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# Israel Planned To Use Georgia Airbases In Iran Attack

8-20-8

Ken Freeland made this compilation of relevant articles about the role of Israel in the Caucasian War:

## The Role of Israel in the Georgian War

Two airfields in southern Georgia had been earmarked for the use of Israeli military aircraft, intended to launch an attack on identified targets relating to Iranian atomic energy projects. This attack was approved by President Bush in an undertaking with the government of Israel signed in Washington, D.C., on July 4, 2006 it is now believed that the Russian special forces have captured, intact, a number of the Israeli drones and, far more important, their radio controlling equipment... , units of the Russian air force bombed the Israeli bases in central Georgia and in the area of the capital, Tbilisi. They also severely damaged the runways and service areas of the two Georgian airbases designed to launch Israeli sir force units in a sudden

attack on Iran.

Peace,

Ken

<http://www.tbrnews.org/Archives/a2867.htm>

### **The Role Of Israel In The Georgian War**

By Brian Harring

8-17-8

Georgia became a huge source of income, and military advantage, for the Israeli government and Israeli arms dealers.. Israel began selling arms to Georgia about seven years ago, following an initiative by Georgian citizens who immigrated to Israel and became weapons hustlers.

They contacted Israeli defense industry officials and arms dealers and told them that Georgia had relatively large budgets, mostly American grants, and could be interested in purchasing Israeli weapons.

The military cooperation between the countries developed swiftly. The fact that Georgia's defense minister, Davit Kezerashvili, is a former Israeli who is fluent in Hebrew contributed to this cooperation. "We are now in a fight against the great Russia," he said, "and our hope is to receive assistance from the White House, because Georgia cannot survive on its own. "

Kezerashvili's door was always open to the Israelis who came and offered his country arms systems made in Israel. Compared to countries in Eastern Europe, the deals in this country were conducted fast, mainly due to the pro-Israeli defense minister's personal involvement.

The Jerusalem Post on August 12, 2008 reported: "Georgian Prime Minister Vladimer (Lado) Gurgenidze(Jewish) made a special call to Israel Tuesday

morning to receive a blessing from one of the Haredi community's most important rabbis and spiritual leaders, Rabbi Aharon Leib Steinman." The Prime Minister of Georgia, principally a nation of Orthodox Christians called Rabbi Steinman saying 'I've heard he is a holy man. I want him to pray for us and our state.'

Among the Israelis who took advantage of the opportunity and began doing business in Georgia were former Minister Roni Milo and his brother Shlomo, former director-general of the Military Industries, Brigadier-General (Res.) Gal Hirsch and Major-General (Res.) Yisrael Ziv.

Roni Milo conducted business in Georgia for Elbit Systems and the Military Industries, and with his help Israel's defense industries managed to sell to Georgia remote-piloted vehicles (RPVs), automatic turrets for armored vehicles, anti-aircraft systems, communication systems, shells and rockets.

The Ministry of Defense of Israel had supplied the Georgian government their Hermes 450 UAV spy drones, made by Elbit Maarahot Systems Ltd, for use, under the strict control of Israeli intelligence units, to conduct intelligence-gathering flights over southern Russia and, most especially into a Iran, targeted for Israeli Air Force attacks in the near future.

Two airfields in southern Georgia had been earmarked for the use of Israeli military aircraft, intended to launch an attack on identified targets relating to Iranian atomic energy projects. This attack was approved by President Bush in an undertaking with the government of Israel signed in Washington, D.C., on July 4, 2006.

The thrust of this top secret agreement was that the Israeli government would have "free and unfettered use" of unspecified Georgian airfields, under American control, onto which they could ferry fighter-bombers which then could fly south, over Turkish territory (and with clandestine Turkish permission) to strike at Tehran. The distance from Georgia to Tehran is

obviously far less than from Tel Aviv.

No one expected that these attacks would completely destroy Iranian military or scientific targets, but there would be the element of complete surprise coupled with serious property damage which might well interdict future Iranian atomic development and certainly serve as a serious warning to Iran not to threaten Israel again. Using Georgian bases, with the consent and full assistance of, the United States, would make such an attack much more feasible than attempting to fly from Israeli bases with overflights that might have serious regional diplomatic consequences.

Now, thanks to the irrational actions of the thoroughly unstable Georgian president, all of these schemes have collapsed and it is now believed that the Russian special forces have captured, intact, a number of the Israeli drones and, far more important, their radio controlling equipment.

