

THE CAUCASUS AS A CATALYST OF THE WEST-EAST RELATIONS

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Diplomacy in today's Russian foreign policy has given up its place to a growing political extremism and sometimes even to undisguised threats. Speaking in Beijing before his resignation. Mr. Yeltsin said: "Russia has a full arsenal of nuclear Weapons, but Clinton decided to flex his muscles. ...I want to say to Clinton that he should not forget in what kind of world he lives. ... We (Russia and China) will dictate to the world how to live/.." How about that? All he lacked was Khruchev's shoe for a repeat of that shabby history. Six months in power of Mr. Putin have made a great change in the world's understanding of Russia as a country, once striving for integration to the world community and to transform itself to a democracy. In short time Mr. Putin has succeeded in things that communists were carefully avoiding during decades of their rule - aiming Russia's foreign policy toward open confrontation with the West. In this connection, how does one not remember the speech of Russian nationalist Zhirinovski in the Russian Parliament a few years ago. saying: "We can have everything we want. All we need is to brandish our nuclear cudgel. Nobody will dare to refuse." This brutish logic, that Russians were laughing at yesterday, today underlines Russian foreign policy. If we say the Caucasus has become a catalyst for this change, we would not be mistaken. But we would be incorrect to say that the Caucasus is a cause of this change. The cause is the Russian people themselves, who could not rise above the level of Zhirinovski's political consciousness. "The peak of Russian empire", as the Caucasus was named by Russian Emperor Nicholas II. this mountainous area between the Black and Caspian Seas has everything to attract the world's attention. This time it is not its

unique beauty.. its pastoral landscapes, its thousand-foot high snow-capped peaks, the ancient traces and monuments of human civilization. **the** (hundreds of miles of virgin sand beaches, its lakes and dozens **hot** and **cold** mineral artesian springs. In his time it is the huge hydrocarbon reserves found in its Caspian region. In his discovery) can make **the** Caucasus a prosperous region in the near future. And **the** only explanation within the Caucasus, where reserves of oil and gas are much less than those of Central Asia, has become a bloodiest arena in Eurasia, the arena of concentration of non-regional powers, is **that** the Caucasus is a master key to Asia. including its position relative to the Central area. The geographical peculiarity of the Central Asian countries, which occupied almost half of the former USSR's southern frontiers, has after **the** collapse of the latter become a cause of their comparative isolation **from the** developed democratic countries and from **the** world's consumer markets. Their location in the "arc of instability", with Russia **on** the north. China **on the** east. Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran on the south, has forced the Central Asian countries to seek an alternative route to connect their oil and gas reserves to a market. The projected revival of the ancient Silk Road, proposed by the West in the pretext of the TAP (Transportation Corridor to the Pacific-Caucasus-Asia). has become such an alternative. An agreement, signed at **the** European Summit among Turkey, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan on the construction of oil and gas pipelines, connecting Central Asian and Caucasian energy reserves with the world's market, has turned the new Silk Road, **the** alternative possibility., into a future reality. At the same time, this agreement put in doubt Russia's plan to play **the** role of the Caucasian dam across this energy stream. Openly ignoring and violating the signed Treaty on Security in **Europe*** Russia has unleashed the war in **the** North Caucasus and concentrated here a huge amount of heavy armament, explaining **to the world that** this is a necessary anti-terrorist action. It is hard to agree with such a point even if conditionally count all Chechen people **as** terrorists.

Concerning **the** huge Russian expenditure on this war. Mr. Putin hopes **that** it will be recouped with interest after Russia returns to domination in **the** Caucasus. Initiating war in Chechnya, keeping seats of the local conflicts hot, among various minorities inside

Caucasian countries and pushing them to "national liberation movements", establishing the Moscow- **Yerevan** Teheran military-political axis, turning independent Armenia into the Russian military arsenal, establishing hostile relations with Georgia **and** Azerbaijan -this is an incomplete list of Russia's steps toward a policy of "cutting **or** controlling the future Caspian energy stream. If we divide **I R** \< T C A into its regional sections, we will have the following Mheme: Central Asia - Caspian Sea - Caucasus - Turkey -Mediterranean Sea. In this scheme only the last two are located out side **of** the **post**-Soviet area, out of Russia's influence. The most important link in this chain of pipelines is the Caucasian, more precisely Azerbaijani and Georgian. It is the link concentrating of all the collected Caspian energy branches in one place for further pumping toward Turkey, out of post-Soviet geography. The war in Chechnia has to be viewed only as Russia's clearing the way to this future main oil and gas pipe line.

further Russian leverage in the Caucasus may also be put in motion soon. The "liberation movement" of the minorities inside the tiny countries of Azerbaijan and Georgia is one. The most vulnerable of the two is Georgia, which still has not managed to liberate its soil from Russian military bases, and has recently experienced Russia's direct military intervention within its border with Chechnia.

