

THE NEED FOR THE REAL NAGORNO-KARABAKH STORY TO BE TOLD

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Joachim Hagopian, LewRockwell.com, 9 April 2016

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Azerbaijan's latest violent escalation was gleefully egged on by Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu:

The whole world should know that Turkey will stand shoulder to shoulder with Azerbaijan against these Armenian attacks until the end of the world. Our 78 million-strong population will continue to stand on Azerbaijan's side until all of its lands under occupation have been liberated.

To understand today's dynamics, a brief account of a longer history of the region is necessary. The first twentieth-century genocide was grinding to a bloody halt as the Ottoman Turks during World War I from April 24, 1915, to 1917 slaughtered and massacred a million and a half Armenian people inhabiting mostly in eastern Turkey. That's one-third of the total Armenian population wiped off the face of the earth in a matter of three years! Three-quarters of a million Armenians died of starvation or dehydration along the brutally forced deportation march en route to the Syrian Desert and onto Aleppo, many shots or cut down by Turkish soldiers' bayonets while others threw themselves into the bloodied red Euphrates River to die volitionally by drowning.

A large diaspora of Armenian people whose ancestors declared the first Christian state in 301 AD were forced to escape for their lives from their ancient homeland dating back to Noah and his ark of which remnants are believed still partially preserved in ice on nearby Mount Ararat. Near a decade ago an expedition claimed they found the ark at the 13,000 foot level of the mountain. Encyclopedia Britannica cites traditional Armenian roots can be traced to Noah's great-grandsons Togarmah and Ashkenaz. Over eight million Armenians spread throughout the region and beyond to 85 nations around the world today while less than 3 million live in the small Eurasian country in the South Caucasus sharing a border with Turkey to its west, Georgia to its north, Azerbaijan to its east and Iran to its south. Small landlocked Armenia is the only Christian nation throughout the Middle East (though Georgia to the north is predominantly Christian as well) surrounded by mostly unfriendly,

hostile Muslim neighbors (particularly to the east and west).

With the October 1917 Bolshevik Revolution breaking up the czarist Russian Empire, Armenia declared its independence in May 1918 only to be invaded and overtaken by the Soviet Red Army in late 1920. Bolshevik leader Nicolai Lenin's underling at the time, Georgian Josef Stalin, double-crossed Nagorno-Karabakh residents misleading the Armenian majority there into believing they would be part of an Armenian outer state republic. But then as a "divide and rule" arrangement it was designated as territory belonging to the Azerbaijan Socialist Soviet Republic subjected to harsh Islamic authority of the Turkish Azeris as part of the larger Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. From the geopolitical outset, it was clear the Soviet Communists intended to keep the Christian Armenians and the Muslim Turk-related Azeris at odds fighting each other so that Moscow could easily impose its brutal will over its burgeoning puppet state empire. The Soviet Red Army seized the first Republic of Armenia for itself in December 1920 relegating it also to subservient status as the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic under the ironclad Communist rule for nearly the next three-quarters of a century.

One can readily see then that the 1994 truce could hardly be considered a final solution to this ongoing conflict over this disputed little patch of land known as Nagorno-Karabakh. For 22 straight years, soldiers on each side of the border have off and on been exchanging gunfire in skirmishes and occasional Azeri provocateur incursions into the region with fatalities accumulating on both sides. And throughout this period of unrest, harkening back to earlier times, Russia has continued playing its divisive role of increasingly selling arms to both sides (announced in 2013 \$4 billion worth of modern weapons that include heavy artillery, tanks, armored personnel carriers and S-300 missile defense systems to its defense pact ally Armenia's enemy the Azeris) knowing full well they'll be used to kill each other. In addition, Israel sold \$1.6 billion worth of drones and anti-tank missiles to the oil-rich Baku government.

And now over this last weekend, the bloodiest fighting since the war ended over two decades ago began just hours after the Azeri president spoke to two top US Empire leaders Biden and Kerry. Such incredibly close time proximity indicates Azerbaijan's military offensive was more than likely granted the greenlight by Washington. The Armenian National Committee of America Executive Director Aram Hamparian said:

The Obama Administration's failure, in Washington, to confront Azerbaijan's aggression gave Aliyev the greenlight to launch these attacks on Karabakh.

