
Georgia : the First Step Towards Chaos Control (I)

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Over the past several weeks, the Russian-language expert community has published a number of worthy analytic papers addressing on a decent theoretical level practically the entire range of aspects of the conflict between Georgia and South Ossetia as well as of the overall geopolitical and economic picture of the world transformed by the August, 2008 five-day war. The particularly noteworthy texts were: The Situation in South Ossetia, Geopolitical Consequences: A Preliminary Report, Georgian Gambit, or A Realistic View of an "Abkhazian Separatist", Geopolitics of the Georgian Offensive, , Saakashvili Ruined the US Plan to Attack Iran.

Another remarkable paper to be mentioned in the context is the one by Alexander Prudnik from the Nizhny Novgorod Division of The Sociology Institute of the Russian Academy of Science. He laid out a fairly original and broad concept of the evolving global political situation: "The analysis of the global political developments which took place during the past several days makes one suspect that one of the purposes of the Georgian aggression against the unrecognized South Ossetia was to distract attention from the ouster of Pakistani President P. Musharraf, which had been the most significant event in August 2008.

Considering that Pakistan is a nuclear country, its destabilization can play a key role in the world's sliding towards World War III" (War is a Technology of Disguising Information).

Particular attention should be paid to the paper by I. Dzhadan The Caucasian Twilight. A Scenario published on March 21, 2008, that is, quite a while before the conflict in the Caucasus erupted.

Let us summarize the conclusions concerning the results of the conflict between Georgia and South Ossetia on the basis of the available extensive analysis and try to forecast the short-term evolution of the international situation in their light.

The following two questions have to be answered as the first step.

The first - though not the main - question is whether the US Administration knew about the coming Georgian aggression? Broadly known facts show that the US not only was aware that it was going to be launched but actively assisted in perpetrating it.

First, the last joint US-Georgian exercise was held literally on the eve of the aggression. Secondly, Ukrainian air-defense squads were deployed in Georgia.

Thirdly, the OCSE representatives in South Ossetia clearly knew about the coming attack as they left their positions several hours before it was launched and, consequently, the same information had to be available to the US. C. Rice visited Tbilisi shortly before the Georgian aggression against South Ossetia.

These are the facts.

Besides, the US involvement in the Georgian aggression can be confirmed on the conceptual level.

Launching the offensive on the day of the opening of the Olympics in Beijing was a way of addressing several tasks of the US foreign policy. Distracting the attention from the major sporting event, the Georgian aggression thus targeted China with its accomplishments which made it possible for China's capital to host the Olympic Games. The plan was that China would be discontent but unable to voice its discontent at least till the closing of the Olympics.

Moreover, Washington's "strike in the Caucasus" induced a slight division between Russia and China. It was a manifestation of the division that China did not express support for Russia, mainly due to Beijing's absolute rejection of anything in any way related to "separatism". Of course, the position is somewhat tricky since integrating territories as an empire Russia is actually fighting against separatism inherited as a result of the breakup of the Soviet Union (and China is also an empire). In any case, the US managed to slightly split Russia and China.

Washington succeeded in probing into Moscow's reaction. From this standpoint, the developments in Georgia have been a sort of a reconnaissance operation. It made no difference to Washington and to the PR team of G. Bush's Administration in particular whether Russia would intervene in the conflict. Russia would have been lambasted under any circumstances "for being weak if it did not help the Ossetians and for being strong (for the "disproportionate use of force") otherwise, which is what we have seen.

Thus, Georgia's provocation helped Washington accomplish quite a few objectives in the international politics. In particular, one of the results is the legitimization of the US efforts to build up its military presence in the Caucasus on the eve of an operation against Iran, at least in the eyes of the European public opinion. Besides, judging by recent news, the US managed to deploy its nukes in the direct proximity of Russia.

The second and the most important question is whether the aggression launched by Saakashvili's regime against South Ossetia was an isolated act or a link in the chain of the US activities aimed at exercising chaos control in the world along the line from Pakistan via Afghanistan, Iran, Georgia, and Ukraine to Kosovo, fracturing the Eurasian geopolitical space into conflict zones and preventing the leading Eurasian powers from integrating the continent?

In our view, the latter hypothesis is true and the conflict between Georgia and South Ossetia was just one step in a long combination planned by the US neocons, who would do anything - even start a conflict with Russia and Iran - to retain control over the White House and to have McCain elected as the next US President. It is already quite clear that the US with its refined strategic thinking is not going to stop short of the next phase of the conflict in Georgia. We should expect another invasion of South Ossetia and Abkhazia and a parallel instigation of a conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

The US has President Yushchenko to help drag Russia into a fatal conflict with its nearest neighbor.

In other words, the US intends to replay the scenario which materialized during the Vietnam War, when the two main nuclear powers did not clash openly but actually fought each other under the flags of other countries. McCain's supporters are exactly the kind of people susceptible to this type of logic, hence the surge of his popularity

over the past several weeks. He is a Vietnam veteran, has been a PoW, and now hopes (and, as the US voters are urged to believe, can) repay the debt to Russia.

What is the objective set by the neo-conservative part of the US elite? In our view, the objective is to cause maximal damage to the image of Russia in the international relations sphere, to increasingly charge Moscow with imperial ambitions and attempts to return to the Soviet era in its worst "as seen in the West - Stalinist form. In case the US accomplishes the objective, the freezing of Russia's assets abroad and a breakdown of the emerging alliance between Russia and the "old Europe" will follow. Besides, Russia's parallel involvement in two armed conflicts in the same post-Soviet geopolitical space (in the Caucasus and, let us say, in the Crimea) and the inevitable threat of the international isolation would radically limit Russia's diplomatic potential in the case of an armed conflict between the US and Iran.

Under the circumstances, Russia will find itself not in the attacking but in the defensive position over the entire range of its international politics interests. The US strategists expect that then it simply would not have the resources to deal with the Iran issue. The Pentagon plans that the active phase of the operation against Iran will be as short as it has been when the US attacked Iraq. It is possible that the US would not stop short of using low-power nuclear warheads under the pretext of "protecting democracy" (already in December, 2007 we discussed the possibility of Washington's provoking a nuclear conflict between two Muslim countries which would position the US as the top arbiter in Eurasia in the paper The Assassination of Bhutto "the US Preparing to Launch a Nuclear Strike Against Iran).

Now let us examine several other aspects of the international situation emerging as a result of the brief August war in the Caucasus.

(to be continued)

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