4797/
1953/09

The Voice of Free

Georgia



SEPTEMBER, 1953

No. 3



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THE VOICE OF FREE GEORGIA

PERIODICAL INFORMATION BULLETIN

Publisher: EDITORIAL BOARD

Address: DR. D. CHATARA
1331 MADISON AVE., N.Y., N.Y.

No. 3 | New York | September, 1953

Anniversary of the Georgian Insurrection

The thirtieth anniversary of the execution of the members of the underground miltary organization for the liberation of Georgia.

Thirty years have passed since some of the leaders of the Georgian fight for independence were executed by the communists.

The Georgians in exile, in Europe and elsewhere, commemorated the day of their execution by memorial services and meetings.

"Iveria," a Georgian newspaper published in Paris, issued a special bulletin, which gives the list of names of the victims and the account of their execution.

The bulletin also contains a commentary written by the leader of the Georgian National Democratic Party, Mr. A. Assatiani. With *"Iveria's"* permission we publish this bulletin.

"VERDICT* of the Extraordinary Commission (TCHEKA) of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Georgia:

"The preparatory work by the agents of the capitalist Entente for an uprising in Georgia has ended in the arrest of these agents by the Extraordinary Commission (Tcheka):

Upon completion of an investigation undertaken by the Extraordinary Commission of Transcaucasia, the Extraordinary Commission of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Georgia decrees that the following persons will receive capital punishment for having conspired and plotted against the Soviet power and organized and participated in a bandit movement in Georgia, thus betraying the peasants' and workmens' State.

"1. *Andronikashvili,* Alexandre, age 51, former prince, former general of the General Staff, Professor at the Soviet Georgian Military College. While occupying this post he joined the Military Center and took part in the bandit movement, as well as participating in the preparation of an insurrection against Soviet power.

"2. *Tsulukidze,* Varden, age 57, former prince, former general, Chief of Frontier Guards of the Georgian Red Army, but in effect directing the work of the Georgian Military Center. The Military Center entrusted him, together with Muskelishvili, with the task of preparing the plan for the mobilization of the population and the distribution of arms, as well as with communicating this plan to those concerned, through the intermediary of the Joint Committee of Parties.

3. *Abkhazi,* Constantin, age 55, former prince, former general of the

—"The Communist"* No. 115. May 25, 1923, Tbilissi

General Staff, former President of the Association of Georgian nobility, and President of the Georgian National Democratic Party. Joined the Military Center and took part in the preparation of an insurrection aimed at the overthrow of Soviet power in Georgia. He admitted having voted, at a meeting of the Central Committee of the National Democratic Party, in favor of an immediate general uprising.

4. *Khimshiashvili,* George, age 31, former colonel, commanding officer of a training battalion of a Soviet Georgian Brigade. While a member of the Red Army he was asked by Mensheviks to be their representative at the Military Center and he took part in directing the bandit movement against the Soviet Socialist Republic of Georgia.

5. *Muskelishvili,* Rostom, age 35, colonel of the General Staff, Chief of Staff of a Soviet Georgian Division. While occupying this post, he joined the Military Center and worked for the Mensheviks and National Democrats, transmitting confidential information. During the uprising of Dusheti, while at the head of the punitive expedition, he maintained liaison with the bandits and was in fact directing them.

6. *Zandukeli,* Michel, age 30, Chief of an Army Supply department, member of the Menshevik Committee of Dusheti. In 1922, he organized two bandit groups in the district of Dusheti and maintained contact with Muskelishvili, who was at that time head of the punitive expedition.

7. *Bagration* de *Mukhrani,* Simon, age 27, former prince, former officer. Upon the order of the Central Committee of the Georgian National Democratic Party, he took part in the preparations for an insurrection in the region of Garé-Kakhetia and was in command of the Lachkarashvili group which had been organized by the Mensheviks in the Gori district.

8. *Karalashvili,* Pharnaoz, age 24, former officer, assistant commanding officer of the 1st Georgian Regiment of the Red Army. In September 1922, while in command of a machine-gun post at the bridge of Zegvi, he entered into contact with the Lachkarashvili band and went over.

9. *Keresselidze,* Jason, age 32, member of the Georgian National Democratic Party. In compliance with the orders of the National Democrats he was in liaison with Tcholokashvili.

10. *Kutateladze,* John, age 40, member of the Military Organization of the National Democratic Party. In compliance with the orders of the Central Committee of this party, he organized groups of counter-revolutionary officers.

11. *Tchiabrishvili,* Simon, age 42, tradesman, member of the National Democratic Party. Participated in 1922 in the activity of armed bands in the district of Dusheti.

12. *Matchavariani,* Alexandre, age 51, former colonel, commanding officer of the 1st Regiment of a Soviet Georgian Division. During the rebellion led by Tcholokashvili, he took an active part in the work of the Military Committee of the Georgian National Democratic Party. While serving in the Red Army, he transmitted to the chief of the punitive expedition, Rostom Muskelishvili, instructions of the Central Committee of the National Democratic Party.

13. *Gulissashvili,* Elisbar, age 32, active member of the Military Organization of the National Democratic Party. While occupying an important position in the Red Army, he transmitted confidential information to Tcholokashvili.

14. *Klimiashvili,* Levan, age 26, officer of the Red Army. In compliance with the orders of the Georgian National Democratic Party, he was recruiting officers on behalf of Tcholokashvili.

15. *Tchrdileli,* Dimitri, age 29, former colonel, commanding officer of an artillery unit of the Red Army. Important and active member of the Military Organization of the Georgian National Democratic Party, in accordance with a request of a group of officers, he declared to the Military Center that he was ready to turn over his batteries to Tcholokashvili.

The above-named persons, whose indictment is contained in the aforementioned verdict, have already been executed."

This terrible verdict was accompanied by a detailed account of an investigation undertaken by the Tcheka. But the picture of the events is incomplete as it provides only as much information as the Tcheka had been in the position to have. Nevertheless, the facts contained therein are sufficient to indicate the widespread support of the plot to liberate Georgia by force of arms.

Since the occupation of Georgia by Soviet Russia in 1921, the Georgian people have adopted the attitude of total opposition to the Soviet rule. The struggle started with the insurrection of Svanethia (a mountainous province of Georgia) led by Bidzina Pirveli (1921). Then came that of Kakhetia in 1922, with Colonel Tcholokashvili directing the operations, soon to be followed by the general uprising of Georgia (1924). Later on, insurrections flared up in 1928 (Letchkumi) and in 1930 an insurrection known under the name of "the women's rebellion."

In 1923, the Military Center, which was formed by all Georgian non-Communist Parties, was of the opinion that the possibility existed of annihilating Bolshevik forces stationed in the Caucasus and liberating the entire country. According to the Center, Moscow would not be in a position to attack the Caucasus for quite some time. Meanwhile, it would be possible to fortify the Caucasus and organize adequate military forces for defense.

Beyond the Caucasus, fighting was still going on in the Cossack regions, in the Ukraine, and in Turkestan.

A swift and vigorous blow directed against Soviet Russia from the Caucasus could have been decisive and might easily have led to its rapid dislocation.

However, the plan conceived by the Military Center did not succeed, because at that time, Georgian political circles did not have unity and cohesion equal to that of the Georgian military groups. Moreover, since many of the members of the Center had fallen into Soviet hands, its efficiency had diminished considerably.

Meanwhile, the Soviet Union was energetically strengthening its forces in the Caucasus, and in 1924, at the time of the general uprising, the equilibrium of forces had changed in favor of the Soviet Union. The tyranny had been rapidly increasing within the Soviet territory and its destructive influence was spreading over the entire world.

During that period, western nations were watching with indifference the monstrous growth of bolshevism and the gradual transformation of a mere gang of professional agitators into a world menace. Some of the western nations were helping communists under cover, others quite openly.

The irreconcilability of the Georgian people toward the communist régime never abated. The enforcement of the red tyranny appeared to them to be by far the most dangerous of all they had endured in the course of their long history. This time it was not only the political existence, but the very foundations of the national way of life, family, church, and moral rights, as well as the economic structure which were in peril.

Stalin reacted with particular severity toward the defiant attitude of his countrymen. Quite probably, in his innermost self, the Soviet dictator suspected that Russian people would never have accepted him as their ruler and master unless he had shown proof of Russian chauvinism; to prove this he struck, first of all, at his own people, meting out hard blows of punishment.

Such harshness could have been explained, to a certain extent, in regard to those who actively partici-

საქართველოს პარლამენტის ეროვნული ბიბლიოთეკა

pated in the armed struggle under the flag of Georgian independence, members of military organizations and active members of political parties. But large numbers of priests, scientists, writers, and other representatives of the intellectual classes of the country, whether in big towns or small villages, shared the tragic fate inflicted upon active fighters by Stalin.

Georgian peasants in large numbers were systematically deported to the concentration camps of the North where certain death awaited them.

Because of refusal to recognize Stalin as her master and to adopt bolshevism, Georgia provoked a terrible revenge on his part.

On the other hand, the irreconcilability of the Georgian people had repercussions of a different type affecting even the Georgian communists. Right from the start as they appeared on the political stage preceding the invading soviet troops, they felt that they were surrounded by hostility and hatred. Prisoners in an enemy camp: such must have been their feeling. In order to conciliate their countrymen's hostile attitude, they made efforts to moderate the bolsheviks' manifestations of utter brutality. Starting from 1921, this tendency acquired a political aspect and was directed against the ruthless centralization imposed by Moscow, thus giving birth to the well known nationalist deviationism which rapidly infected the communists of other nations enslaved by Moscow, with the results that whenever "deviationists" appeared, they were relentlessly pursued by Stalin. For instance, in Georgia only one member of the first communist government died a natural death, all the others were executed.

