Anti-Imperial Block of Nations

REMARKS DELIVERED BY WALTER ZARYCKYJ, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER FOR US-UKRAINIAN RELATIONS, IN HiS ROLE AS DISCUSSION LEADER DURING THE 'END OF AN EMPIRE' FORUM ORGANIZED BY THE AMERICAN FRIENDS OF THE ANTI-IMPERIAL BLOC OF NATIONS

Dear gathered American and non American friends of the Anti-Imperial Bloc of Nations. I welcome all present to the first panel discussion of our 'End of an Empire' event. As the session's chair , I will take the privilege of the office to initially provide a quick opening synosis of what we will do during our proceedings:

(1) I will take 3-4 minutes to explain about the ABN core mission - both in its first iteration and its second form

(2) I will take a minute to introduce our five distinguished friends/purveyors of the new ABN effort.....

(3) Each of our speakers will get 6-7 minutes to cover the (a) state of the struggle for freedom in their specific 'RF imprisoned' nation and (b+c) how, from their perspective, a collective effort like ABN (at home and aboard) might help their particular cause.

(4) If all goes well, we will have 10-15 minutes left for Q&A. And please don't panic if you you were unable to get in on the conversation. Post lunch, we will have our self same cast of speakers back and engaged in discussing concrete steps to take in helping ABN achieve its ends (and hence equally their national goals) with my good friend, Ukrainian Congress Committee Communications Director Andrij Dobriansky leading the session.

OK.....on to ABN's Core Mission - Old and New

Formed in 1943 in the forests of UA and restarted fully in 1946 in post war Germany, ABN's initial role was to speak on behalf of the nations specifically trapped inside the red (or Bolshevik) version of the centuries old Russian Empire, known as the USSR. Note the acronym's full name: 'Anti Bolshevik Bloc of Nations' (rather than simply 'Anti Communist')

After Winston Churchill's stirring 'Iron Curtain' speech in the States declaring essentially the beginning of a 'Cold War' being instigated by the USSR, the ABN founders turned to embrace nations in the USSR's larger sphere of influence - countries that were eventually referred as Warsaw Pact nations. And by the mid to late 50s, with Nationalist China and South Vietnam and South Korea pulled into a global 'Cold War, ABN sought to involve all nations globally threatened by the twin threats spawned by Bolshevism - ie - USSR & the People's Republic of China.

ABN's ability to mobilize the nationalities mentioned, especially their various emigre communities in the United States using a lobbying group known as the American Friends of ABN, led to a monumental breakthrough in the US Congress in 1959 - something ultimately dubbed the "Captive Nations Resolution". The resolution not only included countries that were in the broader 'communist' sphere but included the 'Soviet Republics' - ie- touched the Russian imperial core - in its then Red form. By including Idel Ural, it even embraced nations trapped inside the so-called Soviet Russian Republic.

The Captive Nations Resolution became a bipartisan weapon (using the slogan "the last prison of nations" or "the Evil Empire") during the high Cold War period in the 80s (Henry Jackson on the left; Ron Reagan on the right) and helped bring about the collapse of the Red version of the Russian Empire. The nations earlier formally designated as Soviet Republics managed to escape.

Unfortunately, ABN's efforts and the work of its 'Captive Nations Resolution' allies left the job half finished. The rump of the USSR -ie- the Russian Federation, quickly showed with its actions against the Chechen nation (particularly after 1999 with Vlad coming to power replacing a drunk Yeltsin), what might be in store for the ethnoses left behind in the RF. Initially, other RF trapped nations (good example: the Mordovian Tatars) withdrew into a shell. But Russia's war with Ukraine, especially the last four-five years when what can easily be called Russia's KGB Blue version of empire has reached into the non Russian nationalities to bear the brunt of the hideous conflict. That fact and the

increasing pillaging of the natural resources of the non Russian national territories (think of the great wealth of Yakutia or Bashkirostan) has seriously awakened a desire to be finally free of the bondage -- to suffer no more links at all with Moscovy. And that has led to the consideration of the revival of an ABN -- this time with a somewhat different and simpler moniker: the Anti Imperial Bloc of Nations.

Ukrainians, realizing that a job half finished has left them (and all those who supposedly made it out of 'the prison of nations') quite vulnerable, have (re) embraced the idea fully. You heard as much from our first feature speaker, the untiring leader of the world-wide ABN, two time Verkhovna Rada deputy Oleh Medunytysa. You have heard our second featured speaker, the ever eloquent Margarita Assenova, Senior Fellow of the Jamestown Foundation, proud of her Bulgarian heritage (and cognizant of the nation's Warsaw Pact captivity) express the same sentiment. I feel very confident that You will hear the same sentiment from our Non Russians brethren trapped in 'the Federation': the time has come to embrace the ABN paradigm. Our panel discussion will be their testimony

Now to the introduction of the five speakers presenting....

(a) Iyad Youghar - who over this decade has become a close, valued friend; he is an quintessential example of the Circassian national activism

(b) Aygul Lyon - active member of the Committee of the Bashkir National Movement Aboard and closely connected to the ABN leaders in Ukraine

(c) Marina Khankhalaeva - activist/founder of the movement for independence of Buryatia (Tusgaar Buryaad Mongolia)

(d) Batyr Boromangnaev - Chairman of the Congress of the Oiral-Kalmyk People

and

(e) Aset Sabb - Deputy Minister of FM of the Chechen Republic of Icheria

Now on to the presentations themselves....Iyad, would you start?