

Special Edition - G2NG / Republic of GA partnership

PAGE 1 - visit to Republic of GA. by G2 ARNG & ANG, specifically BG. Thomas McCullough.

PAGE 2 - Article on partnership program by BG McCullough.

- New Role for Guard
- Purpose of partnership program, "Bridge to America"

PAGE 3 - • partnership program showing results.
• start of program & current partnerships.

PAGE 4 - The Food of Georgia.

PAGE 5 - Georgia wine & toasting tips.

PAGE 6/7 - 2 page spread of photos & article of on enlisted Georgian soldier.

PAGE 8 - The Art of Diplomacy.

PAGE 9 - Georgians fascinated with U.S. National Guard structure.

PAGE 10 - Healthcare

PAGE 11 - healthcare/smoking

PAGE 12 - information on Republic of Georgia.

GUARDSMAN

Georgia National Guard

Special Edition

Dedicated to serving our Guardmembers, Civilian Employees and their families.

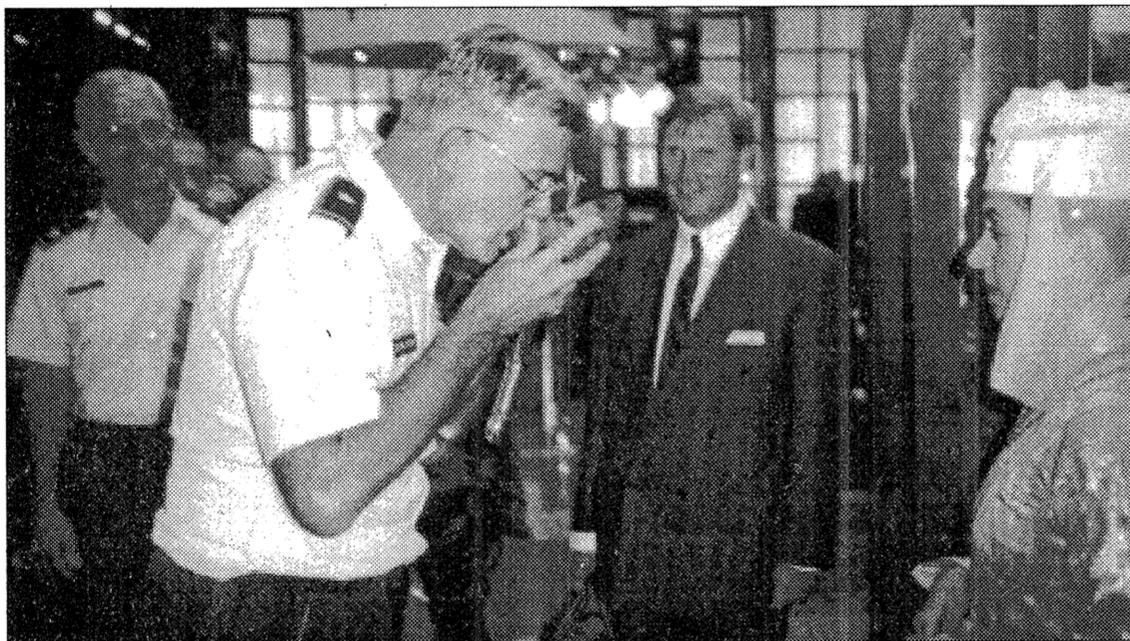
Special Edition

State Of Georgia Reaches Out To Other Georgians

State Partnership Program Introduces National Guard To International Diplomacy

On one side of the table sits the commander of the Georgia Army National Guard. On the other, one of the towering figures of the post World War II era, whose advocacy of glasnost and perestroika helped to bring the Cold War to an end, Eduard A. Shevardnadze, chairman of the Georgian parliament and a former Soviet foreign minister.

For Brig. Gen. Thomas L. McCullough, it is an historic occasion, a field soldier thrust into international diplomacy conversing with



Brig. Gen. Thomas L. McCullough, commander, GARNG, sips wine in a traditional Georgian greeting.

a legendary world leader who is presiding over the delicate rebirth of an independent nation.

For the State of Georgia and its National Guard, it is an opportunity to waltz with history.

The scene is in the Parliament building in downtown Tbilisi, where a delegation of Georgia Army and Air National Guardsmen made their first official visit to establish the National Guard State Partnership Program.

Earlier, a delegation from the Republic of Georgia had visited Atlanta and Fort Stewart. While in Atlanta, Georgian military leaders visited in the homes of state Guard members and observed drilling at armories and in the field.

They observed the 48th Infantry Brigade (Mech) in training at Fort Stewart.

In Douglas County, they observed a mock 911 exercise to demonstrate how city, county and state governments work to handle problems such as medical emergencies.

The talk with Shevardnadze is polite and formal and tentative, with promises of friendship and an expressed desire for warmer relations.

McCullough avoids specific commitments, nor is any proposed. This is, after all, a first meeting, an occasion to get acquainted.



Eduard A. Shevardnadze, now President, receives the delegation.

"It's definitely a new experience for me and I certainly am not a diplomat by any means," said McCullough.

"The only thing I could do is try to be honest, straightforward and do what I could to represent the state.

"I was very careful to make sure that what I said was not a commitment of something that we couldn't do, but showed the interest we have."

That is the intent of the partnership: Not to rush in with promises, but to build long-standing affiliations and people-to-people relationships.

Inside This Special Edition

Partnership Program

..... Pages 2, 3

Food

..... Page 4

Wine

..... Page 5

Military Life

..... Pages 6, 7, 9

Diplomacy

..... Page 8

Healthcare

..... Pages 10, 11

Georgia Overview

..... Page 12

About This Issue

This special issue of *THE GUARDSMAN* deals solely with the National Guard State Partnership Program and our partnership with the former Soviet Republic of Georgia. Because of the content and nature of the issue, it is published in addition to our normal quarterly publication.

Our next regular publication will be the Summer '96 Issue.

Program Reaches Out To Former Adversaries Despite Obstacles

By Brig. Gen. Thomas McCullough
Commander, GARNG

What better way to preserve the peace than to make an ally from a former adversary in a critical region of the world?

That's what the Georgia National Guard is doing in the Republic of Georgia. Through the National Guard State Partnership program, we are working to establish people-to-people relationships between Guard members, their families, the civilian community and the people of the Republic of Georgia. They are very desirous of becoming a democratic nation and to experience the freedoms we enjoy now. I think we can help them.

As we all know, the unique nature of the citizen-soldier makes Guardsmen ideal role models, in both word and deed, for the promotion of democratic ideals and deference to civilian authority. We bring the grass-roots values of Main Street America, where we daily balance our commitments to family and community with our military obligation to protect and defend, and to serve in times of need. In that balancing act, I think we demonstrate the proper role for the military in a democratic society.

