

# GEORGIA

Saturday Dec. 14, 1996--Thursday Jan. 2, 1997

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### Saturday Dec. 14th

Out of Atlanta on Delta at 7:46 p.m. to Frankfurt, then to Moscow after one hour layover. Uneventful flight except intermittent problems with ears stopping up due to upper respiratory infection. Ten hours to Frankfurt, slept terribly as usual, three hours to Moscow.

### Sunday Dec. 15th

Arrived Moscow 5 p.m., met at airport by Levan Vasadze, who lived with me in Atlanta two years while he attended Emory MBA. Has a fabulous job with a company that finds Russian companies for sale, and brokers them to companies in other countries. E.g., last year he sold a Russian cement factory to a big French cement conglomerate. Involves persuading the Russian workers, who own the plants, to form a stock company and sell, and other sorts of maneuverings. In effect Levan gives them a short intense and persuasive course on Western capitalism. Levan has charm, intelligence, energy and persuasiveness. Highly successful. We had dinner at Maxim's, one of the best restaurants in Moscow. Outstanding meal, outstanding conversation about his work.

Left Atlanta in 70's, sun out, bright cloudless day. Frankfurt overcast and cold. Moscow snowing, slush, ice, 20's, mean. Night at 4 p.m. I once wrote a paper, when in college, on how Thomas Hardy used nature to cast a thick emotional tone over his scenes: e.g., verdant fertile agricultural scenes vs. dark stormy nights at appropriate times in the story. Moscow always makes me think of the power of that sort of imagery. And tonight was no exception. The snow, slush, blustery raw wind, dirt, greys without color, all combine to set up unforgettable emotions associated with the city.

To bed at 1 a.m. after having been up longer than I care to remember.

### Monday Dec. 16th

Levan left early to fly to the Euralis for a week, where he is busy scouting out a steel plant for possible sale. His driver picked me up at 9 a.m. for 11 a.m. plane departure. Weather as yesterday, perhaps worse. At airport told plane delayed in returning from Tbilisi, flight scheduled for 5 p.m.

I called the Moscow office of American International Health Alliance (AIHA) and they invited me to stay with them while awaiting the plane. I thought that best, since I was not optimistic about the plane, and that way they could arrange a hotel if I needed one. I obviously didn't fit into their scheme of things for Monday, but did the best I could to be comfortable. Had lunch at the Hollywood Diner across the street, an exact replica of an American diner, down to the same kind of sugar dispensers they use at Evans Fine Foods at Clairmont and North Decatur in Atlanta.

To my surprise I met Kent Brown there, former Ambassador to Georgia from the U.S. All of us who dealt with him became immensely fond of him, as well as respectful. The finest sort of American representative abroad: smart, interested, enthusiastic, immensely knowledgeable about Georgia. He now works for R.J. Reynolds tobacco company, based in Geneva. Said with a smile that he guessed I would think he had joined the enemy. "Not at all," I replied. "Tobacco

companies put bread on my table!" Clearly a different way of looking at his trade to him.<sup>1</sup>

Back to the airport at 4 p.m. and to my delight the plane was there. Flew the three hours to Georgia in coach, in uneasy intimacy with three Georgians: one in front, one by my side, and one behind me. I measured three inches between my nose and the seat in front of me. Had to keep my legs in the aisle, not enough room between my seat and the one in front. Old plane. But we made it.

Met at new airport in Tbilisi by a delegation: Archil, who is Professor of Clinical Pharmacology and coordinator of the Atlanta-Tbilisi Health Partnership in Georgia, Irina, mother of Levan, Rima, course director of the pathology clerkship at Tbilisi State Medical University who spent two months with us at Emory, and many others. Then home to Andro Kacharava's house. Andro is a PGY II resident with us. We had the usual wonderful Georgian table at 1 a.m. (4 p.m. U.S. time). Finally crashed at "Betsy's" at 3 a.m. Betsy Haskell, as those of you who have read these missives before know, is a good friend who has been in Tbilisi six years. Originally from Washington.

Tuesday Dec. 17

Awakened at 8:30 a.m. by the ringing of the telephone. Aka, a Georgian medical student who spent six months as a junior medical student at Emory on our program, was waiting to have breakfast with me. Struggled up, showered European style (didn't get the floor wet, meaning I reacquired European washing skills instantaneously this time) and went to breakfast. He is leaving tomorrow for Emory, where he will stay with one of our students while studying for USMLE II, which will enable him to do a residency in the U.S. Aka is very smart, having made in the 90th percentile on the shelf exam in medicine while he was with us. I am looking forward to having him as an intern when he passes the exam. He brought me five bottles of outstanding wine. His father is president of the wineworkers of Georgia, and on an earlier trip gave us a tour of some of the vineyards.

Then had a meeting with Bernice and Don of AIHA, who are here with me for the opening of our National Information Learning Center today. This is a project conceived three years ago, and implemented masterfully by Carol Burns and associates of the Woodruff Medical Library at Emory.

Then down to the Library, where everyone was excitedly preparing for the opening at 2 p.m. President Shevardnadze is coming, along with the Minister of Health and the American Ambassador, William Courtney. At the appointed time 100 guests arrived, and the Minister of Health gave an excellent speech. Then my time (see speech on next page), followed by Carol, by Larry Gage of the Board of AIHA, Ambassador Courtney and finally President Shevardnadze. An outstanding occasion, and a fitting culmination to a tremendous amount of work by a lot of

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<sup>1</sup>Later during my visit I had a long talk with a senior State Department official. The recent Congress has caused a gigantic downsizing of the Foreign Service. New recruits are no longer being told to consider making it their career. Most of them will be let go during their forties. Many senior and highly experienced officers ("who not only know Malaysia had five rajahs, but know them all personally") are being let go now. The morale in the State Department is nonexistent. A lot of concern and bitterness in the service.

people.

After the speeches a reception across the hall, in the Emergency Medical Training Center the Partnership helped set up, with plenty of wine, champagne and food. Highly satisfying.

Back to Betsy's, where I decided to find an ENT person. My ear had been hurting all day, due to Eustachian tube being stopped up during the flights. George Shakarashvili, friend and head of the World Bank project here, found me one. As you might expect, the most famous one in Georgia, teacher to all the young ones. Went to his home at 6 p.m., where he

"These Few Rooms in This Old Building...."

Remarks of H. Kenneth Walker M.D.  
at the opening of the  
NATIONAL INFORMATION LEARNING CENTER  
Tbilisi, Georgia

Tuesday, December 17, 1996

President Shevardnadze, Minister Jorbenadze, Ambassador Courtney, ladies and gentlemen.

These few rooms in this old building began as a dream three years ago. What you see today has been accomplished through the efforts of many Georgians and Americans. It is truly a joint venture.

This is a period of great opportunity for Georgia. The people of Georgia are where we in the United States were in 1770. They are building a new nation, one on the foundations of an old and proud nation.

This is a propitious time to be building a new nation. The world has changed dramatically in a few short years, especially in terms of politics and technology. We are moving into the 21st century full of hope.

Georgia is fortunate to have leaders who have the vision and will necessary to build this new nation. President Shevardnadze is recognized throughout the world as a principal architect of the new order. His vision and wisdom have made the world a better place. We at Emory University are proud that he holds an honorary doctorate from Emory. Tamuna, the granddaughter of the President and Mrs. Nanuli Shevardnadze, worked with us in the Atlanta-Tbilisi Partnership for two years. She is now a law student at Emory.

President Shevardnadze has assembled an outstanding group of individuals to work with him to lead a new Georgia into the 21st century. One of these, Minister of Health Avandtil Jorbenadze, has been our associate, close friend and valued supporter in this project. Avto's wisdom and leadership have been much appreciated by us.

The capital of the new age we are entering is information. Information is to our age what gold, diamonds and oil were to previous generations. Georgia is uniquely suited to take full advantage of this new wealth. Georgians are highly intelligent, intensely motivated, and have the will to become leaders of the world. They have valued education and learning all their history. The creation of Gelati by King David is a testament to their respect and love of education.

This library will supply the raw material, the capital, that Georgians will use to attain a new golden age. Today we stand in a few rooms in an old building. But these few rooms in this old building contain something more precious than all the gold and silver and jewels of Aladdin. They contain the open sesame to the world of information.

These few rooms in this old building will be the center of the following:

-Librarians will help anyone who enters to search through the knowledge of the world to find the information they seek.

-Georgian people will be trained in the methods of searching the electronic data bases of the world.

-The library will be the center of a network of regional libraries, in Batumi, Poti, Zugdidi, Kutaisi, Telavi and eventually all other cities, that will have electronic access through the internet to the knowledge of the world.

-There will be close collaborations with

Tbilisi State Medical University  
Tbilisi State University  
Georgian Technical University  
The National Medical Library  
and ultimately many other institutions

-In a collaboration with the National Archives historical material of great value will be put into digital form and made available to the rest of the world. Georgians will give information, as well as get information

-The library will serve as an information anchor for hospitals, medical schools and nursing schools.

-Students will come to the library to learn, and professionals will come to refresh and renew their information.

-Information about public health and preventive medicine will be made available to the public for the improvement of the health of individuals.

These few rooms in this old building contain the most advanced information technology available in the world

These few rooms in this old building are the realization of the dreams and hard work of many people from Georgia and the United States

These few rooms in this old building are the beginning of tomorrow for Georgia.

examined me and said my middle ear was inflamed, gave me drops, antibiotics and cream for my ear. Looked to be in his seventies, beautiful English, picture of the famous courtly old physician.

At night all of us had dinner to celebrate: the AIHA people, Archil, the Minister of Health, Larry Gage. Larry and I sat at the end of the table and I discovered a lot about the history of AIHA and about Larry. First, some background about Larry. Fifties, consummate inside Washington lawyer (at least that is how I have always perceived him). Grew up in California, where his father worked for United Parcel Service. Harvard as an undergraduate because he won a merit scholarship from UPS. Columbia to law school. Then worked in Carter administration under Joseph Califano. Jim Smith, the head of AIHA, was a young man who worked with him and they became friends. Part of Larry's job was to get the hospitals of the U.S. to support cost controls, so he went about the country getting to know the CEOs. Discovered the county government officials, who funded the hospitals, were very much in favor of the controls but the hospital CEOs were adamantly opposed. Told by the CEOs that they wanted their own organization (at that time the public hospitals association was a subset in the AMA). When Carter was not elected, Larry wanted to work for a Washington law firm, but had lost all his value because of a Republican administration. So he set up the National Public Hospital Association, with himself as executive director (which he continues to hold). Califano, who had set up a law firm, did not want to do health-related business, and sent all that to Larry, who of necessity set up his own law firm. Both enterprises went along well, and shortly thereafter Califano invited him to join his law firm, which he is now a senior associate with.

In 1991-92 there were two individuals in the US Agency for International Development, a woman named Eddelman and a man who worked for her named Anthony. The Soviet Union broke up, and it became a matter of urgency, in the eyes of the U.S. administration, to provide money in a number of sectors to stabilize the situation. Eddelman and/or Anthony had the idea to create "partnerships" whereby U.S. institutions would establish a relationship with one in the former Soviet Union. They sold this idea to AID, but the fact that one or both of them were political appointees laid the groundwork for much dissension then and later. An additional part of the idea is that an umbrella organization would administer the partnerships. This was new. AID had been in the habit of administering each grant itself on an individual basis. The idea was shopped to various organizations: the American Hospital Association, etc., and no one was interested. Larry's organization was approached, but had other things on its plate. Then Larry and Jim got together, and decided to start a new organization that would have on its Board members of organizations who were supportive but not interested in doing it themselves: the American Hospital Association, the Public Hospital Association, the Association of Academic Medical Centers, etc.

After dinner we adjourned to Larry's suite at Betsy's to talk. Carol brought up to Steve Foote (her colleague at the Emory library who is over her participating with her in establishing the NILC) the fact that he had used the "F" word very rarely in the last few days. Steve apparently is quite fond of it. The question became why that particular word? "Because I grew up on the water" was the reply. I promptly said that was no excuse, since I grew up on a farm and was inordinately fond of it also.

Wednesday Dec. 18

Up at 7:00. Ear still hurting in spite of having put in antibiotic ointment last night. Breakfast with one of the Tbilisi students who came to Emory previously. He has signed up to take the USMLE in Turkey, but his family does not have the \$920 required. He had told me before he left Emory this was a real possibility, and I had said to keep me informed. I asked him to return on Monday and let me see if I could do anything. The student is one of the smartest of the ones who have come over. He scored very high on the medicine shelf exam, and he is also a nice human being. A former house officer gives money to the department each year for me to use as I see fit, and I will perhaps use some of that money. It is for a purpose I feel the former house officer would highly approve. Will think about it some.

Met the Minister of Health. We were delayed about 45 minutes by a woman who precipitously rushed in. He later told us he was combining three institutes<sup>2</sup>--AIDS, Infectious Diseases and Sepsis--into one, and the woman, who directed one of them, had been fiercely upset. But she came out with a smile on her face, demonstrating something I already knew, namely that Avto is highly skilled at dealing with people.

An aside. Several people--e.g., the U.S. ambassador to Georgia--have made the point that Georgia is by far the most successful of the former Soviet republics in adapting to independence and the western way of doing things, such as a market economy. Georgia's growth last year was twice as great as the former republic ranking second. A new currency issued over a year ago, the *lari*, has remained steady at \$1 to 1.30 *lari*. Georgia took all the advice the International Monetary Fund gave and accomplished that feat. Another way of saying what is occurring is that Georgia is led by a group of highly intelligent, motivated and tough minded people who have secured their power base, notably in the election last year when President Shevardnadze was elected with over 70% of the vote. They know how to find out what needs to be done, and they are willing to do it. An example is the health care reform that we are participating in. The system is being changed completely, with shrinkage, privatization, insurance, guaranteed package of minimum benefits, licensure and credentialing.

Avto discussed his priorities for the coming year. Establishing the financial underpinning of the health system is a primary concern. Insurance, hospital operations, transferring money from unit to unit, accounting systems, etc. He wants to have a visit by Richard Saltman of our Public Health School, a world's authority on comparative health care systems, for a week or two of discussion and planning. We will talk to the World Bank about funding this visit. Avto then listed what he will be focusing on the coming year:

-Creation of the insurance system: the law will be in place starting February 1997. Children, women and disabled people will be covered first. They have established a state insurance system, and are searching for foreign partners.

-Public health: many problems need to be tackled, such as tuberculosis.

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<sup>2</sup>Georgia has a large number of institutes, much like the NIH. The Neurology Institute, Cardiology Institute, Trauma Institute, etc.

-Hospitals: financial mechanisms, management of hospitals, budgets, in-service training. Would like help in designing exemplary hospital financing system.

-Private insurance system: wants joint venture with foreign partners.

-People to give him advice: needs a health economist and someone experienced in health legislation.

-Strategic clinical planning: what level and what should be offered to population in cardiology, cancer, stroke, women's health, etc. Should be pitched both to people of Georgia and entire Transcaucasian region.

-Clinical laboratory services: they need to be vastly improved throughout the country. Need licensing, standards, etc.

-Micronutrients: already planning to tackle the iodine problem with Emory Public Health in Jan. Now need to start working on iron, especially fortifying milk with iron.

-Cancer prevention: Pap smears, etc.

We agreed to talk about these topics during my stay here the next two weeks.

