactions, in which it bought American hardware directly from U.S. defense firms. The most notable of these was the purchase of 24 Sikorsky S-70C helicopters from United Technologies Corp.[20]

While USA’s high tech military transfer with China halted due to the “Tiananmen Sanctions” enacted by Congress in 1989, a few years later President Bill Clinton had succeeded in somewhat rectifying this with “a U.S.-China ‘constructive strategic partnership’ for the 21st century,” resulting in the Defense Consultative Talks (DCT) and the Military Maritime Consultative Agreement (MMCA).[21]

Throughout the first decade of the 21st century, the overall trend in U.S.-China relations was quite positive. ... During this period, the United States supported China’s entry into the WTO (2001) and high-level consultative dialogues, such as the ‘Senior Dialogue’ (2005) and the ‘Strategic Economic Dialogue’ (2006), were established, and there was co-ordination between the two regarding North Korea.[22] During the George W Bush administration policy papers suggested that China was a global competitor, and Chinese analysts saw this as a US mentality that required an enemy.[23]

Finkelstein considers that a lack of high level security co-operation will continue due to the lack of a common military threat such as that posed by the USSR. However, the USA remains eager to secure China as an ally. Both states must appease contrary factions, and sabre-rattling serves this purpose. Finkelstein, as with many others, sees Taiwan as the continuing point of major contention. It is questionable whether the USA would remain loyal to Taiwan if push came literal shove. The USA pursued a “two China” policy which allowed China entry into the UNO and the removal of ROC, and “one China” remains the policy of the USA. As with other scenarios for conflict between the USA and China, one might ask how realistic is a conflict between the People’s Republic of China and ROC? Again, does sabre rattling and shadow boxing indicate substance? Taiwan under Chiang had a command economy and Chiang’s nationalist ideology was based on resisting the incursions of international finance. Despite the image of Taiwan as an outpost of U.S. imperialism, Chiang pursued independent economic policies, and not until recently did Taiwan become a market economy. Taiwan pursued economic nationalism.[24] More latterly Taiwan has pursued globalization, and this includes Taiwanese investment in Mainland China and Taiwan acting as a bridgehead for other investors into China.

U.S. companies can draw on Taiwan’s relationships and expertise in expanding their

business arrangements in all of Asia, especially China. The Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA), which entered into force in September 2010, further enhances Taiwan's competitiveness in the Chinese market and establishes Taiwan as a strategic springboard for its trading partners. As of the end of 2014, nearly 50,000 Taiwanese companies had invested directly in Mainland China and ASEAN, forming a complete supply chain system for U.S. companies to develop their Asian markets and the rest of the world.[25]

China and Taiwan cannot afford conflict any more than China and the USA. There will be no confrontation between China and the USA over Taiwan.

Finkelstien presents alternative scenarios to rivalry:

While none of the persistent and gnawing inhibitors listed above are about to vanish, there are new forces at work in international security, and especially within China, that argue for the possibility of security cooperation between the two defense-military establishments as the current decade unfolds. The most significant development behind this line of thought is the combination of the increasing globalization of China's national security interests with the diversification of non-traditional security threats which China also faces as a result of its emergence as a global political and economic actor.[26]

Finkelstein cites several Chinese positions that are, it might be noted, in accord with globalist attitudes on the role of China in a world order:

Beijing is beginning to acknowledge a new reality: a China with global economic interests is a China with global political interests and, increasingly, a China with global security interests. The 2006 version of the PRC defense white paper proclaimed (almost nervously), 'Never before has China been so closely bound up with the rest of the world as it is today,' and a causal connection was made between economic globalization and national security interests. Chinese leaders also acknowledge that securing China's globalized security interests will require cooperation between the PRC and other 29 nations. This concept was hinted at in the work report of the 17th Party Congress (2007), which declared, 'China cannot develop in isolation from the rest of the world, nor can the world enjoy prosperity or stability without China.' [27]

This seems the same position as that of Kissinger, Rockefeller, Soros, Trilateralism, et al. It might be contended that these issues are more significant than the issue of America's backing of Taiwan, and routine clichés about "human rights." We are dealing with high policy in the interests of global economics, besides which the puppet show for public consumption among both Chinese and Americans is trivial. Of other areas where there is a common security focus, such as in dealing with piracy, Finkelstein writes:

... the United States and China have already recognized the need to cooperate, and in fact do cooperate, extensively in civil maritime security affairs. One of the little-known successes in U.S.-China security cooperation is the relationship between the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) and its multiple counterparts in China. Technically, this is non-military security cooperation, but in many cases it has a very paramilitary flavor.[28]

A ground force equivalent to RIMPAC sponsored by the USA and conducted in Mongolia, took



place in 2015, with participation by the Chinese army.

