

Did the US Steal Russia's Hypersonic Weapons Secrets?

The US' Hypersonic Weapons Progress Suggests that Spying Pays Off

By [Andrew Korybko](#)

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Region: [Russia and FSU](#), [USA](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#), [Military](#), [WMD](#)

The US stole Russia's hypersonic weapons secrets over the summer and is now on track to test these systems sooner than the rest of the world originally anticipated.

President Putin's announcement in March that Russia was in possession of hypersonic weaponry was heralded as a strategic game-changer of the highest order because of the implication that the US' decades-long "missile defense" investments were now suddenly rendered null and void, thereby restoring the nuclear balance that had been at risk of disruption by America's moves to safeguard itself from a speculative nuclear second strike and theoretically one day give itself the prerogative to carry out a first one with impunity.

Russia and the rest of the world were on track to become the victims of nuclear blackmail had this trend been allowed to continue uninterrupted, which is why Moscow's development of hypersonic weapons technology was such a big deal.

Russia's restoration of the strategic nuclear balance with America was regarded as a major step forward in the direction of stabilizing the dangerous dynamics of the [New Cold War](#) and importantly allowing President Putin to [concentrate on reforming the socio-economic situation](#) at home throughout his fourth and final term in office now that his country's international security was assured. Somewhat unsurprisingly, however, the US soon thereafter attempted to steal Russia's hypersonic weapons secrets and was evidently successful, at least judging by the fact that a [scientist was arrested](#) over the summer for passing off classified information about these programs to the Americans. It's not publicly known how many secrets he gave them, but the US just [declared](#) that it plans to test this technology in the near future.

The country obviously had a preexisting hypersonic weapons program even before this, but it should be presumed that its efforts might have been greatly aided by its successful espionage operation over the summer, showing that spying does indeed pay off. This isn't a lesson that the Russians hadn't already learned, however, because they pretty much preceded the Americans in doing something very similar during the Old Cold War when they basically stole nuclear technology from them and restored strategic parity between the two superpowers. It can be argued that the US is also restoring parity in its own way after Russia rolled out the next generation of nuclear launch systems through its hypersonic weapons technology, but the situation actually isn't as simple as that.

Superficially, it's indeed true that the US restored a tit-for-tat balance with Russia that had

been altered by Moscow's announcement in March, but substantively, America will use this return to "parity" in order to continue making progress on its "missile defense" shield, albeit this time in terms of the hypersonic dimension after learning how to master this technology. That will essentially return the New Cold War back to its pre-March 2018 state of strategic affairs whereby the US continues to lead the world in anti-missile capabilities that it could tacitly exploit for nuclear blackmail purposes in order to preserve its global hegemony. The solution, then, might rest in Russia resorting to its own espionage operations and learning more about the US' "missile defense" systems, including those that [might](#) be deployed in [space](#).

At the end of the day, spying pays off – for better or for worse – and the world's "second-oldest profession" will always remain relevant.

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Andrew Korybko is an American Moscow-based political analyst specializing in the relationship between the US strategy in Afro-Eurasia, China's One Belt One Road global vision of New Silk Road connectivity, and Hybrid Warfare. He is a frequent contributor to Global Research.

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About the author:

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