

A Glimpse of the Truth ...

On the occasion of the first anniversary of the Russian-Ukrainian war, the Chinese news platform **凤凰网新媒体** published some rare evaluation of China's position, its goals and its risks in the conflict. I read the article, published on 22 February 2023, with an increasing interest and decided to look at it as a real eye-opener. However, it's only an „inofficial“ comment. Here are some important excerpts from the original text, edited by me.
- Wolfgang Wiesner -

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俄乌战争后果初现，中亚大概率会倒向中国



九边

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关于俄乌战争未来的发展态势，我有个猜想，前几天发了个微头条：

俄乌战争最后的结果大概率是以现在的朝韩模式结束战争。

Title: The consequences of the Russian-Ukrainian war are emerging, and there is a high probability that Central Asia will fall to China

The final result of the *Russian-Ukrainian War* is likely to end the war in the current *North Korea - South Korea model*.

The Russia-Uzbekistan war will most likely follow this model in the future.

This arrangement is also the best outcome for the United States. In the future, Russia's door to the West will be blocked by its own brothers. The Nordic countries have also joined NATO this time. The former Soviet brothers basically all joined NATO, and they used all their strength to

support Ukraine in this war, and they all completely fell out with Russia. There is a high probability that Russia will not be able to expand westwards in the future, and that natural gas will probably not be able to be sold directly. It basically repeats the situation in Crimea.

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First of all, Russia cannot collapse.

Obviously, the West still avoids burning the flames of war to Russia itself.

Secondly, Russia's energy is still there. This thing is a hard bargaining chip. There are ten thousand ways to sell it. It's just that after a few more intermediaries, the money earned will decrease. In other words, there is a high probability that Russia will be weak for many years in the future. The war burned a lot of money, a lot of talents ran away, and many young people died. In the future, energy may have to be sold at a discount.

But Russia is a real small power. The half-dead Russian pestle is still there, and the West has to continue to guard against it.

但是俄罗斯是真正的小强，半死不死的俄罗斯杵在那里，西方还得继续防着它。

Of course, this is not what we want to focus on today. What we want to focus on is that after Russia becomes weak, it may not be completely bad for us [i.e. China]. Our energy security problem may have a new solution.

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China is still an industrial country that needs a lot of energy and resource input. And shortages of energy or other resources are leading to the halt of a gigantic industrial machinery. The lithium mines needed for the new energy that has been focused on in the past two years also mainly rely on Australia and Brazil.

In this sense, China is much more dependent on its external environment than Russia.

这个意义上说，中国对外部环境的依赖比俄罗斯严重得多。

And not only energy issues, but also market price factors [are counting]. Some resources in our country, such as iron ore, are too dependent on countries like Australia. If something happens, people push up the price, and we, as the production department in between, are immediately

squeezed out without any profit. This problem occurred in the steel industry in the past two years. The price of iron ore was high, and our vicious competition caused everyone to lose money to protect customers.

It is precisely because resources, technology, and markets are external that our country is resolutely neutral in this Russia-Ukraine war.

也正是因为资源、技术、市场都在外部，所以我国在这次俄乌战争中坚决中立

Europe and the United States have not found evidence of China's support for the Russia-Ukraine war with a magnifying glass (trade is not counted, almost all countries have not completely suspended trade with Russia).

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According to the currently proven data, the oil reserves in **Central Asia and the Caspian Sea region** are estimated to be about 150 billion to 200 billion barrels, accounting for about 18% to 25% of the world's oil reserves, and the proven natural gas reserves are 7.9 trillion cubic meters, only behind Saudi Arabia, it can occupy the seventh place in the world's ranking of natural gas reserves.

These countries are all members of the former Soviet Union. They have inherited the common problems of the Soviet Union and are begging for food (literally: guarding the golden rice bowl and asking for rice).

这些国家都是前苏联的加盟国，继承了苏联国家普遍的毛病，守着金饭碗要饭。

So why is this happening?

The main reason is that there is no other way. These countries are too deeply bound to Russia.

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Not only that, Russia is also very concerned about other countries investing in Central Asia. For example, my country opened a "China-Kazakhstan Crude Oil Pipeline" in 2006, and Russia was very dissatisfied. There is also the "China-Kyrgyz-Uzbekistan Railway", which was finalized just last year. This is a key section of my country's **"Belt and Road Initiative"**. It was blocked by Russia for 25 years, and it was only agreed last year.

Russia and Kazakhstan maintain a very awkward state [of relations], and the two countries that compete with each other are deeply bound. ***It must be noted that the population of those countries in Central Asia is not large, and they could be very rich according to their resources, but in reality, those countries in Central Asia have just passed the international poverty line, and many people are in a state of malnutrition.***

按理说中亚那几个国家人口也不多，以他们的资源量按理说可以富得流油，可是现实里中亚那几个国家却刚刚过了国际温饱线，很多人处于营养不良状态。

It's unbelievable, but if you look at Mongolia in the north, you will know that this is no accident. ***It is difficult to get rich if you meddle with Russia, because Russia has never been rich.***

跟着俄罗斯混是很难富裕的，因为它自己就没富裕过。

However, in the past decade or so, these countries may have realized the problem, and Central Asian countries have also begun to "de-Russify".

不过最近十几年可能这些国家也意识到了问题所在，中亚国家也开始“去俄罗斯化”。

The main reason is also that Russia has declined visibly to the naked eye, and its control over Central Asia is constantly weakening. Russia has no money, so it can't give these countries any benefits, and the brothers start looking for ways to survive.

这个背景下，中亚五国都发生了“去俄化”，跟之前乌克兰发生的事差不多。

In this context, the five countries in Central Asia have all undergone "de-Russification", which is similar to what happened in Ukraine before. For example, these countries have begun to speak their own languages, and no longer speak Russian (the official language was Russian before). And reshape their own national history, saying that their national history has always been "free and independent", and "Kazakh" and "Cossack" both mean "free people".

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After the fight, Russia will still be a big trouble for Europe and the United States, and it will still toss them.

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So I am not worried that Russia will collapse and the West will completely focus on China. Maybe the United States have such idea. Europe, however has no interest in meddling with the United States. They just want to live on their own. At the time, Germany is even planning to continue using Russian natural gas after the war ended.

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The Americans are not frightened, but our own people are frightened. As a result, talents dare not return to China, and funds dare not invest [i.e. in China's economy]. It will be very dangerous for a long time. After all, ***China's next key impact projects are all capital-intensive and intelligence-intensive industries.*** These industries are very sensitive to "stability, freedom, and openness," and taking the path of technological development is our only path, and there is no other choice.

So keep strategic focus and don't let them succeed. The United States have always been good at this trick, putting other countries at risk, but they themselves don't take it seriously, waiting for the other party's talents and resources to go to the United States by themselves. We still have to try our best to increase the income of our people, improve internal strength, trade well with surrounding countries, create a good business and scientific research environment, do not cause trouble and are not afraid of trouble. Then time is definitely on our side.

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The quoted source 凤凰新媒体 is a majority state-owned television broadcaster with headquarters in Mainland China and Hongkong.

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