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THE MOMENT OF TRUTH: END OF THE TRANSITION PERIOD? *(On the Democratic Initiative in the Central Asian States)*

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A specter is haunting Central Asia—the specter of democracy. This is how the opening phrase of Marx and Engels’ *Communist Manifesto* should read in a region soon probably to be engulfed by a wave of “democratic revolutions.” We have already seen the Rose Revolution in Georgia, the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, and the Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan.

Journalists and political analysts readily agreed to treat the power changes in post-Soviet states as revolutions inspired by certain foreign funds and organizations or even by Western states.

We should bear in mind, however, that the epoch of *post-Soviet* leaders the newly independent states inherited from Soviet power, who are going on with the old policies, is drawing to an end.

Kyrgyzstan

The island of democracy, as the Akaev regime was described, went to the bottom of the sea of Central Asian autocracy. This was a natural end: no self-sufficient democracy can survive in any one given country of the region.

- First, the attempt to build democracy in Kyrgyzstan (at least it looked this way to the casual observer) in no way differed from the historical leap from feudalism to socialism bypassing the capitalist development stage as described in Soviet textbooks.
- Second, the repressions used by the Akaev regime to suppress what was called political opposition revealed the regime's true nature. (Indeed, if Felix Kulov had been imprisoned on a legal basis this would have spoken volumes about him; if there had been no legal foundations for his imprisonment this would have spoken volumes about the regime. In both cases, however, there was no democracy to speak of.) It should be said in all justice that opposition did exist and was gaining experience through sporadic actions to be used when the sociopolitical situation in the country became aggravated.
- Third, unable to cope with the deep-rooted social and economic problems, the Kyrgyzstan leaders finally suffered a grave economic and political defeat.
- Fourth, Akaev and his cabinet failed to chart an adequate regional policy not only for the country's two regions—the South and the North—but also, and especially, for cooperation with the other Central Asian states.

It seems that Akaev completely discredited himself, therefore the mass movement was of a purely anti-Akaev nature.

At that time, the media said that the deposed president accused the United States of being involved in the anti-constitutional coup that forced him to leave Kyrgyzstan. In his interview with the Western media, the first after his flight from a country in which he had ruled for 15 years, he said that “foreign interference” was “undoubtedly an important aspect” of the dramatic events that drove him out of his country.

“I think that their influence was prevailing,” Askar Akaev said when asked about the U.S. administration's involvement in the mayhem that is becoming known as the Daffodil Revolution and added that the opposition was “supported by the [U.S. organizations], the National Democratic Institute, Freedom House, and other organizations... They were providing the training and funding,” he said.¹ These same words about training and funding were said earlier in Georgia and Ukraine; later the phrase would be used in Uzbekistan.

The leap from socialism (to which the country leapt from feudalism) to post-socialist democracy did not simply fail, it could not be achieved at all. I absolutely agree with the man who wrote: “When talking about the Kyrgyz opposition, there is no sense in discussing its ideology. To tell the truth, the terms democracy, freedom of speech, the struggle for justice, modernization, etc. have nothing to do with the Kyrgyz opposition. They are used to please the West and to fit the ‘velvet revolution’ brand. Without them the opposition would be nonexistent in the West's eyes. The pure and simple fact is the Kyrgyz opposition wanted power. Its members are former top bureaucrats who abandoned their offices for various, none of them ideological, reasons. Some of them were denied coveted posts; others went too far in squabbles over property, still others took the interests of relatives too close to heart; and some were obviously incompetent. The rest is camouflage.”²

¹ N.P. Walsh, “Ousted President Blames U.S. for Coup,” *The Guardian*, Thursday, 31 March, 2005.

² S. Mikheev, “Kirgizia—zhertva dumno poniatoy demokratii” [www.centrasia.ru], 31 March, 2005.

