MATTHEW BRYZA - TENDER MERCIES 112 YEARS LATER!

Posted on August 11, 2009 by Keghart



DAME EUROPA: "Don't cry, my little man. I've asked this nice, kind Turkish Policeman to stay and take care of you!"

(*From London Punch, March* 13, 1897.)

Category: Opinions

By Masis Babajanian MD, USA, 8 August 2009

I write to submit a firm response to Mr. Bryza's vision, perspective, and stance.

Let me begin by stating that the Armenian people, as a whole, have endured 3000 years of brutality upon their homeland and thus have lost trust in any negotiations with their surrounding neighbors. To come in from over 5000 miles away and establish oneself as a biased, key mediator in this process is naive and unrealistic. However, we do appreciate any efforts to maintain peace there.

Let all those involved bear in mind the manner in which wars have been fought throughout history, including World Wars I and II. The victor has set the terms of the negotiations in any post war treaty. This occurred in the Treaty of Versailles (where Armenians were shortchanged) and in the Potsdam Agreement. The Armenians won the war in Karabakh; thus they are in the position to set the terms of the agreement.
Let no Armenian or non-Armenian forget this fact. This principle cannot be bought with oil, money, pressure, or intimidation. Whoever sacrifices this principle will ultimately lose political or negotiating position -- people who have shed their blood will topple this stance -- that is what nature dictates.

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It is the Armenians' firm belief that Karabakh's self determination be preserved. The territorial integrity of Azerbaijan is a farce. Five hundred years ago Azerbaijan did not exist. Republics in the Soviet Union came and went under Stalin -- there was no territorial integrity then. Did Britain have

any territorial integrity in the US colonies? Did Yugoslavia have any territorial integrity? Does Iraq have any territorial integrity? Territorial integrity comes from an independent country safeguarding its people and protecting them. Once a country raises arms against its people, it loses the principle of territorial integrity.

Any concessions of land must be voluntarily offerred by Armenia in order to safeguard its established territories and independence. This should be done in one package. As a nation we may consider it worthwhile to give up some territory for international recognition of Karabakh, international assistance to Karabakh, and international relations with Karabakh. Any concessions should provide ample geographical contact between Karabakh and Armenia. Any territorial concessions should provide a buffer zone (ie Aghdam) between a large city (ie Stepanakert) and Azerbaijan.

Any attempt of settlements within Karabakh will result in a major disaster. Whoever formulates this plan will have to assume the responsibility of the carnage that will ensue. An Azeri resettling in Karabakh is certain to cause turmoil. The Azeris will resume their behavior of raping their Armenian neighbors and throwing their infants out of high rise windows. Armenians will retaliate just like before. The area will see enormous bloodshed, with Azeris ultimately losing, as before. Settlements will fail as they have in the West bank. Resettling Azeris in Karabakh should be out of the question.

Let Mr. Aliyev understand that his war threats do not intimidate us. If he elects to resolve this problem by war or aggression, the territorial border between Karabakh and Azerbaijan will be expanded into Azerbaijani lands with further loss of territory. He did get a taste of this as he tried to attack Karabakh during Armenia's election turmoil. We have already beaten him twice.

We hope the elected Armenian government will uphold the will of its people, the self-determination of Karabakh, its security and international recognition of Karabakh. If it succumbs to external pressures and sacrifices these principles, it will crumble through internal pressures and be replaced. The silence it has displayed over the last few months has been exceedingly disturbing to us all. We hope it is formulating a useful strategy during this period of "hibernation."