



USA, the Arab Spring and Iran- a Chronology of the Actions for Taking Control Over the Approach to Eurasia

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The world is on the verge of a new epoch. The events from 2011 promise a shift of the geopolitical layers. Efforts can be seen for avoiding these tendencies and turning them in favor of an enhanced hegemony of the Western world and mostly- USA.

At the center of the events stands Iran. The meaning of this country is not determined mainly by the huge deposits of oil and gas (second largest proven reserves of gas after Russia and fourth of oil¹), although this also has its temptations. The major moment here though is the great influence that Iran exercises as one of the key countries in the Muslim's world and center of the Shia Islam. Decisive role is given to the Shiite factor as efforts are made for a Shiite coalition in the region.

The events from 2011 became known as the "Arab spring" were accompanied by a series of unsuccessful attempts for change in the authorities in countries where this was kept on the sly and the tensions were suppressed. In some cases- by force. The unrests in Bahrain were an example in this direction as protests took place even in the Saudi Arabia. Ultimately these were protest of Shiite against the Sunni authorities. This was the distinguishing line from the "spring" that came in Libya, Egypt, and Tunisia. And that is why they could not be successful. Because they did not have the support of the Western world, specifically America. For the analyzers of the events it is clear that even before 2011 there was a struggle in the region that in most of the cases remained hidden for the common viewer, a struggle for influence that is led mainly between the Sunni (and Saudi Arabia as their gravitational center in the region which regime is reluctantly supported by Washington due to the benefits for the USA mostly in the energy sector and because of its predictability as a long- term partner) and the Shiite (through Iran), who have their official representatives in the Iraqi parliament and proxies in Lebanon, Yemen, Afghanistan, Syria, and the Palestinian territories as well as in the very Saudi Arabia.

With the destruction of the Iraqi military in 2003, the U.S. military became the only force, able to counter Iranian conventional military strength in the Persian Gulf

region. The withdrawal of the American forces from Iraq in the end of 2011 creates a power vacuum that the Iranians are preparing to exploit. A Tehran, exercising control over this region means a serious harm of the U.S. interests.

There are more than a few analyzers who consider the events from the "Arab spring" to be directed by the secret services of America and Israel. And it seems that they do have a point thinking in this direction, having in mind the "peaceful citizens" who from the very beginning of the protests were willingly posing before the cameras riding their heavy machine guns and modern armament attached to big western trucks; the so vastly streamed by the media bombings of civil districts in Libya and the peaceful population there, which independent journalists working on the field and in the heart of the events denied and stated that in the corresponding areas there wasn't even a sign of bombings and firing.

Let's examine the following moments as parts of one bigger picture:

1. The Arab spring- much supported by the Western allies and USA, taking into account that it's scarcely possible that there are still naïve persons to believe the official rhetoric that what is being done is being done in the name of the human rights and democracy instead of other self- infested motives and following of a well crafted strategy for expanding the power and gaining new positions and influence;
2. The murder of Muamar Gaddafi- the great champion and master mind of the creation of an African Union. After the events in Libya this issue is hardly going to be in the agenda again;
3. The intensified rhetoric against Iran- during the last months we are witnessing sharper statements made by Israel and USA as well who until recently showed more tact in the public speeches, leaving things to unfold in clandestine actions and covert operations (the Stuxnet worm to cripple Iranian uranium enrichment efforts; the explosion on November 12 at the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) ballistic missile base near Tehran,

¹ <http://www.eia.gov/countries/country-data.cfm?fips=IR>

claiming the lives of 17 people, including a high- ranking IRGC commander who was a critical figure in Iranian ballistic missile program; November 28 and the explosion in Esfahan, one of Iranian largest cities, home of numerous military and research and development facilities, including some relevant to Iranian nuclear efforts), accompanied by pressure over the UN for additional sanctions of the regime in Tehran as well as public accusations of prepared assaults, affecting the interests of the USA;

4. The positioning of the anti- missile defense system on European ground.

What makes an impression is the scale of the action for taking control over North Africa and South- West Asia, but if we read this in the context of the geopolitical game that unfolds on the international scene since the beginning of the Cold War until now, then the reading can be opposite to the one, made by Zbigniew Brzezinski when he wrote that "... he who controls Eurasia controls the world", by redefining it in the following manner- in order to control Eurasia, first one should control the rest of the world.

