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GEORGIA AND THE GEORGIANS

Approximate date  
of report / Nov. 1945

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Georgia, a Soviet Socialist Republic, is located in the Caucasus, with its eastern border on the Black Sea and Turkey, its southern border on Armenia and its western border on Russian Azerbaijan. It comprises 26,865 square miles in area, with a total population in 1939 of 3,542,289. It is larger in population than either Armenia or Azerbaijan, although slightly smaller than the latter in area. Its capitol, Tiflis (Tbilisi) located in the southeast portion of the province has a population of 519,175.

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Until the beginning of the 19th Century, Georgia evidently maintained a kind of quasi-independence, with its own king. The tensions arising from its position between Russia and Turkey, led Georgia in 1801 to place itself under the protection of the Russian Emperor. A good deal of autonomy was evidently allowed. It was permitted to retain its own language and to continue its own culture. At the time of the overthrow of the Czarist Regime in 1917 the Caucasus as a whole found itself out of sympathy with the purposes of the revolutionaries. Each of the three principal provinces in that area, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, proclaimed themselves independent republics. The Republican government of Georgia ensued in an atmosphere, according to qualified observers, of intrigue, graft, and incompetence. Each of these Republics eventually came under Bolshevik control, Georgia the strongest being the last to succumb. The independent survival of the newly proclaimed Republics was short lived due to the failure to achieve an effective alliance, amongst themselves, principally because of territorial disputes, and in December 1922 under Russian influence and sponsorship they became a single Constituent

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Republic known as the Transcaucasian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic. The Georgian Army attempted resistance but without result and the Georgian Republican government fled to Turkey. That government, which has been characterized as Menshevik, retained its organization and in 1924 called from Turkey for another uprising in Georgia. This was quickly suppressed by the Soviets. The adoption of a new Soviet Constitution on December 5, 1936, replacing an earlier one of 1924, resulted in the splitting-up of this Transcaucasian Federation into the Soviet Socialist Republics of Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia.

Georgia has furnished a number of leaders to the Soviet Government, including STALIN, and others in high administrative positions. Available evidence seems to indicate that those who remained in Georgia have accepted their political status, although emigres and refugees abroad, whose numbers increased subsequent to 1922 and 1924, continue their activities and intrigue for the restoration of Georgian independence.

The Menshevik government continued its activities outside Georgia, although its seat was eventually transferred to Paris, perhaps at the request of the Turks. The following names of cabinet members comprising that government are available:

Noi RAMICHVILI  
Noah JIORDANI  
GEETCHKORIA  
KLIOMERKI  
ERADZE  
TSINTSADZE  
Isidore RAMICHVILI  
KAUDELAKI  
TCHREIDZE

The emigre Georgians maintained the pretense of having a chamber

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of deputies, included in which were the following members of a so-called "National Democratic Party":

AVALICHVILI  
TAKAICHVILI  
ABKHASI  
David WATCHNADZE (cousin of Elisbar)  
Spiridon KEDIA (not Michael)  
ASSETIARIE  
FABAGEVILI  
KOUTSOUBIDZE  
TCHENKELI  
VECHAPELI

Of those named above, VECHAPELI, killed in 1926 under unknown circumstances, was reported to have turned Communist. No RAMICEVILI died in the thirties.

There is some evidence that during the thirties certain Georgians together with other Caucasians engaged in intelligence work wherever it could be found. A few are reported to have worked for the French and the Germans, or both, and a Georgian named FORUMIDZE is known to have put one Haydar BAMAT, formerly Charge d'affaires at the Afghan Legation in Switzerland in touch with the Japanese in Paris, early in 1936. BAMAT was the leader of a German fostered Caucasian Nationalist group the aim of which was to establish an independent Caucasian Republic. The Japanese also decided to exploit the connections of this group and endeavoured, in 1937, through BAMAT to establish a Turco-Japanese intelligence association for the purpose of gathering information concerning Russian activities. BAMAT's mission to Turkey failed of "official" Turkish approval because of BAMAT's refusal to consent to the Turkish demand that Mir Ali TAYKUT, a Turkish engineer who had established BAMAT's contact with the Turkish authorities, be designated chief of the group. Notwithstanding BAMAT continued

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to recruit agents on behalf of the Japanese. The most important of these were Ali KANTEMIR, a Caucasian, now believed to be in Switzerland, and Halil HASMEHMEDOV, an Azerbaijan (alias Eash-medoff) GÜNGÖREN, Has MEHMIDOFF, Halil Bek HACMAMEDOV) last believed to be in Istanbul. The Turks expelled BAWAT and fifteen of his followers, including Mir Ali TAYKUT, Halil HASMEHMEDOV, Ali KANTEMIR, Mehmet TUGAY, OSMAN Hoğa, and OSMAN Gübe, most of which went to Germany.

