



RESEARCH ARTICLE

CAUCASIAN POLICY OF THE USA: DOCTRINAL AND CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 17th July, 2017
Received in revised form
26th August, 2017
Accepted 08th September, 2017
Published online 31st October, 2017

Key words:

American doctrinal foreign policy course,
national interests of USA,
A concept of “dissemination of
democracy”, China’s regional activities.

ABSTRACT

This article deals with the USA’s doctrinal policy in the Caucasus and with the major developments in this concept. It states that, American foreign policy of Caucasus has always been loyal and truthful to peace and democracy, to prevention of threats against its allies. Starting from the period of “Monroe Doctrine” in the twentieth century up to Donald Trump’s current presidency term, the entire period is a subject of these analyses. The research paper also illustrates the changing priorities in American foreign policy towards the region of CIS countries and Caucasus, where the exploration and transition of energy resources from these regions occupy special place in the significance of the historical developments. The research states that, relations of NATO and Caucasian countries, reduction of Russia’s political, economic and military impact, restricting Iran’s and China’s regional activities and participations are also the effective measures for protecting the security of the States and its allies. It specifically pays attention to the issues related to the development of political and military chronicles around Armenia-Azerbaijan-Nogorno Karabakh conflicts. The paper brings a lot citations from the outstanding world political figures and political analysts, illustrates the commonalities and differences of socio-political line pursued by American foreign policy in various periods of presidency.

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Citation: Mammadov Shahriyar Agamirza Oglu, 2017. “Caucasian policy of the USA: Doctrinal and conceptual foundations”, *International Journal of Current Research*, 9, (10), 59994-59999.

INTRODUCTION

American doctrinal foreign policy course has started to be more precisely shaped by the establishment of “Monroe Doctrine” in the twentieth century, and it is continuing up to our days. It is a genuine political line to stand against the policy of forceful expanding controls over the states by European countries. This course consistently considers long term developments, which are accompanied by alterations of ruling parties within the USA. Domination through ruling parties’ doctrines comprises the essential principles based on the USA’s foreign policy and leads up to the way of realizing specific targeted objectives. By their characters, these pursuits are deeply appealing for the ideals of human rights, impartiality and freedom. By other words, these conceptions embrace the fundamentals of American foreign policy. During the 90th of twentieth century, the collapse of Former Soviet Union (FSU) caused emerging the new balance and rearrangement of the world powers giving arises to a new rationale system in international relations. This new system triggered the establishment of new flexible political doctrines in the USA - to be compliant with the renewed system of intergovernmental relations.

Meantime, the USA also started to play the role of superpower in defending and supporting the basic principles of international law - inadmissibility of forcefully changing the borders of sovereign states. Thus, protecting the national interests of the world community remained as one of the essential values of American national strategy in opposing the forceful domination and securing stability in the world. Currently, national interests pursued by the USA may be grouped under three categories:

- Vitaly important interests, including factors providing existence and security of its own. They physically include protecting its own territorial integrity, economic prosperity of its allies, security of citizens, and safe guarding the entire economy, banking, finance and other infrastructures.
- Important interest, which are directly related to existence of nation, preserving factors emerging from characteristics of international relations and status, protecting and safeguarding the national prosperity. These interests include protecting the environment, settling the IDP issues, preventing the anti-democratic movements while performing economic responsibilities.
- Second rank interests, which are sometimes called as humanitarian interests, including the dissemination of

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democratic ideas, promotion of human rights and other related issues.

