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Can Russia counter USA's Prompt Global Strike?

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Deputy Defense Minister of Russia Yuri Borisov said that Russia may create its own prompt global strike system. The plans would be implemented on the basis of the defensive doctrine of arms development. As can be understood, this could be a response to US developments on the subject. Can Prompt Global Strike be a threat to Russia and what can Russia do to counter the US system?

To a certain extent, Russian officials have already given answers to these questions. "Russia can and will be forced to do it, but we will develop systems to counter these new types of weapons, because the basic doctrine of our country is the defensive doctrine, and we are not going to change it," said Borisov after a meeting devoted to the state program for arms development in 2016-2025 years. He stressed out that all decisions of the Russian authorities in the sphere of arms should not be perceived as an arms race.

Deputy Foreign Minister of Russia, Sergei Ryabkov, in an interview with the Kommersant newspaper said: "The development of the prompt global strike system in the United States may lead to a conflict with apocalyptic consequences."

Russian officials have made such statements before too. The topic of the Ukrainian crisis and the new cold war that dominates the media can only be regarded as a catalyst. The conflict only prompted further development of the "lightning strike" and stepped up the rhetoric around it. On December 17, 2013, Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin and Sergei Ryabkov cracked down on the plans of the United States regarding the Prompt Global Strike initiative.

The Prompt Global Strike (PGS) concept was adopted in the USA in the beginning of the 2000s. On April 11, 2010, then Defense Secretary Robert Gates stated that the United States was already capable of conducting such a global strike.

In response to the statements about the prompt global strike from the United States, Russia started, for example, developing a new generation of combat rail missile systems. Under the conditions of the vast territory of our country, such complexes would be very hard to target and destroy. Hiding a "combat train" on the vast territory of Russia is a piece of cake, even if they can supposedly see everything from space.

Afterwards, it was decided to invest heavily in the modernization of the Russian defense industry. As a result, Russia approved of the arms program before 2020.

The core of the PGS idea is an opportunity to strike a non-nuclear blow on any spot on the planet no later than 60 minutes after the adequate decision. According to the plans the United States, it is possible to use non-nuclear missiles to strike targets.

PGS targets are mobile and stationary ballistic missile launchers, command centers, nuclear facilities, any type of missile launchers, and, finally, terrorist infrastructure. Of course, the Americans do not call Russia as a target, but who knows what the Americans have in mind? Russia has all of the above-mentioned targets, except for terrorist bases.

To conduct such an attack, one can use conventional intercontinental missiles equipped with high-precision non-nuclear warheads, including of cluster and individual guidance. So-called kinetic weapons are also possible - heavy rods of tungsten 5-10 meters long that can be dropped from as high as space orbit. Launched from space, such a shell, reaching the earth's surface at the desired point, produces the power equivalent to the explosion of 12 tons of TNT. The project remains at the stage of conceptual design. It is not clear how the Americans are going to handle the issue of non-militarization of space, though.

Russia de facto has ballistic missiles and hypersonic cruise missiles. The recent launch of Bulava missile from strategic missile submarine the Vladimir Monomakh showed that Russian warheads are not less accurate than American ones.

Russia has protection from all ballistic and cruise missile of the PGS in its present form. We have, for example, S-300PMU-2 "Favorit," let alone S-400 that are already capable of striking targets moving at the speed of up to 4,500 meters per second. There are other systems too.

In general, this American dream is doomed to fail. When it comes to effective military developments, Russia and the USA go "head to head."

When Reagan was in power, some American money bags profited from SDI. During Obama's presidency, they profit from PGS.

United States President Ronald Reagan was called the father of "Star Wars" that was a subject of much controversy, but then quietly disappeared. There was a lot of PR that proved to be big nothing. Barack Obama may give birth to PGS that may also go up in smoke after some time.

It is believed that the program of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) or "Star Wars", was launched in the United States on March 23, 1983, following a statement from then-President Ronald Reagan. Frankly speaking, it was one of the most ambitious projects in the field of homeland security.

The year 1983 was the peak of the first "cold war" between the United States and the Soviet Union. Interestingly, Reagan, as evidenced by his biographers, could not tolerate it, when SDI was referred to as "Star Wars." George Lucas, the creator of "Star Wars" films and brand, did not like the fact that his creation was very closely associated with the SDI program.

Reagan's "Star Wars" provided for the deployment of combat lasers; missiles capable of destroying enemy ballistic missiles in outer space; super sensors and powerful computers. The program questioned the doctrine of "mutually assured destruction", according to which neither the United States nor the Soviet Union were interested in starting a nuclear war, as the aggressor would be destroyed in a retaliatory strike.

Initially, many experts said that the project was pure fiction. Supposedly, it was believed that Reagan was talked into it to give military-industrial circles of the USA an opportunity to profit from it.

In March of last year, in an article for The Washington Post dedicated to the 30th anniversary of the beginning of the Star Wars project, director for research at the Association of Liberal Arms Control, Tom Collin, said that the project was a big affair of President Reagan. It was incredibly ambitious, because most of the proposed projects was impossible to implement, he added.

The SDI program scared Soviet military and political leaders, and the Soviet Union was seriously drawn into an arms race in this area, despite Gorbachev's pacifism. In 1987, it became known that the Soviet Union was also working on a similar program. A few years later, the

country ceased to exist. The subject of Star Wars faded out soon afterwards. The former "empire of evil" stopped its existence without any space battles.