

Oh, Not Again.

Another one of those pieces by some Pentagon's big honcho about this and that. Pentagon's R&D Chief Mike Griffin waxes exceptional and writes another, in a row of now tiresome, platitudes about how US Armed Forces are great... sort of. He starts with a predictable fodder of Berlin Wall:

I have news for Griffin: Fukuyama is a classic representative of the American so called political pseudo-science class and could serve only as an Exhibit A of sheer ignorance, expected from the guy with [no particular education](#) or coherent analytical skills. Obviously, neither Fukuyama nor Griffin are good scholars of Clausewitz who is explicit in that: in war the outcome is never final. (c) Oh boy, was Clausewitz a Marxist? I thought in a 200 years since [Vom Kriege](#) was penned we all should have developed some degree of recognition of what works and what doesn't in Western Civilization's most important work on war. No wonder Lenin was a huge fan of good ol' Carl. But that simple fact aside, there is one thing which Griffin, himself a superb engineer with a stunning array of STEM degrees and former NASA chief must know that his this statement is trivial at best:

Equally critical was the ability to prevail against a larger force in a conventional fight. The U.S. seized the advantage with precision, with a precise conventional strike, enabled by pattern-matching seekers. With a global positioning system to guide force projection to the right place, [stealth technology](#) to hide our aircraft from enemy radar, encrypted high-rate communications to enable superior command and control, electronic warfare to deny that advantage to our enemies, [unmanned aerial vehicles](#) for both reconnaissance and force projection, and the uncontested dominance of the space domain to tie it all together, we prevailed.

It is becoming downright nauseating reading these Clanciesque pop-warfare narratives since most of them are not true. I don't know if Griffin's tenure at NASA taught him anything but NASA being a paying customer of Russian rocketry for years now, he surely must know that the age of precision guided weapons originally was started by Nazi Germans in WW II when they sunk Italian battleship *Roma* with radio-guided [Fritz-X](#) bomb. But these were Soviet who developed an astonishing array of anti-ship missiles in post-WW II period and I am sure Griffin should know that those by definition are precision guided weapons. It just happened so that the United States was not even a competitor in this field from the inception, lagging badly in development of combat missile technologies in which Soviet Union and Russia had and have a dramatic technological lead, which today may have become insurmountable for the United States. In terms of air defenses the United States military is not even a competitor having nothing even remotely comparable to S-3XX-4XX-5XX systems, not to mention systems of [A-235 Nudol](#). I will skip talking about hyper-sonic weapons here altogether. I will just add that Russians were involved with satellite-based navigation since the same time US got involved with GPS--early 1970s, [such as Parus](#). GLONASS followed in 1982. Griffin surely must know about [TU-143 Reis](#) or even ancient [LA-17R](#) too. You know, drones.

My question is not even with Griffin's statement such as this:

In brief, the United States no longer possesses the unquestioned technical superiority to dominate a future fight.

Because most of "unquestioned" was primarily, up to late 1970s, in processing power and electronics, but in the fact that Griffin narrates totally made up history of US weaponry which, bar few limited fields, was neither "unquestioned" nor dominant. Even US jewel of a true technological excellence, it's world-class superb nuclear submarine force experienced a serious technological push-back since late 1970s which resulted in at least technological parity by 1990s. My quarrel is with this "creative" history of the warfare as a narrative of only American ingenuity and pioneering--this is absolutely false. Those challenges Griffin talks about--and they ARE challenges in every sense from technological to doctrinal--they didn't appear out of nowhere in an instant. All those challenges gestated and grew out of these very Russians understanding the nature of the warfare and doing their due diligence in R&D and fighting doctrine field. The roots of those "challenges" are in 1970s and 1980s, not in 2010s. Well, what do you know--I just wrote a book on the nature of real revolution in military affairs. It is precisely about what Griffin talks. But in the end, these ad nauseam trivialities, such as this:

What near-term risks are we willing to take, and what current systems are [we willing to let go](#), so that we can invest in capabilities that will impose costs on our adversaries and deter them from starting a fight because they know they cannot win? This is the critical national security challenge of our time.

