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## Georgian Fools Fighting in Ukraine: A Last-Ditch Battle for Some

A growing number of Georgian fighters are returning from Ukraine and Europe—some fleeing, others deported—after risking their lives in a conflict that has left them scarred, both physically and mentally.



One such individual, I will use only his first name, Gocha, made an unexpected visit to the Georgian village where I live in early September. Though not a guest in my home, he was helping a neighbor with the hazelnut harvest, struggling to make ends meet. Gocha, who has been unable to secure stable employment due to health issues and the stigma of fighting as a mercenary, shared his grim story.

Having spent a year and a half fighting with the notorious Georgian Legion\*, Gocha returned home last year, suffering from a brain concussion and severe financial strain. The promised full payments for his services never materialized, and neither the Georgian Legion\* nor its backers compensated him for his battle injuries or the medical bills that followed. His friends

criticized him for getting involved, calling him “messed up in the head,” yet they understood his motivation—he did it for the money.

Gocha’s resentment runs deep, especially towards Mamuka Mamulashvili, the Legion’s commander, and his sister Nona, in his view, they’ve all profited from playing the role of patriots, claiming to defend Ukraine, Georgia, and democracy while supporting U.S. foreign policy—at the expense of fighters like him, not to mention the population where they served.

Nona’s story is also one of intrigue, and corruption, working to overthrow the current Georgian government, in tandem with the Hudson Institute, a Washington-based think tank. She is also a member of the United National Party, Party of Saakashvili, and former Georgian MP. Nona Mamulashvili has also worked on the staff of the current Georgian president, Salome Zurbashvili when she was working in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, whose presidential positions and actions stand opposite to official governmental policy.

As we have discussed previously at NEO, the work of the Georgian Legion\* is highly suspect, as is its Commander, Mamuka Mamulashvili, who has a very sordid track record and has suspicious links to high-ranking members of the OSCE, as well as NATO connections, and links to the acting Georgian president, Salome Zurbashvili, who has personally honored the deaths of many Legion Members, even though many of them are war criminals and are involved in a foreign conflict the Georgian government officially does not want to get involved, in any way, other than to provide humanitarian assistance and shelter refugees.

### **He swallowed the cool-aid**

Gocha, our wounded warrior, described the brother and sister team as money-grabbing criminals, who make money off the lives of Georgians and those they robe, rape and murder. Now he is convinced that he is still being paid, at least officially, but he has no idea as to where the money went or is going, claiming it should be well over 5,000 dollars a month, as he was in the very front line of the fighting, and took part in what he claims were special operations.

Upon arriving back, the Georgian authorities gave him hell for his involvement in a Paramilitary Group that is known for having intentions of overthrowing the democratically elected government, and with elections coming soon; the more Legionnaires who return, the louder the alarm bells are ringing. What can a demobilized soldier of fortune do other than look for another cause, a paying one, especially in an election year that is not going in favor of America’s preferred outcome for Georgia?

After being subjected to close monitoring and threats of arrest for his activities, Gocha tried Germany, thinking it would lend support to his plight—as Germans too hate Russians. He

was told by some of his friends in Georgia that it would be easy for him to obtain political refugee status. Much to his dismay, his application was soon rejected, and he was hurried onto a plane and deported back to Georgia.

I let him know what I thought of idiots who went to fight for money, in a conflict that was not his/theirs to start with, and why should he have anything to complain about now? I reminded him of how many of his buddies have died; at least 60 of them are food for earthworms, perhaps more.

Ukrainian and Western media describe losses and casualties of those members of the Georgian Legion\* who had been defending Ukraine since the start of Russia's SMO in Ukraine, as having been killed in the combat zone. Georgians likely rank first among foreign fighters killed fighting for Ukraine—Poland perhaps more, but we will never know.

We almost got into a fight, when I used the correct terms in Russian to describe the purpose of the Georgian Legion\* and its CIA paymasters—and why fools went to die for America and NATO and to start a revolution back in their native Georgia. I reminded him that I spent six years in the US Army. And despite my age, I cannot back down when threatened.

