CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE ONLY SOLUTION

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Category: Opinions

Jirayr Sefilian, Yerevan, 7 July 2015

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That RA citizens massively accept Russian citizenship (according to official stats of spring 2014, about 10 percent of Armenia's citizens; in fact, a higher percentage) not only illustrates the loss of human potential but also the new and serious challenges, which the Armenian people are facing. Those challenges threaten the security of Armenia in the form of foreign interference in the internal affairs of the country.

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Theoretically, there exist two constitutional ways to remove the regime--through elections and through people's peaceful protests in the form of civil disobedience.

So far, attempts to remove the regime through elections have failed because the regime has turned elections into an exercise in improving the mechanism of its reproduction.

Meanwhile, irreversible and ongoing processes are exhausting the people's resistance. Thus, we

have to accept that at this moment, and especially in 2017, we should not expect that the regime's removal through elections is possible.

The most significant of the negative processes Armenia faces are emigration, which has transformed into mass evacuation and other trends--regime's dictatorship, the mass accumulation of the citizens in the public and criminal oligarchic-economic sectors controlled by the regime, which happens because of the super-monopolization of the economy and the catastrophic scale of poverty.

Moreover, there is an artificial inflation in the number of registered voters over the number of actual voters, which is already insurmountable.

Due to these processes, as well as to others, the majority of voters (about 700,000 to 800,000) unwillingly and forcibly appear under the control of the regime. The controlled electorate consists of 250,000 employees in the public sector (according to official data, which is perhaps the only reliable official statistic) and their family members, about 40,000 military conscripts and part of their family members, 100,000 citizens employed in the criminal-oligarchic economic sector and their family members. There are also 100,000 citizens, which appear under the regime's control because of their poor social/life conditions or for other reasons.

It is no secret that the regime has huge administrative, economic and social-cultural impact upon the controlled electorate due to the coalescence of state and oligarchic economic segments. Therefore, the figures given above will remain constant or can only increase. Meanwhile, the active opposition electorate, which is economically and politically independent, sharply declines in numbers.

In 2013, the number of real opposition electorate was barely the above-mentioned 700,000 to 800,000. Perhaps there is no need to prove that the fraudulent victory of the regime's candidate in 2013 largely took place due to the artificially added votes and not through vote stealing. Consequently, the officially recorded figure of all opposition votes-- 660,116--was not too far from reality. However, compared to 2013, in 2017 (due to emigration alone) we shall have lost almost 100,000 of the real opposition electorate. Hence, if not now, then in 2017, the regime will be able to win the majority of popular vote through the electoral mechanism and will not even need to artificially add votes.

When the potential of resistance critically decreases and the regime's impact on the electorate increases, it becomes obvious that planning the mobilization of several thousand intelligent and principled supporters to achieve a significant result at polling stations through defending the votes of the opposition is not realistic. Even if we theoretically accept that we can succeed in doing so, we cannot achieve a positive result because the regime already controls the majority of real voters, and it no longer needs to falsify the votes of the opposition.

Hence, the only option through which we can remove the regime is the people's peaceful protest in the form of civil disobedience. Active citizens, who are ready to take part in non-violent resistance

should gather in city squares and become an organized and united force able to use civil disobedience. Only then, a pole of opposition force can be formed and the regime's administrative, economic, social and cultural impact can be significantly neutralized. That is when citizens will be able to display their will, and gradually join their compatriots. Only then, the people will turn into an insurmountable force and be able to remove the criminal regime.