Nevertheless, the roots of this movement penetrated the various nations enslaved by Moscow, to such an extent that Stalin was forced to make certain concessions. Soviet Russia became the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics with "right for any Republic to secede freely from the Union."

Obviously this clause will remain in the domain of pure fiction until the collapse of the red tyranny.

Future historians relating the struggle for Georgian independence will dedicate glorious pages to the indomitable courage and unwavering steadfastness of Georgian patriots facing death.

On the 20th of May 1923, the Generals Abkhazi, Andronikashvili, Tsulukidze, and their followers were brought, with their hands tied, to the Tcheka in Tiflis. After the verdict condemning them to death had been read they were granted the permission to speak for the last time. All of them, without exception, spoke with calm dignity and firmness to the red executioners: "You do not frighten us, because our death is a pledge of freedom for Georgia." "I am happy to die because I feel proud to be able to sacrifice myself on the altar of my country. Our death will bring victory to Georgia." "Let the others know that we died as it behooves Georgian patriots." "It can be seen on your faces that our courage surprises you: go and tell your masters that the Georgians know how to die for their motherland."

Since that day similar manifestations of courage and dignity have become the rule for Georgian patriots tried in soviet courts.

The Catholicos-Patriarch Ambrosius, Bishop Nazaire, Generals Gardapkhadze, Sumbatashvili, Karalishvili, the two brothers Pourtzeladze, political leaders and their supporters, patriots from every walk of life and every social class whether old or young, all had the same words to say at the approach of death.

Even the Georgian communists, despite their moral nihilism and outlook, did not fail to conform to this rule in facing death. None of them consented to sign any humiliating confessions.

Budu Mdviani, Stalin's childhood friend, at the time of his trial flung

in the face of his accusers the following remark: "Get such declarations signed over there in Moscow; here we are in Tbilissi, capital of Georgia!"..

The history of Georgia will dedicate sublime pages to the struggle for independence which the nation had to sustain; heroism will be glorified as much as martyrdom exalted.

THE INSURRECTION OF 1924

By the executions of 1923 the Soviet rulers hoped to cow the Georgian people into submission and to reduce their will to fight. But the people's reaction proved to be quite different. General A. Andronikashvili's words, addressed to his executioners, proved to be true: "...Many thousands of Georgians bear death for you in their hearts." The executions caused many more thousands to join in the active fight for freedom. The "Independence Committee" was faced with a serious problem. It had either to renounce the fight and capitulate before the hated occupier, or it had to replace the executed leaders and go on with the fight. It was patently impossible to renounce the fight. Even had the Committee decided on this, it could not have prevented the population from rising. All Georgia was seething with unrest and impatiently awaited orders to begin actual fighting with arms in hand. In these circumstances there was only one thing to do, to form a new military center, to revive the underground military organizations, and to try to organize the masses, instead of letting them act on their own and without a general plan. The "Independence Committee," once again began preparations for a general uprising.

Until August 1924, when the rebellion broke out, the number of active members of the military organizations grew day by day. New organizations were also formed, among them student and schoolboy organizations. Practically every Georgian 15 years old and over was getting ready. The committee" once again began preparathat even the worst pessimists joined up. In every class, in every social category, the ground was prepared: workers, peasants, soldiers, tradesmen, artisans, students, and intellectuals, all were as one in the face of the ruthless terror of the foreign occupiers. They all formed one great Georgian national organization, getting ready to fight for the restoration of their country's independence.

On August 29, 1924, at daybreak, the first shots were fired. They were the signal for a general, nation-wide insurrection. At first it met with success and many towns and villages were taken by the insurgents. The communist resistance, in the provinces especially, proved to be much weaker than expected. In the villages, the scattered communist units were unable to offer any serious resistance and were either annihilated or captured. During the first and second days of the uprising, three-fifths of all Georgian towns and villages fell into the hands of the insurgents. Everywhere the red flags were torn down and the national Georgian tricolor was flying; and in those churches which had escaped destruction by the communists, the bells were peeling again. The communist party was outlawed and the communist leaders thrown into prison. Encouraged by the initial success, the population rose as one, and more and more fighters joined the ranks.

Quite different was the picture in Tbilissi, the capital of Georgia. Here the fighting was to have started with an attack on the town by Colonel Tcholokashvili's army. However, the day before the uprising was to have begun, the communists reinforced all strategic positions which defended the town and closed all roads with strong detachements. As a result, Colonel Tcholokashvili was unable to break through. Martial law was proclaimed in Tbilissi as soon as the fighting began, and the communists started mass arrests of the population. On the night of August 30, Georgia was divided into two camps;

one in the hands of the Georgian patriots, the other in the hands of Russian communists. The prisons began to be filled with Georgian prisoners, and the first executions began. On August 31st, the communists started their counter-attack. At this moment the Soviets had in Georgia the following military forces: 5 infantry regiments, 2 cavalry brigades, 1 artillery brigade, 2 machine gun regiments, 6 batallions of Tcheka troops, 1 regiment of military cadets, 1 regiment of engineers and 2 batallions of frontier guards, all told, about 54.000 troops. The Commander-in-Chief of this Red Army was General Pugacheff, former colonel of the Imperial Russian General Staff. The day the insurrection broke out, the following additional troops began moving into Georgia: from Azerbaijan—1 Infantry Division, from Armenia—1 Infantry Division, from North Caucasus—2 regiments down the Black Sea Coast, 3 regiments down the Georgian Military Highway via the Darial Pass and 3 regiments via the Mamisson Pass, another 56,000 men, making 110,000 in all. Besides these troops, units of the Black Sea Fleet started landing in Batumi and Sukhumi.

When you take into account the number of Red troops employed against them. it is not surprising that the Georgians, without any aid from the outside, could not hold out long. The odds were too overwhelmingly against them. We will not try to describe here the various incidents of the fighting, which lasted up to three weeks. The Red troops did not come out unscathed; the Georgian fighters took many an enemy into the grave with them. The end, however, was a foregone conclusion. Cruel and ruthless force, coupled with overwhelming numbers, triumphed.

The world has known many a rebellion, many an uprising of one nation or another fighting for its independence. The world has seen many of these uprisings brutally put down, has seen the cruel repressions which followed them. But seldom in all the history of mankind has any power. any regime, behaved in such a way as the Russian communists behaved in Georgia after the defeat of the Georgian insurrection. Georgia was drowned in blood. Whole families were annihilated; even babes in arms were not spared. We will give one example, absoutely proven and documented. In the village of Ruissi, every human being carrying the name Paniashvili was murdered by the communists. Fathers, mothers, children, brothers, sisters, cousins. Not one Paniashvili was left alive. Here is a list of them. There is not the slightest doubt as to its authenticity.

1. Leon Paniashvili and his son 16 years old.
2. John Paniashvili, his daughter Tamara 14 years old, son Suliko, 6 years old, and two other children 4 and 2½ years old.
3. Julian Paniashvili's widow and her children, George 12 years, Elizabeth 10 years, and Irene 8 years old.
4. Badur Paniashvili and 4 children; a son of 14 and 3 daughters of 5, 4, and 3 years old.
5. Joseph Paniashvili and 4 children, 12, 7, 5 and 3 years old.
6. Gueno Paniashvili, his wife Margaret, and 3 children, 9, 4 and 2 years old.
7. Daria Paniashvili, her mother 60 years old, and daughter, 14 years old.
8. Anna Paniashvili, 23 years old.

This is not an isolated case; on the contrary, it is typical of many, and shows to what a degree of depravity and bestiality the communists descended. Men and women were taken from hospital beds and shot; young school children, students, priests, men who had no connection with the insurrection whatsoever. Without trials, without an interrogation, without any verdict, thousands of Georgians, disarmed and powerless, were taken and murdered in cold blood. There is no family in

Georgia which escaped, which did not have at least one of its members murdered. It was a St. Bartholomew's Eve, but on a far greater scale; a hell let loose which in a few days destroyed the best representatives of the Georgian nation.

The history of Georgia will never forget the Days of August and September of 1924. The rebellion was defeated, but this did not break the spirit of the Georgian nation or their will and ability to go on fighting. Thousands were executed, or sent to Siberia, but tens of thousands of their friends and relatives remained, who, to repeat Gen. Andronikashvili's words . . . "bear in their hearts death for the hated foreign occupier."

We believe, every Georgian believes, that in the final, inevitable struggle, the good will triumph over the evil and that sooner or later, Georgia, together with the other enslaved nations, will be free once again. The rebellion of 1924 was defeated, but it was not fought in vain. And some day, the Georgian nation will be able to pay homage freely to the memory of those who gave their lives for their country, for liberty and for the dignity of man.

TWO WORLDS

BY D. SINDIKELI

World War II was a logical consequence of World War I, and its causes stem mainly from the signing of the Treaty of Versailles. The Allied Powers won the war, but they were not able to handle adequately the task of laying the foundations of a lasting peace, because they were reluctant to abandon obsolete conceptions regarding the conclusion of peace between warring nations.

President Wilson's sincere attempt to promote the establishment of a lasting peace, formulated in his "14 points" undoubtedly played an important role in weakening the will to fight of the German people, giving them hope of an equitable peace.

However, at that time, the United States was absorbed in developing the prosperity and well being of the country and was not in a position to take an active part in safeguarding the implementation of President Wilson's promises.

The signatories of the Treaty of Versailles, lacking the imagination necessary to visualize that injustice and harshness would almost inevitably lead to opposition and resistance, proceeded to compel Germany to sign the "diktat," thus creating favorable conditions for an upsurge of narrow chauvinism and subsequently, Hitlerism.

History records several examples of the ruthlessness and cruelty of various European and Asiatic despots and tyrants—Roman Ceasars, Tamerlane, Genghis-Khan, Persian and Turkish conquerors, and scores of others under whose ferocious rule mankind has trembled in various epochs.

The psychological approaches and methods of action of conquerors do

not vary much: they start by provoking their adversaries, putting them into such an untenable position as to leave them no alternative but to take up arms, then cunningly contrive to put the moral responsibility on the victim. Most tyrants and conquerors resort to this method sooner or later. In our time, the best illustration of this method is provided by the tactics of the Kremlin, the ruthlessness of its leaders surpassing by far anything known in history.

Communism was introduced into and imposed upon Russia by force and violence, and it continues to subjugate the population by terror. In the first years of its rule, the Communist party declared that the "class enemies" were the intellectuals, the clergy, the landowners, the capitalists, the aristocracy and other members of the hated bourgeoisie, whom they had to liquidate in the interests of the proletariat. Next, they began to imprison, murder and send to concentration camps hundreds of thousands of peasants and workers, thus demonstrating the criminality and absurdity of a government system which deems it necessary to destroy large groups of the population in order to protect "the interests of the working masses" and then proceeds to destroy these same working masses in their turn.

As soon as the Communist Party had firmly established its power in Russia it began to show signs of adopting an imperialistic policy, the first victims of which were the nations formerly included in the Russian Empire which had gained their independence at the close of World War I during the revolutionary upheaval in Russia. The Communist leaders, however, did not allow this independence to last. They promptly moved the Red Army into the Ukraine and the Caucasus, crushing the independence of these countries, terrorizing the population, and finally imposing puppet governments so as to insure their subservience to the Kremlin. It should be noted that Poland, Finland, and the Baltic countries were spared this fate until World War II, because of the special interest of the European Powers.

In the period following World War I, Western Europe was not displaying too much curiosity regarding internal developments in Soviet Russia; it was not inclined to regard with disapproval various acts of aggression perpetrated by the Soviet Union, but sometimes even encouraged such action with a view to maintaining the so-called "balance of power" (which at that time was still a prevailing political concept in Europe) with the Soviet Union as one of the component parts. Therefore, the European Powers allowed the Communist régime to grow and acquire strength undisturbed, overlooking the fact that this régime was based on brutality, terror, and complete disregard of every moral principle, busily destroying and terrorizing its own population, reducing it to an almost animal status, and overrunning and seizing the territory of the neighboring nations in order to impose its rule.

The League of Nations in Geneva, the international arbiter, was not in a position to adequately fulfill its role, and it did not go beyond mild protestations whenever an aggression took place or brute force trampled down the sacred principles of national sovereignty and human rights.

During that same period, the representatives abroad of the oppressed and enslaved nations were making efforts to inform European opinion with regard to the internal situation in the Soviet Union and its aggressive purposes, but they found themselves in the position of a "voice crying in the wilderness," and they were completely ignored.

The situation changed in 1939. The Axis powers began to show their readiness to precipitate a war, whereupon Stalin and Molotov entered into a military alliance with Hitler and Ribbentrop, thereby encouraging the Nazi dictator to go on with his aggressive plans. As compensation Hitler agreed to let the Soviet Union seize Eastern Poland and the Baltic countries. However, in 1941, Hitler's military success on the western front emboldened him to turn his forces against the Soviet Union. In the initial powerful drive, he recaptured the countries given away by the agreement of 1939 and the battleline was soon nearing Moscow. The Soviet rulers, seriously frightened, promptly disguised themselves in the proverbial "sheep's clothing" and hastily joined the camp of the Western democracies. It can be safely said that the menace of a third world war came into existence that very day.

World War II was fought with the noble aim of liberating oppressed peoples from the terror of totalitarian domination, but the struggle is not over, it has continued to the present day.

Unhappily for the world, the Soviet Union was among the victors of the war, taking part in post-war deliberations with the power of expressing an opinion and voting on every problem, and it has not failed to use its power to the full advantage. Starting from Potsdam, every action of the Soviet Union has been directed toward the acquisition of new territories, new areas of influence, using, if necessary, aggression.

In 1942 to 1943, Hitler was saying that "wherever the foot of a German soldier has stepped—is German territory." The Soviet leaders went further; they have actually put this dictum into practice and have spread their rule over millions of people, thus transforming the fight for the liberation of the oppressed nations into a grave of this same freedom for the sake of which the war was fought. Moreover, in their drive for world domination they acquired power over a population of 800,000,000 and have made several countries change their geographical outline.

In this connection it is interesting to analyze post-war developments in Central and Eastern Europe. Poland, for whose defence the war was started, is under complete Soviet domination. Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria, in accordance with the terms of the treaty of September 15, 1947, have become Soviet vassals. In addition, Hungary has had to give up Transylvania, which had been incorporated into Rumania, thus returning to the borderline of 1938. She also had to pay to the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia, reparations in the amount of $300,000,000 and her territory is now occupied by Soviet troops, ostensibly for the protection of communication lines with Austria.

Bulgaria, whose participation in the war was limited to a few encounters with Greek and Yugoslav troops, had to pay $45,000,000 in reparations to Greece and $25,000,000 to Yugoslavia. Moreover, a Communist puppet government was organized, imposed by force, and is faithfully following directives from Moscow.

Finland, with extreme dificulty, has been able to preserve a limited independence, but was obliged to give up Petsamo, Viborg, and Karelia to the Soviet Union and to pay reparations in the amount of $225,000,000.

In several countries government regimes have changed: four monarchs lost their thrones: the Italian, the Bulgarian, the Rumanian, and the Yugoslav. Three other countries have been completely obliterated from the map: Estonia with a total area of 45,000 square kilometers and a population of 1,200,000; Lithuania with an area of 64,500 square kilometers and a population of 3,000,000; and Latvia with an area of 65,200 square kilometers and a population of 2,100,000. These countries have become victims of Communist expansion and have been incorporated into the Soviet territory.

Similarly, if we can picture that events taking place in Indo-China, Africa, and the Far East—unrest, destruction, and bloodshed—are direct results of Communist propaganda, financial support, and supply of arms, it becomes clear that the Soviet form of government, Communism, represents the same threat to humanity as other tyrants and despots of history, the only difference being that the development of scientific and technological progress makes it possible for the Communist regime to be even more thorough and cruel in its methods.

In other words, Communism for its own people represents complete subjugation of the individual to the state, total deprivation of fundamental freedom and human rights with its grim modus operandi: concentration camps, destitution, starvation, and death. For foreign countries it means war, invasion, and loss of sovereignty.

At the 19th Congress of the Communist Party, held in Moscow in October 1952, a guiding principle was adopted to indicate that the struggle between communism and capitalism has to continue until the latter is destroyed, and that final peace can only be attained upon the triumph of communism on a world scale. Simultaneously with the restatement of this policy, the Soviet leaders have continued to proclaim at every opportunity that coexistence and peaceful cooperation between capitalism and communism are possible and feasible. Therefore their well organized networks of subversive agents all over the world have been instructed to spread and maintain the idea that communism is the defender of peace and that war is the aim of the policies of western capitalists.

At the end of World War II, several European and American journalists visited Moscow and had interviews with various leaders and prominent figures, including the "infallible leader Stalin" himself. On every occasion they put an identical question: "Do you believe that peace can be preserved in spite of the fact that two conflicting ideologies are dividing humanity?" They invariably received the same reply "We do not doubt that this is possible."

Only one journalist changed the form of his question and asked:

"Would the Soviet Union be prepared to make a common declaration with the United States of their intent to safeguard peace and oppose war?" He received the stereotyped reply that the Soviet Government would be prepared to do so.

The esteemed journalist upon his return from Moscow triumphantly informed the world that the Soviet Government was striving toward peace. But, unfortunately, in the exitement of this valuable doscovery, the naive journalist lost sight of the fact that such a declaration had already been made within the framework of the United Nations Charter, but it had not, unfortunately prevented the Soviet Government from seizing the territory of a series of foreign countries, incorporating them into the "Union" and separating them from the rest of the world by the impenetrable Iron Curtain; it also had not stopped the Soviet Union from creating an armed conflict in Korea and a general widespread tension and uneasiness in the entire Far East.

The question arises whether any value can be attached to the Soviet promises and solemn declarations? The meaning of the promises and obligations undertaken by the Soviet Government are only too well known to the oppressed nations under Communist domination: Armenians, Georgians and other Caucasian nationalities, as well as Ukrainians, Poles, Czechoslovaks, etc., who have had first-hand experience in the struggle against Communism.

Within the past few years, a new moral force has emerged on the other side of the international arena, propagating and supporting the idea of lasting peace, international justice, and fundamental human rights.

This movement began before the war was over, when the representatives of the Allied powers met at San Francisco to lay down the foundations of the United Nations Organization and drafted the United Nations Charter which, among other things, guarantees peace based on moral and legal justice in the following terms: "We the peoples of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war." And the first paragraph reads: "The purposes of the United Nations are to maintain international peace and security....."

In practice, however, it appears that some of the signatories of the Charter are still clinging to pre-war and obsolete concepts of peace and justice.

Nevertheless, San Francisco radically differs from Geneva in that while after World War I the United States limited its participation to the role of a sympathetic observer, at the close of World War II it was prepared to stand on guard and defend the principles of equitable peace and international justice.

It is the first time in history that an example has been given such as that of the United States when it showed a new method of treating a conquered enemy by creating a situation whereby the enemy of yesterday becomes a friend of today. This has been done by means of leaving intact the territorial boundaries of the conquered

state, helping to reconstruct its shattered economy, and generally adopting an unprejudiced attitude.

Japan is the most outstanding example of this noble and generous policy, because with the help and under the guidance of the United States she has been able to become an equal member of the family of democratic nations.

Another example is provided by Western Germany, which has been able to recover from the devastation of the war, to begin reconstructing her economy, and to be on the road to full political partnership with other free nations.

In another field of activity, but in the same category of wise and noble undertakings, can be cited the case of the Philippines, to whom independence was granted in fulfillment of a pledge given during the war.

