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UKRAINE – THE EUROPEAN UNION



Review of the Subject of the Week: *Will the boycott of “Euro – 2012” by European politicians help Ukraine to become more democratic?*

It would seem that after more than four years of preparations for such a significant event for Ukraine as the 2012 European Football Championship (8 June – 2 July), that Ukraine's leaders would enjoy its successful organization. However, so far “mud has been thrown” openly at it not only in foreign mass media, but it has also a priori been considered to be a failure. In fact, European politicians have been boycotting “Euro – 2012” in Ukraine as a result of the situations with the ex-premier Yulia Tymoshenko's and other members of the opposition, for whom selective use of law was imposed.

Hence it was officially announced that only the president of Poland Bronislaw Komorowski, the Emir of Qatar Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani and the Crown Prince of Denmark Frederik would visit Ukraine. It goes without saying that the Polish leader has to take part in the event as a co-organizer and, such has been the custom in Europe, a solicitor of Ukrainian interests in European countries. By the way, Poland seems to be the only one (later on, Hungary also acceded to these appeals) who drew the EU's attention to the boycott of Euro championship as being useless: as a result Kyiv will not only stop introducing reforms but also will find itself under the influence of Russian foreign policy. The Emir of Qatar Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani is visiting Ukraine during the European Football Championship finals. In particular, he is going to examine the stadiums in order to invite Ukrainian companies to participate in the tenders as for building the same infrastructure in Qatar. The Crown Prince of Denmark Frederik is going to stay in Ukraine as a member of Danish representative action delegation.

Nevertheless, the European Union, as a result of ardent debates, passed a compromise decision. On the eve of Russia – EU summit in Saint Petersburg 3 – 4 June 2012, the head of the European Council, Herman van Rompuy declared that though the European Union does not have an intention to officially boycott “Euro – 2012” in Ukraine, as it is interested in its success, which will contribute to the popularity of Ukraine, and will bring together its inhabitants and fans from the EU countries, but some member countries continue to insist on the possible boycotting of the European championship matches. The representatives of Germany, France, Austria, Italy and Belgium are the most active among them. But the interesting fact is that none of the countries considered the possibility of refusing to participate in the European Football Championship, which takes place in Ukraine and Poland. In addition to this, the mission of the Netherlands, who were actively propagandizing the political boycott of the official Kyiv, at the moment are also inclined to visit the matches in which their national team takes part.

So, one can suppose that under the conditions of the current Ukrainian leaders' disposition to authoritarianism, the Euro zone crisis, and taking into consideration the present network of geopolitical relations, the failure of this championship is favorable for some of the Ukrainian-Polish "Euro" "opponents". Germany has its own interest – the partnership with Russia is much more important than Ukraine. Taking into consideration the old-established relations of the parties and their partnership on the "interpersonal" level, one can affirm that no matter how well Kyiv will conduct the Championship, Berlin will still stay the opponent of its struggle for European orientation. Russia follows its own "logic": the worse Ukraine's relations with the European Union are the easier it will be to draw it into the Customs and Eurasian Unions. Nevertheless, our Northern neighbor urges the Europeans not to intermingle sport and politics. However, there is another side to consider that is much more important – the perspective of the summer Olympics-2012 in Great Britain. The logic is simple: the less money foreign tourists will spend in Ukraine the more likely it is that they will come to London. This was also demonstrated by the "Ukrainian racism" information, that was very skillfully broadcast by Great Britain within a framework of anti-Ukrainian information campaign. France does not want Ukraine to be a member of the EU too, even if the democratic values of the latter surpassed those of the former.

It is getting increasingly more obvious that the appeals to ignore the football Championship will not help Yulia Tymoshenko and other members of the opposition, but will only complicate the prisoners' situation and weaken pro-European opinions among Ukrainian people. It is the holding of "Euro – 2012" in Ukraine that will be favorable for democracy in the country, not its boycott. For this reason the German and Italian politicians' endeavor to use the Championship to punish Ukraine for the absence of democratic standards, might lead the West up a blind alley, which will then be difficult to get out of.

