IRRATIONAL PASHINYAN IGNORES REALITY

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Category: Opinions

By Jirair Tutunjian, Toronto, 1 November 2023

> *During an interview, two weeks ago, with* Horizon TV *of Los Angeles (see the Armenian section in this issue) I criticized Pashinyan's feud with Putin. Due to limited time, I didn't have the opportunity to discuss the economic ties between Armenia and Russia. Had time permitted, I would have mentioned the below facts.,*

Armenians in Armenia and in the Diaspora are divided on their views regarding Pashinyan's policy to wrest away Armenia from Russia and change Yerevan's political orientation. The undiplomatic, erratic, and inept Pashinyan's geopolitical designs collapse into nonsense when one considers the economic ties between Armenia and Russia.

Consider the below figures:

--Russia buys 40 percent of Armenia's exports.

--Gazprom Armenia, a subsidiary of the Russian Gazprom company, owns 100 percent of Armenia's gas distribution infrastructure.

--Medzamor can't function without Russian support

--Moscow has near monopoly of grain and petroleum exports to Armenia.

--Armenia overwhelmingly depends on Russia for basic goods. The alternative is to buy from genocidier Turkey. The west disapproves Armenia trade with Iran because the latter has been sanctioned by America & Co.

--Hundreds of thousands of Armenians working in Russia send approximately $3.6 billion a year to their families in Armenia. The total annual money entering Armenia is $5.1. Russian can order Armenian "guest workers" to go home.

--In 2022, trade between Armenia and Russia doubled to nearly $5.3 billion and Armenia's exports to Russia tripled from 850 million to $2.4 billion in 2023. Some analysts claim the huge increase is a result of West's sanctions against Russia. Moscow is buying western goods, these commentators claim, through Armenia. Meanwhile Armenia's imports from Russia have soared 157 percent to $2.87 billion.

In a recent interview, Armenia's Finance Minister Vahe Hovhannesyan revealed Armenia's exports to Russia in the first six months of this year went up 215% compared to the same period in 2022. An encouraging statistic is that 55 percent of Armenia's exports to Russia were finished goods rather than raw materials.

A great many Armenian men who work in Russia, particularly in Moscow, are taxi drivers and drivers of other commercial vehicles. In retaliation for Pashinyan's irrational and delusional anti-Russia pronouncements, the Duma postponed recognizing Armenia driver licenses of taxi and commercial

vehicle drivers. An unknown number of Armenian drivers would lose their livelihood if the Duma votes Armenia-issued driver licenses null and void.

If Russia introduces sanctions, they will be extremely painful for Armenia, says economist Suren Parsyan, adding that there's little prospect of redirecting these goods to western markets. "Quality standards are different. It would require overhauling whole sections of the economy, which is a complicated and time-consuming process." And during the wholesale transition many businesses will close, which would cause growth in unemployment and a worsening socio-economic situation. There has not been a real attempt by the Armenian authorities to diversify the country's economic profile, upgrade products, and reduce its dependence on Moscow.

Considering the above facts and figures one wonders whether anti-Russian Pashinyan lives in some cave where he receives coded messages from a guru on a remote galaxy who dislikes Tolstoy, Tchaikovsky, Pirozhki and Pelmeni, caviar, ikons and…Armenians.

Comments



John Aidiniantz – 2023-11-22 03:47:36

Under the previous governments of Armenia - Sargsyan and Kocharian - I read that protesters were shot at and killed in the streets; the "Minister of Culture" threatened electricity workers with a gun due to a power cut which had spoiled his Christmas dinner; and an innocent man was murdered in the toilets of a restaurant by Kocharyan's bodyguards while he and his fellow mobsters continued eating their meal! These are just some examples and until Pashinysn starts to behave in a similar manner then I think I would rather see him in power than the gangsters who previously ran the country and who were eventually voted out in a free election.



