

indicate that we must make this transformation. When that question is resolved, those of us in the defense industry are confident that we are prepared to do our part in making that vision a reality.

SEMINAR ON THE GEORGIA REPUBLIC

Mr. BROWNSBACK. Mr. President, in May 2000, a delegation from Georgia attended a five-day seminar in western Sicily to help further a culture of lawfulness in Georgia. The delegation consisted of government officials as well as senior educators, representatives from the Orthodox Church, and the media. The program was organized by two non-governmental organizations—the National Strategy Information Center in Washington, D.C. and the Sicilian Renaissance Institute in Palermo, Sicily—with financial assistance from the City of Palermo and the U.S. Department of State. The seminar featured presentations on key aspects of the Sicilian Renaissance as well as one-on-one meetings between Georgians and their Sicilian counterparts to discuss specific programs that could be implemented in Georgia. The focus was on how in recent decades cultural change in Palermo and other parts of Sicily helped reduce crime and corruption, the lessons from the Sicilian experience that may have applicability to Georgia, and how the Sicilian experience can be modified or replicated in Georgia. The consensus of the Georgian delegation was that the achievements of the Sicilians were remarkable and that many of the practices that have been effective in Sicily are applicable to the prevention of crime and corruption in Georgia. The delegation is now developing culture of lawfulness programs with specific products, and methods of evaluation. Additional sectors of society such as the police, social workers, NGO's will become involved as progress is made.

Mr. President, this program is one that attempts to go to the root of one of the major problems left over from decades of communist rule: corruption. The National Strategy Information Center should be commended and encouraged in these types of programs. This is exactly the kind of program we should be encouraging not just in Georgia but in the other Silk Road countries as well.

I request unanimous consent that the following article from the *Giornale di*

Sicilia (Palermo) be printed in the RECORD with my remarks. It is an interview with Vakhtang Sartania, Rector of the Pedagogical University of Tbilisi, Georgia, and head of the delegation visiting Sicily, about the visit to Sicily.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the *Giornale di Sicilia* (Palermo), June 5, 2000.]

TBILISI. IN PALERMO FOR LESSONS OF LAWFULNESS

(By Franco Di Parenti)

Palermo. "Being in Sicily is like being at home. There are lots of similarities between this country and Georgia: here, too, people are straightforward, well-disposed towards others and proud of their culture; even nature is very similar." Vakhtang Sartania is about to leave Palermo and, together with some souvenirs, he is bringing back in this suitcase the image of a city that he found different from the usual cliche. And he tells it with great enthusiasm. Sartania is the Rector of the Pedagogical University of Tbilisi, the capital (twinned with Palermo) of the former Soviet State of Georgia; he led a delegation, invited by the Sicilian Renaissance Institute and the City of Palermo, that had meetings at all levels for five days in order to understand what "Palermo's spring" is about, what the "culture of lawfulness" of which Leoluca Orlando speaks so much consists of, and how it happened that in the city of the mafioso terror there are today only a few murders. It was not be change that the Georgian delegation included mostly educators, plus an orthodox priest from the Academy of Clergy, and only one specialist in national security.

"Perhaps," Sartania says "the image which most impressed me was that of a schoolboy, Umberto, who during our visit came up to Mayor Orlando and patted him on the arm, showing how happy he was to meet him."

It can be read as a sign of a new relationship between citizens and institutions * * *

"It surely can. You see, I come from a country that has experienced war and has only recently regained freedom. But, just like Sicily, Georgia too has given a remarkable contribution to the world culture. That's why I was very pleased to see Palermo so lively from the civil point of view, and I think that credit for this must be given to the Church and Mayor Orlando, who can be considered the symbol of such transformation."

Did Palermo appear to you different from what you expected?

"Movies and books often give us a different image of this country, and I must admit that I expected to find here a gloomier atmosphere. Perhaps many, even in my country, think it to be still so; the truth is that you

have nice people and nice cities here. Anyway, I was expecting a city different from the way it is usually described."

What did this feeling originate from?