The partnership with the Republic of Georgia is a natural one for us. Atlanta has long had a Sister City relationship with Tbilisi, the

Friendship Force has sponsored numerous exchanges and religious and medical groups in the state are actively at work to improve the quality of life in the republic.

Because our first obligation is to train, and because our resources are

scant, the Georgia Guard is considerably limited in the amount and kinds of assistance we can provide. Language, too, is a major barrier.

But despite the obstacles, we can and should begin to reach out to our former



The delegation included civilians, Army, Navy, and Air Guard representatives.

adversaries. Preventing conflict is, after all, much more cost-effective than combat, to say nothing of the lives that are saved.

It's a new experience for all of us. Like most of you, I am a field soldier, but I am enthused about being a part

of this effort to introduce a cost-effective, highly trained, motivated and socially conscious citizen-soldier, the Georgia Guardsman, to the people of another Georgia.

Partnership Program Is 'Bridge to America'

The United States is reaching out to the newly independent nations of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union through the National Guard State Partnership Program.

The intent is to involve Americans in building democratic institutions, developing open-market economies, and supporting humanitarian ideals in countries newly liberated from totalitarianism oppression. The program is a key element in the President's national security strategy.

The National Guard is a compelling model for the military in a democratic society. It is well known for its teamwork during emer-



gencies and disaster response, as well as its effectiveness in mobilizing for Desert Storm. Cash-poor governments see great benefit from a cost-effective, mobilizable force of citizen-soldiers.

National Guard teams in other states have worked with partner nations on hundreds of subjects, from writing constitutions, a Uniform Code of Military Justice, Personnel Management or Recruiting and Retention plans, establishing emergency plans for

disaster response and sharing basic military leadership principles.

An early example of the cooperation: Tennessee and Alabama are paired with Bulgaria and Romania. Neither country had never discussed nor developed a plan for dealing with a nuclear disaster on their common border. Tennessee and Alabama long ago worked out a joint disaster management plan. Working through the partnership, the two states worked with the two nations to develop contingency plans for natural disasters, like earthquakes or floods, and nuclear emergencies.

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A New Role For The Guard

As part of U.S. efforts to assist emerging democracies, National Guardsmen are serving throughout the world to advise and assist nations in their transition to citizen-based military organizations.

The effort emphasizes the proper role of the military in a democracy, military subordination to civilian control, and military support to civil authorities. The National Guard is seen as a compelling role model for a capable yet cost-effective military structure.

Through the State Partnership program, newly independent states are provided with assistance and advice focused on building democratic military institutions with peacetime utility in support of civilian authorities. Assistance in such areas as disaster response, civil emergencies, and humanitarian assistance is stressed.

The reason for involving the National Guard is to encourage long-term institutional and people-to-people linkages and to cement sustained relationships that can extend well beyond military matters.

The program serves national security interests while helping Americans play an important part in building democratic societies abroad.

Partnership Program Already Showing Results

While the state partnership program is just getting started in Georgia, in less than two years, it has already provided tangible benefits elsewhere in support of the President's national security goal of promoting democracy abroad.

National Guardsmen serve on military liaison teams in six of the partner countries, though not yet in the Republic of Georgia.

The Guard has hosted U.S. familiarization tours for more than 200 foreigners from partner countries. The official delegation from the Republic of Georgia visited in August, 1995.

In other states, Guardsmen have provided support in the following areas:

- military support to civil authorities

- nuclear emergency planning
- supply management
- personnel management
- contract law
- military staff organization and management
- professional military education system
- medical assessments

As a result of this activity, significant developments have occurred in the partner countries.

- Among them are:
- military law modeled after U.S. or West established
 - public affairs office organized
 - reorganizing military after Western model
 - developing noncommissioned officer corps
 - expanding contacts with the U.S.



At a tank battalion motor pool in Tbilisi, Georgians discuss maintenance problems.

Partnership Program Started With A Request

The National Guard State Partnership program began in July, 1992, as a request from the President of Lithuania. The request was for assistance in converting a portion of Lithuania's military forces to a reserve force similar to the National Guard.

In December, the chief of the National Guard Bureau led a team on a historic visit to

Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania, the first in 50 years by an official of his rank. That visit led to the development of state partnerships.

The National Guard now has partnerships working or proposed with 21 nations. Work is underway to expand the program worldwide. Countries in Asia, Central and South America, and Africa have also expressed interest.

Current Partnerships

Alabama	Romania
California	Ukraine
Illinois	Poland
Maryland	Estonia
Ohio	Hungary
South Carolina/New Jersey	Albania
Texas/Nebraska	Czech Republic
North Carolina/Florida	Moldova
Missouri	Panama
Vermont/Connecticut	Macedonia
New Jersey/Arkansas/Texas	South Africa
Arizona	Kazakhstan
Colorado	Slovenia
Indiana	Slovakia
Michigan	Latvia
Pennsylvania	Lithuania
Tennessee	Bulgaria
Utah	Belarus
Georgia	Republic of Georgia
New Mexico	Mexico
Louisiana	Uzbekistan

THE FOOD OF GEORGIA

Deliciously Rich, Graciously Served

While unknown to Westerners, Georgian food is delightfully varied and is offered by gracious hosts in bountiful abundance.

Tables sag. Every meal features 16 dishes or more in a never-ending stream from the kitchen. The eye and the palate savor the experience, a cuisine deliciously rich and varied, hinting of Mediterranean, but distinctly local.

Meals are long — an hour or more is not uncommon — and after awhile, serving

Georgians are renowned for roasting pig, chicken and lamb, which are called barbecuing. While often produced for the table's inspection, as a roasted pig was at an outdoor feast in a rural mountain community near the Caucasus, carving is usually done elsewhere.

The meat is then served on small plates, to be garnished with various sauces, such as tkhemali, a tangy, spicy green plum sauce that's not commercially packaged, but instead is

Served at every meal, too, was a long, flat doughy bread called dedaspuri, which according to Miss Arveladze, is made almost entirely by men.

The reason, she explains, is that it is made a tall oven with the fire underneath. To handle the baking, the tender has to extend in an awkward position out over the hot oven.

"It's kind of dangerous, but very interesting to see," she said.

Among the other dishes, the delegation was served:

- **Chadi** — Cornbread, actually, though it is of the consistence of Southern-fried cornbread, or hoecakes. To be eaten with cheese, which was served sliced and is similar in taste to mozzarella, and in bowls with the consistency of cottage cheese.

- **Chakapuli** — A stew of lamb, tkhemali, tarragon, oil and scallions.