Political figures known for their criminal contacts are gaining power amid the chaotic intertwining of forces. The political process in Kyrgyzstan is threatened not so much by the struggle between the North and the South as by possible criminalization of its political system. S. Cornell and N. Swanström have written that it is not yet absolutely clear whether the criminal structures involved in drug trafficking have come to stay, or whether they will perish once the period of transition and turmoil is over, or whether Kyrgyzstan will follow in Tajikistan's footsteps. "The perhaps most worrisome element in this development is the tacit acceptance by political observers in Kyrgyzstan of the presence and influence of criminal figures in the country's political system," they say.³

It should be said that power in the republic fell into the hands of an ad hoc anti-Akaev political group rather than of a political party or an organized opposition. From this time on the group is responsible for social and political stability and the future of democracy in the country. New power wants to prove its viability in the shortest time possible: it should create full-blooded democracy, to cope with the regional clans, corruption, poverty, and the country's steady slide into the category of drug producers and sellers. The main task, something that the previous rulers failed to accomplish, is to shape a modern and closely-knit nation out of the country's population.

Uzbekistan

On 13-14 May, Andijan was the scene of a rout organized, according to official sources, by an Islamic extremist group called Akromiylar after its founder Akrom Iuldashev. The rout seemingly justified the description of the Ferghana Valley divided between Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan as a dangerous intertwining of acute socioeconomic problems, such as overpopulation and unemployment and the ideology of Islamic extremism very popular in this part of Central Asia.

The rout was suppressed, yet the country, which experienced another bout of religious extremism, failed to disentangle itself with honor. The Andijan events marred the state's international image. In fact, it was not the events themselves that were responsible for this, but the impression produced by the deficit of information; the foreign media interpreted it as the state's purposeful policy. The West and international organizations are insisting on an international investigation precisely because the restrictions were unprecedented: they had no access to the city and were denied full information about events which surpassed anything that had ever happened before in Uzbekistan.

Let me say once more—the tragic events were far from an *ordinary* manifestation of terrorism; they differed from what the country has been experiencing since the late 1980s. There were too many victims, while for some strange reason the events themselves were kept secret. (Official information about 170 dead contrasts with the figure of about 700 dead supplied by the unofficial opposition.)

There was only one information source—the president of Uzbekistan who at two briefings in fact likened what had happened in his country to the recent events in Kyrgyzstan; nor did he mince words when accusing some Russian media of misinterpreting the events. In light of the information deficit, when both Russian and Western media were equally denied access to information, the former became a target of much more vehement rebukes.

On the whole, Islam Karimov's nervous response to the way the Western media covered the events was aroused by the fact that they infringed on Uzbekistan's sovereignty. The state proved unable not

³ S. Cornell, N. Swanström, "Kyrgyzstan's 'Revolution': Poppies Or Tulips?" *Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst*, Wednesday, 18 May, 2005.

only to defend its independence (in principle, the issue can no longer be discussed in these terms in the context of globalization), but also to accept a new approach to the very phenomenon of sovereignty, as well as to fight the information war. Strangely enough, the country's political system discovered that it was rejecting Islamic radicalism along with democracy.

Many of the Russian media hastened to say that in the present conditions neither Karimov, nor the political system had any alternative—a thesis which has been stubbornly supported throughout the independence period. Those who try to prove that there are no alternatives to the harsh authoritarian regime have made a mistake typical of the Russian political and journalist circles. Islamic radicalism is the only alternative to democracy; there is also the possibility of stagnation and lengthy protraction of the nebulous and pointless transition period.

It seems that Mikhail Leontiev, anchor man of the “Odnako” (However) TV program, performed this political task the best. While comparing the recent events in Kyrgyzstan and Andijan, he allegedly noticed that democracy in Central Asia might result in stronger religious extremism and unrest. From this it followed that Russia should offer its unqualified support to the Uzbek leaders who, Leontiev said, promptly neutralized the threat. Although he meant well, this flattery was unfortunately an ill service.

The Andijan events, however, demonstrated that the state, by blaming them on outside forces, failed to perform its main function, that of ensuring security. It should be said at this juncture that destructive interference, which took the shape of foreign support of the Akromists and other similar forces, gave way to interference by Western states and some international organizations (the U.S., OSCE, and the EU) which are demanding an international investigation of the tragic events. In her letter to President Karimov of 15 June, 2005, U.S. State Secretary Condoleezza Rice insisted that the president permit an international investigation.

Tashkent clumsily explained its unwillingness by the fact that its sovereignty made this investigation Uzbekistan's domestic concern. Within a month the country found itself in international moral and political isolation; the leading Western countries cut back their embassy staffs, while the International Monetary Fund, the U.N. Development Program, and a few other international organizations suspended many of their programs in Uzbekistan. Those of them that stayed behind are operating under pressure from the state, which is striving to limit their activities in Uzbekistan.

