TURKBEIJAN TWINS THREATEN WHILE ARMENIA DITHERS

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Category: Opinions

By Dikran Abrahamian MD, Ontario, 13 June 2024

The process of delimitation and demarcation is underway on our terms, and this is yet another victory of ours."
Ilham Aliyev, Shushi on May 10, 2024

Following the disastrous war in 2020 and the tragedy of the ethnic cleansing-genocide of Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) in 2023, the Republic of Armenia (RoA) has come under tremendous pressure. It has transformed into a country that appeases to the dictates of Turkey and Azerbaijan — Turkbeijan — in defining its borders. Educational curricula, national symbols, the anthem, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution are all targeted to suit the interests of Turkbeijan. To top it all, revisionist propositions about the Genocide — not unlike the denialist attempts of the notorious *genocidaire* Turkey — are circulated by government officials at the highest levels.

Purportedly all these actions are in play to achieve a peace treaty between RoA and Azerbaijan. The earnest desire of all Armenians for peace is not under question. However, it doesn't take a rocket scientist to penetrate under the surface of pronouncements, press conferences, and meetings at various levels to assert the obvious: this unilateral quest for peace is conducted through coercion and the threat of war. While negotiations behind closed doors proceed, Ilham Aliyev continues to refer to RoA as Western Azerbaijan.

Encouragement of the process and support by the European Union or the US do not constitute a panacea, and so far they have not attained the level of international guarantees. At present the West's interests are to keep oil flowing from Baku and consolidate their newfound foothold in the Caucasus, irrespective of what type of sovereignty the state of Armenia is ultimately "permitted" to have. On the other hand, we suspect, that most Armenians have lost their faith in Russia, because of Kremlin's lack of support for Armenians in pivotal times. Paradoxically — despite RoA's show of pro-Western overture and its criticism by Moscow — actions on the ground led to what Russia intended to do, i.e. leave the South Caucasus to Turkey and Azerbaijan to manage. In this sense, the RoA prime minister wittingly or unwittingly performed as an adjutant of the Kremlin.

Thus, it's no wonder that many or most Armenians question the wisdom of this rush for an elusive peace, and at what cost? Would it surprise anyone if the tone of criticisms of this deplorable process becomes more intense and the volume louder?

Aside from the illegalities surrounding the process, a central question remains unanswered. Given RoA's military unpreparedness, Azerbaijan's avaricious appetite for more lands, and Turkey's zeal to realize the pan-Turanian project, what is there to prevent the Turkic pair from not only making more demands but also invade RoA and establish a subservient government?

The delimitation and demarcation of the borders in Tavush and the transfer of the affected villages to Azerbaijan were the last straw that broke the camel's back. People rightfully took to the streets to

protest. In the absence of a political figure who could command a sizeable following, a high-ranking cleric led the protest movement. Was it a spontaneous act or previously agreed plan to come forward at the appropriate time when emotions had peaked? Perhaps it will never be known. However, the blessings of the supreme head of the Church is telling. The stature of the clergyman likely acts as a draw, something politicians lack.

The clergyman has been criticised for alleged misdeeds that hurt the community he served abroad. Also, criticism has been leveled concerning the appropriateness of a clergyman getting involved in politics. Such negativity against the cleric is intended to undermine the movement. Being a clergyman is no reason to be barred from politics. Our history records precedents. Other nations have elected clergymen as presidents without establishing theocracies. The history of Latin American emancipation is a strong testament that clergymen can lead nations. None were politicians before taking the helm of movements, and they matured with the natural evolution of such movements.

Many opposition groups have sided with the movement. Yesterday's rivals have become bedfellows today. Representatives of Kocharian, the Republican Party of Armenia, ARF, Bright Armenia, the Armenia National Congress, the Communist Party, the National Democratic Party (*Pever,* Alliance), and others have come together under the same umbrella. The presence of a fifth column and agents of foreign powers is not excluded either, each working to manipulate the movement.

The announced goal of the movement is the resignation of the prime minister, followed by the formation of a transitional government to prepare the groundwork for extraordinary elections.