- **Tolma** — Spicy meat, similar to sausage, wrapped in grape leaves or cabbage, boiled.

- **Satsivi** — A kind of soup made with chunks of



Tables are colorful, bountiful.

chicken, corn flour, saffron, and ground walnuts, with a light brown granular-gravy appearance.

- **Badrijani** — Baby eggplants stuffed with ground hazelnut paste seasoned with oils and spices.

Most all cooking at home, and all serving, is done by women.

"Georgian men are famous for their cooking," says Miss Arveladze. "They love to cook. At home, though, the duties are separate and men are not usually cooking."

As in America, though, not all women are at home in the kitchen. "I don't cook at all," Miss Arveladze says. "It's dangerous when I cook."



Sixteen dishes or more at every meal.

dishes may be stacked three high as servers offer clean plates and more food.

"The food is always very tasty with lots of spices and lots of nuts that are grown here," says Maka Arveladze of Tbilisi, who works in the political department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

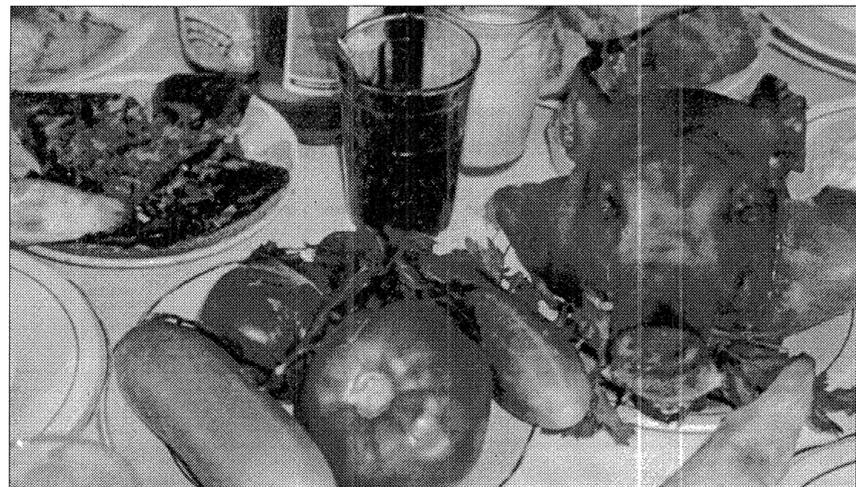
While highly seasoned with spices that include mint, basil, coriander, scallions, dishes are not spicy hot.

The spices, in fact, never overpower the taste of the ingredients, which include hazelnuts, walnuts, eggplant, corn, plums, pomegranates, kidney beans, fish, lamb, pork, chicken and, occasionally, beef.

prepared to individual recipes.

Some dishes show up at every meal. Every cook also has a special recipe for the Georgian national dish, khchapuri, Miss Arveladze says, and every cook serves it. It is a cheese pie made from a layer of dough and goat cheese, topped with a thin egg crust.

Tech Sgt. Bobby L. Jackson of College Park, a member of the Georgia Air National Guard's 116th Medical Squadron, called it "cheese pizza." It's an apt description. Served in this country, it would pass as cheese pizza's twin.



Dishes were creatively prepared, lavishly presented.

Georgia Wine May Be The World's Best; It Is Unforgettable

Americans think vodka. But vodka is not Georgia.

"Our culture is a wine culture," said Col. David Tevzadze, an interpreter with the Republic of Georgia National Guard. "There is a long tradition of making wine and of how to use it."

"If it is not the best in the world, it is one of the best. It is also a matter of national pride."

Georgia, indeed, may be the place where wine-making began. Archeological evidence places the cultivation of grapes and viticulture to 7000-5000 B.C. Over 500 varieties of grapes are grown for more than 60 commercial wines.

The process for making Georgian wines is called kakhethian, says Maka Arveladze, an interpreter for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It comes from Kakheti, one of the most famous wine-producing regions of the country. It uses the whole grape, including the pulp, and not just the juice, she says.

Georgian wine has an alcohol content of 10 - 12 percent and a purity that is said not to produce hangovers.

Good thing, too. Toasting with never-empty glasses of Georgian wine is a ritual that will stagger most Americans.

"In all regions," says Miss Arveladze, "Georgians drink a lot but they don't get drunk often, as foreigners and Europeans do, because they are accustomed to it."

Every meal is presided over by a tamada, or toastmaster, who controls the table and the order of toasts. Nobody drinks until the tamada makes the first toast. "There are special rules of toasting," Miss Arveladze explains.

The first toast offered by the tamada is to peace and friendship. The second is to hostess and to women, to parents and ancestors, to Georgia, to those who have died in battle, to love, to children, to friends gathered, and so on at the discretion of the tamada. The last, Miss



Georgian wines are inexpensive and among the world's best.

Arveladze says, is for continued good relations of new friends and for the tamada."

Guests who wish to make a toast must ask permission from the tamada. It is considered rude to offer a toast without permission. Never, ever, toast with beer. Beer is reserved for toasting enemies.

If a toast is made to you, you should wait to drink until everyone else has finished drinking and then acknowledge the toast with a toast of thanks. Women remain seated during toasts.

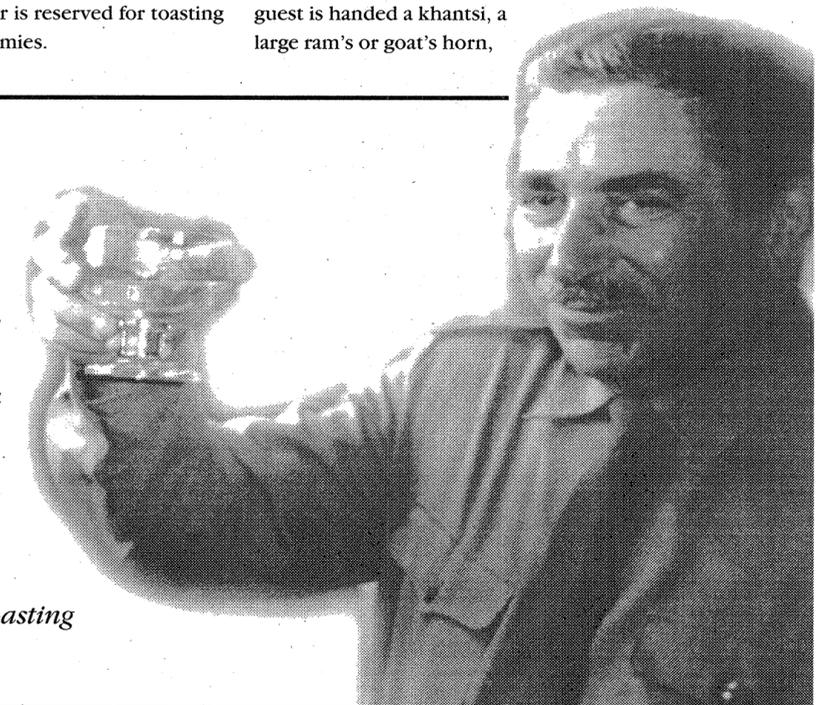
Another ritual that taxes Americans: Occasionally a guest is handed a khantsi, a large ram's or goat's horn,

