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No Threat of Egypt Scenario In Georgia

By Paul Rimple

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Sozar Subari used to come across as a passionate, consistent and zealous defender of human rights when he was Georgia's ombudsman, but as soon as he crossed the line into politics he began to unravel.

On Feb. 15, Subari told a crowd at the opening of his newly created Georgian Party in Kutaisi that we can expect to see a repeat of Egypt events in Georgia, but not until the spring.

"The first events occurred in Egypt and Tunisia in the winter, and they will repeat themselves in Georgia in the spring," Subari said. "The public should unite to put an end to the authoritarian regime in Georgia as soon as possible."

Guys like Subari forget that the reason President Mikheil Saakashvili's National movement has consolidated power is because they let him — by pursuing a course of screaming "Down with the king!" instead of actually addressing the needs of their constituents.

When Levan Gachechiladze ran against Saakashvili in 2008, his platform was "Vote for me,

and I promise not to be your president!" which was a clear demonstration of how Georgians understand the concept of democracy.

The rag-tag coalition of opposition leaders failed to bring down the regime with their two-bit replicate Rose Revolution in 2009 because all they could offer was vile slogans. Former Speaker of the parliament Nino Burjanadze showed people how democratic she was by shouting "No dialogue!" This was the same Burjanadze who backed Saakashvili's decision to send the cops in to beat those same people in 2007.

The difference between what is happening across the Middle East and what will not happen in Georgia again is that Georgia has not only been there, but it has proved these things can work. Despite what you think of Saakashvili, you can't deny that his government has turned the country from a failed state to a functioning nation with a clear vision for the future.

Saakashvili will finish his term, like it or not, and if the opposition doesn't want him to occupy the post of prime minister, then they are going to have to offer people something more than Egyptian-inspired protests.

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