The example of the creation of the State of Israel is one more demonstration of this principle. Its citizens, for many centuries deprived of a homeland, have been able, with the support and under the sponsorship of the United States, to recreate a national home and to organize the life of the country according to the wishes of the people.

The foregoing clearly demonstrates that the principle of preservation of national and individual freedom is the basis of American relationship with other countries. Moreover, it is completely devoid of any motivation of material, territorial, or any other benefit and it is directed toward protecting and safeguarding the legitimate right of every country. In this consists the essence of the new approach to peace and international relationship.

In this conflict of opposing ideologies, the peoples oppressed by communism are joining their moral and material forces to the side which stands for and defends the principles of national independence, fundamental freedom, and human rights, and they are prepared to fight with all their strength against the evil forces of communism and its doctrine, which imminently threaten the life and freedom of other nations.

It is an undeniable fact that the relationship of the United States with other nations is based on the principles of freedom, equality, justice, and mutual esteem, and its victory in the ideological conflict would mean the victory of these principles over the brute force, lawlessness, cruelty, and other evils of Communist rule.

Therefore, we, the representatives of the peoples under Communist domination behind the Iron Curtain, consider it our sacred duty to join our forces, as well as add our experience in the anti-communist struggle, to this movement.

With a view to achieving this aim, it is essential to define more clearly the term "Peoples of Soviet Union," a term which is often misinterpreted, particulary on this side of the Atlantic.

In the future we will attempt to draw a comprehensive picture of the aspirations and goals of the oppressed peoples, who are not only striving for liberation from Communist domination, but also for the restoration of national independence and sovereignty.

The Strategic Importance of the Caucasus

By D. SHALIKASHVILI.

President Eisenhower once said that there is no more strategically important area in the world than the Middle East.

To this highly authoritative statement we take the liberty of adding that the Caucasus is one of the principal key positions of the Middle and the Near East.

But this does not limit the role of the Caucasus; it is also a position of the utmost importance in the system of defences of the U.S.S.R.

The Caucasian Isthmus is a two-sided "tête de pont," situated at a particularly important point. Because of this it holds an invaluable strategic position. It is only necessary to glance at a map to see this and the best way to do so would be to glance at a map of the whole Eurasian Continent.

To make our statement clearer, let us compare the Caucasus to a gate. Whoever possesses the key to this gate can feel sure that he will have no uninvited guests; he himself, however, would be able to pay visits to his neighbours whenever he feels like it.

It has happened in the past that owing to new political conditions, developments of science and many other causes, certain areas have lost the strategic importance they once had and other areas have become more important. However there are others, which owing to their geographical position never lose their importance. The Caucasus is one of these.

From very ancient times until the fall of Constantinople and the opening up of ocean seaways. one of the most important trade routes connecting the East with the West passed through the Caucasus. Whoever held the Caucasus also held control over this vital route. Of no less importance was the fact that the Caucasus lay along the way of migration and invasion of almost every people who at one time or another, moved from Asia into Europe. When the Caucasus—in reality Georgia—was sufficiently strong it could stop these invasions and thus be of enormous service to Western civilization. This happened on many and many an occasion, and Europe does owe an incalculable debt to Georgia. Nature itself made of the Caucasus a wall which could stop invaders both from the South and from the North. But this wall became an effective barrier only, when Georgia and other Caucasian nations were strong enough to man its defences. Throughout history, beginning with the most ancient times, the Caucasus has on numerous occasions played the part of a buffer, for which Nature herself seems to have meant it.

During the time of the Crusades, Christian Georgia, collaborating with the Western Crusaders, formed a second front in the rear of the Mohammedan World. The tremendous

and decisive defeat which the King of Georgia, David the Restorer, inflicted on the Mohammedan coalition at Didgori in 1121, prolonged by many years the life of the Kingdom of Jerusalem.

During the long centuries of the Middle Ages Georgia waged almost uninterrupted warfare against Persia and Turkey. The aggressive policies of these two powerful states can be explained not only by their desire to conquer Georgia and add her to their possessions, but by the vital necessity of holding this flanking position for the successful prosecution of war, which never ceased between the two.

A new epoch in the strategic importance of the Caucasus began with the appearance on the political arena of the young Russian State. Beginning with the 16th century, the Russian Czars cast their eyes toward the Caucasus. From this time began the Russian policy toward the Near and Middle East which has remained unchanged ever since. In the 19th century this policy culminated in the conquest of the Caucasus. Russia finally obtained the gate to the East so much desired by her.

Today the Soviet Union has taken the place of the Russian Empire of the Czars. But, although the rulers have changed, their policy toward the Caucasus and the Near and Middle East remains the same.

What advantages does Soviet Russia gain by holding the Caucasus? In peace time, it enables her to conduct a vigorous active policy in the Middle East; to hold under a constant threat all countries situated there. Because of this menace, there can be no normal life in many of these countries. And this, of course, creates a dangerous situation, which must be taken into account by those working to preserve peace.

In the case of war the advantages which Soviet Russia gains by holding the Caucasus are indeed enormous: it makes it possible for her to bypass the Dardanelles and opens up the easiest route to the Mediterranean, the Suez Canal, the Persian Gulf and to the immensely rich oilfields of the Near and Middle East. This last is of the utmost importance to Russia, because her own resources would not be sufficient if she had to wage a long and total war. Of no less importance is the fact that the Caucasus safeguards her most vulnerable flank. As long as the Caucasus is in its hands, the Soviet Union can feel safe as far as its southern territory is concerned, safe in the knowledge that no mortal blow can be struck from this direction.

Now let us see what possession of the Caucasus would give to the forces waging war against the Soviet Union.

1. It would deprive the Soviet Union of the advantages mentioned above.

2. It would deprive the Soviet Union of the Caucasian oil—over 70% of the total production of the U.S.S.R.

3. It would open the easiest way to the vital areas of the Soviet Union—North Caucasus, the Donbass and the Ukraine.

It is difficult to foretell what form a war against the Soviet Union would take if such a war should break out one day. One thing is certain, however, and that is, that the Caucasian front will be the decisive one. The Soviet Union could, perhaps, survive the loss of Moscow but it could not survive the loss of the Caucasus. This

fact must not be forgotten and should be taken into consideration right now.

The importance attached to the Caucasus by both sides can readily be seen from the following two facts. After the Russian revolution of 1917, many peoples which were a part of the Russian Empire broke off and declared national independence. The Soviet Union reconciled itself to the loss of Finland and the Baltic States but under no circumstances could it accept the loss of the Caucasus and the independence of the Caucasian nations. As early as 1921, the Soviets attacked these countries and forcibly incorporated them into the Soviet Union. This cannot be explained by saying that the conquest of the Caucasian States was easy, or even that the Soviet Union could not exist without the Baku oil. The truth of the matter is that the Caucasus represents something immeasurably more important from the strategic and political viewpoints. The loss of the Caucasus was much more dangerous to the Soviet Union than the nearness to Leningrad of Finland and the Baltic States, even though Leningrad is Russia's only outlet to the Baltic Sea and the oceans. The Soviet Union could wait until 1940 to destroy Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and to try to destroy Finland.

And now for the second fact. During the first period of World War II, when the Soviet Union was still an ally of Germany and there existed the danger that it would move against the Western Allies, these latter organized in the Middle East an army which was placed under the French General Weygand, whose objective it was, in case of war with the Soviets, to strike through the Caucasus. Weygand, one of the foremost military minds of our times, was convinced that, deprived of the Caucasus, the Soviet Union would not be able to wage a long war.

Germany also gave particular attention to the Caucasus and during both World Wars, gave proof of the importance it attached to it.

If the Western World wants to see the Caucasus on its side in the next World War, they must first of all win the sympathies and confidence of its inhabitants. Of course, the communists will not give up the Caucasus without a bitter fight and during this fight a factor of enormous importance will be the people of the Caucasus on whose side will they be? Many wars, not least the last great war, have shown that guerrilla actions can have an enormous, at times a decisive influence on the outcome of a battle or on a whole war. When we take into consideration the mountainous nature of the Caucasus, very heavily wooded in parts, it will be evident, that the local population, working in the rear of the Soviet armies, could render invaluable assistance to the invading armies of the West. With their magnificent fighting history and traditions, proud, freedom-loving, patriotic Georgians and other Caucasians are allies whom the West can not afford to ignore. There are about 12 millions of them, all hating the Soviet Union and communism and waiting for the moment of liberation. In every one waging war against the Soviets, they see a natural ally. So it was during World War II, when the population of those areas in the Caucasus which were occupied by the Germans went over to their side in their totality. At the same time,

tens of thousands of Caucasians, conscripted into the Red Army, deliberately surrendered to the Germans and formed legions, who then fought against the hated communists. There is every reason to believe that in case of another war all this will be repeated, but on one condition: the Caucasians must be convinced that the West is coming to liberate them not only from communism, but from foreign domination as well. They are quite determined to regain their lost independence, to which they have every moral and legal right.

The Bolsheviks are not sitting down with folded arms and doing nothing. Their propaganda tries to represent the Western powers and especially the United States as imperialists who, similar to Hitler, want to enslave the peoples of the U.S.S.R. It is trying to convince the Christian nations of the Caucasus, the Georgians and the Armenians, that in case of war the West is preparing to give them up to the Turks. They are trying to revive the mistrust of these two peoples of their former enemy—Turkey. The Bolsheviks are trying to show themselves as benefactors, who could win back the Georgian and Armenian provinces, taken by the Turks in the past. It is necessary to fight against this propaganda and to convince the Caucasians that they have nothing to fear on this score.

The best thing would have been a friendly and definite gesture on the part of the U.S.A., something on the line, of what was done in the case of the Baltic States. The United States never recognized the treacherous conquest of the three states by Soviet Russia and officially declared that it continues to recognize the independence of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and considers their territory inviolable.

