

Unrest in Georgia: Maidan Redux?

by Daniel Platt

May 3—As the collapse of today’s “rules-based order” unfolds at a dramatic pace, the geopolitical strategists of the Anglosphere are in an increasingly desperate frenzy to hold onto their global empire and influence. Coinciding with this collapse is the emergence of a new spirit in the world, as nations exert their right to sovereignty and economic development. In light of this, the defenders of the old order are hurling everything they can in hopes of destabilizing and preventing such a transformation, taking particular aim at the leading nations of Russia and China. The small nation of Georgia—formerly part of the USSR and occupying a strategic location both on the border of Russia and on the coast of the Black Sea—is now being targeted as a geopolitical tool toward this end.

As with the case of Ukraine since the 2014 “Nuland Coup,” which toppled its elected government, Georgia has been identified (see *EIR*, Nov. 17, 2023, “[The Bernard Lewis Plan](#)”) as a vulnerable flank to be exploited in the drive to destabilize Russia. Georgia also shares borders with Armenia and Azerbaijan, where presently another volatile conflict exists (to the delight of the geopoliticians), and a few hundred kilometers to the south lies Iran, another major target for the neocons.

Georgia is presently in the throes of a major attempted destabilization. Large demonstrations are taking place around the country and in particular its capital, Tbilisi, with the full support and encouragement of Western governments. Michael Roth, current Chair of the German Bundestag’s Foreign Affairs Committee, was quoted on April 29, saying that “the capital of Europe these days is Tbilisi.”

Instead of being a hub of destabilization, Georgia has a potential role in creating regional prosperity and stability. There is a proposed Georgian link in the International North-South Transport Corridor that will move freight between South Asia and Europe. The European Union has already [made known](#) its displeasure at this development, through a Non-

Governmental Organization (NGO) it sponsors called Bankwatch. This, despite the obvious benefit of the corridor for Georgia itself. We will hear more about the role of NGOs below.

The ‘Rose Revolution’

In the early 1970s, Gene Sharp, a U.S. academic with lifelong ties to the defense establishment, wrote guidebooks on how to organize popular revolts using Madison Avenue-style marketing techniques. He rec-



CC/Kristna Fredsrörelsen

Gene Sharp, who wrote the book for conducting color revolutions in the 1970s, was greatly appreciated by the Pentagon.

ommended to anyone interested in sponsoring such a revolt that, rather than confusing or boring the participants with too much political theory, they should motivate their budding revolutionaries with pop culture, using catchy, content-free slogans, logos, and team colors. The application of these techniques became known as “color revolutions,” and they have become the preferred method of “regime change” for the rulers of the Anglosphere.

There have been numerous attempts at color revolution in Georgia, including the one in 2003, fondly called the “Rose Revolution” by neocons. The Rose

Revolution was famously funded by foreign-sponsored NGOs, who were able to hire impoverished Georgians at much higher salaries than were available from the government or from most private employers. It succeeded in removing President Eduard Shevardnadze and replacing him with neocon darling Mikheil Saakashvili. Substantial amounts of money flowed into Georgia from the Open Society Foundations of billionaire George Soros.

With Saakashvili at the helm, the U.S. was able to manipulate Georgia into an ill-fated confrontation with Russia during the 2008 war in South Ossetia (see *EIR*, August 29, 2008, "[Hit on South Ossetia: A British-Led Action](#)"). Saakashvili was not received very well by his constituents, however, and was voted out in 2013.

The 'Foreign Agents' Laws

A new round of popular upheaval is now underway in Georgia. Large demonstrations have erupted across the country in opposition to a proposed law which would require foreign-funded political organizations to publicly disclose the sources of their funding. According to the Russian language edition of Radio Free Europe, 15,000 protesters took to the streets of Georgia's capital Tbilisi on April 18, and demanded that the government withdraw the proposed bill. "No to Russian law," they chanted, carrying European Union and Georgian flags. Since then, the protests have only grown in number and in their proclivity toward violence. On the night of April 30, a mob blocked entrances to the Parliament and was dispersed by police with tear gas and water cannons. They then went on to barricade streets in Tbilisi. Meanwhile, as is to be expected, the protests are receiving the warmest praise and support from Western governments.