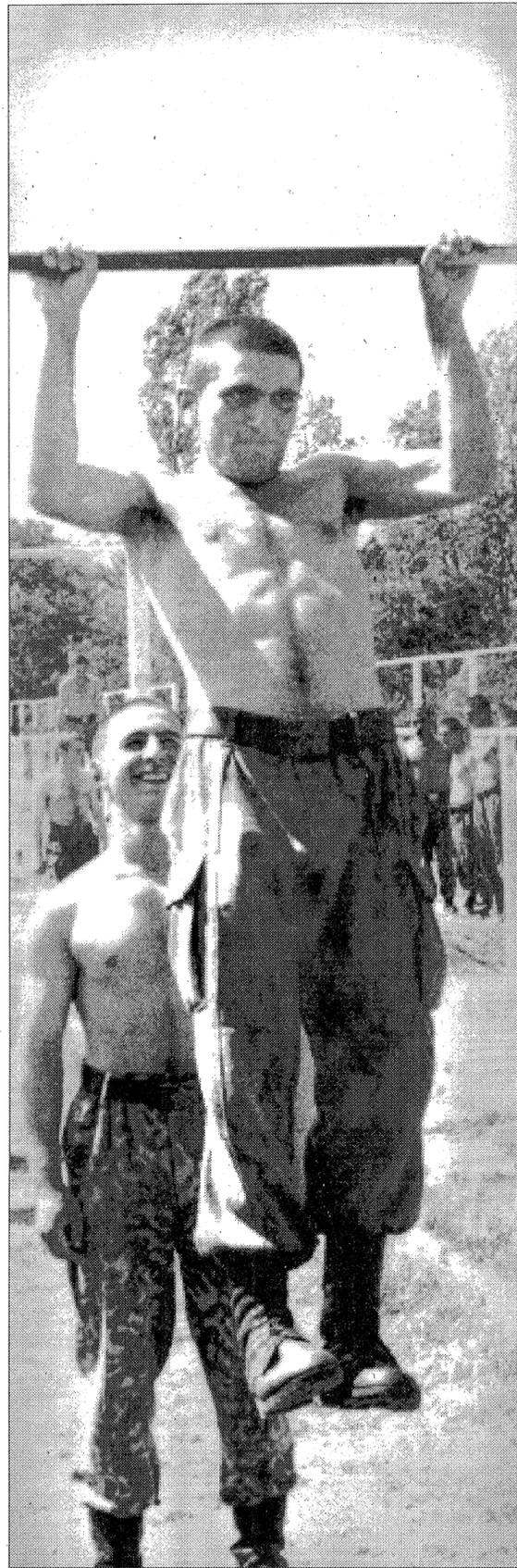
which is filled with wine for an honored guest. Etiquette dictates that it must be drunk in its entirety, though Georgia Guardsmen passed the khantsi around for each to drink his fill.

Toasting Tips

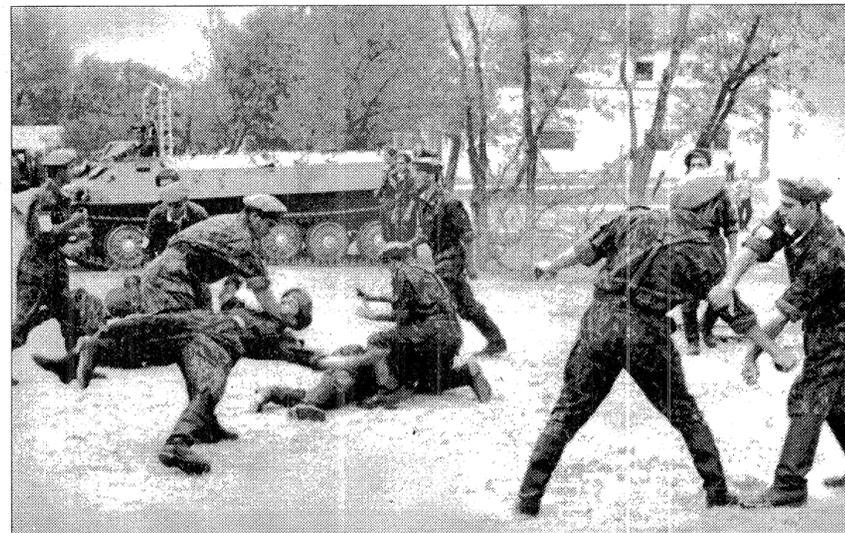
Should you find yourself in a toasting 'tight-spot', here are a few tips to go by.

- Nobody drinks until the first toast is made by the **tamada** or the "toastmaster."
- Guests must ask permission from the tamada before making a toast.
- If you are toasted you should wait to drink until everyone else has finished drinking and then acknowledge with a toast of thanks.
- Women remain seated during toasts.
- Never, ever, toast with beer. It is reserved for toasting enemies.





Soldiers at Rustavi march in review for the delegation.



At Rustavi, a demonstration of Georgian hand-to-hand training.



Gori Training Center is ideal for training tankers.

At Gori Training Center, recruits under go rigorous fitness training.



Infantry soldiers at Rustavi serenade Georgia delegation after training exercise.

Soldier's Life Is Hard But Spirits Are High

A soldier's life in any army is harsh. In the Georgian army, it is rigorous duty performed in spartan facilities under austere conditions:

Shortages mean that soldiers have one sheet and one blanket. It is laundered every two weeks. Laundering takes two days. For those two days, therefore, in winter and summer, soldiers must sleep on bare mattresses.

The army of Georgia is composed largely of conscripts who are drafted for

two years. During those two years, they are paid no salary.

Compensation is food, shelter and about \$3 per month in spending money. At the end of two years, they are released into the reserves.

The only professional soldiers are the officers and a few NCOs.

"Soldiers displayed a remarkable amount of esprit and enthusiasm," said Col. Terry Nesbitt, deputy commander of Macon's 48th Infantry Brigade.

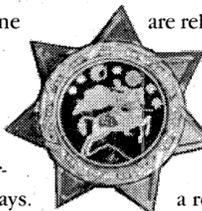
"They're lacking very much in resources, and they

still have a holdover Soviet doctrine in terms of how they train and what they train."

