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PIPELINE POLITICS IN EUROPE: SECURITY PERSPECTIVE

Introduction. “Yesterday there were tanks, today there is oil”. The words of A. Krushelnycky, former Head of Poland’s Security Service, are interesting from the following two perspectives. On the one hand, they show us what energy has become in the modern world. The modern world is an energy addict and from day to day, energy demand is rising more and more. Therefore, those, who have an energy dose, have power over an energy addict. That means energy is not only about the economy anymore. It has shifted into the political dimension and transformed into the tool of influence. Energy has become a weapon and if the Soviet Union used tanks to get control over Eastern Europe in the last century then Russia uses gas for the same goal today. Yesterday there were tanks, today there is gas.

On the other hand, energy has become a subject of securitization. Due to its significance, energy security developed into the issue of national security. As a result, we can see an introduction of new military defense doctrine, based upon the control of energy resources through the usage of military and non-military means. Such example we can find in 2003 when the US suddenly decided to free Iraqi people from Saddam Hussein [1]. Yesterday there were tanks, today there is oil.

Objective of the paper. So, the above-mentioned facts prove energy to have become a *topical* and extremely important security issue. That is why it is *crucial* to study how energy can impact foreign policy and what energy means in the security dimension which appears to be *the objective* of this paper. For this sake, we use the example of pipeline politics in Europe because it allows us to show energy as a security issue from several perspectives. As it has been already mentioned, Russia uses gas for the same goal, as used tanks in Soviet times. In additional, it is a good example of control over energy resources through non-military means. This long pipeline epopee gives us many lessons of how to use energy to implement foreign policy.

These lessons began in 2005 with the company called “Gazprom”. In 2005, Russia bought 50% of “Gazprom”. That company became the main tool of Russian policy in Europe and Central Asia. The proofs of this fact can be observed the same year when Russia tried to buy “Beltransgaz”, the company that owned transit pipeline

system in Belarus. Due to the price controversy, Belarus abandoned that offer. That is how Russia got an opportunity to test its new weapon. First “Gazprom” abolished the price discount, which Belarus had. The new price was too high for Belarus (it was clear for “Gazprom”); therefore, Belarusian government refused to sign the new contract. That fact gave Russia *casus belli* to cut off gas supplying. However, Belarus started to compensate it by siphoning gas meant for transit to Europe, so “Gazprom” was forced to decrease the price and sign the new contract [2; 3].

Price and discounts – economical means became the matter of politics. Full control over “Gazprom” gave the Russian government an opportunity to use them for implementation of its foreign policy. However, as we see the first usage was not successful. Therefore, Russia used more classical embargo. In the case of Russia-Belarus, energy security was a double-edged sword. Due to the structure of the gas supply chain, the means of transportation of natural gas is limited to inflexible pipes. As it was said, one of such pipeline passes through Belarus and allowed Russia to export its gas to Europe. Saving that contract with Europe was extremely important for Russia because energy resources export took three-quarter of Russian budget. We can see that not only energy resources themselves became the tool of foreign policy, but also the way of their transportation.

Not only gas and oil are used as a weapon, but pipelines and transit positions were powerful tools. For such countries as Belarus and Ukraine, their pipelines were the guarantee of independence and sovereignty. Moreover, it gave them immunity from the Russian gas weapon. The additional proof of these facts can be observed on 1 January 2006 when Russia briefly interrupted its gas supplies to Ukraine over a payment dispute. That move is often perceived rather as political, not the economic one, as punishment for “Orange revolution” and a warning for the new pro-Western government of Ukraine [4]. If we take it so, then Russia used its energy capabilities to manipulate the vector of Ukrainian policy. Actually, that really was so. If we compare the dates of gas disputes and the vector of Ukrainian foreign policy at the same time, we will see that none of them took place in the time of pro-Russian government [5]. However, Ukraine as well, as Belarus, had its transit shield, which helped to remain its sovereignty.

That fact was clear for the Russian government. Therefore, in 2007 Russia, in the partnership with German, launched “Nord Stream” project. “Nord Stream” is a pipeline, which links Russia directly to the Northern Germany across the Baltic Sea [6]. From an economic perspective, it was an inexplicable and expansive project [7]. Nevertheless, it was extremely ambitious from the political perspective. Critics called it second Ribbentrop-Molotov pact and such statement was not too far from true [8]. They pointed to Russian attempts to bypass Ukraine, Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, which had tense relations with Moscow. Western countries and transit countries themselves suspected the Kremlin of preparing a scenario whereby their supplies of Russian gas could be halted without affecting Germany and Western Europe. If previous cutting Poland off the gas, Russia had partly cut Germany too, now Russia got an opportunity for gas-snipe actions. As we can see, the gas itself and

the pipelines became the matter of geopolitics. Economic aspects in that example played the second role, as well as it was in the following case.

The EU produces a quarter of the gas it consumes. It imports another quarter from Russia, 16% from Norway and 15% from Algeria, with the remainder coming from Libya, Nigeria, and Central Asia. From this perspective, the Union's dependence on Russian gas does not appear to be quite so dramatic: unless figures for individual countries are considered. While Spain does not import any Russian gas at all, Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Finland were almost completely dependent on Russian gas [9]. That (and eternal Russia-Belarus-Ukrainian gas wars, which threaten European energy security) pushed Europe to the thoughts about diversification of its gas supplying.

The idea was to bypass Russia through Turkey and to get gas from Iraq, Azerbaijan and potentially from Turkmenistan and Egypt [10]. This project was called Nabucco-West pipeline. Of course, it had a little in common with economic goals. Firstly, it could reduce European dependence on Russian gas. It created an alternative source of gas for Austria and Germany. However, it was most important for such countries as Bulgaria, Romania, Czech Republic, those that fully depended on Russia. Nabucco-West pipeline vanished the risks which was caused by "Nord Stream". Secondly, Nabucco pipeline allowed Europe to decrease Russian influence in Georgia and, potentially, in Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan. That means, not only Russia perceived energy as a tool of foreign policy. Actions of Europe, in the case of Nabucco-West pipeline, let us consider not only the single example of energy militarization on post-Soviet areas but also the global trend. Moreover, geopolitics in Europe was strongly connected with energy security, that can be observed from the following example.

Nabucco-West pipeline was a threat to Russian monopoly. Therefore, Russia announced "South Stream" project. It had to pass through the Black Sea to Europe, where its way was very similar to Nabucco. Therefore, CEO of Eni Paolo Scaroni proposed to merge Nabucco and South Stream projects to "reduce investments, operational costs and increase overall returns"[11]. This proposal was rejected by energy minister of Russia Sergei Shmatko. However, that is the good proof of politicization of energy supplying. Russia did not seek to least its consumptions, but only to safe its gas-influence in Europe.

Nevertheless, Nabucco project was failed not because of "South stream", but due to war in Georgia in 2008 and private-sector hesitation. Moreover, in August 2008, in the midst of the Georgian conflict, Gazprom offered to buy all of Azerbaijan's gas exports, proposing to buy their gas at market prices and resell it to the West via its pipeline network. The 'Finlandization' of Azerbaijan and Georgia – transformation into neutral states in exchange for keeping their sovereignty completed Russia's recovery of the Caspian.

Conclusion. As we see from the analysis above, energy has become a tool of implementing the foreign policy. Economic factors are often ignored in favor of political ones. Energy has become a weapon. It is too risky, unprofitable and hard to

occupy other states with a military, nowadays. Therefore, in contemporary world, we occupy them by pipelines nets. Yesterday there were tanks, today there are pipelines.

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