And while the energy card is an important stimulus for the USA it is not in the basis of the recent events. America imports 49% of the oil it needs for domestic consumption. 18% of this import comes from the Persian Gulf countries and 23%- from Africa. In top 5 of the countries from which America imports oil, only one is from the region of the "Arab spring" and to all that this country was not directly harmed by the events- Saudi Arabia.

In fact exercising control over North Africa and South- West Asia could be observed as taking over the control of the approach towards Europe and Eurasia and outlining of a "cordon sanitaire" before Russia and the Russian sphere of influence. A long- term strategy objective that has tormented the minds of several generations of American leaders. And the only obstacle in this moment towards a successful realization of this strategy is called Iran.

As we already mentioned, the rhetoric during the last months became sharper and there was a transition in Washington from a carefully picked out words to firm and determined statements. This can well be illustrated using the words of the U.S. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta who in a speech in November 2011 said that military action against Iran could have unintended consequences and a strike would only set Iran's nuclear program back by three years at most and should be considered as a last resort.

You've got to be careful of unintended consequences here. And those consequences could involve not only not really deterring Iran from what they want to do, but more importantly, it could have a serious impact in the region and it could have a serious impact on U.S. forces in the region.

He also adds that the UN should impose more strict sanctions against Tehran.

His statement from December 2011 is already much more determined and clear- cut:

The United States does not want Iran to develop a nuclear weapon. That's a red line for us that's a red line, [and] obviously, for the Israelis. If we have to do it, we will deal with it. Iran is a year or less from "N-Day", but the United States will stop it- no matter what.

In the new rhetorical line there are no other options any more. The possibility of more strict sanctions is forgotten. The tone is in unison with the one of Israel, where only the former Mossad chief Meir Dagan dared to warn that a war with Iran hides too many unknowns and risks but for this boldness he was immediately criticized by Major General Amos Yadlin, who until recently headed Israel's Military Intelligence directorate, distant and well- defended nuclear facilities. Yadlin said that not everything can be discussed openly before the general public; there are things that should not become object of public debates including also the fact that the population does not have access to specialized information, necessary for such discussions.

The opinion of the Israeli minister of Defense Ehud Barak is that the outcomes for Israel from an eventual strike against Iran could be not more than 500 lives if everyone got to secured bunkers.

The actions and the statements more and more point to the fact that there is a serious campaign going on against Iran which is too probable to lead to military actions.

According to numerous observers, Russia also is aware with the plans of Washington and is undertaking the corresponding measures. According to information published in Nezavisimaya Gazeta, Russia is vigorously making its military structures in the South Caucasus, on the Caspian, Mediterranean and Black Sea regions more efficient. "A full- scale war is possible, and its consequences could be unpredictable" is said in the newspaper. According to Defense Ministry sources, the 102nd military base in Armenia was fully optimized in October- November 2011. Military personnel's families have been evacuated to Russia, and the Russian garrison deployed near Yerevan reduced. Military sub- units stationed in the area have been transferred to Gyumri district, closer to the Turkish border. "Strikes against Iranian facilities by U.S. troops are possible from Turkish territory". Russian troops stationed at military bases in South Ossetia and Abkhazia, have been on high alert since December 1, 2011; ships of the Black Sea Fleet are located not far from the Georgian border. According to the military analyst col. Vladimir Popov, Russia could get military involved in the Iranian conflict:

In the worst- case scenario, if Tehran is facing complete military defeat after a land invasion of the US and NATO troops, Russia will provide its military



support- at least on a military- technical level predicts the colonel before Nezavisimaya Gazeta.

But there are also other factors that can play a bad trick to the USA. The economic state of America, the gathering speed “Occupy” movement, discontented with the growing gap between poor and rich can be factors, leading to dire consequences for America if military actions are being undertaken. The political ruling top will hardly receive the support of the population this time. And it is highly improbable that this time the people will be as peaceful as they were during the military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. Another thing that should not be ignored is the threat from mobilized activity of the terrorist organizations for intensified actions aimed against the West and America and Israel in particular.

One thing is clear though- the allies are regrouping. The world is waiting... but not in silence.

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