In the main, Israeli military and intelligence units stationed in Georgia were mostly composed of Israel Defense Force reservists working for Global CST, owned by Maj. Gen. Israel Ziv, and Defense Shield, owned by Brig. Gen. Gal Hirsch. "The Israelis should be proud of themselves for the Israeli training and education received by the Georgian soldiers," Georgian Minister Temur Yakobashvili.

By this manner, Israel could claim that it had a very small number of IDF people in Georgia "mainly connected with our Embassy in Tbilisi." The Russians, however, were not fooled by this and their own intelligence had pinpointed Israeli surveillance bases and when they went after the Georgians who invaded South Ossetia, units of the Russian air force bombed the Israeli bases in central Georgia and in the area of the capital, Tbilisi. They also severely damaged the runways and service areas of the two Georgian airbases designed to launch Israeli air force units in a sudden attack on Iran.

Israel is currently a part of the Anglo-American military axis, which cooperates with the interests of the Western oil giants in the Middle East and Central Asia.

Israel is a partner in the Baku-Tblisi- Ceyhan pipeline which brings oil and gas to the Eastern Mediterranean. More than 20 percent of Israeli oil is imported from Azerbaijan, of which a large share transits through the BTC pipeline. Controlled by British Petroleum, the BTC pipeline has dramatically changed the geopolitics of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Caucasus:

"[The BTC pipeline] considerably changes the status of the region's countries and cements a new pro-West alliance. Having taken the pipeline to the Mediterranean, Washington has practically set up a new bloc with Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey and Israel, " (Komerzant, Moscow, 14 July 2006)

While the official reports state that the BTC pipeline will "channel oil to Western markets", what is rarely acknowledged is that part of the oil from the Caspian sea would be directly channeled towards Israel, via Georgia. In this regard, an Israeli-Turkish pipeline project has also been envisaged which would link Ceyhan to the Israeli port of Ashkelon and from there through Israel's main pipeline system, to the Red Sea.

The objective of Israel is not only to acquire Caspian sea oil for its own consumption needs but also to play a key role in re-exporting Caspian sea oil back to the Asian markets through the Red Sea port of Eilat. The strategic implications of this re-routing of Caspian sea oil are far-reaching

What has been planned, is to link the BTC pipeline to the Trans-Israel Eilat-Ashkelon pipeline, also known as Israel's Tipline, from Ceyhan to the Israeli port of Ashkelon.

## The Israeli unmanned surveillance drones

The unmanned Israeli clandestine surveillance drones are a favorite of intelligence agencies world-wide. Their most popular drone is the Hermes 450 drone aircraft.

The Hermes 450 is a large, capable 450 kg spy drone manufactured by Elbit Systems of Israel. Able to stay airborne for a maximum of 20 hours, it has a 10.5 metre wingspan and is 6.1 metres long. It can carry a variety of different surveillance packages, including the CoMPASS (Compact Multi-Purpose Advanced Stabilised System), which is a combined laser marker and infrared scanner.

Elbit also offers Hermes with the AN/ZPQ-1 TESAR (Tactical Endurance Synthetic Aperture Radar) from Northrop Grumman of the US, a ground-sweeping radar which can detect objects as small as one foot in size and pick out those which are moving from those which aren't. Radars of this type are essential for full bad weather capability, and help a lot with scanning large areas of terrain. Electro-optical scanners such as CoMPASS tend to offer a "drink-straw" view of only small areas in detail. The TESAR is the same radar used in the hugely successful "Predator" drone, in service for several years now with the US forces.

The U.S. Army has a drone training school located at Ft. Huachuca, Arizona, an intelligence center located 10 miles from the Mexican border and the home of massive telephonic intelligence intercept units, aimed at Central and South America. At present there are 225 soldiers, reservists, and National Guardsmen training at this school. And on the faculty are three Israeli specialists. This unit is not destined for the middle east or even Pakistan; it has been set up to conduct surveillance of northern Mexico. There are two reasons for wanting to watch our southern neighbor. The first is to watch for great treks of illegal aliens but the second, and most important, is to conduct reconnaissance of territory over which American

military units might be traversing in any punitive actions that could very, very well be triggered by the growing political instability in Mexico, caused by a growing struggle between the central government and the very powerful Mexican-based drug lords, who are wreaking havoc in that very corrupt country.

If a highly irate CIA employee, complaining of "excessive Israeli influence" in his agency, had not passed on files of information to the Russians late last year in Miami, in all probability, we would be reading about a stunning Israeli attack on Tehran. Now, the Iranian anti-aircraft missile batteries, supplied and manned by Russian "technicians," have the probable coordinates of such an Israeli surprise attack, from the north, which would give the defenses of Tehran a vital heads-up.

