

The Democratic Republic of Georgia and the Second International

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Abstract

The ruling political force of the Democratic Republic of Georgia, the Social Democratic Labor Party, expressed its desire to join the Second International in February 1919 at the Berne Conference of the International. In April of that year, the Amsterdam Conference granted this request and admitted the Georgian party to the Second International.

This article covers the visit of the leaders of this international organization (Karl Kautsky, James Ramsay MacDonald, Pierre Renaudel, Emile Vandervelde, and others) to Georgia in the fall of 1920 and the delegation's meetings with representatives of the public from across the country. The guests learned about Georgia's past, culture, and traditions, as well as the achievements and challenges of state building. They emerged with the impression that a new model of democratic socialism was taking root in this small republic in the South Caucasus, one that could serve as an example for other small nations seeking independence. The members of the delegation rendered good service to the Georgian state in their countries, spoke out in defense of its rights and made serious efforts to ensure international recognition of the Democratic Republic of Georgia.

Keywords: Democratic Republic of Georgia, Second International, State independence, International recognition

Introduction

The First International – also known as the International Workingmen’s Association, which served as a coordinating center for political parties representing the interests of the proletariat – was founded in London in 1864. Its founders were Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. The principal activity of the International was confined to four congresses. In 1872 the organization split into two wings – Marxist and anarchist – and in 1876, at the Philadelphia Congress, a resolution on self-dissolution was adopted.

In the 1880s the further rise of the labor movement once again placed the renewal of the International on the agenda, and this was indeed accomplished. In July 1889, in Paris, at a congress dedicated to the centenary of the Great French Revolution, the International Association of Socialist Parties – the Second International – was established. It united the social democratic and labor parties of various countries. From the early 1900s the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP) also became a member of the International, and its Bolshevik and Menshevik leaders regularly participated in its activities. The leaders of Georgian social democracy were likewise closely connected with prominent representatives of the International. For Georgian Social Democratic Mensheviks, the ideas of parliamentarism, democracy, and mass parties – supported by the majority of the Second International’s members – were particularly appealing.

The Second International regarded the attainment of socialism, through peaceful struggle and reform, as the ultimate goal of the labor movement, while considering the parliamentary republic, founded on universal suffrage, as the appropriate form for the organization of a socialist state. Among its immediate objectives were the eight-hour working day, the improvement of working conditions for children and women, and others.

The International conducted an active campaign against nationalism and imperialist colonial policy. This organization is associated with the establishment of such widely recognized commemorative dates as International Workers’ Solidarity Day (1 May) and International Women’s Day (8 March).

The socialist parties that belonged to the Second International united 380,000 members, and hundreds of journals and newspapers were at the disposal of the socialists.

The Restoration of the Second International and the Georgian Social Democratic Party

Shortly after the outbreak of the First World War, the International disintegrated due to internal discord. Alongside ideological disagreements, the issue of attitudes toward the war also predetermined the organization's fragmentation. On one side stood the supporters of civil peace, and on the other, the parties supporting their own governments in the war. Numerous factions and intra-party groups emerged, which cast doubt on the unity of the organized labor movement. The state coup carried out in Russia in October 1917 deepened this rift even further (at the initiative of the Bolshevik Party, a new – Third – Communist International was formed in 1919. In V. Lenin's formulation, the Comintern was "the union of the workers of the entire world, which strives to establish Soviet power in every country") (1).

The proponents of revolutionary struggle (primarily the Russian Bolsheviks) labeled the Second International the "Yellow International". As Soviet historiography asserted, "the opportunist leaders of the socialist parties of the Second International, who supported the bourgeois slogan of 'defense of the fatherland,' betrayed the cause of socialism and proletarian internationalism and joined the camp of the imperialist bourgeoisie" (2). In reality, the labor parties of many countries shared the political stance of their national governments, which meant that the concept of the proletariat's international solidarity suffered defeat, and the basis for further cooperation was lost for a long time.