The fact is that the "Euro – 2012" Football Championship has become real. Ukraine is the first among the former republics of the Soviet Union who has won the right to hold a football tournament of such a level. *Neither the world financial crisis of 2008, nor the regular growth of budgets for building stadiums, airports and roads; nor the inconvenience in the cities and on the highways changed the belief of the majority of Ukrainian citizens that "Euro – 2012" is the chance for Ukraine to change for the better, to present itself to football fans and tourists from all over the world; and consequently improve Ukraine's standing in the world.*

UKRAINE – NATO



Review of the Subject of the Week: **Ukraine and NATO after the Chicago summit**

The Chicago summit has clearly defined the NATO strategy for the nearest two years and further. In fact, a solution was presented for vital issues of the inner transformation of the Alliance, as well as a reaction to international safety challenges of global and regional character. The Chicago summit concentrated its attention on three key tasks for NATO: defense, crisis reacting and global partnership while considering the aforementioned challenges.

Defense remains the main function of NATO, which ensures sovereignty and safety of the member countries of the Alliance. However, while carrying out this function NATO faces two problems: scarcity of resources and new types of military threats. Under the circumstances of the financial crisis, the countries of the Alliance are trying to save on defense expenses, resulting in lower general defense capability within the Alliance and the beginning of a change in the general military balance in the world - not in favour of the Euro-Atlantic community. The question about rational and efficient use of defense resources was raised. The answer to this question has become the adoption of the concept of “smart defense”. For its realization, NATO is introducing 24 international projects on the best observation, defense and notification of likely military threats. The main priority will be the specialization in development of defense resources by members of the Alliance.

In this aspect NATO will closely cooperate with the EU, as it was arranged, in order to guarantee that “smart defense” and initiatives of the EU concerning settlement and exchange of resources will supplement and reinforce each other.

NATO approves the EU efforts, particularly in the field of refueling in the air, medical care, naval observation and training.

The defense against ballistic missiles is getting more and more urgent. The Alliance aims for creating an antimissile shield in order to guarantee defense against missiles that might come from outside the Euro-Atlantic council, at the members of the EU. As it is pointed out in the Chicago summit Declaration that the aim of these measures “still consists in ensuring the Alliance operative potential in the field of defense against ballistic missiles, which could ensure full coverage and defense of the entire European population, territories and armed forces on bases of voluntary contribution by the Alliance countries, including interceptors and sensors, financed by some of the countries, agreements about locating the system elements on the national territory and expansion of the active multilayered system of defense against ballistic missiles”.

Another significant direction of realization of the NATO strategy **is the development of partnership in reacting to crisis situations as well as ensuring global safety**. In this context NATO aims at enlisting the member countries from all over the world, the ones who are able to make a considerable contribution to

ensuring safety, building confidence, increasing transparency and developing a political dialogue and practical cooperation. Afghanistan still remains the centre of attention of this direction of NATO policy. It has been mentioned that there are 28 NATO member countries and 22 partner countries in the international armed forces, taking part in stabilizing Afghanistan. There were 60 representatives of the countries and organizations that are involved in this mission in Afghanistan, who gathered for the meeting in Chicago. The president of Ukraine V. Yanukovych was among them too. However, Ukraine was not among the 13 partner countries participating at the meeting who made a special contribution to conducting operations supervised by NATO from a political, operative and financial standpoint.

The fourth key aspect of NATO future policy, discussed at the Chicago summit, was **the problem of further NATO expansion**. Firstly, the principal of continuity of the Organization membership perspective was strengthened in compliance with the requirements of article 10 of the Washington agreement. NATO doors “will remain open only for democratic European countries, who share the values of the Alliance, who are ready and able to take the members’ responsibility and obligation resulting from the membership in the Alliance”.

