

GEORGIA

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Tuesday, May 11-- Saturday May 29, 1999

Visit #15

H. Kenneth Walker M.D.
Emory University School of Medicine

Tuesday, May 11

Delta flight 66 from Atlanta to Zurich. Delta has redone the interior of its 57 international aircraft and added new menus. Much better than before. Sat with a young Frenchman, 32 years old, corporate pilot, who had been one of King Hussein of Jordan's private pilots until his death. A good conversation about the character of the Jordanians and the pleasures of working with King Hussein. The protocol that governs interactions between seatmates in airlines has been an interest of mine. Three classes of people: don't bother me at all; a few pleasantries; a good dialogue that continues with appropriate breaks during all the flight. A fourth and much rarer class is the one that talks constantly. The key to finding out, in my experience, is the first interchange. I usually begin just after the other person sits by saying something to the effect of "nice day" or the like. The next sentence from the new arrival gives an important early indication of where he or she fits into the classification. The best index for an interesting conversation is several long sentences, with the worst being a monosyllabic grunt. My companion tonight, Laurent Golay, was one of the best examples of the third group. Curious about life in the U.S., observations about being a pilot, sagacious observations about being a young divorced man with two children, comments about being a Frenchman now living in Switzerland, thoughts about the future of his life, etc. Bright, experienced, a world traveler and most of all a sophisticated European. A class by themselves.

Two large purposes to this visit. First, I had promised my colleagues at Georgia State University, who have worked with us to establish Western nursing and MBA schools in Tbilisi, that I would be there when they came with GSU president Carl Patton. President Patton arrives a week from now. Second, we have been working with the Partners for Peace Information Systems (PIMS), a unit of the Pentagon. The Partners for Peace countries are NATO plus eastern Europe, notably the Newly Independent States of the former Soviet Union. A device to get those countries into a Western group without taking them into NATO. PIMS is the unit that gives the military Internet access in countries such as Georgia, Kazakstan, Ukraine and the like. Some wise individual tinkered with the Congressional mandate setting up PIMS to add "health services." About one year ago I went to Washington and met Jim Hendrick, the administrator, and started working toward joint efforts. Jim has set up Internet access for the military in Tbilisi, and now he and we are going to work on doing the same for our activities. We already have Internet access through a private Georgian service but: it costs \$1500 a month; only 56 kbs; and only goes to our National Information Learning Centre. Jim and we have plans about extending our network both to his benefit and ours.

This is my fifteenth trip to Tbilisi. I approach them now with as much enthusiasm and pleasurable anticipation tinged with a hint of mystery as I did with the first one in August, 1992. My two planets now are Atlanta and Tbilisi. I use the word "planet"

advisedly, because they are so different. As a youngster of ten or so my favorite book was *The Red Planet* by Edgar Rice Burroughs. He wrote several science fiction books, in addition to his multiple Tarzan books. If I remember correctly, the hero was John Carter. One night as he was gazing at Mars (= red planet) something happened and he was forthwith transported there. The books are about his adventures on Mars, and I remember even now my fantasies of having another planet I could go to. The Republic of Georgia is exactly that to me, a few years beyond age ten.

Wednesday, May 12

Arrived at Zurich at 11 a.m. (six hours ahead of Atlanta), plane leaving for Tbilisi at 8 p.m. Went to a small spartan hotel that caters to airport traffic. Collapsed for several hours, had late lunch, and then to the airport for a 4 a.m. arrival in Tbilisi.

Thursday, May 13

Arrived around 4 a.m. at Tbilisi airport. The new one, opened a year or so ago. I well remember arriving here in the early days and waiting for hours to get through customs. One time the only man who knew how to operate the steps that let you off the plane had gone home when we arrived at 11 p.m., and we had to wait a couple of hours in the plane (full of smoking Georgians) for him to be called back. Now clean, efficient, pleasant, pretty much like a smaller town airport in the U.S.

Met by Nikloz, Gregory and Giorgi, three upcoming interns in the U.S. (Gregory to Cleveland Clinic, other two to Emory). To Betsy's Hotel, and collapse until 10 a.m.

Went to the National Information Learning Centre (NILC), the Internet-connected library put up by our project (I fondly characterize it as a "miniature National Library of Medicine") and met Jim Hendrick of the Partners for Peace Information System (PIMS) and his crew: John Concannon; Frank Randolph; Alex Devinsky. They arrived one week ago, and clearly had been extremely productive. We went over at length our ideas about collaboration. That afternoon we went up to the (Sheraton) Metechi Palace hotel and sat on the terrace overlooking Tbilisi. We met and talked at some length with Colonel Nutter, a Georgia (U.S.) National Guard officer attached to European headquarters and assigned to Georgia (nation) for the next year. We discussed how we might tie together our efforts in both Georgias. That evening Jim Hendrick had a dinner for all of us at the Mirage, a new restaurant across from the Metechi, sitting on a cliff overlooking the Mtvari River and downtown Tbilisi. A Mr. Adamia, an influential member of Parliament and supporter of the PIMS project, was present as guest, along with Amiran Gamkrelidze, the Deputy Minister of Health. A lot of talk about PIMS.

NATO is becoming a potent force in Georgia these days, leading in part to the great

interest by everyone in PIMS. There is a lot of talk about Georgia becoming a member ultimately of NATO. Military leaders speak of "conforming to NATO standards." Shevardnadze's strong public support for the Kosovo war has clearly made him dear to the Clinton administration. A few days before I left I had dinner with Tedo Jeparidze, Georgian Ambassador to the U.S., and his wife. Tedo described at length the recent meeting of Shevardnadze in the U.S. at the NATO summit, and a private meeting with Clinton. There was a televised bantering session between him and his old friend Jim Baker on Cspan in Houston that made a great impression on everyone.

I think when this era is looked back upon some years hence Shevardnadze will be seen as one of the key figures in the history of the time. A remarkable man and career, beginning with his early times in Georgia as a Communist youth and eventually secretary of the party in Georgia, Foreign Minister of the former Soviet Union and now president of Georgia. His two good friends are Jim Baker and George Schultz, the former Secretaries of State. The three of them, to my mind, have a lot in common. They are all publicly and I suspect, privately, inscrutable. Their thoughts and emotions are completely hidden from a public persona of careful statements and no revealing facial expressions--not even the slightest hint of them. Shevardnadze has come across to me as an individual of great character and wisdom, whose larger actions are very much done with the long view in mind, and not the short one. He has had a great impact upon the world, and now an enormous influence for the good on Georgia, both within Georgia and with respect to how the U.S. and its allies treat Georgia. This fall there are upcoming parliamentary elections, with presidential elections to follow next spring. There is currently a lot of political jockeying occurring. The Citizens Union Party, Shevardnadze's party, was addressed while I was there by Ramaz Khurodze, a good friend and rector of Georgian Technical University. Ramaz basically told them they needed to get off their ass and accomplish something in Georgia if they wished to remain in power. The prevailing view is that this fall's elections will be a harbinger of next year's presidential elections.

In neurology my favorite field is "behavioral neurology," or the study of how the brain actually works--the neurological equivalent of psychiatry. The characteristic I described above of "inscrutability" has long fascinated me in people. For simplicity there are two types: those in whom an input gives an instant "unprocessed" output (known in neurology as "frontal lobe types") and those, like Baker, Schultz and Shevardnadze, where an input is processed in great depth without any indication at all of what the process is yielding, until the end, when the carefully thought out product is delivered. Or, as I've occasionally put it to friends who possess this characteristic in full, "you hold your cards so close to your chest even you can't read them." I put this to a friend of mine, a man of vast experience, wisdom and subtlety, and he said this:

After I came to [the university] I suggested that the institution implement a management information

system. [A consulting group] was selected, and a high-powered team came to interview the president. The first question was, "Mr. President, what are your objectives, goals, and plans for the institution?" He looked at them and said, "You don't think I am going to tell, do you? My success as a leader depends on having well-formed, innovative solutions. Laying out everything ahead of time in front of everybody only invites conflict and chaos." -- Since Chinese warlords and Napoleons, brilliant ideas and their surprise executions have been properties of very successful leaders.

I have no problem with these types. For me it is much harder to digest the output of the opposite type, partly because it contains too much data and very little verifiable information, partly because it tends to reveal too much about the degree of "class" (or the lack of it) of the person. You may have observed that my personal preference is for people with some degree of "class" (formality, reserve, seriousness, respect for others).

Of course there must be, and is, the in-between type. To find him, I divide mankind into two categories: those whom I'd like to educate my children, and those I'd keep away from them with a shotgun. In the first category are individuals who are open and have class; in the second category is about 50% of my old faculty colleagues.

To take a contemporary, here is a remark about Ehud Barak from one of his friends: "Basically, he has a closed personality. He keeps a lot of assets for himself. His vision is that as a politician, like as a general, you don't expose yourself in everything." (*Washington Post* 20 July 99). Or, Stalin:

Stalin was born in the depths of the poor. His father was not only an impoverished shoemaker, but an increasingly unsuccessful one. He took to vodka and to ill-treating his son. At a very early age Stalin had to reckon with savage brutality: he learned to be secretive, evasive, enduring, and to keep his mouth shut. It was an awful home, and he learned his lessons well.....At fifteen he moved on to the Theological Seminary at Tiflis [old name for Tbilisi]. The ecclesiastical school and the local priest managed to find a scholarship to maintain him there--which demonstrates both that his gifts had been spotted and that his rebelliousness had not been. In fact, his character, like Einstein's at the same age, was already formed, and so were many of his opinions. The main features of the historical Stalin were already set. He was mature enough to do a very difficult thing; that is, to conceal from his teachers and his fellow pupils what he really believed. At sixteen he was in touch with the anti-Tsarist opposition in Tiflis: he wrote Georgian nationalist verses under the first of his pseudonyms: he discovered Marxist circles in the town: and returned to the seminary to sing tunefully in the college chapel. He kept up this game for nearly five years. Few young would have that capacity for dissimulation or steely self-restraint. The monks gradually became suspicious, but when they at last expelled him they had not proved--though they suspected--his socialist connections. He had concealed those pretty effectively: but--it was a comic weakness in the precocious master of the underground--he could not conceal his passion for secular literature. Secular literature in the seminary was allowed only if sanctioned by the monks: the circulating libraries of Tiflis were forbidden; Stalin could not resist using one. Not in order to obtain Marxist works, which he got secretly and safely elsewhere, but just to read Gogol, Chekhov, Thackeray, Victor Hugo. He was a compulsive reader, then and later. (*Variety of Men*; C.P. Snow)

Friday, May 14

Up early and went to the NILC and connected up via email with Atlanta. Lunch with Jim Hendrick and Archil, with a lot of further discussion about the PIMS project. After lunch I met with Paata Kervalishvili. He is about 50, a distinguished physicist in the

former Soviet Union. Youngest man ever to head one of their scientific institutes. Now is the Scientific Advisor to Shevardnadze. I met him about a year ago at the urging of Zviad. Paata gave me a large plastic magnifying lens that has a variety of applications. Made by one of the institutes he had overseen. He told me when he worked for the Soviets whenever he came up with a new idea the only question was: "Do *they* have it?" They = United States. He always obtained whatever he wished under that umbrella, he said.