A declaration similar to this would do an immense service, because it would convince the Caucasian peoples that their cause is understood and viewed with sympathy by the Free World. The only difference between the Baltic and Caucasian cases is that Caucasians lost their independence nineteen years earlier than the Baltic people. But is this a sufficiently valid reason for treating them so differently?

An illustration of a correct policy in the Caucasus is the action of Germany there during the first world war. Notwithstanding the fact that Turkey was a valuable ally of Germany, the Germans came out on the side of Georgia in her frontier dispute with Turkey, and actually gave her military aid when clashes occurred between the Georgian and Turkish troops. Germany recognized the right of Georgia to be a fully sovereign state and recognized also the necessity of it, if peace was to be preserved in that part of the world.

Georgia and the rest of the Caucasus must be independent. This is an inescapable and just conclusion. Political considerations, demands of strategy, and ordinary justice demand it. Independent Caucasia will be a buffer between the North and South and will serve the cause of peace, not war.

The sooner this is realized, the sooner a definite and just policy towards the rightful demands of the Caucasian people is adopted, the better will be served the cause of freedom, justice and peace.

STALIN AND BERIA

The first one died (?); the second one was removed. Strange indeed is sometimes the fate of small nations. Both Stalin and Beria were Georgians by birth, but they sacrificed the freedom and welfare of their country to their own interests. After the forcible incorporation of Georgia into the Russian Empire, not a few Georgians, compelled to go to Russian schools and to be brought up in the Russian way, became partly or, in some cases, wholly, Russianised. But even among such, Stalin and Beria stand out as exceptions. During the hundred odd years of Russian occupation, many a Georgian distinguished himself in the service of Russia, but not one of them served her interests as well as did Stalin and Beria, and not one of them did so much damage to his own country, Georgia.

The second world war has shown that an enemy occupying a country can nearly always find men who, for personal gain, will serve its interests at the expense of their own country. "Quisling" has became a synonym for traitor in every language. From the Georgian viewpoint, Stalin and Beria were just such traitors.

Stalin, rejected by Georgia, became a great man in Russia and was, more than any other man, responsible for the attack on Georgia and its occupation by the Red Army. He took his revenge on his native land, which would not have him, conquered it by foreign bayonets, and put the yoke of foreign tyranny on his own countrymen.

Beria was one of those who came up to the surface as soon as the communist regime was established in Georgia. From the first he began working in the dreaded Cheka (secret police) and soon made a name for himself by his absolute ruthlessness and cold, calculated cruelty. The first head of the Georgian Cheka, Kote Tzintzadze, was against the mass executions demanded by Moscow; Beria, on the other hand, was all for carrying out these orders to the full. Tzintzadze's comparative mildness cost him dear. He was removed from his post, but Beria did not get his job. Another Georgian renegade, Kvantaliani was appointed instead.

In 1924 a nationwide insurrection broke out in Georgia (see page 5). This gave Beria the chance to show what he was capable of. There were two opposing factions in the Georgian Cheka: one, headed by Kvantaliani, was of the opinion that it was only necessary to execute the leaders of the insurrection, a hundred men or so. The other faction, with Beria at its head, insisted that now was a good opportunity to destroy all anti-communist or potential anti-communist elements in Georgia. Moscow took Beria's side, because it was completely in accordance with Stalin's wishes that "Georgia should be ploughed over." (See The Voice of Free Georgia, No. 2, "Stalin As We See Him"). Kvantaliani was removed from his post and Beria took over. By his orders, over 7,000 Georgians were executed in the first three days

alone. Beria was beginning his reign of terror.

From 1924 to 1937, Beria was Moscow's most powerful satrap in Georgia and in the whole of Caucasia. He carried out all Moscow's directives and acted only in the best interests of Red Russia. During this period Beria learned thoroughly Stalin's character and understood that only by cowering before the despot and by praising him to the skies could a man achieve promotion. Already, it seems, Beria was not satisfied with being the first man in the Caucasus; his ambitions went much higher. So he wrote the history of the communist party in Caucasia. This book is, indeed, a monument of lies and inventions. According to this "history," Stalin was the man who introduced the Marxist teaching into Georgia, Stalin was the man who founded the first Marxist organization there, and Stalin was the man who led the proletariat of the Caucasus to triumph. Beria's "history" does not mention a single person, not a single organization, which was in existence in Georgia and the Caucasus before Stalin. In this book Stalin is the only hero.

The "History" was much to Stalin's liking; and from that time the portals of the Kremlin were wide open to Beria. In 1937 he was transferred to Moscow and began to play a more and more important role on the all-Russian and — when World War II broke out — on the world stage. He gathered tremendous power in his hands and there is little doubt that his intention was to prolong the Georgian dynasty in the Kremlin after Stalin's death by putting himself into Stalin's place.

It is not surprising that this was to bring him to grips with the other pretenders, the outcome of which, as far as Beria is concerned, we all know. One thing gave Malenkov a tremendous advantage over Beria, and that is the fact that Beria was not a Russian, but a Georgian, even though he served well the interests of Russia. There is little doubt that, together with another Georgian, Stalin, Beria played a tremendous part in the buildup of the Russian Red Empire and in saving it from defeat and utter destruction in World War II. But Beria was a Georgian and Russian national pride could not reconcile itself to having yet another foreigner, another Georgian, as the ruler of Russia. Stalin had to be tolerated; he was too strongly entrenched and there was no way of getting rid of him, but after his death the Russians were determined not to have Beria continue the Georgian supremacy. Anyone who knows the feelings inside the Soviet Union should have been able to foretell that Beria was riding for a fall. Sooner or later, he had to disappear. The renegade and traitor to his own country was no longer needed by the country he chose to serve. He had outlived his usefulness; therefore he had to go. And, of course, he overestimated his forces and influence. He may have become careless and just once was enough.

With the disappearance of Beria, a new era is begining in the Kremlin: the era of Russian National Communism; the clear supremacy of the Great-Russians over all the other nationalities enslaved by the Soviet Union. Beria was the victim of this new Russian line and not only the defeated victim in the struggle for power.

It is not easy to foretell what will happen in the Soviet Union in the near future. But one thing is clear. The regime built by Stalin upon the dead bodies of countless millions of human beings is in the process of breaking up and the speed with which this process will come to a final end depends largely on the Free World and on the U.S.A. in particular. Will they be satisfied with the role of observers and sit back and watch until a new dictator sits firmly on the Kremlin throne? The Free World has many means at its disposal to hasten the end of the communist tyranny and there is no necessity to go to war to achieve it.

There is little doubt that Beria tried to get the non-Russian nationalities of the Soviet Union on his side. Not because he was a patriotic Georgian, or that he believed that the Ukraine had every right to be independent, or that he had any particular love for the Lithuanians. No, he simply tried to use the fact that he was a non-Russian, a Georgian, to utilize, for his own ends, the deep antagonism wich all the non-Russian people of the U.S.S.R. have for the Great-Russians.

It is more than possible that, even though he was a hated man, he still represented something that stood in the way of an absolute supremacy of the Great-Russians and as such he became the champion of the rights of the non-Russians.

His downfall will only increase the national tension in the Soviet Union. There is not the slightest doubt that in Georgia, for instance, there are no communists today. With Stalin's death and Beria's downfall, disappeared the only reason why there were any Georgian communists at all. The national feeling and the desire to be rid of the Russians and to be free and independent once again is overwhelming in Georgia. This feeling can and must be put to use. There is no better weapon for defeating the terrible menace of communism, finally and completely, than to give all encouragement and all help possible to all the non-Russian peoples *inside* the Soviet Union. They are the ones who will bring communist tyranny to an end. But they must not be ignored, as they have been in the past, and there must be a clear recognition of their rights to freedom and to an absolute sovereignty.

May 26th in New York

To commemorate May 26th, Georgian Independence Day, the Georgian Association in the U.S.A. arranged a celebration which was held in the Hotel Roosevelt, New York. This year was the first occasion on which this celebration took the form of a joint American and Georgian political demonstration. It was attended by the majority of Georgians residing in New York, as well as by many Americans and the representatives of other nationalities.

The meeting was opened by the President of the Georgian Association, Mr. L. Doumbadze, who, after a short speech in which he explained to those present the significance which May 26th has for all Georgians, introduced the speakers.

The principal guest and speaker of the evening was Mr. Charles Kersten, Member (Wisconsin) of the United States House of Representatives. Mr. Kersten, who is a well known champion of the rights of the Ukrainians, Lithuanians, and other oppressed peoples, made a most interesting and eloquent speech. He recalled that, as far back as 1926, the Foreign Affairs Committee of the United States Senate discussed the question of Georgia and the appointment of an accredited American representative to the Georgian Government, which was then already in exile. He said that such an appointment would have given them hope that they were not forgotten. Instead, shortly after, the United States Government recognized the Government of the Soviet Union. That is to say that power which was holding many small nations in slavery. Mr. Kersten spoke at length about the international situation, of the terrible menace which communism has become, and he warned his own Government and the American people that it is time to understand this menace fully; that it is time to give all possible aid to the real, natural allies of the U.S.A. in its struggle against communism, namely, the nations conquered and held in subjugation by the Soviet Empire. Mr. Kersten concluded by saying that any nation fighting for its independence and liberty, and especially a nation with a great past and proud traditions, will achieve its aim sooner or later.

Mr. O'Connor, former head of the Displaced Persons Commission in Washington, greatly pleased all the Georgians present by his speech in which he showed an amazing aquaintance with Georgia and the Georgian problem. He also showed a remarkably correct appreciation of the problem of communism and of the methods necessary to combat it.