According to these demands, the four candidate countries for future membership in NATO have been selected: Macedonia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Georgia. It is noteworthy that despite the confirmation of political obligations, made by NATO at the Bucharest summit, Georgia is mentioned but not Ukraine. Henceforth, Georgia is listed in the group of postgraduate countries for NATO membership. The political dialogue and practical cooperation with it will be activated and the level of operative pluralism will be increased.

It is pointed out in the Chicago summit declaration concerning Ukraine that *“The selective use of the law causes concern when considering the principles and obligations taken by Ukraine in the framework of the Ukraine – NATO Charter, and the yearly national program. It looks like political oppression, in particular, aimed at the principal leaders of the opposition, as well as their being under arrest. We urge Ukraine to remove these drawbacks in current legal proceedings and guarantee the complete adherence to the principles of government of law and the international treaties in which Ukraine participates”*.

Thus, quite a clear assessment of non-conformity with Alliance values in the current political regime and the inner political situation in Ukraine, which means the principal criteria of membership is given in the above mentioned document. Besides that, the non-aligned status makes the future of NATO – Ukraine relations uncertain. As a result of such a situation, the political dialogue on a higher level has ceased. This means that ***Ukraine has not only remained overboard the Euro-Atlantic integration process, but also lost any potential to join the most reliable and efficient system of collective safety and defense.***

Realizing the abyss in the relationships with the main safety organization, the current Ukrainian leaders are trying to solve this problem by establishing new forms of collaboration with NATO under the conditions of quite restricted framework of non-alignment.

Some of these new approaches in relations with the Alliance include:

- attempts to join the international «Smart defense» programs.
- hope to receive guarantees of Ukraine’s state sovereignty from NATO, not being a member of the Alliance, in exchange for Ukraine’s contribution in international efforts supervised by NATO for ensuring international safety and participation of Ukrainian subdivisions in the quick deployment forces of NATO.
- deepening practical cooperation and task force compatibility under the condition that the political dialogue on a higher level is absent and the potential NATO membership is rejected.

- transferring relationships priorities with NATO from military-political to military-technical cooperation.
- accentuation on the problems of democracy should not become the content of Ukraine – NATO.
- copying the formats of Russia's relations with NATO, such as "28+1" and transforming this formula into the format "28 + 1 + 1" (28 members of NATO + Russia + Ukraine).

The attempts to compensate the refusal from the perspective of the membership by the above mentioned initiatives will not give Ukraine corresponding guarantees of its national safety, as these initiatives are fragmentary and torn out of the context of the general scheme of principles of activity of the Alliance. Such initiatives are rather a confirmation of the uncertain position of the current leaders in Ukraine, and attempts to balance "between" Russia and the Alliance with the aim to get corresponding guarantees for such an in-between position.

FOREIGN POLICY OF UKRAINE



Review of the Subject of the Week: ***The Project of the Law of Ukraine “About principles of state language policy” aimed at realizing the key priorities of Russia’s foreign policy.***

Language is the basis of any national identity. For Ukraine, language self-identification has again become an urgent question on the agenda. The deputies V. Kolesnichenko and S. Kivalov introduced the project of the Law of Ukraine “About principles of state language policy” in Verhovna Rada of Ukraine on **26 August, 2011**. The Verhovna Rada passed this bill in the first reading **5 June, 2012**. As a result of this, confrontation between the governing majority and the oppositional minority in the parliament has sharpened again. It turns out that there are much more questions, clarifications and problems to consider.

Firstly, an absolutely logical question arises: *Why didn’t the opposition, who now are rushing to battle so much, resist this bill as early as August 2011?* There is a version that is favorable for the opposition. It was clear then that sooner or later this question would be raised again. And it is logical to raise this question on the eve of the elections. The reason is that the number of “received” electorate is at present the greatest and the most significant question. The level of faith in the Regions Party has greatly decreased, but this does not mean that the level of faith in the opposition has increased. Such vital, urgent and painful question as bilingualism in Ukraine can help the opposition to win the West, which will scarcely support the Regions Party after such a suggestion.