He came with his wife and sixteen year old son, Giorgi. They would like for Giorgi to be able to spend the summer in the U.S., in a family where he can begin to figure out what he needs to do to get into an excellent U.S. university and then law school. How to study for the SAT, improve his English, and the like. I was impressed with Giorgi, and decided to have lunch later just with him before deciding whether to see if I could think of a family he might stay with in Atlanta.

I met with several young physicians who want to come to Atlanta to be an "observer" for a month or two. This begins to familiarize them with our system and habits and, more importantly, gets them a letter from U.S. physicians) that will aid them in getting a residency somewhere. I asked them to come back and see me again during this visit.

That evening Archil and I went to the home of David Arveladze and had a supra. I met David a year ago, when he came to me to talk about applying for residency. About 24, works in AIDS center. Personable and impressive. He did not get into a residency, and has kept in touch with me via email. The last email was full of anguish and some despair about ever getting into residency. I had also met his brother George when I was here last, who is 18 and a promising young MBA student at a school in Texas. George sends me occasional emails that show a lot of insight and humor, and I like them very much. I asked David why it was that George at the tender young age of 18 was in an American school. "My father believes going to another country for your education makes you much better (he used the word "strong")." Then, I asked, why didn't you go at that age? "My father didn't have any money then (during the chaos of the early nineties)." His father is now president of the Agro Bank of Georgia. An agronomist by profession, I think. George had just arrived this afternoon from Texas and we had an outstanding meal. I like the father a lot, just as I do David and George. A very solid man in the largest sense of that word. A lot of weight as an individual, with respect to his behavior and observations. The backbone of the new Georgia, and planning for his sons to continue the tradition.

Saturday, May 15

Awakened to the sound of pigeons, roosters and mocking birds. Betsy had put me in a new room, at the top, with a commanding view of the city. I had awakened in the

middle of the night, still quite confused as to where I was and when it was, and heard someone urinating in my bathroom. I leapt out of my bed only to find the ghostly pisser was only a defective commode that wouldn't stop. Quite cool, temperature about 60°, I judge. After breakfast I met with Bijan Fazlollahi, the Georgia State professor with whom I have been helping set up the MBA school. We discussed the plans for the arrival of President Patton and his schedule.

I read an article in the *Georgian Times* about the judicial reform that has just occurred. Every judge or aspirant had to take a quiz, and only those who passed were reappointed or newly appointed. In addition the salary went from about 30 lari (\$1 USD = 2 lari this visit) to 500 lari. This is the first of the big new reforms. Hospitals and medical schools are somewhere on the list. The increase in salary and new judicial standards hopefully will cut out or at least greatly diminish bribery of judges and the corrupt judicial system. A senior Georgian official recently spoke with me about corruption. "They (same *they* as in the previous comment by Paata) want corruption stopped," he said. "They don't understand how well nigh impossible it is. These people are our friends, our family, people with whom we went to school, people whose father saved our father from Stalin's purges, and so on. The only way to stop corruption is to do so by changing the system, not by firing people." The judicial reform is an example of what he was talking about. In the same article the journalist said the 70's were the times where physicians had the greatest prestige; the 80's were the lawyers, and now the 90's were the times of politicians. \$250,000 buys the most important parliamentary seat. "The politicians now are being taken care of better than all the lawyers and physicians combined."

Archil and I went to see the Minister of Communications, Mr. Esakia. He was quite interested in more details about the PIMS project and our involvement. (It turned out our partnership, Archil and myself were brought up at every stop by Jim Hendrick, and everyone wanted to ask us about PIMS.) We went over the possibilities in some detail.

David Tsanova came by to see me. He is about 23, a student at one of the numerous private medical schools, and has become a close friend over the last few years. More to the point, he is deeply into computing, and is working on his spare time with an IBM affiliated company selling computers. E.g., is setting up a new phone system at Betsy's. He wanted me to write a letter supporting him for some sort of fellowship at IBM in the U.S., which I did gladly. I will be quite interested in seeing how David finally turns out, and in what.

Sunday, May 16

Spoke with Andrew Giorgadze on the phone. He is a young Georgian graduate of Tbilisi State Medical University who made 249 on Part I of the USMLE. A remarkable

score for anyone, much less for someone with the curriculum he had here. He told me once he studied 20 pages per day, day in and day out. He will leave this week to spend a couple of months with us at Emory under our arrangement with Georgia. He has to take the clinical skills part of the examination, newly instituted for graduates of foreign medical school. I am arranging for him to receive a tutorial for several days from one of Mike Lane's people in Community and Preventive Medicine, and then to spend time on the wards as a junior student. Andrew speaks English with an English accent, coming from a teacher over here with English origins. He grew up in St. Petersburg of Georgian parents. His mother died when he was about ten, and his father returned to Tbilisi. Andrew says his Georgian is not very good, and Archil verifies this.

(A few days after Andrew arrived at Emory he sent me this:

I had a lecture in GI today. To tell you the truth I expected much more from the [Emory] students, they couldn't answer quite simple questions, maybe it's just because they are still on their 3rd year.

I received this message with distinctly mixed feelings. On the one hand I was delighted beyond words that a Georgian student could say this about the Emory students--who are one month away from being seniors. When we started the program such a statement from a Georgian student would not have been possible. On the other hand I was p----d beyond measure at our students.

We went and met with Temur Khurodze, the provost of Tbilisi State University. Conveyed to him my vision of the importance of President's Patton's visit, and what it might portend in terms of interactions in the future. One of Bijan's plans is to give each MBA student two diplomas: one from his school here, the Caucasus School of Business (consortium among three Georgian universities); and the second from Georgia State University. Of course they will have to meet the admission requirements of GSU. This is brilliant, in my opinion. It gives them credibility in both places: former Soviet Union, and the West. Teddy Püttgen, who heads up Georgia Tech's branch in Lorraine, France, does the same.

A visit to Ramaz Khurodze, brother of Temur, and rector of Georgian Technical University. To my mind the most forward and flexible of all the senior educational officials here. He plans to invite Teddy Püttgen here to see what we can strike up in terms of collaboration with Georgia Tech. That will give us three Atlanta schools with a presence in Tbilisi. I hope we can use that to leverage financial support in the Atlanta community.

I saw a patient for Levan Kacharava. Levan is the brother of Andro Kacharava, who came to Emory in 1993, worked with Marschall Runge in the lab, did three years with us in our program and now is a cardiology fellow with Marschall in Galveston. I met

Levan my second visit, in 1993, and he has become, along with Archil, one of my closest friends in Tbilisi. The patient was a 16 year old girl with sciatic pain. She had been seen by an orthoped and neurologist, and had a normal CT scan which I reviewed. I could find nothing on examination. I reassured the family and suggested they continue seeing the doctors here. Archil told me the two she was seeing were excellent.

Dinner with the new Emory interns: Nikoloz Chitaia; Ivane; Saba; Giorgi. At the home of Nick's in-laws. Their grandfather had been a Minister of Agricultural Machinery or some such, and a member of the Presidium. His brother-in-law is Ivan Khokhlov (ხოხლოვ). I have gotten to where I can understand and work with many Georgian names only when I think of them in Georgian. Most of the time when I meet someone new to me in Tbilisi I listen to their name and then write it in Georgian. Impresses them beyond belief. Instant trust and credibility. Two years of studying Georgian plus a number of visits. About 28, a lawyer who got his degree in Tbilisi, spent a year or two at Georgetown, then worked with the American Bar Association for one to two years before returning to Tbilisi. One of the smartest and best read young Georgians I have met. A pleasure to talk to about things Georgians, politics, people, life, love, etc. A wonderful evening. We talked of them coming to Emory (five Georgian interns this year; cream of the crop). Nick's wife, young and beautiful, is also a physician, and has just started studying for the USMLE. Nick says she finds it incredibly hard, taking care of two children also. She and the daughter, age eight or so, will come in September, and Ivan will bring the boy, age two, in January.

Monday, May 17

Met Laura Hurt of Grady and Kathy Futch, formerly of Grady now with Kaiser, at breakfast. They had just arrived around 5 a.m. Had not been able to upgrade to business class since there was no space, and so were terribly out of sorts. They are over here working with the practicing nurse part of the program, and have two assessment visits to do among other things.

Went to Turkish bath, one of the pleasures of Tbilisi, with Levan Kacharava. I first went in 1993, to the same one, and now it has been greatly refurbished. Clean and attractive. Water hot beyond belief. Came out with one layer of epidermis scraped off, feeling clean and pure (first time since age ten in rural Baptist church at the Protracted Meeting time in the summer).

To the Metechi and long talk with Col. Nutter and Major McGowan about how our partnership and the Georgia National Guard might collaborate. We saw many possibilities, and will begin working on them.

I met with Lado Chachanidze (ლადო ჩაჩანიძე) who wants to come for a subinternship. He is 27, mother an engineer, father dead; brother construction engineer; made 87 on USMLE part I. Friend of Saba Bejanishvili, who will be an intern in July with us. Bright, personable, highly articulate. I agreed he could come over for one to two months.

Archil and I went out to the Military Hospital and met with the Chief Doctor. We agreed on how we and they would participate in the PIMS project. This is in an appendix at the end. A young man who is a computer nerd came in, and clearly the computer part of the enterprise will be in good hands. We agreed to find a modem for them and connect their library up immediately.

Then to the Military Medical School, which is a division of Tbilisi State Medical University. I like the Dean, who is of the older school. Always elegantly dressed, courteous in the Old World fashion. We talked about the PIMS project and how they might be involved. I have been there before on several visits. After the initial statement by me, there was a long cacophony involving them and Archil, all in Georgian. That finally ended, and they told me they would have a proposal in a few days (end of this in Appendix). Archil told me in the car they had begun by telling him that he and I had come to them before with various projects, and nothing had come of them. Absolutely true. He convinced them, however, that the PIMS business was different. They finally came around. A difficult problem about us and the past. We have had a lot of proposals that have not come through, for a variety of reasons: promised money that never came through; promises by them that didn't come through; problems we have had; etc. I went back and reviewed what I wrote during my visit of June 25, 1993--my second visit:

Eight to nine hours flying time to Frankfurt, a two hour or so stopover, then on to Tbilisi. I am looking forward to seeing what we find there. Two days ago we got a fax from them that basically said for one year we had been promising hospital equipment, and had not delivered anything. And they were fed up. The person over there for AIHA (American International Health Alliance) told us the following: the economy has gotten worse, with rampant inflation; a gallon of gas costs over \$4, and most people average \$10 salary a month; food is hard to get. And we really haven't produced anything.

The truth is we haven't. When this started a year ago Grady Hospital was made the lead institution. Our part was the medical school, and not the hospital and equipment. Grady has wallowed around the last year, and finally three weeks ago told them that Grady could not, as a charity hospital, give anything away, even scrap metal. (I personally have my doubts about whether this is legally correct, but that is what the current administration believes and is saying.) So that broke the camel's back, and Tbilisi wrote a vituperative letter. For the last two days I have been scrambling with the dean to make up for Grady's lack. I am taking a letter promising them: a CT scanner; a portable x-ray unit with battery; a fluoroscopy unit. This will come to well over \$1 million, so hopefully there will be some quiet and a decent welcome.