The NCO corps, for example, is thin and soldiers

are trained to respond as specifically directed by officers. If leaders are not present, sustaining an operation becomes a prob-

lem. But, Nesbitt said, basic soldier skills are very similar. Long hours and repetitive drills.



A soldier's lunch at Gori was soup and bread.

THE ART OF DIPLOMACY

Skills Needed On Unexpected Occasions

The greater diplomacy skills, surprisingly, were required not for the exchange with Shevardnadze but while dining in late afternoon in Gori, where the Georgia delegation had visited an important training center.

While the world has long condemned Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin, he is still regarded in Gori, his birthplace, as a local hero, and a great military leader who saved his nation from Nazism.

The hut where he was born as the son of a local shoemaker is preserved in Gori within an elaborate Greco-Italianate pavilion built in 1939 and expanded in 1957. The Stalin museum is the major attraction of Gori, but in deference to the American sensibilities, a visit there was not on the agenda.

Still, however, it remains the custom in Gori to honor Stalin's memory and the mayor, presiding over the feast, proposed a toast.

Toasting etiquette dictates that those who share the occasion agree with the sentiments expressed; otherwise it is a breach of manners.

Rather than embarrass the U.S. team and insult the leaders of Gori, McCullough the diplomat gracefully modified the toast to honor the cooperation of Stalin and Franklin D. Roosevelt and their success in World War II and, as glasses clinked, threw in Winston Churchill for further mollification.

The commander of the Republic of Georgia National Guard, Maj. Gen. Jamal Chumbaridze, politely intervenes to offer explanation. "You may consider Stalin the enemy because he was the

leader of an antidemocratic society," he explains, but the people of Gori regard him as a local hero who was good for their region.

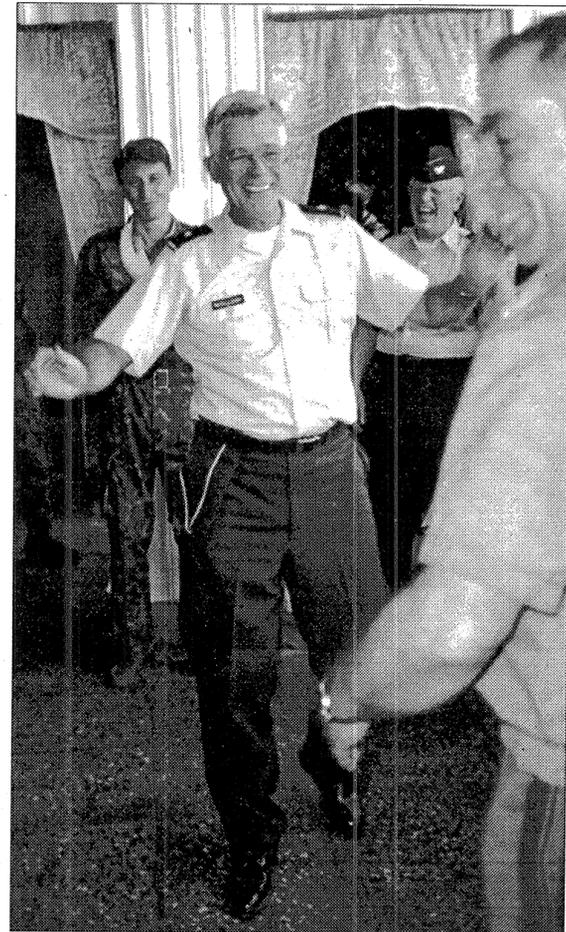
"We respect Stalin for his contributions in World War II and we respect the relationship the people of Gori have with him," McCullough said in a reply toast.

With that, Col. Vance Renfroe, director of International Affairs for the U.S. National Guard Bureau, stepped in with a presentation to the Gori mayor of Air National Guard aircraft prints. The moment - and the sensitive subject of Stalin - passed.

The lunch ended with McCullough, the mayor and other guests dancing to traditional Georgian folk music.

Diplomacy, otherwise, reflected the universal bond among soldiers. For Americans who have spent careers training to fight either Soviets or their military tactics taught to surrogates, the visit to military bases used to train a former enemy was an extraordinarily fascinating and even emotional experience. Most in the American delegation, whether they visited military bases or hospitals, were struck by the historic opportunity afforded them to convert a former enemy into a friend.

"I don't look at what we did as diplomacy," said Col. Terry Nesbitt, chief of staff for the Georgia



McCullough, Chumbaridze in traditional Georgian dance.

Army National Guard. "That is done at a higher level and outside our organization.

"But I do feel good about the possibility of making allies out of former enemies. I've got a three-year-old grandson and I would like to think when he is of the age where he would have to fight the nation's wars, that there would be fewer enemies out there that he has to be concerned about. From that standpoint, I feel good about being a part of it."

Added Maj. Robert Cochran of Woodstock, military support operations officer in the Georgia Army National Guard:

"The more stable and the more democratic they are,

the less the chance that we are going to have to go to war and fight them."

Lt. Col. William Dailey of Savannah, base dental surgeon at the 165th MDS in Savannah, and a member of the health care assessment team, thinks the program that brought the Georgians together, the National Guard State Partnership program, is "fantastic."

He explains: "We do a lot to keep us ready for war; it's nice to do something to make us ready for peace. It gives everybody involved a tremendous sense of pride."

Georgians Express Fascination With Guard Structure

The defense establishment of the Republic of Georgia expressed considerable fascination with the command and organizational structure of the U.S. National Guard, asked for follow-up information, and declared an interest in copying it.

"They were very interested in civilian control of the military, how the military establishment fits within the overall structure of government, and the constitutional provisions we have for the National Guard," McCullough says.

"I think it's new to them, but it is something they seem to find intriguing," he continues. "They were very interested in anything that deals with democracy and democratization of their system."

The republic had a separate "National Guard" until recently, when the

an organ of national pride that every schoolboy would want to join.

The republic has a small air force, and border guards, as well. The distinction between National Guard and active military soldiers is unclear and may remain so until the U.S. Georgia National Guard pitches in to help them understand how democratic, civilian-controlled military functions.

During Georgia's brief independence, the military has been severely tested. After declaring independence on April 9, 1991, Georgian and Russian troops were involved in skirmishes for control of military facilities. At the Gori Training Center, for example, a T-72 tank on a concrete pedestal was erected as a tribute to 34 Georgians who were killed fighting for control of the facility.



McCullough and guests stand as troops pass in review.

Konstantine Gamsakhurdia, and the country's first president.