After Hillary and Nuland's unlawfully overthrew Ukraine's democratically elected leader in February 2014 and installed their corrupt neo-Nazi puppet regime in Kiev, Putin beat Empire to the punch by ensuring that the US did not seize Russia's naval base in Crimea. Putin's defensive protection of his critically strategic Black Sea naval port along with Crimea's ethnic Russians who'd overwhelmingly voted to be annexed by Russia (not unlike Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh) since Crimea had already been part of Russia since the 18th century. Yet it became the exclusionary basis for both the

West's demonization of the Russian leader and false pretense for resurrecting a second cold war that's shattered global security and only polarized and heightened international tensions. US Empire has supported Ukraine's ethnic cleansing campaigns in the eastern Donbas region but despite sending its advisors and arms, Kiev has become mired in a stalemated war of attrition while the Kiev government has sunk deep into bankruptcy as yet another Empire destroyed the nation. Global destabilization as an operating agenda works perfectly for the Empire of Chaos and Destruction doing what it does best.

Since the end of World War II the US Empire has refused to peaceably share power in the world, so its cold war strategy has been a relentless attempt to isolate and weaken both Russia and China by willfully turning every nation at their border hostile as the neocons perceive Russia and China as Empire's biggest threat to unipolar global hegemony. South Caucasus nations bordering Russia are central to that neocon endgame using them as anti-Russian pawns near Moscow's doorstep much like the Eastern European NATO membered vassals were manipulated into installing US-made nuclear missiles pointed directly at Russia. So when Nuland, Clinton, and Kerry make their globetrotting rounds courting Eurasian and Central Asian countries to join Empire's anti-Putin fan club, if any dare to refuse like Armenia, they too become Empire enemies targeted in its imperialistic crosshairs. While Armenia's east, north and west neighbors in Azerbaijan, Georgia and NATO member Turkey have largely shifted away from Russia and embraced the US-NATO alliance, Armenia having closer ties to Russia is deemed having joined the enemy camp.

The BTC (Baku through Tbilisi to Ceyhan, Turkey) pipeline running from Azerbaijan through the Georgian capital of Turkey dating back to the Bill Clinton era was designed to compete and help cut off Russia's main gas export to Western Europe. Originally proposed as a straight line through Armenia was nixed by Aliyev, then a proposal through Azerbaijan a few miles from the NG hot zone was deemed too risky. Hence, the out of the way far more costly loop northward into Georgia due to Azeri landlocked oil-less little enemy Armenia and its confounded little Armenian enclave. After nearly \$4 billion invested of big US energy money, the BTC was flowing fully operational by 2005.

After Obama and his neocons have repeatedly been outmaneuvered, outclassed and outplayed by grandmaster Putin at every turn from Ukraine to Syria, they and their corrupt despot Islamic allies ISIS, Turkey and Saudi Arabia are clearly becoming more unglued, erratically unstable and unpredictable. With Russia and Syria wiping out what's left of the US created and supported terrorists still dying and fleeing from Syria to other neighboring countries conceivably showing up in Nagorno-Karabakh, it's desperado time for US Empire to turn up the heat on long-simmering hostilities at yet another global hotspot between brethren Turks on Armenia's east-west flanks. Hothead Erdogan has resorted to turning up the rhetoric to spur Aliyev on, brazenly calling for a fight to the end to liberate all lost Azeri land timed just two weeks prior to the 101st anniversary of the Armenian genocide.

Every year mounting pressures ratchet up to call the bludgeoning massacres a century ago a

genocide. Still pissed over being snubbed during his recent trip to Washington when no official state visit with Obama was arranged, it appears as though Erdogan may be lashing out at all his critics on both sides of the Atlantic by reverting to using his offensive attacks as his best line of defense. Resuming the killing of Armenians today automatically makes classifying what happened a century ago a moot point.