A long time ago. A lot of water under the bridge, a lot of plans, a few

accomplishments.

It did come out the military medical school faculty have been told they might not survive as a school, since they have an old curriculum that "doesn't conform to NATO standards." One of the PIMS partners is my friend Jim Zimble of the Uniformed Services medical school in Bethesda. I put him and Jim Hendrick together, and they have big joint plans. I hope to get Zimble's organization involved with the medical school here, and see what happens when the 21st century meets with the 17th.

To the cell phone place and got a free phone with a down payment that will be used to pay for my calls. Cannot do business in Georgia without a cell phone.

To the Turkish bath, this time a new one, "Poseidon," that lacks the charm of the other one, which has been around over 100 years. Also doesn't have blistering water. They provide pizza, beer, whatever.

Dinner with Vaso Egnatashvili. I have talked about him before. Vaso spent six months as a junior student with us, about three years ago. Stalin's mother was a maid in his grandfather's house, and the rumor is his grandfather was Stalin's father. I proposed to him that he do a Thomas Jefferson analysis on the descendants and see if that is true. I anticipate he will sooner or later. When I was here in December his father had end stage renal disease, and Vaso was staying with him 24 hours a day. His father died a few weeks ago, and now Vaso is trying to sort out his life. He told me he had found in his father's library a diary written by his grandmother about Stalin, as well as a number of other interesting family mementos of Stalin. Vaso would like to come to the US and get his MPH. He said he badly needed to get out of his father's house (lives there by himself at the moment), and take up his life anew. I will see what I can do.

Tuesday, May 18

Breakfast with David Arveladze, Cathy and Laura. Carlos del Rio has just arrived. Carlos is one of our faculty members who trained with us, became the AIDS Czar in Mexico (father Chief Justice of Supreme Court there) and now is back with us running the AIDS unit at Grady Hospital. He has a close relationship with the AIDS Institute here in Tbilisi. They have joint NIH and World AIDS funding. Getting Carlos involved over here is one of my best accomplishments.

Archil and I went for lunch. Almost ran over an elderly lady who was struggling to cross the street. If I ever get killed over here, it will be in the street. Automobiles have the right of way, and the dangerous thing for us Americans is that they implicitly assume everyone knows this and will get out of the way. So they never prepare to slow down or stop even when you're dead ahead of them. They simply know you will

get out of the way. Archil has a thing about what he calls "street walkers." He strongly believes they should cross where they're supposed to cross. He shouts and yells at them. I told him how several weeks ago I heard on the radio how the incidence of drivers in Atlanta running red lights had climbed alarmingly, and the police were taking measures. The next morning, at 6:45 a.m., the light at DeKalb Avenue and Moreland turned yellow just as I was approaching. Remembering the previous day's information, I promptly stopped. The lady behind me ran into me (\$2800). Can't win.

We talked about birth control. The pill used to be given to the population free, but the physicians talked so much about possible complications the public would not use it then, or even much now. Reason for physicians opposition: they make money from abortions. Archil has a patient who had 52 abortions and three children, one of whom is a leading Georgian politician.

Judy Wold and Linda Spencer arrived from Vienna, without luggage. Just like my experience in December. A thirty minute connection at Vienna, so of course the luggage doesn't make it. In a bad humor. Lent them T-shirts for pajamas.

Beer with David Arveladze, following my practice of trying to get to know the Georgians who want to come to Emory as well as possible. Nice lad.

Dinner at "Stones" with Archil and his son Sergo. Stones is an innovative restaurant where small pieces of beef, fish and chicken are brought to the table, along with a large marble slab that is very hot. Six dishes of various spices. You cook the meat piece by piece. Fondue for meat.

Sergo is about to begin his senior year in high school, and is thinking about what to do for his education. U.S. or not? Lawyer or not? About 6'3" and handsome. Last week as he was walking the streets of downtown Tbilisi a woman approached him and asked him to screen for a TV advertising model. He will do this next week. I told him he had "magic," which the rest of us yearn for and mostly don't have. My brother contends he does. Says every woman in a room eventually comes over and touches him wherever he goes. I view this assertion with a jaundiced eye. At least I can say I personally see nothing in him that would ever attract a woman. My brother in fact reminds me of a passage in my favorite book, *All Creatures Great and Small* by James Herriot:

"Another thing about my new life which interested me was the regular traffic of women through Skeldale House. They were all upper class, mostly beautiful and hey had one thing in common-- eagerness. They came for drinks, for tea, to dinner, but the real reason was to gaze at Siegfried like parched travellers in the desert sighting an oasis. I found it damaging to my own ego when their eyes passed over me without recognition or interest and fasted themselves hungrily on my colleague. I wasn't envious, but I was puzzled. I used to study him furtively, trying to fathom the secret of his appeal. Looking at the worn jacket hanging from the thin shoulders, the frayed shirt collar and

anonymous tie, I had to conclude that clothes had nothing to do with it. (p.55, St. Martin's Paperbacks)

I told Sergo about one of the freshman medical student at Emory from north Georgia named Eric. I asked one of Eric's classmates after a Problem Based Learning session late one afternoon what he was about to do. "Go out to a bar with Eric and watch him do his magic with the girls."

Back at Betsy's I came across Carlos del Rio and Ken Nelson, infectious disease person from Hopkins who is working with Carlos on AIDS here. We talked about our projects, and in particular the severe need for a Public Health School here. Jim Curran, the dean of the School of Public Health at Emory, says he is willing to work on starting one if I can find the money. I have queried several foundations and other sources and so far haven't found anything. Ken was quite interested. Carlos and I agreed to see what we could do back in Atlanta.

Carlos last year got \$10,000 from International Affairs at Emory and produced an AIDS workshop in Mexico City. Took down about four of our faculty members. Tremendous success. He is thinking about doing the same over here.

In the night I was awakened by hammering. Betsy is renovating rooms, and the people work until late at night. Unheard of in Georgia, at least several years ago.

Wednesday, May 19

We had a meeting at Tbilisi State University with Temur Khurodze about the new nursing school Judy Wold is working on. The entire crew was present in the board room of the university: Judy Wold, her nursing colleagues in Tbilisi, the senior faculty of the university who are involved. The curriculum is done, students chosen, faculty taught in Atlanta, dean chosen, but no money to start it. TSU has agreed to start it when the Minister of Health gives about \$20,000. He looked me in the eye and shook my hand and promised it when I was here in December, but so far no money. To be fair, he is having a hard time. Budget has been cut from around \$70 million to \$35 million, due to inability to collect enough taxes. A Georgian friend stayed at the Georgian Embassy in London a few weeks ago and told me the Ambassador, a close friend of his, told him he had not had money to pay his staff for three months. And in London.

We had a long discussion of where money might come from. Judy has exhausted all the possibilities. We were concerned that the visit of Dr. Patton was imminent, but we were a long way from getting the school started. Temur, when pressed, said he thought the Minister would come through. We left it at that for the moment.

Lunch in a Georgian fast food place with David and George Arveladze. Then Salome

Kacharava, wife of Andro, arrived to take me to see a patient who was a friend of theirs. They had gotten the permission of the physician taking care of the patient. At the Central Clinical Hospital, formerly the Republican (= national) Hospital in Soviet days. Huge, reminds me of Grady. Used to have about 1500 beds, but many of the rooms now are occupied by refugees from the Abkhazian conflict of several years ago. I took David with me to translate. Met with the neurosurgeon taking care of the patient, his chief (old and grizzled, as usual) and his associates and the father. In brief, the patient was a 24 year old lad who had been treated in the Infectious Disease hospital since September for tuberculous meningitis with three drugs, had developed normal pressure hydrocephalus, had become comatose, was shunted and was much better. On the surface a simple case. But the more I found out about the facts the more puzzled I became. Apparently his illness had started at the seashore. He had become jaundiced and had "hepatic coma" due to viral hepatitis. Then the TB meningitis had been discovered. I asked what was the evidence: cultures; stains? Answer: clinical picture. I reviewed the chest films, and although of poor quality, they appeared normal. In addition he had received drugs for TB for almost a year without evidence of regression and is now getting hearing loss from the drugs. Spinal fluid now: 100 cells, 165 mgm% of protein, 'low' sugar. Some months ago said to have had about 500 cells and lot more protein. I went and saw the patient who to my surprise was bright and alert. No nodes, no spleen, upgoing toes, moderately cachectic (said to have been gaining weight lately).

I said frankly I was not sure the patient had tuberculosis and in fact I did not know what he had. I mentioned cryptococcus, which at Grady would have been quite likely given his findings, and was told that doesn't occur in Georgia. I now found myself in the usual dilemma when seeing patients here: I didn't know what the patient had, and could see no way of doing the relatively simple things one would do in U.S. What to tell the family? I had been impressed by the physicians taking care of him now. He had been sent to them a few days ago just for the shunt, so of course they didn't know many of the facts, and kept telling me "we are neurosurgeons; we are not infectious disease physicians". I temporized by telling the family I was impressed by the quality of the physicians taking care of him, which was true, and that at the moment I didn't see anything else that could be done, which in Georgia is also true. I however asked for a sample of CSF to take back to Emory to see if I can discover the diagnosis.

(Written after my return. No CSF arrived for me, in spite of meeting again with the neurosurgeon and the chief doctor and being promised it. I then asked for it to be sent with the students who arrived two weeks later. They were contacted, but no CSF. I asked the family who had asked me to see the patient to see if they could get a sample, since one of them was coming over. Finally received word that "patient is sicker, getting CSF is contraindicated at this time." This behavior on the part of physicians is quite disturbing to me, and I take it as indicative of a deeper problem: a physician not feeling responsible personally for the welfare of the patient, in the most

profound sense of the word "responsible." One of the big lessons that medical students and residents learn at Grady Hospital is this: they are responsible for everything, in the final analysis. For making sure the patient actually gets the prescribed medication; for seeing to it that the patient is transported to x-ray, even if this means they do it personally--a frequent occurrence; for giving the patient a bedpan if no one else is there to do it. I think this sense of personal responsibility for the life of a patient under his or her care is a characteristic of U.S. physicians that sets them apart from many--not all--physicians elsewhere. The ultimate philosophy that gives rise to this is the value that our society puts upon the life of individuals, applied in our profession to physician behavior with respect to his or her patients. This philosophy is notably absent or less present in many civilizations.)

At the NILC I saw Ia Kamkhadze. She is about 35, a cardiologist in the town of Kaspi about one and one-half hours from Tbilisi. Her husband was a hero who was killed in the Abkhazian war. She wants to go to Emory and receive training in echocardiography, and was referred to me two visits ago by the minister. I have had concerns about her language ability and her background with respect to her ability to come to Atlanta and profit from a stay with John Merlino at Crawford Long Hospital. I worry that she would take a lot of time and not get much out of it. I have bluntly expressed these concerns. Balancing these concerns, she is persistent, highly motivated and very tenacious, all being qualities that I like in people. So I have been temporizing, asking her to come back on my visits. This time I voiced my concerns again and then got Kakha, who was next door working in the NILC. Kakha is a very bright cardiologist who spent three months at Emory three years ago, and now practices cardiology as well as working with us. I asked him to work with her at least two days a week until I return in October, and then for both of them to give me an assessment about her capability to benefit from a stay with us at Emory. I had earlier talked with John Merlino, and he had indicated his willingness to have her. I am going to Kaspi at the end of my visit here to visit the orphanage close to her hospital, and I asked her if I might visit her hospital then--see her in her own environment.