The bloodiest fighting, however, has occurred in the break-away provinces of South Ossetia in the Caucasus Mountain region and Abkhazia, which is strategically located on the Black Sea in the northwest-

Nations-monitored cease-fire is in place.

Georgian soldiers bear the scars. At a battalion headquarters in Gori, General Chumbaridze asks a thin, distinguished looking soldier with stoic eyes, salt-and-pepper hair and full, black mustache to open his jacket. His chest and left shoulder region is riddled with shrapnel wounds.

The general hugs him, kisses him on the cheek and proclaims his valor. His battalion, the general explains, suffered horrible casualties. "This brave soldier was the only officer who survived from his battalion," said the general. "He was severely wounded when a rocket-grenade struck his tank."

Later, with the mountain battalion in the rural town of Sachkhere, the visiting delegation is introduced to a company of bright, fresh-faced 17 and 18-year-olds in clean, fresh uniforms. They had been specifically selected from rural, mountainous towns in the vicinity for the elite "mountain battalion."

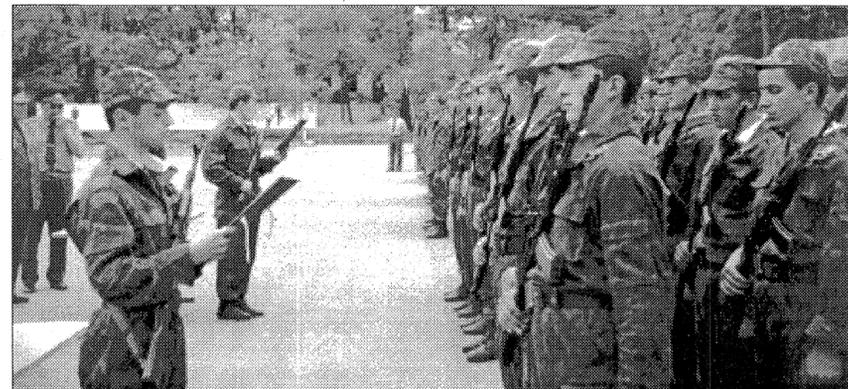
They are introduced, too, to two veterans in civilian

clothes, one on crutches with a right pants-leg neatly folded and tucked into his belt, the other with deep, wicked scars the length of his right arm.

"They have a great need for everything from artificial limbs to rehabilitation," says McCullough. "They do not have the facilities or the medical services to work with those people and they have no income for them."

Earlier, in briefings at National Guard headquarters in Tbilisi, generals explained that 553 families of soldiers killed in combat collect no government pensions. Instead, they are supported by contributions from the officers and men of the Guard who contribute 20 percent of their pay to the families of fallen comrades.

A 54-unit apartment building is under construction to begin to provide housing for them, but \$500,000 is needed to complete it - money the National Guard does not have.



At Tbilisi, new recruits are inducted into the battalion.

Minister of Defense, General Mardiko Nadibaidze, combined the Guard and the Army, the Guard becoming the 1st Regiment.

Nadibaidze told Gen. John M. Shalikashvili, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and an ethnic Georgian, that the new Guard would be the heart and soul of the rebuilt Army of the Republic,

"We asked them to leave and they wouldn't," says the base commander.

Scars and hard memories are part of daily life in the Republic. The street fighting that occurred in Tbilisi in January 1992 led to the overthrow of former Georgian president Zviad Gamsakhurdia, son of the famous Georgian novelist,

ern part of the Republic.

In August of 1992, 2000 soldiers were killed and hundreds wounded when 5,000 Georgian National Guard troops entered Abkhazia, which has attempted repeatedly to separate from the Republic.

Fighting continued to erupt over the next two years and, at present, a United

People Gracious For Guardmembers' Help

The stateside delegation unanimously agreed that despite the difficulties being experienced by Georgians and the shortages, the people expressed a warmth that was undeniably genuine.

"The people were very friendly and cooperative," said Tech Sgt. David W. Hines of Lusby, Md., an optometry technician assigned to the 113th Medical Squadron at Andrews Air Force Base.

In return for glasses, "patients tried to give us things like melons or fruits and vegetables.

"If you could describe it, it would be 'Southern hospitality.' It couldn't get any warmer. They fed us well and made toasts to us and we took our pictures together. It wasn't like they were trying to impress us or because they felt like they had to do it. I think they were doing it because of what we were doing there."

The National Guard's international affairs specialist, Colonel Renfro, thought the visit had well achieved its objectives of having decision-makers from the two Georgias "meet and develop a personal relationship and trust." He continued:

"We are offering the hand of friendship. We don't have any agenda for change to force on them. The men and women of the Republic of Georgia have won their freedom. The men and women of the State of Georgia should now help nurture it, strengthen it and protect it during this fragile infancy."

A Health Care System In Need

Partly as a result of conflict, but mostly because of the massive reorientation of the government and the economy, health care - the probable area of future Georgia-to-Georgia cooperation - is in desperate straits, not only for wounded veterans but for the entire civilian community as well.

"They need everything," said Col. Sidney J. Morgan of Sylvania, a physician who commands the Georgia Air National Guard's 165th MDS in Savannah.

"Generally, the medical facilities are in much disrepair and basic diagnostic and treatment equipment is antiquated, broken or not available. Basic supplies are extremely limited."

"However," he said, "there is an overabundance of well-trained physicians and a generous accompaniment of hospital staff support."

He has offered some specific suggestions for areas where Georgians could help without substantial expenditures of money, which is generally agreed will be hard to come by.

"In the political sense," Colonel Renfro says of the visit, "we had the objective of assessing and helping them prioritize their needs. We knew from experience in other former Soviet republics that medical requests would be top priority. Georgia has gone through a revolution and a civil war. A school child spending half a day here could figure out what they need: Everything."

The Georgia State National Guard's ability to provide direct assistance is considerably limited. Nesbitt expects the Georgia

National Guard could be helpful in coordinating private, individual and nonprofit assistance and in providing the airlift to deliver it to the Republic.

Donations are needed, from books to clothing to food and friends. On the initial trip to Tbilisi, the Georgia Guard delivered a million dollars worth of medical supplies collected by the Baptist World Alliance from manufacturers and other donors.

In addition, two optical teams assembled by National Guard Bureau, and consisting of active-duty Navy personnel as well as Guardsmen, delivered 7,500 pairs of eyeglasses collected nationwide by Lions Clubs. Nearly 3,000 men, women and children had corrected

Reserve Base, agreed.

"We got a lot accomplished from the standpoint of actually dispensing spectacles. We are talking about frames that in some cases go back to the 1950s, cat-eyes. I've seen pictures of my mother wearing them back then. But you'd think we had money we were trying to give away."