Shortly after the end of the First World War, the process of restoring the Second International began, culminating in its formal reorganization at the Geneva Congress in July 1920. Leading roles within the International were assumed by the British Labour Party, the Belgian Socialists, and the German Social Democrats. Earlier, in February 1919, at the Bern Conference of the International, in which the majority of the old Social Democratic parties participated, the Social Democratic Party of Georgia expressed its desire to join this organization. The Georgian delegation also submitted a resolution to the Bern Conference, and in the statement adopted in response it was noted: "The Conference regards the national independence of Georgia as a just demand of the Georgian people, which is in accord with the fundamental principle of the right of peoples – self-determination. The Georgian people have demonstrated undoubted political awareness in creating, despite the most difficult circumstances, a democratic and republican order, and in having lived independently for eight months. Therefore, the International Socialist Conference demands of the Peace Conference that the independence of Georgia be officially recognized" (3).

In April 1919, the Amsterdam Conference admitted the Social Democratic Party of Georgia into the Second International. At the same conference, the renowned Georgian Social Democrat Akaki Chkhenkeli was elected a member of the permanent international commission of the Second International. The Georgian Social Democrats were granted four seats within the International and the right to establish a Georgian section (4).

The delegation of the Georgian Social Democratic Party once again submitted a resolution to the Amsterdam Conference, requesting the International's support for the recognition of Georgia's state independence. The Conference fully accepted this request and adopted an appropriate resolution. The resolution called upon the Paris Peace Conference to officially recognize Georgia's sovereignty (5).

According to Akaki Chkhenkeli's assessment: "This is the first time that the International has expressed its opinion regarding Georgia. ...I welcome with joy the raising of the Georgian question within the International; this heralds its recognition as an international issue". Chkhenkeli also regarded the entry of the Social Democratic Party of Georgia into the International as an important achievement, referring to it as "a matter of utmost significance" (6, 93).

It is noteworthy that at the Lucerne Conference of the Second International, held in August 1919, the majority supported the establishment of the League of Nations. At that time, international social democracy believed that the League of Nations could prevent injustice, guarantee the independence and extensive rights of peoples, resolve all contentious issues in relations between nations, achieve complete disarmament, and so forth. At the same time, the Conference condemned the Treaty of Versailles as a dictate imposed by the victors and demanded its revision on the basis of the right of peoples to self-determination (7).

Visit of the International Delegation to Georgia and its Impressions

At the Geneva Congress of the International, the representatives of the Social Democratic Party of Georgia, including Irakli Tsereteli, invited leaders of the international labor movement to Georgia, and they expressed their consent.

What objective did the ruling political party of the Democratic Republic of Georgia pursue when, by inviting European guests, it planned such a large-scale initiative? Although by that time the new Georgian state had already been recognized *de facto* and the contours of its involvement in international relations were beginning to take shape, the Republic still required formal needed recognition. Moreover, a new universal association – the League of Nations – was being formed, and membership in it was perceived as an effective guarantee of the country's security. Both tasks demanded an increase in Georgia's visibility and the creation of a favorable climate of public opinion abroad. This was all the more necessary since, as the newspaper *Sakartvelo* observed, "cultured Europe and America remain poisoned by the malicious insinuations that the enemies of our nation have relentlessly disseminated since the

very day our independence was proclaimed” (8). Prominent European socialists could dispel such clouds of falsehood and assist the Georgian state in turning the information struggle to its advantage.

To use a contemporary term, the editor of the newspaper “Ertoba” (Unity), Viktor Nozadze, had a clear understanding of the meaning of public relations. He wrote: “Let no one say that the work of propaganda for Georgia has little significance in the matter of our country’s fate. ...For Europe, becoming acquainted with us – having a name in Europe – has great importance. This is especially true for us, who only yesterday entered the international arena. Such propaganda is not needed by Poland, nor by Finland, but it is needed by us all the more” (9). The fact that the visit of European guests to Georgia and their travels throughout the country were fully financed by the government of the Democratic Republic of Georgia clearly demonstrates the awareness of this necessity (10, 16).

For the journey to Georgia, a broad representative delegation of the International was formed under the leadership of Karl Kautsky (11), the renowned Marxist theorist and a leader of the German Social Democratic Party and the Second International. In addition to Kautsky, the delegation included: James Ramsay MacDonald, Thomas Shaw, and Mrs. Ethel Snowden (Great Britain); Pierre Renaudel, Léon Blum, Alfred Inghels, and Adrien Marquet (France); Émile Vandervelde and Camille Huysmans accompanied by their spouses, Huysmans’s daughter Sara – who kept a travel diary – and De Bruycker (Belgium).