Halil HASMEHMEDOV went into Iran and organized another Caucasian group on behalf of the Japanese. However, friction between the Azerbaijanis and Georgians resulted in the latter breaking away from the leadership of HASMEHMEDOV. Although our source reports the Georgian group as having been the more active and to have produced the better results there is a dearth of information concerning the personalities involved. The reports of these agents working on behalf of the Japanese were submitted to Halil Hideo Helmi NAKAO, expert on Russian affairs at the Japanese Embassy in Turkey, Major General Hario TATEISRI, Military Attache of the Japanese Embassy, Turkey, and his secretary Kazo ITO.

An unfavorable report by NAKAO to Berlin resulted in the withdrawal of support from BAWAT and his assistant KANTEMIR excepting with respect to the Iranian group controlled by HASMEHMEDOV whose principal collaborators were Iskender SEHAZAYAN (alias SHEIKZAYANOV), reported to have been killed by a Soviet agent, and General KERESLIDZE, a former general in the Russian army whose reported death has not been confirmed. Other groups then attempted to form organizations, each of them with the objective of liberat-

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ing Georgia. One of these, known as the "Committee for the Liberation of Georgia", was under Prince BAGRATION-MOUKHARANSKY, who has been characterized as the "Pretender" to the Georgian throne. His committee lasted for only two or three months, despite a certain amount of support given to it by von RIBBENTROP, who took an interest because the Prince, who had a wealthy Italian wife, evidently had some social standing. Another committee that was formed and died during this same period was one organized by the following:

AVANICHVILI  
TSERETELLI  
MAGALOFF  
Spiridon KEDIA

One reason for the quick death of these committees was due to attacks on them by one Michael KEDIA, who was coming along fast, in the eyes of the Germans, in the leadership of the Georgian community. KEDIA had first become prominent when he was designated by ACHMETELI to report to the Germans on the Georgians in Paris. He later transferred the seat of his activities to Berlin. Unification of Georgian activity had not been completed by 1943. The KEDIA organization was operating directly under the auspices of the SD, but there also existed a so-called "Kaukasische Vertrauensstelle" under ACHMETELI, which operated more or less under the auspices of the ROSENBERG Ministry. The conflict between these two groups was ideological among other things, since KEDIA's organization made some attempts to secure a promise by the Germans that the constituent states of the Caucasus would be independent, whereas the ROSENBERG group promulgated the view,

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which had to be accepted by those working with it, that the Caucasus should have only a provincial or colonial status. In 1944 in order to unite the two organizations and, more important, to bring about a unity of all Caucasian organizations, the Germans created and put all groups into one organization known as the "Kaukasische Verbindernstab". This was divided into four sections, representing Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan and the North Caucasus. The Georgian section was in charge of KFDIA, and the following were active in it:

MAGALOFF (the previous active supervisor of those working with the ROSENBERG Ministry; now reported to be on the estate of his German wife somewhere between Munich and Salzburg)  
ALCHIBAIA  
GUELIANI  
TSOMAIA

The north Caucasus section was under BAMAT's old associate, KANTEMIR.

The Georgians seem to have been used by the Germans for a number of purposes. First of all, they furnished recruits for fighting forces which the Germans were using under General VLASSOV. VLASSOV had organized a Free Russian army to fight with the Germans which is reported to have had several hundred thousand volunteers in less than seven months. This army sought the independence of the Caucasus and consequently was opposed by the ROSENBERG Ministry. A Georgian brigade was organized within the army, most of the survivors of which made their way into northern Italy after contriving to surrender to the Anglo-American forces near the Austrian border.

A second objective which the Germans had in organizing the

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Georgians was that of acquiring intelligence. For this purpose, KEDIA seems to have used, to a large extent, the old stamping ground of Turkey. He made frequent trips to Turkey, travelling under the name of Michael KOHLER. During one such visit he stayed with a Georgian named DJAKELI or JAKELI whose cover in Istanbul was a business dealing in manganese. DJAKELI was a direct contact of ZAEHRINGER who was attached to the office of the German Naval Attache; on his last two visits he stayed with one WEIDTMAN, director of the Deutsche Bank. One Georgian made the statement that KEDIA's trips to Turkey were for the purpose of establishing contact with the Allies, but no positive evidence has been found. There was a substantial organization in Turkey consisting largely of Mensheviks (members of the Social Democratic Party) who looked to Noah JORDANIA (@ NIORDANI), leader of the MENSHEVIKS in Paris, for guidance. The Georgian organization in Istanbul whose activities were directed by KEDIA comprised three groups all of whose members were members of JORDANIA's party.