I saw five people who want to come to Grady as observers for two months, in the role noted previously.

Nana Makalatia (მაკალათია): 78 and 88 on USMLE. Surprising that her part II is so much better than Part I. Usually other way around, since they can study basic science by themselves in texts, but don't have the opportunity to learn on the wards about the practice of modern medicine. She said she also was surprised. Age 33. Graduated from TSMU in 1990, worked since then in clinic as internist, then last three years as cardiologist. One year in ICU. Mother chemist, father engineer, brother mathematician. I thought she would be a good candidate to come and told her so.

Iana Dzagnidze (ძაგნიძე): 82 and waiting to hear about II. Age 32. Graduated TSMU 1991, has been working in an emergency station. Husband owns printing house, was with her. I asked a number of pointed questions about his support for her coming to the U.S. for several years and got nothing but positives, both verbally and nonverbally. She said she had to become a good physician. Two daughters,

4 and 5. Friend of Kent Brown, first ambassador here. I told her probably yes, saying I had concerns about her family. Impressed by her husband.

George Kandelaki (კანდელიძე): 82 and 81. Age 27. Graduated TSMU in 1995. Intern one year, working with AIDS since then. Sent to me by Carlos del Rio, who says he is bright and able. Has been doing research in immunology. Father dead, ophthalmologist. Mother philologist (basically the equivalent of a liberal arts A.B. in U.S.). Two brothers, one physicist in Moscow, other economist. Girl friend physician, works in AIDS with him, plans to marry her. At the request of Carlos will take him in June when Carlos is one the wards.

Gia Gogoladze (82; 77) and Gocha Saliashvili (83; 78). They spent two months with us as observers last year, but didn't get into any residency program. I told them I would do everything I could to help them do so this year. Both older, in mid thirties, very mature and capable physicians.

Dinner with Archil and Gia Kurdgelashvili., who will be one of our new interns in July. Quite bright, very capable. Then to airport to meet President Patton and his colleagues, who arrived on British Airways about 10 p.m. He brought with him Yezdi Bhata, who is the Vice Provost, and who is working closely with Bijan to establish the new MBA school. The project began a couple of years ago with a lunch with me and the two of them in the Commerce Club in Atlanta. Also John Hicks, who is their Director of International Affairs. Former Ambassador to Eritrea, worked in US Agency for International Development for twenty years. I came to like him and to really respect his abilities during the visit. Fenwick Huss, associate dean of the Business School, came a few days later. Roin Metrevelli, Temur Khurodze and Ramaz Khurodze had set up a welcoming ceremony with champagne and all the fixtures. A thirty minute toasting and get acquainted session while waiting for the luggage.

Thursday, May 20

Archil and I had breakfast with Alisher Sagatov, who works with American Medical Centers. I had received an email from a Dr. George Rountree, CEO of the American Hospital in Istanbul, saying they were going to start an outpatient clinic in Tbilisi, and wanted to talk to me. We spoke about their operations, showed him where they might establish a clinic, and told him what we really wanted was the equivalent of an American Hospital in Istanbul. Sounded like that might be far in the future. We promised to keep in touch.

To the official introduction of President Patton at Tbilisi State University, then a formal Georgian lunch at one of the new and quite formal restaurants. Roin Metrevelli, the Rector, presided. After the initial toasts had been given ("to our guests," etc.), I suggested that President Patton and Rector Metrevelli each give a short biography. I did this with some hesitation, because I had never come across that at a Georgian table, and I have never heard a Georgian in public give a such a biography, which of course is very common to us--in committee meetings and the like. I have made some gaffes in my time with respect to Georgian protocol. Most of them have been covered up by Archil when he translates, but he wasn't here this time for me to ask, but I went

ahead. I had two goals: for each to begin to learn about the other, and I wanted to hear what Roin had to say about his career as a young Communist. I had heard some visits ago that he and Shevardnadze were the two leading members of the Georgian Communist Youth League (Komsomol) in Georgia, and one of them was going to become General Secretary in 1972. Shevardnadze was the winner, and Metrevelli left politics and went to work for the Georgian encyclopedia (I may have some of these facts and names wrong), becoming president of a smaller institution some years later, and then picked by Shevardnadze--who didn't see him as a rival at that time--to head Tbilisi State University in the early 1990's, when TSU was in a bad state. I also suggested President Patton begin, knowing he would give an excellent example of such a biography, and Roin would have to follow suit. This is what happened, and I could tell the Georgians were quite taken with President Patton's open recounting of his background and career. Then Roin followed, and outlined in detail how he had been "in the highest ranks of the party and then left" back in the 70's. I felt I had accomplished my goal.

After lunch I went to the NILC and went with the nurses to Rustavi, a wealthy town a few kilometers from Tbilisi. Huge steel factory. Enlightened leadership. The Governor of the Province, Levan Mamaladze (მამალაძე), about 35, is the brother of Leah, who has worked with our partnership as its "chief nurse" for a number of years. Laura Hurt, Kathy Futch and I accompanied Leah and several of the other nurses. We were received in style by the senior officials of the province. We described in detail how, if given the opportunity and funding, we would set up a regional office containing: satellites of the NILC and EMS training center; tuberculosis and AIDS and sexually transmitted disease initiatives; and primary care with an emphasis on the role of nurses. I was quite taken by Levan. Bright, personable, highly energetic, and clearly has his vision on the future. I decided to begin to get to know him better in subsequent visits.

I picked up Giorgi Kandelaki and went to Dr. Zangaladze's house for a long-promised supra. Andro Zangaladze came to Atlanta at the invitation of my friend Kelly Jordan (entrepreneur type who began the Little Five Point rebuilding initiative in Atlanta) and with my help about five years ago. He worked doing research in the neurology department, published several papers with the neurology faculty, now is a transitional intern with us on his way to being a neurology resident at Jefferson in Philadelphia next year. Dr. Zangaladze, his wife and Andro's father-in-law were there, along with Giorgi, me and one of Giorgi's friends who happened to have the car we came in. I deliberately took Giorgi so I could see how he handled himself in various situations and could decide about inviting him to come to Emory as an observer for one to two months. He was the translator, and handled himself superbly. Turned out Dr. Zangaladze had been his anatomy teacher. A love fest, with many congratulatory toasts all around. Dr. Zangaladze owns a private nursing school, and I arranged for Judy Wold and myself to go there tomorrow to see exactly what a private nursing

school does in Georgia.

Friday, May 21

After breakfast we went to TSU for the formal opening of President Patton's visit, with an announcement about the new MBA school. We met in TSU's board room. The U.S. Ambassador and Victoria Sloan, head of USIA for Georgia, were present. There had been some back and forth about who would speak first. The Embassy insisted the Ambassador speak first, while the Georgians wanted their guest, President Patton, to speak first. Settled in favor of the Embassy, who said otherwise the Ambassador would not come. The Ambassador gave an excellent discussion of how the MBA school fit into the desires of the U.S. in terms of helping Georgia, and then President Patton outlined Georgia State's deep commitment to education in Georgia, and how he planned on expanding his commitment there. Then me. A summary of what I said:

Mr. Ambassador, President Patton, Rector Metrevelli and colleagues. This occasion represents a milestone in the partnership between Atlanta and Georgia. Our partnership began in 1992. It has been long, fruitful and is growing. Our vision is that our partnership is anchored around a sharing of information. GSU will be a principal player in this sharing partnership. GSU has begun now two important initiatives aimed at crucial sectors in Georgia:

- An MBA school that will introduce Western business principles to Georgia. Two diplomas, not one, will be given to its graduates: one from the MBA school here in Tbilisi, and the other from GSU. Its graduates will have the capability of being global business people.

- A nursing school at TSU that will demonstrate a new way of doing healthcare in Georgia, and that will provide the women of Georgia with a new career pathway that will be a source of much satisfaction and pride.

- A third proposal is on the table to US AID from GSU for a health management school. This school is crucial, since there is a desperate need for individuals skilled in the knowledge of administration of healthcare. GSU has great strength in this area. This proposal fits beautifully with the other two initiatives. We look to Victoria Sloan and her colleagues for help in obtaining support .

President Patton and his associates are individuals of extraordinary vision. He is a highly respected academic leader in the U.S. His visit here provides a vital sign of the commitment of GSU to Georgia. I join the Ambassador and Rector Metrevelli in welcoming the visit of President Patton, with its promise of an enlarging cooperation between GSU and Georgia.

I carefully put in the third proposal, since the decision will be made by the American International Health Association in Washington and forwarded to AID in the next few weeks. The conjunction of the three schools will give GSU a footprint in Georgia that can only expand in the coming decades.

After the meeting we adjourned to the Rector's office for a small discussion. I talked at some length with Lawrence Avassian, the director of Eurasia. He is an extremely able

individual who I need to see more of, for possible help with the NILC.

Then we had a similar meeting for the Nursing School. Since this is not at the stage of the MBA school, we didn't have the ambassador. I had fun giving a little talk:

მედიკოსები! (Nurses!)

Nurses are infinitely more important to sick patients than physicians. We have all had the experience of being a patient, where the physician sweeps in grandly for about three minutes once a day, while the nurses ministers to us hour after hour. The role of the nurse is absolutely necessary.

In the U.S. about 1950 the role of the nurse began to change. The U.S. nurses today is vastly different from the nurse fifty years ago: a paradigm shift. Georgia State University is now set to bring this transforming principle to the nurses of Georgia.

Ten years hence the nurse in Georgia will be vastly different from the nurse of today. This will come about as the nurses of Georgia take the information they get from Georgia State University and change it in ways that fit with Georgia. There will be a continual flow of information back and forth between Georgia and the U.S., with each side changing the other.

This interaction is in many ways what our partnership is all about: human beings sharing information and changing each other.

The partnership of GSU and TSU in the area of nursing will bring great benefit to both parties and to their patients.

That afternoon Judy Wold, Linda Spencer and I went to Dr. Zangaladze's private nursing school. I had thought that, as the initiators of a Western nursing school in Tbilisi, they would benefit from seeing a private one. The lecture part occurs in a high school building that reminded me of my school building in the 1940's in Danburg, Georgia. A typical Soviet era lower level school--i.e., for elementary and high school. Large rooms, peeling paint, clean but shabby, deteriorating desks. Absolutely no genuflection to beauty or attractiveness. Plain, functional, unappealing. The clinical part is at the Central Republic Hospital.