"From past contacts between Sicilians and Georgians. For instance, in 1968 some earthquake refugees from the Belice Valley were given hospitality in my country for some time. And since Sicilians don't like to feel in debt, six years ago some Sicilian families began to give hospitality to children coming from Abkhazia, A Georgian region with many difficulties".

You came here to understand what's behind local successes in the fight against the Mafia. Is your country too menaced by organized crime?

"Georgia has a very important geo-political position because it connects Asia with Europe. Commercial links have just started being developed, such as those in the oil sector or the so-called "silk route". There's the risk that organized crime may infiltrate into or exploit such links for illicit traffic. We must be ready to avoid it. Above all, we must work on prevention".

Is this the reason why your delegation consists mostly of educators?

"Your experience in combating the Mafia is very interesting, and we look at the promotion of a "culture of lawfulness" with special attention. We must transmit positive values, such as patriotism and tolerance, and must invest resources in that direction. In our current phase, so delicate for our country, we must explain that welfare is good, but it has to be legal; that family has a great value; that family, school and society are the foundations of an educational system. But I wish also to add that our relationship must be based on a two-way exchange. We've got a lot to learn, but others too can learn from us."

[From the Press-Office of the President of Georgia, July 11, 2000]

STATEMENT OF THE PRESIDENT OF GEORGIA, E. SHEVARDNADZE

My fellow compatriots, I would like to draw your attention to one of the urgent problems facing Georgia.

Yesterday I signed the Decree on the "National Anticorruption Program", according to which a special authorized group of the highest level was established, headed by Mr. Lado Chauturia, Chairman of the Supreme Court of Georgia.

This group shall elaborate several stages of the anticorruption program, oriented on various trends, which will be the ground for very radical actions and corresponding policy.

There is no time left, the situation is unbearable, our society expects the urgent measures from us.

I would say, that I made this very hard decision after beginning of the process of economical improvement in the country. It is

enough to say, that in the first part of the current year the Gross Domestic Product has increased by 5 percent, and the industrial output by—11 percent in comparison with the same period of the last year. The export volume is increasing, and it is important, that since 1998 the change in the tax incomes' gross has taken place for the first time.

All I said indicates that the country will definitely overcome the both—the budgetary and the financial crisis; the significant economic growth will occur, the problems related to unpaid salaries, pensions and other kinds of payments will be solved as well as those of social assistance.

But the success will be temporary only; the country will fail to recover entirely, if we do not have the clear, exact and active anticorruption program as a firm basis for it.

Let me label this social disease as "malignant tumor", that is removable with pain, but necessary measures should be taken urgently.

I should be fair and remind you—much was done during the last 4 years in order to set some limits to "corruption space" and for creation of the anticorruption basis in Georgia.

Proper legislative system was created and that is very important. Criminal, Civil and Administrative Codes reflecting contemporary realities and national specific nature were worked out and approved. The common courts and Supreme Court have the new legislative basis.

Many laws have been approved, intended against the corruption processes in the society. The law "On Licenses", "On State Purchase", "On Monopoly Activities and Competition" and many others are among them.

The law "On Conflict of Interests at Public Service and Corruption" is worth to mention on the ground of which Information Bureau for Ownership and Financial State of Higher Officials has done a large-scale work.

The judicial reform has been carried out—the penitentiary system was subordinated to the Ministry of Justice.

Two thousand persons were arrested within last three years for committing crimes like abuse of one's position and misappropriation of State property. The six hundred of them have been already imprisoned.

These facts seem to prove the intensity of our struggle, but our efforts are not still enough. At the same time, one must consider the unfit system of the law enforcement bodies, extremely hard material and financial conditions of the employees, poor technical basis.

Yet, I believe, that law enforcement bodies and reforms therein are of great importance and they will intensify combat of corruption.

They should not wait final preparation of the program but intensify the activities for establishment of the corresponding fund.

The interested bodies have suggested the several versions of the anticorruption program.