As the meeting finished my ear gave me more and more trouble, and I decided it now had to become my first priority, since the pain was making it difficult for me to think about anything else. Archil arranged for an ENT specialist to come to the hotel and examine me. Shota Jeparidze, about 45, spent some months in U.S. He said I needed to come to his office for suctioning, irrigation, etc. We went to the Republican Hospital, which is one of the two major hospitals in the city, and the main teaching hospital for Tbilisi State Medical University. Shabby, run down, like Grady Hospital in the 1940's--i.e., the original Grady. He diagnosed an inflammation of the canal, put in antibiotics, etc., and for the first time since arrival my ear felt okay. A great relief. Gives one a glimmer of understanding of why someone with cancer and in continuous severe pain has no objection to the end.

I then went with the Jack Shulman of Tbilisi State Medical University, Otar Gerzmava, to the medical school. I met with Rector Khetsouriani, who brought up the issues on his mind:

-TSMU wants a port in the Learning Center continuously available to them. I referred him to Zviad, the Director, and Carol Burns, the Director of Woodruff Medical Library, who set up the Center<sup>3</sup>.

-They want me to meet with the students and staff of their Medical College. It took me some time to figure out exactly what this was, since I had not encountered it before. It turns out this is

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<sup>3</sup>TSMU agitated from the beginning for the Center to be located on their campus. Steve Foote told me someone yelled at the opening ceremony "this should be at the medical school!" We considered that location, but in view of their fierce territorial imperative, and our desire to model the NILC in every sense after the National Library of Medicine in Bethesda, we put it under the Ministry of Health in one of their buildings..

their answer to my agitation about three years ago that medical school over here should be like the U.S.: high school, college, then medical school. Over here, and in fact the rest of the world, it is high school then six years of medical school. TSMU did not choose to take my advice, but a new medical school here that is being established by Tbilisi State University (30,000 students, equivalent of Univ. of Ga.) did choose to take the advice. This promptly caused TSMU to try to have their cake and eat it, so they established a "college" of two years.

-They want to have a big celebration of five years of cooperation with our partnership and Emory, and want me to come to it in May 1997. I explained this was a very busy time for me (new house staff arriving last of June), and there was no way I could come then.

-The Rector wants to visit Emory for 2-3 days and meet the new dean. I told him we could arrange this and I would let them know convenient times.

I returned to Betsy's about 5 p.m. and had an hour's nap, the first time since arrival pain free. It was wonderful.

Irina Chanturishvili, Levan's mother, and her husband Shio came by to see if I were healthy. Had drinks, and were joined by a consultant named Gina. Family Russians, left and went to Canada when she was four, but she kept up the language skills. Now works for the Eurasia Foundation out of Washington, and is preparing a report on the banking situation in Georgia and Armenia. Said the short term loan rates were 50-100%. Banks in Russia are rich, very well capitalized. Georgia and Armenia often capitalized with \$100,000 or so. Bribery and kickbacks often mentioned to her in Georgia, never in Armenia. Her idea is that everyone in Armenia knows everyone else (population 3 million), and if you do something wrong you will pay for it forever, and your family will too. So they don't go the kickback/bribery route. She confirmed that the economic situation was relatively very good.

Archil and I and Guram, the Minister's best friend and the economist of the Ministry of Health, had dinner. When Archil was in Atlanta a few weeks ago he had brought up the need for cheap prefabricated housing units in Georgia. I had taken him to a trailer company in Eatonton, Georgia. They had trailers designed for shipping overseas. They were the same size as the ship/railway containers, and were reinforced in the right places so they could be stacked on top of each other. They sold for about \$8000-12000, if I remember correctly. This included heating and kitchen appliances. The man in charge of selling overseas was affable and easy to do business with. The Georgians brought all the information home with them, and now are quite interested in bringing over the prefab units to supply economical housing. The building industry in Georgia is primitive, and there is the need for a lot of new housing units. The ones from Eatonton appear to be the right answer. They are going to give me a letter to take back, exploring the possibility of the Eatonton company setting up a joint manufacturing and/or assembly venture over here.

The restaurant was very good, and I noticed quite a few of new restaurants. Even last year there were only one or two. Definite signs of a beginning of a new prosperity.

Thursday Dec. 19

Breakfast, served by Vovo. About 28. Confided to me that his intense desire is to have a greenhouse and grow house plants for sale. Majored in botany in Tbilisi State University. Has discovered an unused greenhouse owned by the University, and is thinking about how to raise the money. The market economy concept has reached down to where it will do the greatest good over the long haul!

Long talk with Betsy. She owns this hotel, which reminds me a lot of the mountain inns up in Highlands, North Carolina, and surrounding areas. An old house that she has restored, and with a staff that is highly solicitous. She has applied for money to build a new one, with about 40 rooms. Money will come from a fund assembled by Keith Norman (see diary from April 1996) from the European Redevelopment Bank and other sources. The fund hasn't been established yet. There is another building across the street that she can buy and set up as another small hotel. She is leaving tomorrow for Istanbul and then Washington for one month. Can't make up her mind whether to branch out in a big way, or just continue to be small with a few small hotel types developed from old houses.

Eka Asatiani came to breakfast with me. Was one of the students who came to Emory one year ago. Just passed her USMLE exams with scores in high eighties. Very smart. Wants to be internist, then perhaps cardiologist. Eka is beautiful, and has elegant taste in clothes. Turned the eyes of everyone in the dining room. We talked about her coming to Emory this next July as a preliminary intern in medicine. I am also interviewing others over here, and when I get back will go over them and our budget with Juha Kokko.

Alex Aladashvili and George Daniela came by. Alex will be the dean of the new medical school to be established by Tbilisi State University. George is the same for the new nursing school that Judy Wold of Georgia State University and Laura Hurt of Grady are working to establish at TSU. I had told them we would help, if they modeled it after U.S. medical schools, with high school, college, then medical school. They agreed to do this, and Alex is the result. Alex is about 40-45, a cardiologist. George is in his late thirties, I judge, and is a physician who is going to set up the nursing school. I gather there were no suitable nursing candidates who had both the qualities the Minister felt necessary plus were fluent in English. Alex and George will spend Feb. and March in Atlanta. One month ago one of our students, Andy Kogelnik, had gathered together a complete set of transcripts of the first two years, and I had sent the first semester of the freshman year to Alex. He was excited about them, because for the first time he could see explicitly the content of what students at U.S. medical schools are taught. He is planning to translate these "class notes" into Georgian for use of teachers and students, and for the senior people to see in detail what a modern curriculum entails. I privately winced at the idea of one student's notes playing such a crucial role, but you have to work with what you have!

We went over the plans for the new medical school in detail (see figure). It is modeled after the Emory curriculum in years 2,3,4,5. The first year is an introductory year. We had a long discussion about the students who would be selected. I argued strongly against them being merely high school graduates, saying they should get students either in other faculties of the

university<sup>4</sup> or graduates of other faculties who have decided they wish to enter medical school. Alex said the new curriculum was a "transition" to the U.S. style, and everything couldn't be done overnight. I said they should aim to get the very best students, especially for the first few classes, and high school graduates didn't fit this bill. He said he agreed, but he had to abide by the rector's wishes, and the transition was from him. We agreed I would make a pitch to the rector. The first year then would be an introductory course for students with all sorts of background. The next day I enlisted the Minister of Health on my side, and next week I am scheduled to meet with the rector and senior faculty.

A point I need to make here is that this school isn't being started from scratch. The university already has an extensive biological faculty, including such usually medically oriented topics as immunology and human physiology. And Georgia has about 30 or so "institutes," much like the National Institutes of Health in the U.S. They include all the clinical fields: medicine, surgery, neurology, etc. The plan is to combine the biology faculty and the clinical institutes into a new medical school. There will be about 30-40 students a year.

We decided the planning from now on will be as follows:

-Alex comes to Emory Feb and March of 1997, spending time with the deans and course directors, and reviewing our curriculum in detail, especially the first two years.

-The course directors for the second and third years will be chosen (viz., the first two years of Emory Medical School). They need to be relatively young and fluent in English. Alex will present to Rector Metrevelli and I will present to Jack Shulman the idea of them coming to Emory 1997-98 to audit the course they will direct starting Sept. 1998 in Tbilisi. (During the 1997-8 school year in Tbilisi the first year of introduction will be given; so the real first year of medical school doesn't start until the fall of 1998.)

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<sup>4</sup>They don't have a general college followed by graduate school, law school and the like. Instead there is a faculty for each subject: law, economics, history, geology, etc. This parallels the medical model, whereby the medical faculty is also separate, and students enter just after high school, as they do with the other subjects.

### Year 1: Background Courses

Subjects	Hrs	Subjects	Hrs
Chemistry	68	Mathematics	54
Physics	36	Philosophy	36
Medical law	18	Sociology	16
History of world culture	18	English	68
History of Georgia	16	Latin	72
Economics	18	Medical informatics	36
Biology: develop; medical; ecology molecular; cytol; histol; genetics.	248	Biophysics	16

### Year 2: Biomedical Sciences

#		Hrs	#		
505 510 540	Anatomy Gross: 200 hrs; Embryol 16; Histology 64	280	535	Physiology	120
530	Neurobiology	60	515	Biochemistry Nutrition 15	150
550	Patient-doctor	60	555	Medical problem solving	48
545	HumaN Genetics	36	605	Microbiology Immunology 32	135

### Year 3: Biomedical Sciences

	Hrs		
Pathology: Pathological anatomy 186 Pathophysiology 120	306	Clinical Methods	120
Pharmacology	165	Microbiology	72
Problem Solving	48	Analytic medicine	30
Human Behavior & Psychopathology	87	Ethics in medicine	30

## Years 4 & 5: Clinical Years

Medicine clerkship	8 wk	Surgery	8
Pediatrics	8	OB-GYN	8
Psychiatry	7	Radiology	2
Dermatology	2	Family medicine	4
Neurology	4	Anaesthesiology	2
Advanced medicine	8	Surgery selective	4
Elective courses	4		

Graduation from Medical School here.

**Years 6 & 7: General Clinical Training Program  
("rotating internship")**

	Rotation	Wks
1	Internal Medicine	<u>36</u>
	Internal diseases	8
	Family medicine	8
	Emergency medicine	4
	Neurology	5
	Gerontology	2
	Oncology	2
	Dermatology	3
2	Surgery	<u>20</u>
	General & ambulatory surgery	8
	Orthopaedics	3
	Ophthalmology	3
	Anaesthesiology	2
	ENT	2
3	OB/GYN	8
4	Pediatrics	8
5	Psychiatry	5
6	Public Health	*
7	Health administration	*
8	Elective courses	12
	TOTAL	<u>85</u>

\* = course of lectures only.

One of the big projects has been accreditation of medical schools and licensure of physicians. When the Soviet Union fractured there was one state medical school here. In the next year about 30 were started. They are small proprietary schools that exist solely for the purpose of getting the tuition money from students, much like pre-Flexnerian U.S. In addition the country is the richest one in the world with respect to health care workers: about one physician per 250 people, or about twice what the State of Georgia has. Same is true with respect to nurses and hospital beds.

Alex summarized where matters now stand with respect to credentialing and licensure:

-A joint commission of the Ministries of Health and Education has done the following:

- Rule of accreditation has been prepared
- Self-assessment questionnaire for medical schools was sent out Oct. 1, with deans to return during the middle of January
- Computer data base for results of questionnaire has been prepared
- Analysis of results will be done early next year and final decision about which schools to keep and which to close

-Rules of licensure of physicians

- Each specialty/subspecialty has formed a committee of 2-3 experts in the field
- Old examinations have been given to them, and they have been asked to come up with new examinations
- A series of three exams will then be given in three steps: a) Multiple choice; b) problems, e.g., chest pain, and examinee will write how to handle the diagnosis and therapy; c) oral examination

-Rules of postgraduate residency training

- Now under discussion

-Establishment of minimal professional standards for undergraduates and postgraduates: next project to plan

Picked up by driver, and went to the pediatric cardiothoracic unit in Children's Hospital #3. This was set up by Joann McGowan, who headed a non-governmental organization Heart to Heart, name later changed to Global Healing. She initially set up a similar operation in St. Petersburg. She brought the Russian cardiac surgeons to the U.S. and other places for training, and then established a pediatric cardiothoracic surgery unit. Until I came across this, I hadn't appreciated the fact that echocardiography was the only specialized equipment needed for diagnosis of congenital defects prior to cardiac surgery. Unlike the need for angiography for adult cardiac surgery. Joann then sent Georgian surgeons to St. Petersburg for training, and with the help of I think about \$300,000 from Coke here in Georgia and other sources, renovated, furnished and equipped a pediatric cardiac surgery unit here. About 20 rooms, an ICU, and two operating rooms. I was quite impressed. Pediatric cardiologists and surgeons from

Emory came over and established the unit about two months ago, and performed 37 operations. Lot of septal defects, tetralogies, etc. A very impressive setup. I spent a day with Joann just before they came over. Just after the unit was set up and operating, Joann went to St. Petersburg and tragically died of a stroke, apparently a subarachnoid hemorrhage. She was determined, aggressive and had her heart in the right place.

I then went to the Republican Children's Hospital ("republican" in Soviet times was the comparable word to "national" for us) and visited the pediatric leukemia unit. This was at the suggestion of Al Brann of our pediatrics department. Includes lymphomas, too, but no solid tumors. About 30 children in various stages of disease, including remission, recurrence, secondary infection, etc. They treat sepsis empirically, since the electricity is so variable the incubator doesn't grow out the blood cultures. Three physicians showed me around; group of eight total. Each had received some of their training in other countries: Italy, Russia, Sweden. I was very impressed by their knowledge. Their two big problems: no CT scan for staging lymphomas, and, most distressing of all, no laboratory equipment and reagents to type the leukemias so as to know which protocol to use. They do the best way they can by playing the odds. To illustrate where their lab stands, they measure hemoglobin by the old colorimetric method, of holding acidified diluted blood up to light in a colorimeter and match up with their eyes. This is the method I used in 1948 when I began working in the laboratory at Wilkes County Hospital in Washington, Georgia. And I suspect the actual equipment and reagents needed are modest, at least by our standards. As I was walking out the building one of the mothers I had met inside sidled up and basically asked if the physicians were doing the best they could for her 9 year old who had just slipped out of remission. I told her how impressed I had been by the quality of the physicians.

Then to our NILC, where we had a "staff" meeting: Archil, Zviad (rheumatologist who is the Georgian Director), Dato (computer person who does software and hardware; PhD from Georgian Technical University; exceptionally able by anyone's standards), Helen (graduate M.D., who came to us for six months about two years ago; aspires to be a neurologist; smart and excited about informatics), and myself. Carol Burns and Zviad have spent a lot of time on pricing and the services to be offered. To give an idea, a "subscriber" pays 10 I<sup>5</sup> a month for: unlimited searching using internet (Ovid and Grateful Med); use of CD ROMs in library; e mail. At the moment there is no institutional charge for medical schools and the like to connect and use Internet facilities as well as access the CD ROMs in the library.

