

# “BROTHERHOOD” OF EVIL NEIGHBORS

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This year, Azerbaijan is celebrating the 100th anniversary of the birth of Heydar Aliyev, a political and public figure who led the country for two terms – when Azerbaijan was a part of the USSR and after the restoration of state independence. Both periods, separated by a long pause, have been quite remarkable in terms of Azerbaijan’s comprehensive development in various spheres of life.

This issue of IRS-Heritage features an article about how Heydar Aliyev, while holding high party and government positions, became the target of attacks by Armenian nationalists who wanted to discredit him both in the eyes of the ruling elite and the public. This is due to the fact that the former leader of Soviet Azerbaijan was seen as the main obstacle in the way of plans to annex parts of Azerbaijan’s territory to Armenia – the upper part of Karabakh and the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic. As the course of events showed, it was Heydar Aliyev’s resignation from senior positions in the USSR in 1987 that triggered the emergence of Armenian separatist sentiments in Karabakh, which, after the collapse of the USSR, led to the occupation of a fifth of the territory of Azerbaijan.

Recent months have seen the rise of a movement against the anti-democratic clerical regime in Iran. This has further exposed the problem of the Iranian regime’s destructive policies both at home and abroad. An article in this issue of our magazine provides a description of the ruling regime of the Islamic Republic of Iran from the point of view of postulates of Islam. The author concludes that Islamic phraseology is nothing more than a cover with which the regime is trying to disguise its policy of inciting Sunni-Shia confrontation in the Middle East in its own geopolitical interests. In this context, the article reviews Tehran’s policy in the neighboring South Caucasus aimed at closeness with Armenia to the detriment of the same-faith “brotherly” Azerbaijan, the attitude towards which is primarily associated with the task of “exporting the Islamic revolution” and neutralizing the Azerbaijani factor inside Iran. From this point of view, the toughening of Iran’s policy towards Azerbaijan after the latter’s victory in the second Karabakh war in 2020 is worthy of note.

This issue comes out at a time when Azerbaijan, along with a number of other countries of the East, is celebrating the ancient Novruz holiday – a holiday of spring and renewal. An article in this issue is dedicated to this wonderful holiday.

In addition, the reader will traditionally find materials on other aspects of the history and culture of the Azerbaijani people.

We do hope that they arouse an interest and fill a few knowledge gaps about the Land of Fire.