Georgian Rustavi2 TV Journalist Suffers NED-Inspired Diarrhea of the Mouth

They will never cease to amaze me, the new depths, even as reported by the BBC ... the so-called Georgian media can reach when spurring out carefully scripted hate speech for political ends. Take the case of the Rustavi2 TV station, on a programme aired nationally in Georgia, PS, PostScript, on Sunday July 7th.

This highly rated TV station was once hailed as the voice of freedom, moderation and high journalistic standards, at least according to American media sites and the US State Department, but times do change, and so do not-so-hidden-agendas.

This time the target was Vladimir Putin and his pedigree, and the attack included all kinds of descriptive expletives for his mother and parents graves. They were so bad even a seedy Georgian taxi driver would blush.

There was a counter protest against this behaviour, as likely anticipated by the channel and the scriptwriters of this latest media provocation. But this only convinced Georgians that the Russians were trying to take over the streets, as the allegedly pro-EU United National Movement and its pseudo splinter parties have been doing for the past two weeks.

Little Mind Trying to Express Itself

Georgi Gabunia, who is claimed to be a journalist, is apparently the mouthpiece here, commenting on this and other events: the anti-government protests (really a failed coup) and the repeated efforts to hold Gay Pride rallies, which are all coming together as a perfect storm. What few are taking notice of is that these actions are not homegrown, and are carefully designed to divert public attention from larger and more pressing issues—like the economy and debt (banking) crisis in Georgia, notwithstanding many social problems.
As was to be expected, Russia took exception to the expletive-laden personal attack on Vladimir Putin and the Russian Federation. Russian MPs have already threatened to further cut trade amid a deepening diplomatic row between the two neighbouring countries.

Relations having soured last month after a visit by a Russian Orthodox MP to Georgia’s parliament set off angry protests, and this TV stunt would not have been an accident in these circumstances. Many, including myself, considered the reaction as an ambush.

Gabunia also referred to Russian people as “slaves” in his rant, and told them to get out of Georgia. This is in the wake of Georgian government statements that Russians can feel safe here and are welcomed as guests. The remarks prompted complaints the next day from the Kremlin and the Russian foreign ministry, which portrayed Gabunia as a radical and uneducated, and said the Georgian government, had not done enough to control anti-Russian sentiment.

“We believe they are totally unacceptable and deserve condemnation,” said the Kremlin press spokesman, Dmitry Peskov, when asked about the remarks. They were the “consequences of the reluctance or unpreparedness of the authorities to keep extremists at bay right from the beginning”.

Russia’s foreign ministry echoed Peskov’s comments, calling the television monologue a “provocation by radical Georgian forces designed to undermine Russian-Georgian relations”.

“The current outrageous incident is a clear example of where rabid anti-Russian sentiment leads,” the Foreign Ministry said in a statement. The Georgian president, Salome Zurabishvili, also urged restraint, condemning “hate speech” in a Facebook post.

Who stands behind such stunts?

Someone paid money and Gabunia said what they wanted him to say.

As one teacher at a Georgian university wrote to me, “they must have given him a lot of money to do so. The head of Rustavi 2 put on a special programme a few minutes later, after the verbal abuse, and apologised for his co-worker. But I think this was also a performance.”

Her student shared something similar … “The stupid puppet did it for $$, and now ordinary people will suffer. Even in my job I can't do anything without confirmation from one of the bosses-- it is impossible to act in such a way on a TV channel.”

As reported in several media outlets, the Georgian Foreign Ministry also condemned the journalist. “[The comments made on air on “Rustavi 2”] have nothing to do with freedom of speech and [are] a provocation clearly aimed at complicating an already difficult situation in Russian-Georgian relations.”

Russians Did It!

Some are nevertheless quick to lay the blame at the Russians for all that is transpiring. As one graduate student from Caucasus University, which just happens to be initially funded by the US State Department, and currently serves as command center for the United National Party, UNM shared:

“Gabunia’s filthy speech was a planned by Saakashvili and his criminal group here and in Ukraine. I consider them all to be agents of Russia: Gvaramia, Gabunia, Saakashvili, Bokeria, Ugulava… All of them work for the Russians. These pseudo Orthodox groups are also agents of Russian influence too.

“What a horrible picture we see in this country! I think the Russian hybrid war specialists will get a high salary for these 2 months. They have done the job perfectly … they have managed to divide Georgian society.”

Timing is Paramount

Considering the recent efforts to storm and occupy the Georgian Parliament, what is now happening is more than simple a sideshow, a one-off incident.

President of Georgia Salome Zurabishvili said that such behaviour runs counter to Georgian traditions. Prime Minister of Georgia Mamuka Bakhtadze also criticized the TV presenter.
But this is not the first such incident associated with Rustavi2, and on earlier occasions, as reported by Georgian Public TV, the same journalist was caught making anti-Christian remarks.

Members of the Georgian March Movement held a protest at the Rustavi 2 building back in March 2018. They slammed the anti-Christian statements made by the same journalist and demanded that Giorgi Gabunia apologise.

Then Niels Scott, the UNDP Resident Representative in Georgia, commented: “We may agree or disagree with what the journalist said, but violence is unacceptable”. He expressed the hope that the government will duly respond to the incident and prevent similar ones occurring in the future.

The Future is Now!

Scott acknowledges that freedom of speech must be protected, and the media should have internal regulation which will determine what is ethical and what is not. Resolution of this issue by violence is absolutely unacceptable.

But it is obvious that all these events are part of a larger pattern and zero sum game. Some of the journalists at Rustavi2 have been trained under the guise of various American media development projects, especially those funded by NED, and at least one did an internship with the US based National Security News Agency.

It is only necessary to connect the dots and all will be clear, especially in the light of US and NATO plans for Ukraine and Iran. There is a familiar footprint - the CIA/NED and American dollars.

None of what is happening in Georgia, and especially how it is reported, is about domestic issues and people taking exception to a government that has not delivered on its promises. It is externally funded, and focused on dividing the people and weakening the government in support of outside interests. Hopefully, and the sooner the better, the Georgian people will wake up and take notice of how they are being manipulated.

One only needs to look back at who gave us the Rose Revolution in 2003 or Ukraine’s Maiden Square in 2014. It would come as no surprise to Georgian watchers if they see Victoria Nurland passing out cookies and sandwiches in the centre of Tbilisi in the not-too-distant future, and we know what comes next - blood.

The problem is that you cannot ask a mob to be clever. But at the same time one needs to keep in mind that a mob is ruled by clever people, who need stupid people to follow and do the wicked things.

What does Georgia gain by all of this, protests, Rustavi2 and name calling? It is like 2008, when John McCain and some other people wanted to start a war in Georgia and the region. We already know the players and their backers.

My theory is that America needs to destroy all relations between Georgia and Russia so that it can start a war with Iran. Unfortunately Georgia will be destroyed in that process, if not directly then by refugee flows.

This is why some powers want to destroy the current government and bring back the crooks from before. Then they can do what they want, and it won’t matter how many Georgians and other innocents die in the process. This is not the end of this never ending circus, and perhaps the round will involve blood, Georgian-on-Georgian, so to raise the stakes.

And we will know who really to blame!

Henry Kamens, columnist, expert on Central Asia and Caucasus, exclusively for the online magazine “New Eastern Outlook”.