This dramatic story posed a fairly theoretical question: Can the West's demands for an international investigation be regarded as interference in domestic affairs? The paradoxical answer is: Yes and No. The classical (absolute) interpretation of the concept of sovereignty describes this demand as interference, while its contemporary interpretation (under which the state assumes certain international obligations) denies such an interpretation. Today, the republic's leaders will have to cope with the challenges created by its OSCE membership and by the Uzbek-American Declaration on Strategic Partnership, which addresses the issues of democracy and political reforms in several of its provisions.

This makes interference inevitable either as destructive attempts by religious extremists to change regional order, or under the guise of democratic “salvation.” The former is latent and conspiratorial, the latter, open and unambiguous.

The scope of external democratic “interference” caused by the events in Andijan comes second after the EBRD's interference in May 2003 when the bank made its financial help and investments conditional on seven demands. **The Uzbek leaders should realize that by rejecting both democracy and theocracy, Uzbekistan runs the risk of being pushed to the wayside of the world community.** President Karimov insists that any revolutionary event in Uzbekistan will inevitably be of a radical Islamic nature. This raises the question of why the possibility of action by the secular opposition is excluded? On the other hand, there have been numerous scholarly and political publications about the deep-rooted social and economic problems of the Ferghana Valley, which is a very special region of Uzbekistan.

Uzbekistan's political system and society have been put to a hard test in a far from simple political situation. To a certain extent, the test was instigated by the recent events in Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan; the terrorist acts of 2004; the EBRD ultimatum mentioned above; the never ending criticism of the state of democracy in Uzbekistan voiced by the U.S. Congress and the State Department, and the tragic events in Andijan in May 2005.

This was the hardest test for the nation, the state, and the authorities; and the foreign media stepped up their criticism of the country's leaders.

Since late 2003, ultra-national rhetoric by the neo-ideologists has been accelerating in the country with alarming speed. They made a lot of noise the day before the Soros Open Society Institute in Tashkent had to fold up. An article in the *Khalk suzi* newspaper put their ideology in a nutshell; the author armed himself with national values to lecture to those who, he wrote, tried to teach the Uzbeks democracy and human rights: "From this point of view we cannot call a man who has no national values in his heart after becoming imbibed with democratic views and arming himself with them, an Uzbek and a perfect individual (Kamil-inson)... It seems that only those who are born Uzbeks can understand these values."⁴

I think that the public is under a hypnotic spell: it did not respond to the strategic partnership with the United States and remained indifferent when these relations worsened. It looks as if Uzbekistan has lost its bearings in the geopolitical Big Game of the world powers in Central Asia and the Little Game carried out by the regional states. Meanwhile, there is no open analytical discussion of the Andijan events. The comments are coming from handpicked neo-ideologists who concentrate on the facts, rather than their meaning. They rebuff all demands for an international investigation with trite arguments about interference in Uzbekistan's internal affairs, which should not be allowed.

Few members of the political and analytical community recognize that this external democratic interference is part and parcel of the global process of transformation of world order. Today, the issue of international democracy is at stake, while the concepts of sovereignty, interference, and domestic affairs of states are being revised by the international community. And the concepts of democracy and tyranny, human rights and repressions, wellbeing and poverty no longer belong to the domestic affairs of states.

On the Democratic Initiative in the Central Asian Countries: Plot or Mission?

There is an opinion widely shared in the expert community that traces of foreign sponsors could be easily observed in the events that shook the Balkans, Georgia, and Ukraine. The same is said about the events in Uzbekistan. They offer the following arguments: the mass actions were prepared well in advance; the methods used in Serbia, Georgia, and Ukraine were identical to the scenarios of democratic elections in Afghanistan and Iraq; by pointing to the accumulated social and economic problems, the locally placed foreign organizations, along with local activists, tried to stir up mass discontent and distrust of the country's leaders.