The students are selected by interview and test at the end of the ninth grade or eleventh grade. The ninth graders have three years, with the first being preparatory subjects--biology, chemistry, math, English. The eleventh graders spend two years. The School advertises May through August. The raison d'etre for the nursing school is profit: tuition from the students. Tuition is \$300 per year. Outstanding students who cannot pay that much get a scholarship of \$150 per year. The curriculum is general nursing, with some specialization--e.g., pediatrics. The nursing courses are what one would expect: general nursing; reanimation (resuscitation); basics of nursing; midwifery; gynecology; surgery, etc. I copied the specifics for Surgery I:

Sterilization. Handwashing technique. Methods of stopping hemorrhage. Admitting a surgical patient. Casting. Aspiration and drainage. Pre- and post-op follow-up.

Surgery II

Infusion, transfusion and injection. Preparation. Surgical pathology and therapeutics. Ethics. Ambulatory surgery. Nursing plans. Discharge.

Their major problems: old Soviet programs; old books; no computerization or computer aids for teaching.

They have fifty nursing students in the 2nd and 3rd years, 25 each year. Thirty midwifery students (with seven faculty for them), 120 dental technicians (!), and 20 pharmacy students. The school began in 1992 after the breakup of the Soviet Union and Georgian independence. Clinical faculty at the hospitals are paid by the school. Many of the texts are 1988 Russian ones; they have a 1995 Russian obstetrics text. State exams are given at the end of the course: 65% of the students pass the first time. They can only take the exam twice.

Judy took copious notes during the presentation.

A visit to some of Archil's friends who were having a family birthday supra. About fifteen distinguished appearing Georgian men sitting comfortably and peacefully and postprandially around a groaning table, occasionally nibbling, around 5 p.m. Clearly the supra had been going on for some time. A clutch of matronly ladies, mostly in their fifties with a child or two in their twenties, several **მპილი მპილი** (grandchildren). The talk rose and fall in gently undulating sound waves: family matters, weather, and the like. I was asked to give a birthday toast to the lady of the house. I said my toast would represent a peculiarity of my view of birthdays--it would be to her mother's day. I told how, when I was about thirteen, I went to work in the local hospital in the small village of Washington, Georgia. (There was a twofold reason behind this: I was interested in science and the hospital was the nearest thing I could come to being involved in something scientific; and I wanted to emulate my classmates, all of whom were working in various stores during the weekend, thereby escaping the farm. I vividly remember the first day: I was assigned the task of taking from the operating room and incinerating the leg of a patient that was disarticulated at the hip. Quite a beginning to a medical career.) One day I was given the task of cleaning out a lot of old records, and in a tattered notebook came across the record of my birth on Sunday, October 4, 1936, at 10:00 a.m. Usual long labor for a first child, and 9 lbs at that. A peculiar sensation to see one's start in a few sentences. Since then on my birthday my thoughts have always focused on Mom. Seems to me that is a more appropriate focus than one's own birthday. However that may be, my toast was to her mother's day.

A big supra given in honor of President Patton by Roin Metrevelli and Ramaz Khurodze. In the old city of Tbilisi. Another ream of toasts. I had on my current

favorite necktie, with ladybug beetles. I toasted beetles, telling the tale of the famous English biologist, J.B.S. Haldane. A student of evolution. One day a gaggle of theologians cornered him, and posed this question to him: "And, Professor Haldane, what have you learned about God from your study of evolution." Haldane answered: "God is inordinately fond of beetles." Turns out there are about 336,000 species of beetles on earth, the largest number of species of any living creature. So, I said, I want to extrapolate and say "God is inordinately fond of Georgians, from both sides of the ocean, as is evidenced by all the blessings given them."

Just after I began the toast the translation was suddenly taken over by Archil, as opposed to the translator for the occasion. Even I could tell there was a great difference in the quality of the translation. There was a sudden increase in the number and richness of the Georgian words used. I have noted this on many occasions. Inexperienced translators will sum up entire paragraphs with one short and simple sentence, and you know damn well the meaning and quality of the language doesn't get across. Archil, I suspect, is the Shakespeare of translators.

I was struck once again by what I can best describe as the unique Georgian ambiance that pervades supras. First, there is the style and substance of the toasts, which play across the entire spectrum of crudity, subtlety, sophistication, warmth, hidden meanings, expressions of love, levity, etc. Successful supras are composed of as many complexities as any artistic production. In most of them the people around the table become unified for the duration. Then the music that is present at many of them: Georgian harmonizing that reminds me of our barbershop quartets. And the wine--I discovered on this trip that toasting with beer is strictly forbidden. Beer is reserved for toasting someone you dislike and wish to bring bad luck upon. And this is done only by 'lower level people,' I am informed. Then there is the 'bottoms up' with wine, usually, or even hard liquor. I have learned to keep carefully a glass of Borjomi water (mineral water from the Borjomi springs) next to my wine glass, and whenever the 'bottoms up' command is given to reach hastily for the Borjomi, hoping I am not discovered (I suspect I usually am, but the Georgians are too polite to point it out).

Bijan gave an interesting toast. First, a bit about his previous history. Grew up in Iran, degree in engineering at MIT. Back to Iran and built and ran a steel factory for the Shah; then did a number of things for the Ayatollah, such as being in charge of the Port Authority of Iran; finally, PhD in computer science in Rochester, then GSU. In his toast he said that a number of years ago he had stood in Iran and looked across the water from the other side at the former Soviet Union, and the launching of rockets. He had fantasized about the Soviet Union and its people, and now, many years later, here he was. He had found the people, at least the Georgians, to be worthy of his fantasies. He said he had been fascinated especially about the large table, for supras, that was to be found in every home, restaurant, institution. He elaborated at some

length on the characteristics and advantages of supras. He said he had been so taken with the supras, that he had gone so far as to purchase a large table for his home, so he could have his equivalent of supras! He gave several examples of supras he had given, and their accomplishments.

He was followed in toasting by President Patton, who spoke for a few moments about the three requirements for professors being given tenure in the U.S.: scholarship; teaching; and service. He was thinking seriously, he said, of adding a fourth: a large table.

Saturday, May 22

A lazy, leisurely desultory sort of day. Began with a visit to the Turkish Bath with Giorgi Kandelaki. Then some private time, and beer in a restaurant with a porch overlooking Rustavelli Avenue, with Levan Kacharava. A long, entertaining and illuminating discussion about Georgia, Georgian business and Georgians by Levan, who is quite insightful about Georgian culture in a detached way that produces wonderful conversations. One of his earliest girl friends came by, now married to a politician, evoking a string of amusing memories.

A supra in the late afternoon with Nikloz Chitaia and his family. His father, a pediatric nephrologist, was present. Also his grandmother. I asked about the grandfather. Turns out he lives on a farm close to the airport, has bees and all sorts of interesting animals. Sounds to be quite a naturalist. I promised myself to visit him in October.

The final supra of the day: given by Tengiz of the AIDS center in honor of Carlos del Rio. I had to give a toast, of course, for Carlos. I spoke about how he and his wife Jeanette first appeared here some fifteen or more years ago. Fresh from a subinternship in Oregon, wishing to do one here. The rest is history: residency and infectious disease fellowship here; AIDS czar in Mexico; now with us. A super example of many superb foreign medical graduates we have had over the years.

Sunday, May 23

The entire delegation went to Telavi, with sightseeing at the home of Alexander Chavchavadze, one of a long line of his family. Large and imposing house. We had a supra in one of the buildings, and were royally entertained by Georgian singers.

One of the party made a perceptive comment at the end of the day. He pointed out how the people of each country have their treasures that they show visitors with pride. E.g., the palaces in Vienna, the churches in Italy, etc. The Georgian treasures are plainer and fewer. The result of all the wars that have raged across Georgia, as a consequence of its geographical location. E.g., Tbilisi has been almost totally

destroyed twenty-nine times. Followed by the stupidities of the Soviets, whose period of domination of the republics led to almost no buildings of public beauty. None that I know of in Georgia.

Monday, May 24

I went to the Metechi Palace Hotel (now the Sheraton) and had breakfast with Carl Patton and Yezdi Bhata, the Associate Provost of GSU, formerly Director of the Business School (I may have gotten some of Yezdi's titles a bit wrong, but I have conveyed the picture). We discussed the trip so far: accomplishments; challenges to overcome; perceptions. We talked at some length about getting additional funding possibilities in Atlanta and the U.S., perhaps as a joint venture involving GSU, Ga. Tech and Emory. We agreed to explore this possibility upon our return. As an example, I'd dearly love to start a public health school in Tbilisi, ultimately serving all the Caucasuses. Jim Curran of Emory School of Public Health has agreed to hear about the project if I can find the money. Carlos del Rio and I will meet with Jim upon our return. Such a school is desperately needed.

We all then went to Georgian Technical University, where Ramaz Khurodze had assembled some of his deans. The dean of the Institute of Public Administration made a presentation. The Institute was started by John Stewart of the University of Tennessee at Knoxville about six or seven years ago. John established a model I like very much. He was the U.S. director for a year, with a Georgian co-director. He brought eminent public administrators, often retired, over for one to two month periods of lecturing. After two or more years the Institute was turned over entirely to GTU. The dean said they were seeking a U.S. university affiliation. The funding was by Mellon, Carnegie and Rockefeller--I may have the specifics wrong, but by several large U.S. foundations. President Shevardnadze had personally given his strong support, saying how desperately the country needed education about public administration, Western style. The same philosophy underlying the GSU MBA and nursing school.

A visit to the Space Technology Institute of GTU--a stunning surprise. It turns out the Space Institute was a crucial component of the Soviet Union space effort, and was responsible for a number of components of the space craft. Part of the institute is on GTU premises, the other part in a valley up north in Georgia. The director, Elgudja Medzmariashvili, is world class in his area. He demonstrated to us a "radiotelescope" they have just designed and built, in association with Daimler Benz. It is small and compact, but in space the astronauts set it up and it unfolds to a huge expanse. The alpha testing in space will occur in July. We saw videos of some of their projects. They are designing bridges and other supporting structures to be used in space, e.g., on a planet such as Mars as well as in a space station. The structures are collapsed and transported, being lightweight and occupying little space, then expand when they are set up. The main part of the institute came across to me as very high tech, and not

suffering at all from the economic breakup and chaos of everything else in Georgia and the former Soviet Union. I could see there might be some real possibilities for joint ventures with Georgia Tech, and will follow up on this with Teddy Püttgen of Ga. Tech upon my return to Atlanta.

Then a visit to the architecture school of GTU. One of the students, a young and attractive woman, told us how she had just won a medal in an European contest. Dr. Patton, whose background is in architecture and urban planning, was quite taken with the possibility of having her to Atlanta to visit his architecture school. Mrs. Patton quietly explained to me "he has a soft spot in his heart for architecture students."

All of us had a meeting with Avto Jorbenadze, the Minister of Health, and a longtime friend. He brought with him Akaki Zoidze (აკაკი ჯოიძე). I have talked many times to Akaki over the phone and was very pleased to meet him. A physician, about 30, who got his MPH in New York at Columbia or Cornell, and then spent three months with Kaiser in California. Works with Curatio, a group of young physicians who are setting up a small HMO enterprise. All very bright and able. For some reason I had built a picture of Akaki as thin and ascetic. Instead, tall, handsome, very muscular. Amazing how we assemble all sorts of nonvisual information into a picture. We discussed the visit so far, and the need for money for the nursing school. Avto said he would be able now to supply the money. I was concerned, since he had told me this back in December and it had not occurred. On the other hand, to give him credit, he has had an awful time with money, as has all the government. The tax collections are far below what they should be, and the lari has gone from 1.30 per U.S. dollar to 2.00. (A friend came to Atlanta recently, and en route spent two days with his friend the Georgian Ambassador to England. The staff of the Embassy there have not been paid in three months.)