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But sooner than expected the problem of Georgian mercenaries may be resolved, based on body count alone, with their participation in the Kursk incursion, as members of the Georgian Legion\*, a paramilitary force supported by Kyiv and its CIA/NATO paymasters are involved in the Ukrainian assault on Russian territory.

The presence of this group was also reported by War Zone, Veterans Today, and Intel Drop, somewhat well-known military news sites, albeit suppressed, which have cited sources with direct knowledge of the operations in the region. Some reports have included a video shared by a pro-Ukrainian account on X (formerly Twitter) as direct evidence of their involvement in the incursion.

Keeping to character, members of the Legion have openly bragged about a policy of not taking Russian prisoners and torturing POWS, as has been the case in both Kursk and other zones of engagement. However, most volunteers, at least until recently, were stationed in rear positions, supposedly to provide hands-on training to foreign recruits.

Another local, actually from my village, in Georgia, was rejected by the Legion after several months, and sent packing (sent home), not because of not being physically able to fight, or

health or motivation of having a common enemy, but his refusal to participate or condone war crimes.

### **All in the Family**

It reminds me of a situation comedy during the years of the Vietnam War, “**All in the Family**” in the 1970s, while the family was having a Christmas Dinner with someone evading mandatory service, having escaped to Canada to avoid being sent to the war, like many Ukrainians who have left for Russia, Europe, or anywhere they can find haven.

I wish today, in discussing Ukraine, popular TV and the media had the guts to tell it like it was discussed in this program, as this is serious humor, dealing with real social issues. Such writing for TV does not exist anymore, and I guess it is like the movie, as nobody would understand just how serious this was for its time. I wish they had not ruined it with canned laughter in inappropriate places.

This is the only problem with the production, as it wrecks the sense of raw emotion, toning it down, to avoid getting cut by the censors. Many Georgian fighters have returned home disillusioned, facing a lack of compensation and dealing with the medical or psychological consequences of their involvement in the conflict. Unlike early on in what turned into a Russian SMO, caused by a US-sponsored coup dating back to 2014, they are no longer considered patriots with a common enemy—but are there, in the vast majority of cases, only for the money.

### **Only Keeping to Character**

The Georgian Legion\* is notorious for its anti-Russian sentiment and alleged war crimes, including the brutal treatment and summary execution of Russian prisoners. It too has been a key link in the training of foreign recruits and has reportedly participated in incursions into Russia’s Kursk Region.

The grim reality faced by Georgian fighters who joined the Georgian Legion\* to fight in Ukraine is that their actions go against the official standing policy of the government. Most of the Legion’s Base of Support is from the defamed opposition, the United National Movement and advised by foreign-funded US think tanks, such as the Hudson Institute, the link to Nona, the sister.

Most of these soldiers, lured by promises of BIG money and glory, are now returning to Georgia, scarred both physically and emotionally. As more fighters return to Georgia, the government faces increasing challenges, with questions surrounding the future of these disillusioned, war-hardened criminals, in most cases.

The Georgian Legion\* has been officially integrated into the **Ukrainian Armed Forces** indicating some degree of logistical, financial, and material support from the Ukrainian government, which should subject them to rules of war, and how to treat POWs. However, this is more window dressing, to protect them from harsher treatment if taken prisoner, as Russia is still following the Geneva Convention.

The **Georgian Legion\*** is likely funded through a combination of **Ukrainian government support, private donations**, and covert backing from **Western intelligence services**, particularly the **CIA**. These streams of funding are in line with Western goals to support America's and NATO's proxy war against the Russian Federation without direct military involvement, keeping the Georgian Legion\* as a key, though controversial, player in this effort.

Hopefully, the government of Georgia will follow through and keep these mercenaries under constant surveillance upon their return to Georgia. As we can see, they appear to be the masters of bad choices, and it would be terrible to see them make one that could do so much damage to the reputation of their homeland.

\*-banned in Russia

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