The experience of the Rose Revolution, the "Orange Revolution" in Ukraine (2004), and other "regime change" operations, had led to a heightened appreciation of the potential threat posed by foreign-funded NGOs among the former states of the USSR. In 2012, Russia adopted Federal Statute N 121-FZ, titled "On

Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation with regard to Regulating the Activities of Non-Commercial Organizations Acting as Foreign Agents," commonly known as the "Foreign Agents" statute. In a recent [interview](#) with *Russian Federation Today*, the author of the statute, Senator Andrei Klimov, had this to say about its genesis:

It all started with the experience of the United States, where eighty years ago they realized that if they did not limit foreign influence within their country, the United States would simply



Mikheil Saakashvili (left), as President of Georgia in 2007, visited NATO and NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer (right).

fall to pieces. Therefore, the famous FARA law was developed, which seriously and severely restricts the activities in the United States of persons who work in the interests of other states. At one time, we studied the American experience and realized that such a law could bolster the defense of Russian sovereignty. Afterwards we finalized and revised it, taking into account our interests and realities. Therefore, Georgian law cannot be called "Russian" or "American"—it is different. But if the current Georgian leadership nevertheless decided to follow this example in the struggle for the sovereignty of their country, then only the enemies of Georgia can oppose this. And such a law must be adopted solely to protect the national

interests of Georgia itself and its people. Those who oppose it sing, as they say, from someone else's voice....

If you look at the processes more broadly, what is happening in Georgia today is what is happening in most countries, including pro-Washington countries—awareness of the value of sovereignty is growing all over the world. Georgia, which was under the Western yoke with the help of ex-President Saakashvili, understands that they are trying to drag it into processes that will bring great troubles to the Georgian people. This became especially clear after the 2008 war—outbreaks of Russophobia, due to which they want to drag a small Caucasian country into large geopolitical processes, have an extremely negative impact on both the economy and social standards of life in Georgia.

The referenced FARA law is the Foreign Agents Registration Act (22 U.S.C. §§611-621) which was enacted in 1938. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, the Act—

was enacted to require individuals doing political or advocacy work on behalf of foreign entities in the United States to register with the Department of Justice (DOJ) and to disclose their relationship, activities, receipts, and disbursements in support of their activities. FARA does not prohibit any specific activities; rather it seeks to require registration and disclosure of them.

On March 7, 2023, a similar law with the title, “On Transparency of Foreign Influence” passed the Georgian parliament during its first reading by a vote of 76–13. It immediately came under attack from EU representatives, who warned that the law could cause the EU to deny membership to Georgia. It was also denounced by U.S. State Department Spokesman Ned Price and by the U.S. Embassy in Georgia, which called the vote a “dark day for democracy.” In response to accusations that the law was modeled on the Russian version, advocates of the Georgian legislation produced an alternate version which was simply a line-by-line translation of the American FARA law.

There was also public opposition from many NGOs, who activated the street demonstrations again, causing the bill's sponsors to retract it three days after it was introduced (see *EIR*, Mar. 9, 2023, “[Mass Protests in Tbilisi, Georgia Touted as ‘Anti-Russian’](#)”).

The entire drama is now playing out again following its re-introduction in the Parliament on April 17, 2024, except that this time it seems less likely that the bill will be withdrawn. Sponsors are saying that the problem of foreign-sponsored “slush funds” has become more acute.

Four hundred NGOs have issued a statement opposing the bill. British-dominated Transparency International and Amnesty International have been especially vocal in their condemnations. EU functionaries Josep Borrell and Olivér Várhelyi announced, “This law is not in line with EU core norms and values.” The U.S. Department of State also issued a statement condemning it:

We are gravely disappointed by the Georgian Parliament's decision to advance Kremlin-inspired “foreign influence” legislation. As the EU has stated, passage of this law could compromise Georgia's progress on its EU path. We join our European allies in urging Georgia not to enact legislation that goes against the wishes of the overwhelming majority of Georgian citizens—the desire to integrate fully into the EU. Georgia has a vibrant civil society that serves its citizens and works to improve Georgia's economy. If adopted, the proposed legislation could limit freedom of expression, stigmatize organizations that deliver these benefits to the citizens of Georgia, and impede independent media organizations working to provide Georgians with access to high quality information. Such Kremlin-inspired legislation is not appropriate if the goal is to promote transparency.

Who Is Writing the Checks?

A commentary from 2014 in *Foreign Policy* magazine laments, “Foreign governments have long accused the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) of being a front for the CIA or other groups dedicated to their collapse.”

USAID, presently headed by neocon harridan Samantha Power, is indeed at the center of the U.S.’ sprawling regime-change apparatus, funding myriad meddling projects including the notorious National Endowment for Democracy. In October 2023, prior to becoming Georgia’s Prime Minister, Georgian Dream party chair Irakli Kobakhidze accused USAID of “financing revolution” in Georgia.