Back to Betsy's where I spoke to her about my desire to buy a rug for my living room. I have lived in my house in Stone Mountain twenty-five years and basically done nothing to it, and that is evident. So I've embarked on a flurry of painting and renovating swimming pool, having furniture refinished and house painted inside and outside. I want a rug for my living room, and will tie (with the help of Doris) everything else to the rug. Betsy was all for it. Rugs are her passion. They decorate every uncovered part of her hotel, all of them old Persian rugs. We went to 'her' rug man and had a sensually delightful time going through huge numbers of gorgeous rugs. Finally picked two to take back, put on Betsy's floor, and see how I thought about them.

At Betsy's I ran into an old friend from the first visit or two, who wanted to talk about his medical problems: carcinoma of the prostate. A problem that I think is one of the thorniest medical subjects there is nowadays in terms of what to do and not to do, and the sequence. I listened carefully, and he and I agreed he had what

sounded to be an excellent physician, and the two of them should decide together what to do.

Dinner with Zviad at "Stones." We talked at length about the NILC, telemedicine, PIMS and the partnership. Talked some about the history of Georgia, and previous times. The attitude of the Georgians toward their history and communism is fascinating. An email I got from a young woman physician:

My dad is a wine engineer, he produced wine and champagne until things changed in Georgia. He used to take us to vineyards every Fall when we were kids. It was a very special event in our family. My grandfather and great grandfather also produced wine. Grandpa was a director of wine factory in Poti - small city on the coast. My great grandfather owned vineyards and wine factory until 1921, he was the richest man on the coast. He used to sell wine in the neighboring countries on the Black Sea and Mediterranean. He had two ships on the Black Sea which he sank when the communists took over. He was a man of honor and believed that the communists would not use them for good purposes. He preferred to sink his ships rather than giving them to communists. He only brought anchors home, he wanted us to remember family business and history, I guess. We still keep them in the basement of the house in Poti. Later, communists took all his real estate property away. Now there is a federal court in one of his buildings in Poti. We all grew up in Tbilisi, but dad still keeps the property there. I have this special feeling about that small city on the coast, old house with vineyards, smell of freshly squeezed grapes, and old anchors in the basement...

Tuesday, May 25

An early morning meeting with Avto, the Minister of Health. He said they had just finished the ten year plan of health policy program for Georgia, and would give me a copy to take back. He wants me and Richard Saltman of Emory's School of Public Health to go with him to the Sept 26-7 World Health Conference in Copenhagen, where there will be extensive discussions about how to help Georgian healthcare. A special WHO group has been formed to plan the meeting. There will be a discussion of the relation of WHO to countries such as Georgia. He wants Richard and me to think about the following issues that will be on the table in September:

- the model of healthcare he has proposed for next ten years
- reorganization process
- socially oriented market approaches
- relationship of WHO to Georgia
- participation of donor organizations

He spoke about the recent meeting that President Shevardnadze had in Houston with Mike DeBakey, where it was agreed to form the Caucasian Cardiology Center (which I had read in the newspapers). The oil companies apparently will give money. Avto would like for me to go to Houston with him when he goes to meet Dr. DeBakey.

He has the plans underway for a new general hospital of 150 or so beds, that he hopes will be operational at the end of 2000. This of course is the reason we got

involved in Georgia in the first place in 1992: to partner with a Georgian hospital and help it become a model for healthcare. My goal is to find the money for faculty, students and house staff to come over for a month at a time to teach and help set up the various departments.

He spoke of the new list of the five most important initiatives for Georgia from the U.S. Embassy: small business; energy; agriculture.....etc. He wants health to be number six, and added to the list. I promised I would bring this up with the Ambassador.

He would like to visit Atlanta when he comes to the U.S. in the next few months. I told him he would be welcomed.

Archil and I met Marina Gudushauri in the Ministry. Marina is one of the deputy ministers, who has responsibility for amputees. There are 10,000 people in Georgia who have an amputated leg, a lot of them from land mines. Many of them are children. The International Committee of the Red Cross operates a prosthetic factory, turning out about 500 prostheses a year. They are made inexpensively, and last only a year or two. Mark Geil at Georgia Tech has a new machine that can be placed on the stump and directly digitize the measures. This is in contrast to the currently used method, where a cast has to be made. This information will be sent digitally to Mark in Atlanta, who will experiment with various cheap but sturdy materials to make prostheses. Hopefully, when we find about \$100,000, we can set up a CAD CAM process in Tbilisi that will turn out about 25 prostheses a day. There is a similar setup at the VA Hospital in Atlanta. This output will be enough for the entire Caucasus region, in all probability. Mark wanted me to get some samples of the current prostheses so he could make measurements of how they performed, and think about which new materials to try.

All of us went to a meeting at the Embassy with the Ambassador (Kenneth Yalowitz), Kent Larsen, head of US AID in Georgia, and Victoria Sloan, USIA head. The Ambassador began by talking about a putative military coup that had been dismantled the day before. It was being planned for Independence day, May 23rd. A few former military officers and "Zviadists" (followers of Georgia's first president, Zviad Gamsukurdia, who was deposed and followed by Shevardnadze), large cache of weapons. I had heard about it from people back in the U.S. The *Georgian Times* here had just a few offhand paragraphs about it. The Ambassador said there was a "fragile stability" to democracy in Georgia, but democratic institutions were showing increasing strength. He said Shevardnadze had spoken of an unfolding Russian interest once again in the attempted coup. (This may or may not be from the official government; probably more likely from hardliners in the military who hate Shevardnadze for what they see as his role in destroying the Soviet Union, who act more or less on their own.) I brought up the Minister's desire for health to be added as a sixth component. The Ambassador said everyone and their siblings wanted

something added. Said the five components were part of the infrastructure, and that is why they were chosen. I wanted to say that health was certainly a part of the infrastructure, too, but chose not to. A lengthy discussion about the MBA school, and its \$630,000 funding over the next three years, largely from USIA. A problem is there is no money to pay tuition for the students, and \$1500 is more than virtually all of them can afford. The Ambassador thought there should be enough flexibility in the money to scrape up some of it for tuition, but apparently the guidelines do not permit that. President Patton brought up that there is no overhead being paid to GSU as part of the grant, so it is impossible for the university to contribute. The meeting ended, as many such meetings, with a commitment of all parties to work for some solution.

Irina Chanturishvili and I went with her husband, Shio, to a rug merchant they know down by the Turkish baths. An avuncular Armenian, who is the brother of the one Betsy took me to. I liked one of his rugs very much, a Somak*, and decided to sleep on whether to buy it. \$2500. Finally turned out he would take \$1800, and I bought it.

A visit to the Central Republican Hospital. Formerly the leading hospital in Tbilisi, with 1500 beds. Now struggling along, with many refugees from Abkhazia in its rooms, outdated equipment, no x-ray films, etc--the litany of all the hospitals here. The chief physician turns out to be the father of Archil's son-in-law. He has two sons, identical twins, and both are famous soccer players, now playing for a European country-- Belgium, I think. They are much in the news. He and I talked about the patient I had seen there, and the neurosurgeon, Tamaz Kersevadze (**tamaz fersevaje**) came down. He asked me to see if I could find surplus shunts in our hospitals for them, since they were almost impossible to come by: ventriculo-peritoneal and lumbar-peritoneal shunts for medium pressure). I told him I would.

We discussed the participation of the Hospital in the PIMS project, and went to see their library. Two librarians, medium sized room, old texts, no journals. We will furnish it with one to four computers, a connection to the LAN from PIMS, and provide training for the librarians in searching Internet. There will be an emergency medical services component and perhaps a toxicology center also.

Archil and I brought up another idea to the chief doctor. We now have about seventeen residents from Tbilisi in our program, and we wondered about each of them taking their two months of electives running a ward service at the hospital. Introducing Western teaching to their residents and students, as well as using what they have learned at Emory and Grady to treat patients. We agreed on the major problems: old attending physicians who are powerful and still are mired in the Soviet style mentality; lack of laboratory and x-ray facilities to provide the information the Emory residents have come to rely on to make decisions. We decided this was something to pursue in further discussions, but was not feasible at the moment.

To the Military Medical School, in a follow-up to our previous visit. They had gotten together their ideas about how they might participate in the PIMS project. The head of military medicine was present, a colonel, who came across as bright and forward thinking. The head of the military hospital, the dean and the senior faculty, all attested to the importance they are now giving the PIMS project. The military medical commander: "We have to come up to NATO standards." The faculty is interested in survival and relevance. Here are the points that came up:

-they badly want mobile military medical units; one assigned to the hospital in Tbilisi, the other at Kutaisi. They had earlier stated they wanted them to be very mobile. What equipment would be needed?

-they do not have enough money to support what they need. Where can they find this? From US?

-they have a lot of experience that they can contribute to us, especially about floods, earthquakes, landmine injuries and the recent war in Abkhazia.

-the "main directions of collaboration" that they see are: civilian disasters; military training; topics specific to military medicine. They would hope to get this in Russian or Georgian, since few of their people are proficient in English.

-a visit by Jim Zimble and his people would be very much appreciated, to help them in changing their curriculum in the medical school.

-they have "left the Russian orbit" and have no place to publish their scholarly activities. What ideas do we have about where they can publish? Our military medical journals?

-the military hospital commander spoke at length about the ideas for mobile military medical units. They see the need for small units of twenty or so people, and larger ones, around eighty people. These units need to be highly mobile, so they can get close to site of catastrophes or military engagements. He spoke of a system involving triage, on-site surgery and front line icu's for immediate management of severe problems, and evacuation to back-up hospitals. They see us as helping them with communication and training. This would involve: commander of military medicine; Minister of Defense; military hospital; and military medical school. He also wanted a visit by Jim Zimble and his people to help them in their planning.

The meeting ended with a sense of mutual accomplishments in the offing.

I met with Tornike Aphridonidze (თორნიკე აფრიდონიძე), the young newspaper editor of *Georgia Today*. I had been referred to him by his brother, who is a physician interested in U.S. training. We talked about newspapering in Georgia, his use of electronic technology in his newspaper and his view of the future. I will visit his paper the next time I am here.

Temur Kobidze (თემურ კობიძე), director of the toxicology unit at the medical school and Central Republican Hospital, met with me. He has worked with Loren Garrettson of Emory to plan how to modernize the poison control center. The concept of poison control was not known in the Soviet Union. The toxicology physicians instead were the

people who treated overdoses and the like. A visit or two back I saw a patient who had been treated by them. As nearly as I could deduce, he had overdosed on cocaine and had pulmonary edema, which they promptly treated with bronchial lavage with saline. Ended up with acute respiratory distress syndrome. We hope to set up the poison control center connected to the PIMS network, thereby making it widely available.