Most of them are interesting and I would emphasize the suggestions of the local administrations, local self-governing bodies, and of course, the corresponding Parliamentary Committees.

As for my yesterday's special Decree about the anticorruption program, I have already said, it has a very important function and liabilities.

Well, I think I must share several opinions.

The first conceptual thesis is that the corruption has reached the crucial level with its scale and nature, that makes dubious almost every State initiative and implementation of some Governmental programs.

Unfortunately, the high level of the corruption has damaged authority not of the Government only, but of the Georgian independent state.

The fulfillment of both interior and foreign priorities is immediately connected with the necessity of suppressing corruption.

I am not departing from my responsibility and am fully responsible for this situation.

But nobody should forget that President of the State is able to do only what the society and the whole country are capable of performing.

Since the end of the civil war and bloody conflicts, and until now, I had to compromise on some issues, in order to rescue the other more important and more priority values for the moment.

Last 8 years of my governing have been devoted to turning of almost ill independent Georgian State into a healthy one, and to create it in fact.

That's why I had to make a hard choice concerning problems to be solved on the first stage and proper use of our poor resources more effectively.

Once more, I declare with all responsibility: nowadays nothing can be of more important issue for Georgia's society and State development, than combating corruption.

All other issues must be subordinated to the settlement of this strategic issue.

The second: the long-term and detailed analysis of the corruption as a phenomenon in the country allows me to conclude the following: In spite of some proper programs, the anticorruption activities up to now produced no desirable results. The local programs failed to create proper State mechanisms, able to solve the problems.

In other words, the solving of the State-scale problems appeared impossible within the framework of the separate actions. Even the judicial reform, quite effective anticorruption action by itself was not enough evidently.

It goes without doubt, that in order to solve large-scale State problems, it is necessary to elaborate a multistage statewide program.

Meanwhile, the program must be supported by the consequent actions systems, finances, and social-political factors and by the active support in the society.

The third: My long-term experience of being at the wheel of the country, has assured me that unprepared actions hear only a campaign, surface character and can yield only temporary results.

In some cases, the populist impulsiveness may only aggravate the problem. So, instead of recovery from the grave disease we are likely to get the opposite result.

That is why I acted so carefully.

That's why, I consider it both necessary and possible to undertake the radical measures after common State program for complex anticorruption policy was prepared. I would say, the national program and the corresponding executive mechanism will be created.

As we established the anticorruption service and some corrupted officials have been arrested, I could have earned more "grades" in the pre-electoral period, but I am sure, that we would not be able to combat corruption, and that would only worsen the situation by populist actions.

The fourth: working out of the anticorruption program will be the ultimate step for the fulfillment of my main purpose—to combat corruption in Georgia for good.

I am sure, that after recovery from the disease, the Georgian State will be healthy and sound, and Georgian people will have own everlasting prospects of the national development.

I declare that the statement of the anticorruption program that will be submitted to me by the group, working on it presently will be a cornerstone of my policy during the second term of my Presidency, as it is economic growth at present stage.

The same statement and recommendations define the purposes and rights of the special anticorruption service or the anticorruption committee.

The necessity of creation of such a body is the topic of a large-scale discussion in the society, which must be continued.

The fifth: the members of the group, working at the program, (it is remarkable, that the number of the group's members may be enlarged, if necessary), as well as the invited guests (I mean the well-known foreign experts), must gain the trust and create the necessary authority in the society, important for implementation of the program.

This group will depart from narrow political interests. It will realize a super-party, nationwide mission and shall cooperate with those political forces, for which corruption is national insult, humiliation of national dignity, source of national and social jeopardy and not the life style.

The sixth: I completely understand the great national importance of these tasks. I have made this strong decision. My political will is firm. I address to my adherents, companions, the members of government, parliamentarians; I categorically demand from them to accept president's will with complete responsibility and understanding.

The first victims of anti-corruption policy should be those unkind officials and statesmen, who are determined to reach their aims and goals by using their positions, enjoying partisan or relationship links with me for their own prosperity and not for strengthening the national buildup.

