AGAIN ABOUT OUR PAIN

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Category: Opinions

By Harut Der-Tavitian, Los Angeles, 29 September 2022

Unfortunately, we find our national situation, which is revealed before our eyes, to be sad once again. But before reflecting on this and making suggestions, we consider it necessary to clarify the basis that led to our suggestions, so that the broader picture and the actions we should take are clearer. Let's start with the global picture that led to our situation.

With the demolition of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union, a new world order began to take shape. In a very short time, the USA became the sole ruler of the world. There were even statements that with the victory of liberal democracy, which the USA professed, the evolutionary process of history had reached its end. Soon, however, it became clear that the uni-polar world led by the USA is returning to a bi-polar situation with the strengthening of China.

Taking advantage of the Sino-Soviet conflict of 1969, the US took an unprecedented step with the Nixon-Mao Zedong meeting in 1972, thus driving a wedge into the left-wing camp led by the Soviet Union. Less than twenty years later, the Soviet Union collapsed. At present, when China is the leader of the left camp, why didn't the USA try to woo Russia as it did with China in 1972, but instead tries to neutralize or subjugate it (through the war in Ukraine)? Do the US missteps taken during Yeltsin's administration that led to the rise of the Putin phenomena obstruct the use of such a strategy this time around?

It should be clear to all of us that for some twenty years, in our depiction, a "silent war" is being waged between China and the USA. However, that became "noisy" with the flaring up of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. This "silent war" is characterized by the US expansion of NATO since 1999 and the founding of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) by China in 2001, as well as its "Belt and Road" initiative since 2013. In connection with these developments, it is also worth noting that Putin came to power in 1999 and the annexation of Crimea took place in 2014.

All countries are trying to take advantage of these developments on the world stage, pursuing their national interests. When we have the Caucasus region in front of our eyes, we will see that Turkey is the best beneficiary of this situation so far. Turkey, which failed to join the European Union (Westward direction), Turkey, which failed to become the leader of the Islamic and Arab world (Eastward direction), has already achieved some success in the Caucasus region, subduing Azerbaijan and sharpening its Pan Turanism appetites. In the bi-polar (NATO-SCO) world that is being formed, a very sensitive role has been assigned to Turkey, which, as a member of NATO, wants to cooperate with the SCO as well. It should be noted that the SCO consists of the following members: China, Russia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, as well as India and Pakistan, which joined in 2017, and Iran, whose membership will be confirmed after April 2023. More than half of the world's population is in these countries. Turkey can not become a member of the SCO without getting out of NATO. A scenario, which we find very farfetched, because joining SCO will not enhance its Pan Turanism dreams, and on the contrary, it may also put its territorial integrity in danger, by the creation of a Kurdistan provoked by the USA.

Armenia needs to be careful in how it positions itself on this geopolitical stage. US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visits to Ukraine (April 30-May 2), Taiwan (August 2-4) and Armenia (September 17-18) should also be viewed in this light. With regards to Armenia, it is worth noting that the largest embassies of the USA and China in the Eurasian region are located in Yerevan. It is also worth mentioning the appointment of the US Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, high-ranking diplomat Philip Ricker, as OSCE Co-Chairman; the opening of the Iranian consulate in Kapan; the visit of the Chinese ambassador to Armenia to Syunik; the visits of the US and Russian intelligence chiefs to Armenia within 3 days of each other; and the visits of many other high-ranking leaders to Armenia. These indicate Armenia's relation to global developments is quite ingrained, forcing us to act with extreme seriousness and caution, always guided by the principle of prioritizing our state interests.

But what do we witness? Unfortunately, once again we are stuck in the abyss of pursuing our individual and clannish interests. In our opinion, this national disease of ours is one of the main reasons why we have remained a "small nation" over the centuries. For reference, let's mention only a few major examples. Six of the last eight kings of the Arshakuny dynasty (66-428 AD) did not end their reign by natural death, falling victim to internal conspiracies (murder, capture, blinding, and abdication). Naturally, that led to the demise of the kingdom. The liberation struggle led by Davit Bek and Mkhitar Sparapet at the beginning of the 18th century was aborted by the assassination of the latter due to an internal conspiracy. A more recent example is the Oct. 27, 1999 massacre of the National Assembly, which beheaded our newly independent statehood. Why have we not learned from these experiences? Because among us there are opportunistic, imperious and arrogant people who, by becoming tools in the hands of foreign powers, have pursued their own selfish interests and trampled over our national interests. The 44-day war revealed that disease once again. It is a pity that such people would not receive nationwide condemnation, giving the opportunity for new offspring of that sort. That is why, according to Khorenatsi, we are ruled by evil-hearted kings. It is also a pity that we lack the high culture of objectively examining the issues and making decisions accordingly. Instead, profanity and mudslinging abound. Don't those who behave like that realize that they are simply discrediting themselves, not their targets? Is this the true picture of our nation? We arrogantly talk about being an ancient nation, having exceptional gifts and having contributed many benefits to world civilization, but we cannot tolerate each other and fail to strengthen our statehood through the joint efforts of the whole nation.

Unfortunately, that is the dominant image of our nation. But in this ugly and sad situation, we also see the wonderful and the noble, in the role of the soldiers of our army. Those who defend our nation and punish the aggressor must necessarily be noble and brave. In order to get out of the current situation in the most advantageous way, our main hope remains our army. We should strengthen our army by all means, endowing it with modern weapons and patriotic and accomplished commanders. When we succeed in doing that, we will regain our dignity, which has been seriously injured. Only in this way can we heal our pain and proudly celebrate our independence.

NB ***This is an expanded version of the speech given on 18 September 2022 at the rally held in Glendale.***

Comments

Hagop Toroyan – 2022-10-10 08:01:43
Dear Harut, What you have described is the typical human behavior. The picture in Lebanon is no different, neither Syria, Iraq, Yemen, etc. Armenia's geographical location is unlike any other nation. We are stuck among very aggressive nations, whether 2000 years ago or now. As people, we are not different than any other nation, but they all have advantages, whether with natural resources, geographical boundaries, etc. We should be smart to go beyond self-pity. What can we do today to get out of this chaotic situation? I wish I knew the answer. Recently, Raffi Hovhannisian of Heritage party gave an interview. One important remark that he made was, "all previous presidents made grave mistakes, they need to come forward and ask for forgiveness" (not the exact words). That needs humility, which we should have learned from being so called "the first Christian nation". We should stop living in myths, lies and in the past. Imagine, I stopped listening and reading any news channels from Armenia, I leave to you to make the judgement.

Sebouh Baghdoyan – 2022-10-10 04:42:52
Dear Harut, At this highly critical and extremely dangerous stage, all and everything should be feasible to undertake to ensure the unity of our nation through the a) fusion of the two catholicosates, thereby appointing H.H. Catholicos Aram I as Catholicos Coadjutor and H.H. Karekin II as the sole Head of the Armenian Apostolic Church and converting the Catholicosate in Antelias into a Patriarchate; b) joint appeal and declaration of all political parties (both in Armenia and in the Diaspora) to unite their activities towards the strengthening of our national security; c) obligation of and the demanding from all Diaspora Armenians (regardless of their welfare and social status, to immediately contribute towards real improvement of the Armenian army and the economy. I am afraid, we seem to be already too late and the threat of losing everything (country, statehood, nation, Artsakh, Diaspora) is very imminent.