National interests of the USA are distinguished with its global characteristics and wide scope of foreign policy pursued by them. As a matter of fact, these interests have created new environment after the disintegration of USSR and fall of prospects of perestroika (reforms). It also opened the new opportunities to obtain the increased influence in all areas of their activities. Consequently, Soviets were also obliged to reevaluate their international socio-economic and political relations in the world. In the 90th of twentieth century, one of the USA foreign policy theorists, F. C. Turner has promoted the concept of “active borders” strategic line, which comprised rejection of existing borders, and made the USA responsible for resolution of crucial global issues [9, p. 59]. This idea has mainly paced into the foreign policy conception developed by G. Bush, B. Clinton and son G. Bush administrations. Newly established international situation implied the victory of USA after a long-term “cold war” era, which in its turn also served as a proof to the growing superiority of the States’ democratic values. Thus, starting from the 90th of twentieth century, a concept of “dissemination of democracy” gained some supremacy within the ideological strategies, followed by the cautious tone of American foreign policy.

While addressing to congressmen, President George Bush put forward the idea to establish a new layout of the world. It envisioned the commencement of a new policy: “terrorism is a threat for truth and peace!”. Following this, a doctrine promoted by Father Bush made significant developments in increasing role of USA in the post-soviets period. Strategy of “dissemination of democracy” contributed to enlargement of American impact in the world and strengthened its international positions in this region. Increasing role of the USA’s foreign policy line was also promoted by the State Secretary James Baker. He wrote: “Participation of USA in regulation of regional conflicts for the sake of development of democracy secure market economy, and military-political environment is important provision” [1]. G. Bush government considered free multiparty elections as a tool to reach peace in the settlement of such types of problems. Although B. Clinton administration made several alterations to the concept of “a new layout of the world”, but the aspects of political line towards the post-soviet area remained unchanged. However, during B. Clinton’s presidency, by its concrete pre - set measures, the Caucasian policy of USA became more active. Meantime, the policy of “strategic enlargement”, including the framework within NATO where Clinton regarded the Caucasus as the main region in the global policy of USA targeted the decrease of Russia’s and China’s influence in Eastern Europe and FSU [2, p.34].

Alongside with these principles, the USA also increased its economic influence within the region. Such policy had to have a long-term impact to enhance the dominating role of USA, while decreasing Russia’s and Iran’s “visibility” in shaping and stimulating a new economic system. Establishment of economic relationships, maintenance of security, stability and democracy became the vital principles of American foreign policy. Clinton administration, also triggered a new model of USA-Azerbaijan relationships which resulted in involving Azerbaijan into the peaceful operations as its ally. Researchers, as Maxim Suchkov, Michael Malakhov, Musa Gasimli, Aynur Bashirli and others named the term of 90th as a period of

“familiarization” in the USA-Azerbaijani relations. The post 9/11 period is an active phase of American policy in the Caucasus because during B. Clinton’s presidency his administration has started determining the new milestones of American foreign policy in this region. One of the main directions of this foreign policy was decreasing Russia’s impact and position within this region. If enlargement embraced only one pole of this foreign policy, the other side of this included “the policy of engagement”. Establishment of a special authority in state department for actively impacting the ongoing processes of resolving conflicts in Caucasus and Eastern Asia regions in 1993-was one of activity measures in this foreign policy. It was carried out within the frameworks of resolving conflicts in commonwealth countries. For this purpose, the USA became a co-chair of OSCE Minsk group. In the 90th, one of the directions in the USA’s Caucasian policy was associated with the resources of carbohydrate reserves to secure its economic and political interests. For example, on September 20, 1994, for further exploitation of Azeri, Chirag and Guneshli (ACG) offshore fields, Azerbaijan signed the first globally recognized production sharing agreement (PSA) with major western oil producing partner countries, including the USA. This was a “contract of century” which determined the directions of oil pipelines where Russia stayed outside of this project. It increased exceptional role of USA within this region, and distinguished the role of its foreign policy in the related areas. It also facilitated to maintaining the increased stability in this region. From one side, it positively impacted the trial balance of Azerbaijan, and from another side, it created the more favourable conditions for the States to more decisively approach to the resolution of Armenian-Azerbaijan – Nagorno Karabakh conflict.