The observers point out that even the names of the organizations that launched the Color Revolutions were similar: Khmara in Georgia, Pora in Ukraine, and Otpor in Serbia. They also draw atten-

⁴ "Vernost natsional'nomu dukhu," *Khalk suzi*, 16 December, 2003 (Russian translation) [www.TRIBUNE-uz].

tion to the methods employed to organize mass actions and replace political leaders; they say that foreign NGOs are busy with seminars and training sessions at which the youth is taught democracy, political awareness, and political activity. The observers are obviously ironic when talking about the specific projects being carried out by international organizations in the countries of their residency.

I cannot totally accept the theory of NGO plotting.

- First, it is natural for them to teach young people political awareness and political activity. In general, such suspicions can be easily applied to any lecture or contribution of an invited or even local professor.
- Second, the state (Uzbekistan) has long been calling on the nation to demonstrate more political activeness. In 1999, the country's leaders made public their strategy of liberalization and moving away from a strong state toward a strong civil society. This means above all that sooner or later parties and groups will be locked in a real political struggle irrespective of the presence or absence of foreign NGOs in the country.
- Third, every year hundreds of Uzbek citizens go abroad, to the United States in particular, on state money to study or for on-job training. Many of them, especially those who study humanities (political science, sociology and history), are acquiring practical and professional knowledge of democracy. Every year the number of those who have studied abroad or been involved in all sorts of international projects and conferences is increasing. This says that plotting would be better carried out among those who live temporarily outside the country. Would it be better to separate the country from the rest of the world with an "iron curtain" in the Soviet style?
- Fourth, there is a powerful flow of foreign scholarly and political publications, periodicals, books, leaflets, videos, etc. Not all of them speak positively about the republic and sociopolitical developments in it—many contain serious criticism much more biting than that which comes from the NGOs.
- Fifth, there is the Internet, which disseminates huge amount of information, some of it true, some of it false, some of it friendly, some of it hostile.
- Sixth, from the very first day of its independence, Uzbekistan has been and remains a target of positive comments about its reforms and highly negative official international comments. The U.S. Congress conducts regular hearings on human rights and democracy issues in Central Asia: its conclusions are far from positive. The EBRD offered its critical comments in May 2003. This obviously affects public opinion inside the country.
- Seventh, for no reason at all, foreign NGOs find themselves in the midst of a "witch hunt" organized to distract public opinion. Meanwhile, nearly all accusations hurled at them (even if they are justified) are not supported by legally valid evidence. On top of this, a Georgian academic who has carefully analyzed the external and internal factors of the Rose Revolution offered a reasonable comment: "External forces, however, cannot ensure the victory of a 'velvet revolution' if the country is not ready for it."⁵

NGOs are but a small part of the rather complicated social and political internal and external context of the reforms now underway in Uzbekistan. A Velvet, Orange or any other Color Re-

⁵ M. Matsaberidze, «The Rose Revolution and the Southern Caucasus,» *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (32), 2005, p. 11.

volution, if the term can be used at all in this context, is not a product of international nongovernmental organizations alone. I refuse to believe that they can start revolutionary processes in any country, accelerate them, and replace top figures. It is very wrong to suspect INGOs of trying to stage an Orange Revolution in Uzbekistan—it is not in their interests. The West, and the world community for that matter, need political and social stability in Central Asia—instability plays into the hands of terrorists and extremists. As a result, extremist organizations of the Hizb ut-Tahrir type, which openly reject the democratic option, will use all the tools at their disposal to seize power.

Obviously, the routs, revolts, and revolutions, which we have seen quite a few of, were mainly caused by the aggravated sociopolitical situation, worsening living conditions, and an upsurge of discontent over the mounting poverty and corruption. There is a classical formula about the lower classes being unable to continue living and the upper classes being unable to continue ruling in the old way. In the case of Central Asia, it can be supplemented with the dubious gain of “privatization of power.” When discussing the phenomenon of the Akaev family, which usurped control (a similar situation can be found in other Central Asian countries) over the key economic branches, Uwe Halbach offered an interesting comment: “The merging of business and power make the transfer of presidential power in the post-Soviet state tricky and any regime change volatile.”⁶ Obviously, only under these conditions could foreign interference, if it did take place, be decisive.