This was composed of:

- a) A Georgian group permanently resident in Istanbul (Turkish citizens): Simaon JENTI; Alexander GAZALISVILI (GOZGOSHVILI), employed at the Ottoman Bank; Shaliko TALANTADZE.
- b) A Georgian group from Paris possessing French Passports: BERESHVILI @ Karlo BERIK; SIMEON @ Simon GOGURBERIDZE; DADIKO @ DAVID.
- c) A group organized by JORDANIA's Private Secretary: Sandro MINAGARI @ Alexander WEISSNER (WEISSNER had a French Passpost, but was protected by the Germans).

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These groups are reported to have been efficient and productive. DADIKO established a number of contacts on the Turkish side of the Turco-Russian border, and one MUSTAPA, a merchant from the frontier village Kemal Paşa, is known to have made regular visits to Istanbul where he contacted Suleman Abashunze/SAHJAMMADE, an Adjarian (Mohammedan Georgian). The Germans sent to the Caucasian groups materials for sabotage, plus certain minority newspapers published on behalf of the Caucasian groups in Berlin. Two other men with whom the KEDIA organization is reported to have worked in Istanbul were:

ESKOMIACEVILI  
MENAHRACHVILI

The latter is rumored to have been a double agent whose primary loyalty was to the British.

One further function performed by the KEDIA organization was that of furnishing support and agents for the operation of the ZEPPELIN organization. This division of AMT. VI, known formerly as AMT VI/C/Zeppelein, was set up by the Germans to carry out intelligence and sabotage missions in the Caucasus. The details of its operation are known only sketchily, but for the Georgians the leadership seems to have been in the hands of KEDIA, whose contact in AMT VI was a certain HENGELHAUPT. Among the German officers working with ZEPPELIN, a Capt. DRESSLER and Lieut. INSER have been identified. Elisbar WATCHNADZE admits to having briefed paratroppers for sabotage and information missions to the Caucasus area on behalf of ZEPPELIN. The dropping zones, at least for the missions with which WATCHNADZE was concerned, were intended to be

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"BOTI" and "BOROTCHALIN". The missions were to have WT communication and consisted of one WT operator and five men. WATCHNADZE claims to have discontinued work for ZEPPELIN following such briefing. Whether or not the missions were successful is not known, although SINDJIKACHVILI has stated, in connection with a vague description of ZEPPELIN operations, that certain Georgians sent to the Caucasus were captured and shot by the Russians.

The location of one camp was said to be at Teppel, near Marienbad, Germany. This information was furnished by an Azerbaijani who also identified the following as Azerbaijan instructors at the camp:

✓ ALIJEFF  
✓ BACHIROFF  
✓ ABASSOF  
✓ MAMEDON  
✓ KULIZADA

All of them were stated to be former officers of the Red Army. This camp may have been confined to working with the Azerbaijanis.

Evidently certain ZEPPELIN activities were designed to take place at the front, during the German advance. SINDJIKACHVILI has said that he went to Russia in December of 1943 to be in the service of TCHAIVTCHAIIVADZE who, he stated, was working with ZEPPELIN. The objective was evidently that of sabotage and intelligence operations in front of the German Armies, particularly as they advanced into the Caucasus. The operation showed no accomplishment for the German retreat started soon after. SINDJIKACHVILI maintains that thereafter he and a certain ZACHARIADZE engaged in helping Polish officers escape to Switzerland.

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The leadership of the Georgian community by KEDIA did not extend to all Georgians, some of whom seemed to have worked independently for the Germans and others to have disputed the authority of KEDIA. Among those who worked independently for the Germans are the following:

YGHANEASCHIDSE: A Georgian in Berlin, who evidently worked from 1937 to 1945 as a part of Abwehr, IWI, Bremen, 65 years old; this agent was reputed to have worked particularly well with the Japanese and the Turks in Berlin and to have reported to the Germans information concerning Trans-Iranian oil, Russia and Russian influences with respect to the oil, and Near Eastern import and export business.

WAGLAHELIDZE: Identified by TCHMELIDZE, chief KEDIA representative in Italy, as one who worked for the Abwehr. It is also stated that he attempted to be the Georgian representative with General VLASSOV.