We decided Zviad would come up with a business plan over the weekend, and all of us would review it in detail, and pass it back and forth to Carol Burns for her input. The opening of the NILC was reported widely in Georgian news (due to President Shevardnadze's presence) and a growing number of institutions are desirous of connection, such as the Institute of OB/GYN and others. In addition, we would like to establish regional libraries as soon as possible in Kutaisi and Telavi, the two other large cities in Georgia. The NILC has to be self sustaining, and the only way to accomplish this is through offering services to subscribers and institutions, and through training people in e mail and searching electronic data bases. On the other hand we have to balance this against what we put the NILC there for in the first place: to provide people with

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<sup>5</sup>This is the Georgian letter for "L" and stands for "lari." \$1 USD = 1.30 I. This has been stable for over a year now, and represents a major accomplishment for the Georgian governmental leaders. Inflation is quite low.

access to up to date scientific information. Since salaries are somewhere around \$30 a month, and young people are a prime target, it is obvious we cannot price ourselves out of business. I anticipate a difficult series of discussions as we try to do the right thing.

Dinner at Betsy's. Met Hughes Ryan, a California wine expert who has set up his own wine business here, Aliverdi wine. He has been coming here periodically for many years, and loves Georgians and Georgia. I gather his enterprise is slowly beginning to do well. Georgia was the prime supplier of wine for the entire Soviet Union, but production plummeted from millions of liters to only 12,000 two years ago, as a result of the chaos that followed the breakup: no insecticides, no modern vines, no fertilizer, no fuel for equipment, etc. Another big problem is that the communists in the early sixties decided to go for quantity, to hell with quality. This struck at the very marrow of Georgians, who are immensely proud of their wine. The first evidence of wine making in civilization was some utensils discovered in Georgia with a date of around 4,000 years ago. When I began coming here in 1992 I was appalled at the quality of the wine that was served at every table and consumed in great quantities. Only saving grace was that the alcohol content, as judged by its effect on me, must be about 1-2%, or just the same as the draft beer I drink occasionally at Manuel's Tavern at the corner of North and Highland avenues in Atlanta. There have been several joint venture enterprises in the last two years (e.g., Chalice wineries) that have started producing good to good+ wines that are now quite available.

Friday Dec. 20

Went to office about 10 a.m.<sup>6</sup> Interviewed eight young physicians who are applying to the residency program at Emory. I have met and talked with all of them several times over the last year or two, as they have been studying and taking the USMLE. I didn't plan it this way, but seeing them over time has helped a lot in making up my mind about which are the ones most likely to do well with us. Several of them are students who have spent six months with us, and of course they are known very well by us. In addition, they took the medicine shelf exam when in the U.S., so we have even more information. The statistical information we get over here is the USMLE I and II scores, plus the TOEFEL score (standardized English language test for individuals with English as a second language; indirect IQ test of sorts). The individuals most likely to do quite well make in the mid-eighties or higher on Step I of the USMLE. They always do less well on Step II, which is clinical. I attribute this to the severe lack of modern technology here (and in other countries) compared with us<sup>7</sup>. Their basic science background, plus what they glean from studying texts, is closer to American graduates. I interviewed them, told them we would let

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<sup>6</sup>Georgia kept daylight savings time in order to conserve the precious stores of energy. So the sun doesn't come up until around 9:30 a.m. or later, and stays up until 6 p.m. A contrast to Moscow, where 4 p.m. is pitch black. President Shevardnadze decreed that all government workers cannot start work before 10 a.m., another step in energy conservation.

<sup>7</sup>The students who spend 4-6 months with us then come back and take their final oral examination at TSMU here in Tbilisi. One of them told me of his experience with the exam. The question had to do with how to diagnose and handle a patient with acute renal failure. He gave the U.S. way, a la Kokko, of various tests, analyzing them, following creatinine and electrolytes, etc. He was promptly flunked, because they only use the urinalysis here, and that sparingly! Electrolytes, BUN and the like are either never available, or used only rarely, due to lack of technology, reagents, and knowledge of how to use the information.

them know our decision in January after I get back and go over their scores with Juha Kokko, and we look at how the match for 1997-98 is looking. We have now had six TSMU graduates in our programs, and they have all done well. Two are PGY IIs, two are PGY IIIs (one going to Boston University in nephrology, the other doing critical care I think with us), one is at Yale in neurology, and the other at Hahneman in medicine (got lonely in Atlanta). We appoint them into the preliminary program, which is identical except for one month to the categorical program (one elective month instead of one of two primary care months). I was quite impressed by three of the applicants.

At 11:30 met the Minister of Health and went to eastern Georgia. Nata, a young graduate of the pediatric school who works with Archil in our office, went as translator. Driven in his car by another Archil, who is head of the chancellery of the Ministry of Health. His car is a meticulously kept seven-series BMW that looks new. I was told used BMWs, usually about seven or eight years old, are now brought to Tbilisi from Germany and sold in great numbers. They cost as much as a "comparable" Russian car one year old, and of course there is no comparison. This is a vast difference from even six months ago when I came here. Then, as in 1992 when we first came, the cars used by all officials were the black Russian limousines. All the citizens used Ladhas.

We went at breakneck speed to eastern Georgia, in the direction of Telavi, which is the third largest city. The reason for the visit was for the Minister of Health, the Minister of Roads and the parliamentary representatives to go to the area together and see what was happening and talk to the people. We went to the town of *Dedoplistskaro*, or "the Queen's Spring." I judge the population to be 25,000 or so. We went to the municipal headquarters and were met by the governor of the region<sup>8</sup>. Then the assembled delegation, so to speak, went and visited the hospital.

There were about five buildings, e.g., infectious diseases, surgery-pediatrics, internal medicine/ob-gyn. Formerly 350 beds, now 75 active ones. However I counted a total of about nine patients in all. First went into the internal medicine ICU, one small room with an elderly monitor. Young man of 32, worker, who was admitted with symptoms of fatigue and malaise and a pulse rate of 32. Pulse rate now 50, and I could not get a diagnosis from the cardiologist that I could understand. I was told he was ready for discharge, but he was being kept because they had no other patients and wanted something to do. Then to ob/gyn, where there was one patient. Said they delivered now about 275 babies a year. Formerly much more, but the patients now going to other hospitals or were delivering at home. One patient, two day old baby. Then to surgery: a 14 year old lad, Mamuka, post appendectomy, who plans to be a policeman; elderly man with oxygen, I did not discover his problem. All the buildings were freezing cold, except for kerosene heaters in the few rooms with patients. No electricity. Once again reminded of Washington, Ga., in 1948 with respect to age of the facility (probably built in 30's or 40's). Ancient instruments; gloves washed and re-used. Paint peeling. The Minister of Health had a long hallway discussion with the ten to fifteen physicians (half men and half women). Spoke with

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<sup>8</sup>Georgia was reorganized into twelve regions as a result of the governmental reform, as opposed formerly to about 60 *rayons*, which had been the principal governmental unit. Each region has a governor, etc., and is planned to have a tertiary care hospital and an administrative apparatus for health care, as well as for other functions of government.

them about need for shrinkage, diminished resources, shift to outpatient medicine for many procedures and diseases that now are being treated as inpatients.

The Minister and the delegation then went to town hall to have a meeting, and a man named Omar, an engineer with the health care administration, took Nata and me on a sightseeing tour. Omar also had a BMW; didn't have a speck of dirt on it. He tickled me as we drove along a country road with a lot of holes. He carefully and very, very slowly picked his way amongst them, never hitting one. About three mph. Visited the birthplace and museum of the Georgian primitive painter Pirosmani. There had been a celebration of his 130th birthday a few months ago. The museum, which had no electricity today, had about 30 of his paintings. Skylights gave some light. The guide, a young woman, told many tales about him. Such as Picasso, invited by the Russian authorities to come to Moscow for an exhibition of his paintings, telling them they had a much better painter than himself and they should show his paintings.

Then a tour of a cathedral and nunnery named for St. Nino of Cappadochia, who brought Christianity to Georgia in the fourth century, making it the first or second country after the Roman Empire to have Christianity as its official state religion.

At about 4 p.m. we went back to Dedoplistskaro for a Georgian table. Home of the director of clinical laboratories for the region. The multitude was already assembled around the table, about forty people in a room 12 x 24 or so. I could hear the table groaning from outside. Gigantic heaps of food. Around the table were: the Ministers of Health and Roads; the regional Governor and his deputy; the regional health care director and a number of her people; the chief of police; the chief judge; the regional director of roads; etc. The *tamadan*<sup>9</sup> was a local man who is a famous poet. At occasions such as this someone is chosen as tamadan who is famous for his ability to perform in this role. The one today was no exception. He was a formidable orator, and displayed his abilities with great gusto. He was an opponent of the first president of the country after the Soviet breakup, Zviad Gamsurkurdia, and I could see that he was a redoubtable opponent.

He began by wanting to know what I thought of Pirosmani. I could sense he was taking my measure. I replied I had been immeasurably impressed, and I recounted what I had been told about Picasso. I then said I had been disturbed to discover that Pirosmani never had any formal attachments with women (or informal either, as far as I could tell from the guide), and he died at age 57. Picasso, on the other hand, I said, went from one passionate attachment to the next, and he lived to be 90, and I thought that might be a message to all of us. Telling this was a risk. On the one hand, Pirosmani is loved and admired tremendously both in this region, his home, and

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<sup>9</sup>As those of you who have read these epistles know, a central facet of the Georgian culture is the Georgian table, presided over by a *tamadan*, or toastmaster. Each guest has a wine glass, and as a matter of pride it is kept constantly full over a period of four hours or so, as the affair continues. Thankfully the usual table wine is about 1-2% alcohol. Often supplemented with vodka and cognac, however. There is a strict sequence to the toasts: first to the tamadan, then the people of the house, then the president or presidents if there are guests from other countries, to the dead relatives and friends of the assembled people, to the relatives and loved ones who are elsewhere, etc. This is not exactly the sequence, but you get the idea. The tamadan gives a toast every 2-5 minutes. At times others are expected to respond, and at times the giving of the toast is assigned to someone around the table--a guest, such as me. It is an absolutely fascinating cultural "device." Emotions and other messages are conveyed that in many cultures, such as our own, are done either not at all or in an entirely private fashion.

in Georgia. So any implied criticism would not be favorably received. On the other hand, Georgians are very much into both the opposite sex and old age, so this was a positive. And, since my measure was being taken, I thought I had to say something with a bit of "bite."

The tamadan then gave a toast in my honor. Nata whispered to me that I needed to respond. This caught me by surprise, but my native bullshit ability, tuned and finely honed over many years of experience in an academic medical center, came to my rescue. I said that the coming of poetry in the history of the evolution of human being had been the beginning of art, literature and other higher activities of human beings. It represented the time that human beings moved from the language of food, fight and survival to higher attainments. And, the poet presiding over the table, represented the highest attainments of poetry. Etc., etc.

The work of the table now began in earnest. The Ministers toasted the various functionaries, and so forth. The purpose of the meeting, as I said before, was for the leaders to go out and interact with the people. I thought of it as a Town Hall meeting, Georgian style. At issue was health care. The hospital we saw earlier is typical of what is happening now: few patients; poor facilities; absent technology; no energy; physicians and nurses barely surviving. A new law reforming health care went into effect about a year ago, and our partnership worked with ministry officials and World Bank people in coming up with this law, so I feel intimately involved. A central insurance fund has been created, with employees/employers/government all paying into it. At the moment all facilities are owned by the state, and all salaries are from the state (probably about 15-20 lari a month, or 10-15 US \$ a month. One young physician got up and with great passion declared he and his colleagues didn't give a tinker's damn about calculating copayment, but they took care of their patients and their problems! I felt entirely at home. The weekend before coming over here I had gone to a meeting of the AMA in Atlanta, and heard exactly the same sentiments with the same passion.

This continued for about seven hours total. Multiple toasts, with various points being made by both sides. The wine flowed, but significantly there was no vodka or cognac, and there was no discernible inebriation. Just serious discussion of very difficult problems, all in the context of this unique cultural device of Georgia, the Georgian table. As the end began approaching Nata, who was sitting to my right and translating for me, whispered that Avto (Avtandil Jorbenadze, the Minister of Health) wanted me to lift a toast to the people tonight as my colleagues. I stood up and said that three years ago I had been sitting in the lobby of the Metechi Palace Hotel in Tbilisi, when a young Georgian physician approached me and said he wanted to come to the U.S. to continue his training. If this were possible, he said, he would be outstanding. We took him, I said, and this has indeed turned out to be true. We were proud of him. His name, I said, was Gela Mchedlishvili. There was an instantaneous uproar of approbation, since the Georgians around the table, all from Eastern Georgia, recognized the name of someone from the region<sup>10</sup>. Nata told me that Avto was beaming in the way that a teacher looks when a pupil has performed especially well.

I thought about this as the meeting was approaching the end. I had been conscious of having an

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<sup>10</sup>A Georgian can instantly identify where another Georgian family originates based on the name, especially the ending. Gela is the one who stayed with us a year, then went to Philadelphia. He was very smart, having scored 90 on the USMLE I. He was about 28, and had been a cardiac surgeon over here in Tbilisi.

emotion during the meeting that I had not been able to identify to my satisfaction. Every time I have come over here Avto has taken me on a similar sort of trip. E.g., once to Western Georgia and the town of Zugdidi, which was the nearest town to the Abkhazian fighting. At that time I was taken to attend a reelection campaign for the current prime minister, Pascatsias, and spoke at the meeting. I remember the occasion well. A small theater, heavy velvet curtains, just like a theater in my youth, full of attentive totally quiet people in their sixties and older, people who grew up during the Communist era. The emotion, I think, is that of being taken into the cultural inner sanctum, as it were. A place where the elders of the tribe gather, closed to outsiders under normal circumstances.

Another hectic drive back to Tbilisi, with the BMW's speedometer needle hovering steadily past the halfway mark. At least on my car this would be eighty. A long talk with Avto about health care, future visions of Georgia, and similar discussions. Gratefully to bed at 2 a.m.

### **Saturday Dec. 21**

Stalin's birthday. He grew up about 45 miles from here, in a town appropriately named Gori. I will go there Monday to see his museum.

I spent the morning around the hotel, prolonged breakfast, working on this. Lunch with George Shakarashvili, the young physician in charge of the World Bank project here. We discussed the problem of getting someone to help them set up their hospital systems. I had the idea Bob Parrish, formerly of Grady, might be perfect. Someone experienced and shrewd in hospitals, government and relationship to communities. George was agreeable, saying they were about to sign the agreement about the second World Bank loan (about \$20 million, perhaps), and maybe Bob could be included. I told him the Ministry needed someone who could evaluate what they had, and have frequent dialogues with them about setting up an entirely new system, much as we have been doing about medical education.

Irina Chanturishvili picked me up at 4:30 p.m., along with Giorgi Margvelashvili, a close friend and former schoolmate of Levan, Beso, her nephew, and the grandfather. George has his PhD in philosophy, but now works for an NGO having to do with democracy here. Beso is an inspector with the Georgia IRS. Both of them have visions of going to the US and furthering their education. Tom Bertrand, formerly of Emory and now president of Brevard, knows George well and has spoken with him about the possibility of coming to Brevard.

We went out about an hour from Tbilisi to another nunnery and shrine to St. Nino. Climbed the tower and had a wonderful view. Met an old farmer with a cow he milked; said she gave four liters a day. Flat tire, and spent a lot of time finding a new inner tube. All these little kiosks along the road advertising "vulcanization." Dinner with Irina and her family. A delicacy for dessert of green walnuts, pickled and marinated whole.

