

THE ASSASSINATION IN BUDAPEST WAS A PRE-PLANNED OPERATION BY
AZERBAIJANI SPECIAL SERVICES

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Public opinion in Armenia still widely considers the assassination of the Armenian army officer, Gurgen Margaryan, in Budapest to be the result of a permanent escalation of anti-Armenian hysteria in Azerbaijan. The statements by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defense of Armenia, as well as articles and public appeals take this version for granted. How well is this version grounded in truth and should we consider it as the only possible scenario at the murder trial in Budapest? The analysis of all succeeding events leads to another version: Ramil Safarov is, perhaps, only the executor; while the assassination was thoroughly planned by the Azerbaijani secret service, (and the participation of their Turkish “counterparts” cannot be ruled out).

Let us consider the reactions in Azerbaijan, in Armenia, and in the West to the assassination in Budapest. The Azerbaijani authorities, led by their newly elected president, compared the murder at night of the officer in his asleep (in the framework of a peacemaking program!) with sniper shots at the Armenian-Azerbaijani frontier. The assassination in Budapest was received with national euphoria and; it received “pan-national” support. Neither the pro-authorities nor the pseudo-opponentist public condemned the cold-blooded murder; on the contrary, they were united in openly supporting the executioner. Both the Azerbaijani ombudsman and the “Organization for Liberation of Karabagh”, which is closely tied with the authorities, demanded reassurances about the murderer’s “comfortable” confinement condition, starting up a special Internet site to publicize this matter. On this site, the murderer was praised as a “national hero and a symbol of courage”. The reaction of other organizations and “intellectuals”, famous or otherwise, was the same. In a word, such developments in autocratic-dictatorial Azerbaijan betray the skillful conductor’s baton and directions from “above”.

Revenge and revanche – these are justificatory arguments brought forward by them. We must accept that Azerbaijani revanche succeeded in Budapest symbolically. The brutal and insidious murder incited the primordial instincts of Turkic military-psychological culture and practice, which Azerbaijan intends to use in a new war.

After the assassination in Budapest Aliev-Jr. took successive steps towards the gradual curtailing of the negotiation process, escalating the situation and mobilizing all

human and other resources that Baku has at its disposal. It is notable that together with dozens of his proponents, the worst enemy of Geidar Aliev, the “hero” of Karabagh war Suret Guseinov was liberated and immediately afterwards declared his program of activities, that is “the liberation of Karabagh” by military means.

The date of the Budapest murder, February 19, also suggests its preplanned character. Later, during the interrogation Safarov declared that he took revenge for those who died in Jebrazil and Khodjalu in the last weeks of February in 1992 and 1993. It is evident that the Azerbaijani advocates will try to distort the impending trial into an informational and political operation with the following major objectives:

- a) to discredit Armenia and the Republic of Nagorno Karabagh, Armenian military forces and their military-political leadership,
- b) to raise the martial spirits and morale of the Azerbaijani army and nation,
- c) to morally justify the Azerbaijani thug, portray him as an "avenger" for the "atrocities" by the Armenian troops in Khodjalu and elsewhere, to make him an equivalent of an Azerbaijani Soghomon Tehlerian. Here the Turkish special branches are not passers-by as we collide with an attempt of moral and legal revanche for Berlin judicial process in 1921, which was lost by the Turks but never forgotten (both Berlin and Budapest are situated in the heart of Europe). It should be mentioned that the murderer for several years received military training in Turkey (what specifically he was trained is an open question),
- d) to prepare the ground for a new war.

There are also operational data testifying to the premeditated murder. Firstly, the Armenian officer was killed without any direct provocation. The murderer is characterized by his commanders as well as the officers who communicated with him in Budapest as an even-tempered, reserved and disciplined soldier. This type of person is used (and drilled) to fulfill a task, rather than take a personal initiative in making decisions overstepping the permissible limits.

Secondly, based on the data provided in the press, the murderer bought an axe together with his fellow Azerbaijani officer, who was attending the same courses with him. Strange though it may seem, however, the Hungarian authorities did not hinder the Azerbaijani coworker’s return to his country.

Thirdly, the statements of the attorney, a certain Adil Ismaylov, who had already visited Budapest, indicate that the murderer was probably assured in advance that he would serve his sentence on the territory of Azerbaijan, which meant that he would be released in a very short time.

On the whole, the murder of the Armenian officer served as a “warming-up” (or “trigger”) before the battle, for Azerbaijan vigorously to get ready for the military revenge. It is rather difficult to overestimate the encouraging psychological effect this action had on the Azerbaijani people, who were dealt a crushing defeat in the first Karabakh war (1988-1994). Unfortunately, judging by the evolution of the situation in the world and the region, a second Karabakh war is impending. And to date the moral and physiological advantage from the strategic (by no means ethical) point of view leans in favor of Azerbaijan, not least “thanks” to the murder in Budapest.

The “civilized” West responded to what had happened with emphatic indifference. Its reaction was confined to a few words of condolences, whereas no further actions were taken. The Armenian Genocide (1890s-1922), which had lasted for three decades, gave rise in the West to a habit of looking at the blood of an Armenian murdered by a Turk as at a natural phenomenon. Thus, there is an impression of absence of any kind of “punishment costs” in the form of articulate condemnation (not to say about any sanctions or a threat to use them) exercised by the international community against Baku. (Another illustrative example of a similar situation is the genocide of Serbs in Kosovo and the lack of serious counter-measures on the part of the USA and NATO, the “guarantors” of security in this former Yugoslavian province). It is clear that the matter has not even slightly touched upon the reconsideration of the peacemaking process and international mediation in the issues of Nagorno Karabakh. Instead, in Baku, where the Budapest murderer receives daily rounds of applause, the negotiations have been launched aimed at the urgent transfer of some military bases to the U.S. special forces.

Armenia, in her turn, reacted to the murder in Budapest with a momentary shock, which did not amount to the level of strategic sobering due to a number of reasons, namely: aggravation of the internal political situation, as well as the current acute apathy and indifference of a considerable part of population towards politics (we omit the plentiful reasons for this), and, finally, the idleness of the authorities, who let the sphere of national security to drift. In Armenia, unfortunately, this crime failed to trigger the unification of our society against the imminent danger. We should, however, worry that the outcome of a possible second Karabakh war would depend upon whether it would be similarly patriotic as the first.

Thus, we should not exclude the possibility of the murder in Budapest being a part of an intricately elaborate program by Baku’s military-political leadership with the aim of preparing a revanche in a new large-scale war.

All of this provides a solid ground to the Armenian party at the forthcoming court hearings in Budapest to explore this version of the murder, implying a premeditated and thoroughly planned action by the Azerbaijani special services, in other words, making a case

for a state crime. The attorneys, representing the family of Gurgen Margaryan, as well as the Armenian government must insist on a scrupulous investigation of this particular version, first and foremost. Moreover, our attorneys should be advised on the given issue by a multiple-task group of experts, which should also include highly qualified employees of the Armenian special services.

Revelation of the true organizers and motives of this act of state terrorism at the court grants the Armenian party a unique opportunity not only to punish the criminal according to the gravest measures of the law in Hungary, but also to inform the world community about the new war methodically planned in Baku and Ankara. This would allow for preventing or at least delaying this war for an indefinite period of time so it does not impact upon our people in this unsteady internal political and moral-psychological situation in Armenia.

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This article was first published in Russian, NOVOYE VREMYA newspaper (Yerevan), 30 March 2004; DEFACTO news agency (www.defacto.am), 29 March 2004.