This is a tale of US expansion not Russian aggression

War in the Caucasus is as much the product of an American imperial drive as local conflicts. It's likely to be a taste of things to come

By Seumas Milne  
The Guardian  
8-14-8

The outcome of six grim days of bloodshed in the Caucasus has triggered an outpouring of the most nauseating hypocrisy from western politicians and their captive media. As talking heads thundered against Russian imperialism and brutal disproportionality, US vice-president Dick Cheney, faithfully echoed by Gordon Brown and David Miliband, declared that "Russian aggression must not go unanswered". George Bush denounced Russia for having "invaded a sovereign neighbouring state" and threatening "a democratic government". Such an action, he insisted, "is unacceptable in the 21st century".

Could these by any chance be the leaders of the same governments that in 2003 invaded and occupied - along with Georgia, as luck would have it - the sovereign state of Iraq on a false pretext at the cost of hundreds of thousands of lives? Or even the two governments that blocked a ceasefire in the summer of 2006 as Israel pulverised Lebanon's infrastructure and killed more than a thousand civilians in retaliation for the capture or killing of five soldiers?

You'd be hard put to recall after all the fury over Russian aggression that it was actually Georgia that began the war last Thursday with an all-out attack on South Ossetia to "restore constitutional order" - in other words, rule over an area it has never controlled since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Nor, amid the outrage at Russian bombardments, have there been much more than the briefest references to the atrocities committed by Georgian forces against citizens it claims as its own in South Ossetia's capital Tskhinvali. Several hundred civilians were killed there by Georgian troops last week, along with Russian soldiers operating under a 1990s peace agreement: "I saw a Georgian soldier throw a grenade into a basement full of women and children," one Tskhinvali resident, Saramat Tskhovredov, told reporters on Tuesday.

Might it be because Georgia is what Jim Murphy, Britain's minister for Europe, called a "small beautiful democracy". Well it's certainly small and beautiful, but both the current president, Mikheil Saakashvili, and his predecessor came to power in western-backed coups, the most recent prettified as a "Rose revolution". Saakashvili was then initially rubber-stamped into office with 96% of the vote before establishing what the International Crisis Group recently described as an "increasingly authoritarian" government, violently cracking down on opposition dissent and independent media last November. "Democratic" simply seems to mean "pro-western" in these cases.

The long-running dispute over South Ossetia - as well as Abkhazia, the other contested region of Georgia - is the inevitable consequence of the breakup of the Soviet Union. As in the case of Yugoslavia, minorities who were happy enough to live on either side of an internal boundary that made little difference to their lives feel quite differently when they find themselves on the wrong side of an international state border.

Such problems would be hard enough to settle through negotiation in any circumstances. But add in the tireless US promotion of Georgia as a pro-western, anti-Russian forward base in the region, its efforts to bring Georgia into NATO, the routing of a key Caspian oil pipeline through its territory aimed at weakening Russia's control of energy supplies, and the US-sponsored recognition of the independence of Kosovo - whose status Russia had explicitly linked to that of South Ossetia and Abkhazia - and conflict was only a matter of time.

The CIA has in fact been closely involved in Georgia since the Soviet collapse. But under the Bush administration, Georgia has become a fully fledged US satellite. Georgia's forces are armed and trained by the US and Israel. It has the third-largest military contingent in Iraq - hence the US need to airlift 800 of them back to fight the Russians at the weekend. Saakashvili's links with the neoconservatives in Washington are particularly close: the lobbying firm headed by US Republican candidate John McCain's top foreign policy adviser, Randy Scheunemann, has been paid nearly \$900,000 by the Georgian government since 2004.

But underlying the conflict of the past week has also been the Bush administration's wider, explicit determination to enforce US global hegemony and prevent any regional challenge, particularly from a resurgent Russia. That aim was first spelled out when Cheney was defence secretary under Bush's father, but its full impact has only been felt as Russia has begun to recover from the disintegration of the 1990s.

Over the past decade, NATO's relentless eastward expansion has brought the western military alliance hard up against Russia's borders and deep into former Soviet territory. American military bases have spread across eastern Europe and central Asia, as the US has helped install one anti-Russian client government after another through a series of colour-coded revolutions. Now the Bush administration is preparing to site a missile defence system in eastern Europe transparently targeted at Russia.

By any sensible reckoning, this is not a story of Russian aggression, but of US imperial expansion and ever tighter encirclement of Russia by a potentially hostile power. That a stronger Russia has now used the South Ossetian imbroglio to put a check on that expansion should hardly come as a surprise. What is harder to work out is why Saakashvili launched last week's attack and whether he was given any encouragement by his friends in Washington.