To Betsy's, and stoked up the fire. This is the first room over here I have had with a fireplace, and it is wonderful. I dearly love going to sleep with the sounds, and the look of the firelight spilling out over the floor. Not to mention the warmth, given Betsy's penchant for keeping the place cool to keep down on utility bills.

Sunday Dec. 22

Up around 9, breakfast, then read and worked some. Archil Kobaladze came over around 11, and we reviewed what we need to accomplish before I leave. A sizable number. One big problem is the too few evenings for Georgian tables. Always more than I can accommodate.

Lunch with Zviad Kertava, the rheumatologist who is director of the NILC. Alex, the new dean came, and Amiran Gamkrelidze, director of the National Health Management Center, the Minister's think tank. It is also in charge of all the reforms in health care, including credentialing. Prolonged discussion of the various projects.

On leaving I noted the wind was up quite a bit, and the sky overcast. So far the weather here has been wonderful, the best I have known it to be at Christmas. I felt a foretaste of worse weather, however.

Archil and I went to several places to try to find copies of the international *Herald Tribune*, without success. I always feel out of touch with the rest of the world when I am here.

Dinner at Archil's home. I prepared an agenda of the topics we are currently pursuing:

PROJECT	CURRENT STANDING
NILC	Open. Preparing business plan, which is crucial. Need to go to military hospital this week and begin to lay way for telemedicine and visit of Fort Gordon military in a month or two.
Health Care Reform	Now focusing on setting up hospital systems, working out details of health insurance. Proposed Bob Parrish come over as part of World Bank project.
New TSU medical school	Meeting this week with senior faculty. Plan in place for Alex to come to Atlanta. Will present idea of course directors coming to Atlanta. Need to work out where money will come from. Probably TSU. Working on who will be applicants for first classes.
Iodine micronutrient project	Delegation from Emory Public Health School in Jan.
Tuberculosis project	Meeting with Director of TB hospital this week, speaking to him about Hank Blumberg's plans.
City Hospital #2	Container with mammogram arriving 1-2 months; must decide where to put. Bill Casarella of Emory trying to get CT scan from GE or other company. Renovation will be complete in about 2 years. In about a year will need to start planning how to make it into an academic medical center. Some administrative issues need to be decided.
Radiology residency	Meeting this week with Prydon Todua, director of Institute of Radiology. Radiology teaching file arriving in 1-2 months, will be in Archil's keeping for time being.
Neurosurgery	Georgian neurosurgeons sent message to me by member of Parliament a few months ago, and I met with the Chairman of our Neurosurgery Department, who expressed support. Need to meet with them before I leave.
Resident selection	Four acceptable candidates, need to discuss with department on my return.
Tbilisi State Medical Univ.	Lecture tomorrow, meet with faculty and students. Need to work out details of last two who will come this year. They have other wishes which I need to consider in business meeting with their two deans later this week, with Archil in attendance.
Georgia Tech branch in Tbilisi	Meeting later this week with Ramaz Khouradze, rector of Georgian Technical University, to plan where to go at this moment.
Forming NGO in Tbilisi, PVO in Atlanta	Need to talk further with Archil about this, and get process underway. Need to do this so money can flow more freely into projects here from US AID and other potential sources.
Internet	Need to meet with Goodwill Industries over here, who manage the Internet connection. We would like to have our own full channel, but so far cost is prohibitive.
Military Hospital	Need to meet with them with Minister Jorbenadze, and begin to lay groundwork for visit of Betsy Blakeslee and Ft. Gordon military.
Prosthetics Center	Fitzsimmons Army Hospital prosthetics factory shipped 3-4 days ago. Need to talk with head of Trauma Center, and think about getting together with Robin DeAndrade at VA Hospital on return, to set up prosthetics. Georgian has 6000 young people with below the knee amputation due to war.
EMS Center	Doing splendidly. Need to meet with them.

Went to Archil's house for dinner, and discovered a large number of ladies having dinner and a fine old time. It was his wife Nona's birthday. He and I ate as little food as possible, still being stuffed from lunch. Rambling conversation about all sorts of topics, such as Stalin, our

projects, his son Sergio's (age 16) unexpected prowess in baseball.

Monday, Dec. 23

Began the day at the NILC. Sherry Carlin called to say she was in town from Yerevan, and came by to see it. Sherry was our first U.S. coordinator here, in 1993. She was a cardiology ICU nurse who got her MPH at Emory, and wanted to work abroad. She was highly successful for one and a half years, working closely with Georgia in getting the national health reform started. She then became AID director in Georgia, quite a promotion, and now is head of humanitarian aid for AID for the entire Caucasus region, based in Yerevan, Armenia. She told me she spends most of her time in Azerbaijan, since the humanitarian projects have almost stopped in Georgia and Armenia.

Then to Tbilisi State Medical University, and visited with faculty and students in their "college." About three years ago I made a big point about the need for medical students to be well grounded in literature, philosophy, art..... I proposed that TSMU start requiring a college degree before accepting applicants. They did not do this, but promptly changed the title of the school and added the word "university," and began a "college." They showed me the curriculum of the two year college, which includes the subjects I mentioned. When I met with ten students, they also talked about liking painting, and so on. I don't totally understand the college. I gather at the end of the two years the students either go ahead and become nurses, or enter the second year of a six year medical school. The students were bright and personable, albeit shy, but I was struck by their youth. They were children. They need to be in college, not in a medical school. My determination for the new school to accept more mature candidates was reaffirmed.

Then we went to Republican Hospital #1, the adult hospital as opposed to the children's one I visited earlier, and visited the pathology department. We have close connections with it. Rima Beriashvili is course director of the pathology clerkship at TSMU, and spent two months with Whit Sewell at Emory. About 35, smart, personable and beautiful. The director emeritus, and reigning queen, is Tamara. A bit over seventy, holds everyone else in the palm of her hand, and I like her immensely. Very similar to Evangeline Papageorge at Emory, even to looking alike. A four storey building. The hospital was 1100 beds, now shrunk to 350. They did twenty-seven autopsies this year. Primitive equipment. E.g., no Technicon, but staining done by hand. Have to get the reagents on the black market. There was a very nice photography department, although the equipment was dated. Tamara had always put photography high on the list of what was important, and clearly felt seriously all her career her responsibilities as a teacher. She introduced the current director, who she said she had coerced into becoming director when she was seventy. Now, she said, she is having a wonderful time. Does what she wants, and he does all the work.

Then to Gori, Stalin's (syalin) birthplace. Stalin's presence hung over the rest of the day. Gori is about one hour from Tbilisi, about 50,000 or so. The head of pathophysiology led us there, since he has family in Gori. In 1993 I had visited Gori, but the Stalin museum was closed, and I had always wanted to return. Special arrangements had been made for it to be open today. It is now open usually, but not on Monday. Special arrangements had been made for me to see it. There had been a plan during Stalin's lifetime, which he vetoed, to have a museum about him in each of the fifteen republics. This one, the only one I gather, was established in 1956, three

years after his death.

The cottage in which he was born Dec. 21, 1879, is on the premises, encased in marble. I was told this was its original site, although I have some doubts about that. About two rooms, wooden. Father a shoemaker and said to drink heavily. Usual to-do that Stalin really had a different father. Went to Tbilisi to seminary, where he had several poems published. The museum is a large marble building with about five huge rooms, the last one containing his death mask. I greatly enjoyed the pictures that hung around the walls in profusion. I was not prepared for the magnetism that came forth from the pictures in his twenties. I always think of him as old, pockmarked and pudgy, completely unsmiling. In these pictures he was a young Georgian male who leapt from the wall. Photography was not permitted, but I persuaded the guide to let me take one picture of my favorite photo of him. She was in her sixties, and carried herself with authority. I had assumed naturally she could give the permission. It turned out the two silent and unobtrusive policemen who accompanied us had the final say-so. Some things don't change.

We then went to the pathophysiolgist's (Vaktang Kipiani) friends' home, an imposing dwelling in the middle of Gori. Gigantic Georgian table, about 30 people. First toast to the tamadan, who not surprisingly was Vaktang, then second toast to the people of the house, then third toast to me<sup>11</sup>. The NILC was mentioned at some length. Taking my cue, I responded in kind. I told them of seeing a model that was displayed in the Stalin museum. It was a cutaway of a house and a well for water by the side of the house. The cutaway showed the shaft of the well, and halfway down another shaft ran at right angles, and led up to a room with a printing press deep underneath the house. This is where much of the propaganda by Stalin and the other revolutionists was printed. I said it was clear that information and its dispersal had been appreciated by the Georgians for many years, and the NILC was merely the last in the line of what Stalin's press had been an example.

The talk and toasting gathered speed. A youth of about eight came in, said a few words in English to me, and was introduced by a proud grandfather, who said that in his youth they all spoke Russian around the table so the youths would learn it. Now, he said, all the conversation was in English, since everyone was learning it furiously. A large toast was made to Stalin, with talk about pride in him, the things he had accomplished, etc. When I was here in 1993 the museum was closed, because the townspeople couldn't decide whether to permanently close it or to keep it open. They were highly ambivalent then. I vividly remember the initial toast (by this same family) where the first toast was to Stalin. Half the table stood up, the others sat in stony silence<sup>12</sup>. This time I detected no ambivalence, or if there were any, it was well buried. In fact, a man at the foot of the table was pointed out with widespread humor to have been the mayor of the town several years ago, and at a Georgian table for distinguished visiting Americans had made a fervent toast to Stalin. He rapidly became an ex-mayor.

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<sup>11</sup>"Mr. Ken." Georgians usually refer to men as "Mr" (*bayoni*, *batoni*). Physicians are almost never referred to as "doctor."

<sup>12</sup>I had read about this in the guide book, and didn't know whether to stand or sit. I finally stood, since the toast was by my host, but my companions did not. I thought this worked out well, mirroring in fact what the Georgians were doing themselves.

There was considerable discussion, especially in the toasts, about how Stalin was seen to be evil. But the clear consensus of the table was that he was someone in which Gori took pride.

I can see how the problem of integrating Stalin into the life and culture of current day citizens of Gori is extraordinarily difficult. He is the most famous son of the city, no doubt about it. And the killing he was responsible for--and he killed Georgians some think in even greater numbers than people in other republics, simply to demonstrate he had no favorites<sup>13</sup>--is an indisputable fact that cannot be ignored. I will look forward to seeing how this plays out over the years.

As the toasting proceeded once again I was struck by the extraordinary degree to which Georgians display emotions at the table that most cultures keep private. Georgians males are intensely macho, but surprisingly at the table very intense devotion is expressed on a same-sex basis. Obviously not homosexual, but in the U.S. would be viewed as suspicious of such. One toast brought this home: "Russians," the tamadan said, "drink at the table to get drunk. We drink to fondle<sup>14</sup>".

One particularly difficult toasting maneuver is when someone toasts you personally in a highly respectful and emotional fashion. Each person holds a glass full of wine, wraps that arm around the other's, and then simultaneously they drink the wine to the last drop. Do this two or three times and you are out the rest of the night. I am usually astute enough to have two glasses of wine, one with a fairly small amount. I usually cannot predict when this is going to happen, but can hurriedly pick up the glass with the small amount for this ritual. I did it tonight the first time, but didn't anticipate a second one, and so had to drink a large glass of wine<sup>15</sup>.

As the evening wore on I had increasing difficulty about the need to go to the bathroom, given the large quantity of wine I had been consuming. There was no electricity, just two lamps at the large table, and I had not brought a flashlight, which is *de rigueur* in Georgia, so one can be appropriately dexterous in a pitchblack bathroom. I finally gave up and asked to go, whereupon one of the lamps was taken and I was led out, thereby publicly declaring what was happening to my slight discomfiture (would have been greater had I not experienced Georgia the last six years, and had I drunk less at the table).

Back to Tbilisi. Rain pouring, small tin can of a Lada car, windshield wipers not working, cars ripping along at great speeds. Worried again about survival, but once again got home and to bed safely.

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<sup>13</sup>Virtually every Georgian I know had a grandfather killed during the purge in the thirties.

<sup>14</sup>I wasn't at all sure about whether the translator was using the right word here, and asked her the Georgian word: *alersi*, which my Georgian dictionary does define as "to caress, to cuddle, to embrace".

<sup>15</sup>I once saw this happen to Jim Smith, the head of the American International Health Alliance, except it was a huge amount of vodka instead of wine. Jim did his duty, as befits the head of AIHA performing properly in Georgian society, but the results were fairly rapidly what might be expected: virtual coma.

Tuesday, December 24, 1996

Met at 10 with Vaja Doborjginidze, who is head of the Tbilisi health systems. This includes all the city hospitals (non-Republican hospitals) such as the hospital we work with, City Hospital #2, the polyclinics and emergency services. He is readying a plan for how his system will work under health care reform. The plan will include:

- Reducing the number of hospital beds
- Changing how the polyclinics function
- Focus on specific programs
- Public Health
- Emergency medicine services
- Blood transfusion services

I brought up City Hospital #1, formerly 1500 beds, and now much less. "It is a dead hospital," he said. Apparently hopes to have one single municipal hospital, with a number of private ones and the Republican hospitals. Plans to set up a capitation system, if possible. I asked how we could help:

- How should they go about setting up the new systems
- Monitoring system
- Information management

He spoke at length about the lack of individuals trained in western hospital and ambulatory management systems. I brought up the need for a healthcare administration management school, and suggested that would be a good thing for his agency to set up for their own needs, and it could be expanded to meet the needs of other users. I told him it was possible an experienced hospital manager would be coming over under the auspices of the World Bank, and he would be an invaluable source of help.

Then to Georgian Technical University and met with the rector, Ramaz Khurodze, who is one of my favorite people. About 50, energetic, smart, focused on future. His school has about 30,000 students, and is comparable to Georgia Tech in Atlanta. We are working with him on several projects. First, the father of Brian Hage, our office administrator in the Department of Medicine at Grady, goes around the world for his company selling refurbished airplane jet engines to be used to generate electricity. Apparently about 2-3 could furnish a city of 1-2 million people, such as Tbilisi. Mr. Hage had supplied data to Ramaz through Brian, and questions that needed to be answered. In typical engineering fashion Ramaz and his colleagues had analyzed the figures, and come up with the conclusion that Mr. Hage's engines furnished the cheapest electricity available, as well as furnishing heat as a by-product, at 85% efficiency. They can use natural gas and are environmentally clean. All of this is enormously appealing to Ramaz, who is also chairman of the board of the largest steel company in this part of the world, Rustavelli. He is sending the answers to Mr Hage's questions back with me, and it sounds as if they will be doing business.

The second joint project is establishing a branch of Georgia Tech in Tbilisi. I have gotten to know Dean Püttgen at Ga. Tech. He established and is dean of the Ga Tech branch in Lorraine, France. It was begun several years ago as a postgraduate institution closely allied with other engineering

institutions in the region. A new building was constructed featuring the latest facilities for engineering, a dormitory for students, and a house for visiting Ga. Tech faculty. The facility has brought in large amounts of research projects. In addition companies such as Daewoo have built large research facilities associated with the branch. Dean Püttgen and I met in Atlanta about six weeks ago with the deputy rector of Georgian Technical University as well as a minister of science from Tbilisi. Dean Püttgen is preparing a letter of what needs to be done in preparation for a visit from him to hopefully get the project underway. The estimate is somewhere around \$10 million over a five year period, which the dean says can be obtained with the joint offices of Ga. Tech and President Shevardnadze. Ramaz is sending a letter back with me to Dean Püttgen.