The eyeglasses, explains Lt. Col. James R. Mason, a Gastonia, N.C., optometrist who serves in the North Carolina Air National Guard's 145th Medical Squadron, are collected by Lions Clubs through doctors' offices around the country.

"We have 20,000 pair in inventory in Chicago," he says. Air Guard technicians from the 126th Medical Squadron in Chicago and

"I had tears in my eyes because of the needs I saw that were so great."

Capt. Andre Long, 159th Medical Squadron, Louisiana Air National Guard

vision when the "Project Cyclops" team departed.

"It was a wonderful experience," said Capt. Andre Long, an Alexandria, La., optometrist who serves in the 159th Medical Squadron of the Louisiana Air National Guard in New Orleans.

"The hotel we stayed in was the worst I have ever seen, but even if I had to stay in that same hotel again, I would go back. I had tears in my eyes because of the needs I saw that were so great. I would do it again in a heartbeat."

Tech Sgt. Bobby L. Jackson of College Park, Ga., an optometrist assistant assigned to the 116th Medical Squadron at Dobbins Air

Navy personnel from the Great Lakes Naval Center determine the prescriptions with a lensometer. Then they are boxed and catalogued.

"What we did here was like a drop in the bucket," says Lt. Col. Craig M. McCormick, an optometrist in Albert Lea, Minn., who is assigned to the 114th Medical Squadron of the South Dakota Air National Guard in Sioux Falls.

He, too, noted the severe shortage of up-to-date equipment. "I examined a patient and needed a headset," he recalls.

"The doctor told me they had one available, but that it was being used in surgery right then."

Medical Care System In Transition Georgians Look To American Model

By Col. Sidney J. Morgan
Cmdr, 165th MDS GANG

Unlike our medical system in the United States, medical care in Tbilisi is provided by numerous specialized hospitals. Dental care is provided in polyclinics, which are outpatient facilities, as was most care for pediatrics and ob/gyn.

In a 1979 travel guide, Tbilisi was reported as having "about 60 hospitals, over 155 dispensaries and clinics, some 60 consultation centers for women and children, with 101 doctors and 143 qualified medical staff per 10,000 people."

This is an extremely high ratio for medical care.

Prior to 1990, medical care was adequately provided in a sophisticated, though not efficient, manner. Medical care was free to all and was totally supported by the USSR. Since the declaration of independence, due to inadequate funds, medical care has markedly diminished.

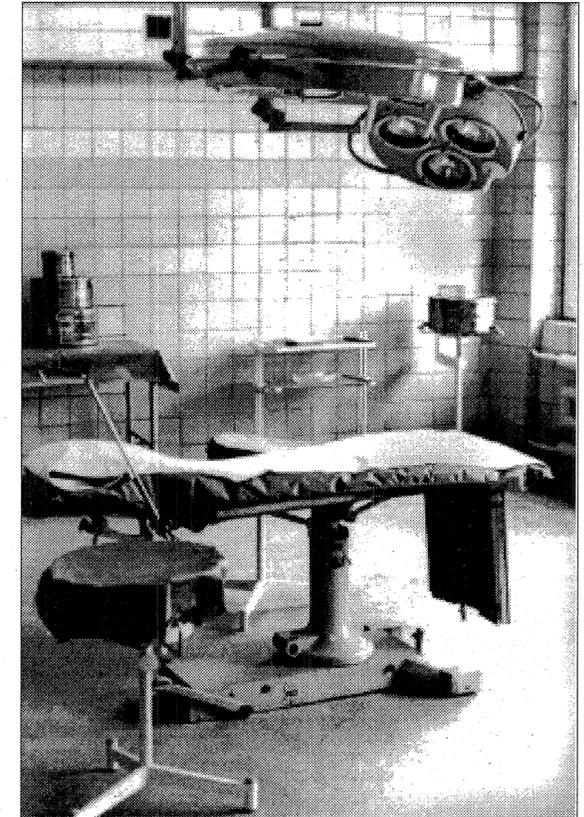
Hospitals have fallen rapidly into significant disrepair.

One example is the 1200-bed Republic Hospital, which prior to 1990 received over a million dollars per year for facility maintenance. Since then, nothing. And, the hospital has over 700 impoverished refugees living in it.

A large contingency of well-trained health profes-

sionals exist in the Tbilisi area. Many contribute from their own salaries to keep hospitals functioning. This generosity is poignant considering that physicians' salaries from the government now range from an equivalent of about \$100 per month to \$300 for a very active surgeon.

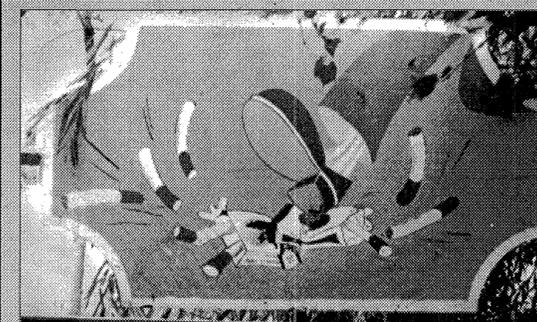
At the time of our visit, hospitals were in an early transition to a fee for service concept and were quite interested in modeling their health care system after that of the United States. There is no third-party payment system available. The transition is expected to be slow and difficult.



An operating room at a soldiers' hospital in Tbilisi.



Eyeglasses were much in demand.



In Any Language: NO SMOKING!

Even during the Cold War, the U.S. surgeon general and his Soviet counterpart were in agreement: Smoking is harmful to your health.

The visitor to the Republic of Georgia quickly notices, however, that the message didn't take.

"Somebody of high rank was undoubtedly aware that smoking is not good for you, but nobody paid attention," Col. Gustavo A. Escalera, the Georgia Army National Guard's state surgeon.

Billboards and posters urging Georgians to stop smoking spoke a universal language.

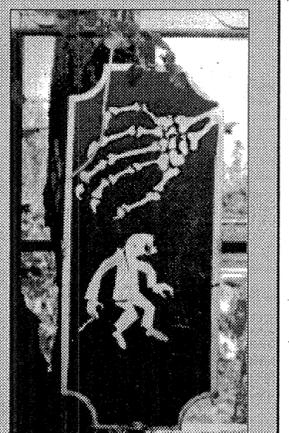
"You didn't have to be able to read Russian or Georgian to know the message they were trying to convey



Warnings on a military base near Rustavi. (All photos)

was that smoking will kill you," Dr. Escalera said after visiting a battalion-sized training base.

"Everybody there smokes all the time," he said. "All of the doctors I met there smoke. Intellectually, they seemed to understand that the habit is bad for the, but they smoke anyway. It is pervasive there as smoking was here in the 40s and 50s."