DIMITRACHVILI: This man was accused by PAVLIASHEVILI and Laura KAKHELI (British wife of a Georgian refugee) of having worked for the Gestapo in Berlin. DIMITRACHVILI is obviously in bad standing in the Georgian community, charges of embezzlement and bad faith having been made against him. His accusers state that he has been a spy of long standing, having worked successively for the French, the Russians, and the Gestapo. He is presently in Allied hands in Italy and instructions have been given that he is to remain under surveillance.

Elisbar WATCHNADZE: Apart from this man's activities for ZEPPELIN, discussed above, it has also been stated that he worked

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in Paris and in the French Provinces for the SD.

David WATCHNADZE: This man, a strongly anti-Communist Georgian, helped form a short-lived Armeno-Georgian community and also, in Berlin, assisted Prince BAGRATION-MOUKHARANSKY in his efforts to form a Georgian organization. It has been stated that he was an AMT VI agent in Rome, although his associates are inclined to doubt it in view of his shiftless character. It may have been a case of mistaken identity with Elisbar.

Among the most famous of the non-corroborators with KEDIA was ODICHARIA (@AUDICHAR, TSAGOEPF). This soldier of fortune through the years worked for the Germans and the Japanese as well as the French Deuxieme Bureau. He had been a member of the French Foreign Legion and returned to France after its occupation by the Germans. He thereupon seems to have devoted his time to fighting the position of KEDIA as leader of the Georgians. To prejudice KEDIA with the Germans, ODICHARIA frequently denounced KEDIA as well as some of his associates, either on the ground that they were working secretly for the Soviets or for the Allies. Thus ODICHARIA denounced SINDJIFACHVILI as being the bearer of a message from the British Intelligence Service to KEDIA. Despite these efforts, the prestige of KEDIA remained unimpaired, perhaps because of the full confidence given to him by HENGELHAUPT. ODICHARIA proceeded into anti-Maquis activities in France, and became wealthy through black market operations. His anti-Maquis activities, which consisted of forming a band of Georgians to engage in active suppression of the Maquis, has led him to be called "infamous" by one Georgian, (Elisbar WATCHNADZE) as also

to a request for his person by the French, who evidently wish to try him as a war criminal. Among ODICKAFIA's associates were PALIACHVILI, who also admits to service in the German army against the Russians; he was among the first 100 recruited by KEDIA after the invasion of Russia. PALIACHVILI is presently interned in Italy by Allied order awaiting further investigation.

The most difficult part of any discussion of Georgian activities for the Germans is to attempt to evaluate their services and find reasons therefor. Despite the characterization of the KEDIA organization in Turkey as being efficient and productive the specific projects which the Georgians seemed to have engaged in appear relatively insignificant. It has already been noted that the ZEPPELIN activities on the Front were disrupted by the German surrender, and the dropping operations into the Caucasus seemed to have resulted only in the capture and death of those participating.

SINEJIKACHVILI worked with KEDIA on the formation of a Georgian unit which was to liberate Georgia by proceeding overland through Turkey. The scheme was worked upon, elaborated, and had German approval, but finally for very vague reasons it fell through without a single Georgian having proceeded to Georgia. SINEJIKACHVILI is presently interned by the Allies in Italy, pending further investigation.

Another scheme was the so-called "Georgian Cloister" which was worked out by KEDIA, BASILLIUS and a Father Michael TARSCHNIVILI. The scheme, which one report says should be attributed to a certain SABATHIERASCHVILI, was designed to establish a cloister

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in Rome under the wing of the Vatican which could be used as a trusting place and communications center for German agents in Rome. The scheme fell through without having accomplished anything. There is evidence that BASILLIUS used the money furnished him by the Germans for his own ends instead of establishing the cloister. In addition, Father TARSCHNISVILI evidently came to regard the "cloister" as his and objected to having radio communications centered there. There is one further puzzling piece of information to the effect that the cloister, which existed physically although it was never in operation, was used by BASILLIUS for hiding escaped Russian prisoners of war. There is no evidence whether this was due to BASILLIUS's sympathy for them or whether he regarded them as prospective recruits for his own operations.

There is nothing to indicate why German efforts with the Georgians should have been as futile as they seemingly were. It could conceivably be due to the fact that the Soviet Union so controlled Georgians, or so penetrated them, that their schemes were bound to fail. There is some evidence that KEDIA's organization had been penetrated for two members of that organization, TCHARTISCHVILI and Lieut. MEIVANI, are now working openly for the Russians in their Austrian zone. The inefficiency may have been due to the ineptitude of the Georgians themselves or their mutual jealousies and suspicions. The Georgian community abroad, like a number of expatriate groups, were closely drawn together but rocked with mutual jealousies, accusations, and envy, and this may have led to an inability to accomplish anything substantial

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for the Germans.