Secondly, the bill offers protection of languages spoken by national minorities through the system of recognition and protection of “regional languages or languages spoken by minorities” on the territory of certain political units, according to the European Charter of regional languages or minorities, ratified by Ukraine. If 10 % of native speakers of “regional” language live in a “region”, these territories can be transformed from the level of a region to the level of a district, city, town, village. The bill involves the principle of adopting regional languages or minority languages by local councils. It is important to note that only the Russian language will be introduced as regional. In addition to this, in the explanatory note attached to the bill, it is pointed out that regional councils prevail over the district, city and village ones. Even if a certain village will wish to preserve the Ukrainian language, it could be made to follow the instructions “from the top” to introduce the Russian language. According to calculations, Russian will become a regional language in 13 regions (out of 27) of Ukraine under the condition of passing the bill. That is to say after a decade or two Ukrainian will just be destroyed in these parts of the country. An example of this can be the Belorussian language.

Thirdly, the whole situation has the aim of protecting languages which suffer from oppression. In this case, **it is Ukrainian that must be protected**. It is the Ukrainian language that suffers. Russia has been systematically pursuing the policy of russification on the territory of Ukraine for many centuries. Ukrainian has been suffering from oppression and destruction for many years in the history of Ukraine - Russia relations. The language, national traditions – are factors that help the nation to unite and identify itself in the world. Consequently, to disunite the nation, to destroy it and assimilate into another one, is necessary to destroy its language. That is the thing that Russia has been doing for many years of the whole history, and at the moment it is doing it in the framework of “Russian world” policy. Pursuing Russian on the territory of Ukraine is a process financed by Russia, who has considerable economical potential. Even despite the fact that there are a great number of TV channels, newspapers and magazines in Russian in Ukraine, Ukrainian spoken mass media cannot get the support of the current Ukrainian government.

Fourthly, Russia’s anti-Ukrainian foreign policy direction in the humanitarian sphere wholly corresponds to the interests of the governing oligarchic class in Ukraine. It has inherited the rudiments of soviet-Russian identity and is doing its best to transform Ukrainians into a “Little Russian” society, having deprived them of their own national consciousness. As researcher, Andrii Holiavka, points out: “They perfectly realize that their retaining power, prosperity and physical survival is possible only under the condition of further preserving the cultural-psychological situation, born by Russian colonialism. Spokesmen of neo-colonialism persuade Ukrainians that the natural reaction of the nation to foreign pressure or aggression is a worthless “zoological nationalism”; that opposition to russification is extremism and exasperation of international animosity; that expression of simple national consciousness is fascism”¹.

It is not accidental that the informative-humanitarian sphere has become a field of a complete coincidence of interests of the governing oligarchic class in Ukraine and Russian foreign policy. As a result of such a coincidence the antagonistic contradictions in Ukrainian-Russian relations have been removed and Russia ceased the diplomatic information war against Ukraine. Instead, it has obtained extremely great opportunities to build up a “Russian world” in Ukraine and homogenization of its society mentality on the basis of Russian identity, strengthening it in Russian civilized space by the dominance of Russian in all spheres of the country’s social life. It is the passing of the bill “About principles of state language policy” by Verhovna Rada of Ukraine that creates such opportunities for turning Ukrainians into a Little Russian society, and Ukraine into a Little Russia.

Thus, **the question of bilingualism is not only the question of the future elections, but also selling the national consciousness and independence, destroying the civilization identity of Ukraine. Unfortunately, Ukraine cannot resist this russification, as it does not have a strong and economically independent elite, who, having some leverage, could preserve Ukrainian as a single national language. After passing the bill, the Ukrainian language will need to be protected as becoming extinct in time. Such a result is not very pleasant.**

¹ Andrii Holiavka. To overcome the inheritance of neocolonialism. - <http://ntz.org.ua/?p=1574>.