

TAVISUPALI SAKARTVELO (FREE GEORGIA) N14 (1995) in brief

Zviad Dzidziguri is Charged With the Attempt to Blow Up the Vakhushthi Bridge

On June 27, approximately at 3-4 a.m. under unknown circumstances were arrested the member of the Supreme Council, exiled prefect of Samtredia Zviad Dzidziguri, his brother Koba Dzidziguri, his brother-in-law Vazha Tsereteli as well as Zaza Danelia and Gia Korbesashvili charged with the attempt of blowing up of the Vakhushthi Bridge.

Two days later, on June 29, State Television of Georgia in its information program "Matsne" showed a broadcast of prosecutor-journalist Merab Kvitashvili where all arrested persons were qualified as convicts and terrorists before the beginning of investigation. In the same broadcast were shown the things which supposedly belonged to the arrested. These things included: exploding device, electric wires, a spade which to all probability the arrested were going to use to dig the reinforced concrete construction of the Vakhushthi Bridge.

In this case the police could very safely watch the criminal waiting for the next summer when they at last would finish their digging activities and thus obtain one more proof for investigation in the form of a hole dug in the reinforced concrete construction.

At the same time, on the background of the detailed and most emotional conversation between the head of City Police department Demur Mikadze and the above mentioned telejournalist, confessions of the arrested people, who were bearing obvious signs of physical and psychological pressure, looked like self-slender. This suspicion is strengthened by the information provided by the authors of the broadcast according to which Gia Korbesashvili cut off his veins in an attempt to commit suicide.

From informal sources it became known to us that his feet were so injured as a result of unmerciful torture and beating that he cannot even wear the socks.

Noteworthy is also the fact, that each of political prisoners names himself as an organizer of diversion and assumes complete responsibility for this action. Arrested persons did not have lawyers during the interrogations. Zviad Dzidziguri refused from the appointed state lawyer - Buadze. On his part, Buadze himself refused to be his lawyer and he did not sign the Interrogation Protocol.

The investigation interrogated him without the presence of the lawyer, obtained confession and even broadcast it by TV. All this invites the suggestion that the preliminary investigation carried out by investigator Romeo Zarkua is over and the Prosecutor's Office can readily pass the case to the Court. Thus, we are again witnessing the facts of obvious violation of presumption of innocence, according to which nobody can be recognized guilty unless there is a verdict made by the just trial. Of interest is one more circumstance: why the Procurator's

Office does not observe the secrecy of investigation, and on the third day after the arrest allows such dangerous terrorists to appear on TV? May be behind them is hiding a large terrorist organization whose bosses having received such detailed information would take all precautions to hide their tracks. Or, who knows, may be the prisoners used some secret code unknown to the investigators and gave secret instructions to their accomplices?

Thus, the list of Georgian political prisoners continues to expand.

Bezhan Javakhia was detained

After the arrest of Zviad Dzidziguri one more member of exiled Supreme Council, the editor-in-chief of "Marji" newspaper Bezhan Javakhia was detained and released on the same day. Our correspondent got in touch with him and asked him to tell the story of his detainment.

T.S. - Mr. Javakhia, under what circumstances were you detained.

Bezhan Javakhia - On June 27, approximately at noon I visited the family of my friend, Zviad Dzidziguri's, sister Marine Dzidziguri. Right then somebody called her and made an appointment. She left the house and asked me to wait for her return.

Suddenly the door was unlocked by the keys and some persons in civic clothes entered the flat. There were about 7 of them. They demanded from me and other three guests, young ladies, to show our IC. They themselves did not show us any documents, instead they verbally informed us that they were from the Police department of Saburtalo district and added that as the representatives of Criminal Code Investigation they had the right to enter the citizens' flats and that they were not obliged to show any documents to us since we were not the owners of that flat. Irrespective of the fact, that they have already established who we were basing on our IC., we were taken to the Police department of Saburtalo District where notwithstanding the fact that we were not informed about the motives of our detainment we were subjected to personal search. Then I was taken to the preliminary detainment cell. Some time later I was let out and one policeman who did not tell me his name, demanded from me to write an explanatory note. I did so and explained how and why I was found in my friend's sister's flat. Before I wrote my explanatory note, they had taken my finger-prints without informing me what this procedure was necessary for.

