

Saakashvili's Roses Not Yet Wilted in U.S. Visit

by William Jones

The first visit to the United States by the newly elected President of the Republic of Georgia, Mikhail Saakashvili, was for him, as he said, “like coming home.” The new President, brought to power in Georgia in a U.S.-supported move against old Soviet apparatchik and Gorbachev protégé Eduard Shevardnadze, was given a royal welcome to Washington. His friend and mentor, Zbigniew Brzezinski, introduced him at a public forum at the John Hopkins’ School of Advanced International Studies on Feb. 25. Saakashvili had a warm Oval Office meeting with President Bush on Feb. 26. He brought in his entourage nearly his entire cabinet, all with close ties to leading American political circles.

Saakashvili, a graduate of Columbia University in New York and with a graduate degree from George Washington University in Washington, D.C., is definitely no stranger to these parts. As a matter of fact, his career has been carefully cultivated since he was a student by some of Washington’s most influential political figures. Since he graduated from Columbia University Law School in 1994, some of the nation’s top geopoliticians—like that madman from the Carter years, Brzezinski—have had a long time to observe this young Georgian political figure.

Indeed, the “Rose Revolution” which brought Saakashvili to power—so named by the fact that the oppositionists in the Georgian parliament met the military called out by Shevardnadze to evacuate them, with each oppositionist carrying a rose—was effectively choreographed through the use of funding from George Soros’s Open Society Foundation. In fact, the Open Society Foundation brought in operatives from the successful overthrow of Serbia’s Slobodan Milosevic by the opposition Otpor, to train the Georgian opposition. The Open Society Foundation has created a veritable “school for agitators” capable of dealing with any “recalcitrant” regimes which are not prepared to play according to the “Washington consensus” rules dictated through Soros and his cronies.

‘Finlandization’ of Georgia?

The outlines of the geopolitical game being played in the Georgian Republic has been quite clearly outlined by Brzezinski in one of his recent geopolitical treatises, *The Global Chessboard*. Like Halford Mackinder before him, Brzezinski sees Central Asia as the battlefield in which U.S. financial and oil interests have to insert a wedge into the growing Russian-Chinese-Indian cooperation. As Brzezinski himself bluntly

acknowledged in his book: “To put it in a terminology that hearkens back to the more brutal age of ancient empires, the three grand imperatives of imperial geostrategy are to prevent collusion and maintain security dependence among the vassals, to keep tributaries pliant and protected, and to keep the barbarians from coming together.”

In his comments at SAIS, Brzezinski urged Saakashvili to follow the model of Finland during the Cold War: That is, maintain cordial relations with Russia, but remain doggedly independent. Brzezinski also urged Saakashvili that it was important for Georgia to maintain some semblance of “constitutionality,” warning, perhaps somewhat nervously, that the support which had been carefully created for Saakashvili could quickly dissipate if he moved too abruptly to consolidate himself in power. This in the midst of threats being made by Saakashvili in Tbilisi, against secessionist areas and his moves to crack down on the domestic media. In Washington, however, he was all smiles and good-will. While Brzezinski views the Georgia developments as the first “domino” to fall in his Central Asian “New Great Game,” he is also aware that things can quickly backfire.

The World Bank loan promised Saakashvili—and, in an extraordinary move, applicable prior to any agreement between the International Monetary Fund and the Georgian Republic—may keep the new President “pliable,” at least for the time being. And then the promise of the Caspian pipelines through Georgia, the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhhan line or the more ethereal Baku-Tbilisi-Batumi line preferred by Saakashvili, may offer some hope for the future.

But given the existence of secessionist areas like South Ossetia, Abkhazia, and Adjara, and the growing suspicion in Russian political circles that the new U.S. Central Asia policy is aimed at containment of Russia, which continues to have troops in Georgia and is sympathetic with some of the dissident circles, may make the role of “satrap” more difficult than it now seems with U.S. assistance flowing to the new government. Even without the Great Game being played, the Caucasus has always been something of a rough neighborhood. Many observers have commented that Saakashvili has, nevertheless, handled the situation relatively well, and his four-hour meeting with the Russian President in Moscow seems to have waylaid fears of any confrontational approach on his part. That is not the case with the Brzezinski and the Cheney neo-conservatives, however. As we have seen with utmost clarity in their “splendid little war” in Iraq, their approach has been viscerally confrontational. Saakashvili may be thankful for the doors and the spigots being opened for him in Washington by his alleged “friends,” but it is not quite clear that the new Georgian government are really prepared to serve as the front-line soldiers in the geopolitical wars being fomented by Brzezinski and the neo-cons. If not, they must begin some serious “weeding” in their garden, if the “roses” are not to begin wilting in a new bloody geopolitical clash in the Caucasus.