GEORGIA AT A GLANCE A New Republic Building A Nation

Historical and Geographical Provinces of
GEORGIA



The Country

The Republic of Georgia is a brand new country just emerging from the col-



Warm and friendly people.

lapsed Soviet Empire and fully preoccupied with nation-building. Located in Southwestern Asia, bordering the Black Sea, between Turkey and Russia, it is slightly larger than South Carolina. It's an ancient land, rich in history, and by legend is the site of Colchis, where Jason found the Golden Fleece.

The People

Population is 5.6 million, 70.1 percent Georgian, 8.1 percent Armenian, 6.3 percent Russian, 5.7 percent Azeri, 3 percent Ossetian, 1.8 percent Abkh, and 5 percent other. Over 80 nationalities live in Georgia. Life expectancy is 72.8 years.

The Language

71 percent Georgian, the official language, 9 percent Russian, 7 percent Armenian, 6 percent Azeri, and 7 percent other.

The Religion

65 percent Georgian Orthodox, 10 percent Russian Orthodox, 11 percent Muslim, 8 percent Armenian Orthodox, and 6 percent other.

The Climate

Warm and pleasant, Mediterranean-like on the Black Sea coast. In Tbilisi, the capital city, winter temperatures range from 16-32 in January, while summer temperatures range from 64-

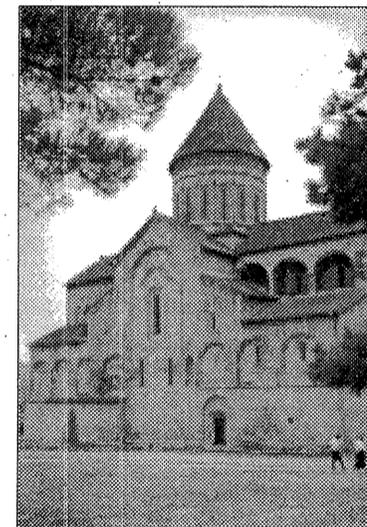
96 in July. Tbilisi gets little rain from May through September. Tbilisi has hot summers and chilly, damp winters without much spring or fall in between.

The Economy

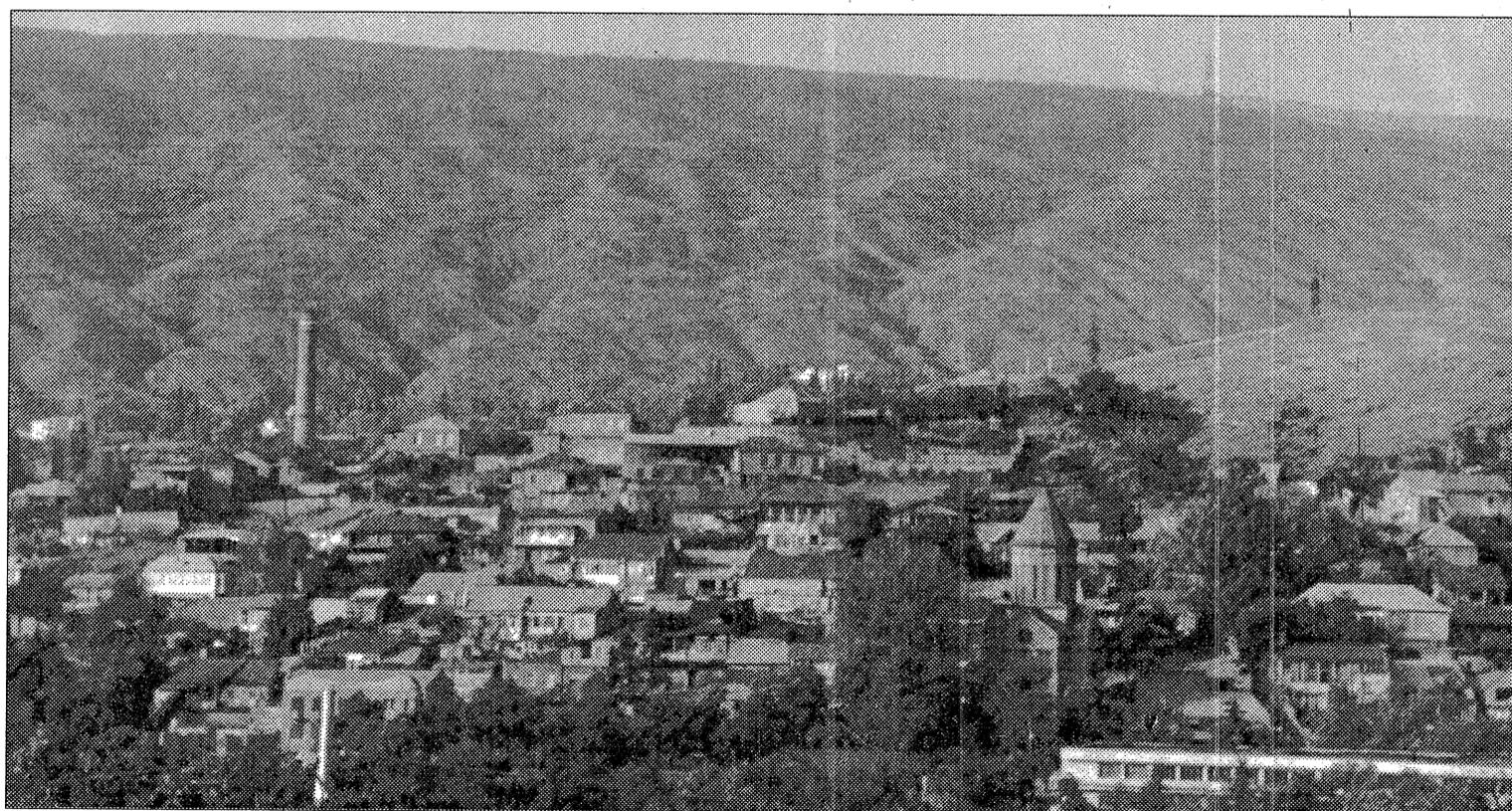
Black sea tourism, cultivation of citrus fruits, grapes and tea, mining of manganese and copper. The industrial sector is small, producing wine, metals, machinery, chemicals and textiles. Hydropower is the

only domestic energy source and the bulk of energy needs, including natural gas and coal, must be imported.

Throughout 1993, with the collapse of the Soviet economy and conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, industry functioned at 20 percent of capacity. Official unemployment is less than five percent, but by some estimates is as much as 65 percent.



Church being restored.



A view of Tbilisi from the hotel housing the State of Georgia delegation.