T.S.- Did they take your finger-prints without informing you the reasons of your detainment?

B.J. - That's right, they did not say anything. Then I was again returned to the cell. It took them about 5 hours to find out our identity and take our finger-prints, after which the ladies who were detained together with me and I were taken to the study of Deputy head of the Police department David Tsotskilauri. D.

Tsotskilauri arranged special didactic classes for us. According to his words the time of people possessed with some idea was over. He stated that they were following the different way and that it was time for us to understand that being in the bear's claws it was more reasonable to be polite and obedient. He also informed us that we were lucky to escape from the worse fate, since they could have provided different motives of our being in that flat had they wished to do so.

After this I was released.

It is absolutely incomprehensible for us why the finger-prints are so necessary to establish the identity of a living person especially as he has his IC. and can present the relevant documents? We would also like to know how were those finger-prints identified considering the fact the Bezhan Javakhia had never been subjected to such a procedure in past? So we addressed the experts for consultation and learned that it was quite possible to transfer the taken finger-prints on the surface of any object. Thus, it is quite probable that in future the finger-prints of Mr. Bezhan Javakhia will be found on the handle of the spade or exploding device so broadly advertised by Georgian TV.

Shevardnadze Once More Violates Presumption of Innocence

- Last week another group of terrorists was arrested in Georgia. This time it was one of the supporters of the ex-President, former prefect Zviad Dzidziguri and others. Probably there are some preliminary data and information concerning this fact...

- I can tell you what I heard two days ago. As I was told and there are respective documents too, this group had everything ready to blow-up the Vakhushthi Bridge. Imagine what would happen had this intention been realized? It is that very Dzidziguri who had raided and ruined Samtredia, who became known in Samegrelo and Abkhazia regions for his murders, brutality, burning down the villages. Just recall his invasion into Samtredia, the blood that was shed there, burned down houses, tens of killed people.

I thank the leaders of the city Police, all policemen, who with the help of the Ministry and support of the Major had saved the capital from such dangerous criminals. As I am told, very soon it will be known what forces are supporting these criminals (and they are quite a mighty forces!). I was also told, that this group was planning a series of terrorist actions and diversions (enough documents have been obtained confirming this). Many terrorist acts they have already successfully committed. The respective bodies will inform the society about it.

From radio interview of Eduard Shevardnadze of July 3. "Sakartvelos Respublika", #74 (1090), July 4, 1995

In his traditional radio interview made on July 3 Eduard Shevardnadze in his conversation with the journalist Nato Oniani once more confirmed that the notion of presumption of innocence does not exist in Georgia and the verdict against the political opponents is already pronounced before the Court Hearing, before the beginning of investigation and even before the arrest of the suspects. This fact was more than once stressed by

international organizations. Notwithstanding this fact, the State Institutions such as Human Rights State Committee which in past was so selflessly defending the right of the Head of the State to violate universally recognized juridical norms, seems to contribute to the repetition of the rough mistake made by the Head of the State earlier.

As we are all well aware, Shevardnadze couldn't hide his dissatisfaction with the verdicts pronounced after the hearing of the so-called "Kvareli Case", and expressed his hope that the following Case, or Chikovani Street case, would be approached with more seriousness by the Court and more severe sentences would be pronounced. The Chairman of the Human Rights State Committee A. Kavsadze categorically rejected the statement that those words could be considered as the pressure over the Court and violation of the presumption of innocence. The verdicts pronounced in "Chikovani Street" Case convince us that the Supreme Court did take the recommendations of the Head of the State into consideration.

