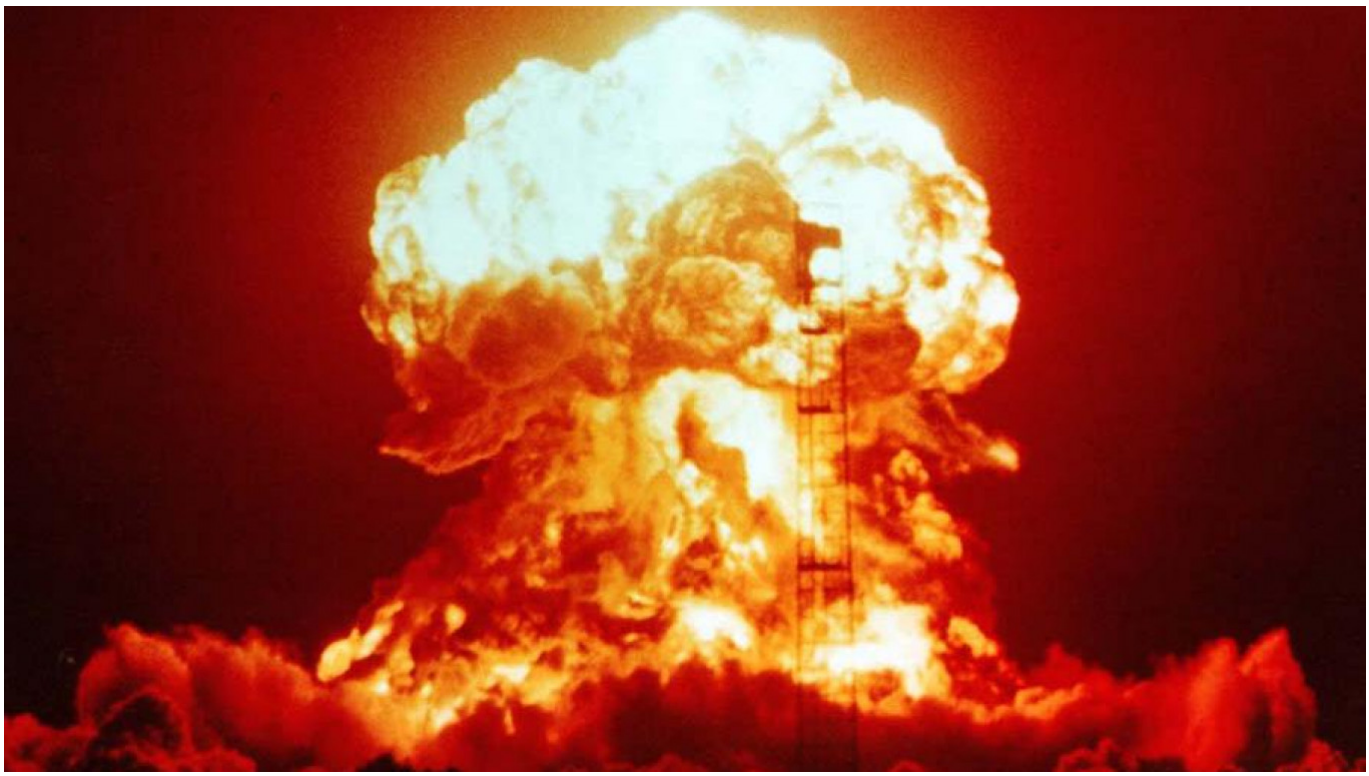
The Moscow Times
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Russian Politician: UK Will Be 'Wiped Off Face of the Earth' in Case of Nuke Strike

April 25, 2017



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Politician Frants Klintsevich has said Britain could be wiped "off the face of the Earth" if it launches a nuclear strike.

He made the statement in response to radio comments made by Michael Fallon on Monday in which the British defense secretary discussed the possibility of a preemptive nuclear strike on Russia.

"In the most extreme circumstances, we've made it very clear that you can't rule out the use of nuclear weapons as a first strike," Fallon told BBC Radio 4's Today program.

Asked to specify the circumstances, he added: "The whole point about the deterrent is that you have got to leave uncertainty in the mind of anybody who might be thinking of using weapons against this country."

According to Klintsevich, deputy chairman of the Federation Council's security committee, the statement was tantamount to a threat.

“In the best case this statement can be seen as a form of psychological warfare, which in this context is particularly disgusting,” he was cited as saying Monday by the TASS state-run news agency.

He added that Britain was not “the largest” and would be “literally wiped off the face of the Earth by a counter strike.”

In the case Britain launched an attack against a non-nuclear power, it would be following in the footsteps of the United States, which dropped an atomic bomb on “defenseless Hiroshima and Nagasaki,” Klintsevich added.

“That time has irrevocably passed,” he added, just like “the former British empire.”

Klintsevich has recently come under the spotlight, as the supposed author of a letter claiming that Vyacheslav Volodin — Putin's former deputy chief of staff and current State Duma Speaker — was being groomed as President Vladimir Putin's successor.

Putin has denied that theory on state television, saying that the next Russian president would be chosen “exclusively by the Russian people in the course of democratic elections.”

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