WAR IN UKRAINE: PROSPECTS AND OUTCOMES

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Category: Opinions

Neutrality during clash of civilizations will still subject you to the winning world-order

By Vah Iri, Toronto

As the world is continuing to navigate through the ever-escalating Russian-Ukrainian war, some important questions need to be analyzed. What is next to come? How did the world let this happen? What would be Armenia's official position? What about Armenia's parliamentary opposition?

It seems in a matter of hours the entire world seemed to be united in support of Ukraine, condemning the aggressor. One after another leaders of the free world threw their unconditional support behind Ukraine's struggle for independence. This includes the governments and surprisingly the big-name corporations. It looks like the world is re-grouped into two distinct sides of the conflict. Collective West (though it includes eastern nations like Japan, Singapore, Taiwan) versus Russia and its allies (most notably Turkey). President Biden firmly mentioned in his State of the Union address that he sees this as a fight for freedom and whoever is on the wrong side will have to share the consequences with Russia.

Which brings us to our main point. What about Armenia then? Where are we positioning ourselves or where should we see ourselves? When it comes to Armenia, our officials were silent. Following the local news, one might have thought the country lives in a different universe. Frontlines of editorials would briefly mention war in Ukraine. As for the public, it was kept busy discussing totally unimportant subjects.

Some amongst us would argue that such a weak and militarily defeated state should stay quiet as the grave. That we are in such a vulnerable position that taking sides risks the existence of our statehood more (irrespective of outcome) than staying neutral. This could have been a valid position if not for several contradictions. Let's go through them quickly.

There are grave risks for Armenians and Armenia if Ukraine and the Collective West wins. The biggest risk factor here is that the current regime in Armenia is supported by Kremlin and plays along the Russian-Turkish alliance. With such official representation if Armenia/Armenians want to be prepared for West's victory, we should consider supporting these small and still marginal political/social groups in Armenia that have a clear pro-western attitude. In the end who would vouch a word for us in a new world-order where the West is the clear winner? Our government is showing unconditional support for Putin and his actions all around the world (recently sending troops to Kazakhstan is a prime example). How would such a government even work with the West? The risks involved can be mitigated with having reasonably strong pro-western opposition, ready and willing to take power when the right time comes, and the region gets hit with a power vacuum after Russia's defeat. Ethem Sancak, a close friend of Erdogan and a Turkish mega-oligarch in his recent interview with Russian RBK https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RBK_Group speaks about this possibility openly. In his own words "Turkey will be dismembered if West wins and Russia loses, and same goes the other way, if Turkey loses, Russia will be dismembered".

The other scenario is Russia's victory of this round of the new Cold War (just like in 1960s and 1970s) throwing USA and the west off its seat of superpower for the next decade or two. This scenario is what many Armenians believe is a safer exit for Armenia. Because our people still dream of the relatively stable and prosperous 1970s and 1980s of soviet times. And yet within it lays a grave mistake of not understanding what Russia's true intentions are in case of winning. And make no mistake Putin made it clear many times during his public speeches. The last time was the day before the attack began in his one-hour long history "lecture"; where he laid out what he and his regime think were fatal mistakes of Soviet leadership, leading to the collapse of the Empire. In his own words "unnecessary liberalism towards national question, which put a time bomb set under Russian Empire of the time called Soviet Union and eventually brought it down". Thus, the way Putin sees as reincarnation of the Empire is not the Neo Soviet Union with its relatively liberal policies towards "little-brother" nations like Armenia, Georgia and such, but much more centrally vertical, brutally Russified and unitarian state, e.g., Neo Tsarist Russia. And our history is full of examples of how that state would be and what would its "tolerance" level towards Armenians be as a separate nation, separate identity, language, Church and future. 'Russkiy Mir' (Russian World) as Putin calls it today, is exactly this. Thus, this should be considered a much greater risk to our nation, and one should admit such risks are hardly even mitigable.

Next, I want to also mention few things about Ukraine. For now, Ukraine's struggle seems strong. At the time of this writing, a few pages long list of organizations, corporations have already declared their exits, boycott of Russian market. Most of the world's countries are either officially backing or neutral on this conflict. Russian economy is starting to hurt and there is a chance of political elites in Russia emulating power-swap, Putin's removal, and policy change (or a simulation of it) to settle the issue with the West/Ukraine.