If so, it has spectacularly backfired, at savage human cost. And despite Bush's attempts to talk tough yesterday, the war has also exposed the limits of US power in the region. As long as Georgia proper's independence is respected - best protected by opting for neutrality - that should be no bad thing. Unipolar domination of the world has squeezed the space for genuine self-determination and the return of some counterweight has to be welcome. But the process of adjustment also brings huge dangers. If Georgia had been a member of NATO, this week's conflict would have risked a far sharper escalation. That would be even more obvious in the case of Ukraine - which yesterday gave a warning of the potential for future confrontation when its pro-western president threatened to restrict the movement of Russian ships in and out of their Crimean base in Sevastopol. As great power conflict returns, South Ossetia is likely to be only a taste of things to come.

**Six days that broke one country - and reshaped the world order**

August 16, 2008

by Ian Traynor  
The Guardian

Pity Georgia's bedraggled First Infantry Brigade. And its Second. And its hapless Navy.

For the past few evenings in the foothills of the Southern Caucasus on the outskirts of Joseph Stalin's hometown of Gori, reconnaissance units of Russia's 58th Army have been raking through the spoils of war at what was the Georgian Army's pride and joy, a shiny new military base inaugurated only last January for the First Infantry, the Army Engineers, and an Artillery Brigade.

A couple of hours to the west, in the town of Senaki, it's the same picture. A flagship military base, home to the Second Infantry Brigade, is in Russian hands. And down on the Black Sea coast, the radars and installations for Georgia's sole naval base at Poti have been scrupulously pinpointed by the Russians and destroyed.

Gori and Senaki are not ramshackle relics of the old Red Army of the type that litter the landscape of eastern Europe. "These bases have only recently been upgraded to NATO standard," said Matthew Clements, Eurasia analyst at Jane's Information Group. "They have been operationally targeted to seriously degrade the Georgian military."

"There is a presence of our armed forces near Gori and Senaki. We make no secret of it," said the general staff in Moscow. "They are there to defuse an enormous arsenal of weapons and military hardware which have been discovered in the vicinity of Gori and Senaki without any guard whatsoever."

The "enormous arsenals" are American-made or American-supplied. American money, know-how, planning, and equipment built these bases as

part of Washington's drive to bring NATO membership to a small country that is Russia's underbelly.

The American "train and equip" mission for the Georgian military is six years old. It has been destroyed in as many days. And with it, Georgia's NATO ambitions. "There are a few countries that will say 'told you so'" about the need to get Georgia into NATO," said Andrew Wilson, Russia expert at the European Council on Foreign Relations. "But many more will want to walk away from the problem. And for the next few years, Georgia will be far too busy trying to pick itself up."

If Georgia and NATO are the principal casualties of this week's ruthless display of brute power by Vladimir Putin, the consequences are bigger still, the fallout immense, if uncertain. The regional and the global balance of power looks to have tilted, against the west and in favour of the rising or resurgent players of the east.

In a seminal speech in Munich last year, Putin confidently warned the west that he would not tolerate the age of American hyperpower. Seven years in office at the time and at the height of his powers, he delivered his most anti-western tirade

### Pernicious

To an audience that included John McCain, the White House contender, and Robert Gates, the US defence secretary and ex-Kremlinologist, he served notice: "What is a unipolar world? It refers to one type of situation, one centre of authority, one centre of force, one centre of decision-making. It is world in which there is one master, one sovereign. This is pernicious ... unacceptable ... impossible."

This week, he turned those words into action, demonstrating the limits of US power with his rout of Georgia. His forces roamed at will along the

roads of the Southern Caucasus, beyond Russia's borders for the first time since the disastrous Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in the 1980s.

As the Russian officers sat on the American stockpiles of machine guns, ammunition, and equipment in Gori, they were savouring a highly unusual scenario. Not since the Afghan war had the Russians seized vast caches of US weaponry. "People are sick to the stomach in Washington," said a former Pentagon official. And the Russians are giddy with success.

Celebrating the biggest victory in eight years of what might be termed Putinism, the dogged pursuit by whatever means to avenge a long period of Russian humiliation and to deploy his limited range of levers - oil, gas, or brute force - to make the world listen to Moscow, the Russian prime minister has redrawn the geopolitical map.

In less than a week, Putin has invaded another country, effectively partitioned Georgia in a lightning campaign, weakened his arch-enemy, President Mikheil Saakashvili, divided the west, and presented a fait accompli. The impact - locally, regionally, and globally - is huge.