To the NILC where I saw some applicants for residency positions:

-Rashdin Kutelia: 23. Father professor of mathematics, chair of physics at Georgian Technical university. Brother head of military cooperation department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Went to private medical school, Ayety. USMLE I 77, II 78. "I can only blame myself for doing so poorly." Liked his honesty. Went last year to George Washington University, where he was promised an externship that did not materialize.

-George Zurashvili: 21. Mother works at Betsy's ("Medko"). Now in fifth form at Tbilisi State Medical University. Married 3 months.

-Khatuna Kadeishvili: 33. Graduated 1991. Works in Hospital #4 in internal medicine. Has taken or will take I and II shortly. Would work out fine, I think, for externship.

-Khatuna Natsulishvili: 33; graduated 1991. Step I 86 (215); waiting to hear about II. In cardiology. Daughter age 6. Friend of Misha Siamshvili at Embassy, who highly recommends her. Would work out well for internship after gets her last score.

I appreciate very much the Georgians who come out and say "it was my fault." So very difficult not to be defensive and find excuses when we make lower than we think we should on a test. Particularly when you are trying to get something you want very badly, such as a residency position.

Went out with David Arveladze and Giorgi Kandelaki. A good evening.

Wednesday, May 26

Independence Day. Based on the day in 1918 where Georgia declared independence from Russia, for a short-lived three years before being taken over by the Bolsheviks and Russia again in 1921.

I had lunch with Giorgi Kervalishvili in order to get an idea about how he would do in the U.S. for the summer. He acquitted himself very well. More than serviceable English, poised, an intense desire to improve himself by getting an American education. I decided to see if I could get a family with children of about his age to take him in for the summer.

In the afternoon I went to the Oncology Institute, the leading oncology hospital in Georgia, with Levan Bakanidze, a resident there who spent six months with us as a

junior student a few years back. Levan's uncle, Rezo Gagua, is chief of thoracic surgery and, I think, the deputy chief doctor. I quote from my previous visit in October, 1998:

The hospital has 650 beds, with some 350 patients per day now. Surgery patients have a stay of 20 days, chemotherapy and radiation patients 14 days. No CT scan. Cobalt, 25 years old. Do use computers to plan radiation. Eleven clinical divisions: e.g., children's; head and neck; breast; gu; gyn; chemotherapy; etc. Cost per day is \$120. Average of \$640 for complete diagnosis and therapy. A bit over 200 physicians.

They have two groups of patients now: rich who can pay and indigent patients who are paid for by the government. The rich are getting more knowledgeable about what is available, and wish to have more expensive chemotherapy than is currently available in Georgia, e.g., taxol. There is one department set up by the Germans, that I described in 1998:

But there was a twelve bed unit, costing around \$300,000, that Germans had invested. Any patient can come here and pay \$135 a day for everything: diagnostic studies (CT scan at another center included if needed); surgery; chemotherapy. Complete renovation, with bright airy rooms, excellent furniture.

They would like to establish now what they call a "commercial department," where people who can afford it can get any appropriate chemotherapy and procedures available anywhere. They would like to do this for thoracic surgery and head and neck surgery. A particular problem is their surgeons don't know the latest procedures as practiced in the U.S. Another item high on their wish list is a mammography machine with which they can do stereotactic biopsies.

They had made progress since my last visit, and I was once again impressed with the intensity of their desire to learn and change. I met Konstantin Mardaleishvili, chief of head and neck surgery. He showed me where they are renovating the operating room and building an ICU, both of which will be ready in about two months. But they have no money for OR or ICU equipment. They have a long waiting list of patients, all of whom can pay in cash. They operated on 200 patients last year. A particular desire is to get to know colleagues in the U.S. with whom they can interact.

I met Levan Ramishvili (რამიშვილი). About 30, and has just founded the Georgian Anti-Cancer Foundation. Adequate English. Enthusiastic, energetic, impressive. Wants very much to get connected with the American Cancer Society, which I will arrange, since their headquarters is on the Emory campus.

I left determined to connect the Cancer Institute with organizations and people in the US who might help them. I'll start with the National Cancer Institute, and also hope to find one or two individuals at Emory or elsewhere who might be interested.

I received this email from Levan after the visit:

Dear Dr. Walker,

Hope you are O.K. I,d like to thank you once again, that during your last stay in Tbilisi, despite your overwhelmed schedule, you found time to visit the National Oncologic Scientific Centre, where I,m working. Since that time, I,m so proud that you appreciated me to meet with several doctors, who wished so much to speak with you, share their problems and ask for your help. They asked me to be in touch and cooperate with you with my assistance.

1) Let me start with my uncle - Dr. Rezo Gagua, vice-director of National Oncologic Scientific Centre, Head of the Thoracic department, working on problems of lung cancer. As you remember, he kindly asked you to find someone in USA, if it,s possible, who will be interested to make investments for creation of American-Georgian clinic at the basis of his department. Also he hopes to arrange, by your help, scientific cooperation and exchange of young doctors between our hospitals. He asked me to tell you, that he is ready to send to you or to the person, interested on that issues, projects or plans concerning, how everything that can work out.

2) Dr. Kote Mardaleishvili - Head of the Head and Neck Surgery department at the National Oncologic Scientific Centre - wants to thank you for your visit at our Georgian-German clinic and kindly reminds you of his problems concerning the OR, ICU and diagnostic equipment. Also he relies on your help to connect us with USA Head and Neck surgeons, because he is sure, that cooperation will be beneficial for both sides.

3) Dr. Levan Ramishvili - young president of CNF - Georgian National Foundation - „Anti-Cancer%- short characterizing list of which he gave you. He is so thankful for your promise to get in touch with analogous American Anti-Cancer organizations, to help our foundation with finances and advice how to build the infrastructure of foundation and perform its, activity. If you need, he can send you additional information.

4) Dr. Kakha Baramidze - Dr. of Mammology department - I,we introduced him to you in hospital,s elevator. He asked you to find for him even used mammography machine with Stereotactic biopsy system. It,s interesting that Kakha,s mother died from breast cancer and now he has an aim in life, somehow to improve the diagnostic methods and management of breast cancer patients.

Dr. Rezo Gagua and Dr. Kote Mardaleishvili are expecting your visit on November with great happiness. They are going to arrange your trip to Kakheti, which is beautiful at that season in Georgia.
Dr. Walker, excuse me for such a long e-mail and thank you

Sincerely,

Levan Bakanidze

Went to a supra at the home of Gia Kurdeshvili, who is coming as an intern. Works for AID now. Comes from a family that has long roots in Georgia. Archil and company were present, with many toasts. I looked sadly at my expanding waistline.

President Shevardnadze gave his Independence Day reception, and I went with Judy Wold and the rest of the Georgia State group. I said hello to Mrs. Shevardnadze, who spent a long time with us in Atlanta a few years ago when her granddaughter Tamuna was the Intern Applicant Secretary in our department. She has a new hair color and new “do,” which has all the ladies talking.

A supra on the river on a boat, hosted by the universities. We began with a ritual signing of the agreement among the three universities in Georgia and Georgia State University. Then a gargantuan meal. When it came my time to give a toast I discovered my wine glass was empty. I had just read that the toastmaster at each supra has an assistant, the **მეროქვევი** (*merikipe*), whose sole duty is to keep the wine glasses filled. Roin Metrevelli was the host, and the presence of empty wine glasses at such a prestigious supra reflected upon him. So I said loudly "What this table needs is a **მეროქვევი!**" My knowledge of this quaint Georgian custom, plus its hitting so directly on the mark, had a marked effect.

Thursday, May 27

I met with Sandro Kvitashvili, who is the administrator for the Curatio Healthcare Group. Sandro got his masters at New York University, and spent two months with us at Grady as an intern in administration. I like him very much. He is married to Nicole Jordania, daughter of Reb Jordania, and granddaughter of the first and only president of independent Georgia back in 1918. She works with AID in the Embassy now. When in Atlanta Sandro and I played racquetball many times, with me always winning. This galled Sandro, who is proud of his athletic ability. He told me he is building four racquetball courts in Tbilisi, for \$10,000, and on my next visit he will redress his previous defeats! I was quite impressed.

Sandro also asked me if he could give me \$500 to subscribe to the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, and mail it by FedEx to his group, so great is their desire for western medical information. This disturbed me greatly, since the NILC was set up for that very purpose. I told him we had online journals and textbooks at the NILC, which was news to him. I later had a long discussion with Archil and Zviad. A big problem is that physicians such as those at Curatio do not have the time to come to the NILC when they wish to look something up. Our licenses do not allow us to give passwords for Ovid to remote sites. We decided we needed to tackle this difficulty in the next couple of months.

A meeting with Amiran Gamkrelidze, the Executive Deputy Minister of Health. We went over our agenda, notably the giving of \$20,000 to the nursing school by the Ministry. He assured me once again this would be done. We discussed the crying need for a western hospital. I pointed out we will ultimately turn out 23 Georgian physicians from US postgraduate programs, most of them in internal medicine. They have no place to return to practice what they have learned. Ergo, they won't come back. No use in providing the training, if they cannot come back and practice modern medicine. Better to leave them barefoot physicians, a la China. Amiran is confident the hospital will be built soon. We'll see.

Archil and I had lunch at McDonald's, just opened a couple of months ago. As glitzy as one can imagine. Sleek. They refused to let me take pictures. Same food however, as in the McDonald's next to Grady Hospital. Unfortunate.

In the afternoon I fulfilled a longstanding promise and went to the orphanage at Kaspi, which has children labeled neurologically or psychologically handicapped. I went with Jane Carboy, whose husband has recently been the European Union ambassador here, Lisa Kaestner of Eurasia, about to go to the World Bank, and Audrey Scheutz, one of our medical students here for a couple of months. Audrey just arrived a couple of days ago. She is taking a year out between her junior and senior years doing an MPH.

In my last visit I quoted some remarks Jane had written about Kaspi:

The state of the orphanage is alarming, particularly in terms of the quality of care provided the children. Numerous visits by donors and concerned observers have shown that the children live in a social, psychological, and emotional void. The orphanage is, essentially, a "storage facility".

The children at Kaspi have been labeled as either physically or mentally handicapped, and restrictions are placed on their opportunities to develop and grow towards their potential. The management at Kaspi considers a blind or deaf child, or a mentally impaired one, as incapable of learning. A child with epilepsy is regarded and treated as handicapped. And some of the diagnoses of physical handicaps appear suspect.

The orphanage is two hours from Tbilisi, out in agricultural country. The orphanage is vintage Soviet architecture: large, poorly constructed, completely functional, without any beauty. Huge rooms. No screens on the windows. Poor toilet facilities. The staff eat first, and whatever is left over is given to the children.

It was a searing experience. Eighty children, from about eight to seventeen, boys and girls. They all descended on Jane and Lisa with screams of pleasure, jumping all over them. They looked to me to be in good health: rosy cheeked, endlessly energetic. They seemed to me to fall into three groups:

- children who were obviously severely retarded, with various automatisms, sitting mute and staring.
- children with physical handicaps, such as no feet, but who appeared mentally normal.
- children that I could not tell had any problems just from the brief time I had to watch them.