The movement's first show of force was on 9 May 2024. An impressive number of people —— an estimated 31,500 — were present at the Republic Square in Yerevan. However, a month later there were 15,400 participants. A demand that the prime minister resign in four days was made at the rally. Today, at end of the four-day stand-off, there were 3,400 protesters in front and around the parliament. The protest was marred by violence.

It's fitting to ask what made the rest of the previous participants stay away. Was it that the movement had lost momentum, because of a lack of a cohesive plan that outlined the goals in internal and external politics, economy, educational, and cultural fields, to name a few? This is despite various politicians and intellectuals independently making relevant statements. "This is not just about the land; it's about our security and our future," said one of them. Another politician demanded "the withdrawal of Armenian troops must be approved by the Constitutional Court and ratified by parliament." A third person explained: "The main fear and dissatisfaction in Armenia regarding the delimitation process is that it is happening unilaterally, outside the law, and people are afraid that the same will happen to Tavush as happened to Artsakh."

The preponderance of representatives of the old oligarchic regime in the movement gives one pause. The two heads of that regime did not declare they would abstain from political activities.

They were publicly asked to do so. The citizen would also ask: "Do I trust the arrogant, unabashed, and corrupt Catholicos who uninvited inserted himself in the legitimate struggle to change the course of nation-harming egregious acts? I say: "No"

The old regime paved the way for the present prime minister to rise to power. Ironically, his inept handling of multiple complex challenges may throw us back to the days of the old regime. If this movement **with this present composition** succeeds, internal large-scale strife is likely to the detriment of the country and the people. Woe to those who don't act wisely.

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The views expressed in this essay are solely that of the author.

Comments

Vahe H Apelian – 2024-06-25 10:10:14
In hindsight I realize I should have elaborated why I was not expecting anything other than what Ilham Aliev said and that I was surprised at Dikran's posting the comment as a source for justifiable contention to NP's government's negotiation over the border issue. Ilham Aliev's comment on May 10, 2024 was that "The process of delimitation and demarcation is underway on our terms, and this is yet another victory of ours." I would have been really concerned if Ilhamm Aliev had claimed that the Armenians are getting away at the delimitation and demarcation process and ending up with Azeri lands.

Vahe H Apelian – 2024-06-24 10:29:24
"The process of delimitation and demarcation is underway on our terms, and this is yet another victory of ours." Ilham Aliyev, Shushi on May 10, 2024" I am surprised that Dikran expected to hear something else from Aliev, as a trusted source.

H – 2024-06-19 20:51:50
Although I am never at a loss to articulate my thoughts, rereading your article of June 13, I find the comments made to you by politicians and intellectuals as nothing but excuses. Why should we care what the constitutional court, the so called intellectuals or others state in order to stay away from the just protests, mainly for fear of reprisal. The momentum should not be lost. Why a bishop as leader? Why not a bishop? Historically Armenians are known to have had clergy leading political movements like Khrimian Hairig. In the Catholic Church the pope, a clergyman, is more involved in politics than religion. Accepted without criticism. Armenians have been losing land, soldiers, identity, and hope for keeping what's left of Western Armenia, Eastern Armenia, et al. A peaceful revolution will have a hard time, mainly because of, the support to the Turkic twins by England and the US. A challenge. However, the momentum gets threatened only if the 40000 "police" green beret, red beret, black beret imported or local, undeterred continue to commit violence against the Armenian people for protesting, in order to secure the gifting of historic Armenian lands to the enemies by the few "hoghadoos"… leaving the borders unprotected. The enemy within.



Avedis Tchaparian – 2024-06-15 22:04:56

An accurate diagnosis made by a patriotic doctor. What is needed now is a Therapeutic Intervention(s) to restore the health and the well-being of the Homeland. Reminder: the most prominent "national" politician of the Armenian people was a Cleric named Meguerditch Khrimian, who struggled against both the Ottoman Sultan and the Russian Tsar in protecting the interests of the Armenian People.