News of the planned visit of the leaders of the Second International to Georgia became widely publicized. Information about it appeared not only in the socialist press of Europe but also in far more influential periodicals. For example, the London „Times“ reported as early as 4 August 1920: “On September 1, at the invitation of the Georgian Government, a socialist delegation will depart for Georgia in order to study the prevailing political and social conditions. The delegation will include socialists who have already visited Bolshevik Russia, enabling them to compare the situation in the two countries” (12, 208). Similar information was published by the „Morning Post“. According to this conservative periodical, the purpose of the visit of the “European Workers’ Mission” to Georgia was to compare local conditions with those of other countries (13).

On 5 September 1920, the newspaper Unity, the organ of the Social Democratic Party of Georgia, which referred to the guests as “the luminaries of the International” and “the apostles of brotherhood and unity” (14), wrote in its editorial: “We may congratulate Georgian democracy: our revered leaders of the European labor movement, the finest fighters for these ideals, who have brought us to the threshold of victory, will already have departed from Europe in the direction of our country.

Who has not visited our land during these few revolutionary years: generals, princes, soldiers, merchants, and speculators from foreign countries. What variety of people have the streets of Tbilisi not seen? Yet they have never been our guests. Some came to dominate us, others to profit from us. Thus, they were guests either of our rich nature or not guests at all. Only now are true guests arriving – friends of Georgia and teachers of Georgian democracy, those whose writings shaped and strengthened our revolutionary thought and enlivened our energies. The finest bearers of international socialism are to be welcomed by our country, by our democracy”.

At the conclusion of the article it was noted: “We may be proud that they come to observe the practical work carried out by the Social Democrats, by the working masses of Georgia in their person” (15).

Later, Noe Zhordania recalled that “we regarded the socialist delegation as the best weapon for Europe, and we invited them with great honor and confidence. They fulfilled their role faithfully and justified our expectations” (16).

The delegation of the Second International arrived in Batumi on 14 September 1920 aboard the Austro-Hungarian armored liner „Franz Ferdinand“. The distinguished guests were greeted by the small ship „Batumi“, adorned with waving flags and decorated with roses and flowers, while on the shore thousands of people holding banners had gathered. As one member of the delegation described: “Children held bouquets; beneath a triumphal arch music played. No one was compelled to meet us. The people came because they wished to come. ... They ran after our carriages, throwing red roses and sending us kisses. We collected these roses and pinned them to our clothing as a red symbol of international solidarity” (12, 211).

During a meeting held at the Batumi City Council, it was decided that Marine Avenue would henceforth be named International Avenue, and that the members of the delegation would be granted the title of Honorary Citizens of Batumi (17)

After touring the seaside city, the delegation departed for Tbilisi in the evening on a special train. In honor of the guests, the Government of Georgia declared 15 September a public holiday. A ceremonial reception – attended by members of the Republic’s government, deputies of the Constituent Assembly, members of the headquarters of the People’s army and guard – was held at the Tbilisi railway station. The entire city was adorned with national flags and red banners. Along the streets leading from the station to the palace, military and guard units were lined up. An orchestra performed on a stage erected in front of the State Theatre. Posters printed in European languages were displayed, among other decorations. On the same day, a special session of the supreme legislative body convened, attended not only by the members of the Assembly but also by the government in full composition. The square adjacent

to the palace was packed with people. In the festively decorated hall, the guests were greeted with ovations.

Welcoming speeches were delivered by the Deputy Chair of the Assembly, Aleksandre Lomtadze; on behalf of the factions – Grigol Giorgadze (Social Democrat), Shalva Aleksimakhishvili (Socialist-Federalist), Giorgi Gvazava (National Democrat), Leo Shengelia (Socialist-Revolutionary), Grigol Veshapeli (National Party), and Leon Ter-Stepanian (Dashnaktsutyun).