Of great interest was also the speech of Mr. Gerald Dooher, the Chief of the Middle East and South East Asian division of the Voice of America, Mr. Dooher spoke of the gradual rise of Russian Imperialism, which was continuing today, and which together with communism was a menace to the world. Mr. Dooher, who is a great and true friend of the Georgians, concluded by expressing his conviction that the Georgian people, who have sacrificed and are still sacrificing today so much in the struggle against communism and foreign oppression and who are determined on the restoration of their independence, will achieve victory one day. This day, concluded Mr. Dooher, may not be far off.

Professor Lev Dobriansky, the President of the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America, spoke of the absolute necessity for all the non-Russian peoples forcibly incorporated into the Soviet Union to work together, and of his conviction that such collaboration will bear fruit.

Two other representatives of the Ukrainians spoke, as well as representatives of Rumania, Latvia, Lithuania, Byellorussia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, North Caucasia, Turkestan, and others. Many telegrams and letters were received and some were read at the meeting. Among them was a message from Senator Alexander Wiley, Chairman of the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, which we quote in full:

"In response to your letter of May 11, 1953, I am happy to send you this message in connection with your celebration of Georgian Independence Day. The American people have the deepest sympathy for all peoples who are oppressed by communism in the Soviet Union and its satellites. We have long admired the courageous resistance of the Georgian people to communist tyranny, and it is our fervent hope and prayer that in the future all peoples will be able to work out their own destiny in their own way." Signed—Alexander Wiley.

This letter, as well as many others, was addressed to the Georgian-American League which did considerable work in connection with the celebration. A memorandum about Georgia, the Georgian problem and May 26th, was prepared and sent to a great number of persons prominent in American public life, among them, the President of the United States, the Governor and Senators of the State of New York, members of the House of Representatives and others. Many messages of congratulation and sympathy were received in reply.

A pamphlet published by the Georgian-American League, also dealing with May 26th and the Georgian problem, was distributed during the meeting,

The proceedings closed with cocktails offered by the Georgian Association.

The Editorial Board of the *Voice of Free Georgia* extends its congratulations to the President of the Georgian Association, Mr. L. Dumbadze and to other organizers of this successful celebration and, together with all Georgians, thanks all Americans and the representatives of other nations who honored it with their presence and thus expressed their sympathy with the Georgian cause.

LEAVES FROM GEORGIAN HISTORY

David -- King of Georgia

By ALEXANDER TSOMAIA

David the restorer was a great king in a long line of great Georgian monarchs. The Bagration dynasty is unique in the annals of monarchy in that a family which reigned continuously for more than 1000 years had in its line not a single ruler who was unworthy of the place he was born to. The Bagrations were versatile and resourcefful as individuals and as statesmen, and David met every challenge of his long, troubled reign as a devoted servant of his people and as master of every untoward circumstance. To grasp even faintly his accomplishments, we must look for a moment at the period which preceded his reign.

At the beginning of the 11th century, in the reign of King George II, there appeared along the southern frontiers of Georgia, without presage or warning, an unknown political element which was to have far-reaching and sinister influence on the history of Georgia. The Turkish Menace, a new international factor, henceforth for centuries to be reckoned with, had come upon the scene.

This new political element, within a few short years conquered the whole Near East, rendered important the mighty Byzantine Empire, finally delivering the death-blow the capture of its capital.

The Turkish tribe known as the Seljuks originated somewhere to the east of Lake Aral, where they had for countless years led an unorganized, nomadic life. A certain leader, Prince Togrul-Beg, had united several primitive tribes during the years 1038 to 1040, and it was he who started the Seljuks on their way to conquest and power. Under his leadership they swept over Horassan and Ispahan in 1051; in 1052 Baghdad fell to them. The Caliph Al-Quaim of the Abbasside dynasty of Bagdad acknowledged Togrul-Beg as religious leader, whereupon this Seljuk Sultan assumed the title of Caliph and thus constituted himself the highest religious and civil authority of all Islam.

The first encounter betweea Seljuks and Georgians took place on September 18, 1049, in the Bassiani region. The advance guard of the Seljuk army, led by Ibrahim-Inal, had made its way to the borders of Byzantium and, after conquering Armenia, they carried the invasion into West Georgia. At Bassiani the united Byzantine and Georgian forces defeated the intruders and drove them out of the country. In the affray, one of the Christian generals, Liparit Orbeliani, was taken prisoner by the Seljuks.

During the year 1054 to 1055 the Seljuks returned again, this time with Togrul-Beg himself at their head. Armenia and the Bassiani province were laid waste and the surrounding region plundered, but Togrul-Beg was frustrated in his efforts to conquer the larger centers, and both Erserum and Kars were able to withstand his assaults.

Togrul-Beg was succeeded by his nephew, Alp-Arslan, most talented and most powerful of all the Seljuk sultans. In 1063, Alp-Arslan launched an attack against Georgia, and this time the Turkish hordes penetrated into West Georgia almost to Tao. Every invasion inflicted severe hardship upon Georgia, for the Turks destroyed all the villages and towns in their way, scattered the population, and left utter waste and desolation behind them.

The Byzantine Empire was now threatened with extinction. An incalculable, long dormant power comprised of the whole Moslem world had awakened to full consciousness of its strength and, lusting for conquest, confronted Byzantium. Alp-Arslan's units quickly overran the Byzantine borders in many places, occupied large areas, reached the Black Sea, and began their march toward the Bosphorus. In this region a new Moslem state was established and named Ikonium. Alp-Arslan appointed his nephew Suleiman as Sultan of this state.

Suleiman naturally derived much profit from his relationship to Alp-Arslan and also from the weakness of Byzantium. To his own state he appropriated summarily all of Anatolia as far as the Hellespont. This occupation of the eastern shore of the Black Sea and of Anatolia had a detrimental influence on the relations of Georgia with Byzantium. Whereas formerly these countries had had a common, peaceful frontier, now they were separated by a power hostile to the Byzantine Christian world, totally different in race and religion, and bent upon the destruction of the Christian power.

Georgia now became the victim of systematic loot, the prey and spoil of Suleiman's troops, for in 1080, under Emir-Achmad, the Turks started another invasion.* The fortified town of Kars on the southern border of Georgia was taken and then two armies led by the Emirs Yassi and Bushgobi followed the vanguard. West Georgia was ravaged. Kutaissi and Artanugi were taken and many villages and towns, with their homes, churches and monasteries, disappeared forever from the earth.

Furious because of the Georgian resistance, the Turks put forth their utmost strength against the people and dealt ruthlessly with the defenders. In 1081, 1082, 1083, and 1084, they returned again, marauding and plundering and exercising their cruel sway over the land until 1090. In addition to these horrors, all of Georgia was rent by a terrible earthquake in 1088. These dire calamities so affected the king George II, that he renounced his royal rights to his son David, a lad of sixteen years, in 1089.

The boy came to the throne as David III. He reigned for thirty-six years dying in 1125 at the age of 52. He was the greatest of all the Bagrations and by far the most important statemen of the Caucasus, well meriting the affectionate designation bestowed upon him by his grateful subjects—David the Restorer.

Viewed in detachment along with other great figures of history, David stands as a giant among giants. with none who excelled him in variety of gifts and accomplishments, and but

—* D. Karitshashvili, Georgia in the 12th Century, p. 25 & 26.

few peers. Had he been a ruler of England, of France, or of any great nation in the West, his name would have come down as a household word with the great evocative names of history. Rarely is one person so richly endowed. Here, indeed, was that man who could "act like a philosopher and think like a man of action." David was erudite and reflective, learned in philosophy and theology and other abstract subjects; but he was also a prudent, imaginative statesman, a reformer of social life and institutions, gifted with political intuition, and withal a man of indomitable energy, a born leader, an able strategist, a keen warrior.

The most urgent concern of the young king was to devise and institute effective measures for the protection of his country against further hostile invasions. To secure his borders was the first problem. Most of the people had been forced to seek refuge in the mountains and the dense forests. They had to be returned to their towns and villages to clear away the rubble and rebuild their dwellings. It was the courageous attitude of their young king, his reasonable, practical measures, his enlightened administration, and his reorganization of legal and military procedures, that restored to his people faith and reliance in their own power of recovery. New means of resistance were devised, and the nation, led by the energetic king, created formidable barriers along the frontiers, so that the Turks were kept at bay and were forced to practice reserve and caution. When this had been accomplished, the young king was able to turn to matters of reconstruction and improvement within his borders.

By a series of regulations and enactments, he reformed the state functions and established a just and operative system of reference and authority in all matters pertaining to the common weal, restricting the privileges of the nobility, and opening the way for all men gifted with intelligence and superior personal qualities to occupy the highest offices in state, army, and public life. This was, indeed, a truly democratic reform and a realization of the principle of human rights.

The church, which until this time endeavored to subordinate civil life, was put under state control, and the Synod of 1103 acknowledged as legal the Church Reformation Act which had been prepared by George Mtatmindeli forty years before.

David established a standing army of infantry and cavalry, rebuilt the battered fortresses, and reinforced the frontier defences. The Georgian State was thus secured again and according to the records of a Georgian historian "it extended from Nikopsia on the Black Sea to Derbent on the Caspian." Devastated and ravaged towns were restored, and the country felt that its destiny was guided by the hand and will of a highly gifted and reliable man.

Several times David turned back the Turks at the borders and took the initiative in attack, in order to make an end of their aggressions.

The economic life of the land was strengthened by privileges given to trade and industry. To improve traffic routes many bridges were erected across the rivers, stone-paved roads were built, and along them were inns and caravanseries for travelers and traders. Merchants of all

nations were welcomed. Even for the Moslems David introduced working conditions which evoked the highest praise of Moslem historians.

All Caucasian peoples were taken under special protection. The town of Gori was founded by David as a settlement for Armenians, and their descendants live there to this day. Tirelessly David labored to restore churches and monasteries. The aged and infirm were granted assistance and social benefits and homes with working lots were placed at their disposal. The king watched over these establishments personally; he was an open-handed benefactor who gave liberally of his own substance to the poor. Never once did he use the means of the state for his benevolences, drawing always upon his own resources.