Vrej M – 2023-11-03 22:53:09

It is my understanding that it is Russia, during soviet times, that gave Artsakh to Azerbaijan, they gave Javakh to Georgia, they gave some land to Turkey. Nothing was given to Armenia. Russia could just state that they gave those lands away and that they are the source of the problems. I think when the Soviet Union collapsed, the UN simply decided that there would be no exchange of lands. That is my guess. "The French are selling weapons only because of the French-Armenian vote. " ==It is my understanding that France offered to send soldiers and Pashinyan refused. That they offered weapons and Pashinyan refused. "When we lost 5,000 to 6,000 in 2020 the West's media was silent." ==Yes, I find this rather strange. I have to wonder whether top government officials are giving orders to the media to ignore certain news. Either that or someone needs to tell them what is going on. If you don't tell your colleagues that it is your birthday, how would they know? News spreads because people talk about it and spread it. When I make comments on Youtube, on various channels, most people just ignore. Armenia means nothing to them. I understand. They have never heard of it and it is just some remote country. Russia sold weapons to Azerbaijan and trained them. What kind of partner is that? Apparently, Armenia has bought weapons from Russia (before their Ukraine war) and they never delivered. Apparently, Armenia bought weapons from India, it reached the port of Georgia and the Russians blocked it. It looks to me that Russia is helping Azerbaijan. I know that the Armenian economy is something to worry about but it looks like Turkey and Azerbaijan and Russia are collaborating to wipe Armenia off the map. If Russia wants to ban Armenians, Armenia can block them from trading with Iran. For Gazprom, Iran had offered to sell natural gas to Armenia for a fraction of the price but Armenia still went with Russia. In short, Armenia's problems have started by Russia. It is also unfortunate that the west cares so little about Armenia, which probably has saved them (Europe) for thousands of years by fighting against Arabs, Iranians, Mongols and turks.



Jirair – 2023-11-03 18:28:53

Vahe, Although you provide no evidence that abductions took place "with the blessing of Russia," I will consider it a fact and move on. Our history with Russia goes back more than 200 years. They have always been the dominant and often repressive partner. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Russians remained friends although many Russians, to this day, believe it was Armenia/Artsakh which precipitated the collapse of the Soviet Union. Although justice and truth back our contention that Artsakh belongs to us, the 190 members of the UN maintain it belongs to Azerbaijan. Rather than agree with the world, Russia co-sponsored Armenia/Azerbaijan negotiations about the future of Artsakh. Russians knew Kocharian and Sargsyan were playing for time. The Russians pretended they believed in the negotiations. Then came Pashinyan, the inept and undiplomatic Boy Scout with Messianic pretensions. He decided to break away from Russia and join the West. But being a bundle or nerves rather than a mature man, Pashinyan began to badmouth the Russians before having guaranteed a welcome from the West. After the West gave him the cold shoulder, Pashinyan finds himself suspended: on one side an indifferent West and on the other an offended Putin. Meanwhile, Putin is punishing Armenia with hopes that Armenians will topple Pashinyan. I understand there are clandestine groups in Armenia which are planning just that.



Vahe – 2023-11-03 12:28:08

Jirair Indeed, it was redundant to re-state what we know and see in plain daylight, as we see the seven Armenian officials abducted and taken to Baku along with Nagorno Karabakh Oblast, with the blessing of Russia. But you did not counter with the vital Russian interests that Armenia is undermining, other than the impression you left, that Armenian's overture is not pleasing to Russian overlord's taste buds. Is that it all about, not pleasing the Russian overlord?



Harry Avanessian – 2023-11-03 00:08:32

Nikol is a criminal that should have been kicked out of power long time ago. He has made so many terrible decisions and humiliates Armenians all over the world. He is disingenuous, deceitful and toxic.



Jirair – 2023-11-02 23:24:57

Vahe, It would be redundant to say that we all want a free and strong homeland. But Armenia's unfortunate circumstances require a circumspect leader and not a bundle of nerves who is inept, radiates a Messiah complex and has no idea that the West will not help us. The French are selling weapons only because of the French-Armenian vote. When we lost 5,000 to 6,000 in 2020 the West's media was silent. Recently, because Canadian Armenians made representation, Ottawa promised to send a grand total of $4 million to the Artsakh refugees. Meanwhile, the U.S. Secretary of State says he believes Azerbaijan will attack Armenia but doesn't condemn, let alone say Americans wouldn't allow such an outrage.



Vahe H. Apelian – 2023-11-02 22:53:26

“We only want that which is given naturally to all peoples of the world, to be masters of our own fate, not of others, and in cooperation and friendship with others.” It does not matter who said it. Why would it matter? I quoted because that is how I receive Armenia’s policy, unlike your exaggerated depiction, Jirair. Russia still maintains the largest military force in the Caucasus in Armenia. Russia/Russians continues to own the Armenian post office, along with many other businesses. Armenia continues to buy its gas from Russia at fair competitive price. The two countries still have no visa required to travel. Many Russians continue to visit Armenia and set up businesses. Let us be mindful, much like in Russia, there are also millions of Armenians who live in the west and help Armenian citizens in many ways. What harm has Armenia opening to west caused to Russia’s vital interests? (I do not have sufficient knowledge to weigh the implication of the IC ruling against all that is bi lateral between Russia and Armenia). . Armenia is a viable homeland for all Aremians as long as it is the master “ of its own fate, not of others, and in COOPERATION AND FRIENDSHIP with others.”