On the following day, the guests attended a performance of the opera „Abesalom and Eteri“ at the State Theatre, after which a meeting with representatives of Georgian society was held. Speeches were delivered by the poet Kote Makashvili and the writer Grigol Robakidze. Particularly impressive was the latter’s address, in which he stated: “Noble guests! ...For two thousand years, we Georgians ...have awaited you: the chosen sons of the West. ...While being pressed by the East, we have always aspired toward the West. ...Today we have met at last, and from this meeting onward a new mountain pass in Georgian history shall begin” (18).

The delegation held meetings with members of the Council of Workers’ Deputies, representatives of the trade unions, the Georgian Social Democratic and Socialist-Federalist parties, and others. The guests spent ten days in Georgia, traveling through Kakheti (Sagarejo, Gurjaani, Tsinandali, Telavi), Kartli (Mtskheta, Gori, Kareli, Khashuri, Borjomi), Imereti (Kutaisi, Samtredia, Chiatura, Tkibuli), Samegrelo (Abasha, Akhali Senaki, Poti), and Guria (Lanchkhuti, Ozurgeti, Natanebi). They met with residents of cities and villages, attended numerous rallies and ceremonial sessions, and on multiple occasions addressed the citizens of Georgia. The visit of the delegation of the Second International was widely covered by the Georgian periodical press, and scenes illustrating the visit were captured both in photographs and on film.

The leaders of the Second International who had come to Georgia were “the theoreticians of socialism, while their hosts were its first practitioners” (19). After familiarizing themselves with Georgia’s socio-political reality, the European guests formed the impression that in this small republic of the South Caucasus, a new model of democratic socialism was taking shape – one that could serve as an example for other small nations striving for independence. According to them, Georgia represented Western civilization situated between the “Asiatic” traditions of Bolshevism and Kemalism (10, 24).

In this respect, Ramsay MacDonald’s words sounded particularly compelling: “Our aim is to assist you and to share in your experience, for our own states have not yet attained what Georgia has achieved”.

“Georgia is a socialist republic that has remained loyal to European social democracy. ...You have founded a socialist republic on your own traditions, on the principles of liberty, free thought, and freedom of speech and press. ...The delegation recognizes that Georgia, as a worthy heir of its past, is a republic that promotes both universal and international ideals” (10, 29-30).

More succinct was Emil Vandervelde, who stated: “Allow me to express my admiration for what I have witnessed here myself. We are told that you wish to learn from us. No – the West must come to you to learn” (20).

Thomas Shaw echoed this sentiment: “I am convinced that the path chosen by Georgia will lead the working class to the socialist goal. We have not come solely to support you; we wish to share in your experience” (10, 34).

The position of Albert Ingels, the representative of the French Socialist Party, was no different: “The working class of all Europe is watching Georgia. Georgian democracy has already partially realized socialism... Georgia is on the right path and will lead the working class to victory” (10, 32).

These statements were made by foreign guests at a time when their Georgian ideological counterparts were oriented toward European socialists. Georgian social democrats had been educated in the ideas of Marx, Engels, and Karl Kautsky and remained faithful to this worldview. Several addresses delivered to the leaders of the International, which will be verified below, serve as evidence of this orientation.

Noe Zhordania stated: “We are your disciples, sharing your social doctrine and political tactics, faithful to masters such as Marx, Engels, Kautsky, Jaurès, Vandervelde, and Keir Hardie”.

Isidore Ramishvili said: “Look at the path we are following to achieve our goal and point out mistakes we would definitely make, Georgian Social-Democrats we are inevitably making in accomplishing such a task so quickly. We will, as always, approach your advice with due attention”.

Silibistro Jibladze added: “Please get to know our young republic closely and point out the mistakes we have made, so that we may avoid them in the future” (10, 32).

Aleksandre Lomtadze addressed the guests: “Dear friends, ...you have more experience than we do; know us, study us, judge us, and tell us directly what is wrong in our work and what is good. In carrying out the cause of international democracy, rest assured that Georgia’s democracy will fulfill its role faithfully” (21).

The guests were given direct exposure to Georgia's past, culture, traditions, and the achievements and challenges of its ongoing state-building process (22). They noted individual shortcomings frankly, yet all were profoundly impressed by the Georgian social democrats' moderation and commitment to democracy. For example, Emil Vandervelde remarked that in Georgia, which he called "the Switzerland of Asia", he saw "the realization of democratic ideals and the path along which the ideals of international socialism are being implemented" (23). Ramsay MacDonald added: "Georgia, as a country, its politics, its people, is extraordinary" (24).

