

Complicity in Genocide

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уторак, 12 август 2008 21:03

The recent events in South Ossetia can be adequately described as genocide. The Russian Defense Ministry says that Georgian forces had a 12-fold superiority in all parameters over the peacekeeping force when the Georgian invasion of South Ossetia began. Georgian guerillas trained by Western instructors practically wiped out Tskhinvali and nearby villages and committed unprecedented atrocities in the occupied territories. Civilians who were hiding in residence basements were killed with hand grenades. People were burned alive, run over by tanks, and shot using all types of weapons. Accounts of demolitions, violence, pillage, and hostage-taking by Georgian forces retreating from the Znaur district are available. Schools, hospitals, cemeteries, and churches were destroyed. Total ethnic cleansing was perpetrated in the eastern Leninogorsk district which was particularly vulnerable to attacks. Ossetians were killed regardless of age. Some of the people are reported to be hiding in forests. The Georgian side leaves no corridors for the evacuation of wounded people and refugees. The tactic demonstrates beyond doubt that the objective is the total extermination of the Ossetian population. Georgian leaders openly threaten to do to the Abkhazians what has been done to the Ossetians. The civilian casualties in South Ossetia cannot be estimated at the moment, but it is clear that the death toll stands at thousands. Tens of Russian peacekeepers were killed or wounded. Some of the corpses have been mutilated to the extent that the Russian Defense Ministry has difficulty identifying the dead. Killing peacekeepers is without precedent in the global practice.

At the same time, Western media are waging an information war against Russia, which is largely similar to the one launched around Kosovo in 1998 on the eve of the strikes on Yugoslavia. In some cases, the "objective and independent" Western media resort to direct falsifications. For example, footage showing the heavy bombardment of Tskhinvali by Georgian forces is combined with a text condemning Russia's alleged strikes on Georgian towns. Western Internet domains are flooded with staged photos which are meant to shift the responsibility for the tragedy from the Georgian leaders. Journalists from leading Western news agencies and media are working exclusively in Tbilisi whereas no Western journalists are reporting from Tskhinvali. Practically all news briefs covering the conflict begin with new untrue statements made in English by the Georgian President. Russian TV channels are not allowed to reach the Western audience. Efforts are made to block Russian sites in Internet.

Can all of the above be described as something other than complicity in genocide?

The criminal regime in Tbilisi which unleashed the war near Russia's southern border and massacred Russian citizens of the Ossetian nationality hoped to go unpunished. This hope is based on the fact that the public opinion in the West is isolated from the truth about the events in South Ossetia.

The Kremlin must understand that Russia's mission in the Caucasus will be impossible and any strategy adopted by Moscow to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe in South Ossetia will fail unless the informational blockade of South Ossetia is broken.

(Strategic Culture Foundation)