The seventh, I strongly believe that anti-corruption activities will receive complete support from the citizens of Georgia and from the whole Georgian society. At the same time, all of us need to acknowledge our civil and national responsibilities.

In this complicated and non-compromising combat, we, the society and government, must defend the superiority of justice and law, we must categorically exclude the efforts of mutual punishment, blackmailing and civil counteract.

I gave a special importance to the support and principal attitude of the press, primarily television and mass media at large.

The Georgian media is our democracy's important achievement. For several times, it showed veritable national, patriotic attitude toward the national affair and devotion toward any national interest.

Even more patriotism and intense sense of responsibility are necessary today.

In the process of being of vital importance, the unity of words and actions must turn into principal measure and basis of patriotism for every citizen and government official.

More than this, during the program elaboration, and while its implementation, no single agency shall avoid the responsibility that it invested in it by the law and all agencies shall be obligated to fight against corruption.

I want to add that to combat corruption with some repressive methods implies a certain preventive system, an active application of economic lever and mechanism, the restriction and suppression of criminals in the economic sphere.

I don't suspect that in the present circumstances, when the society has realized the importance of such a destructive vice, with joint will and endeavor Georgia can overcome this problem and recover from such a shameful disease as corruption represents itself.

In response, our generation will regain the right and honor to look into the face of the next generation proudly and create healthy, honest and democratic order in Georgia.

It is my firm decision and I will use all my strength, experience and facility to realize it.

And now, let me announce the Decree.

“On Elaboration of National Anti-corruption Program”

“Taking into consideration the scale and the complexity of the corruption and to increase the effectiveness of activities for its suppression a national group shall be set up to the office of President of Georgia. The group with the following membership shall develop the anti-corruption program:

1. Lado Chanturia—Chairman of Georgian Supreme Court, Head of the Group;
2. David Usuposhvili—Lawyer, Executive Secretary of the Group;
3. Gia Nodia—Director, Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development;
4. Sulkhan Molashvili—Chairman of Georgian Chamber of Control;
5. Levan Dzneladze—First Deputy of Georgian Minister of Finances;
6. Nana Devdariani—Georgian Public Defender;
7. Gia Meparishvili—Member of Parliament;

The task group shall present the main trends of the program by September 20, 2000. The essential components and plans will be implemented before the final presentation of the program. The deadline of developing and publishing complete version of national anti-corruption program is fall, 2000.

While working out national anti-corruption program the Group shall:

Gather, analyze and collect recommendations of international organizations concerning corruption in Georgia, programs worked out in governmental structures, research agencies and ideas based on private initiatives shall be presented to the Group;

Be provided with the idea of the national consensus—to negotiate with each interested person, political and social groups;

Work out a specific mechanism to make a program taking into account society involvement and their proposals and opinions;

Explore, analyze and use experience in corruption problems of foreign countries and leading international governmental and non-governmental organizations;

Define the separate sections of anti-corruption system, provide their systematic description, (legislative base, institutional structure, political system, economical base, moral, psychological preceding, etc. . . .) and explain the relationship concerning reasons and results, hence, set up a system of priorities;

Elaborate on political, financial, institutional, legislative and personnel staff providing schemes for anti-corruption program implementation;

Analyze acting legislation of Georgia, make complex program of legislative amendments and thus eradicate those legislative defects that promote formation of corruption based relations or hinder effective struggle against corruption;

Study the relations of separate national traditions to corruption-based relations spread all over the country and take appropriate measures;

Make a prognosis for main obstacles expected on the definite stages of project implementations process and define the ways to avoid them;

According to definite program activities make a prognosis for the most afflicted social groups and regions and plan to take social protection measures;

Seek and invite Georgian and foreign specialists to elaborate on concrete problems and thus to arrange working conditions for at least two specialists on every issue;

Discuss the materials offered by experts, plan to take concrete measures in definite directions and unite them within the frames of complex anti-corruption program stages;

Define the mechanisms for the monitoring of program implementation process and for

adequate reaction towards variable environment;

Present concrete recommendations concerning anti-corruption activities to the president of Georgia in case of demand, or by private initiative, in case of especially important issues;

Demand from every state and local administration requested information in timely order without any obstacles.