"The war in Georgia has put the European order in question," said Alexander Rahr, one of Germany's leading Russia experts and a Putin biographer. "The times are past when you can punish Russia."

That seems to be the view among leading European policymakers who have been scrambling all week to arrange and shore up a fragile ceasefire, risking charges of appeasing the Kremlin.

"Don't ask us who's good and who's bad here," said Bernard Kouchner, the French foreign minister, after shuttling between Tbilisi and Moscow to try to halt the violence. "We shouldn't make any moral judgments on this war. Stopping the war, that's what we're interested in."

His boss, President Nicolas Sarkozy, went to the Kremlin to negotiate a ceasefire and parade as a peacemaker. Critics said he acted as Moscow's messenger, noting Putin's terms then taking them to Tbilisi to persuade Saakashvili to capitulate. Germany also refused to take sides while Italy warned against building an "anti-Moscow coalition".

That contrasted with Gordon Brown's and David Milliband's talk of Russian "aggression" and Condoleezza Rice's arrival in Tbilisi yesterday to rally "the free world behind a free Georgia".

The effects of Putin's coup are first felt locally and around Russia's rim. "My view is that the Russians, and I would say principally prime minister Putin, is interested in reasserting Russia's, not only Russia's great power or superpower status, but in reasserting Russia's traditional spheres of influence," said Gates. "My guess is that everyone is going to be looking at Russia through a different set of lenses as we look ahead."

In Kiev certainly. Ukraine's pro-western prime minister, Viktor Yushchenko, Saakashvili's fellow colour-revolutionary, is chastened and wary. His firebrand anti-Russian prime minister, Yuliya Tymoshenko, has gone uncharacteristically quiet.

Invasion of the Ukraine?

"An invasion of Ukraine by 'peacekeeping tanks' is just a question of time," wrote Aleksandr Sushko, director of Kiev's Institute of Euro-Atlantic Cooperation. "Weimar Russia is completing its transformation into something else. If Russia wins this war, a new order will take shape in Europe which will have no place for Ukraine as a sovereign state."

All around Russia's rim, the former Soviet "captive states" are trembling. Even Belarus, the slavishly loyal "last dictatorship in Europe", went strangely silent, taking days before the regime offered Moscow its support.

"Everybody's nervous," said Wilson.

The EU states of the Baltic and Poland are drumming up support for Georgia, with the Polish president Lech Kaczynski declaring that Russia has revealed "its true face". That divides the EU since the French and the Germans refuse to take sides and are scornful of east European "hysteria" towards Russia. Rahr in Berlin says the German and French governments are striving to keep the Poles and the Baltic states well away from any EU-led peace negotiations. It was the Germans and the French who, in April, blunted George Bush's drive to get Georgia into NATO. They will also resist potential US moves to kick Russia out of the G8 or other international bodies.

There are many who argue that Putin's gamble will backfire, that he has bitten off more than he can chew, that Russia remains weak, a "Saudi Arabia with trees" in the words of Robert Hunter, the former US ambassador to NATO.

Compared to the other rising powers of China, India or even Brazil - the companions referred to as the BRIC - Russia does indeed appear weak. Its economy struggles to develop goods or services, depends on raw material exports and on European consumption and the price of oil for its current wealth.

### Resources

But Putin's talent is for playing a weak hand well, maximising and concentrating his limited resources, and creating facts on the ground while the west dithers.

"There is a lack of a clear and unified European policy towards Russia," said Clements. In the crucial contest over energy "the Russian strategy of keeping control of exports and supply is outpacing any European response".

Putin may now calculate he can call off the dogs of war, having achieved his aims and able to pocket his gains very cheaply. The Georgia campaign becomes the triumphant climax of Putinism.

"In politics, it is very important to know one's measure," wrote Aleksey Arbatov, director of Moscow's International Security Centre. "If Russia continues to inflict strikes on Georgian territory, on facilities, on population centres, we may lose the moral supremacy we have today."

But Wilson and many in eastern Europe worry that rather than being the climax of Putinism, the Russians in Georgia signal the start of something else. "This may not be a culmination, but only step one," said Wilson. "If you don't stop this kind of behaviour, it escalates."

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It was the pro-Israeli crowd in the Republican Party that pulled the old switcheroo and refocussed on the Middle East rather than Eurasia. Now, powerful members of the US foreign policy establishment (Brzezinski, Albright, Holbrooke) have regrouped behind the populist "cardboard" presidential candidate Barak Obama and are preparing to redirect America's war efforts to the Asian theater. Obama offers voters a choice of wars not a choice against war.

-- Mike Whitney

13 August 2008

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