We are also collaborating with the NILC. Georgian Tech is the technical resource for the library, and one of their faculty, Otar Zumburidze, is working closely with us. Dato, a junior faculty member, is the technical director of the NILC. We spoke with Otar and Ramaz about the Internet connection problem. We now are connected up with a 14.4 modem, delivering 19.2, for 24 hours a day. The actual Netscape speed today was 9600. The price for a 64 connection today is around \$4500 a month, money that we don't have. We would also need connection equipment costing somewhere around \$15,000. We decided to meet tomorrow with the Goodwill people, who actually supply Internet here, and talk further.

Ramaz said the Minister of Health had given him a clinic building for Ramaz's physicians, who supply health care to all his faculty and students. Ramaz, with characteristic ingenuity, has gotten all sorts of new equipment for it, and is immensely pleased with himself. I will visit it when I come back in April.

Archil and I had lunch at a restaurant that opened two weeks ago. It is amazing, but a plethora of new restaurants have sprung up everywhere. One year ago there was one or two restaurants, now they are everywhere. A good sign of what is happening generally over here. A gigantic difference from when I first started coming here in August 1992. There was, as usual, a beautiful woman running the establishment, and, as usual, Archil knew her well and greeted her with a warm kiss.

Then to the tuberculosis hospital<sup>16</sup> and a meeting with the director. I had met with him in April, and since then Hank Blumberg of our Infectious Disease Division has come over, and they are collaborating on several projects. I met Irakly, who is working with him. Irakly graduated from medical school two years ago, and was trained by Stan Music of the CDC, who spent two years here, in epidemiological surveillance. The meeting in April, my first one with the director, when I suggested we would try to get Hank over, had been distinctly cool. A marked difference today. They have detailed plans for a number of collaborative projects and he is quite enthusiastic. One problem is whether or not they have resistant strains of TB. They don't know at the moment, because the electricity is not on constantly enough for them to do their cultures. Some preliminary data from Russia suggest resistance might be quite high. Hank has just shipped an isolation cabinet for cultures, and plans to help set up the equipment. He will also do

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<sup>16</sup>Tuberculosis is a huge and increasing problem in Georgia. Not due to AIDS, which they have very little of (under 100 cases by their report, but of course screening is not widely used), but in association with chronic diseases and malnutrition.

DNA typing at Emory, and they have applied for funding from the Fogarty Institute of the NIH<sup>17</sup>. Several Emory medical students are coming over for an elective during the month of April, and one of them will work on a project involving AIDS in patients with TB with the director and Irakly. Hank also has prepared a training course in various techniques that one of the director's technicians will come over and participate in at Grady and Emory and the CDC.

I have high hopes for an increasing number of collaborative projects between Atlanta faculty members and Georgians, of which this is a model. There is a wealth of opportunity for our people to collaborate in informative and interesting projects over here, which would serve several purposes: help the people in Georgia; provide Georgian scientists with insights and knowledge of newer techniques; provide our faculty with the opportunity to participate in projects with either different diseases or diseases in a different way than in the U.S. Many diseases in Georgia have been untouched by modern therapy, offering many possibilities for research that will benefit the patients as well as provide new knowledge.

We then had a "staff" meeting of the NILC to go over the business plan devised by Zviad. Present were Zviad, Helen Phagova (Helen spent six months as a medical student at Emory, hopes to go into neurology when she passes the USMLE in 1-2 years), Dato the technical director, Archil, Nata from our office here and myself. We covered these topics:

-Individual subscribers: 10 lari one month, 20 for three, or 30 for six months. They can do the following: use of all printer materials; e mail; browse the Internet; use Ovid and search online; use CD ROM materials; request document delivery (2 lari for less than 10 pages); and download searches including full text material on disk.

-Institutional subscribers: Dial up Internet through our server; have a home page on NILC server; search Ovid if they have a license (we have three to give out); e mail; we will train their librarians; dial-up for CD ROMs; Ovid requests which we will fill; our staff will do troubleshooting for them; certain numbers of their faculty and students may act as individual subscribers. After much discussion we decided the basic package (doesn't include home page, individual subscribers or troubleshooting) would be 100-150 lari per month for this initial period.

-Regional libraries: same as institutional users.

-Workshops we can offer: introductory computer; Medline and Ovid searching; e mail; Internet searching/browsing; individual tutorials.

-Other services we might consider offering: web pages on our server for commercial users (could be in collaboration with Gia Bokuchava's firm in Atlanta); subscription services (e.g., to particular journals, which we would download periodically); maintain data bases, such as

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<sup>17</sup>One month ago the Minister of Health led a delegation to the Fogarty Institute at the invitation of Phil Schambra, Director of the institute. About ten Georgian scientists. Hank Blumberg and I went up for the meeting. Goal was to acquaint the Georgian scientists with what is occurring in their areas in the U.S., and to encourage collaborative projects between US and Georgian scientists. There is a fund of the Fogarty established specifically for this purpose.

epidemiological or other; serve various corporate needs, perhaps access to Lexus-Nexus.

We had a vigorous discussion about the amount to charge. We agreed the NILC had to be self-sustaining, and there was no choice about that. On the other hand, our principal purpose was to offer information services, and we couldn't let other concerns overshadow this. We agreed Dato was to prepare the curriculum content of the courses we would offer, and Zviad would place advertisements for them in newspapers, and all of this would be accomplished by the end of Jan., to start in Feb. We also decided to invite the regional health care directors, who come to the Ministry every two weeks, to a day long visit to the NILC. Archil has already prepared a questionnaire for them to fill out giving their resources. We will move immediately to start planning on signing one or two regional centers up. We also discussed the details of our approximately \$50,000 Soros grant. It includes: salary for co-director of \$18,000 (who we need to identify as soon as possible); about \$9000 for regional library hook-ups and training; \$6000 for Ariel document delivery; \$2600 for multimedia materials; \$7000 for Internet access; and \$7000 for CD ROMs.

I went to Dr. Givi Bokuchava's dinner. He is the father of Gia<sup>18</sup>, and is a faculty member at Georgian Technical University. He is a world authority on grinding, and has published several texts and many papers. He and his wife are two of my favorites. He had a sixty year old Russian cognac saved to celebrate my 60th birthday of two months ago. Wonderful cognac.

Ended the evening by calling Demir Baykal in Istanbul and arranging to spend several days with him in Istanbul on my way back. Moscow is at -30 degrees Centigrade now, and getting even colder. Levan, my friend there, is going to New York for a week, so no reason to return through Moscow. Demir came to us at Emory as an intern, and now has just finished cardiology with us, is setting up practice in Istanbul in January, having just returned a week ago. He called me a week ago here in Tbilisi, and issued an invitation.

Wednesday, Dec. 25th

I am the only guest at Betsy's now. Otherwise closed for painting and renovation. By agreement I get breakfast here every day, but no evening meal (which I rarely have in the hotel anyway). Diesel fuel for generator ran out last night, so I bathed, ate and worked by candlelight. My usual routine has been established. Up between 7-8, shower, breakfast, then work for a couple hours before the day officially begins for everyone at 10. Sun doesn't come up until around 9:30.

Georgians celebrate orthodox Christmas on Jan. 7th, but also genuflect to our Christmas. So three former students (Nick, George and Natia) came up at 9 with Christmas presents for me. We discussed their plans. Two of them have taken one part of the USMLE. Difficult for several

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<sup>18</sup>Gia came to Atlanta to help us about two years ago. PhD from Georgian Technical University and director at that time of their computer center. Went to work for Atlanta firm that makes home pages for various clients (such as AT & T) and keeps them on their server. Gia has had a meteoric rise in the company, and is now vice president for technical affairs. Has an unlimited future. Nino, who works with him, has the same abilities and potential.

reasons: cost of \$920; difficulty of having materials to study, which the NILC will help now<sup>19</sup>; difficulty of having time, electricity to study by; difficulty with their educational background; necessity of going to Turkey to take it.

At 10:30 I had a meeting with Amiran Gamkrelidze in his office. Amiran is director of the Minister of Health's think tank, the National Health Planning Committee. He brought me up to date on licensing and accreditation, just as Alex had earlier. In January the deans of the medical schools will turn in their self assessment questionnaires, and in summer final decisions will be made about which medical schools to keep open, with a three year process of closings. Licensing of hospitals and all other healthcare facilities will begin in Jan 97.

Licensing of physicians has begun with the appointment of 3-4 people in each subspecialty to design multiple choice questions. There will be three stages to licensure: multiple choice questions; written questions involving diagnosis and treatment; and an oral examination. Amiran divides the physicians in Georgia into four groups in terms of licensure and certification:

1. Professors who have the degree of doctor of medical science in the old Soviet system, and who have had at least 5 years of clinical practice. He estimates there are about 200 of these in Georgia, and 70% are over 60 years of age. He plans to give them licensure and certification *a priori*, without examination.
2. Physicians who have the degree of candidates of medical science<sup>20</sup>, of which there are about 1000 in Georgia, but only 50% of which are in clinical practice (rest in research institutes). This however includes some of the leading specialists in clinical practice. Amiran would like to figure how to give these latter individuals *a priori* certification also.
3. Individuals who are just finishing the seven year course of five years of medical school plus two years of general clinical residency (two years of rotating internship; see previously). They will be given a licensing examination (in contrast to the certification examination in a specialty to be given to first two groups). After further training they can take a certifying examination and be certified in a specialty, including family practice. This will establish the procedure that will occur for medical graduates from now on.

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<sup>19</sup>The students from Georgia who have participated in the Emory program will have free access to the NILC.

<sup>20</sup>The Soviet system had three groups of individuals who could practice medicine, as I understand it: 1) Doctor of Medical Science, which most individuals intending to become academicians obtained; and 2) Candidates of Medical Science, a lesser degree; 3) all others, who had the necessary training to be physicians, but did not get either degree.

4. About 25,000 individuals, many in practice, who have neither of the first two degrees, and who have been out of school some years. They include specialists (greatest number) and generalists. The ones who have been practicing a specialty for over five years will be given a certifying examination in that specialty; this includes a lot of people. Amiran estimates less than 50% will pass. Graphically:



Group II will be encouraged to become generalists by a variety of techniques, such as publishing the expectations for qualification to become specialists.

The ones who have been practicing less than five years will be treated as the group in #3.

We then talked about the specialty groups. There are now six important specialties:

Internal medicine; cardiology; general surgery; ob-gyn; pediatrics; neurology.

A group of 3-4 specialists, as noted above, has been formed for each specialty to devise multiple choice examinations, and to determine the residency requirements in each specialty. They are using as source material requirements from the European Union and the U.S. Amiran and I agreed that when Alex Aladashvili visits Emory in Feb and March we will arrange for him to visit one or two specialty boards and residency review committees, so he can see how we do this in the U.S. Alex is in charge of the entire process. We will also arrange for literature from all the boards and residency review committees.

I then visited City Hospital #2 and Iliia, the physician who is CEO. The World Bank is putting over \$5 million into renovating a new shell built some years ago by Georgia, and we plan for it to become a model academic medical center. The World Bank has their own vision, and it focuses more on maternal and child health than an even-handed treatment of all areas of medicine. I was interested to read the bed allocations:

Cardiology	15	Peds	15
Surgery	30	OB	40
Gynecology	15	Neonatology	10
ICU	6	TOTAL	131

There are two old buildings currently functioning as a hospital, and their allocations when the hospital was thriving:

Medicine	120	Surgery	60
ICU	24	GI	60
Cardiology	60	TOTAL	324

Today they have about 90 beds and 30 patients according to Iliia. The rest of the rooms are filled with refugees from the Abkhazian war. They also literally took over the shell that will be built into the new hospital, and getting them out will be a challenge.

The new hospital will be completed the end of 1998, and there is plenty of time to see what happens to the old buildings, and to plan on the specifics needed to make the entire complex into an academic medical center.

Then to the NILC, where we met with the Goodwill communications people. They are our hope to Internet. It will cost about \$6000 a month for a 64 kbs line, with about \$13,000 needed for the connection. We would like this very much, but have to go back to the drawing board to see if we can somewhere find about \$20,000 to fund the initial investment. Once it is up and running, we think we can get enough subscribers to pay the bills. I suggested we could better tell how things would work out after a shakedown of 2-3 months. Then we can make decisions about the future, seeing how the current staff take hold and work out. We also need badly to get an American co-director for six or more months (we have \$20,000 of salary from Soros; the problem is finding a qualified individual who will come, and hopefully speaks Russian).

I met with the medical informatics people of the National Health Policy Management institute. They would like to collaborate in arcane areas with U.S. scientists. I noted they were working on an electronic patient record, and asked that tomorrow they show me everything they have done. Their time would be spent fruitfully developing electronic data bases for patients, a task even we haven't satisfactorily solved.

We went by the English Teachers Society. The monthly meeting of everyone who teaches English.

I gave a brief talk about the importance of learning other languages, and cited my struggles to learn Georgian. Archil said I deliberately put on a thick Southern accent.

At Archil's request we went by to consult on a woman who was thought to have a neurological problem. I decided it was more depression and gynecologic, but prudently said instead she needed the care of a really good physician who would work out her difficulties with her.

Then to a 4 p.m. dinner with Ramaz, the rector of the Georgian Technical University. Three hours, toasts, large amounts of food. Getting fatter and fatter. Jan and Feb are looking leaner and leaner.

Back to Betsy's. I am the only guest now, and Betsy has gone to the U.S. for one month while the house is completely repainted. The staff are having their own personal party tonight. Forty of them. I visited for a short while. Everyone pleasantly tipsy, many toasts. I have known virtually all of them for three years now, and greatly enjoyed the occasion.

Reminded myself it was Christmas day, but it hasn't been. Wanted to call family and friends in U.S., but everyone here is wrapped up in the party and I wouldn't want to disturb their festivities to make my calls.

**Thursday, Dec. 26th**

Went to Tbilisi State University and met with the rector, Roin Metrevelli, and his deputy Temuri Khurodze (brother of Ramaz at GTU). This was a formal meeting for me to state the important points about the new medical school, and for the rector to agree formally. I talked about the importance of college then medical school, and the rector agreed. We discussed the possibility of course directors coming to Emory, the importance of choosing the first few classes carefully in order to begin to produce the leading clinician-scientists of Georgia, and that the first class would probably be 15-20 students. I told him about a dream of faculty from Emory coming over, with housing and salary provided for one or more months period, and collaborating with teaching and research. He said he was building a hotel for this purpose, and we would work together to go to a foundation, with President Shevardnadze's help, and see about getting money. I said \$500,000 to \$1 million would be the neighborhood. I said the course directors were vitally important, should be young people with experience but still highly motivated to achieve a reputation. The clinical clerkships would be even more difficult to set up, I said, because the senior faculty would tend to not want to change, but we would work that out as the time approached. They are deciding now about which hospital to use as the medical school hospital. This is quite difficult, and I decided to have some discrete discussions about which hospitals they were considering.

I said AIHA was planning on having its annual partnership meeting at Emory in Sept 1997, with all the senior health officials and partners from the former Soviet Union in attendance. President Shevardnadze was being considered as being invited to be the keynote speaker, I said, and if he came it would be important for the Rector to come with him, and get to know the new senior leadership at our school, Dr. Johns and Dean Lawley.

To the Partnership Office, then a haircut (an experience), a shoe shine and some sewing on my coat for an amputated button.