The next Russian steps in this pipeline chain can be expected in the direction of increasing pressure against the construction of gas and oil pipelines under the Caspian Sea. opening once again the **question** about the legality of using this water basin. In this issue. Russia has a strong supporter in its historical ally - Iran, which considers itself as the best option in the transport of the Caspian hydrocarbons.

To weaken the commercial profit of the TRAGI CA. Russia and Iran are creating alternative energy and transportation solutions for energy producing countries and energy consumers, for instance. Iran, which has its own huge gas reserves, offers neighboring Turkmenistan to buy its gas. attempting to decrease the supply of Turkmenistan's gas into the I RAC I C A pipeline. Russia is doing the same, by signing on with Turkey in the "Blue Stream" project, which could cover Turkey's need for gas by supplying it from Russia through the

pipeline planed for construction under the Black Sea. Once built, it will put in serious doubt the commercial profitability of constructing a similar pipeline under the Caspian Sea. The last link in the 1 RACECA project is the Central Asian region. To create obstacles for this project here. Russia is using its influence in Kasakhstan, home of the richest Caspian oil reserves. In this connection, we would not be mistaken predicting Russia's use of its ethnic majority within Kasakhstan to put pressure against their government's decision to participate in TRACECA. directing its oil How to the north. Early signs of this scheme already can be seen in the growing dissatisfaction of citizens of Pavlodar and Ust-Kamenogorsk, the Russian populated regional centers in northern Kasakhstan, which with only a little support by Russia can be easily turned into a separatist movement.

These are just a few of many other examples of how Russia has tried, and may try in the future to return to its domination in the Caucasian-Central Asian region.

Unlike the West, Russia has nothing to offer this region except all kinds of armaments. For example, Azerbaijan repeatedly protested Russia's illegal allocation within Armenia of one billion dollars worth of heavy armament. Russia finally responded by offering to "liquidate the injustice" and to allocate the same amount of armaments into Azerbaijani soil. This is how Russia understands justice. The full-scale war going in the Caucasus has already reached the borders of the independent states of Azerbaijan and Georgia. Yet their fragile security hasn't have an adequate help from the West, fully depending on the dubious belief that Russia will not openly confront with its former satellites. What is not dubious is the point that Russia wants to deliver to the world - it's prepared to do whatever it takes to return to domination in the post-Soviet area. If the West repeats President Wilson's mistake in the beginning of the 20-th century, refusing to recognize the independence of the Trans-Caucasian countries and allowing the Bohheviks to capture the whole region, world will have a new National-Socialist Empire, which will grow as strong, as the conquered wealth of Caucasian and Central Asian regions will make it possible. The "new vocabulary" created by Russian politicians, where independent countries are called "newly independent states" in the

"near abroad" ol' Russia, shows dial the imperialistic mentality still dominates in their approach to neighboring countries. It is lime for the West to understand that the value of "independence" has nothing to do with time, and that "abroad" has nothing to do with distance. A country may either be independent or not. and from the geographical point of view, has to be somebody's "near abroad", meaning, be somebody's neighbor. Millions of people in the Caucasus and **Central** Asia hope and wait lor the time w hen the West will arrive at the same conclusion.

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QAFQAZ QƏRB-ŞƏRQ ƏLAQƏLƏRİNDƏ KATALİZATOR KİMİ

Rüfət KƏRİMOV

(Posi-Sowl arasclırınaları v J nuxLvıvv.ıthrrarrası .ıhu/.ı. Arch International.

Boston, ABŞ)

Rusiya xarici siyasətinin bugünkü diplomatiyasının yerində arlan siyasi ekstremizm və bozən hətta açıq - askar hodolor mövcuddur.

İstəta verməmişdən əvvəl Pekindəki çıxışında cənab Yeltsin "Rusiya hər cür nüvə silahına malikdir. Klinton isə qollarına gic vermək qorana gəlibdir. ...Mon Klinton demək istəyirəm ki, o hansı dünyada yaşadığını unutmamalıdır... **Biz** (Rusiya və Çin) dünyaya necə yaşamağı dikto edəcəyik...** - dedi. Necə fikirdir? Məskin ləlixə təkrar etmək əvəzinə yalnız Nruşşovun cəkməsi çatışmadı. Cənab Potinin hakimiyyətdə olduğu altı ay ərzində dünyanın Rusiyaya, ölkənin bir zaman dünya birliyi ilə inteqrasiya uğrunda mübarizəsində və demokratiya yolunu tutmasına münasibətində böyük dönüş yaratdı. Rus millətçisi Jirinovskinin bir necə il əvvəl Rusiya parlamentindəki "Biz istədiyimiz hər bir şeyə malik ola bilərik. Bizi yalnız nüvə döyənəyini işə salmaq lazımdır. **Keç** kimin etiraz etməyə cüreti çatmayacaqdır" sözlərini necə xatırlamaq olar?