Even at this time mutual recriminations continue, as evidenced by Allied interrogations of Georgians. Thus DIMITRACHVILI has denounced the following members of the Georgian community as having been German collaborators:

SINDJIKACHVILI, TCHMOLIDZE (discussed below), PAVILJACHVILI, Elisbar WATCHNADZE, ALCHIBAJA, and BEIKACHVILI. He has also named the following as agents who worked for KEDIA:

X GUARAMADZE (reported to have been arrested by the Allies in Milan);  
X BARANIERDZE; KARDOWA (a Turk who has perhaps returned to Turkey) and DJAKELI (now deceased, with a son presently in Spain). DIMITRACHVILI, on the other hand, has been characterized as a blackmailer by Elisbar WATCHNADZE who states that DIMITRACHVILI organized a scheme with one X OKROPERIDZE and Miss Miriam KERESSELIDZE to blackmail prominent Georgians. Among the intended victims are said to be WATCHNADZE, SINDJIKACHVILI, and PALIASEVILI, for being German agents; and a certain Mrs. KOMARTELLI, whose principal recommendation for being blackmailed seems to be that she is quite wealthy. There have also been mutual charges of embezzlement in the Georgian community, traceable to certain funds of Georgian organizations which made their way into the hands of individuals. Most of these accusations center around the persons of SINDJIKACHVILI and TCHMOLIDZE. The latter is a Georgian who worked for the ROSENBERG ministry in 1941. He admits that he had been out of Soviet Russia since the 20's and that he had been abroad under a Russian passport until 1937. He maintains that this was for purposes of convenience but that in 1937 renewal would have com-

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promised him with the Soviet Union and accordingly at that time he applied for, and received, a German passport. In the ROSENBERG ministry he worked under Dr. MACALOFF, and was appointed Chief of the Georgian Colony in Italy in April 1945. Officially, his position in Italy was that of chief representative of the "Kaukasische Verbindungsstab". He is presently in Allied hands, in Italy, awaiting further interrogation.

Certain other Georgians are known to have been active on behalf of the Germans, although in most cases information concerning them is scant. One is KANTCHICHVILI, an engineer, a representative of Siemens in Milan during the war. Another is SCHAVGULIDZE, a close associate of KEDIA's and more specifically pay master to the families of Georgians who were fighting on the Eastern Front. Three others who might be of some interest because of their anti-Soviet reputations are: Girjeri NAKASHIDZE, Nicholas NAKASHIDZE and ZAHARIADZE. Others whose names are found in reports include SHAVISHVILI, a former Georgian delegate to the League of Nations, now living in Geneva; and INANSSARIDZE, a former German PW now said to be acting as a Soviet agent of the Repatriation Commission. Two other individuals who should be mentioned in this connection are Cardinal TISSERANT, who has written to the British Ministry in Italy protesting that certain Georgians are now being forced to return to USSR against their will; and a certain Princess SEAPEYNSKI whose son was an OSS agent, and whom KEDIA is reported to have protected in Berlin. Elisbar WATCHNADZE claims to be a particular friend of the Princess, who apparently remained in Italy throughout the War.

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Since the end of the war, the Georgians seem to have concentrated in Italy, as also in Switzerland. KEDIA, KASTNER, and TSONOIA are all said to have gone to Switzerland where they proceeded for the announced purpose of working with the Swiss to insure fair treatment of Georgians on matters of repatriation to the Soviet Union. A recent report states that KEDIA has proceeded to France. There is also a concentration of Georgians in Munich. These include TSONOIA who had previously been reported in Switzerland with KEDIA. This individual, characterized as "chief of police" for the KEDIA organization, is supposed to be working in Munich with ALCHIBADA, KASARSHVILI and a certain MAGALOWSEVILI, who had been associated with KEDIA's Georgian Liaison staff writing anti-Soviet propaganda. KASARSHVILI who has been characterized as leader of the Georgian "National Socialist Party" is reported recently to have written to AVOLIANI, another associate of KEDIA, urging that all representatives of KEDIA's old Georgian liaison staff return to Munich since contacts have been established there "with the Soviets as well as with American authorities".

In Italy, Prince KAKHELIDZE presented to the British a proposal for the formation of an organization to gather intelligence for the Allies, the quid pro quo to be a promise by the Allies of the independence of the Caucasus. KAKHELIDZE's document, on file in X-2, Washington, outlines in considerable detail the methods and organization which would be adopted.

There is attached hereto as Appendix A an alphabetical index of persons mentioned in this memorandum, together with references of pages on which they are mentioned.

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