I do agree with Uwe Halbach that we are witnessing the “autumn of the patriarchs.” After exhausting their political resources, the regimes fell into slumber. They are growing old and there have no one to blame for this but themselves. In fact, the post-Soviet regimes which have remained in power in Central Asia and in the majority of CIS countries since the very first days of independence are being eroded in the literal sense of the word. An impartial analysis of the events described above suggests that the regimes are growing weaker, the leaders and their power are losing legitimacy, and new regimes are replacing (or have replaced) them. **Strange as it may seem, loss of legitimacy is largely caused by the leaders’ desire to stretch it, that is, to extend their term in power, indefinitely.** By adjusting the laws to their political ambitions, the leaders blinded themselves. In fact, all five presidents of the Central Asian countries extended their terms by hook or by crook: today, all of them have spent 15 or even more years at the helm. From this it follows that the possibility of extending presidential terms should be excluded from the democratic political process.

The term Rose, Orange, Tulip, etc. Revolution was invented (deliberately or not) to create the image of external enemy and to distract public opinion from the urgent domestic problems accumulated during the years of independence. I am absolutely convinced that the democratic (or allegedly democratic) wave brushed against all Central Asian states, not only Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. All of them will be involved in the process in one way or another, since the key political changes in any given one reverberate across the region. No wonder the painfully familiar words about West-exported democratic revolutions have reached us from Kazakhstan.

Speaking at an International Republican Institute dinner (Renaissance Hotel, Washington, D.C.), President George W. Bush said: “Across the Caucasus and Central Asia, hope is stirring at the prospect of change—and change will come. Across the broader Middle East, we are seeing the rise of a new generation whose hearts burn for freedom—and they will have it... As more and more people rise up to demand their freedom, the world is seeing a proliferation of democratic transitions... Democratic societies are peaceful societies—which is why, for the sake of peace, the world’s established democracies must help the world’s newest democracies succeed... In these countries, and across the world, those who claim their liberty will have an unwavering ally in the United States.” These words

⁶ U. Halbach, “Der Herbst der Patriarchen,” *Der Tagesspiegel*, 3 April, 2005.

rekindled suspicions in the skeptics' minds about Washington's intentions to depose the existing political regimes, particularly in the Central Asian republics.

Why do certain people find latent conspiratorial meaning in America's democratic rhetoric? It seems that this simplified (or even distorted) interpretation smacks of a primitive anti-conspiracy designed to perpetuate the authoritarian regimes and justify them. **What can be opposed to the democratic conspiracy (if there is any)? The answer is: democracy. What can we mobilize to respond to the democratic mission? The answer is: true democracy. If we fail to respond (if the word can be used at all) to both challenges—the democratic conspiracy and the democratic mission—with democracy, it will mean that we renounce democracy latently (in the former case) and openly (in the latter).** The political regime that holds forth about democracy out of fear of it is pathetic.

The End of the Transition Period? *(In lieu of a conclusion)*

When the Soviet Union, which in one form or another pushed modernization to the East, fell apart, Kyrgyzstan and many other post-Soviet states were left to face the de facto restoration of archaic, semi-feudal political forms varnished by a thin layer of superficially democratic political institutions.⁷

“In fact, throughout the years that followed the Soviet Union's demise, the democratic changes in Kirghizia were nothing more than a forced pantomime: the changes were paralyzed by the family-clan nature of the sociopolitical relationships consolidating in the country.”⁸

The moment of truth has come. Are the current events in Central Asia the beginning of the end of the notorious period of transition, which the political leaders are speaking so much about? It looks as if the local countries have set off along the road leading away from the period of transition toward a new development stage.

We have witnessed six changes of political power across the post-Soviet expanse. The first Russian president preferred to retire in the “castling” style, to borrow a chess term, before his term expired. In Azerbaijan, power was transferred from father to son. In Georgia, the opposition forced the president to retire. In Ukraine, the opposition won the presidential election. In Moldova, the communists regained power. In Kyrgyzstan, the power change was possible because all sorts of political forces closed ranks against one person and because the president made a grave error on the eve of presidential election. (In Uzbekistan, however, the group inspired by the Kyrgyz example suffered defeat.)

