OPPORTUNITY LOST

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Category: Opinions

By Bedros Magarian, Toronto, 7 November 2023

Since Sept. 19, Armenians in Armenia and in the Diaspora have been moaning, beating their chests and asking how did we let the Sept. 19 disaster happen and what could we have done to have prevented the calamity. We can guess what the 120,000 Artsakh refugees in Armenia and their imprisoned leaders are thinking.

Some readers would accuse me of Monday morning quarterbacking. I will acknowledge such accusation without rancor. Over the years, I have shared the below ideas with friends and colleagues.

Let's go back, for a brief moment, to the immediate post-Artsakh liberation war (1994). Although we had won, our leaders realized the victory was not sustainable: because the oil-rich enemy, which had more than three times our population, was in the driver's seat and could buy far more modern weapons than we could. And of course there was another factor: Erdogan's Turkey. More than once, Turkey's dictator and the Azeri dictator described their countries' relationship as "two states, one nation."

Thus, under the aegis of Russia and France, we began negotiating with Azerbaijan about the fate of Artsakh. Lolling in oil, from day one Baby Aliyev insisted all of Artsakh belonged to Azerbaijan. We have no idea what went on during the interminable negotiations.

With billions of dollars in his pocket and the latest in Israeli weapons in his hands, Aliyev could afford to be obdurate. Besides, he was getting stronger everyday thanks to Israeli and Turkish military support, intelligence, and training.

Although it was the temperamental and undiplomatic Pashinyan whose numbskull declaration that "Artsakh is Armenia" precipitated the 2020 November war, logic would suggest Aliyev was getting impatient to wrest Artsakh from the Armenians.

Armenian politicians—in Armenia and in Artsakh—should have realized that times was on the Azeri side: the negotiations were not open-ended. Someday—not in the distant future--the Azeris would attack. Our politicians should have taken advantage of our solid presence in Artsakh and made the following proposal to the Azeris: THE 120,000 ARTSAKH ARMENIANS WOULD VOLUNTARILY EVACUATE THEIR COUNTRY AND MOVE TO ARMENIA IF ALIYEV PAID A $3 OR $4 BILLION COMPENSATION TO ARTSAKH ARMENIANS FOR LOSS OF LAND AND COUNTRY.

Considering the cost of waging war in addition to the loss of soldiers, multi-billionaire Aliyev might have accepted our offer. The deal would also have prevented Artsakh Armenians' loss of life, widespread injury, and misery as a result of their violent dislocation.

Comments



Kegham Papazian – 2023-11-17 14:20:23
An Armenian proposal to the Azeris: "THE 120,000 ARTSAKH ARMENIANS WOULD VOLUNTARILY EVACUATE THEIR COUNTRY AND MOVE TO ARMENIA IF ALIYEV PAID A $3 OR $4 BILLION COMPENSATION TO ARTSAKH ARMENIANS FOR LOSS OF LAND AND COUNTRY" Really? The centuries old Armenian land of Artsakh is not for sale. Money can't buy. How much would Azeris pay for the loss of the cultural heritage of Artsakh, the centuries old Armenian churches, monasteries, monuments, Khachkars etc.? They are already removing the crosses from the domes of Armenian churches in Stepanakert and elsewhere. Even one square meter of Armenian land is priceless. Հայաստանի ղեկավարութիւնը Արցախէն ձեռքը քաշեց ու թոթուեց եւ վարչապետը յայտարարեց թէ Արցախը Ազրպէյճանի կը պատկանի: Այս յստակ նշան էր որ հրամմէ, Արցախին վրայ յարձակէ եւ ետ ար, մենք որեւէ անպատեհութիւն չենք տեսներ: Թշնամին փոխանակ սպասելու մինչեւ 2025 անմիջապես շարժեցաւ եւ գրաւեց Արցախը:



Antranig Bedrossian – 2023-11-16 11:03:06
Another words, abandon homeland in exchange for compensation. With this logic,we can also give Siunik and Meghri to Azerbaijan and move out. No Mr Margarian, homeland cannot be sold or traded. Artsakh and Nakhijevan are part of the Armenian homeland. Our duty is now to defend the right of return of Artsakh Armenians as a separate Armenian entity and not as Azerbaijani citizens. The Armenian position must be reversed. This kind of thinking leads into loss of Armenia in the long run. Therefore it is unacceptable.