And yet I believe one factor here is not discussed and is being downplayed - Turkey. Ukraine's leadership seems to have placed lots of hopes on Turkey and on Erdogan personally, to help them settle with Russians and Putin specifically. And I believe this is the Achilles Heel for Ukraine. Even though Turkey publicly might have supported Ukraine and even sold drones and other military equipment, but their ties with Russia, cemented by the crushing Russian betrayal and defeat of Armenia/Artsakh will play its role in Ukrainian conflict. If negotiations take place in the format of Zelensky-Putin-Erdogan trio, that are now being rumored to happen, there will be two against one and will put Ukraine's leader in a very unfavorable position to force-sign a capitulation.

And lastly there is also a good chance that Zelensky himself in the end is a Kremlin's agent. The reasons behind this goes deep to the 1990s of how the Soviet Union dissolved and how after that the KGB decided to hold power in Russia and in the former client-states through installing its own puppets/agents to power. We got our own version of it straight from Lyubanka: Armenia's first President and his team. And it went from there one after another, KGB puppets placed as heads of states, more and more tightening the KGB's grip over newly independent states.

And if that is the case, then imagine at the negotiating table where Putin, Erdogan and Zelensky are all on one side of the table, and The People of the Ukraine on the other, with no representation. Just like a year ago there was a similar table with Putin, Aliyev and Pashinyan, all three against The People of Armenia/Artsakh.

Pray for Ukrainians.

Comments

Telo & Co – 2022-03-30 23:19:08
Turkey and AZ got the green light to attack Armenia/Artsakh. That was a NATO proxy war against Armenia/Russia. Now Turkey is helping foreign mercenaries enter Ukraine to fight the Russians.
https://www.sott.net/article/466092-New-batch-of-ex-ISIS-members-transferred-from-Syria-to-Ukraine

Patlamish – 2022-03-15 01:27:14
In this excellent interview with Cornell West, you can read about how NATO has the gall to call itself a defender of democracy.
https://www.newyorker.com/culture/the-new-yorker-interview/cornel-west-sees-a-spiritual-decay-in-the-culture

Kevork Papazian – 2022-03-14 13:40:31
I do not condone the Russian invasion of Ukraine nor am I a supporter of President Putin or Russia in general. From my point of view, the real issue here is the NATO expansion towards Russia by constantly including new member states, in spite of previous promises given to Russia not to expand eastward. The same thing happened decades ago when USA did not allow Soviet Union to deploy missiles in Cuba in October 1962, mere miles away from Florida and the mainland. I believe the Russians are feeling threatened by NATO forces and their missiles from being deployed in Ukraine straight on its borders. A Red Line for them in this case, as it was a Red Line for USA during the Cuban Crisis, 13-day political and military standoff in October 1962 over the installation of nuclear-armed Soviet missiles on Cuba, just 90 miles from U.S. shores. The Russians conveyed their concerns to USA and NATO, but they chose to ignore. The question now is who instigated this crisis? Russia or NATO?

Kevork Papazian – 2022-03-14 13:34:33
Where were NATO and the Western countries when Azerbaijan was attacking Artsakh and Armenia? Where was the secretary general of UN Anthony G.? You see them all condemning the Russians, sanctioning etc. but did nothing for Armenians. Another issue: how come NATO started bombing Libya and supporting the so called "rebels" (terrorists) to overthrow Kaddafi, yes who was a dictator. Who gave them the right to interfere and invade another UN member country? Same happened in the 2nd Iraq War on the pretext of weapons of mass destruction? and yes Saddam Hussein was a dictator. Also bombing Syria on behalf of Israel to dethrone Assad. Look What happened to these three countries. Total destruction, lawlessness, poverty and the rise of terrorism.

Perouz – 2022-03-10 21:43:26
The following excerpt is taken from a March 10, 2022 National Post newspaper article written by Terry Glavin. The Honourable Stéphane Dion is Ambassador to Germany and Special Envoy to the European Union and Europe. “And after everything that has happened, and while all this history was being made in Germany and the EU, Dion was down in Yerevan, Armenia, for days on end, hanging around with the most senior officials of the only government in the 47-member Council of Europe that opposed Russia’s expulsion from the council for invading Ukraine.”

Samvel – 2022-03-10 17:25:57
Thanks for this analysis. I don't think the West cares how Armenia is positioning itself during the Ukraine war. The West understands that Armenia's options are limited. Regarding Putin and many of the Russians themselves: What kind of people allowed themselves to be murdered by the millions under Communism? What kind of person is Putin, who has utterly betrayed his ally Armenia and sided with Turkey and Azerbaijan? Mere words cannot adequately describe him.