None of the above can be described as genuinely democratic. There are two reasons for this: the Soviet heritage (the endogenous factor) and the Cold War heritage (the exogenous factor). Let me explain. First, there is still no clarity about the formation nature of the transition period: is it a transition from socialism to capitalism, from totalitarianism to democracy, or from a planned economy to the market economy? These are not idle questions: in Central Asia the laws of natural economy, the capitalist system, and contemporary scientific and technological revolution are in operation.⁹ In Central Asia, the issue of democracy cannot be reduced to the issue of political values or the form of government—it is the issue of the local peoples' self-identity. The coun-

⁷ See: S. Mikheev, op. cit.

⁸ Ibidem.

⁹ For more detail, see: F. Tolipov, “Democracy, Nationalism and Regionalism in Central Asia,” *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 4, 2000.

tries and peoples of Central Asia treat the issue of national democracy as a regional democracy issue.¹⁰

Second, I am convinced that there is a certain link between democracy and geopolitics. In Central Asia, geopolitics, or new geopolitics, as well as democracy have already penetrated into the national genetics, if I can put it this way. One of the latest works on geopolitics points to the three major components—geographic space, historical continuity, and identity—present in international politics. The authors remind us that the desire to gain an idea about the world and about one's place in it is a basic human need. When coupled with theoretical concepts, they become geopolitical, geostrategic, or geo-economic postulates.¹¹

To a great extent, the fundamental difference between the viewpoints of Russia and the U.S. on the Color Revolutions can be explained in geopolitical terms. It is no wonder, Yossef Bodanski of the International Strategic Studies Association (U.S.) pointed out when writing about the events in Kyrgyzstan, that in its anti-Russian policies the United States has placed its stakes on removing the former Soviet republics from Moscow's sphere of influence by giving them allegedly pro-Western administrations. The real aim, however, is to bring to power, through coups or seedy elections, weak governments chained to the U.S.-headed West and totally dependent on it. Mr. Bodanski goes on to say that Washington hoped to install an obedient and complaisant administration in Bishkek in the shortest time possible. Kyrgyzstan was selected as the most suitable regime-change object to serve as a toehold for continued destabilization in Central Asia with the aim of establishing America's hegemony over the local states and their energy fuels.¹²

The situation is even worse than that: democracy may be rejected or even discredited not so much for geopolitical reasons as for the subjective, ideological, personal characteristics of individual politicians, as well as due to the fact that the popular masses have not mastered the democratic political culture. This is what we can see in Central Asia.

We can agree with Samuel Huntington in that the biggest divide of all is that of the "West versus the Rest." According to him, Western military capabilities, economic strength, and the dominance of its existing institutions are so great that world politics will be defined in large part by how non-Western civilizations respond to Western power: through isolation, attempting to join the West, or by balancing against it. Huntington argues that the West needs to recognize the growing primacy of conflict between civilizations as the dominant (though not exclusive) form of conflict. In the long term, the West needs not only to maintain its own relative economic and military power, but also to learn how to accommodate other civilizations, based on a more profound understanding of those civilizations and what they potentially have in common with the West.¹³

Today, when the transition period is drawing to an end to be replaced with a period of new formation development, all the sides have finally clearly realized:

- Russia and other post-Soviet states, especially the Central Asian countries, should demonstrate that their democratic choice is irrevocable and free from geopolitical apprehensions;

¹⁰ For more detail, see: F. Tolipov, "National Democratism or Democratic Nationalism?" in: *Security through Democratization? A Theoretically Based Analysis of Security-Related Democratization Efforts Made by the OSCE. Three Comparative Case Studies (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, 2003-2004)*, Center for OSCE Research, Hamburg, 2004.

¹¹ See: L. Tchamouridze, A. Lieverse, "On Geographic Space, Historical Continuity, and Identity," in: *Geopolitics: Global Problems and Regional Concerns*, ed. by L. Tchamouridze, Center for Defense and Security Studies, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 2004, p. 2.

¹² See: Y. Bodanski, "'Demokraticeskaja revoliutsiia' v Kyrgyzstane: mify i real'nost'" [www.centrasia.org], 12 April, 2005.

¹³ See: S. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs*, No. 72 (3), Summer 1993, pp. 41, 48-49.

— the West, primarily the United States, should demonstrate that it looks at democracy as a noble mission rather than a geopolitical project.

A democratic conspiracy or a democratic mission—this is the fundamental question of the day to be pondered upon and be answered by all countries and nations which found themselves to be the objects or subjects of “revolutionary” changes in the new independent states.