The USA, also started to keep close relationships with the newly established alliance - Georgia-Ukraine-Azerbaijan-Moldova (GUAM). This process was evaluated as a major step for decreasing Russia’s role in this region, which coincided with the foreign police doctrine of USA. Although, in its early periods, GUAM was established to harness the questions of infrastructure and transportation of oil pipelines, later it was prompted to military partnership to combat the policy of separatism. These supportive steps have significantly reduced the roles of Russia and Iran in the region. In 1997, USA government included the north part of Russia and the Caspian Sea into the areas of its interest, and this step officially increased its role in the region. In 1990, the USA military forces did not face any obstacle while it declared the north part of CIS as their “responsibility area” of its central command (CENTCOM). In 2000 when V. V. Putin came to power, Russia started showing increased interest for this region. Declaring CIS countries to be as essential priority of Russian foreign policy, and conducting more expedient policy with Caucasian region, V. V. Putin’s government changed its foreign policy in this region. In this case, Azerbaijan preferred to pursue a balanced policy between Russia and USA. It is necessary to note that, meantime Georgia’s pro-American policy was directly supported by USA. American senator S. Braunbeck and political science specialist Cohen declared that “Georgia is a border between NATO and Silk way” [10, p.201-202]. This might clearly be observed in the policyline towards Georgia. In 2002, by joining NATO Georgia obtained strong support rendered by USA in “rose revolution. It was also consolidated by American-Georgian Charter on Strategic Partnership where both states declared their interests to preserve strong, independent and democratic Georgia, while

NATO activities in a relation to Armenia were limited to establishment of defence and safety sectors. Subsequently, the approaches in American-Azerbaijan relationships also began assuming more distinctive character since then. To improve relations with Azerbaijan, Bill Clinton administration began to take more effective measures, by focusing much attention on Azerbaijan in its foreign policy. Azerbaijan President Haydar Aliyev's first official visit to USA, signing the "Contract of century" with the major world oil companies, Azerbaijan's accession to "Partnership for Peace" programme of NATO and some other intergovernmental activities conducted by Bill Clinton administration facilitated to the increasing role of USA in the settlement of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

On February 26, 1993, Bill Clinton in his speech in one of American universities noted that, the main two aspects of his foreign policy would be globalization and cyberspace. Issues of priority included the increasing role of trade and "open markets" in foreign policy. By preserving its superiority, the USA rendered its aid to the economy of the third world countries for expanding democracy in Russia and in other states, which were in the focus of the its national foreign policy [3]. These ideas were also attributed to the Caucasus because of its natural resources and strategic position which matched with USA's interests. In 1994, for getting the closer engagement in the Caspian region of CIS, the USA's State Department, National Security Council, Ministry of Power Engineering, and the Ministry of Trade established the intergovernmental working group towards its targets. USA also continued its strengthened policy in South Caucasus to supervise the region of Central Asia through Caspian Sea. It included the decreasing role Russia and Iran in South Caucasus and minimizing the impact of China in these regions. Therefore, some strategists considered that the enhanced role of USA in the Caspian region was one of the major points of American foreign policy. For instance, Sh. Hesel, the employee of Ministry of National Security wrote: "USA may not allow Russia and Iran to predominate over Caspian's energy resources. Caspian region is not only turning into the important component of West's energy security, but it also turns into the brace of changing Eurasian forces ratio" [15, p.56]. Active phase of USA foreign policy on Caucasus may also be observed since September 11, 2001 events and adoption of a new National Security Strategy in 2000. The strategy taken thence served as the main determining factor in foreign policy of USA's on defence and tactics. This document gave high preference to the armed forces of USA, development of democratic values where the new role of the USA Armed Forces had an exceptional role. "By minimizing opponent state activity, using military potentials to preserve and protect standing of sole super state in the world were among these important issues" [6]. Main components of this strategy were maintaining security of amicable and opponent states, providing their interests, and if necessary, giving them military assistance [6]. National military (2004) and Military defence strategies adopted in the period of son Bush have completed this strategy and determined the methodology of USA's military policy activity. Getting access to the important regions and communication lines and creating necessary the environment for security through strengthening alliance and partnership relations were the signs of Caucasian policy in National Defence Strategy. By adoption this conception, Caucasus was considered not only to be source of power resources, but it also served as the starting point for the USA military forces' impact in the regions. USA had a chance to

