

افغانستان آزاد – آزاد افغانستان

AA-AA

چو کشور نياشد تن من مباد بدین بوم ویر زنده یک تن مباد
همه سر به سر تن به کشتن دهیم از آن به که کشور به دشمن دهیم

www.afgazad.com

afgazad@gmail.com

European Languages

زبان های اروپایی

<http://original.antiwar.com/malic/2013/12/12/the-long-retreat-2/print/>

The Long Retreat

By Nebojsa Malic

December 12, 2013

One of the pitfalls of writing history is that things that happened tend to seem inevitable in retrospect. Coupled with wishful thinking, this can lead to a dialectic mindset, in which the course of human events seems preordained somehow. The “end of history” wasn’t the invention of “liberal democrats” – before them, Communists and Nazis alike believed their ideology was the pinnacle of political evolution that would last forever. In actuality, “forever” translated to 12 years for the National-Socialists, and 74 years for the Bolsheviks.

From Bosnia onwards, the power of the Atlantic Empire – and the EU – rested on the carefully manufactured perception of unprecedented power and wealth leading to inevitable triumph. That perception came close to cracking during the 1999 war on Yugoslavia, only to be salvaged by the “color revolutions” in the first decade of the 21st century. Then reality began to strike back.

The first real check on Empire’s impunity came in August 2008. Then came the financial crisis, very much the inevitable consequence of an economic con job required to fund the modern Imperial state. The supposedly undefeatable military has been sapped by the long campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan – with one dead terrorist not enough to offset war profiteers and legions of traumatized veterans. Libya was done on the cheap, the sloppiness predictably exacting a price.

And then came Syria. Or, rather, didn’t. Everything appeared ready to go, until the seemingly inevitable march to war simply halted. The official, self-serving fiction is that the mere threat of

Imperial intervention scared President Assad into offering to surrender the chemical stockpiles. Far more likely is that a Russian fleet squadron off the Syrian coast had something to do with it.

Now the elaborate illusion of invincibility is breaking apart. But neither the Empire, nor the EU, are willing to let it go without a fight.

The Pipeline Cometh

One setback came on November 25, when the construction of “South Stream” pipeline ceremonially began in Serbia. EU’s energy needs are principally served by Russian – and central Asian – natural gas. The main gas pipeline currently runs through Ukraine. But when the Empire-installed Orange regime disrupted the supply, in early 2009, Moscow moved to deploy alternatives. “North Stream” bypassed Poland to supply Germany directly. “South Stream” was to run through Bulgaria, Serbia, Hungary and Slovenia to Italy and points West.

Washington in particular fought “South Stream” tooth and nail, going so far to propose an alternate pipeline called “Nabucco,” while resorting to regime change in countries along the route if they were perceived to be getting too friendly with Moscow. In the end, “Nabucco” died a quiet death, and even such abject quislings as Serbia’s current regime were unwilling to renege on contracts with Moscow, despite tremendous pressure from Empire-funded media and “activists.”

At that point, Brussels played the regulatory card: the European Commission declared that the contracts with Russia “contradicted European legislation.” Moscow responded with a shrug. The countless volumes of EU legislation might actually be useful for heating the shivering millions throughout *Brusselreich*, if this winter turns out to be as freezing as forecast.

Indecent Proposal

Earlier this year, Iceland gave up on joining the EU. In 2011, Icelanders also rejected a government bailout of EU banksters. But Iceland is small and far away, and the mainstream media thus could – and did – dismiss it as irrelevant.

Ukraine, however, is a different story. A victory there would be the geopolitical brass ring for the EUrocrats. Not only because present-day Ukraine is the cradle of Russian history and civilization, or even because extending the EU to Donetsk would be a thrust into Russia’s soft underbelly last seen in 1942. Roping Ukraine into the Union is an *existential* issue for Brussels, a proof of concept that the EU is actually worth something – even as a quarter of EU’s population has serious grounds for doubt.

So it came as a surprise that the EU offer to Ukraine at the Vilnius summit was “indecent” – the “aid” offered by Brussels didn’t come close to covering *1 percent* of the expense changing everything over to EU requirements would have cost Kiev. Still struggling from years of Orange kleptocracy, Ukraine simply can’t afford it.

Down with... Lenin?

When President Yanukovich announced he would pass on the deal, however, EU- and US-funded Astroturf “activists” attempted a reprise of the 2004 “Orange revolution” in the streets of Kiev. Yanukovich’s government responded with restraint, defending its sovereignty and refusing to be drawn into the drama conjured from Gene Sharp’s revolutionary playbook. Meanwhile, the “opposition” – led by a retired professional boxer – has been hamming it up: offering celebrity endorsements and taking hammers to a statue of Lenin on Kiev’s main square.

Why Lenin? Didn’t the Soviets recognize Ukraine as a separate entity for the first time ever? Isn’t the EU downright Leninist in its values? And will those celebrity endorsers donate some of their wealth to make up the mastodonic fiscal gap between EU’s demands and Ukraine’s ability? None of this makes sense – but in the world of politics as reality TV, and perception management over facts, logic has long since left the building. Or the square, as the case may be.

Tea and Biscuits

Math is cold, hard and merciless: the EU can’t offer Ukraine a better deal, because the money simply *isn’t there*. According to Eurostat, some 124 million people – a quarter of EU’s population – are “at risk of poverty or social exclusion.”

Legions of unemployed, rioting immigrants, banksters running rampant and pilfering people’s savings – this is the reality no amount of smoke and mirrors – such as the dour Baroness Upholland strolling along the barricades, or Assistant Secretary Nuland giving out biscuits – can change. But again, Washington and Brussels don’t think in terms of reality, but in terms of *virtuality*, shaped by perception management.

Calling the Bluff

Hysterical accusations of “Russian coercion” and alleged plots to re-create the Soviet Union serve as a smokescreen for the real revival of something the Soviets fought to death in the 1940s. The Empire has been gunning for Moscow for over a decade, rightly seeing in Vladimir Putin a danger to their entire edifice of lies. If it is possible to be sovereign and independent, to not take orders from Assistant Undersecretaries and Deputy Commissioners, then the entire illusion of Empire’s “end-of-history” triumph amounts to a hill of beans.

Moscow understand this all too well, refusing to be fooled by false overtures from Washington after the debacle of the 1990s. On Thursday, the chairman of the Russian legislature’s Committee for International Affairs, Alexei Pushkov, told the media that the Ukrainian crisis was an attempt by Washington to retaliate for being thwarted in Syria. According to Pushkov, by organizing the theater in Kiev, the West is trying to demonstrate it is still calling the shots in global affairs. But it is becoming increasingly obvious that the West is playing with a horrible hand, and the world is beginning to call the bluff.