Rusların dünən güldüyü bu mənasız məntiq bu gün Rusiya xarici siyasətini səciyyələndirir. Rus imperatoru II Nikolay Qafqazı Rus İmperiyasının mirvarisi adlandırırdı. Qara dəniz və Xəzər dənizi arasındakı bu dağlıq ərazi dünyanın diqqətini cəlb edən hər bir şeyə malikdir. Qafqazın neft və gaz ehtiyatlarının Mərkəzi Asiya ilə müqayisədə çox az olmasına baxmayaraq, bu bölgə Avrasiyanın qanlı döyüş meydanına, qeyri-regional qüvələrin cəmləşdiyi sahəyə çevrilib. Bunun yeganə izahı Qafqazın post- Sovet dövründən mərkəzi ərazidə yerləşməsi və Asiyaya qapısının açan olmasıdır. Mərkəzi Asiya ölkələrinin şimalda Rusiya, şərqdə Çin, cənubda Əfqanıstan, Pakistan və İran ilə "mütərəddid qövs" də yerləşməsi Mərkəzi Asiya ölkələrini öz neft və gaz ehtiyatlarını dünya bazarına çıxarmaq üçün alternativ marşrut axtarmağa məcbur etdi. Qərb tərəfindən TRACECA* adlanan planlı bərpa olunmuş qədim İpək Yolu belə bir alternativ oldu. Avropa Birliyinin Sammitində Türkiyə, Gürcüstan, Azərbaycan və Türkmənistan arasında Mərkəzi Asiya və Qafqaz enerji ehtiyatlarını dünya bazasına çıxaran neft və qaz boru xəmərinin tikintisi barədə imzalanmış razılıq yeni İpək Yolunu, alternativ imkanı, gələcək reallığa çevirdi. Rusiya Avropada Təhlükəsizlik Müqavilə-sinə açıq-aşkar etinasızlıq göstərərək, onu kobudcasına pozaraq, Şimali Qafqazda müharibəyə başladı. Səhsiz-hesabsız ağır silahları oraya topladı və bunun terrora qarşı vacib iş olduğunu dünyaya izah etdi. Hətta bütün çəçen xalqı, şərti olaraq, tenorçu kimi hesablasa belə, bu mövqə ilə razılaşmaq çətindir.

Bu müharibəyə çəkilən külli miqdarda xərclərə gəlincə, Putin ümid edir ki, Rusiya Qafqazda hakimiyyətə qayıtdıqdan sonra gələn gəlir bu pulların yerini dolduracaqdır.

Əgər biz TRACECA-nı onun bölgələri üzrə bölsək, bu sxemi ala-rıq: Mərkəzi Asiya - Xəzər denizi - Qafqaz - Türkiyə - Arahq də-nizi. Bu sxemdə yalnız sonuncu iki bölgə post-Sovet ərazisindən, Ru-siyanın təsirindən kənarda qahr. Bu boru zəncirində ən mühüm həlqə Qafqaz, daha qəqiqi, Azərbaycan və Gürcüstandır. TRACECA-nın

TRACECA (Transportation Corridor Europe - Caucasus -Asia (Avropa - Qafqaz -Asiya Nəqliyyat Dəhlizi))

commersiya gəlirini azaltmaq üçün Rusiya və İran enerji istehsal edən ölkələr və enerji istehlakçıları üçün alternativ enerji və nəqletmə üsulu yaradırlar. Məsələn, zəngin qaz ehtiyatı olan İran qonşu Turk-mənistana, ona qaz satmasını təklif edərək, TRACECA boru kornerine gelen Türkmənistan qazının hecmini azaltmağa cəhd edir. Türkiyə ilə "Blue stream" (Mavi axın) layihəsini imzalamaqla, Rusiya da eyni işi görür.

Qafqazda gedən açıq muharibə, artıq, müstəqil dövlətlər olan Azərbaycan və Gürcüstanın sərhədlərinə çatmışdır. Hele, şübhəli inama, Rusiyanın keçmiş əlaltılarına qarşı açıq-aşkar çıxmayacağına ümid edən bu dövlətlərin kövrək təhlükəsizliyi Qərbdən kifayət qədər kömək almamışdır.

Qərb üçün başa düşməyin vaxtı çatmışdır ki, "müstəqillik" anlayışının zamanla və "xaric" anlayışının məsafə ilə heç bir əlaqəsi yox-dur. Ölkə ya müstəqil olmalıdır, ya da yox, coğrafi nöqteyi- nəzərdən o, kiminsə "yaxın xarici", yeni kiminsə qonşusu ola bilər.

Qafqazın və Mərkəzi Asiyanın milyonlarla əhalisi ümid edir və Qərbin həmin nəticəyə gələcəyi vaxtı gözləyir.