Invoke only one question--under what stone did Mr.Griffin spend last 20 years in order to not recognize the fact that it is the United States who unleashed non-stop violent wars and coups all over the globe and made sure that people will start the fight once they recognize that their livelihood and sovereignty is under attack by the United States. Luckily, the instruments to defend themselves against American military aggression are better than those of the aggressor and that what saddens US establishment, which has no idea what real war is. Or maybe they do? And that is why they are sad.

This brings me to another point, of Michail Khodaryonok today making a statement to RT:

What Khodaryonok forgets to mention is that Russia has enough conventional deterrent to not go for the nukes. I may understand (I think) where Khodaryonok is coming from but he, as a graduate of the Academy of General Staff, should know that conventional step in the escalation process in case NATO wants to commit suicide, is, in fact, an additional deterrent and adds robustness to Kaliningrad's defense. Khodaryonok writes:

Now, a few remarks on the message posted by China's Eastday.com. It says that if NATO and Russia went to war, the bloc could seize the Russian region in a matter of two days. Our Chinese comrades are a little off with their timeline. The operation would not actually take this long, and the result would be very different. It would take Russia no longer than 40-45 minutes to launch a nuclear strike, and after that we would be able to do only one thing – discuss the peculiar aspects of the modern nuclear apocalypse. To sum it up, the battle for Kaliningrad would under no circumstances remain an isolated military conflict. It would become just an episode of a global nuclear war. And even the countries not involved in this conflict would suffer the consequences. Unfortunately, these are the effects of using strategic nuclear weapons.

While Khodaryonok is absolutely correct in stating that such a conflict will not stay local, I don't know if he missed [Valery Gerasimov's statement \(in Russian\)](#)

[couple of years ago](#) that already then Russia had enough cruise missiles deployed on critical strategic directions for a complex deterrence by means of high precision weapons. A lot of time passed since then and when even RAND admits impossibility of involving NATO in a conventional conflict with Russia:

[“We lose a lot of people. We lose a lot of equipment. We usually fail to achieve our objective of preventing aggression by the adversary,” RAND analyst David Ochmanek told a security conference on Thursday. “In our games, when we fight Russia and China, blue gets its ass handed to it.”](#)

Khodaryonok retired from the Armed Forces in 2000. 19 years ago. Since then one could observe a dramatic change in Russia's doctrinal thinking with introduction of "strategic force deterrence by high-precision weapons" already in 2010 Military Doctrine. One couldn't fail to notice that these were primarily conventional forces that Russia was improving and updating since early 2000s. This was done primarily to be able to fight a conventional, not a nuclear, conflict. So, if Mikhail Khodaryonok thinks that in case of NATO attacking Kaliningrad, Russia is going to go for nuclear jugular immediately, I have a bit of disagreement with him, because the first thing which will be done will be a conventional strike on NATO's infrastructure and for that Russia has enough force to disrupt NATO's C4ISR architecture and inflict major losses. That is precisely what is called a "strategic force deterrence" by means of stand-off, precision-guided weaponry. In the end, rearranging stones in D.C., Brussels or London in purely conventional way is nothing that 3M14 or X-101 cannot do. It is also a good way to avoid apocalyptic scenario by inflicting a lot of pain for aggressor to have second thought about escalation. It is so self-evident from Russia's military development since mid-2000s, that it is strange that Khodaryonok had to reply in this manner to some strategic delusions by some butt-hurt "strategists" who lost every single war they were involved in since 2000 and who still are dreaming of some revenge out of desperation after seeing the myth of their conventional military power blown to smithereens. In the end, even R.D. Hooker's ["opus" is about "defending" Baltics](#) and cannot be taken seriously from any professional point of view. Khodaryonok, evidently, [forgot Macron begging not to sink French frigate or harm any forces in April 2018](#). They are not complete idiots there, yet. They can calculate and know, as an example, that NATO's fleet combat life in case of attacking Kaliningrad will be counted in tens of minutes before Kinzhals or P-800s arriving. Khodaryonok MUST know these things. As for nuclear war. Well, no special commentary is needed here.