Karl Kautsky, who arrived to Georgia on 28 September 1920, was also deeply impressed (25). Although he believed that "an economically backward country can never be a pioneer in developing forms of socialist governance", he recorded in the book he wrote following his visit: "We discover that during the revolutionary period, the government of Georgia was the one enjoying the firmest support at home. ... Whenever a social-democratic government comes to power, it will have to act according to the same principles, and the benefits gained from the Georgian experience will be at its disposal" (26).

The Delegation's promises and the Issue of their Implementation

Leaders of the Second International pledged active support to Georgia. For instance, at a meeting with workers in Sagarejo, Ramsay MacDonald emphasized: "We will carry wonderful news of you to Europe, and there we will speak the truth in front of the country, in parliament, demanding what ensures Georgia's independence and freedom" (27).

Thomas Shaw declared: "On behalf of the workers of all Europe, I must tell you that we have one goal: that you do not lose your freedom. For this purpose, the European working class must take measures and demand recognition of Georgia's independence and its admission to the League of Nations" (28).

The visit proved successful. The guests fulfilled their promises. In their own countries, they not only promoted the "Georgian experiment" and its leaders, but also made serious efforts to secure international recognition of the Democratic Republic of Georgia. In the autumn of 1920, Viktor Nozadze, who was in London and closely following the European press, wrote: "We personally attached great importance to the arrival of the socialists to Georgia, but we still doubted whether such a visit could produce such immense results. No other organization could have carried out the propaganda for Georgia that is now being achieved through the socialists" (29).

Naturally, the Georgian Social Democrats were satisfied and repeatedly expressed their gratitude to the leaders of the Socialist International for their efforts on behalf of Georgia. Yet not everyone shared the Social Democrats' perspective. For example, Geronti Kikodze, then a deputy of the Constituent Assembly, later recorded in Soviet-era notes that he viewed the visit positively as "one of the most significant events in the brief history of the Democratic Republic of Georgia", but he also added: "I do not know what impression the European delegates took back with them. Noe Zhordania's government showed them little beyond lavish Georgian feasts and the fencing skills of the Khevsurs. Only Emil Vandervelde delivered a presentation in French in the Georgian theatre hall. He offered a few conventional compliments on the richness and beauty of Georgia's nature and, apparently, expect socialism as well" (30).

By the way Karl Kautski also advised the Georgian Social Democrats to temper their expectations in light of the Second International delegation's visit. He wrote: "Nothing harms a cause more than illusions. The enthusiasm provoked in Georgia by the arrival of the International delegation is certainly most gratifying, as it testifies to the strength of the Georgian proletariat's sense of international solidarity, but it would be detrimental if this enthusiasm were based on an exaggerated view of the International's power" (31)

A more skeptical perspective was held by the prominent Georgian diplomat Zurab Avalishvili, who believed that the arrival of the Second International activists in Georgia was primarily an "ideological demonstration". In his view, this "excursion" created a misleading impression of "Western democratic support" and reinforced an illusion that had little practical significance for consolidating independence (32).

This assessment, however, appears somewhat exaggerated. The European socialist delegation's visit to Georgia served a dual purpose: both foreign-political and domestic. Although the guests belonged to the oppositional spectrum vis-à-vis the authorities in their own countries (Great Britain, France), in Belgium, Austria, and Germany their parties were part of coalition governments. Therefore, their words and opinions carried some weight and resonance within democratic realities.

Upon returning home, the representatives of the Second International rendered valuable service to the Georgian state, raising their voices in defense of its rights and presenting demands before their governments and parliaments for the legal recognition of the Democratic Republic of Georgia (33). It is well documented that the support expressed by English, French, and Belgian socialists – which was widely covered in European periodicals such as „L'Ouest-Éclair“, „The Nation“, „The Times“, „Le Soir“, „Le Matin“, „Le Temps“, „Le Cri du Nord“, „La Vie socialiste“, and others – enhanced the visibility of Georgia's first republic and, to some extent, influenced official London, Paris, and Brussels toward the decision to legally recognize Georgia (34).

The Encyclopedia-Lexicon of the Democratic Republic of Georgia notes that it is likely the support of the Second Socialist International, along with the efforts of the socialist parties of Western countries and their leaders to publicize the issue of Georgia's independence, had a significant impact on the governments of European states and the leadership of the Entente. The result of this influence was the de jure recognition of Georgia's independence (35).

As the newspaper „Ertoba“ reported: “It is true that we were recognized by a conference of bourgeois governments, which, of course, acted in accordance with its own interests. Yet every Georgian should be certain that our European friends and comrades, who visited Georgia last September, played a major role in this recognition”. According to the newspaper, the fact that Georgia was “already counted among the states of Europe” was also the result of the efforts of the international working-class democracy: “We were first recognized by the workers' International. Germany recognized us, and finally every one of the great European states crowned this recognition with a most welcome decision. ...The working class unquestionably and wholeheartedly recognized us, while the bourgeois governments did so only after much testing and becoming convinced of our firmness” (36). expect socialism as well”

Documentary evidence shows that Georgian Social Democrats repeatedly received support from their “ideological friends” in organizing important meetings. For example, Albert Thomas arranged meetings between representatives of the Georgian delegation at the Paris Peace Conference and European diplomats and foreign ministers (10,19). The British Labour Party member Henderson, while in London, introduced Irakli Tsereteli to the Speaker of the House of Commons, leader of the Conservative Party, and future Prime Minister Bonar Law, to whom Tsereteli presented a report on General Denikin's anti-Georgian actions. One of the leading ideologists and theorists of international socialism, Professor Alphonse Olart of the Sorbonne, published an extensive article in *Le Pays* on 13 June 1919 in support of Georgia, criticizing Denikin and calling on the French government to assist Georgia. French parliamentarian Anatole de Monzie and British MP Joseph Kenworthy also raised questions about Georgia with their respective governments (37). According to Akaki Chkhenkeli, in September 1919, Argentine Socialists Justo and Tomas were expected to facilitate recognition by Argentina of the Democratic Republic of Georgia (Juan Bautista Justo was the founder and chairman of the Socialist Party of Argentina, and Antonio De Tomaso was one of its leaders. Both were elected members to the Argentine Parliament. A. Chkhenkeli established contact with them at the Socialist International conference in Bern, where they represented the Socialist Party of Argentina (6, 128).

It should also be noted that Akaki Chkhenkeli critically remarked in his records: “The reception of the guests should have been given a popular and party character, not a state one.” Nevertheless, he regarded the delegation's visit as a major achievement, because it

“strengthened our position both internally and externally, not so much materially as morally” (6, 295; 297).

The visit of the prominent representatives of the Second International to Georgia in the form of a delegation was no less significant for its propagandistic aspect and domestic political importance. The Georgian Social Democratic Party invited the foreign Socialist leaders, and the primary responsibility for hosting them was to be undertaken by the Georgian Social Democrats. The arrival of such distinguished figures in Georgia served to reinforce the authority of the Social Democrats in the eyes of the population and, above all, the electorate, demonstrating approval of their activities.

Under the circumstances of the upcoming parliamentary elections (scheduled for March 1921, shortly after the adoption of the constitution), this carried additional political weight and could be considered a form of success. This was all the more significant because competition in the new elections was expected to be sharper, as right-wing opposition forces were preparing for consolidation. Such a union was indeed formalized at the united conference of non-socialist parties held in January 1921, when the National Democrats, the National Party of Landowners, the Radical-Democratic Peasants’ Party, and the Union of Independents merged to form the Democratic Party of Georgia (38).

According to the American scholar Steven Jones, the visit of the European socialists was not merely an endorsement of Georgia’s ruling political party – the Social Democrats – but “represented a demonstration to the citizens of Western support” (39).

The International Delegation and the Georgian Political Spectrum

What, then, was position of then time Georgian was the political spectrum toward the visit?

The National Democratic Party’s newspaper, „Sakartvelo“, considered the ceremonial receptions for the unofficial delegation of Second International leaders, the declaration of a public holiday on the day of the guests’ arrival to Tbilisi, and especially the participation of the government and state institutions in the pompous events, to be excessive (40). Nevertheless, it evaluated the visit positively overall: “Our guests will witness firsthand the strength of our nation’s tradition in state-building, and they will depart even more convinced supporters of our independence” (41).

