The Hypersonic Fall of US Prestige

Even against the backdrop of recent events, the US stubbornly refuses to acknowledge that “American credibility” in the world is falling apart. It is not just a question of political credibility or the collapse of 20 years of American military intervention in Afghanistan. This fall did not begin with Biden or Trump, but with the faulty perception by the current political and military establishment of the United States of its alleged exceptionality and dominance in the world and its total corruption.

Despite the policy pursued by the current US authorities to exert pressure and push their weapons into foreign markets, they have long been unable to compete in many areas, particularly with Russian weapons. The American military who went through armed conflicts in Vietnam and other countries have repeatedly emphasized in The Atlantic and other specialized military magazines the indisputable advantages of the legendary Soviet AK-47 assault rifle over the M-16 rifle, which is most popular in the US military. Today, many of even American media outlets already point out that American weapons cannot protect American soldiers “from the machinations of the enemy.” And here, it would be worth recalling the problems with the US Navy, the collapse of the submarine fleet. Or more new shortcomings revealed with each passing day of the fifth-generation fighter F-35, hefty advertised by the Pentagon, which, despite the billions of US taxpayers’ dollars already invested in it, still cannot guarantee the declared level of capabilities, having turned into an “American scam.”

Throughout all the time since Russia declared it had the hypersonic Zircon missile, even though its tests were announced by Moscow in advance and conducted regularly, the US and NATO missile defense/anti-missile defense systems have never been able to detect its launch and further flight. According to the conclusions of military experts, the Space-Based Infrared System (SBIRS) is only able to provide information on a “fire in the hole!” basis. Modern technologies are unable to intercept such a target.

In this regard, NATO and US military commanders have serious concerns that their air defense/anti-missile defenses
would be useless in the event of a possible military conflict. However, it should be emphasized that the Russian nuclear deterrence and nuclear weapons policy does not stipulate a first strike on enemy territory. The conditions for Russia’s use of nuclear weapons are clear, and they call only for a retaliatory counter-strike.

As for the shorter-range hypersonic weapons, for example, the Kinzhal has a range of about 2,000 kilometers. This is not a strategic range but an operational-tactical range. But SBIRS can’t pick it up either.

Therefore, Russian hypersonic weapons are causing great anxiety among US strategists. In this sense, the words of Glen VanHerck, a general in the United States Air Force, that hypersonic weapons of Russia challenge the early warning systems of the US Department of Defense are quite logical. After all, if the target maneuvers at hypersonic speeds, there is an insoluble problem for intercept. At such speeds, the interceptor missile must have more energy than the hypersonic target, and the overloading, in this case, will be such that no material and no missile can withstand it.

As for the US hypersonic weapons, another test of the AGM-183A hypersonic missile under the Air-Launched Rapid Response Weapon (ARRW) program failed, specialized portal The War Zone reported recently citing a US Air Force official. In late July, it came to light that the US Air Force had already twice failed to test the prototype hypersonic missile AGM-183A, which, according to Washington, was allegedly able to reach Moscow and reach speeds over 15,000 miles per hour, (five times the speed of sound, although the Russian Zircon hypersonic cruise missile already flies at a speed eight times faster than sound!). Nevertheless, attempts to inflate the long sagging US missile cheeks and threats that Washington will, if necessary, send to Europe hypersonic medium- and short-range missiles (which, it should be said, the US does not have) to “deter” Russia continue unabated from Washington.

At the same time, President Vladimir Putin has repeatedly proposed to Washington additional steps to de-escalate the situation in Europe. The Russian Foreign Ministry has published the draft treaties of Russia with NATO and the United States on security guarantees, which are not yet accepted for consideration in Washington and Brussels, unfortunately.

Instead, the Pentagon is trying to intimidate the world with its new effective weapons by actively promoting, through controlled media, the US Navy’s test of a Laser Weapon System Demonstrator (LWSD) combat laser that destroyed a floating boat target in the Gulf of Aden in the Indian Ocean on December 14. The LWSD laser is designed to counter UAVs and remotely piloted explosive-laden boats commonly used by Houthi insurgents in the Red Sea. US authorities believe the technology could be a “game-changer” in future conflicts, including in the event of a major war with China, reports The Daily Telegraph.

At the same time, the Pentagon deliberately omits the fact that the guidance systems of the US-tested combat laser can be suppressed using electronic warfare without much problem. Its effectiveness falls in fog and haze. That is why even today, the conclusions of some experts can be seen all over the place that the primary purpose of “new Pentagon weapons” is just another siphon off and appropriation of taxpayers’ money, which has already ruined the development of research work of American armament specialists on hypersonic weapons.

Under these circumstances, all Washington has to do today is to rely on the United States’ own use of China’s “miracle weapon” that it used to scare the common American man during the Cold War era: a giant slingshot, which supposedly could be pulled by millions of Chinese soldiers. And the Pentagon is already making some progress in this regard with the adoption, in particular, of the Strategic Long-Range Cannon (SLRC) by the US Army, which, supposedly, instead of the non-existent hyper-weapons, will be able to “bombard Moscow” like in that old scare story about a slingshot.

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