Archil and I had lunch with Marina Gudushauri, Director of the Trauma Center of Georgia, and the Institute of Traumatology. She visited us in Atlanta two months ago. She will get the prosthetics hospital that Fitzsimmons Army Hospital is giving to Georgia; it is already on the waters, and should be here in 3-4 weeks. After lunch we went to the institute, and looked at her prosthetics setup.

I was stunned. It is an operation carried out by the International Committee of the Red Cross, and is a self-contained prosthetics shop for limbs. They have another one in Batumi, and a third in Abkhazia. Here for three years. No other prosthetic setup in Georgia. Run by Bernard Matagne, from Switzerland, who is in his second year. They make their own limbs, 5-7 per week. They have trained Georgians to make and fit the limbs. They have done about 300 lower limb prostheses in the 2 years they have been here. A waiting list of two and one-half years, with 750 on the waiting list. Lot of diabetes. They do 20-30 prostheses per month. Statistics:

Below age 20	5%
Age 20-65 years	76
Male	89
Civilian	82
Above knee amputation	50
Double amputees	12
Accident	31
Gun shot	10
Mine	25
Disease	34
War wounded total	36

I was impressed. A flawless operation. We talked about how Bernard will assess the prosthetic factory when it arrives and see how to use it. Robin DeAndrade will come over and the two of them will work together to determine how we can help. Robin had earlier offered the aid of the VA. It is only possible to make 5 or so prostheses by hand a week, as exemplified by the shop here. But a cast can be made of the stump, and digitized with a simple instrument, and the measurements can be sent to the Atlanta VA, which with a computerized machine can turn out up to 20 prostheses a day, with Georgia paying only for the raw materials. The Minister of Health estimates there are 6000 amputees in Georgia, and the waiting list of two and one-half years makes it plain that greater production is needed. Bernard says exact figures are impossible to obtain, but agrees the need is great. I will pass along all this information to Robin. The difference between no leg and a prostheses is so great that it is obvious we need to move rapidly to improve the situation.

Back to the hotel and met with Zaza Kanchaveli, one of the chief neurosurgeons here. His father-in-law, who is chair of the parliamentary committee on science, had met with me in Atlanta during the Olympics and asked me to meet Dr. Kanchaveli, who wishes to establish a relationship with Emory. I had spoken with Dan Barrow, Chairman of Neurosurgery, and he has extended an invitation to Dr. Kanchaveli. About 45, has much experience in pituitary surgery, so will fit in well with George Tindall.

A discussion then with George Danelia, who will be the dean of the new nursing school at TSU that Judy Wold of Georgia State University and Laura Hurt are helping to establish. A severe need. The status of nursing is that of handmaiden to physician. This plan will go in parallel with the new medical school. George and I will meet again tomorrow with Alex Aladashvili, dean of the new medical school, and have some concrete discussions about his plans. George will spend two months with Judy and Laura in Atlanta beginning in Feb.

Then Shota Japaridze came and pronounced my ear well. He does a lot of endoscopic ENT surgery, and we discussed this. He has invited me and the Emory students to come to his country home for a Sunday in April.

A glittering dinner at the Transcaucasian Club. Established by Malhaz, who is a leading interior designer in Tbilisi, and the father of Salome who works in our intern applicant office. A splendid interior, all marble, tile, jade, with rooms designed to look like an English Club. This was practically the first dinner. Rector Metrevelli, Amiran, Temuri of TSU, and about a dozen others. Larry Kerr, the deputy ambassador of the U.S., and his wife Ohmie were there. A good evening. Only mishap was I broke a fractured a tooth, and had a painful time.

**Friday Dec. 27th**

Breakfast with Alex Aladashvili and George Danelia, heads of the new medical and nursing schools at TSU. Focused on nursing this time. The level of nursing here is quite low, with no college graduates. There are about 70 nursing schools, and these are basically trade schools. The two year curriculum will be aimed at senior practicing nurses. Later a four year curriculum will be started. George will spend two months with Judy Wold of Georgia State University, and we discussed what he needed to do before he gets there.

Then to Tbilisi State Medical School, where we discussed the budget of the NILC with Dr. Kipiani, the director of information. I presented in detail the budgetary considerations, and said we had enough money from the AID budget to last until May 1, and we needed their advice and assistance as how to become self sustaining. A long conversation, with him to take this under advisement. They have done quite well financially to my observation over the last four years, and are visibly better off. They have paying foreign students, and make money in various ways.

We went to another building and visited their Military Medicine Faculty, which is a subfaculty in the medical school for turning out MDs who will make a career in the military. The first class started four years ago, and now they have four classes with 30 students per class. The major courses are just as the regular medical students, with special military medicine courses, field training, and courses related to being an officer in the military. In the Abkhazian war most

of the deaths were related to hemorrhage; the medical school rapidly took 60 of its students and turned them into military field nurses, with a big decrease in deaths due to hemorrhaging. They were all volunteers. Three of them were killed. Competition for entering the military medical school is 5 applicants per 1 slot, higher than the regular medical school. There are fifty faculty members. We met the dean, an M.D. who had been in army of the Soviet Union (as a good number of the faculty), who is about 60, and came across as very knowledgeable. Spoke in detail of comparative military medicine in U.S. and Israel, which he says are the best. Proudly showed us the classrooms and special educational materials. Out of about ten faculty who were present one, about 35, Gela Gekia (literal spelling), spoke excellent English. I think he will be quite good to relate to the military when they visit for the telemedicine project. He will e mail me.

Then a rapid stop by the School of Dentistry, when a very skilled (no pain, no wasted time, excellent work) woman dentist fixed my tooth. I fervently trusted the anaesthesia was with a new and disposable needle. Archil assured me this was the case.

To the Ministry of Health, where Avto took Archil and me to the Ministry of Defense. We met the minister, short, carried himself very straight, very dynamic, had been in Soviet army 30 years, then Russian army 2 years, now here. Said to be an outstanding manager. Avto had proposed that we visit the military hospital, but the Minister basically said only with him in attendance--"I will show it to you personally!" This will be a key point in the telemedicine project, and I felt it absolutely necessary to get a feel for it and the physicians. New, opened in March. I was impressed with the Minister's knowing every nook and cranny. He said it was important to him that his men receive excellent health care, and he received a detailed report every Monday from the hospital commander. Obviously sincere. About nine stories, clean, very good facilities. Today had 140 patients; looked to be hospital of 300 bed capacity. No CT scanner. Saw ICU that had patient on ventilator with "internal hemorrhage." Mostly young physicians. Wouldn't let even the Minister go into the operating room suite--a good sign, I thought, since in every other respect he was kowtowed to.

I left impressed with the facility and the people there. I think they will fit in well with the telemedicine project.

Received my ticket to Istanbul on Orbi for Monday. Choice was going on Orbi, a Georgian airline, on Monday, or Turkish Airlines, much nicer, on Tuesday. Decided one day more in Istanbul is worth the discomfort and anxiety of Orbi.

A Georgian meal with Dato Kavtaradze, the medical student who spent six months with us, his mother and sister. We had *cha cha*, the Georgian beverage similar to *grappa*, that is about 120 proof. Dato had made this himself, and apparently this is what all Georgians do. Use the hulls of grapes after they have been crushed for wine, let sit underground in a stone jar for a few weeks, then repeatedly distill it, adding whatever to flavor it. This was flavored with walnuts, and it was outstanding.

Back to Betsy's hotel, then to dinner at Larry and Ohmie Kerr's. Irina Chanturishvili<sup>21</sup> was

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<sup>21</sup>Mother of Levan Vasadze, who lived with me two years and is now in Moscow. Irina spent four months in the Woodruff Library at Emory, and now is the USIA librarian here. Ohmie is head of USIA in Georgia.

there, and Henry Wooster and his wife. Henry works with the human rights commission and spends a lot of time in Abkhazia. The house was decorated for Christmas, and it had a good feeling to be in the setting of Christmas set up by an obviously American hand. Wide ranging talk about Georgia.

**Saturday, December 28, 1996**

Dato Kavtaradze came over and gave me his materials to mail to USMLE in order to take his examinations in Turkey. Mail between here and the U.S. still basically nonexistent.

George Danelia and Alex were by and we had another discussion about the medical school and nursing school (see 2 year curriculum). Finalized an e mail to Judy Wold summarizing their plans and asking her advice. Alex and I looked over the course directors and when they would be coming to Emory.

Amiran and George Shakarashvili came in, and we discussed how to set it up to invite Bob Parrish over, probably in April, to give advice about hospital and health care administration. We agreed on what was needed from me when I get back--his c.v., etc.--in order to do this. Everything seems in place, and now the only challenge is to persuade him to do it.

**SUGGESTED CURRICULUM PLAN:  
TWO-YEAR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM IN NURSING,  
LEADING TO BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE**

**Note:** Two-year professional development program in nursing, leading to Bachelor of Science degree is designed for practitioner nurses with corresponding clinical and theoretical experiences and willingness to improve and advance the professional qualities and competencies.

As many applicants for this program may be employed during their enrolment in the program, to make additional arrangements will be necessary in order to meet the course requirements.

It is expected, that after passing of this program, students will be ready for taking of corresponding exams, necessary for receiving of Bachelor of Science degree.

**YEAR 1:**

**Semester 1:**

- Philosophy (according to Phil-241)
- Legal and Ethical Issues.
- History (History of Georgia and World History)
- Foreign Language (English)
- Mathematics and biostatistics.
- Skills, Basic for Professional Nursing - I, (according to N-216)

**Semester 2:**

- Sociology and Cultural Anthropology (according to Anth-202)
- Basics of Economics.
- Political Science
- Foreign Language (English)
- Skills, Basic for Professional Nursing - II, (according to N-217)
- Elective\*.

**Summer:** - One-month practicum in nursing.

**YEAR 2:**

**Semester 1:**

- Modern Principles and Perspectives in Nursing (according to N-204)
- Clinical Nutrition (according to NTD-221)
- Epidemiology and Public Health
- Research in Nursing (according to N-301 and N-302)
- Principles of Modern Pedagogics and Education.
- Elective\*.

**Semester 2:**

- Nursing in Primary Medical Care and Community Nursing (including N-391, N-392 and N-419)
- Leadership and Management in Nursing (according to Mgt-350 and N-460)
- Research in Nursing (according to N-303)
- Practicum in Professional Nursing (according to N-461)

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\*Electives may be chosen from the departments of Humanities or Social Sciences.

Above curriculum plans had been developed on the basis of corresponding curriculum plans of Georgia State University School of Nursing and curricula of various nursing educational institutions of Tbilisi. Current situation and needs in country's (Georgia) health care had also been taken in consideration.

Beso Zhgenti came by to meet George. He is Irina's nephew, about 25, spent one month in Atlanta as a high school student with Sister Cities. Now a senior tax inspector, and wants to take a World Bank internship this summer in Washington. I asked George to help him.

Lunch with Gia Khechinashvili, Director of the TB Institute, and Irakly Khulordava, his associate. Irakly is 28, married with one child, studied epidemiology for one year with Stan Music of the CDC when Stan was here. USMLE Part I 88 score, which is tremendous. He will take part II next year, and I hope eventually will do internal medicine and infectious diseases with us. The two of them have developed a close relationship with Hank Blumberg of our department. Had a small "European style supra" to use Gia's words, in his apartment. Two hours of good conversation about TB, Georgia and the U.S.

Back at Betsy's I went into the kitchen and felt as though I had stumbled upon the hiding place of Coca Cola's secret formula. They were grinding up walnuts in a sausage grinder kind of machine. Walnuts are a pervasive part of Georgian dishes, and are to be found cooked with spinach, cabbage rolled in small portions, sauce over meat such as chicken, and flavoring cha-cha, to mention but a few. I had always wondered how they prepared the nuts, and there as a huge pile of them ground up in front of me.

Tom Bertrand, formerly the Secretary of Emory, now president of Brevard, had asked if I would see a patient for him. Tom spent six months here in 1991, and had become very close to a number of people here. He is now compiling an anthology of Georgian poetry. His friend is Mamuka Salukvadze, whom Tom rates as the most gifted and important Georgian poet of his time. His aunt and a friend came and took me to his house. I had read the medical material sent by Tom. Mamuka is 45 years old, and in February of this year had been diagnosed with small cell lung carcinoma in Germany. Since then he has had chemotherapy in Germany and radiation therapy in Moscow. He is currently on steroids and morphine. He had not seen a physician in two months, because the physicians here told him they could do nothing for him. As I feared, he was emaciated, extremely weak, was at times quite alert and at other times very lethargic. He constantly smoked. He had every appearance of someone who is terminal from lung cancer. He asked repeatedly "What am I to do tomorrow?" His family were clearly desperate and wanted to know if he could come to the U.S. and get excellent therapy. I spent a long time sitting and talking, trying to decide the wise way to proceed. I simply don't think it a good thing to do to walk into someone's home and a few minutes later, without any data except something written on paper in Germany and observation, tell them that they need to accept the fact they are terminal and plan accordingly. Mamuka's son Luke was there, fifteen years old, two years away from finishing high school. His wife, who is a journalist. His aunt, who used to be an English teacher, his uncle who ran the Tbilisi City hotel before the war. There was also a seven month old wire haired terrier named Deborah with whom I was much taken. I have two wire haired terriers in Atlanta, Jenny and Billy, and I am missing them very much.

I finally said I needed some time to think about the *wise* thing to do, and I repeated and emphasized the word *wise* over and over. I asked Mamuka if he felt up to traveling, hoping to get from him a statement that he recognized that he was at the end, but he equivocated. I tested the waters a bit by saying that at times it was useless for someone to go on long trips if nothing more could be done than them being at home. The uncle mirrored the thoughts of the others as he got up and in much distress went out on the balcony to smoke. I retreated, saying I needed to

think about the wise thing to do, and I would get back to them the next day.

I left much distressed. What I needed so badly was a good physician here with whom he could bond with and trust, and together they could gradually approach the necessary understanding. A similar problem to the woman earlier, who had what I thought were clearly non-organic problems, but I couldn't on the basis of twenty minutes come out and say that; she needed an excellent internist who could examine her thoroughly, do the appropriate lab tests, and then together with her approach the real problem, assuming the workup was negative.

At the hotel another patient whom I had agreed to see was waiting. Sixteen years old, has two uncles and a mother who, as nearly as I can ascertain, have a progressive neuromuscular disease with onset in the teens or twenties, and by the sixties they have much difficulty, but are still not wheelchair bound. A bright and alert lad without evidence of neuromuscular disease on the basis of the examination I was able to make in my hotel room. A handwritten note reporting an EMG some years ago reporting "myotomia," with much spontaneous muscle activity.

I feel tremendously uncomfortable seeing patients in these circumstances for a variety of completely obvious reasons: no good data; inability to perform appropriate physical and laboratory examinations; I won't see them again; and a reluctance to do anything that would undermine the relationship with physicians they see here. A very difficult situation, but one I am certain is faced by any physician visiting other countries. In fact, I am a veteran of similar situations in the Philippines, in South America and in Washington, Ga., when I visit there. One needs to behave with the greatest of care, but I have never found a decent reason to refuse to see someone. That would be viewed as overt discourtesy, and if done right I think it can be positive. But damned difficult.

I told the lad and his father to gather all the information on past workups, and to get all the information from workups done in Moscow and the U.S. on the uncles. That I would be happy to review all of it when I return in April and see where we stood then.