International Intelligence

China's 'Power Security' Top Priority

China's State Electricity Regulatory Commission on Feb. 24 told officials of the power industry, who were summoned to Beijing for a national conference, that the security of the power system is a top priority this year, and that it will also pass stricter regulations immediately to cut accidents which may cause loss of life, massive blackouts, and the collapse of grids.

Since 2002, *China Daily* noted on Feb. 26, government strategy had emphasized market-oriented reforms to increase "competition"; now, this is a "marked change." State Electricity Regulatory Commission Chairman Chai Songyue announced that for the power industry: "Any reform plans or policies should be conducive to the security of the power system. "The economic interests of enterprises should yield to security concerns when they conflict with each other." He also called for increased investment to improve the security of power generation and grids. The all-out use of power plants is cutting into maintenance, also a big concern.

China is having a drastic electricity shortage. Last year, over 66% of China suffered frequent blackouts or electricity rationing. Some grids have a "zero reserve margin," Chai said. China will be short by a generating capacity of 20,000 megawatts this year, after a shortfall of 15,000 megawatts last year. Some experts from the State Grid Corp. consider that the supply-demand gap could be up to 30,000 megawatts, due to a potential 12% consumption increase this year.

UNMOVIC Final Report Ridicules U.S.

The UN Iraq weapons inspection team (UNMOVIC) released its report on pre-war inspections in Iraq on March 3. The current director, Demetrius Perricos, who took over from Hans Blix, said that the United States failed in its effort to find WMD after the war, and David Kay's report admitting that fact confirmed what UNMOVIC had said all

along: The evidence showed that the Iraqis and the inspectors, between them, had destroyed all the WMD in the period following the first Gulf War in 1991. "For a lot of people who were negative because they didn't know, the impact from David Kay's pronouncement has started them to realize that there was expertise in UNMOVIC, that we were not incompetent," said Perricos. Among other disparaging remarks from U.S. officials, Secretary Colin Powell had said on ABC in February 2003, that the inspectors were like "Inspector Clouseau running all over Iraq."

The report itself is a point-by-point run-down of the various weapons and delivery systems which UNMOVIC had investigated, showing that in all but a few trivial cases, the Iraqis had documented their weapons in the report submitted to the UN, and that they had been destroyed either by Iraq or by inspectors. A few cases were left unresolved in March 2003, only because the United States forced the UN inspectors out by invading.

Fascist Law Passes Australian Parliament

The long-feared law to empower Australia's Attorney-General to ban organizations passed the Australian parliament on March 4, within a mere 24 hours of being introduced. It is the latest in a series of laws in Australia modeled upon those of Hitler in 1933.

The Howard Government cut a dirty back-room deal with the opposition Labor Party, getting Labor to drop its longstanding opposition to this "emergency power." Furthermore, the bill was hidden until just hours before it was tabled for debate, which short-circuited any opportunity for real opposition to the bill to be mobilized.

The Criminal Code Amendment (Terrorist Organizations) Bill of 2003 grants executive proscription powers to the Federal Attorney General, to ban an organization simply if he is satisfied that it is "directly or indirectly engaged in, preparing, planning, assisting in or fostering the doing of terrorist acts." Besides this vagueness, the power can be exercised on the basis of secret and un-

tested evidence, and the only standard of proof is that the Attorney General needs to be satisfied on the balance of probabilities.

LaRouche's associates in Australia, the Citizens Electoral Council (CEC), led a mass mobilization in 2002 which stopped this law being passed that year. However, last December, the Labor Party, under intense pressure from Rupert Murdoch, dumped leader Simon Crean, who strongly opposed this power. The Labor Party's shift was described by a gloating Prime Minister Howard on March 4: "It's in reality a big back-flip, because they've railed against it as a terrible infringement of civil liberties, and now for, you know, some reasons of political judgment, and not high principle, they have executed a back-flip. And I congratulate them on it, I think it's the right thing to have done in the national interest."

The Queen's Privy Council, through its front known as the Anti-Defamation Commission of B'nai B'rith (run by three Privy Councillors) has long campaigned for LaRouche's CEC to be banned from Australian politics.

India Accelerates Its Lunar Mission

India will launch its mission to the Moon in 2007, one year earlier than originally scheduled. The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) announced on March 1 that the progress in preparing its \$100 million lunar orbiter mission for launch is going so well, it has moved the launch date up. The Chandrayaan-1 craft could lift off even earlier than 2007, ISRO Chairman Gopalan Madhavan Nair said, speaking at the 13th National Space Science Symposium on Feb. 28. The lunar orbiter will rely on the heritage of India's weather satellite, Metsat, which is saving time, he said. ISRO has reserved about 25 pounds of payload capacity aboard the satellite for experiments supplied by an international partner, and has put out a call for other nations to join. So far, it is reported, eight proposals have been received: from the European Space Agency; a U.S. laboratory; and Israel; one will be selected. India plans to launch the lunar orbiter with a modified version of its Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle.