

SHORT COMMUNICATION

The Ukraine Conflict: Ecological and Demographic Aspects

Sergei V Jargin

Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, Clementovski per 6-82, Moscow, Russian Federation, Russia.

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Corresponding Author: Sergei V Jargin, Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, Clementovski per 6-82, Moscow, Russian Federation, Russia.

Abstract

The conflict in Ukraine has impeded ecological policies in Europe and elsewhere. Environmental protection and energy conservation are less popular in Russia than in other industrialized countries. The war itself is damaging for the environment having global repercussions, worsening energy and food supply. As food prices rise, some nations are likely to cope by converting forests to fields. International tensions and conflicts are among reasons to boost childbearing in Russia and some other countries. The overpopulation and gender imbalance are increasingly important these days as potential causes of conflicts. The growing excess of males in consequence of sex-selective abortions may contribute to militarism. In the past, overpopulation was counteracted by wars, pestilence and famine. Today, scientifically based humane methods can be used to regulate the population size. Under conditions of globalization, the overpopulation and environmental damage can be efficiently counteracted. Among advantages of globalization are the ecological management, governance of the world economy, control of warfare and fostering of transnational democracy. A globally coordinated unemployment protection would inhibit migrations and help people to develop professional skills according to new demands. Of particular importance is the globalization of human rights. Great projects could be accomplished by the unified humankind to improve the quality of life worldwide: irrigation systems, nuclear and other energy sources as an alternative to fossil fuels, hydroelectric power plants on large rivers to produce hydrogen as eco-friendly energy carrier. Without procreative competition, different peoples would be more likely to live in peace. The equality principle would automatically affect populations with higher birth rates. A justification for the use of force as a last resort is to provide the breathing-space for morals and truths to be established. Should the power in Europe shift to the East, it would come along with losses of some moral values. Disregard for laws and regulations, corruption and collectivism will come instead. The quality of many services and products will decline. Certain aspects of public health are briefly delineated in this connection. A preferred alternative would be a leadership centred in developed parts of the world, based on the principles of mercy, modesty and forgiveness, aimed at preservation of human life and health. The role of Russia as a regional superpower would be honorable and satisfactory for sober-minded citizens. Instead of machismo and militarism, the propaganda should popularize the image of scrupulous and hardworking people. Ukraine must become a test field for the international trust and cooperation.

Keywords: Ukraine, Armed Conflict, Demography, Environment.

1. Introduction

The declared reason of the “special military operation” (SMO), which began in February 2022, was the anti-separatist activity of Ukraine in the Donbas since 2014. This activity was exaggerated by Russian media and

officials (Jargin 2015). Combating separatism within national borders is justifiable, exemplified by Russian anti-separatist operations in the North Caucasus (1994-2009). The Ukraine voted for independence (~83%) in the 1991 referendum. The pro-independence vote

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varied from 95% in the west of the country to 76.5 % in the Donetsk area and 54% in Crimea (Sneider 1993). The 1991 borders of Ukraine were recognized by all nations, including the Russian Federation (RF), which consented to guarantee the borders by virtue of the Tripartite Accords (with participation of the United States) of January 14, 1994, and the Budapest Declaration of December 5, 1994. On May 31, 1997, the Treaty on Cooperation and Partnership between Russia and Ukraine was signed, recognizing the state borders. The State Duma endorsed the Treaty in December 1998 and the Federation Council in February 1999 (Trenin 2001). The United Nations considers SMO to be a violation of territorial integrity and sovereignty, which is against the UN Charter. The Ukraine war, having undermined the principle of internationally agreed status quo, has triggered a series of conflicts in different parts of the world. The Russian military establishment earns credibility and funding by exploiting supposed threats from the West (Buwalda et al. 2003).

Admittedly, a majority of residents in the southern and eastern parts of Ukraine are Russian-speaking and many people were disappointed that their region had not become a part of RF. The Ukraine in today's borders was created by Bolsheviks disregarding ethnic and linguistic realities. Statistics about ethnic composition are potentially misleading because some residents registered themselves as Ukrainians for reasons of convenience but continued sharing the Russian identity and loyalty. Numerous Russia-sympathizers probably contribute to corruption and misappropriation of foreign aid. Recent referendums in occupied territories were met with scepticism because residents voted for the unification with RF to avoid trouble as they did not believe that the situation will be reverted. The Soviet-trained collectivism has influenced referendums, elections and opinion polls. Almost everybody voted the ruling party in the former SU. Some Russian-speaking provinces of Ukraine may become parts of RF if people really want it. The border should be agreed by negotiations.

2. Demographic and Environmental Aspects

The conflict in Ukraine has impeded environmental policies in Europe and worldwide. Environmental protection and energy conservation are less popular in Russia than in other industrialized countries. The war itself is damaging for the environment having global repercussions; the conflict between two major agricultural countries has negative impact on the global

food supply. As food prices rise, some nations are likely to cope by converting forests to fields. International tensions and conflicts are among reasons to boost childbearing in Russia and some other countries. The overpopulation and gender imbalance are increasingly important these days as potential causes of conflicts. The growing excess of males in consequence of sex-selective abortions may contribute to militarism. The ecological damage, shortages of drinking water and food are generally proportional to the population density. The agricultural production increases partly through overexploitation and pollution of water resources, groundwater depletion, deforestation and environmental degradation.

Pro-natalist policies in Russia and some other countries are inconstructive in view of the global overpopulation. The birth control has been obfuscated by presumed national interests: the demographic growth was used to strengthen the sovereignty and defenses. In particular, high fertility has been propagandized to boost up military and labor resources (Russell and Russell 2000). In the past, overpopulation was counteracted by wars, pestilence and famine. Today, scientifically based humane methods can be used to regulate the population size. Under conditions of globalization, the overpopulation and environmental damage can be efficiently counteracted. Among advantages of globalization are the ecological management, governance of the world economy, control of warfare and fostering of transnational democracy (Giddens 2002; Ross 2002). A globally coordinated unemployment protection would inhibit migrations and help people to develop professional skills according to new demands (Ghislieri et al. 2018). Of particular importance is the globalization of human rights including tools and sanctions reinforcing accountability (Kim 2017). Great projects could be accomplished by the unified humankind to improve the quality of life worldwide: irrigation systems, nuclear and other energy sources as an alternative to fossil fuels, hydroelectric power plants on large rivers to produce hydrogen as eco-friendly energy carrier. New substances used in the industry, nutrition and medicine must be tested in large animal populations to achieve statistical significance and register rare outcomes. Such projects would create many jobs, being a reasonable alternative to the warfare and excessive military expenditures. Not much is needed for that: a globalised administration and English as the first or second language for everyone. Moreover, should the birth rate decline in the future, it means

that the workforce is at its maximum today, and this is an opportunity to accomplish great projects.

Nuclear power has returned to the agenda because of increasing global energy demands, declining fossil fuel reserves and climate changes. Nuclear power plants (NPPs) emit virtually no greenhouse gases in comparison to coal, oil or gas (Markandya and Wilkinson 2007). Moreover, nuclear research and technology employs many objectively thinking scientists: the laws of physics are not steerable by directives like man-made laws and mores. Militarism is generally known to be associated with suppression of independent public thought. More international trust and cooperation would enable construction of NPPs in optimally suitable places, notwithstanding national borders, considering all sociopolitical, geographic, geologic factors, attitude of workers and engineers to their duties. Consideration of all these factors would make nuclear accidents improbable. Since the early 2000s, we have evaluated publications exaggerating ecological and medical consequences of a minor anthropogenic increase in the radiation background, summarised by Jargin (2019, 2023a). The conclusion was that the exaggeration is in agreement with the interests of fossil fuel producers and militarists. Probably not all writers, scientists and Green activists, exaggerating medical and ecological consequences of low-dose low-rate exposures to ionizing radiation realize that they they serve the purposes of militarism. Some of them may have good intentions; others are ideologically biased or have conflicts of interest, may serve certain governments or companies. In particular, appeals to dismantle NPPs are in agreement with the interests of fossil fuel producers. The weightiest argument against NPPs is that they are potential targets in armed conflicts. Escalation of conflicts and nuclear threats contribute to the boosting of fossil fuel prices. This is probably one of the motives of the Ukraine war.

Without procreative competition, different peoples would be more likely to live in peace. The equality principle would automatically affect populations with higher birth rates. The most reliable method of birth control is sterilization. The last (or single) birth should be preferably accomplished by a caesarean section. Although more costly, this procedure is associated with a lesser risk for the newborn and facilitates sterilization by resection of fallopian tubes (Jargin 2018). Vasectomy in men would be also efficient,

especially in the populations, where overt or hidden polygamy and contraception sabotage are common. Sterilization can provide a solution of controversies related to the economic migrations. If an economy needs foreign manpower, sterilization should become a desirable or obligatory condition for a residence and work permit. Such measures are preferable compared to economical sanctions against families with many children, which, to be efficient, must include denial of free education and medical care. The victims of such measures would be children, who are not responsible for their parents' unwillingness to use contraception. It can be argued that sterilization does not prevent sexually transmitted diseases including AIDS; however, these conditions may be regarded as self-inflicted in consequence of negligent or immoral behavior, thus being in a sense a private matter. However, when children appear, it ceases to be a private matter or an inherent human right, as the number of children in a family is of public concern today. There is an objection that birth control and sterilization are unnatural. It should be noted that death from infectious, parasitic diseases and many forms of homicide are natural, while the care for disabled is quite unnatural. In fact, it is the human civilization that is unnatural, and it is the civilization that can prevent overpopulation, environmental damage and international conflicts.

