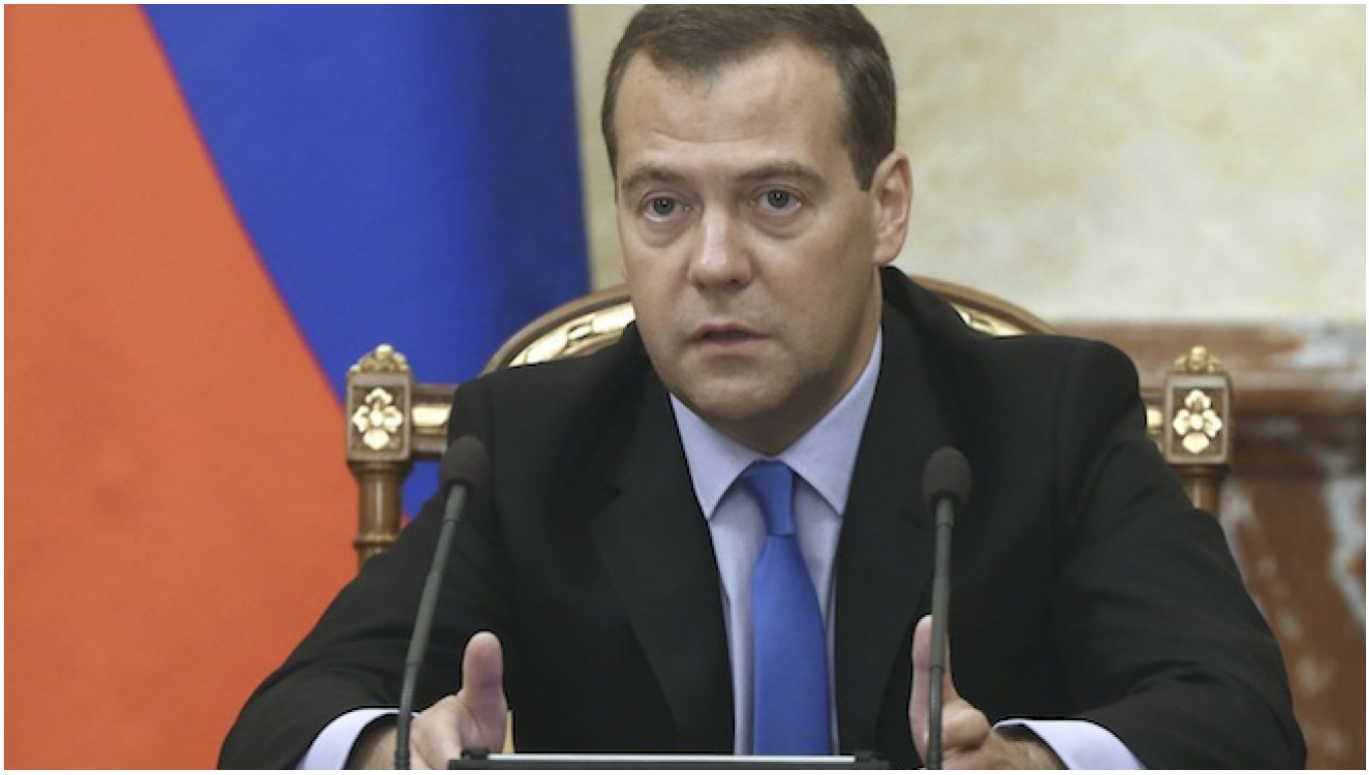
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Medvedev Says 'Evil' Sanctions Could Lead to Defense Spending Hike

By The Moscow Times

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Russia's Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev chairs a government meeting in Moscow.

Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev suggested on Thursday Russia could increase defense spending in response to "evil" new Western sanctions over the Ukraine crisis.

He said Russia would not be bowed by the sanctions announced by the United States and the European Union but told a government meeting such moves could set relations back to the 1980s — the latter stages of the Cold War.

"Any sanctions are evil," Medvedev said in televised comments at the meeting. "The international record shows that such sanctions have never been able to bring anyone to their knees."

He said such moves "cannot help but affect our budget policy" though he pledged to carry out all the government's social obligations.

"But we will also have to pay more attention to our defense and security expenditures. We know how to do that," he said.

Medvedev said the sanctions would not help Ukraine, where pro-Russian separatists have rebelled in eastern regions, and would fuel anti-U.S. sentiment in Russia.

"There will be a further consolidation by Russian society against those countries and people who try to contain our country and act against the interests of its citizens," he said.

"We may go back to the 1980s in relations with the states which are declaring these sanctions. This is sad."

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