Regarding Obama and his silence foregoing the use of the g-word on last year's historic Remembrance Day centennial, Obama has needed Turkey as a NATO ally for military purposes to strategically control the Middle East. Thus in his psychopathic world, geopolitics always will take priority over ethics. So what else is new? Obama has refused to publicly acknowledge the genocide for what it is despite the fact that 27 other much more morally grounded nations already have. But now with this latest aggression and bloodshed spilled in Nagorno-Karabakh, what's new is the deputy mayor of the southern French city Marseilles and MP of France's National Assembly Valérie Boyer has just gone on record stating:

Nagorno-Karabakh is a de facto independent state. It's time to recognize it.

With tensions have been building between Putin and Erdogan ever since Turkey's US-NATO approved act of war shooting down that Russian jet last November, Putin putting a damper on the Erdogan family's illegal oil business bombing the terrorist caravans and recent Turkish threats to invade Syria to save the last of its Islamic State terrorists still fighting against Assad. As a precautionary measure, Putin has tactically placed S-400 missile defense systems to protect both Syria as well as Armenia where Russia maintains a military base and has recently moved thousands of its troops to the Armenian-Turkish border. Once again it appears as though neocon-led Empire aggressions partnering in cahoots with deranged Muslim dictators are setting up the global chessboard in a frenzied attempt to bait Putin into starting World War III. But all this floundering actually signifies the increasingly desperate acts that only demonstrate that the tide is rapidly turning against the globalist supported neocons now flailing in fits of rage to wreak global havoc as their puppet masters are clearly on the run.

The Minsk Group that has been the diplomatic body assigned to resolve this conflict for years now is co-chaired by the US, Russia, and France. Because the precedent of a 95% population of one ethnic group administratively governed by the 5% other ethnic group is inherently unfair, unfeasible and never acceptable by any and all ethical standards, returning the enclave over to Azerbaijan would never work as a peaceful, equitable resolution. Since the enclave's residents have called Artsakh (NK's Armenian name) their home for numerous centuries, the original mistake was made by Stalin assigning the region under Azerbaijan's jurisdictional authority.

The Marseille mayor called it correctly, recognizing Nagorno-Karabakh as a legitimate de facto independent entity that reserves the right to be part of the Republic of Armenia. Just days prior to the Soviet Union's dissolution Moscow was planning to designate the region as part of Armenia

anyway. It should have never been handed over to Azerbaijan in the first place, and then a quarter century ago it was about to happen but didn't. Twice it failed to be judiciously granted unequivocal self-governing authority to be part of Armenia. So better late than never, let's finally get it right and be done with it. Of course the apparent animosity and hatred that too many Azeris and Turks possess towards Armenians and to some extent vice versa, that kind of religious and/or ethnic bigotry is fundamentally wrong and individuals predisposed to hate need to evolve beyond their prejudice and discrimination.

Over the last several days there's been a virtual blackout of truthful information covering unfolding events in Nagorno-Karabakh being dispensed to the Western populations. And predictably what has been reported by mainstream media is just more of the same old, same old twisted propaganda lies supporting neocons' ruthless recklessness and Empire overreach in its tiresome efforts to provoke Putin into retaliating so he can be blamed for the next world war. Access to firsthand on-the-ground accounts documenting unprovoked Azeri aggression carried out in Azerbaijan's attacks on civilian Armenians living in the disputed region have been off-limits to Western journalists.

Yet there remain brave eyewitnesses reporting continued widespread violence despite Tuesday's announced ceasefire. Legions of determined citizens are translating firsthand observations into English so the rest of the world can bear witness to the atrocities now being committed in spite of America's covertly sinister collusion protecting the perpetrators by deliberately withholding and obstructing the truth from being revealed to the concerned waiting world. Thus far what we do know is dozens on each side have been killed including Armenian civilians living in enclave villages that have been seized by Azeri forces. Damaged residential homes, downed helicopters and drones, tanks and armored carriers have all been destroyed. Detailed accounts of what's been transgressing in the war-torn villages of Nagorny-Karabakh will soon be emerging to incriminate the Azeri forces of war crime aggressors. Stay tuned.