It has been argued that birth rates tend to decrease as living conditions improve. There is such tendency indeed but it is insufficient for some regions especially in Africa. For example, Uganda is projected to triple by 2050 to about 103 million inhabitants, which will be accompanied by deforestation and soil erosion (Coombes 2009). The tenfold population increase in Ethiopia during the last century (Nyssen et al. 2009) went along with a shortage of food supply and unemployment. As for the more developed countries, their population continues growing due to economic, ecological and war-related migrations. Finally, it should be stressed that there can be no religious objections against contraception, sterilization and abortions because these methods are not mentioned in sacred texts. Religious concepts, realized without consideration for realities, may cause geopolitical and demographic problems. Russian leaders must support globalization and civilisatory efforts instead of obstructing them as they have done during the last century (Fig. 1).

The image shows two parts of a document. The top part is a screenshot of a web portal for the Presidential Administration of the Russian Federation, displaying details of a petition filed on March 7, 2024. The petition text, written by Yargin Sergey Vladimirovich, expresses concern about global conflicts and asks for a change in leadership. The bottom part is a printed official response from the Presidential Administration, dated March 11, 2024, which states that the message cannot be replied to as it does not contain specific requests.

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Отправлено в Электронную приёмную Президента Российской Федерации
 Статус обращения зарегистрировано
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 Дата регистрации обращения 11 марта 2024 года
 Регистрационный номер NO-312790
 Прикреплён файл в формате PDF

Текст

Уважаемый Владимир Владимирович!

Передайте, пожалуйста Дмитрию Анатольевичу, чтобы он перестал хамить, он вербует нам врагов по всему миру. Без хамства можно добиться приемлемого решения (см. мою прилагаемую статью 2015 г.). нужно только перестать браться со всеми врагами цивилизации.

Я не знаю голосовать за Вас или нет. Думал, что надо сменить команду. За профессорский аттестат, может быть проголосую и поддержку, а то вся номенклатура, фальсификаторы и плагиаторы, ходит профессорами, а я - пенсионер, и меня каждый гардеробщик воспитывает; см. "Mosconduct in medical research and practice"

Искренне, Яргин Сергей Вадимович
 Канд. мед. наук

АДМИНИСТРАЦИЯ ПРЕЗИДЕНТА
 РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ

УПРАВЛЕНИЕ
 ПРЕЗИДЕНТА РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ
 ПО РАБОТЕ С ОБРАЩЕНИЯМИ ГРАЖДАН
 И ОРГАНИЗАЦИЙ

ул. Ильинка, д. 23, Москва, Российская Федерация, 103132

ЯРГИНУ С.В.
 sjargin@mail.ru

« 11 » марта 20 24 г.

№ A26-02-НО-31279091

Ваше электронное сообщение не содержит предложения, заявления и жалобы, а также запроса информации, поэтому дать ответ в соответствии с федеральными законами от 2 мая 2006 года № 59-ФЗ «О порядке рассмотрения обращений граждан Российской Федерации» и от 9 февраля 2009 года № 8-ФЗ «Об обеспечении доступа к информации о деятельности государственных органов и органов местного самоуправления» не представляется возможным.

Консультант департамента

Figure 1. Petition to Vladimir Putin with peace initiatives for Ukraine, filed March 07, 2024, with attachment of the article by Yargin (2015). Bottom - reply from the Presidential administration: "Your message cannot be replied".

