Yesterday's Hegemony Keeps Washington Fairly Confused

At this point, there's hardly any doubt left that Western elites are reluctant to admit that they've faced a major crisis. Over a short period of time, the people of this world were presented with a number of challenges no one is really willing to face. Those are military clashes, political disputes, along with the drastic aggravation of international relations between key international players. Against this background, Russia's relations with a number of Western states sunk to a new low. Western elites try to argue that this situation was triggered by the steps that Moscow took, and above the positions that Russia's President Vladimir Putin occupied on a number of issues. There's no arguing that a strong Russian leader must be really annoying for those politicians in the West that are rapidly losing their authority along with their face. In fact, there's a long list of their own personal failures they are trying to blame on the policies pursued by Russia and its president.

At the same time, there an ever increasing number of people in the West who are genuinely trying to figure out highly puzzling realities of today's geopolitics for themselves, since the blame game that is being sold to them as a universal explanation of all problems doesn't fulfill their curiosity. Among such people, one can name the political observer of the German newspaper Die Zeit, Jochen Bittner. He has a reputation of an intelligent man that is always trying to establish the cause of any phenomenon, although he can hardly be described as a Russian sympathizer. In his recent article published by The New York Times, he compares the current state of international relations with the so-called Great Game of the nineteenth century, during which great powers would use all sorts of tricks to obtain more influence.

Bittner describes this modern revival of the centuries old struggle as the Game of Three, in which Russia, China and
the West are competing for a chance to get an upper hand. Mind you that this competition is not purely economical, as it has an ideological component behind it too, which to some extent explains the challenges that the world is facing today. This German journalist is convinced that China and Russia want to promote new rules of engagement in the international life, even though Moscow has an upper hand in his opinion, due to the unparalleled respect that Russia's President Vladimir Putin enjoys on the international stage.

As for the Western elites, according Bittner, they are confident that they are going to preserve their dominant position in the world. For the sake of objectivity, it should be noted that a number of Western journalists recognize China's and India's rapidly growing potential, but this fact doesn't automatically results in them starting to doubt the unconditional primacy that the West in their opinion will continue enjoying in the foreseeable future.

It seems that the ruling circles of the United States and Europe are reluctant to open their eyes on the real state of things in the world. It's truly disturbing that this is a matter of their deliberate choice, since they would otherwise be incapable of turning a blind on the fact that the crisis of Western civilization is getting worse by the day. Unfortunately, political scientists are focused on studying immediate implications of modern geopolitical phenomena, while losing track of the fact that the rapid decline of the West is going to be irreversible.

As other players are becoming increasingly more confident in their own steps, Washington will no longer be in position to call all the shots. This process manifests itself in the inability of the West to carry on blackmailing and manipulating elected representatives of other states, threatening them with the use of military forces when Washington's orders are not being fulfilled.

The most immediately distinctive feature of this phenomena is the deepening divide between the rich and the poor in the West, its rejection of the fundamental moral and ethical norms that have been guiding both Europeans and Americans for centuries.

The last report of the famous Club of Rome concluded that the degeneration of capitalism started some four decades ago, since at that point it time what was used to be investments transformed into a tool of financial manipulations. The authors of the report believe that financial capital, which largely determines the economic climate of the West, is now purely speculative in its nature. Mind you, that there's somewhere between 21 to 32 trillion dollars being kept in offshore zones by Western oligarchs. The report clearly states that all these issues affected our society in a truly negative way.

A growing discrepancy of opinion between the United States and Western Europe is becoming more and more evident and it is unlikely that in the foreseeable future we can witness a positive change. France's President Emanuel Macron has gone as far as to announce a possibility of a civil war in Europe. However, the Western crisis is being aggravated the most by Washington's patronizing approach to other states that goes hand in hand with unreasonable use of force. Thus, during his recent meeting with Macron, Donald Trump announced that rich countries of the Middle East are bound to pay for the so-called American protection, adding that without this alleged protection those states wouldn't last a week. Now, the other day he half-openly threatened countries that would support Morocco's application for hosting the World Cup in 2026.

The above mention German journalist announced that Russia and China are doing everything to undermine the West, the view that is typically characterized by complete lack of understanding of the historic processes.

Apparently it's time to reveal to Western citizens that the crisis they're witnessing isn't just tough times, it's an indication of the tectonic shifts in the alignment of forces on the global stage and these tendencies can not be reversed or restrained by force. Attempts to stop the wheel of history may only trigger new global conflicts, as no one is able to change the course of events at this point.

New failures and failures of the policy of the Western powers can not be explained by the inherited short-sightedness of Western politicians alone. However, their logics remains flawed as they fail to recognize that Chinese, Russian, Indian and Islamic civilizations are growing to increase their influence and that's a clear sign of this world's development. The sooner our Western partners realize this, the sooner we could start real cooperation in addressing global challenges present a threat to humanity.

Meanwhile, Western elites are incapable of providing a convincing explanation for the weakening of their influence in the world, along with their departure from values and traditions. Yet, they only way they can address this issue is through the strengthening of the Russophobic propaganda campaign. They can not find convincing arguments to justify their line, which obviously leads to a sharp increase in international tensions, formation of new conflicts.
Under these conditions, unfortunately, it is necessary to conclude that continuous attempts to discriminate Russia in every possible way through accusations, apparently, will be carried on. And you will have to get patience and make a lot of efforts while understanding the present situation, until the West regain some sanity.

Veniamin Popov, Director of the Center for Partnership of Civilizations at MGIMO (Moscow State Institute of International Relations) of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, exclusively for the online magazine “New Eastern Outlook.”