obtain access to Afghanistan and Iraq. Each three countries located in South Caucasus supported the USA's anti-terror operations and actively participated in the operations conducted within the NATO framework. It is necessary to note that, since 1994, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia have joined this programme of "Peace for Partnership of NATO" which provided the enlargement of NATO in the specific regions. Unlike Clinton, junior Bush was more interested in conducting adaptive policy towards the demands and potentials of the regional countries. It might also be observed from the policy line of Georgia. By declaring its accession to NATO, Georgia has acquired support form USA in "rose revolution" in 2003; in fact, it accepted Georgia as its ally. Strong support by USA might also be seen from the USA-Georgia Charter on Strategic Partnership. Both states declared that they were interested in preserving strong, independent and democratic Georgia. Thus, such kind of agreements were signed with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in 1998, and later, in 2008 it was done with Ukraine. This charter was compiled in three columns. The first one was related to security issues, which declared that, "USA and Georgia are willing to enlarge scope of partnership programme to defend and develop peace and stability against global threats for peace and stability" [4]. This partnership encouraged Georgia's further application for member ship to NATO. In this chapter, Georgia and USA "were willing to continue Extended Bilateral Investment Agreement, to provide Georgia's accession to General Privileges System and to investigate possibility of Free Trade Treaty regarding economy [4]. There were also certain energy security goals increasing effectiveness of energy transition and its physical protection from Georgia to Europe. For promoting democracy, it said that, the parties "shall undertake to collaborate in the field of strengthening chances to acquire independent media, freedom of expression, objective news and information" [4]. Additionally, the parties expressed their wills to more rigorously strengthen legal norms. To achieve it, USA has promised to conduct training of judges, lawyers and other members of legislative sectors. Nevertheless, after signing this charter, Georgia began to be much concerned about getting enough guarantee in the field of security. Some observers noted that, the purpose of USA was to fight against probabilities of Russia's dominance in the region, and for this reason, it had to display its consent to obtain it [5]. This period was characterised as improvement in Azerbaijan-USA relations and enhancement of partnership between these two countries. Professor Musa Gasimli marked the term after 2001 as a new period of relations between the USA and Azerbaijan [16]. This was considered a turning stage from a partner into a collaborator. Academician Ramiz Mehdiyev evaluated this period as a term when Azerbaijan gained a chance to establish its close relationships with USA and when it gained a broader chance to use these chances [17, 248] on military-technical and security issues in 2002. Meanwhile, the issues of energy safety, humanitarian aid, the increase of trade turnover began to draw a special attention. On August 23, 2002 Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Finance Department of USA signed a memorandum on technical aid [14]. Humanitarian aid rendered to Azerbaijan was within the framework of "Hope" project. By the partnership agreement of financial ministers, the USA allocated 4.4 million USD funding for Azerbaijan's defence and security. In the same year Azerbaijan also participated in 11 programs in the field of security and defence [19]. Within the framework of anti-terror operations organized for military platoons, Azerbaijan's armed forces along with the armed forces of Turkish Republic began