Birth rate inequalities lead to a growth of certain minorities that may become majorities and cause political instability. Differences in population dynamics between ex-Soviet countries and ethnicities within RF are considerable. The greatest ethnic shifts have been observed in the Caucasus and Central Asia. Emigration of Russians from these regions has started

decades ago having accelerated after the dissolution of the Soviet Union (SU), while the immigration to RF of ethnically non-Russian people is conspicuous. The highest birthrates within RF were registered in Chechnya, Ingushetia and Tuva; the fastest population decrease - in Pskov, Tambov, Tula and Tver provinces (Arkhangelsky 2015). Migration of ethnic Chechens

from mountains to lowlands is going on while ethnic Russians are leaving the area (Panin 2018; Riazantsev 2003). According to surveys, most frequent reasons of emigration from the North Caucasus were crime, threats and abuse of children (Gadzhieva 2019). Almost in all Far Eastern provinces of RF, the ethnic Russian population is dwindling. Since the 1990s, immigration to the Far Eastern parts of RF has occurred from the Central Asia, China, North Korea and Vietnam, compensating for departures of ethnic Russians. Some analysts forecasted that by mid-21st century there will be 7-10 million Chinese in Russia (Trenin 1999). The population growth in the Far East has been maximal in Buryatia and Yakutia thanks to higher birth rates of the indigenous ethnic groups (Simagin and Murtuzaliev 2020). The maximal contribution to the population decline in the period 1992-2019 was made by St. Petersburg (652 thousand people lost) with surrounding oblast (414), Pskov (237), Vologda and Novgorod provinces (185 thousand each) (Rybakovsky and Fadeeva 2020). In Dagestan, the birth rate of indigenous peoples is approximately twice as high as among Russians (Gadzhieva 2019). The birth rate in Moscow is one of the lowest in RF, while the population growth is nearly the highest thanks to the immigration accounting for 83.7% of the growth in the period 2012-2018. One of 7 infants in Moscow is born to a migrant woman coming predominantly from the Caucasus or Central Asia. The phenomenon of “guest” or “parallel” (i.e. temporary or fictive) marriages becomes more widespread (Arkhangelsky et al. 2019a,b). Sexual and reproductive coercion is used for the purpose of migration, to cement relationships and marriages, to obtain a residence permit and lodging, or to spread a certain genotype often with geopolitical motives.

3. Discussion and Conclusion

There is an opinion that morals have no materialistic foundations worth respecting (Oakeshott 1993; Jargin 2014). A justification for the use of force as a last resort is to provide the breathing-space for morals and truths to be established (St John 1985). Should the power in Europe shift to the East, it would come along with losses of some moral values. Disregard for laws and regulations, corruption and collectivism will come instead. The quality of many services and products will decline: spoiled foods on sale, antibiotics in milk, falsified beer and wine, impolite service, wrong price tags in shops, misquoting of legal codes by civil servants in their correspondence, backdating of official letters, embezzlement of registered correspondence,

different types of misconduct in the healthcare (Jargin 2020).

The autocratic management style discourages criticism. In the healthcare, attributes of this style include a paternalistic approach to patients, bossy management, and harassment of colleagues if they do not follow instructions. Under conditions of paternalism, misinformation of patients, disregard for the principle of informed consent, and compulsory treatments are deemed permissible (Mikirtichan, et al. 2022). The following has been discussed: the overuse of gastrectomy for peptic ulcers, of thoracic surgery in tuberculosis, bronchial asthma and other respiratory diseases, spleno-renal anastomosis for diabetes mellitus, excessive and compulsory treatments of alcoholics. Endocervical ectopies (named pseudo-erosions in Russia) have been routinely cauterized without cytological tests; Pap-smears for early detection of cervical cancer have been performed infrequently and not up to the international standards, cervical cancer being diagnosed relatively late. Millions of women in the former SU underwent Halsted and Patey mastectomy with removal of Pectoralis muscles without evidence-based indications, often without informed consent. Patients with early cancers were subjected to mastectomies including resection of pectoral muscles without discussing with them the extent of operation. Justifications of surgical hyper-radicalism could be heard in private conversations among medics: “The hopelessly ill are dangerous” i.e. may commit reckless acts undesirable by the state. For example, glioblastoma patients were routinely operated on, while it was believed by some staff that the treatment was generally useless, just forcing many patients to spend the rest of their lives in bed (Jargin 2020, 2022, 2024). Domestic products are promoted sometimes despite questionable quality and possible counterfeiting (Senokosova 2019).

Certain non-Russian subjects of RF may be interested in a continuation of the fratricidal war, and there are misgivings that Vladimir Putin has come under their influence (Jargin 2023b). The well-known ideologist Alexandr Dugin opined: “Every civilization has the right to decide about... death, good and evil” (Mettan 2023). Indeed, some terrorists have already made that decision. A preferred alternative would be a leadership centred in developed parts of the world, based on the principles of mercy, modesty and forgiveness, aimed at preservation of human life and health. The role of RF as a regional superpower would be honorable and satisfactory for sober-minded citizens. Instead

of machismo and militarism, the propaganda should popularize the image of scrupulous and hardworking people. Ukraine must become a test field for the international trust and cooperation.

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