The Socialist-Federalist newspaper „Sakhelulo Sakme“ was more loyal, noting: “Georgia’s democracy is for the first time linked to cultural Europe, and this is a great benefit for the

Georgian people” (42). One of its leaders criticized the fact that the Social Democratic Party’s Central Committee report to the Second International was published at the state’s expense (43).

In contrast to these newspapers, the Bolsheviks generally portrayed the Second International and its leaders’ visit to Georgia in a distorted light. For example, the Tbilisi-based newspaper „Akhal Komunisti“ labeled them “bankrupt socialists”, “revisionists of Marxism”, and “opportunists who have devoted all their talent to the throne of the bourgeoisie and served its cause with utter self-abandonment”. In the same paper, Karl Kautsky was described as “an obstinate preacher of class reconciliation, Forceless preacher of the fruitless revolution and revival of the Capitalism”, while Pierre Renaudel was called “the most loyal lackey of the French bourgeoisie and imperialists”, among others (44).

According to „Akhal Komunisti“, “the entire composition of the Second International (from its chairman to its secretary) engaging in such an unusual display in a small bourgeois country, and placing any hopes in it, can only result in the conclusion that the Second International – expelled from its old sphere of activity and now wandering aimlessly – is, in fact, already dead and is merely trying to mourn its demise with as much pomp as possible”. The newspaper added that their visit to Georgia would neither “make bread cheaper nor eliminate any evils, nor would it improve the condition of the working class if it were worsening” (45).

Conclusion

The Second International, in its existing form, continued to operate until 1923. In that year, the Second International merged with the International Federation of Socialist Parties and the International Workers’ Association (“Two-and-a-Half International”, also known as the Vienna International) to form the Socialist, Labour, and Social Democratic International, which lasted until 1940.

The Second International made a certain contribution to the international recognition of the Democratic Republic of Georgia. Representatives of this international organization, who visited our country in 1920, did not cease supporting the government of the Democratic Republic of Georgia even after the republic was overthrown by the military aggression of Soviet Russia and its leaders were forced to flee abroad.

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30. Kikodze, G. (2003). Contemporary Notes, pp. 36–37 Tbilisi. It is possible that this last passage reflects Soviet influence. See also Saitidze, G. (2010). The First Universal International Organization – The League of Nations and Independent Georgia (1918–1921), p. 61, Tbilisi.
31. Kautsky, K. 1920). Problems and Perspectives of Socialism in Georgia, p. 30, Tbilisi.
32. Avalishvili, Z. (1926). Georgia's Independence in International Politics, 1918–1921, pp. 359–360, Tbilisi.
33. Newspaper Sakartvelo, November 19, 1920; Newspaper Ertoba, November 16, 1920.
34. For example, Eric Lee argues that the British government was compelled by MacDonald to recognize Georgia (12, 218).
35. Shvelidze, D. (2018). The Second Socialist International, in The Democratic Republic of Georgia (1918–1921): Encyclopedia-Dictionary, p. 271, Tbilisi.
36. Newspaper Ertoba, February 1, 1921.
37. Kobakhidze, B. (2015). The Georgian Question at the Paris Peace Conference, doctoral dissertation for the degree of Doctor of History, pp. 56–57, Tbilisi (with manuscript permission).
38. Janelidze O., 2020). Essays on the History of the National-Democratic Party of Georgia, pp. 398–400, Tbilisi.
39. Jones, S. (2020). "Georgia, European Socialism, and the Second International," in The Visit of European Socialists to Georgia, 1920, Vol. I, p. 16, Tbilisi.

40. Newspaper Sakartvelo, September 14, 1920.
41. Newspaper Sakartvelo, September 15, 1920.
42. Newspaper Sakheljo Sakme (People's cause), September 18, 1920
43. The Constituent Assembly of Georgia (2020). Minutes of Sessions, 7 vols., Vol. VIII, January 1 – March 17, 1921, p. 28, Tbilisi.
44. Newspaper Akhali Kommunisti (New Communist), September 14, 1920.
45. Newspaper Akhali Kommunisti, September 17, 1920.