We acknowledge that foreign countries and international organizations and/or missions acting in Georgia shall provide active support and give necessary assistance (including financial aid) to the Group;

Non-governmental organizations, political units and representatives of public society shall be urged to cooperate with the group and respond their requests on time;

The group shall work out the working schedule within next week. It should be taken into consideration that a special anti-corruption plan and materials thereof are designed at the national Security Council to President of Georgia and according to the order of President of Georgia will be handed over to the Group to utilize them while working process.

The members of the Group who are not in civil service shall receive their salary from exploring funds of the Program;

The executive secretary shall provide administrative and technical arrangements for the Group.

COMMENDING SENATOR CARL LEVIN

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I want to talk about Senator CARL LEVIN, the ranking member for the Democrats on the very important defense committee of this Congress.

The Democrats could not be more proud of any Senator than we are of CARL LEVIN. We are so comfortable with him at the helm of this important aspect of what takes place in this country; that is, the preparedness of our military. He has a great working relationship with Senator WARNER. This bill was an extremely difficult bill. It simply could not have been completed without the expertise, the concern, and the respect Senator LEVIN has with his colleagues. I want to make sure the RECORD reflects that.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2001

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I rise today in support of S. 2549, the National Defense Authorization Act for FY2001. Included in the bill that passed today are several amendments that will significantly improve the lives of active duty members, reservists, military retirees, veterans, and their families.

These amendments greatly improved the version of the bill that came out of the Armed Services Committee. I had voted against reporting the bill out of the Committee because it did not include important measures for military personnel and neglected the issue of defense reform.

The critical amendments that were included in the legislation that passed today will: remove servicemembers

from food stamps; increase pay for mid-grade Petty Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers; assist disabled veterans in claims processing; restore retirement pay for disabled military retirees; provide survivor benefit plan enhancements; authorize a low-cost life insurance plan for spouses and their children; enhance benefits and retirement pay for Reservists and National Guardsmen; authorize back-pay for certain WWII Navy and Marine Corps Prisoners of War; and provide for significant acquisition reform by eliminating domestic source restrictions on the procurement of shipyard cranes.

One of the areas of greatest concern among military retirees and their families is the “broken promise” of lifetime medical care, especially for those over age 65. While the Committee had included some key health care provisions, it failed to meet the most important requirement, the restoration of this broken promise.

With severe recruitment and retention problems still looming, we must better compensate our mid-grade enlisted servicemembers who are critical to leading the junior enlisted force. We have significantly underpaid enlisted servicemembers since the beginning of the All-Volunteer Force. The value of the mid-grade NCO pay, compared to that of the most junior enlisted, has dropped 50% since the All-Volunteer Force was enacted by Congress in 1973. This pay provision for the mid-grade enlisted ranks, up to \$700 per year, plus the food stamp pay provision of an additional \$180 per month for junior enlisted servicemembers, provides a significant increase in pay for enlisted servicemembers.

The National Guard and Reserves have become a larger percentage of the Total Force and are essential partners in a wide range of military operations. Due to the higher deployment rates of the active duty forces, the Reserve Components are being called upon more frequently and for longer periods of time than ever before. We must stop treating them like a “second-class” force.

I would like to emphasize the importance of enacting meaningful improvements for our servicemembers, their families and their survivors. They risk their lives to protect our freedom and preserve democracy. We should compensate them adequately, improve the benefits to their families and survivors, and enhance the quality of life for the Reserves and National Guard in a similar manner as the active forces.

Each year the number of disabled veterans appealing their health care cases continues to increase. It is Congress’ duty to ensure that the disability claims process is less complex, less burdensome, and more efficient. Likewise, we should restore retirement pay for disabled military retirees.

I would also like to point out that this year’s defense authorization bill contained over \$1.9 billion in pork—unrequested add-ons to the defense