I then had an inspiration. I know the lad's father quite well. He is a well known surgeon here, and has visited us in the U.S. On my return from seeing the poet Mamuka I noted that his aunt had related warmly to the physician. It turned out they had been in school together. I have a lot of respect for the physician. He is warm and compassionate. I told him about Mamuka, and asked him if he would consider basically being responsible for his medical care. I said he needed an excellent internist who he could trust and relate to. To my delight the physician agreed, and told me in a fashion I trusted that he would see to everything. He will refer Mamuka to a friend who is a pulmonary physician, "who has a large heart," and he himself would make sure Mamuka got whatever was needed.

I felt I had done everything I could do in a situation that is immeasurably distressing.

I had drinks with Irina and Beso, and talked again about his getting a summer internship in the World Bank. I like Beso a lot. He is bright, ambitious and determined.

Nine of the Georgian students who have spent six months on clerkships with us took me to a pub that had been set up by one of them, Temuri Megreladze, and his friends. In a house several centuries old, using upper part plus the cellar, which was magnificent. We talked about their

methods and ambitions of passing the USMLE; several of them have passed one part, and one has passed with high scores both parts. I have gotten to know all them quite well now, as well as their families. I have a lot of respect for them: serious, sincere, devoted to becoming good physicians.

Saturday Dec. 29, 1996

Alex and George came over and we finalized where we stood at the moment with the nursing school and medical school. George is sending a long e mail to Judy Wold at Georgia State, and won't do much more here until he goes there in Feb. Alex and I agreed, depending upon agreement of Jack Shulman and the people at Emory, upon the following visit schedule for course directors:

1997-8 academic year: 5 faculty

Fall: 3 faculty.

Anatomy (gross; embryol)  
Biochemistry  
Physiology

Spring: 2 faculty

Neurobiology  
Cell biology and histology

Patient-doctor course: Alex will go over in Feb.

Problem Solving: one of faculty monitoring another course

1998-9 academic year: 4 faculty

Fall: 3 faculty

Microbiology  
Human behavior  
Pathology

Spring: 1 faculty

Pharmacology

Clinical Methods: Alex and one other faculty member

Analytic medicine: Alex and one other faculty member

Pathophysiology: Alex and one other faculty member

1999-2000 academic year: 4 faculty

OB-GYN  
Medicine  
Pediatrics  
Surgery

Alex Aladashvili's visit components Feb. 8--March 23, 1997:

- Curriculum at Emory
- Cardiology at Emory: ? joint venture with Georgian patients, etc.
- State of Georgia Licensing Board
- American Board of Internal Medicine
- Residency Review Committee in Internal Medicine
- American Association of Medical Colleges--Dr. Kasselbaum
- National Board of Medical Examiners

The World Bank has agreed to pay for his visits to ABIM, etc., which we will plan to be during his last week, with a flight then to Poland. A group of surgeons and cardiologists are visiting a cardiac cath lab and cardiac surgery unit there, with the view of setting up same in Tbilisi. Alex is a leading cardiologist and will participate.

I will do the following upon my return: get literature from Boards and RRCs of: medicine; cardiology; general surgery; pediatrics; neurology; ob-gyn, to send to Amiran and Alex in Georgia as they move along with planning residency training and specialty certification.

I had invited Vaso over to talk with me. Vaso spent six months a year ago at Emory, and is planning to go into OB-GYN. He and others had mentioned to me that his family had been closely connected to Stalin, and I wanted to hear the story. His great grandfather was a very wealthy man in Gori. Stalin's mother and father lived in his house, where she was a house maid. Stalin was born there, and a persistent rumor has it that Vaso's grandfather was Stalin's father<sup>22</sup>. Stalin grew up with the grandfather's two sons. The grandfather paid for Stalin's schooling in Tbilisi, where he went to the seminary. The grandfather died around 1910, before the revolution. The grandfather's name was *Koba*, and Stalin called himself by that as he was a young guerilla, and later named his oldest son Koba. Stalin made one of the grandfather's sons *commandant* of the Kremlin, head of his security, and the other co-president of the presidium of Georgia. Vaso also said the "cottage" that is encased in marble at Gori, and has the signage that it is Stalin's birthplace, was actually built by the communists in the 1930's. They didn't want it know that Stalin had been born and grown up in a wealthy family and house. Once again..... The family still has a lot of Stalin's letters and poems, all unpublished, and other materials. They prefer to keep them private and have not made them public.

One of the officials of Tbilisi State Medical School came over. He and I had discussed some areas a couple of days after I arrived, when I had just come from the ENT physician and wasn't feeling well. We now had to finalize some areas, and I was prepared for some difficulties. Archil had agreed to be present, but when I called him he said "I have some things to do around the house and can't come." This annoyed me something fearsome, since I recognized this for what it was: he didn't want or intend to participate, since he and they view each other with at best mutual suspicion, and downright hostility most of the time. This left me without a translator, which was the source of my anger, since the official has fractured English and I have the Georgian vocabulary of Downs syndrome.

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<sup>22</sup>Vaso and I agreed that even Stalin's mother might not have known who was the father, and that DNA testing of his family today would prove conclusively the parentage, if anyone is interested.

The first issue had to do with which students were to come to Emory in the Spring. When I was here in April we had gone through our usual rigorous selection process<sup>23</sup> and selected five students for this year, three of whom have been at Emory since the end of September. One of the two remaining wishes to bring her husband, and I explained this was not in the agreement and we do not have the facilities to put up married couples. If they wish to come (and the husband is a really bright economist who wants to take English and business courses at GSU, which we don't oppose) they need to pay for their own lodging. The second issue is that they don't want to send the fifth student who had been selected ("he isn't that well prepared or smart") and wanted instead to send the daughter of one of the high officials of the school. I explained repeatedly that we had agreed upon the process, they had put the student forth as acceptable, we had accepted him, and that was that: no one would be taken except who had gone through the agreed-upon process. I don't think I ever got across the concept and philosophy of selecting students fairly, but I got across the point the lad would come and the official's daughter would not. The ball now went to the medical school's court. Yesterday my visit with the Ministers of Health and Defence to the military hospital had been aired on the evening TV, and the leadership of TMSU was severely upset because I never appear on TV with laudatory remarks about TMSU. I was told<sup>24</sup> this caused much gnashing of teeth in the board room. I said I could see they had a good point, and that I would be happy to make laudatory public statements about parts of the school that I do think are excellent, but they had to come up with the forum--I couldn't.

The Rector wants to come to the U.S. and visit Emory for 2-3 days in April, and I agreed we would be delighted to see him.

Then the official, whom I actually like, took me to the old house where Stalin and his comrades had their printing press, the cutaway model of which I had seen in Gori. He had taken the trouble to locate the house, find the caretaker, and persuade him to open it up for me on a wet, overcast rainy Sunday. I was ecstatic. It was near the Metechi Palace Hotel, where I used to stay before Betsy's came into being. It had been transformed into a museum, but the caretaker said I was only the second person who had come to see it in the last five years. They had a cottage built over the well, and I looked down into the well. Seemed about 30 feet deep, only three feet across, encased in bricks. Then the house. They had what was put forth as the same printing press on display (but I had my doubts after the cottage tale), although it was unquestionably of the same vintage. Pictures and maps. I took pictures, but there was no artificial light, and an overcast day, and I had a lot of problems with focusing.

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<sup>23</sup>Set up by agreement at the beginning of our partnership. The School advertises the elective to Emory, gives any candidate who applies a rigorous test with an English essay and oral exams by the major specialties, then I interview those 10-15 with the highest scores. The School also provides me with their GPA (a new concept at the time) in selected courses. I take this information to Atlanta where the final decision is made of whom to accept.

<sup>24</sup>An underlying not-spoken-about issue is that five year elections at TMSU are coming up in a few months, and comments about excellence will be greatly and understandably helpful.

Georgian higher institutions elect their rector, as happens in many other countries. Ramaz Khoradze of Georgian Technical University explained to me there was a body composed of faculty and students (the "senate") in his university who elected the rector.

I went to see *Peplum* the Arabian stallion I ride when over here. I hadn't this time because it was too cold. In good shape, and raised hell and refused for us to enter the stall because he was eating. A feisty animal, who is quite tractable though highly spirited when not eating. Lasha and Dato are the people who manage and are part owners of the horse stables. It has a hippodrome, and occupies about five acres in the middle of downtown Tbilisi. They also have a large farm one hour from Tbilisi with about 300 horses. I have wanted for two years to visit it, and promised myself I would do so on my return in April. They are struggling to make it as a breeding, training and racing farm. They are just breaking even. We had the usual *supra*, with about five of us. A wonderful dish called in Russian something like "osspray" ("rapid?"): an iron pot full of small bits of beef in a subtle barbecue kind of sauce, boiling as delivered to the table. I ate sparingly since I knew I had two more supras in the next few hours, but it was difficult.

Dato, the technical director of the NILC, took me to his home for a *supra*. Dr. Bokuchava and his wife were there, as well as Dato's wife, two month old son, mother, father, and in-laws. There was also Jock, who I immediately discerned to be, in James Heriot's terms, the "boss dog" of the household. Everyone paid him deference, and he raised hell with me once for having the temerity to offer (at a safe distance) to pet him. Heriot's tale about boss dogs is fabulous, and should be read by everyone. I have met four or five of them in my time, and they are singular animals.

Dato, his wife and 2 month old child live in an apartment (which the family owns) with his mother and father, his 22 year old brother and his grandmother. There are four rooms plus a tiny kitchen. At night one or more sleep in every room. This is typical for Georgia. I have never found an apartment occupied by only one couple. The comity amongst the extended family members is remarkable<sup>25</sup>. With an average income of \$20-30 a month, I wonder how and if young married couples are going to establish separate households. I wonder if "double wide" trailers from the U.S. will affect this. Somehow I can't imagine Georgians taking to the trailers.

Back to Betsy's and a long talk with Zviad about the NILC: its budget, future, survival, leadership. We need to sell various services, and he thinks the Ministry of Communications will not allow this, and itches to go into battle. I suggested he get all his facts together, figure out exactly what we want, and then let Avto, the Minister of Health, do the negotiations, if any are needed.

Dinner in the Minister of Health's home, with Guram and the Deputy Minister of Justice. I like the Minister's wife, Nino, immensely. She is a public health physician who works in the Ministry, and is full of vitality. Archil and his wife Nona were there. We had a several hour talk about many issues. At a toast I laid it on Avto that I was counting on him to take the NILC under his umbrella and that I was leaving it in his hands. He made some satisfactory remarks about how I could count on him to see to it that the NILC thrived. I also made a dig at Archil's behavior

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<sup>25</sup>And in contrast to Georgians abroad, who by reputation and my experience are extraordinarily fractious amongst themselves. I always have to inquire who is getting along with whom before knowing who to invite to Georgian get-togethers. Another area of frequent discord seems to be Georgian fathers and their sons. One of the Georgian house officers in Atlanta hasn't spoken with his father in a year; his wife does the communication. When I mentioned this to Archil he smiled, shrugged his shoulders and murmured something about "Georgian sons and their fathers...."

about not coming to meet with the TMSU person. I followed up on a toast the Minister made lauding Archil, by saying he was my mentor, my teacher, my friend, my savior<sup>26</sup>, at least if the activity didn't involve the people at TMSU. During the evening Avto got a call about the people being trapped in snow in the Caucasus mountains. About 300 of them were trapped in a tunnel by an avalanche, due to the huge amount of snow and bad weather in Europe during the past few days.

Monday, Dec. 30, 1996

Up early, packed, down to the airport, off for Istanbul. Demir Baykal, a house officer and cardiology fellow with us who just returned to his home in Istanbul two weeks ago, had called me in Tbilisi and invited me to spend a few days with him on my way back to Atlanta. I had planned to go through Moscow, but Levan had gone to New York and a look at the weather left no doubt in mind: Moscow low was -5 °F, with a high of 10, and much snow. The flight is a bit over two hours, and is one of several ways to get into and out of Tbilisi, the others being: Moscow; Vienna; Cologne; and Amsterdam. I had earlier had a talk with Larry Kerr about airlines. He had just spoken with Delta, who is exploring having a joint venture with a feeder airline into Tbilisi, such as Orbi. He said British Airways had already signed an agreement to start flying in sometime soon. Turkish Airways from Istanbul and Germania from Cologne are the only two truly Western type airlines flying in now. I could go to Istanbul on Orbi today (a baby Flot, i.e., a spinoff of Aeroflot), or wait until tomorrow and go Turkish Airways. Since it came down to an extra day in Istanbul, I decided to do the Orbit bit. An old Russian Tupelov. But only about ten of us, and a good flight.

Left Tbilisi at 50 degrees, an absolutely gorgeous day. Arrived in Istanbul in 40's, rain. I was met at the airport by Demir. It turns out his uncle is one of the two or three most powerful politicians in Turkey, and I had been designated a "distinguished visitor" of the city of Istanbul, an honor which carried with it a fat black Mercedes belonging to the Chief of Police, and one of his drivers. The chief benefit became apparent rapidly. Everywhere we went there were hundreds of sightseers waiting in line for literally hours. We parked in front of the entrances, were whisked in back entrances and taken to the head of lines. I estimated I saw more in three days than an ordinary tourist would see in two weeks.

I had never been to Istanbul, and was unprepared for its beauty and charm. My friends in Georgia had said repeatedly it was the most beautiful large city in the world, and I instantly agreed. I felt immediately comfortable and at home in a beguiling city. Similarly I feel raped in Moscow, a dirty, mean, ugly and unpleasant city, with most of its people to match.

A tiny bit of history about the city in order to put in perspective the places I visited. It stands on both sides of the Bosphorus strait, which basically connects the Black Sea (and thereby Georgia) with the Mediterranean. The city sits astride both sides of the Bosphorus: the European side and the Asian side (which formerly was called Asia Minor). It was founded around 660 BC, although

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<sup>26</sup>I told here of the first time I met President Shevardnadze formally. I had essayed a joke that Archil would not translate. The joke in fact had more truth than even I suspected at the time. I said our partnership was reminiscent of the first time Adam and Eve saw each other naked, Adam shouted at her "Stand back, stand back! I have no idea how big this thing is going to get!" (Archil was right.)

earlier settlements had existed for probably 5000 years, and called Byzantium<sup>27</sup> in honor of the leader of the Megarians who settled there. A century later conquests began: Persia; Athens; Sparta; Alexander the Great; Rome. The Roman Emperor Constantine began extensive development of the city, and at a tremendous celebration on May 11, 330 AD, it was named New Rome and designated the capital of the Empire. When Constantine died in 337 it was named Constantinople. This name evolved over the years as: Stinpolis; Stinpol; Estantul; and eventually Istanbul. Constantinople became known as the religious capital of the Empire and Rome and the pagan capital. In 395 AD the Empire was divided by Theodosius I into Western (Rome) and Eastern (Constantinople). The Western Goths attacked, but were effectively assimilated. The Huns attacked in 440 AD, but ultimately were defeated with the death of Attila. Around 451 the effective religious division of the Church into West (the Pope) and East (the Archbishop of Constantinople) occurred, with the two being considered equal. Western Rome was swept off the stage in 476, effectively leaving only Eastern Rome, or Constantinople. Justine became emperor, and enlarged the empire with crusades. Constantinople became a milestone on the Silk Road between China and India. Basileios, a Balkan Slav, conquered the city and his heirs reigned from 867-1056. The first crusaders arrived in 1096. A complicated history ensued until basically the establishment of the Ottoman Empire by the Ottoman Turks occurred somewhere around 1299. Their empire was established firmly by Mehmet II the Conqueror in 1453, and lasted until 1918-23, the period after World War I. The Ottomans were on the losing side, and the last sultan was exiled.