The boys were for me the hardest to get over. They clustered around me as though they had never seen a male before. I had them write their names, and they were clearly adept at the a.b.c's. Many of them could speak a few words or phrases of English. They put their arms around my shoulders, saying "me Zviad," or "me Giorgi," while the girls were doing the same with Lisa and Jane. They wanted a role model, in the very primitive sense of how one animal hungers for another of its own kind. I thought how much good a Big Brother program would do, but it seems unobtainable

out in the middle of the country. Also unknown in Georgian culture.

Jane plans to build an orphanage in Tbilisi, with professional help for the children. I will see if I can get the Rotary Club in Atlanta to help with a large international grant. When I arrived back in Atlanta Monica Umpierrez, a radiologist at the VA, who is from Ecuador, said the US is unique in its approach to orphans. Virtually every other country puts them 'in storage.'

Back to Betsy's, where Judy Wold confided to me that Betsy reminds her of her mother. Mrs. Lupo founded Mary Mac's Tea Room on Ponce de Leon Avenue in Atlanta, and was a presence for many years in Atlanta, until she died about one year ago. She was a strong and flavorful character who left an imprint on everyone. Just like Betsy.

Betsy leaves an unforgettable impression. She is a determined, charming, intelligent human being. All the functions that make for a successful individual are "hard wired" in Betsy. I have a friend who made me understand unforgettably what hard wired means. His mother was tragically killed by a robber. She and his father, age 85, had been married almost 60 years. The father was devastated and grief stricken. Jeff stayed with him during the two weeks after the tragedy, and noted all the signs of a severe depression: insomnia, apathy, etc. One day a really cute young thing came over from the local church or some such. He noted the old man straightened his tie, adjusted his coat, glanced rapidly at the mirror to make sure everything was in place. Irrefutable signs of a "hard wired" function that was suddenly in control after severe grief.

Dinner that night with Levan Kacharava, Salome Kacharava, Nino (Levan's girl friend) and Giorgi, his partner.

Friday, May 28

A last fling, done in style, at the Turkish Bath, courtesy of Levan Kacharava. Then a final meeting at the NILC with Archil and Zviad, and to the rug place to pick it up. I had been hoping to get my Russian visa so I could go through Moscow instead of Tbilisi. Two days ago permission had come through, but on going to the Russian Embassy we were told it was too late and would cost \$700. Levan Vasadze called from Moscow, and wanted to know when I was arriving. He was furious when I told him about the delay and money. He had one of his associates, a former ambassador, to call the Ambassador to Georgia and insist I get a visa. We were told to call the Ambassador, and Archil did so. He said he would see to it, only to call and say the visa office had closed thirty minutes before. I gave up. Levan was furious. I'll get the visa (multiple entry) when I return to Atlanta.

Austrian Air to Vienna. The travel agency from AID had asked "do you want to stay at a good small hotel in Vienna, and not at the airport." I of course said yes. I found a small hostel, no air conditioning, spartan accommodations, four cots in my room. No amenities. Once again I had assumed the tastes of some nameless and faceless functionary were on a level with mine. A lesson learned, unfortunately not the first time. But I did have a wonderful dinner at a small streetside place, Italian, with fabulous beer: Gold Fassl, a Viennese beer that can be found in Tbilisi but nowhere else outside of Venice.

Saturday, May 29

Up early and to Atlanta on Delta.

I returned to Jenny, my wire haired terrier, the light of my life, who had what I thought was psychological distemper the last time I went to Tbilisi. It turns out Jenny has a large tumor on her thyroid gland, discovered by--of all people--the groomer. Missed by the vet and me, in spite of plentiful opportunities to discover it. I am set to take her to the University of Georgia veterinary school for surgery, for what I am told is almost surely statistically a carcinoma. She is seven. My last two wire haireds lived to be twenty. I am not prepared to have Jenny leave me at age seven. I brace myself for the surgery.

Friday, May 14, 1999

**PIMS MEETING IN TBILISI MAY 13,14 1999
and Subsequent Meetings in Tbilisi through May 28, 1999**

This is a summary of the meeting held in Tbilisi, outlining the results and future plans. I invite all of the participants to correct or enlarge on any part that I may have gotten wrong.

Participants: Jim Hendrick; John Concannon; Frank Randolph; Alex Devinsky; Archil Kobaladze; Zviad Kirtava; Dito Makhatadze; Ken Walker.

PIMS will set up a wireless 2 megabyte local area network (LAN) during June, or perhaps July or August, that connects the following:

Ministry of Defense

Military Hospital

Military Medical School of Tbilisi State Medical University

Central Clinical Hospital

Partners for Health:

 National Information Learning Centre

 EMS Training center

Ministry of Health

National Security Council of Georgia

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

?? U.S. Embassy

The hub will be at the National Information Learning Centre (NILC).

The U.S. participants in the project will include:

Emory University School of Medicine: Ken Walker; Carol Burns; Vlad Slamecka

The Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences: Jim Zimble

The Georgia National Guard: L.Col. Nutter; Col. Sidney Morgan;

U.S. Army: MG Ralph Haynes

A draft outline for planning arose out of meetings among the Tbilisi participants and Ken Walker over a two week period subsequent to the initial meeting with Jim Hendrick and the PIMS people. This outline follows.

**A. Partners for Health
NILC and EMS Training Center**

1. One or more servers on site and maintained by NILC staff 24 hours a day 365 days a year.
2. Two work stations (= one computer and printer as appropriate) for PIMS purposes.
3. A room will be renovated and furnished appropriately for the servers.
4. The NILC will provide an with appropriate credentials and training to trouble and maintain the systems for PIMS.
5. PIMS will provide a sum to the Partners for Health for training that will be transmitted in an appropriate fashion.
6. The NILC would be pleased to participate in the development and maintenance of databases and web pages.
7. The NILC would be pleased to participate in appropriate ways in the development of new informatic techniques and techniques for PIMS.
8. The NILC would be pleased to established a distance learning classroom with 25-30 computers in space that is available in the NILC. This facility would be available for use by USUHS, the Georgian Military Hospital, the Georgian Military Medical School and other groups for appropriate use. A videoconferencing capability might be added in the future.
9. The EMS Training Center will have one work station.
10. The EMS will work with other groups (Military Hospital, Military Medical School, USUHS, PIMS, etc.) to develop and adapt programs, modules and guidelines on topics appropriate to: disasters; crisis management; military medical needs.
11. The EMS will train trainers to use the above modules.
12. The EMS will participate in working with the Military Hospital, Military Medical School and the Georgian military medical services in training personnel for mobile medical groups.
13. The EMS will participate in working with PIMS and Georgian military medicine authorities to design and test communication technology among groups participating in disasters, following the FEMA model in the U.S.

14. The EMS will work to develop and maintain appropriate data bases, working with PIMS.

15. A disaster data base and server will be developed.

16. A plan for advanced on-site stabilization of acute trauma (civilian and military) will be developed. This plan will include development of training modules and evacuation by helicopters or other means.

17. One work station will be in the office of the Partners for Health.

B. Military Hospital and Georgian Military Medical Service

Based on conversations with the chief doctor of the Military Hospital and the commander of the Georgian Military Medical Service.

1. Mobile Military Medical Units will be developed:

Must be highly mobile

There will be two sizes: small (20 people) and large (80 people)

Must be able to get close to site of battle or catastrophe

Communication technology high priority

Must have appropriate level of medical support

Design and training necessary

2. Satellite library of NILC will be established in Military Hospital with up to four workstations.

3. Access to or Poison Control Center and data base on premises, with particular reference to agents likely to be encountered in disasters and warfare.

4. Close collaboration with EMS center in planning areas to develop training modules.

5. Establishment of technology for obtaining second opinions from within Georgia and abroad, including possibility of development of teleconferencing between Military Hospital and other Georgian as well as international centers.

6. Establishment of telemedicine between Military Hospital and remote sites in Georgia.

7. A prime goal of these projects will be the ability to replicate them elsewhere, especially training modules.

C. Military Medical School of Tbilisi State Medical University

Based on two meetings with the Dean and senior faculty, and documents supplied by them. One of the meetings was a combined meeting with the chief doctor of the Military Hospital and the commander of the Georgian Military Medicine force. The language is the language of the Medical School. Many of these suggestions are more applicable to USUHS than to PIMS as such, and reflect two realities:

- The intense desire of the medical school to develop a more modern curriculum in order to survive.
- A reflection of the new policy that the military has to meet NATO standards

The Military Medical School will have a satellite of the NILC with four to six work stations, and appropriate training in the use of medical data bases provided by the National Library of Medicine and other institutions.

1. Planning of actions in Critical Situations

- Initial database of planning.
- Development of management software
- Planning of evacuation-rescuing operations
- Preparation (training) of population and medical personnel for medical care service deployment in critical situations.

2. Crisis management

Development of a policy for crisis management

3. Military exercises and corresponding training

- Organization and forms of military exercises relevant to the Military Medical School.
- Military-medical training of armed forces.
- Forms of battlefield and special training of medical units and institutions in field exercises

4. Military education: Curriculum and Policy Development; Training Plan

Development of uniformed programs of undergraduate and postgraduate professional military-medical education. (Note by K. Walker: the curriculum of USUHS.).

5. Military topography of Georgia, with reference to medical facilities

The geography/topography of Georgia is quite complicated and diverse, from the mountains to the sea. A digitized topographical map that is available wherever needed (e.g., mobile military units) is needed.

6. Reorganization of Military Medical Service with reference to infrastructure.
7. Development of an English-Russian-Georgian Dictionary of military and medical terms.
8. Medical standards and procedures for search and rescue operations.
9. National database development of chemical hazards in Georgia.
10. Environmental preservation: development of training methods to preserve the chemical safety of the armed forces, civilian population and ecosphere of Georgia.
11. Development of databases, training modules and methods to manage chemical and nuclear disasters in Georgia.
12. Updating and modernization of existing toxicology information and Toxicology Consulting Center, using modern technology and databases.
13. Methods and technology for developing databases for inventory and maintenance of medical equipment. This would include the estimate of the medical supplies needed in peace and war.
14. Collaboration with the Military Medical Hospital and Central Clinical Hospital in the establishment of databases about mine injuries.
15. Other areas of interest to the faculty of the Military Medical School:
 - Blood banks: collection, preparation and storage of blood.
 - Aeromedical evacuation.
 - Medical Supply policies and procedures for contemporary military forces.
 - Rear supply policies and procedures with respect to medical system.
 - Rear support of the units of the Army Medical Service.
 - Computerization of rear functions, especially with reference to sanitary losses/needs.
 - Forms and regulations of ordering and demands of medical supply.
 - Access to military medical publications in various journals.
 - Exchange of educational/scientific experience with other military medical schools.

D. Central Clinical Hospital

1. A satellite of the NILC will be established with up to four work stations. Librarians will be appropriately trained in searching medical data bases.
2. Databases will be developed of the rich clinical material of the Hospital with respect to recent medical warfare experiences, especially land mines and other explosives.
3. A Poison Control Database and Center will be on premises and maintained for use by the military as described above.