**Supermagterne satser på atomvåben**

USA's præsident Eisenhower mente, at en stormagtskonfrontation i atomalderen ville være katastrofal for begge parter. Eisenhower valgte at satse på den afskrækkelse, der lå i, at USA var overlegen, når det gjaldt atomvåben. Det gjorde han bl.a., fordi Sovjetunionen i begyndelsen af 1950'erne var NATO klart overlegen i Europa, hvis det skulle komme til en konventionel krig. Vi ved i dag, at Sovjetunionen i sine væbnede styrker havde 175 kampklare divisioner - over dobbelt så mange som de kampklare NATO-divisioner.

Det ville kræve kolossale økonomiske ressourcer, hvis Vesten skulle have lige så store konventionelle styrker under våben som USSR. Atomvåben var billigere, skønnede Eisenhower. NATO og USA skulle være i stand til at besvare ethvert angreb fra Sovjetunionen med massiv gengældelse med atomvåben.

I august 1953 afprøvede russerne deres første brintbombe. Fra midten af 1950'erne fik de langdistancefly, som kunne nå USA, og de begyndte at opstille mellemdistanceraketter, som kunne ramme mål i Europa.

Artikel om Sovjets ‘dommedagsmaskine’

**Russia's 'Dead Hand' Is a Soviet-Built Nuclear Doomsday Device**

Military.com | By Blake Stilwell

A lot of great technology was developed during the Cold War. Things like GPS, the internet and microchips were all developed as part of the arms-race tech boom. Unfortunately, so was the Novichok nerve agent, the world's largest nuclear weapon and Russia's doomsday device, just to name a few.

You read that right. Like something out of one of the worst James Bond movies, the Soviet Union developed a world-ending mechanism that would launch all of its nuclear weapons without any command from an actual human.

Russia currently has an estimated 1,600 deployed tactical nuclear weapons, with another 2,400 strategic nuclear weapons tied to intercontinental ballistic missiles. This makes Russia the largest nuclear power in the world. All of these weapons are tied into the Perimeter, an automatic nuclear weapons control system.

The RT-2PM ICBM was designed to be road mobile and is mounted on a heavy truck.

In a crisis that might mean a first strike from the United States, high-ranking government officials or military commanders could activate the Perimeter. Perimeter would guarantee that the Soviet Union (and now, Russia) could respond even if its entire armed forces were wiped out.

Once switched on, the Perimeter system can launch the entire Russian nuclear arsenal in response to a nuclear attack. It was part of the Cold War doctrine of mutually assured destruction, a means of deterring nuclear attacks by ensuring the side who initiated a first strike also would be annihilated.

Called "Dead Hand" in the West, the theory is that a command and control system measures communications on military frequencies, radiation levels, air pressure, heat and short-term seismic disturbances. If the measurement points to a nuclear attack, the Perimeter begins a sequence that would end in the firing of all ICBMs in the Soviet (now, Russian) arsenal.

Perimeter would launch a command rocket, tipped with a radio warhead that transmits launch orders to Russian nuclear silos, even with the presence of radio jamming. The rocket would fly across the entire length of the country. After a number of test launches to prove the viability of such a command rocket, the Perimeter system went online in 1985.

The Soviet Union never confirmed that such a system ever existed, but Russian Strategic Missile Forces Gen. Sergey Karakaev confirmed it to a Russian newspaper in 2011, saying the U.S. could be destroyed in 30 minutes. Russian state media outlets suggest the system was upgraded to include radar early warning systems and Russia's new hypersonic missiles.

In the United States, similar technologies were developed. Seismic and radiation sensors are used to monitor parts of the U.S. and the world for nuclear explosions and other activity, but the U.S. military never created an automatic trigger for its arsenal. Instead, it ensured that American humans with the ability and authority to launch a second strike would survive a first strike.

Since the Perimeter is reportedly still active, the danger of an automatic, computer-generated nuclear strike still exists. Now that Russian President Vladimir Putin has put Russia's nuclear weapons on high alert, he might have taken Russia's doomsday device on notice as well.