Two wrongs don’t make a right. For the past ten years, the West has deluded itself that two wrongs would someday make a right. The West should have known, by reference to its own values – that this would never happen. But so deep was its involvement in the first wrong, anything which buried its memory was considered acceptable – regardless of the consequences for the Georgian people.

The October 2012 Parliamentary Elections, and the Presidential Elections of 27 October of this year, have removed the Rose Revolutionaries from power, and they have accepted the results, despite all their vote rigging to prevent this eventuality in years gone by. The much-hated regime of Mikheil Saakashvili, which forfeited its once-vast public support by doing all the things it vowed it would consign to history, has been changed by the will of the people. This ostensibly peaceful transfer of power, the first in Georgia’s post-Soviet history, has been hailed by the West as a step forward. One wonders, therefore, why both the Saakashvili and previous Shevardnadze regimes, which gained and maintained power by undemocratic means, were so strongly supported by the same West until the bitter end. Or is the reason staring us in the face?

So far the new government is making all the right noises, and the change of governmental practice it has ushered in has indeed demonstrated to Georgians that their ideals of democracy, human rights and rule of law are both real and achievable, and that the people of Georgia can and will introduce these values to their political system, and defend them, if allowed to do so. But unfortunately the jury is still out on what will happen in the longer term. Will Georgia bring any of its long list of criminals in power to justice?

**Least unacceptable puppet**

Will democracy, rather than the installation of the least unacceptable puppet and their maintenance at all costs, become the norm? Or will the longstanding demands of Georgians of all political colours be once again suppressed, for fear of exposing who did business with the old regimes, sold the weapons, laundered the blood proceeds and defined what the real business was?

German, British and Israeli arms manufacturers, such as the Chemring Group, which makes fuses for cluster bombs packaged as humanitarian de-mining devices, which were used on civilian populations, might like to answer that question. So might the money launderers, the shell companies, the offshore investment funds and casinos. So might BP, which corrupted Gia Chanturia, the former director of the Georgian International Oil Company, whose subsequent role in the BTC pipeline project and cosy black business connections with Ilham Alivev are well known to insiders.

Few really want to know about all the networks of patronage and scams. Regardless of which government is in power, nothing has ever been done about the likes of US-born David Philips, all the American and British advisors in the Chancellery and other governmental structures or USAID and its NGO network, for instance organisations such as Ag-Vantage and ACDI/VOCA, whose projects on paper bear no relation to their real work in Georgia – which is smuggling weapons and drugs.
The Georgian people were surprised when, in September and October 2012, then leader of the opposition Ivanishvili asked the people not to come out in mass protest. By doing this he confirmed Saakashvili, and subsequently himself, as a democratic and legitimate ruler in the eyes of the West – one who could be dealt with through the political system, not the mob action he himself had used to gain and maintain power for so long. Again, he was proved right – the system was allowed to work this time.

Why did all these Westerners who continued to express their admiration for Saakashvili, the “Great European” with the opposite of European values, while the people thrust his crimes in their faces want him out now? Or why did they want Ivanishvili in, rather than any of the vast array of opposition leaders who had tried and failed before?

Misha has now finished his presidential term without facing justice. If he continues to be not even questioned about crimes committed on his watch, many of which can only be traced to him and him alone, questions will remain.

There are clearly plenty of Western figures who don’t want certain things being heard. Two political giants, NATO’s Anders Fogh Rasmussen and the US State Department’s Phillip Gordon, continued to express their support for Mikheil Saakashvili to the bitter end, even during the election campaigns, despite this action being forbidden as ‘interference in the electoral process’ in their countries of origin. Even after the videos of a broomstick being shoved up the rectum of some poor detainee in a Georgian prison were shown to the world, in the run up to Georgian Parliamentary elections, Western politicians who deride such conduct in ‘enemy countries’ continued to support the United National Movement, in charge of the prisons and prison officers involved.

Secret torture chambers

Even when secret torture chambers were revealed on Georgia’s Channel 9 TV, and even UNM ammunition dumps in the Samegrelo region of Western Georgia, near the administrative border with the breakaway region of Abkhazia, this did not defray Western support for this regime. Former British Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin once stated that he would rather swim with the tide than sink to the bottom with his principles around his neck. It seems that, for the sake of their beloved Misha, Western figures are perfectly happy to risk sinking to the bottom with their lack of principle round theirs – perhaps confident that figures bigger than they will always find a way to raise them to the surface, at least incognito.

Of course, when the West wants to attack someone it does not need evidence (45 minute claim in Iraq, anyone?) but when its friends are attacked it demands it. That is why American journalist Jeffrey Silverman took a TV crew with him to record what he found in Ganmukhuri, in Western Georgia. Anchor Levan Chkhaidze presented this report live back in September. He said:

“The video which we will present to you was shot in Samegrelo, 35 km from Zugdidi in the forest of Ganmukhuri. According to media reports, this being the first on TV, this is a stash where people were held and tortured. Since this place was first investigated the wider media has circulated the story. This concealed torture bunker was constructed in 2009, and it is impossible that they (those working in the local administration) did not know about such a place. We want to remind the public that from November 2006 to July 2012, head of the regional police (of Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti) Tengiz Gunava was working in this region.

“I have been informed that this place has been in existence for four years. It has electricity, ventilation and a toilet. It is possible that people can be kept here for various purposes: rape, torture and the application of pressure. It is a place where people can be detained for several days before being transferred to other places. It would not be possible to create such facilities in such remote places without permission from the upper echelons of government.

“Such places were set up to maintain total control over the region. The main mechanism for this control was terror
and frightening the local population. All this was so well-organized that inevitably the heads of the regional government which were in power back then will have been involved. I think all this was ordered by the higher authorities; it denotes that there were no human rights in Samegrelo, and that the authorities who were in power back then were criminals. Some of those who were senior figures in the local government at that time are still in power”.

According to Silverman, the style of the building suggests it was constructed by US defence contractor Cubic – he’s an Army veteran, he knows these people and how they operate in this part of the world only too well.

**Detached from reality**

Is Mr. Rasmussen unaware of such things? If so, how can a NATO Secretary General be so detached from the reality of life and the political scene in Georgia? I’m sure the Americans also know that the really big fish are yet to be fried and most likely will never be cooked to the end. Evidence? The Americans long denied that the bio weapons lab near Tbilisi Airport existed. They have since admitted that they founded it, ran it and funded it, but not what actually went on within its walls. The chemical and biological weapons being used in Syria and other trouble spots are coming from somewhere. The Tbilisi lab is not the only one - even the U.S. Defense Department concedes there are a string of them. But they are all close to the Middle East, and Tbilisi International Airport lies at the bottom of George W. Bush Avenue.

When the West openly supports Saakashvili, but brings in another favoured son to displace him, does it not follow that it wants the man out of the way, but his deeds, the reasons the West supports him, to remain?

Should Saakashvili try to return in 2014, he will not be able to be President again because the Constitution forbids it, but he can be Prime Minister as long as he likes. Then the opportunity to investigate his previous regime will be gone - and the forces that maintained it, in defiance of what they are supposed to be in Georgia to do, will never be prosecuted under their own laws for what they did to the people who still see them as their friends.

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