to participate in counter terrorism movement in Afghanistan. The conference of “East-West energy corridor is a reality” on energy security issues which was held on February 25, 2003 was very productive where the Azerbaijani President Haydar Aliyev once more declared that Baku-Jeyhan pipeline did not only have economic characteristics, but it also assumed a security nature. It also facilitated to the settlement of some regional disagreements [18, p.573]. Worsening situation around Iraq and war did not weaken the strengthened the USA-Azerbaijan relations. By sending a letter of thanks to the President of Azerbaijan, President George Bush expressed his gratitude to Azerbaijani leader for its collaboration, while it faced difficulties against Saddam Hussein regime [13]. Azerbaijan’s peacekeeping forces have actively participated in military operations in Iraq. Such close mutual relationships also strengthened this partnership for the following years. The new security concept adopted by USA facilitated to development of these relationships. The new National Security Strategy adopted in 2006 was ratified in the complicated for the USA period because of active ongoing military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. Meanwhile, nuclear program of Tehran was also becoming more pressurizing. That is why, the strategy adopted in 2006 had a new approach to security concept.

By enlarging existing borders of security, it envisioned all necessary measures for preventive attacks, where in the case of emergency, applying forces to help old allies was also not excluded... [11]. Additionally, the document prescribed that the USA foreign policy was established on three main theses. The first was provision of military superiority of USA, the second was availability of war conception which contained the first attack by the USA before enemies’ attacks towards USA and its allies, and the third was to be able to act solely in reaching multilateral partnership. Rejection of negotiations with terrorist organizations and states, depriving them from all supports, assistance and shelter and the likely issues were elements of this concept. It also stressed USA’s special role in combatting global threats, protecting human rights and disseminating the democratic values as state priorities of the USA’s foreign policy. From this point of view, collaborating with regional states, strengthening democratic values in these countries remained as main foreign policy issues of USA in Caucasus and in the Republic of Azerbaijan. Foreign policy concept adopted in 2006 and its negative tone towards Iran also deepened these interests.

In 2010 the newly adopted by President Barack Obama National Security Strategy made essential changes in the foreign policy course of USA. By initiating a comprehensive pragmatism, Barack Obama administration considered a coalitionary approach and used the “smart power” in the settlement of internationally important problems. Four aspects in this document should be considered as the main issues of USA foreign policy [12]:

- Security;
- Economic prosperity;
- Promulgation of “universal values”, and
- Strengthening the peace with American government.

World leadership issues remained as a forceful element in this conception, too. Consequently, it remained as innovation in the USA foreign policy because although military and foreign policy matters considered two main directions of National

Security, this document had still some additional values regarding to internal economic development. From one side, comprehensive feature of this strategy could bring the internal and external aspects of national security in USA. From another side, George Bush’s subsequent policy proved its interest towards maintaining American dominance in vitally important regions. “We remained as one of nations passing through the most powerful and prosperous period of the world. We will always carry the world behind us” [8].

In 2010, Barack Obama administration expressed American national interests and priorities as following:

- Strengthening relations with allies and partners in the field of non-proliferation of nuclear weapon;
- Abolition of Al-Qaeda terror organization on the account of weakening “Taliban” movement;
- Military-political assistance to Afghanistan and Pakistan;
- Withdrawal of USA troops from Afghanistan upon achieving its sovereignty;
- Creating the environment for Palestinians to establish their own country through settlement of Israel-Arab disputes in a peaceful manner in the Near East region;

