

Documents

Programme of the National Democratic Party of Georgia

Amongst the various informal Georgian nationalist groups mentioned in Stephen Jones' article perhaps the most radical is the National Democratic Party. Its programme, which we reproduce below, contains the novel suggestion that the political system to replace the present one should be a 'theo-democracy'.

Wise Deeds (The Principles of the Party Programme)

Introduction

In the course of almost 70 years in which Soviet power has existed in Georgia, it has become clear to the Georgian people that:

i. The Communist Party of Georgia and the so-called government of Georgia are not an independent political force and submit unconditionally to the Kremlin in all things. Not only do they have no independent foreign policy but even in internal matters their hands are completely tied.

ii. The Georgian nation has in fact been left without a government of its own and deprived of the possibility of defending itself; its wishes and rights are ignored. The fate of Georgia and the Georgian nation is dependent on Moscow's decisions.

iii. Georgia has no army, no national flag or coat of arms. Georgia has no parliament or state power; it is not an independent country but part of a foreign country. Georgia's main present-day problems can be solved only by restoring its independence.

iv. The nation's spiritual life has been destroyed: the church is in fact controlled by the state authorities, which has resulted in a moral decline and loss of self-respect among the people.

v. The Georgian nation is being methodically wiped out in Georgia through the artificial destruction of the demographic balance.

vi. Nature is being mercilessly destroyed in Georgia. The country is facing an ecological disaster.

vii. The Georgian language is not the state language of the republic and in practice is also being forced out of many areas of public life.

viii. The level of Georgian culture, despite individual achievements, is very low.

ix. The system of secondary and higher education needs not just reform or cosmetic treatment but fundamental transformation.

x. Georgian patriots are being persecuted; they cannot publicly express their convictions or disseminate them. They are subject to constant surveillance by the punitive organs,

who use repression, provocation and administrative measures against them, spread slander about them, and so on. In Georgia, as in the whole Soviet Union, the human rights stipulated by the Helsinki Agreement are constantly violated.

xi. The authorities are doing all they can to russify Georgia.

xii. After the sovietisation of Georgia it was deprived of part of its historical territory, which — disregarding the interests of the Georgian nation and the integrity of its territory — was given away to its neighbours.

In addition, three autonomous areas have been established in Georgia, although the territory of the so-called autonomous republic of Abkhazia and autonomous region of South Ossetia have been part of the historical land of Georgia from the start and, as for Adzharia, its population is Georgian and the Adzharian autonomous republic is in fact based on religious differences — which is wholly unexpected from an atheist state.

xiii. Georgia is a Russian colony from the economic point of view as well. The Georgian economy is part of the whole economy of Russia. As a result, the departments of the national economy of Georgia develop according to the interests of Russia, not Georgia.

In Georgia Soviet power was established by force, as the Georgian nation found it unacceptable to become part of a foreign country, or a totalitarian system.

The Georgian nation has fought, is fighting and will fight for the restoration of its independence.

The Fundamental Principles

1. The National-Democratic Party of Georgia is the avant-garde of the Society of Ilya Chavchavadze (Dasi

IV), a political union of the most radical section of Georgia's national patriotic forces.

2. The aim of the National Democratic Party (NDP) of Georgia is to restore Georgian independence by peaceful means and to introduce pluralism into the political, social and economic spheres of life.

3. The ideological basis of our party is theo-democracy, which in addition to the traditional democratic values, envisages a leading role for the church in moral questions and in supervising politics.

4. Our motto is 'Georgia for the Georgians', which does not mean in any way that the rights of other ethnic groups living on Georgian territory are to be restricted or that their political freedoms are to be limited.

5. We have cooperated and will go on cooperating with the democratic and patriotic forces of Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine and Armenia. We have the same aim and we shall achieve freedom either all together or not at all.

We consider it very important to cooperate not only with the existing democratic forces in the USSR but also with truly progressive, anti-totalitarian forces abroad.

The laws of history and objective reality clearly demonstrate that the liberation of enslaved nations is near — the people have only to get organised, unite their forces and coordinate their actions.

6. The party rejects any kind of force. It will use only political means of struggle. Meetings, demonstrations, strikes, distribution of *samizdat* literature, proclamations, calls for national disobedience and active implementation of that disobedience — these will be our way of fighting.

Our party considers it very important to hold a referendum and has great hopes of this lawful way of expressing the people's will. We shall

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try to introduce the practice of referenda. We demand that a referendum be held on the current problems of the Georgian nation. This referendum, which should be carried out with the direct participation of UN representatives and other experts, would give the Georgian nation the opportunity to express its views as to whether Georgia should remain part of the USSR.

7. The NDP is fighting to unite the best national-democratic forces of the Society of Ilya Chavchavadze (Dasi IV) and to bring a chosen section of that society into the party's work.

8. The party must lead the national movement with the help of its fundamental mass organisation — the Society of Ilya Chavchavadze (Dasi IV).

9. Under no circumstances will the NDP give way to compromise with

the authorities.

10. The NDP recognises three forms of property: state, cooperative and private property. Decentralisation of the economy and provision for the interests of the market are a precondition for a healthy economy in the future Georgia.

11. The NDP is directly continuing the political policy followed by the NDP of Georgia — in the first quarter of this century, as the most nationally representative force of the time. So we consider that a new party has not been founded: the old one has been restored. As for the various differences in the fundamental statutes of the 'old' and 'new' parties, these are due to the passing of time and to the new political situation.

We recognise the NDP in the emigre community and ask that opportunities of coordinating our activities be explored.

Pastors and their Flock

Vladimir Zelinsky is a well known Orthodox lay theologian living in Moscow. The author of numerous books and articles, his Coming into the Church dealt with the 'religious renaissance' evident in the Russian Orthodox Church during the 1960s and 1970s. He takes up one aspect of this question in a recent article which appeared in the samizdat journal Vybor (No. 20). We reproduce this article below in an edited version.

Today people who do not go near a church are fond of saying that there are many young people there: just as often others say that the church is full of old women. This second assertion, although often made by those who are not exactly well disposed towards the church, does come from an actual experience of

being in a church. What, then, is the true picture?

At the beginning of the 1970s one very enterprising Moscow priest introduced a new and unexpected method of preaching: 'question and answer' sessions. Parishioners were invited to write down their questions on a piece of paper beforehand and the priest would give the answers at the end of the Saturday evening service. The questions were varied and the answers courageous and incisive. The priest stood at the altar and said what he thought. Although there was nothing particularly new in what he said, the very fact that a person, and a priest to boot, stood in church and spoke openly about things which people knew, but about which they remained silent, was so unusual that from the second ques-