This time Shevardnadze formulates his ideas extremely clearly, passes ahead the events and from the very first days of investigation, when not all of the arrested even have a lawyer, qualifies the suspects not only as criminals, murderers and terrorists but also provides preliminary instructions to the investigation bodies informing them what other charges could be brought against the political prisoners.

In such case may be the investigation and Court hearing are simple waste of time? May be it would be better to make verdict right now and execute it immediately right on the stairs of IMEL?

However, this odious statement has another aspect: We do believe that this time it will be especially difficult for A. Kavsadze to fulfill his only function - defend unlimited rights of the Head of the State. From the same interview it becomes evident, that in the nearest future we should expect wide-scale repressions. Against what forces will be directed these measures we shall be soon informed about.

Thus, Nodar Natadze's statement about the beginning of 1937 in Georgia, which he made at the session of the Parliament seems to be not deprived of reasonable grounds.

To the International Human Rights Organizations

To Mass media

On June 27, 1995, in Tbilisi the police arrested 5 (five) persons: former prefect of Samtredia town and member of the Supreme Council Zviad Dzidziguri, his brother Koba Dzidziguri, his brother-in-law Vazha Tsereteli as well as Zaza Danelia and Gia Korbesashvili. The circumstances of their arrest are unknown.

On June 29 information program "Matsne" of State Television of Georgia showed the material where was stated that the above 5 persons are charged with accusation in terrorist actions. Specifically, they were blamed in having an intention to blow up the Vakhushthi Bridge (one of the modern reinforced concrete construction). TV showed the proofs found by police: one spade, electric wires and exploding device. As it was mentioned in the broadcast all five arrested persons confessed their guilt.

Zviad Dzidziguri stated by TV that he as a representative of the authorities overthrown in 1992, was fighting against the existing authorities and for that reason he had explosives and arms.

It is noteworthy, that from the moment of arrest to the moment of broadcasting of the material the whereabouts of the arrested were unknown to their relatives and friends. They were interrogated without the lawyers. It should be stressed, that each of the arrested people names himself as an organizer of the terrorist act.

All arrested people had visible traces of physical and psychological pressure. The broadcast material contained information about the attempt of one of them Gia Korbesashvili to commit suicide by cutting off veins during the interrogation. he was hospitalized in Republican Hospital where the doctors saved his life.

All above said invites the suggestion about rough violations of the human rights of the citizens as a result of political squaring of scores.

On June 30, 1995, the Chairman of the Defense and Security Commission, deputy Nodar Natadze in his speech at the session of the Parliament stated in relation to this fact that such confessions obtained without investigation, immediately after the arrest of the suspects represent the manifestation of Stalin's repression of thirties, which is indicative of beginning of the new wave of pre-election mass political terror.

Focusing your attention on the practice of mass and rough human rights violations in Georgia, we appeal to you to take the fate of the above persons under your watch and do not permit one more fact of political squaring of scores to take place.

Helsinki Union

Meeting At Rustavi Colony

The journalists that visited #1 Rustavi Colony met with the convicted political prisoner, head of Gori Battalion of the National Guards, mayor Ramaz Vanishvili, whose detachment was known for its courage, discipline, order and military dignity. He gave us a short interview.

R. Vanishvili - I was trailed by Article 232(1) and was sentenced to 5 year imprisonment. Earlier I was serving my term in the National Guards. After the coup I was persecuted. For this reason I joined the peace-making troops in those times which were located in Samachablo. What happened there you all know very well.

When in Samegrelo began the process of restoration of lawfulness and we went there. My detachment counted 50 soldiers. After the invasion of Russian troops into this region we separated. TV was broadcasting the statement which contained the appeal for us to return to our houses and promise not to undertake any hostile actions against us. However we were attacked by "Mkhedrioni". My brother and two of my friends were killed. When I got better, I was hastily trailed by a military Court. They were charging me with robbery also, but failed to prove their charges. here in colony about 30 prisoners are imprisoned for being Zviadists like me. Certainly they all are charged with different accusations. In their majority they are Guardsmen who were convicted for having arms.