
The Caucasian game

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Why did Georgia launch a war if it could be well predicted that such a decision would put them into a difficult situation? How could the politicians in Tbilisi decide on taking a suicidal step forcing Moscow to an inevitable reaction, and thus pushing far away the Georgian chances of regaining the breakaway territories as well as acquiring NATO membership? Why did the United States choose not to step in so as to halt the suicidal and genocidal action when they do have their military experts present in the region, and it is hard to believe that Mikheil Saakashvili could have acted or done anything without their prior consent? To answer all these questions, according to many experts, we have to look at the picture more closely and examine the context of the game in the Caucasus, assuming that the United States would not make such a bold move as to score a big self-goal in a region that is so very important for them because of geopolitical reasons.

It has been obvious ever since Afghanistan and Iraq that the main objective of the United States is to control the area that expands from the Near East to the Caspian region and which is extremely rich in energy resources. The biggest obstacles to this are currently Iran in the Middle East, Russia in the region of the Caucasus, and Central Asia. The attempts to weaken Russia's impact on the region have been going on for quite a while now, and Washington's most important ally in this effort is Saakashvili's Georgia. In other words, in this geopolitical game, Tbilisi is only a small player, and so the interests of the more important players can eventually override Tbilisi's and Saakashvili's efforts. Otherwise, in case of serious players, it is hard to think of anything else when facing the events of the last couple of days. There is some logic to find in the schedule of the events, if those who worked out the details of attacking Tskhinvali and the Russian peacekeepers counted on Moscow's inevitable reaction of entering the war. Because Russia had no other choice, for them it was the only possible thing to do. If we follow this logic, pulling Russia into a long and chaotic war, into the swamp of the Caucasus, could even serve Washington's best interests.

The situation could develop even further, as Azerbaijan, a country rich in oil dollars, would not mind to "restore the constitutional order", and another war in the Karabakh region would open up a new front for the Armenia-friendly Russia. The chaotic situation could well lead to the destabilization of the whole North-Caucasian region. This cynically evil scenario could serve the opportunity to bog Russia, to make Russians get involved in wars using up their energies, thus torpedoing their chances to carry out any modernization plans. If Moscow could be kept busy with performing an aggressor's role, it could have no energy to deal with such issues as NATO enlargement, building some alternative energy transport routes, or deploying missiles. In the long run a prolonged conflict in the Caucasus could well lead to an increased US influence in the region. It would not take long for the NATO peacekeepers to appear in the conflict-region, and Georgia, that has lost its breakaway territories, could join NATO and become a member of the organization, and at the same time, by way of controlling the region, Washington could have the chance to prop itself against Iran, cut the North-South energy route, and also contribute to developing alternative European transport routes.

Therefore, there is no question about Moscow's best interests which are served if the Russians are able to prevent such a scenario by all means. The best way for them to do that is to settle the conflict with a quick win.