The most important issues included increasing a partnership with Islamic world countries, spreading the western democracy in the directions for protecting human rights and universal values, broadly using and disseminating information technology, shaping new and stable relationships in international sphere. Though the strategy adopted in 2015 reflected several issues from the previous one - from 2010, there were still some new strategic policy interests included into this concept. It had some reasonable grounds for this. If relations with Russia were stable in 2010, now in the new doctrine this case under went some changes. For example, in the new concept the USA more overtly expressed its negative attitude and condemnation towards Russia’s aggressive policy in Ukraine. Unlike Bush’s government, Barack Obama’s administration did not only consider its own interests, but the whole concept of mutual interests in relations to its counterparts. Apart from this, the USA’s foreign policy in South Caucasus remained completely actual in the period of Barack Obama because USA again continued remaining as an interested party in weakening of Russia’s impact in this region. It established the alternative lines to silk way, realized the alternative Nabucco-West natural gas pipeline, and other projects. Achieving positive solution in settlement of regional conflicts, has also promised to take successful steps in resolving Azerbaijan-Armenia-Nagorno Karabakh conflict in strategic foreign policy of USA in 2015. At the end of 2011, Obama publicized the National Defence Authorization Act and establishment of bilateral relations with Georgia in which the issues of security were reverberated. The report adopted by Congress on April 30, 2012 was necessary for the next year. It obviously revealed that there were two directions in defence strategies concerning the partnership between the two states. These included improvements of Georgian army and USA support for assisting ISAF. Georgia repeatedly appealed for military provision, and USA tried to secure all these applications. Although some inquiries were directed to ISAF assistance, majority of them were used for the development of defence field [7]. The relations between USA and Azerbaijan progressed in this period. In September 2010, president of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev conducted his next official visit to

USA and on September 24, 2010 he met with the USA president Barack Obama in New York. Mentioning İlham Aliyev's leadership role, Barack Obama noted that Azerbaijan had gained the status of the most reputable country within the region. This meeting once again demonstrated the development of USA-Azerbaijan relationships into the strategic partnership level.

- USA accepted Azerbaijan as a leader state in the development of "Southern Corridor";
- Azerbaijan was considered a country of priority in the new Caucasian policy of USA;
- Settlement of the military conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan was evaluated as a decisive factor for providing peace and stability in the region;
- Strengthening partnership between USA and Azerbaijan was highlighted to combat against international terror.

Conclusion of "open skies treaty" on April 6, 2016, "Air transport treaty between the Republic of Azerbaijan and United States' government" on July 2, 2016 and the grant agreement between State Civil Aviation Administration and Trade and Development agency of the USA in the framework of the third meeting of joint intergovernmental commissions of Azerbaijan-USA on economic partnership were the apparent evidences for them. Donald Trump's presidential election in 2017 reflected the innovations developing in the foreign policy of USA. As a newly elected president, he prioritized the combat against terrorism as the line of main American national interest which complied with the previous USA foreign policy course. However, anti-Iran and anti-China policies did not intend eradication of sanctions against Russia, they were indications of continuing previous foreign policy course of the States. This did not predict any radical change in Caucasus policy as well. Caucasus remained as the main field of interest for USA.

Thus, being one of the important political points, Caucasus still plays crucial role in formation of USA foreign policy. Main components of this policy are:

- Being as an important power in the region, to keep the regional states under control;
- To reduce Russia's political, economic and military impacts for holding leadership in the region;
- To restrict Iran's activity in four main directions – Iran, Caspian Sea, Afghanistan and the Persian Gulf;
- To form military bases to enlarge military participation potentials;
- To control Caspian energy resources and use the alternative routes for energy transportations;
- To use region for accession to Central Asia;
- To decrease impacts of Russia, Iran and China by strengthening its position in the region;
- To keep the post-soviet countries under control through political, economic, military and scientific-technical assistance;
- To achieve settlement of regional conflicts on an international level;
- To involve regional countries in NATO through enlarging its borders;
- To support political realization of economic projects with geo-strategic importance (for example, Nabucco pipeline);

- To form an idea of a unified Caucasus;
- To form a regional security system.

Thus, the analysis of American policy on Caucasus displays the importance of USA for Caucasus region. From this point, the significance of South Caucasus region for USA are the followings:

- Maintaining the security of independent states in the region as a vital element in the regional stability and decreasing the impact of Russia which guarantees the security of Caspian power suppliers;
- Keeping power suppliers away from Russia in transiting issues and preventing Europe to use energy resources of Russia by prioritizing the importance of usage from the Caspian resources;
- Isolating Iran by minimising its impact in the region and restricting its role in political, economic and military lives of the regional states;
- Creating an environment for the development of the USA's role in the formation of power ratio of states in the world.

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