David's reforms extended to the legislature of the Georgian State. Until his time the king himself had been the highest tribunal and all matters of major importance were dealt with by the crown. This was possible in a small state, but as the jurisdiction now included all the region from the Black Sea to the Caspian, and the population had increased to millions, the king could no longer follow the old paternal fashion, especially since he was obliged to travel from one province to another to keep under his care all problems of domestic and foreign politics. The old legislature was an anachronism in this new scheme of things, therefore the king created a High Court which was empowered to adjudicate in all important matters and to render decisions without the king's assent. Men of juridical education and blameless behavior were entrusted with the judicature. This reform was of great importance. It operated towards acceleration of existing procedures and effected the separation of the administration of justice from the executive power of the state, which is to say that the foundation-stone of the independence of the judiciary was laid,

David the Restorer had a great predilection for books. His library, loaded on pack-mules and camels, went with him always, to be at his disposal at the resting places. On military expeditions or at home, he spent his hours of leisure in study. His special interests were history, military history, and philosophy. The Bible was always with him, and according to the statement of one historian, he is said to have read it through twenty-four times within one year. He knew the Islamic teaching so well that even Moslem teachers were astonished at his knowledge of it. His special interests were history and philosophy. Besides his native Georgian language he spoke Greek, Arabic, and Persian and he was well versed in the literature and science of these peoples. This scholar king set high value on intellectual labors and he protected and fostered talents — scientific men, poets, and other writers. For those without means he established homes where they could work with the material assistance of the state.

Religious intolerance and national chauvinism were unknown to him. He allowed Moslem poets and authors—according to the record of the Arab historian Al Dijaz—to live and work in the home of the Georgian authors at state cost. Young men were sent to Constantinople at state cost to

study Greek literature, science, medicine, architecture, painting, and the like.

For furthering the work of existing institutions, he founded in 1106 an Academy of Sciences in the beautifully situated resort, Gelathi: —"the Jerusalem of the East"— where he engaged as teachers only the most "distinguished learned scholars of irreprochable life and piety, and made Gelathi a second Athens."

The Academy of Gelathi was the second one in Georgia, and it was the first in Europe; the other, a clerical school, was in Ikaltho. The University of Paris was founded 150 years later, in 1250, by Louis the Pious* and the first German university, Heidelberg, in 1386.

The rector of King David's Academy ranks as one of the famous philosophers of the 12th century. He was a Georgian monk named John Petritsoneli (obit 1127) who studied in the Emperor Constantine's Monomachus Academy which was founded between the years 1044 and 1047. This school was considered to be the center of the Hellenistic Renaissance. John Petritsoneli created in Georgia a new philosophic speech and terminology. He translated from the Greek the works of Aristotle, Plato, Diadochus, and other works of historical, hagiographical, astronomical, and grammatical content. He wrote original treatises, one of which, the volume "Concerning Platonic Philosophy," is still in existence. This is an elaboration and continuation of the Neo-Platonic philosophical doctrine. His teachings contain Hellenistic - pagan elements, with a critique of Christian dogma, for which the theologians of the time attacked him.** The nomination of such a person as rector of the new Georgian Academy is significant of the spiritual liberalism of King David. At the same time Arsen Ikalthoeli, famous professor of Philosophy, Theology, Physics, and Anatomy, at Constantinople University and author of the "Allegoric Aphorism," was active in the second Georgian Academy of Clerical Science.

The Academy of Gelathi carried on the old scientific and philosophic traditions and laid the foundations for the Georgian Renaissance.

To conserve this wisdom for future centuries, to transmit, to renew, and to explain, had been the great meritorious work of the philosopher, Dionysius Areopagitica, at the end of the 5th century. His works were, in the course of centuries, lively objects of discussion and of imitation in the Western cultural orbit, and even the first teachers of the European Renaissance such as Michael Pselos, John Itali, and later Georgios, Plato, Bessarion, Marsilio Picini and others, were only commentators and followers of the philosophic school of Areopagitica. For a long time his doctrine was not clear and he was considered to be a Greek philosopher; it

—* V. Dupuy, Histoire de France, Vol. I p. 358, 20th edition.

——** N. Marr, Member of Russian Academy of Sciences, John Petritski, A Georgian Neo-Platonist, 11th - 12th century. About J. Petritsoneli, see also Prof. K. Kekelidse, History of Georgian Literature, Vol. I, p. 301-311, and Prof. Sch. Nuzubidse, Preface to the Russian translation of "The Man in the Tiger Skin".

was known that his name "Dionysius Areopagitica" was assumed, but now in is known that the Bishop of the Syrio-Georgian community, founder of the Georgian College of Jerusalem, Peter of Iberia, wrote under the pseudonym — "Areopagitica." The works of Peter of Iberia or Dionysius Areopagitica were very highly esteemed in Georgia, and the Rector of the Gelathi Academy carried on this philosophic spiritual teaching.

John Petritsoneli was a great scholar and under his guidance the Academy of Gelathi led the way for the Renaissance in Georgia so that it came about much earlier than that in Western Europe. This was also an effective consequence of the sympathies and activities of its royal founder. It may be assumed that the king was friendly towards the philosophic ideas of John Petritsoneli. By appointing him head of the Academy he gave this teacher of the Byzantine school, persecuted there, an opportunity to continue and develop his work in more favorable conditions. Permission to continue liberal teaching of doctrines forbidden by the official church is significant evidence of the liberalism of this prince and also of the freedom of thought that prevailed in Georgia.

David was an able general and an astute strategist, with a genius for taking the enemy by surprise. In the field he went before his troops and aroused their fighting spirit by his own courage and boldness. A contemporary historian says of him: "The king never went behind his soldiers, nor controlled them from afar; he marched before them, shouted with a loud voice like a lion, attacked like a whirlwind, and felled with a strong arm anyone who attacked him."*

After the consolidation of the Georgian State, he set about to unite all the Caucasian peoples into one empire. This was a political program of extraordinary foresight — beyond any other thus far conceived in the history of all Caucasia.

Many events in the world beyond Georgia which were going on at that time helped to further the political plans of King David. In 1092 Melik Shah (successor to Alp-Arslan) died, and the contenders for his throne were so preoccupied with rivalries and conflicts among themselves that their outside aggressions slackened down. David could thus devote himself to internal improvement and reconstruction. Of even greater importance, however, was the beginning of the Crusades to free the Holy Sepulchre from infidel custody. The first Crusaders reached Constantinople in 1096. In 1097 they reached the shores of Asia and seized Nikia. In 1098 they captured Antioch and Edessa and in 1099 Jerusalem was liberated. Godfrey de Bouillon, often referred to as Duke of the Holy Sepulchre, established the Kingdom of Jerusalem. He was one of the leaders of the First Crusade. His follower and brother Baudouin was given the title of King.

The Georgian Annals, "Karthlis Tsovreba," recount the interest of the Georgians in these events. "In those times," the historian writes, "the Franks arrived and took posession of Antioch and Jerusalem, and

——* See Prof. I. Javakhishvili, History of the Georgian Nation, Vol. II, p.539.

with God's help the country recovered, and David strengthened and increased the fighting forces."

The founding of the principalities of Edessa and Antioch was of more than moral significance for Georgia because of its geographical proximity to them; the religious tie was also likely to lead to close cultural and political affiliations.

According to the Armenian historian Matheus of Edessa, David gave his assistance to Godfrey de Bouillon during the First Crusade, and for this favor one thousand Crusaders entered the service of the Georgian King. From existing sources it can not be determined whether David was bound by a formal agreement with the Crusaders, but at any rate the spiritual unity and the identity of aims resulted in joint action to such a degree that the Islamic historians reckon David's struggles as part of the Crusades, and they regard Georgia as a part of Europe which fought against Islam.

The Sultan of Aleppo, Nadim Eddin Elghasi, who had several encounters with the Franks, and who was considered by the Moslems to be invincible, became the leader of the Moslem coalition, and as he was at the same time the governor of Nadim, his influence extended over the whole area from Syria to Mesopotamia. An army estimated at 600,000 was gathered by this Islamic leader from Syria, Mesopotamia and neighboring Moslem countries as far as the Caucasus. The plan was that these united forces should first march on Georgia and destroy the power of King David, to forestall any attack by the Georgians on their rear.

The battle between the Georgians and Sultan Elghasi's cohort, took place at Didgori, which lies south of Tbilissi, on August 14th, 1121. This battle is reckoned as having been of decisive importance, not only by Georgian sources, but also by Armenian, Arabian, Persian and European chronologists. Records of Didgori have come down from Ibn-Alathir, Kemal-Eddin, Ibn-Khaldun, the author of the Syrian chronicles Abul-Schafar (Bar Hebraeus), Matheus of Edessa, Gauthier Galterius, and others. We quote only the writing of Gauthier Galterius who, because of his official position, was able to look on at the situation and to observe the activities, besides which he might also be preferred for his exactness and reliability. He reports:

"Elghasi marched out of Aleppo and gathered an enormous army of Turks and Arabs, and, full of pride in such a large showing, he decided in agreement with the Chorassan Sultan to go to Iberia in order to make war on King David, and after David's defeat to turn to the complete conquest of Jerusalem and Antioch and the destruction of the Christians. But God's punishment was visited on the haughtniess of Elghasi. The same day that he was about to enter the country with his army of 600,000, King David, with 80,000 Christian soldiers under the sign of the cross, took his position in a forest between the mountains where the enemy had planned to attack. The King decided upon his battle position and saw that every unit was in its assigned place. The 200 Franks under him were placed in the front rank. The unbelievers approached the forest with loud roaring, ear-splitting noise, and many banners.

