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## Refugees in Geopolitical Game

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Hundreds of thousands of refugees and migrants have recently made their way to Europe, but only to the casual observer would this seem to be a fluke event. In reality, what we are dealing with is an artificially induced phenomenon.

And those who sparked it are pursuing two goals. First of all, they want to shift the spotlight from Europeans' growing dissatisfaction with the actions of the local, pro-American elites, as well as the Brussels bureaucracy that is slavishly devoted to Atlanticism, and instead redirect that ire toward these new arrivals. Second, this wave of migration is being used to pressure those elites and gain an additional element of control over them, just in case they should try to distance themselves from the anti-Russian line of the US and EU on issues regarding trade and energy.

After all, the notorious EU quotas on refugees and illegal migrants that Brussels establishes for

each host country can be almost endlessly manipulated (as long as there is a European Union at least) - as can the ways in which funds are allocated - or not – for the infrastructure to accommodate those migrants.

There is no financial logic or common sense to be found here, only geopolitical calculations: those guests that are not welcome in Western Europe will be nudged eastward, to the countries known as «new Europe». A telling example can be seen in the way the migrant issue has been handled in Austria. Mass protests were held in Bratislava and other European capitals against the use of «quotas» to resolve the problem of illegal migrants, and so the Austrian government and EU leadership responded by routing the first influx of refugees into Slovakia. The Austrian Interior Ministry called this move a «pilot project» and stated that the two-year program could be extended. Five hundred migrants currently housed in an Austrian intake center in Traiskirchen are to be transferred to Slovakia. The process should be completed in September.

Austrian Minister of the Interior Johanna Mikl-Leitner calls this a «small step» and a «signal of solidarity». But there is no solidarity to be seen here. The Austrian Ministry of the Interior acknowledges that it has not been determined exactly who will pay the costs to move and accommodate the migrants. Knowing the ways of the EU bureaucracy and the complexity of the procedures for tapping into EU funds, one can assume that that the burden will be imposed on the Slovak government. The richer country of Austria will be able to dodge these expenses, which Brussels has decided will be levied upon the Slovaks. But we do not yet know if they are prepared to accept those costs.

Serbia offers another example. Serbian authorities have pledged to develop an «Operational Plan» by the end of August to solve the migrant problem, a continuous stream of whom is flooding into the country from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria, Somalia, and other countries. According to the government's official data, about 2,000 people arrive in Serbia each day, half of whom apply for asylum. Approximately the same number attempt to disappear once inside the country or else make their way to other European nations - primarily across the Serbian-Hungarian border. Since the beginning of the year, about 80,000 people have officially requested asylum in Serbia. And at least that many are staying in the country illegally, and many of those having quietly settled down there and have no plans to leave.

It is clear, however, that none of the Serbian government's plans will be helpful here. The streams of migrants that are currently inundating Europe were generated by attempts to redraw the vast geopolitical landscape of North Africa and the Middle East - instigated by the United States and its allies - which then had a direct impact on the countries of the former Soviet Union.

One might legitimately question the rationale behind the procedure for moving these people around. And this is not just about refugees from Libya or Tunisia who were miraculously saved after their boats were destroyed, but also about those migrants who have already managed to get a roof over their heads in the heart of Europe. Must they suddenly be evacuated to a neighboring country? Probably. After all, the proponents of European integration regard the boundary between «old Europe» and «new Europe» as also a boundary between first- and second-class Europeans. And that's not even counting countries like Ukraine or Moldova that are just scraping by on their EU association agreements (a kind of ersatz EU membership) - they're definitely

considered third class.

And another thing about Ukraine. The country will have to pay a special bill for the «European choice» made by the new Ukrainian government. And the European Commission already has a plan. Dimitris Avramopoulos, the EU Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, has said that even Ukraine will have to accept refugees, and not just a handful of displaced persons like little Slovakia is taking. In fact, the number of refugees sent to Ukraine will be proportional to the geographical size of that country. «Our analytical center has calculated that Ukraine is capable of accepting up to 100,000 migrants, or even more, since it is a large country, and, significantly, possesses fertile land where Africans can not only create their own infrastructure, but also farm and be self-sufficient. In addition, this can be a great stimulus to the development of the Ukrainian economy, because for the most part migrants are extremely hardworking», announced the commissioner.

Here we can see the system of «external control» in action. President Putin has said recently that it was «humiliating for the Ukrainian people». This is a big game where huge masses of refugees just play the role of pawns.