

Arctic Gerrymandering

Arctic Ghosts of Soviet Gerrymandering, Putin's Great Game

Background

Following the withdrawal of the United States from Afghanistan it became clear that Russia's long-term single-track goal is to achieve world domination. Underpinning Russia's heritage is Russia's heart and soul¹ of communism. President Putin has righted the train of communism from the ruins of Stalingrad, for as the democratic world sleeps global instability is the communist's favorite form of forging communist unity. Here they cultivate the masses with false promise after false promise. As Yeltsin found out, it takes moral courage to stand up and fight oppression.

Arctic Ghosts of Soviet Gerrymandering, Putin's Great Game, shows that a short review of the history of the Soviet Union's dissolution is a relevant study on important measures to be taken to address future challenges in the Arctic. Putin's strategy and tactics are reminders of Lenin's claim of world domination. How, why, when, where, and who collided in the Arctic.

Arctic maritime affairs serve as a textbook example of Peter Wooley's thesis that geographic variables, access to a country and proximity in trade routes reflect the setting of a nation's foreign policy (Hansen:6). Open armed conflict in the Arctic is going to become readily apparent as one examines the geographic scale of the Arctic. But this we know.

¹ "If we are going to take advantage of the assumption that all people want peace, then the problem is for people to get together and to leap governments -- if necessary to evade governments -- to work out not one method but thousands of methods by which people can gradually learn a little bit more of each other." -- President Eisenhower. September 11, 1956

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Dissident Resonance

A dissident view presents those ghosts of Soviet gerrymandering in the 1920s and 1930s are present in today's Arctic as Putin's harpy (eagle) claws his way toward world domination. Global interest in the Arctic has grown exponentially as the planet warms, resulting in open Arctic waterways and open passage on the Northern sea lanes. All were cultivated by demanding markets for natural resources, maritime commerce, and promoting Russian maritime and naval security.

Russian dictator, Stalin believed if a man's eyes wander his conscience is guilty. Putin's eyes don't wander. World domination was the goal of Communism in 1917 as it is today. Of course today communism is behind Putin's Russia for Russia Potemkin Village mantra. By any measure, Putin converted democratic gains of freedom set off in 1997 by Boris Yeltsin, Mikhail Gorbachev, and others into his village of a benevolent Russian dictatorship. In a word, Putin's dreams, desires, and one-sided diplomatic dances are the dictatorship's anvil on the Soviet communist forge of suppression.

Maritime Affairs of the Arctic

“It is only realistic to recognize a major feature of Soviet policy is sea power. Because of the Arctic vastness and the scope of Arctic shipping lanes the Soviets did not forsake the Arctic in their drive and the goal of world domination”. *Remarks by Col. J.D. Hittle. January 7, 1957, Senator Humphry, Hubert. Congressional Record, Appendix Extension of Remarks*

Col. Hittle further states in his congressional remarks that the Arctic Sea Lane supplies flexibility and projection to the Soviet naval forces and its merchant marine fleet. Russia makes plain in its current actions across the Arctic that the Arctic is a “covered route of approach to the Pacific Basin”. Today’s Russian, Chinese, and North Korean bromance of convenience harks back to Li-Lobanov Treaty of 1896 when China ceded by treaty Russian naval warship use of Chinese ports. For then only two months of the year 1896, the Arctic Sea lanes were passable. Beyond maritime issues, strategy, tactics, and subterfuge, Russian maritime interest in the Arctic anchors a pillar of Putin’s Arctic Game, great for allowing enhanced exploitation of the Arctic’s natural resources, its impact on the Arctic’s democratic freedoms and access to the Pacific’s arc of markets.

Recent Russian diplomatic collaboration with North Korea and China anchors the unity on Russia’s arctic strategic position. This transformation radically changes the implications of achieving Putin’s dream of world domination.

Rubiks Cube

The Soviet Union’s organizing principles are based on misinformation, getting others to think so (Stalin p. 175), and that little is to be gained and much is lost by timid joviality and pretentious good nature (Kerr, 247). Putin’s attraction for all three areas is well known. Soviet dominance took many different regional paths focused with Moscow at the center. Putin models his actions directly from these

principles.² (592). Like the Soviet Union Putin actions in Ukraine have opened a dictator's gordian knot. If Russia withdraws from Ukraine, if Russia pulls back from Central Asia Russia will have to confront an armed Islamic radicalism along its 36,000-mile Southern border. Russia will have a daunting face of confronting Islamic radicals who have a knack for defeating American and Russian armed forces. China and North Korea, based on historical and cultural precedence, will not be willing to lose prestige and follow Russia down a "rabbit hole". Putin leverages existing and future partnerships through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) to buttress Russia's global clout. Look back on the timeline and one sees that in 1881 Russia imposed the Akhal-Khurasan convention on Persia (471. Volume V1, History of Civilizations of Central Asia). This convention along with its secret provisions for all purposes ceded to Russia, Russian control of the Caspian Sea and its watersheds. During this period secret and semi-secret (*anjomans*) societies sprang up contesting the economic interference of foreign powers (473). Some contemporary Iranian scholars compare these organizations to Russian soviet, (or councils) which was established by Russian revolutionaries at the turn of the century³.

Bourgeois Cosmopolitanism

Stalin cemented the Russia communist ideals to "catch-up and overtake the West". He also forced into the Soviet Union the czarist principle that all cultural life in Russia must be in the service of the communist State (Schmidt, 235). These themes of secrecy, contradictions, conflicts, influence of interests are present in the Caspian

² 1 deWall, Thomas. The Caucasus, an Introduction., Oxford University Press, 2010.

³ M. Bayat, H. Algar, W. L. Hanaway, Jr., "ANJOMAN (Organization)," *Encyclopedia Iranica*, II/1, pp. 77-83. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/anjoman-gathering-association-society-general-designation-of-many-private-and-public-associations>.

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region and Central Asia to this day. There is no reason not to expect Russia to exploit, leverage and consolidate the relative nativity of Arctic stakeholders to the anatomy and physiology of communism, now Putin's dictatorship, in the same manner and fashion. Bourgeois objectivity and American cosmopolitanism is very much present in the Arctic maritime⁴.

Conclusion

American and Western academia, commercial interests, defense agencies, government policies and the like would do well to study how communism under the Soviet Union evolved into a suzerain principle for dictatorships. Putin as a former KGB officer knows well the process of communist gerrymandering. A process he is willing and follows. Putin has turned communism's goal of world domination into his own polished boutique dictatorship. Access to and to markets of Arctic resources, sea-lanes and maritime affairs postulates control of the Pacific, one step further towards communism's goal of world domination. Though this paper is a pessimistic construct there are areas of mutually beneficial Arctic interests that must be the focus of a peaceful collaborative Arctic policy and government actions.

References

Schmidt, Dana. Anatomy of a Satellite. Atlantic Monthly Press Book, Little Brown and Company, Boston, 1952.

⁴ See Schmidt, *Ideological improvements though Stalin's essay on Marxism and Philology*.