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<sup>27</sup>As one might expect, I have become quite interested in the history of this part of the world since I started coming here in 1992. I began to read *The Icon and the Axe*, an "interpretive history" of Russia by James Billington, the Librarian of Congress, and discovered I had to understand the earlier history of Istanbul, since in effect much of Russian culture and religion came from Byzantium. Tom Burns, Carol's husband and historian at Emory, has just put me onto a new book *The Creation of Byzantium*, which I purchased just before I left. This figured importantly in my decision to visit Istanbul, and get a feeling for the places I plan to read about in the next few weeks.

5000 yrs	Settlements existed in area.
660 B.C.	Byzantium founded by Megarians, named town for their leader
560	Conquered in succession by: Persia; Athens; Sparta; Alexander the Great; Rome
May 11, 330 A.D.	Named New Rome, designated capital of the Empire. Developed extensively by Emperor Constantine
337	Named Constantinople when he died. Name evolved over the years: Constantinople; Stinpolis; Estanbul; Istanbul
395	Empire divided by Theodosius into Western (Rome) and Eastern (Constantinople).
	Goths
440	Huns
451	West (Rome) and East (Constantinople)
	Justine emperor; crusades; milestone on Silk Road
1096	First Crusaders
1299	Ottomans
May 29,1453	Mehmet II the Conqueror firmly established Ottoman Empire
1918-23	Deterioration of Ottoman Empire after WW I
1923	Mustafa Kemal Attatürk

\*This account of the history of Istanbul is from a guide book and may have a lot of errors

### Summary of History of Istanbul

A military officer, Mustafa Kemal Pasha, forged a new nation during that time, and he was later given the name Atatürk (the first Turk, or the most important Turk, etc.), and is known to us as Kemal Atatürk. He is revered by the Turks even to this day, and has been immortalized by them. He made Turkey what it is today. The Ottomans were both secular and religious leaders, and the Muslim religion was a pervasive secular influence. Atatürk said this would no longer be so: the government would be secular, and religion was absolutely banned from any influence or power in governmental affairs. The military has had a powerful voice ever since, on three occasions taking over the government for a period of time. The current Prime Minister of Turkey is a conservative Turk who speaks loudly of the importance of Islam. He is the first Islamic leader of government, and there has been a lot of worry in the West as well as Turkey that this portends a significant Islamic slant to the government. I was interested to read during my visit that the top military officer made a firm statement that "Atatürk secularism is the way of this country, and any religious involvement in governmental affairs will not be tolerated." This was widely viewed as a warning to the Prime Minister.

The second thing Atatürk did was to change from an Arabic alphabet to the Roman one we use, in order to make Turkey a more European nation. I was stunned to hear this. The alphabet of a country is tied inescapably to its culture, to its very marrow. I cannot imagine any other leader in the history of the world doing such a thing. The man was such an incredible leader that this happened uneventfully, and today Turkey is either the only or one of the few Muslim nations with the Roman alphabet. He virtually always had 80% public support, which is another feature I find remarkable and unbelievable. I read on several occasions in the *Turkish Times*<sup>28</sup> people saying "we need another Atatürk." I came to understand this sentiment as I read about the current politics of Turkey--in fact, we could use an Atatürk in a lot of places in the world! He came from humble beginnings, went to military school, and took up a military career. He must have been an incredible human being, and I cannot wait to read more about him.

Our first stop was the Topkapi Palace. The construction was started around 1473 during the time of Mehmet II. Until about 1850 this complex--a small city-- served as the administrative center and living center of the Ottomans. The accomplishments of the Ottomans--the second longest empire in the history of the west, the longest being the Roman--revolved around their administrative talents and wisdom in handling the countries they conquered. The breadth of their administration can be gathered by a listing of the structures in this palace complex, all of which are separate buildings: the ceremonial court, where important state ceremonies were held; the Court of Justice, containing the imperial council chamber, the Registrar's Chamber and the chambers of the Grand Vizier; the tower of justice; the imperial treasury; the barracks of the crested halberdiers; the royal stables; the imperial treasury, where all the money was minted; the gigantic kitchens, which daily served 4,000 meals, which now have displays of the plates and utensils used, most of them gold and china, encrusted with precious jewels, of which

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<sup>28</sup>This ten sheet newspaper was free in the hotel. It has a lot of articles from Reuters and other news services. There were a lot of lengthy political analyses, probably more than usual since it is the end of the year and the new year is upon us. I found it the best newspaper of its sort I have ever seen. It ranks with the *Times*, *Post* and *Herald Tribune* in my estimation. Hot items included: the accidental death in a car of a much sought-after hoodlum, a high security official, and a congressman, all riding together in the same car; the Kurdish problem and the US; relations with Greece over Cyprus, etc.; the ascent of Madeline Albright and what that means.

emerald is the favorite; the throne room; the library; the Privy Treasury; the Circumcision Room<sup>29</sup>, the library, the harem, with gates and living quarters for the eunuchs. And countless other buildings. I was overwhelmed by the splendor of the buildings, their decorations and the displays of china, silverware, gifts of all sorts and living accoutrements that were used daily by the sultans and their household.

We next went to the Basilica Cistern, a gigantic underground cistern built by Justinian. It is huge, 210 x 420 ft, with 336 columns supporting it, and having a depth of 60 feet or so. A remarkable sight.

Then the Blue Mosque, and finally the Covered Bazaar. A gigantic complex of small businesses that has been present for hundreds of years. Everything imaginable: rugs, gold, jewelry, leather, artwork, dresses, etc., etc. Haggling was the order of the day. Demir says even if your best friend has a store there, you won't get any favors. I discovered one US \$ is worth 100,000 Turkish lira. This gave me great problems, since my mind simply cannot contain the fact that 500,000 of anything is only \$5.

Checked into the Ceylan International Hotel, then went with Demir and had dinner with his friend Ferit, about the same age. Ferit was Demir's roommate when he first came to Atlanta. Manages the land and building assets of a large construction company. Worked as a deputy in Fulton County when he was in Atlanta, working with youngsters in trouble. Articulate, politically with it, and will probably be an important politician in the future. Knew Max Cleland well when he was here, and is very up on US politics. Ate in a new restaurant on a hill overlooking Istanbul. A beautiful sight. Then drinks at an old Ottoman palace on the Bosphorus that has been turned into a fantastic hotel and convention center.

Tuesday, December 31, 1996

Visited the Dolmabahçe Palace this morning. Building completed in 1856. Took the place of the Topkapi palace as the residence of the sultans and the administrative center of the Ottoman Empire. Everything was under one roof, including the harem. Two hundred eighty-five rooms. Now a state museum. Receptions for visiting US presidents, e.g., George Bush, held here. The splendor of the buildings, furnishings and instruments of daily living was disturbing and nauseating. And incredible. Wealth beyond my imagination. Rooms that were gigantic, with Persian rugs that were massive woven for them. Baccarat crystal chandeliers weighing 4 tons. Diamonds that were huge. Clothes made of the finest silk, and adorned with gold and jewels. Silver and gold and crystal tea sets *ad infinitum*. A library containing huge numbers of illuminated manuscripts from the beginning of the art form. We spent a long time visiting the harem. Forty or so women. The principal one was the *Valide Sultan*, or mother of the sultan. She presided over the establishment. Then about four wives. Then the favorites. Then the "important women," who came after the favorites. Then the concubines, several of whom slept in rooms together. Down through the important women each one had her own apartment. The children had their own part

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<sup>29</sup>All Muslim males are circumcised, but unlike Jews, this is done somewhere between ages five and six and ten years of age. The ceremony, unbelievably, is greatly looked forward to by the victim, I was told, because a large amount of gifts are given. Everything he asks for during the preceding five years is promised on the occasion. Afterwards he is placed in bed and tended to with much solicitude and attention.

of the harem, with rooms for their teachers. A concave seven foot tall mirror for one of the sultans, who was six feet tall and weighed 350 lbs, but who liked to look into the mirror and feel he was getting thin. The guide made the point that no one left the service of the sultan's harem and wrote books telling what happened there. So the sociology is guessed at, but not known. The reigning sultan, and all of them were directly descended from the first, chose the son who would be the next sultan, and rumor has it that sometimes he ordered a competing son killed.

An unimaginable way of life.

Then to the Hagia Sophia (the church of "divine wisdom"), the magnificent church built first during the reign of Constantine in the fourth century. Burned in 404, rebuilt in 415. Burned and again rebuilt in 532. A thousand masons and ten thousand apprentices worked on it. Consecrated in 535 by Emperor Justinian. Repaired, portions rebuilt, restored and expanded many times since then. I remember reading about its importance in 1952 in my history class at Emory at Oxford. An awesome building, especially considering when it was constructed.

Then to the Archeology Museum. One of my favorite places. It has a magnificent series of displays on the archeological findings at Troy, and for the first time I began to understand the significance of Troy. Also sarcophagi from Sidon, from around 3000 BC. Literally hundreds of carefully constructed displays with English texts of the important times in the history of Istanbul, including Troy and other important areas in Turkey. They have what they maintain is a replica of the Trojan horse.

Lunch followed by tea in various places. I enjoyed watching the people. Demir says the average salary is \$300 a month or so, but there is a huge underground economy that brings each person somewhere around the same amount.

Strolled along Baghdad Street; Demir grew up and now lives a block off it. The equivalent of New York's Fifth Avenue and similar glittering streets. Called such because it was the beginning of the road to Baghdad during the years of the Ottoman Empire.

Dinner at Demir's home with his father. Age 83, ob/gyn for many years. I had met him a couple of years ago in Atlanta.

New Year's in the club on the top of the roof of my hotel. Much dancing and festivities. I could look out over the Bosphorus, a narrow strip of several hundred feet at this point, and fantasize about who went up and down it two thousand years ago. Wonderful.

**Wednesday Jan 1, 1997**

Fog so thick you could cut it with a knife. A quiet day of sightseeing around the Bosphorus. Visited various palaces and other places of interest. Lunch on the Black Sea. Dinner with Demir's brother Ahmed and his family. Home with Hassan and Demet, Demir's brother-in-law and sister. Hassan runs a family business of a sawmill. We talked at length based upon my knowledge of sawmilling from my youth.

Istanbul *is* a fabulously beautiful and beguiling city. The combination of the Bosphorus, its ancient roots, the mosques, the sexuality of the sultans and their harems and the powerful fascination their life style has, and the story of modern Turkey make a potent mixture. I shall return.

Thursday, January 2, 1997

Up at 5 a.m., waited two hours for fog to lift, then Istanbul to Frankfurt, changed planes and on my way now to Atlanta.

A good time to reflect upon our Partnership and where we now stand from my perspective.

- Georgia: its leaders are an extraordinarily able and tough minded group of people who have the capability of forming a country that will be the linchpin of the Caucasus, and one of the most influential countries of all of Eastern Europe. They are smart, highly motivated, visionary and immensely shrewd.
- What we do is to go there with our knowledge of what we have to offer, take a look at the problems, and engage in a prolonged dialogue, with many visits on both sides over months and years, and ultimately jointly decide what we have to proffer to Georgia. The Georgians take our contributions, their problems and their culture, and come up with plans. This process takes time and patience, and evolves slowly. You can't look at a problem now and predict where we will all be with the solution in months or a year or two. What is obvious about a problem a year after you begin looking at it wasn't seen at all initially.
- Our NILC is the anchor of many of our efforts. It will provide the requisite modern information, without which a modern society cannot be built. I am vastly pleased with where we are now. The next year is crucial. The NILC has the potential of transforming many areas of Georgian life if its full potential is realized. It will require vision, management skill, luck and a helluva lot of hard work for the potential to be realized. I am keeping my fingers crossed that all of us do the right thing with it in the next few months. A US codirector with the right experience is critical.
- The new schools of medicine and nursing are proceeding flawlessly. The visits of the course directors will enable them to take away a detailed knowledge of Western medicine, nursing and educational techniques, and craft their own courses. Four years from now there will exist a Georgian nursing school and medical school that will be outstanding. This work is on track, and largely planned. Our work with TMSU needs some maintenance, but I feel that is going well also. The students who have come over and spent several months with us, about 17 of them, in time will form the nucleus of a new and highly modern cadre of physician leaders for Georgia. I will be interested to see how its curriculum evolves. I don't think it a bad idea to have an European style medical school existing together with an US style one.
- The telemedicine project is just aborning. I have been reading a lot in the newspapers about NATO and Eastern Europe and the NIS, and the Partners for Peace, the structure we hope to work with. It is clear this developing relationship will have a high priority in the US administration, as well probably as Germany and the rest of western Europe, during the next

few years. It hopefully will be the ideal vehicle for us to start a telemedicine project (teleconferencing, teleradiology, telecardiology, and other parts) that can be replicated elsewhere, bring desperately needed information to the entire region. We are waiting now for State and Defense to sign a memorandum of understanding about the Partners for Peace, and then we can move ahead. The Minister of Health has written (prematurely it turns out) the requisite request to the American Ambassador<sup>30</sup>.

- The Health Care Reform is moving along nicely with respect to licensure and credentialing. This is an extraordinarily difficult project, but I think the Georgians have it in hand superbly. The information that Alex Aladashvili picks up during his visit here will be quite helpful. The financial infrastructure of the new system and hospital management is not at the same stage. It is so hard to get qualified people over to Georgia to spend time and help them, seeing the problems and offering advice the Georgians can take and adapt to their environment. I hope Bob Parrish will come and will be of value to them with respect to many of these problems. I would give anything to get someone with insurance know-how to come also. This is an area all of us will have to work with, and now is unsatisfactory. What I would like is to establish a health care management school.
- Collaborative research projects. The TB project is the one with the most promise at the moment. I have high hopes that Georgian and US scientists, especially from Atlanta, will collaborate fruitfully. This will be a very slow process, given the needs and resources of Georgia and its scientists. This is an area I hope will expand slowly but steadily.
- People. I am quite pleased, as noted above, with the medical student cross fertilization. We also have five residents now in our internal medicine program at Emory, and I identified four others who will make splendid house staff that we will discuss on my return. In five years I hope to have City Hospital #2 as a modern western academic center, and in ten years have it staff largely by individuals with modern training. Then they can start raising their own. This is another slow process, but one that is slowly building up steam.
- Our other projects are going well. The EMS center is doing a fantastic job. Neonatal resuscitation is coming along nicely under the leadership of Susie Buchter and Jack Huddleston. Al Brann has a magnificent plan for an all-encompassing Maternal and Child Health Care system, and hopefully the next round of World Bank lending will fund it. The iodine deficiency project will take off in January with the visit of the Emory Public Health contingent.
- NGO status. We need to accomplish this rapidly, and I think everything is in order to do so. Then we will consider a PVO in Atlanta to complement it.

The Partnership has come a long way since August 1992!

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<sup>30</sup>Events move when there is a political reason to do so. The US military wants to demonstrate how its technology and know-how can be applied to civilian life in a way that is unique and useful. This can be useful domestically, as well as to US foreign policy. Getting the Georgian military involved in a technologically leading edge project such as telemedicine will productively engage them, as well as helping the country.