USAID’s own website proclaims:

USAID funds more than 35 programs to strengthen Georgia’s resilience to malign influence, consolidate democratic gains through enhanced citizen responsive governance, and enable high-value employment through increased economic growth....

USAID began operating in Georgia in 1992. Over the past three decades, the American people have provided approximately \$6 billion in assistance (of which \$1.9 billion is from USAID) to Georgia to strengthen the country’s security, prosperity, and democratic institutions. Currently, USAID invests in approximately 40 development programs with a total value of ap-



U.S. Embassy, Kyiv, Ukraine

The infamous woman behind the coup in Ukraine, Victoria Nuland, checks up on her dirty work with a 2016 visit to Ukraine. At that time she was Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs.

proximately \$373 million and an annual budget of more than \$70 million.

Indeed, Georgia has one of the highest densities of NGOs of any country in the world, with 25,000 active NGOs, 90% of which get funding from foreign sources. Nikoloz Samkharadze, the chair of Georgia’s Foreign Relations Committee, told the BBC in April that this equals 1 NGO for every 148 citizens. USAID works in tandem with such institutions. George Soros’ Open Society Foundation admits on its website that:

To date, the foundation has invested over \$85 million to support Georgia’s social and economic development. From helping the Georgian government fulfill its ambitions to integrate with the European Union to building support for human rights and good governance, the Open Society Georgia Foundation continues to fund and support a broad range of local partners working for positive change.



CC/Aimaina Hikari

Regime-change demonstrators attack the police in the Maidan coup in Kiev, Feb. 18, 2014.

Integration with the European Union

There are obvious parallels between the situation in Georgia and the “Nuland Coup” ten years ago in Ukraine. First of all, the amount of money spent by the U.S. government to meddle there is roughly the same as the now-infamous \$5 billion of which Victoria Nuland [boasted](#) in 2013. Then there is the blandishment of EU membership and all that that entails, as Ukraine has found out the hard way since 2014. The EU [made clear](#) what it expects from its recruits:

The EU recalls that the European Council granted Georgia candidate status on the understanding that the relevant steps set out in the Commission’s recommendation of 8 November 2023 are taken. Step 9 includes a recommendation for Georgia to make sure that civil society can operate freely, and Step 1 calls on Georgia to fight disinformation against the EU and its values.

Transparency should not be used as an instrument to limit civil society’s capacity to operate freely. We encourage the political leaders in Georgia to adopt and implement reforms that are in line with the stated objective of joining the European Union, as supported by a large majority of Georgia’s citizens.

Far from encouraging Georgia’s sovereign right to prevent foreign influence in its internal affairs, EU membership is now used as a tool to demand complete fealty to a system of supranational governance, with “civil society” being the favored euphemism for the unfettered activities of foreign-funded NGOs.

Georgian President Salomé Zourabichvili, an American-educated disciple of neocon kingpin Zbigniew Brzezinski and an advocate of European integration, has vowed to veto the controversial legislation if it ever arrives at her desk. It would only take 76 votes to override her opposition, however, and the bill’s first reading passed with 83 votes. Zourabichvili’s term is scheduled to end later this year. On the other hand, Prime Minister Kobakhidze and the Georgian Dream party have attempted a balancing act, trying to preserve Georgian sovereignty while seeking not to offend either Russia or the Anglosphere. Thus, the party is on the record as supporting European integration, while also supporting the “Foreign Agents” law in order not to become excessively “integrated.”



Mamuka Mamulashvili's facebook page

War criminal Mamuka Mamulashvili, a warlord who boasts that his Georgian Legion takes no prisoners in fighting Russia, has repeatedly received red carpet treatment in Washington from neocons, including Senators Dianne Feinstein and Kirstin Gillibrand.

As was also the case with Ukraine, EU membership should be viewed as a package deal with NATO membership. At the 2008 NATO summit in Bucharest, the infamous Victoria Nuland, who at that time served as U.S. Ambassador to NATO, demanded that both Ukraine and Georgia be [added to the Membership Action Plan](#). In November 2013, after being appointed by President Obama to be U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian affairs, Nuland issued a statement where she called for Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova to be “knitted into the European family.” The coup that she was orchestrating in Ukraine would come to a head three months later.

Mercenary Thugs

One important lesson of the Nuland Coup in Ukraine is that sometimes it is not sufficient to simply blast propaganda and spread around a lot of cash. Sometimes you need violence, and when you need violence in Georgia, the man to see is Mamuka Mamulashvili. Mamulashvili participated as a teenager in the brutal Georgia-Abkhazia war in the early 1990s, where his father was a military commander and the two of them were captured and held for three months.