King David paid little heed to this savage and ferocious show. He encouraged his men and soon the enthusiastic Christians set upon the enemy with spontaneous shouts. By God's help the enemy became so entangled after the first collision that the infidels were beaten down by the swords of the Christians. Witnesses of this battle have related that 400,000 fugitives lost their lives at the hands of the king's men within three days. Elghasi himself, wounded in the head, having lost all his accoutrements, returned under the guidance of the Arabic sultan, hungry, and shorn of his weapons."*

This record of Chancellor Gauthier Galterius needs some additional facts to round out the narrative, and these can be found in statements of other historians. This decisive battle between David's forces and those of the Islamic coalition took place, as has been already noted, on the 14 th of August, 1121, at the place chosen beforehand by the King. The Georgian troops fortified their positions, built obstacles, and dug trenches to halt the attacking cavalry. The vanguard of the enemy was provoked, and led into an ambush by a small, experienced Georgian unit, whose task was to show itself to the invaders and then retire at the right moment, seemingly defeated, in order to induce the intruders to follow and draw them towards the main positions of the Georgian defenders. Elghasi's units were thus led into the forest of Didgori, where they were ambushed by David's men. Here the first big encounter took place and the battle flowed back and forth the whole day, for on both sides the élite vied with one another in deeds of matchless bravery. The Georgians were the victors on the first day, but the attacks and counter attacks continued for eight days. The effort of the first day so exhausted Emir Elghas's army that they could not turn the tide of battle, and the Armenian historian Matheus of Edessa states that the battle ended in crushing defeat for the invaders.

Elghasi died soon afterwards, in 1122, from wounds suffered in the head during the battle. These facts have been established by Georgian sources. One of David's biographers recounts that the Georgians completely annihilated the enemy's units and brought home enormous booty, "so that the whole kingdom was filled with gold, silver, Arabian horses, and Syrian mules, with tents, valuable utensils, weapons, and other spoils of war."

The effective forces of Elghasi amounted to 600,000, a figure attested by various records, while estimates of the Georgians taking part vary; M. of Edessa and Chancellor Galterius estimate the Georgians at 80,000 men, but they may be in error. It seems impossible that 80,000 men should have been sufficient for breaking the power of the 600,000 troops of the Near East army. It would seem more reasonable, as recorded in certain Georgian Chronicles, that "David levied out of every ten men one man, and so he drafted an army of 400,000." It may be assumed that this mobilization took place shortly before the battle of Did-

* M. Brosset, Histoire de Georgie, Additions et eclairtissements, p. 299. Some statements about this war will be found in R. Grousset, L'Empire du Levant, p. 190.

gori. If the Georgians triumphed, despite a disparity of 200,000, doubtless they owed their victory to their superior fighting skill, their knowledge of the art of war, and to the strategic and tactical abilities of their chief, David the King.

This war and the Georgian victory resounded throughout the whole world, East and West, as far as France and England. The triumph of David was the occasion of great rejoicing in Europe and was considered to be a real European triumph. A member of the French Academy, R. Grousset, made the following just statement:

"The Georgian Crusade, taking the Mohammedans from the rear, gave invaluable support to the Frankish effort. This is a fact which must never be forgotten when studying the historical questions of the East in the 12th century."

This victory and the military operations which followed enabled the European crusaders to fortify their positions and to lengthen the period of their occupation of the Holy Places. Grousset continues:

"The repulsion of the Turks by the Georgian Army in Upper Armenia had the same great influence throughout the whole Mussulman world as the victorious battles of the Franks in Syria. The Caucasian Mussulmen asked help from the Baghdad Caliph to push a counter-crusade against the Georgians, and the Mussulmen of Aleppo went there with the same demand of assistance against the Frankish Crusaders."*

These events made David famous throughout the East and the Western Christian countries. The literature of this period very often mentions King David, and his popularity grew so great that the people began to regard him as a legendary person, so that even during the Fifth Crusade, one century after his death, the European Christians invoked the help of King David, a hero credited with having reigned on the borders of India and supported Christians in victory. His name was later associated with that of a legendary personage — Prester John — and finally both names melted, as it were, into one, or became interchangeable, so that we find in old annals of Europe references to "King David who was called Prester John."**

Throughout all of Europe this legend was widely spread and we are told in an English chronicle of 1228:

"In Christian countries the saying has gone forth that King David, otherwise Prester John, arrived from India with a large army and conquered Media-Persia." David the Restorer had died just 103 years before this date, therefore he could not have occupied Media-Persia, nor could he have brought assistance to the Christians. But his name lived in the memory of the people for his outstanding deeds, his battles, and his victories. The Christians of the East adored him, and the people, in simple faith, placed great reliance on his help.

The battle of Didgori and the victory over the Moslemic coalition gave the Georgian State indisputable predominance in the Caucasus. Its territory included the whole region

——* R. Grousset, L'Empire du Levant, p. 420.

——** Prof. Z. Avalishvili, From The Time Of The Crusaders, p. 151.

from the Black Sea to the Caspian and it maintained its boundaries and its position from this period until the Mongol invasion. It must be stated that David treated the Moslems within his realm with a respect and justice they had never received elsewhere, giving them complete religious and political freedom and the right to live according to their faith, and forbidding the Christians to molest or interfere with them.

The following year David freed the Armenian capital, Ani, from the Seljuks, a fact always mentioned by Armenian writers with great respect and appreciation. Then David marched into Shirvan, a vassal state of Georgia, and returned a victor once more. He now gave his army a year's respite from battle, while he prepared greater enterprises. These "greater enterprises" were to be set in motion in 1125, but providence willed otherwise. David died on January 24th, 1125. His future plans, for which he had been reorganising his army, and the secret of his prospective enterprises, died with him.

With David the Restorer began the great Golden Age of Georgian history. It lasted until the Mongol invasion. This period saw the summit of Georgian political ascent, of great military developmeat, and cultural and economic advances of a high order. Several monarchs contributed to the glory of this Georgian Golden Age: The son and immediate successor of David, Dimitri I (1125—1125); David IV (1125—1156); Giorgi III (1156—1184); and the great Queen Thamar (1184—1214). All of these sovereigns had talent and energy and each made a worthy contribution to this happy epoch.

The foundation of a united Georgia, begun by the two kings Bagrat III and Bagrat IV, was placed upon a firm foundation by David. Spiritual and material culture reached the height of their development during the reigns of Giorgi III and Queen Thamar, and these monarchs were also notable for their great political sagacity. Monumental architecture, ornamentation, metal work, the art of jewelry making, painting, mosaic work, and glass refining, are represented by master works of rare art, and the extant examples are of first quality. In glass-painting and mosaics, Georgian work ranks with the Byzantine. In design and ornamentation Georgian work was considered the best in Europe.

Besides the rich religious writings emanating from the monasteries there was a great flowering in secular poetry and literature. Trade, arts, and industry were thriving, as was commerce with Byzantium, with the Caliphate and the countries of the North. The towns, and the cities where economic enterprise centered, grew apace. Tbilissi, Kutaissi, Dmanissi, Samchvilde, Rusthavi, Poti, Sukhumi, all became rich and centers of culture.

Many Moslem sultans were subjugated by Georgians arms. The Emir of Shaharmene, the Sultan of Rum (Konia), the Prince of Derbent and the Prince of Erserum were forced to acknowledge the power and superiority of the Georgian forces. The former domains of Armenian kings which had fallen under the rule of the Shah, the Sultanate of Khlati and various Emirates were occupied and attached to Georgia.

The Georgian European Movement

A meeting of the organizing committee of the Georgian European Movement took place on August 10th and 11th of this year in Munich, Germany.

A sub-committee was elected whose duty it will be to proceed with the final organization of the Movement. Professor Michel Tzeretelli was elected the Honorary President of the Movement.

Every Georgian has the right to become a member of the Movement, provided he recognizes the full and absolute sovereignty of Georgia and is in sympathy with the formation of a United Europe. The Movement has for its aims to acquaint Georgians with the ideas of a United Europe and to work for an eventual inclusion of Independent Georgia into the European Federation.

Throughout her history Georgia has looked towards the West, and her cultural ties have invariably been with the European countries. The Georgian State maintained close contacts with ancient Greece and the Roman and Byzantine Empires and Georgians drew on these countries for their own culture. After the fall of Constantinople, Georgia remained the only outpost of Western Christian civilization in the midst of the Mohammedan World of the Near and Middle East, and this made her even more conscious of the fact, that her place was rightly among the nations of the West. Throughout the dark ages of Georgia, in the 15th and 18th centuries, when she was almost completely cut off from the outside world, Georgia was ceaselessly endeavoring to restore and maintain ties with Europe. The Popes of Rome, the Kings of France, Spain, and Poland, the Dukes of Burgundy, — the Georgian Kings sent ambassadors and Legations and letters to them all and unsuccessfully sought aid against the common enemy of Christendom.

When Russia appeared on the scene and began moving to the south, it seemed as if the long awaited aid was at last at hand. It is an old and well known story now — how this "aid" turned out to be the greatest misfortune which could have befallen the Georgian nation.

But times have changed, and the Georgians are confident of the future. They know that in the end Georgia will take her rightful place — that of a full member of a United States of Europe.

The Editorial Board of the *Voice of Free Georgia* welcomes the formation of the Georgian European Movement and wishes all success to the members of the organizing committee.

Printed by RAUSEN BROS. 417 Lafayette St., New York 3, N. Y.

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The Editorial Board wishes to express its thanks to all those friends and well wishers, Americans, Georgians and others, whose voluntary and generous contributions have made the publication of the "Voice of Free Georgia" possible.

However, more is needed and the Board wishes to remind all those who are in sympathy with its aims, that, although, there is no fixed subscription fee, all contributions, no matter how small, will be gratefully received.