Around 300 U.S. personnel, from the U.S. Army and Marine Corps, will participate in the exercise, along with 600 Mongolian Armed Forces troops. U.S. and Mongolian troops will comprise the majority of the roughly 1,200 military personnel from 25 countries scheduled to participate or observe this year's exercise. The complete list of participants, per U.S. PACOM, includes "Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, Canada, China, Czech, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, ROK, Singapore, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkey, UK, and Vietnam." ... U.S. Marine Brigadier General Christopher J. Mahoney noted that Khaan Quest 2015 will help participating militaries "create professional military-to-military relationships" and "build personal and lasting connections." No statements from either the Mongolian or the U.S. side emphasized the significance of China's first-time participation.[29]

It is notable that Exercise Khaan Quest was only sparsely mentioned by the Chinese media, and China's involvement has not received commentary from the USA. Such co-operation does not accord with the popular view of rivalry. Again, Russia is missing, despite the "peacekeeping" character of the operations, and Russia's immediate interest in the area, as distinct from Canada, Italy, et al. Mongolia is one of the states that was once part of the Russian sphere of influence, but has been drawn to China; an example of the manner by which China has profited most from the post-Soviet decline of its Russian "ally."

There is an inherent, one might say spiritual, basis to an enduring conflict between Russia and the USA. Americans have been poisoned against Russia since journalist George F Kennan, later funded for his revolutionary fervor by Jacob Schiff of Kuhn, Loeb and Company, started writing and lecturing across America against Russia in 1886, as among the first to start calling for "regime change." [30] The conflict between Russia and the USA is one of difference in world-views; one mercantile, the other spiritual and both universal (Russia as the "Kathon" holding back the forces of the Antichrist, remains a deep-set mystique). The USA and China think in terms of trade and economics. [31] The differences between them are not of the same magnitude and quality as those vis-a-vis Russia. [32]

## Notes

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[8] Richard C Bush, "United States policy towards Northeast Asia," SERI Quarterly, Brookings Institute, April 2013, 38.

[9] Ibid., citing Donilon, "Remarks By Tom Donilon, National Security Advisory to the President: 'The United States and the Asia-Pacific in 2013,' March 11, 2013."

[10] Ibid., 43.

[11] Michael e O'Hanlon, "US-Russian Relations Beyond Obama," April 20, 2016, Brookings Institute, <http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/order-from-chaos/posts/2016/04/20-putin-obama-next-administratio-n-ohanlon>

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[15] "Goldman Sachs says Niet to Russian bond deal," Fortune, March 3 2016, <http://fortune.com/2016/03/03/goldman-sachs-russian-bond-deal/>

[16] Peter Grose, *Continuing The Inquiry: The Council on Foreign Relations from 1921 to 1996* (New York: CFR, 2006), 42-43.

[17] Roderic Lyne et al, *Engaging Russia: The Next Phase* (Trilateral Commission, 2006), 179-181.

[18] Trilateral Commission 2016 membership roster.

[19] David Finkelstein, *The military dimensions of US-China security co-operation*, CNA, 2010, 1.

[20] Finkelstein, 7, citing James Mann, *About Face: A History of America's Curious Relationship with China, from Nixon to Clinton* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998), 141-142.

[21] Finkelstein, 14.

[22] Ibid, 14.

[23] Ibid., 15.

[24] Chiang Kai-shek, *China's Destiny & Chinese Economic Theory* (New York, 1947).

[25] U.S. TaiwanConnect, <http://www.ustaiwanconnect.org/>

[26] Ibid, 28.

[27] Ibid., 28-29.

[28] Ibid., 33.

[29] Ankit Panda, "A First: China Sends Troops to US-Mongolia-Led Khaan Quest Exercise," The Diplomat, June 23 2015,  
<http://thediplomat.com/2015/06/a-first-china-sends-troops-to-us-mongolia-led-khaan-quest-exercise/>

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[32] For a consideration of the Russian messianic imperative see for example: Ellis Sandoz, Political Apocalypse: A Study of Dostoyevsky's Grand Inquisitor (Wilmington: ISI Books, 2000).

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