There were reports of atrocities by both sides. A committed anti-Russian, Mamulashvili then went to Chechnya a few years later to fight in the Russo-Chechen War.

After attending college in Paris, Mamulashvili returned to Georgia to serve as senior military advisor to President Mikheil Saakashvili following the “Rose Revolution.” In 2008, Mamulashvili and his fellow Russophobes attempted another military provocation when they attacked Russian peacekeepers in the small enclave of South Ossetia, but they suffered a swift and humiliating defeat. Next stop: Ukraine.

The seminal moment in the Maidan riots, which precipitated the violent coup in Ukraine, was the sniper attacks which took place during February 18–20, 2014. This sniper fire, which killed both police and demonstrators, was loudly attributed by neocon press organs to government shooters. Years later, [new evidence](#) revealed that the snipers were in fact Georgians, in a “false flag” operation ingeniously designed by Mamuka Mamulashvili to trigger a violent backlash against Ukraine’s elected government (see *EIR*, Sept. 21, 2023, “[Kiev’s ‘Georgian Legion’ Plans 2014 Euromaidan in Tbilisi, Georgia This Fall](#)”). This was the origin of the Georgian Legion, one of several fascistoid militia groups in Ukraine, including the infamous neo-Nazi Azov Battalion.

The Georgian Legion, founded and commanded by Mamulashvili, was absorbed into the regular Ukrainian army in 2016 and now boasts of having 2,500 members. It is mainly comprised of Georgians, but has also attracted a number of “racially-motivated white extremist” Americans to its ranks, who have been implicated in terrorism and assorted murders (see *EIR*, June 22, 2022, “[U.S. Terrorists Getting Training in Ukraine](#)”). Statements made by Mamulashvili indicate that the Georgian Legion has a policy of not taking prisoners, i.e., they execute all enemy captives—a war crime.

Mamulashvili has visited the U.S. and been [fêted by some of the leading congressional neocons](#), including the late Sen. Dianne Feinstein, and current Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, who sits on the Select Committee on Intelligence as well as the Committee on Armed Services.

Back in Georgia, Mamulashvili’s sister Nona was elected to parliament in 2020 as a member of the “United National Movement–United Opposition, ‘Strength Is in Unity’” faction. She also founded and

heads Gamziri, or “Avenue,” one of those Georgian NGOs which are so reluctant to disclose their sources of funding. Her NGO campaigns for Georgia’s entry into the EU and NATO and is heavily promoting the current protests in Georgia today.

The intensity of the current situation is exemplified by [an incident](#) in the Georgian parliament on April 15, where an MP punched the leader of the Georgian Dream parliamentary majority in the face as he stood at the podium and advocated for passage of the “Foreign Agents” legislation. The parliamentarian who threw the punch was Aleko Elisashvili, a veteran of the “International Legion of Territorial Defence of Ukraine,” another Georgian militia. What ensued was a general brawl (see *EIR*, Apr. 15, 2024, “[Violent Demonstration Against Georgia’s Parliament on Registering Foreign Influence](#)”).

Have a Cookie

Following the April 28 “March for Europe” demonstration, the [@GAMZIRI24](#) Twitter/X account began mass-posting of videos from that event, showing young people, some draped in Ukrainian flags, all speaking in English for their American audience. Congressional neocons dutifully began tweeting pre-scripted talking points; Rep. Brad Sherman (D-CA) posted on Twitter/X, “The Georgian people are clear: they will not accept a copycat of Russia’s foreign agents law that stifles dissent & jeopardizes Georgia’s Euro-Atlantic future.” A similar statement was issued by Congressman Gerry Connolly (D-VA) and Congressman Austin Scott (R-GA), the Co-Chairs of the Congressional Georgia Caucus.

It appears that all the components are in place for a Maidan-style coup in Georgia, gearing the country up to be the next flash-point as part of the geopolitical aims of Global NATO. However, there are clearly some Georgian leaders who are aware of the potential threat to their sovereignty and are trying to take preventive measures. Georgian Dream founder Bidzina Ivanishvili, who served as Georgia’s prime minister from 2012–2013, told a Georgian Dream counter-rally on April 29 that Georgia and Ukraine had been treated as “cannon fodder” by Western countries, and that “The financing of NGOs, which present themselves as help for us, is in reality for strengthening [foreign] intelligence agencies, and for bringing them to power.”